

of their electorate. But in the municipal elections due to start on May 24th, some of the politics are creeping light tially some

Ir the v first r govern niceti ready the pe. divisiv denial: vote it... cancelled at the last minute. The government and its Syrian backers, or so popular wisdom runs, will not risk giving their civil-war foes a fresh foothold in politics.

But the regime knows that international donors and investors set much store by smooth-running local government. Over half the councils elected in the last round of local elections have had to be dissolved because the majority of their elderly members have either died or left the country. Furthermore, Lebanon's constitution leaves little power to the municipal councils. Even their budgets must be approved by the central authorities. Opening up local government allows Syria to draw dissident Maronites into the political process without conceding them much influence.

So why has the Maronite opposition abandoned its boycott for so inconsequential a prize? Publicly, the Maronites argue that local councils are the only layer of government not controlled by Syria, so they can take part without becoming collaborators. The local polls will be a good way to prove their enduring popularity, they say, since it would be nigh on impossible to rig the results of over 9,000 different races. But in private they concede that after eight years of inactivity, they would be consigning themselves to irrelevance if they did not at last take part in a vote.

Most prominent Maronites want simply to regroup their core supporters. Dory Chamoun, the son of a former Lebanese president and brother of a war-time militia leader, is standing for a seat on the council in his home-town of Deir al-Qamar, while supporters of Michel Aoun, the exiled army chief who fought the Syrians for control of Lebanon, are putting together a slate for the Maronite stronghold of Jounieh.

But even these modest ambitions have caused tensions. Walid Jumblatt, a minister and former militia leader whose men defeated the main Maronite force during the civil war, is already growing about fresh conflict. Bombs have gone off outside three branches of a pro-Syrian party in the Maronite heartland. With the various shoot-outs and fist-fights between Hizbul-

lah and Amal, the two main Shia Muslim parties, a public rift within the family of President Elias Hrawi, and a series of ever-more improbable alliances between different Sunni, Shia and Christian groups, the elections have become a daily soap-opera for Lebanese voters.

In the long run, that may be the campaign's most important legacy. The relative freedom and liveliness of the elections

have attracted a new, more youthful class of candidates and campaigners. The enormous number of seats up for grabs, and the intense, localised nature of the campaigning has drawn many into politics for the first time. Whatever the results, the deepening and revitalising of democracy in Lebanon may prove more of a challenge to Syrian authority than any of those erstwhile Maronite grandees.

Africa

The new princes fall out

Hopes of an African "renaissance" begin to fade as the reformist regimes start to quarrel among themselves

THE "new leaders" of Africa, the handful of rulers who were supposed to be cleaning up the continent and leading it into the 21st century, are falling out with one another. In the Horn, the rulers of Eritrea and Ethiopia, once close allies in overthrowing the regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam in 1991, are exchanging fire across their common border and talking of "full-scale conflict". In Central Africa, the leaders of Uganda and Rwanda, which last year helped to launch Laurent Kabila to power in Congo (formerly Zaire), boycotted his regime's first birthday party last week. A pre-party summit of 16 heads of state had to be abruptly cancelled.

This is not at all the common approach to regional problems that is expected from the West's new allies in Africa. Susan Rice, in charge of Africa at America's State Department, has gone scuttling off to the continent to try to get some of these old friends to make up and be buddies again.

"New leaders" is an American-invented term for the military princes—such as Uganda's Yoweri Museveni, Ethiopia's Meles Zenawi, and Eritrea's Issaias Afwerki—who have driven out the corrupt old rulers, such as Zaire's Mobutu Sese Seko, dubbed the "toad kings". In general, the new men have introduced market reforms plus a measure of democracy, though not on a western model. They seek to be on good terms with the West, particularly America, which would like their countries to be islands of stability and growth in a fragile continent. An African "renaissance" has been spoken of, perhaps too freely.

The row between Ethiopia and Eritrea is surprising because of the close relations between their presidents. Mr Issaias's Eritrean nationalists supplied and fought alongside the Ethiopian rebels in the 1980s. After Mr Mengistu's fall, they engineered Eritrea's independence in the teeth of Ethiopian nationalism. Though this left Ethiopia landlocked, the two leaders managed the arrangement amicably, through regular



meetings and telephone calls.

Things began to go wrong last year when Eritrea launched its own currency, the nakfa. Unexpectedly, Ethiopia announced that trade between the two countries should be in hard currency. Then Eritrea expelled Ethiopian officials from the lifeline ports of Assab and Massawa. In return, Ethiopia expelled several thousand Eritreans from its north-western province. Telephone calls, this time, did not do the trick of producing harmony. Small border disputes broke out, culminating, on May 6th, in armed clashes.

The disputed territory—remote but fertile and said to contain gold—is not the real issue. More important is the fact that Ethiopia, big, ancient and proud, has its main access to the outside world controlled by small, new, feisty Eritrea. This has snapped the bonds forged in war.

Their quarrel has worrying implications for regional stability. Ethiopia and Eritrea are generally regarded as bastions of secular and sensible rule against chaotic Somalia to the east and Sudan's Islamist fundamentalism to the west. Both countries are also friendly towards Israel. Hence

INTERNATIONAL

the dispatch of Ms Rice.

The Americans are less concerned about Mr Kabila's spoils party. They do not feel that Mr Kabila has yet earned a place in the new-leader club. The summit was supposed to bring together regional heads of state to discuss the continuing wars in eastern Congo, Rwanda and Burundi. But Uganda's Mr Museveni and his Rwandan counterpart, Paul Kagame, refused. Personal pique played its part. Mr Kabila was once thought of as their puppet. No longer.

The Banyamulenge people—Tutsis from eastern Congo who are close to the Rwandan and Ugandan regimes—used to be the backbone of Mr Kabila's army. But he has now got his own power-base and sent the Banyamulenge packing, undermining his relations with both countries.

In addition, both Mr Museveni and Mr Kagame are fed up with what they see as Mr Kabila's erratic and ineffectual rule. They disagree with him on how to solve the regional wars. Congo, claim Uganda and Rwanda, is harbouring rebels who are trying to overthrow their governments. They want Mr Kabila to take a much harder line. All good reasons. But perhaps, above all, they cannot bear to see their protégé upstaging them in their own area.

Mozambique

Minus a party

MAPUTO

IT IS often held up as a model, a country that has managed the difficult transition from civil war to multi-party democracy. However, the smoothness of Mozambique's move depended on Renamo, the rebel faction, playing its part in the democratic process as parliamentary opposition. This has worked, until now. But Mozambique is to hold municipal elections on June 30th and Renamo has announced that it will not take part in them.

Unusually, for a new democracy, Renamo's withdrawal has nothing to do with oppression by the ruling party, Frelimo. After 15 years of civil strife, Frelimo has worked hard for peace. Dissent is tolerated and the government does not, in general, repress civil liberties. Renamo's withdrawal signals its inability to refashion, and maintain, itself as a viable political party.

During the war, Renamo's main objective was to create havoc. Set up by white-ruled Rhodesia and then adopted by apartheid South Africa, the rebel group had no ideology, its aims were disruptive and its methods barbaric. Yet in 1994, having negotiated peace with Frelimo, it turned political, contested the parliamentary election and won 38% of the vote. Its

Darling, those sheikhs are wonderful

DUBAI

THE hottest product in Saudi Arabia's booming black market is Viagra, America's "wonderdrug" for impotent men. Although it has yet to be licensed in the desert kingdom, or in any other Gulf state, it is in huge demand. Tablets branded as Viagra, the commercial name for Pfizer's drug Sildenafil Citrate, are an instant hit with both Saudi and expatriate men seeking to resurrect their flagging libidos. They change hands under the counter for as much as \$80 a pill, ten times their retail price in America. The trouble, say Saudi pharmacists, is that not all the tablets now on the black market may be what they claim.

With travellers from foreign cities bringing the pills into the country hidden in their hand luggage, the opportunity for bogus pills to be sold as the real thing is huge. Although Saudi Arabia takes a famously tough line on drug smuggling, announcing threateningly to visitors on their visa form "Death for Drug Traffickers", it is equivocal when it comes to medication. Each year thousands of Muslim pilgrims enter the country with pills for personal medical use, many of which are unlicensed in



Saudi Arabia. Since they are not classed as narcotics, nor destined for resale, the authorities turn a blind eye.

The illegal smuggling of large quantities of Viagra is a different matter. No doubt there are many genuine customers for a drug that tackles impotency. But, as elsewhere, the pill is finding a ready market among men looking to enhance their sexual prowess. Widespread use of an unlicensed sex pill sits a bit uncomfortably with Saudi Arabia's deeply conservative moral codes.

leaders were induced to abandon war for politics with gifts of money, cars and houses. The trouble was that they failed to carry out the basic organisational tasks expected of a normal political party.

The government, and the western countries that give Mozambique aid, had made extensive concessions to Renamo to tempt it to take part in the local elections. These had already been delayed twice by its com-

plaints—and its need for more time to mount a credible campaign. Renamo claimed that the registration of voters had been fraudulent, even though the electoral commission, on which three Renamo appointees served, found no fraud.

President Joaquim Chissano negotiated directly with Renamo's leader, Afonso Dhlakama. The government agreed to nearly all Renamo's demands. But when the deadline for registering candidates came in mid-April, Renamo had registered none. Instead it issued a fresh set of demands. The government, calling its bluff, said there would be no more delay.

Good riddance, perhaps. But international donors, who are paying the \$20m bill for the elections, are unhappy. They had hoped that the vote would decentralise the administration—and promote democratic development—by strengthening municipal government. Instead the elections have become a source of political instability. By its boycott, Renamo has blundered into a crisis. For a start, it is expected to obstruct voting in the rural areas it controls. Moreover, the boycott could lead to a showdown with the government over the extra-legal privileges it retains from the war, including a small armed force.



As it should be, but isn't

INTERNATIONAL

What to do about Iran

BUENOS AIRES AND TEHRAN

A confusion of sanctions, terrorism, natural gas and a new president

SHOULD Iran, a serious country from a political, economic and geographical point of view, continue indefinitely to be treated as some kind of "rogue state" by the United States? As the Americans cautiously debate this question, two developments this week may affect their calculations. The trouble is that the two seem to pull in opposite directions.

First, Argentina claims to have come up with new evidence linking Iran with the bombing of a Jewish centre in Buenos Aires in 1994, which killed 86 people, and an attack on the Israeli embassy in 1992, which killed 29. Second, in a deal between the United States and the European Union, President Bill Clinton has agreed to waive sanctions against at least some companies investing in Iran's oil development.

An Argentine federal judge, Juan Jose Galeano, has been leading an investigation into the Buenos Aires terrorist bombings for the past three years. The inquiry has gone slowly, pointing blame in various directions: these include Iran, two guerrilla groups over which Iran has or had considerable influence (Lebanon's Hizbullah and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad), and right-wing Argentine extremists. So far no charges have been filed, although one Argentine suspect has been in custody for three years.

But last week Mr Galeano ordered the detention of eight Iranians for questioning and *Clarín*, a leading Argentine newspaper, reported that an international warrant might soon be issued for the arrest of Mohsen Rabbani, a former Iranian cultural attaché, who left the country last year and was told by the Argentines not to return. Argentina has expelled all but one of the Iranian diplomats in Buenos Aires and relations are on the verge of being broken.

A visit this month by Louis Freeh, the head of America's FBI, encouraged speculation that the United States was pushing Argentina to implicate Iran in the terrorism.

The Americans had urged Argentina to break diplomatic relations with Iran at once after the bombing of the Jewish centre, but Argentina, lacking clear evidence and reluctant to damage valuable trade with Iran, held off. Now, however, the Argentines plainly believe the trail to be stronger.

Iran, which flatly denies any involvement in the bombings, has responded to the expulsion of its diplomats with un-



Terrorism unforgotten in Buenos Aires

usual restraint. Nor, indeed, is it particularly worried. Iranians recall that the first probe into an Iranian trail fizzled out after the main witness turned out to be an impostor; they are again questioning the validity of testimony given by Iranian exiles, including a former intelligence agent.

Iran expressed similar scepticism about the evidence that led a Berlin court last year to find the Islamic regime implicated in the 1992 murder of four Iranian Kurdish dissidents: the same intelligence agent is said to

have been pivotal in that case. Yet Iran is strongly suspected of pursuing, and killing, senior dissidents in the past. Be that as it may, say Iranians, they did not suffer much from the Berlin verdict. The European Union withdrew its ambassadors for a time, but EU trade delegations continued to scout around Iran. The ambassadors came back some months after Iran elected its liberal-minded president, Muhammad Khatami, new "substantive talks" are now about to begin, and the bitter German incident is rarely mentioned.

Although the Iranians are showing restraint in their reaction to semi-accusations of terrorism, they are full-voiced in responding to the American "retreat" on sanctions. "America finally bowed to European pressure," rejoiced the state news agency. Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, an influential ex-president, boasted that "America's defeat in efforts to isolate [Iran] is a sign of our strength."

The question had been whether America would take action against a French-led consortium that had broken the law Congress passed two years ago to stop companies investing in Iranian (or Libyan) energy. Under the preliminary deal worked out in London on May 18th, America may exempt European companies from such punishment (though, said officials, there would be no automatic waiver for firms investing in pipelines that run across Iran from the Caspian). As a start, America waived sanctions against a French company, Total, and its Russian and Malaysian partners for signing a \$2 billion contract last year to develop a gas field in south Iran.

The point of the law had been to drain Iran of the money that was supposedly going either to finance its terrorist operations around the world or, even worse, to develop a nuclear bomb. But Total charged in, securing for itself a splendid foothold in Iran. As America dithered over whether or not Total should be punished for its defiance, other European companies, including Royal Dutch/Shell, held back, waiting to see which way the decision would go. Some 11 major contracts, worth billions of dollars, are up for tender but, until now, the fear of reprisal has discouraged bids. Iran has every reason to exult.

In discussions on trade with Iran, the Americans have recently put more stress on the need to starve Iran's nuclear ambitions than on curbing its support for interna-

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such countries
are not helpful when
you're trying to knock out
the regime - they know
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INTERNATIONAL

tional terrorism. They hope that the quid pro quo from Europe will be firmer and more vigilant co-operation in preventing Iran from acquiring the wherewithal to develop its military nuclear potential. But if Argentina comes up with convincing evi-

dence of Iran's involvement in the Buenos Aires bombings, it may bear on American calculations. Under Mr Khatami, Iran would seem to be moving away from the deeds that led to its outlaw status. It could still be caught by its past.

Copts in Egypt

The danger of foreign meddling

CAIRO

Two articles on Christians in the Middle East. First, Egypt's Copts fear outside interference; second, Lebanon's Maronites decide to vote

HOW could anyone argue against a law that protects religious minorities? Well, try Egyptians. Legislation that is winding its way through the American Congress has roused a furore in Egypt, where 5m Coptic Christians rub shoulders with 55m Muslims. The bill, passed by 375 votes to 41 in the House of Representatives, would impose automatic sanctions against states that America deems to have abetted religious persecution or turned a blind eye to it. Along with China, Pakistan and Sudan, the bill's sponsors have named Egypt as a likely offender.

In Egyptian eyes, such pressure is arrogant—and dangerous. It is not just that Egypt could be threatened with losing the \$2.1 billion of American aid it receives each year. Nor is it simply that the government denies there is anything like persecution in Egypt. The worst of it is that singling out Copts for superpower intervention could have the effect of intensifying Egypt's pervasive—though generally mild—discrimination against its Christians.

Why would the United States want to do this? ask Egyptians. Suspicion of America's motives has deepened in recent years. Egyptians see it punishing poor countries, such as Iran and India and now perhaps Egypt, while pampering a nuclear-armed and peace-resistant Israel (a country, they

would add, whose whole *raison d'être* is to discriminate on religious grounds). President Hosni Mubarak suggested this week that Egypt is the victim of a campaign by America's pro-Israeli lobby. At a Cairo café, a rich banker goes further. Israelis, he says with a puff on his waterpipe, "want to keep our economy down".

The suspicion cuts across the Christian-Muslim religious divide. "Those who are trying to interfere in Egypt's internal affairs are, in fact, stabbing Copts in the heart," declared an impassioned Christian member of parliament, Edouard al-Dahabi. "I will ally myself with the nearest Egyptian Muslim rather than an American congressman," echoed Yousef Boutros-Ghali, a member of Egypt's grandest Coptic family, who is also minister of the economy.

Members of the large Coptic emigrant community in the West do not necessarily share these views. During hearings on the bill, the *Washington Post* published paid advertisements alleging systematic oppression of Copts. On the Internet, Coptic fringe groups accuse Muslims of plotting to cleanse the Middle East of all other faiths.

These are wild accusations. But Egyptian Christians do have legitimate grievances. Mr al-Dahabi was addressing a house whose 444 elected members are all Muslims. He himself is one of ten members appointed by the president. In the most recent parliamentary election, Mr Mubarak's National Democratic Party failed to field a single Coptic candidate. None of Egypt's provincial governors or university presidents, and very few of its senior army, police and judicial officers are Christian. In the country's education system and on the job market, there is petty discrimination everywhere.

On the other hand, many of Egypt's most successful businessmen and celebrities are Copts. The Coptic church

is vibrant; its services are packed, and once-forlorn desert monasteries bustle with activity. Moreover, the government has been keen to project a conciliatory image. Church lands seized during land reform 40 years ago have just been returned. The government has relaxed a 150-year-old law that required presidential permission for building churches. The Church of St Simeon, a cavernous amphitheatre for 20,000 people recently quarried out of the limestone cliffs that loom over Cairo, is one of the most striking new churches in the world. At Aswan, a grandiose cathedral is rising behind the venerable Old Cataract Hotel.

Yet secular-minded Egyptians note that the success of the official church may itself be a symptom of an unhealthy rise in communal feelings. Two decades of a deep-rooted religious revival in Islam have not left Egyptian Christians untouched. Most dramatically, the extremist Muslim groups challenging the government have sometimes attacked Christians: a 1997 machine-gun assault on a village Sunday school in Upper Egypt killed nine people. (The overall toll of Christians dying violent deaths, however, reflects their proportion of the population, which happens to be high in backward and troublesome Upper Egypt.)

A more enduring effect of the revival is that Christians have themselves grown more religious, more parochial, more separate from their Muslim neighbours. Coptic Christianity has endured for 1,400 years under Muslim rule, which is to say seven times longer than the United States has existed. In fact, a majority of Egyptians were Christian until around 1300. The tide turned against them then because of foreign meddling. Crusader invasions of the Holy Land sparked a historic shift in generally tolerant Muslim attitudes, which played itself out in a wave of persecution against Christians. This, Egypt's Copts believe, could once again be the danger.

Maronites in Lebanon

Back in the game

BEIRUT

ELECTIONS are normally dull affairs for Lebanese Christians. Since the civil war, during which the country's once-dominant Maronite Catholics lost much of their power, the best known Maronite politicians either went into exile or landed in jail. Most of the remainder boycotted the two parliamentary elections held since the war ended in 1991, on the grounds that they were orchestrated by the Syrians, whose forces occupy most of Lebanon. Maronite voters had no choice but to plump for candidates who had cut deals with the Syrians—and were therefore traitors in the eyes



Newcomers, please keep out

has put it on an electoral par with the RPR and a shade ahead of the UDF. But Mr Madelin, whose own attitude to Mr Le Pen's lot has been ambiguous, feared his free-market ideas would be squelched in a single party dominated by wishy-washy moderates. So he bolted. The UDF's council is to debate Mr Bayrou's idea for a merger early next month. The omens are not good.

By unhappy coincidence, another awkward customer who was big in the UDF, Charles Millon, a former defence minister, has set up a rival movement "which dares to say its name". He has called it, simply, The Right. Mr Millon was expelled from the UDF for accepting National Front votes in order to hang on to his presidency of the Rhône-Alpes region after elections two months ago.

But it is not just the UDF that is splintering. The other chunk of the respectable right, the Gaullist RPR, is cracking too. Several hundred party campaigners have been booted out for flirting with the Front. Philippe Séguin, who took over the shattered party after its r has threatened edly undermin Jacques Chirac the Gaullists' "i ing party figure justice ministe of Paris, are loc trol of the cap Tiberi, an old snared in a sca the president l

This spread apparently bo Séguin and his UDF counterparts, Léotard, for a single structure for the mainstream right. The new Alliance would have a permanent secretariat and a rotating presidency. It would draw up a common programme and define the right's electoral strategy "case by case". Those who have long argued for right-wing unity are, apparently, to get it; and those preferring diversity to widen the right's electoral base are, it seems, to get that too. Mr Madelin and Mr Millon have already said they are game. It sounds so simple that one wonders why it has not been tried before.

Actually, it has—and it failed. In 1990, the two big parties of the right agreed to set up a "Union for France" with one bland programme and a primary system to find a presidential candidate. Within five years it ended in tears when discord broke out over such issues as Europe, economics and the role of the state. To cap it all, two Gaullists, Mr Chirac and Edouard Balladur, then vied bitterly for France's presidency.

Still, ancient divisions within the French right, going all the way back to the Revolution, have not stopped it winning elections. But, whether under one umbrella or several, it is unlikely to succeed again

soon without finding an undisputed leader to put across a clear, bold programme. The absence of such a combination is what, at present, is keeping the right—in whatever guise—in the wilderness.

Spain

Watch the left

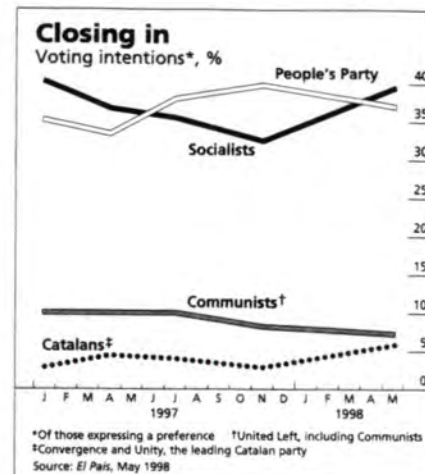
MADRID

WHEN Felipe Gonzalez resigned as leader of Spain's Socialists last June, the ruling conservatives smiled broadly. Though defeated in a general election two years ago after nearly 14 years in power, Mr Gonzalez had remained Spain's most popular politician. Despite the perkiness of Spain's economy, the triumph of Spain's qualifying to join the euro next year, and a drop—at last—in Spain's stubbornly high unemployment rate, all achieved without great social pain, the conservative prime minister Jose Maria Aznar, has still failed to make Spaniards love him. Now he faces a tough challenger in Josep Borrell, the Socialists' new candidate in the next general election, due by March 2000.

Mr Borrell is a loner with a sharp tongue and a sharper mind. A Catalan baker's son with a doctorate in economics (which he studied at California's Stanford University, among other places) as well as a degree in aeronautical engineering, he has started well. He persuaded the party's rank and file, against Mr Gonzalez's advice, not to give the job to the Socialist establishment's man, the duller Joaquim Almunia. But then Mr Borrell sensibly persuaded Mr Almunia to stay on as the Socialists' general secretary, because quite a lot of Spaniards have been nervous that the populist Mr Borrell might pull the party back to the left. Mr Almunia looks reassuringly pragmatic.

Mr Aznar, by contrast, still strikes many Spaniards as too dour and rigid. For sure, they think he has done well with the economy and has shown skill in sustaining a parliamentary pact—against the centralising tradition of Spain's right—with moderate Catalans, Basques and Canary Islanders. Many Spaniards also like the virulence of his rhetoric against the Basque separatist guerrillas of ETA, though still more, glancing at Northern Ireland, would prefer further progress towards peace.

The Socialists hope for an early fillip in Catalonia, where a regional election is due next year. Jordi Pujol, whose conservative Catalan nationalists back Mr Aznar's minority government in Spain's parliament in Madrid (though without taking part in the administration), is looking jaded after 18 years as Catalonia's top politician. Barcelona's former mayor, a highly popular Socialist, Pasqual Maragall, has a chance of



taking over. If that happens, Mr Aznar's arrangement with Mr Pujol would look much less imposing.

Four other factors may also rattle Mr Aznar. First, despite those impressive economic figures, many Spaniards do not feel they have enjoyed the benefits. Though the unemployment rate is dipping, it is still the highest in Western Europe, even allowing for the black market.

Second, Spaniards still tend to like charisma. On that score, Mr Borrell easily outguns Mr Aznar. Mr Almunia would have seemed more of a match. Third, when votes for minor left-wing parties (including the ex-communists) are counted, Spaniards on the whole still lean a shade to the left; and if moderate Catalan and Basque parties lose ground, it will be harder still for Mr Aznar to control parliament.

Finally, Spain has a habit of copying European trends. Spanish Socialists take comfort from the popularity of Tony Blair in Britain and Lionel Jospin in France. And if Helmut Kohl loses power in Germany this autumn, then surely—they think—their time will soon come.

Yugoslavia

Ever smaller?

BELGRADE

ŠLOBODAN MILOSEVIC is already fighting one war—to keep Kosovo, Serbia's Albanian-speaking province, from breaking away. Now Yugoslavia's president is close to starting another, this time in Montenegro, the tiny republic that, together with Serbia, makes up what is left of Yugoslavia.

This week he had Radoje Kontic, a Montenegrin, sacked as Yugoslavia's prime minister. Mr Kontic was thought to be insufficiently hostile to Montenegro's reform-minded president, Milo Djukanovic, who is at loggerheads with Mr Milosevic. Not

THE AMERICAS

Yankee drug-busters head south

Bankers are getting caught in a daring sting. Is this a turning-point in the United States' ambivalent war on Mexico's drugs mobs?

THE news came as a shock, perhaps even to those delivering it. Robert Rubin, the American treasury secretary, and Janet Reno, the attorney-general, announced this week that their underlings had nabbed bankers from many of Mexico's top banks, and over \$50m in dirty assets, in an elaborate sting. The charge? Laundering millions of dollars in drugs profits. The shock is not that there is drugs money in Mexico's financial system: that has been obvious to anyone who has watched the growing might of the drugs cartels along Mexico's border with the United States. The real news is that the American government—or parts of it, anyway—has dealt its first serious blow to Mexico's traffickers.

Over the past three years, undercover American agents say they lured bankers working with Mexico's Juarez mob and its Colombian affiliate in Cali to launder drugs money using slippery techniques such as wire transfers and bankers' drafts. In return, the bankers pocketed 2-3% of the transactions. Last weekend, the agents fooled nearly two dozen Mexican bankers into gathering on American soil for a weekend of fun, and arrested them.

Intriguingly, the Americans did this without collaborating with their Mexican counterparts. Indeed, they did so without informing a single Mexican. They also took the unusual step of fingering three banks—among them Bancomer, Mexico's second largest—for widespread laundering.

Some see all this as a sign of American impatience with the failure of Mexican prosecutors to make any real progress against drugs corruption. Nonsense, insists Jose Angel Gurria, Mexico's finance minister: "This is not a question of pressure, or anything of a political nature." Nothing to hide here, insists Hector Rangel, a top man at Bancomer: only a few of our tens of thousands of employees have been arrested. Besides, he says, Mexican banks are still learning how to apply launder-

ing statutes, which came into force only last year.

Such protests ring hollow, not least because Mexican prosecutors sheepishly admit they are now busy investigating their banks based on the evidence gathered by the Americans. By mid-week, they had already made several related arrests. The United States has asked Mexico to arrest some other bankers who did not turn up for last weekend's fun. If the Mexicans agree—a big if—these suspects may be extradited north.

There are strong signs that the probe may eventually nab perhaps as many as 200 bankers. On May 20th, American officials announced that they had also arrested several Venezuelan bankers on American soil as part of the same investigation into money laundering by Mexican mobsters. One American customs official involved with the sting says he expects some of the mid-level bankers already arrested to talk, perhaps helping to haul in bigger fish.

If this week's events do lead to a much broader American crackdown on Mexican corruption, it will not be because Bill Clinton wants it that way. Like American presidents before him, he has spent much political capital defending the Mexican government and "certifying" Mexico every year as a reliable ally in the war on drugs. That has pleased officials in the State Department concerned about diplomatic relations and investor confidence. But American drugs fighters in the front line often

complain that their dangerous work is made irrelevant because their government fails to act as energetically against Mexico's mobs as it has against Colombian ones.

Over the past few years, the Americans have humbled Colombian mobs through a combination of political pressure and aggressive action. The United States has cracked down hard on Colombian laundering through, for example, wire-transfer firms, and issued blacklists of companies believed to be fronts for the Cali mob. Mexican mobs have not been subjected to the same treatment, despite the belief of Thomas Constantine, the head of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), that they have surpassed Colombian rivals.

Mr Constantine felt the need to declare during a visit to Mexico two years ago that that country's banks were awash with drugs money. Mr Clinton's political officials rushed to distance themselves from his remark. Now, they are rushing to take credit for this week's bust. The truth is that the men orchestrating this week's sting kept it secret for three years not only from the Mexicans, whom they do not trust, but also from their own State Department.

According to one then-senior DEA official, the United States government had more than enough evidence a year ago to pursue the most celebrated corruption case in Mexican history: the one against Raul Salinas, the former president's brother, on suspicion of laundering drugs money. Only reluctance in the Clinton administration to upset Mexico's elite could prevent this case from going forward, he insisted. Within weeks, he was moved aside, and the Salinas case has since gone nowhere. As American investigators pursued their sting this week, a Mexican judge suddenly declared Mr Salinas not guilty of the laundering charge. Will the Clinton administration now take the political gloves off?



Is this fun?

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The other side
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The Economist

A SURVEY

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The deep green sea

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THE SEA



A second fall

THE eviction of Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden marked the end of man as a hunter-gatherer. For most of history, mankind had survived on berries, nuts and wild animals, but as numbers grew and food became scarce, people were reduced to farming. As God told Adam, "The earth will be cursed. You will get your food from it only by labour all the days of your life." After the freedom of the forests and the plains, it was back-breaking work. The first farmers suffered from rotten teeth and stunted bones. Farming was the antithesis to the nomadic way of life, bringing with it a domesticated landscape, a settled existence, ownership, and laws to protect it.

Something similar is now happening to the ocean. Where once it seemed infinite in its bounty, it is suffering from overfishing and pollution. Wherever humanity meets the sea, the sea comes off worse. Two-thirds of the world's 5.5 billion people live within 50 miles (80km) of the coast, and much of the pollution from the land runs to the sea. Residents, tourists, commercial interests and wildlife are all fighting for their corner of the garden.

After decades of expansion, many of the world's fishing grounds are already overfished, and many more soon will be. The scale of the hunt is awesome. In a study published in the journal *Nature*, Daniel Pauly and Villi Christensen, then both working at the International Centre for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLARM), a non-profit research centre in Manila, tried to measure how much of the tiny marine plants, called phytoplankton, is needed to support the life that man extracts from the sea. They concluded that people take 25-35% of the output of the richest areas of the sea: the

continental shelf and the places where currents saturated in nutrients well up from the deep. Although these areas are small, less than a tenth of the ocean surface, the finding is alarming. Mankind's share of the output of the land, at 35-40%, is not that much higher—and look how irrevocably the land has been changed by this exploitation.

Then there is global warming with all its uncertainties. Tens of millions of people—most of them poor—who live only a few metres above the high-tide mark have much to fear from even a slight rise in the sea level. Hundreds of millions more who have settled on the coast will also suffer if today's Prosperos end up creating more or wilder storms.

"The sea is not landscape. It is the experience of eternity," wrote the German novelist Thomas Mann. Yet the fringes of eternity are polluted with nitrates and blooms of foetid algae. Immensity and fecundity were once the ocean's defining characteristics. Now the sea turns out to be just another environment under threat. What the British poet W.H. Auden called "the alpha of existence, the symbol of potentiality" seems tired and worn.

There was no more sea

The time has come for people to change the way they think about the sea. Hunter-gatherers were never banished from the salt water. Although coastal states control the waters to 200 miles off shore they find it hard to exert their authority there. Most of the deep sea is subject to the even frailer rule of international law. Scientific ignorance and the sea's lack of natural boundaries further frustrate the task of designing institutions to manage the marine environment. Little is known about the precise

The ocean used to seem infinite in its bounty. Now it needs care and maintenance, writes Edward Carr



effects of, say, the changing climate on fish stocks or the remote consequences of estuarine pollution.

Despite being badly governed, the sea provides vast benefits. For some, these are measured in jobs—fishing, along with processing and marketing on land, for example, employs about 200m people. To many more the benefits are food, recreation and protection against storms. And everyone needs the sea for shipping and to wash away waste, recycle water, and provide a habitat for wildlife. In a recent paper, Robert Costanza of the University of Maryland put a value of \$21 trillion on these services, compared with \$12 trillion for what the land offers. The numbers are debatable, but the idea behind them makes sense. Environmentalists would like the sea to be a pristine environment; others treat it as a waste-dump: in fact it is a resource that must be preserved and harvested.

To enhance its uses, the water must become ever more like the land, with owners, laws and limits. Fishermen must behave more like ranchers than hunters. Polluters should pay something for the

damage caused by their pollution. Planners will have to balance the natural habitat against development and prepare, if necessary, for a rapid rise in sea-level. Should the world's population double, mankind may have to treat the coastal waters like prime agricultural land.

It will not be easy to extend fallible laws and regulations to a realm that has stood for freedoms dating from before civilisation. Attempts to "manage" the sea are seen as somehow unnatural. Yet the laws and regulations are coming all the same. Byron was right in 1817 when he wrote: "Roll on thou deep and dark blue ocean—roll! Man marks the earth with ruin—his control stops with the shore." But he is right no longer.

This has been declared the year of the ocean: a time for glossy display, including an Expo that has just opened in Lisbon. Few want to think about the sea's fall from grace, its loss of infinity; and no one likes to pay for resources that had always been considered free. The second fall will no more feel like progress than did the first.

On the edge

Too many people want too much from the coast

WHY are people drawn to the sea? A recent book by Elaine Morgan, a British writer, argues that it is because part of the evolution of *Homo sapiens* took place on the seashore. The story is highly speculative: the aquatic ape protected himself from the water by becoming balder and fatter than his forest-bound relatives. Like seals, dolphins and other large aquatic mammals, man is equipped for immersion, thanks to a high concentration of haemoglobin and the rare ability to breathe at will (without which, incidentally, it would be impossible to talk). Perhaps the only ape on two legs waded before he walked.

Paleontologists scoff at such circumstantial evidence. But perhaps the hordes moving to the coast know something the academics do not; likewise the trippers squeezed into a ribbon of tarry, cigarette-strewn sand. Thirteen of the world's 16 cities with more than 10m people are on the coast. In America,

almost half of all new residential development is near the ocean, and people are moving there at the rate of 3,600 a day.

The coast is the place where everything comes together. It is the marine environment from which people obtain the most benefit. But the demands made on the coast for different purposes—commercial, residential, recreational—often conflict. Efforts to allocate the right to pollute and exploit the coastline and coastal waters are fraught with complexity.

And confusion. People tend to think of oil pollution as the biggest threat, and to blame it on large spills. In fact, the amount of oil entering the ocean has been falling, and large well-publicised oil spills make up only a small part of the total. Industrial dumping—such as the fateful release of mercury from a factory in Minamata Bay in Japan in the 1950s, causing appalling disease—is now illegal in most countries, and is easily detected. Occasionally, nature itself is the polluter. According to a United Nations team*, volcanic eruptions on the sea bed account for far greater quantities of heavy metals and radioactivity than do man-made sources.

The real damage to the coast comes from a myriad small parts that add up to one big whole. Each day New York, a city of over 7m people, deposits 500 tonnes of treated sewage in the Atlantic. A city of 5m people would release some 42m litres (8.8m gallons) of petroleum products a year, roughly the quantity of oil spilled by the Exxon Valdez. James Baker, the head of America's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), gives warning that the chemistry of the water round the coast is gradually changing. He thinks coastal pollution is as serious a problem as climate change.

The most visible consequence of human habitation is rubbish. No coastline, however far-flung, is



Aquatic apes at play

*"The State of the Marine Environment", by the Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Pollution. Blackwell, 1990

free from it. In the early 1990s, Tim Benton, a scientist visiting the Pitcairn Islands (four dots in the Pacific Ocean 5,000 miles east of Australia), was struck by the rubbish washed up on the beaches. One morning, on a small uninhabited atoll called Ducie Island, the remotest of the Pitcairns, he decided to record what he found. The 953 objects included a meat pie and six light bulbs (see table 1).

Ducie's rubbish, which probably came from boats, was ugly, but fairly harmless. Crowded coasts face a bigger threat from compounds containing nitrogen and phosphorus. According to one book*, the North Sea now collects four times as much nitrate and eight times as much phosphate as it did 20 years ago. Some of the pollution comes from easily identifiable sources, mainly treated sewage. But most originates from the drainage of hundreds of thousands of farms and the exhaust of millions of petrol and diesel engines.

With these "non-point" sources, identifying the polluter is impossible. Some 40% of the land in the United States, including mid-western farm land, drains into the Gulf of Mexico. The nitrate-rich river water has spoiled an area of the sea bed the size of New Jersey. Nobody knows the cost of this damage—nor how much each farmer caused and what it would cost to prevent it. Even if they did, studies in other regions—admittedly less exposed to agricultural pollution—show that, typically, 40% of the nitrate in the sea originally came from the air.

To complicate the picture, while too much of the stuff is certainly a bad thing, some of it is probably better than none at all. Limited amounts of nitrate and phosphate—which go into making fertiliser—are almost certainly beneficial. When the High Aswan dam was built on the Nile in the 1960s, the reduction in nutrients washing into the Mediterranean cut the fish catch immediately offshore from 38 tonnes in 1962 to less than 6 tonnes in 1975. The Mediterranean as a whole has confounded scientists, who in the late 1970s had said that the sea was fully exploited. Since then the catch has almost doubled. John Caddy, of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in Rome, suggests that this may be due to a greater concentration of nutrients.

Yet, as Mr Caddy would be the first to point out, too many nutrients are harmful. The gravest example is the Black Sea, into which rivers drain from a vast area of Europe and Asia. Since the 1950s, concentrations of nitrate and phosphate in the Danube, for example, have increased up to tenfold. Worse, the pollutants become concentrated in the Black Sea, because the only exit to the open ocean is through the Bosphorus and the Sea of Marmara. This has caused algae to grow, making the waters turbid, which prevents light from penetrating much below the surface. Organic sediment containing dead algae settles on the sea floor, where it absorbs oxygen as it rots. That leaves insufficient oxygen for benthic (bottom-dwelling) species, many of which die. New species, such as jellyfish, have supplanted the sea's original inhabitants. Only six of the 26 original commercial fish are often still caught there, accord-

ing to David Aubrey of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Massachusetts.

As an enclosed body of water, the Black Sea is exceptional, but other coasts have also been affected by pollution. One symptom is "harmful algal blooms"—sudden growths of a single type of alga which are usually unsightly, often foul-smelling and occasionally toxic. Such blooms have a long history. The first plague that Moses visited upon Egypt was a blood-red tide which killed fish and fouled the water. These days, places that never had blooms are seeing them for the first time, and places used to having them are suffering more often, and for longer.

Blooming algae

Along the Chinese coast, aquaculture has been struck by an organism called *Noctiluca scintillans*, which turns the water tomato-red and kills shrimp. A related species, called *Gymnodinium Mikimotoi*, also bloomed there recently, killing half the annual production of farmed fish in Hong Kong, where it had never been seen before. In Texas, in the Laguna Madre, a brown tide caused by an alga called *Aureocumbra lugunensis* lasted for seven years. A few scientists argue that more blooms are seen today because people are looking for them. But most think the increase is real, and that it has a number of causes—possibly including climate change—beside the extra nutrients running off from the land.

The main trouble with blooms is that they deprive other species of oxygen. Little is known about the lasting effects this might have. A few types of alga are clearly harmful. *Gymnodinium breve* leaves toxic residues in shellfish. After inhaling tiny droplets of the poison, people have difficulty breathing, and in Florida in 1996 it killed 150 manatees, an endangered sea mammal. Algae of the genus *Chaetoceros* kill fish by clogging their gills. Other organisms cause memory loss in people and suppress the immune system. One organism, *Pfiesteria piscicida*, discovered by scientists at North Carolina State University in 1992, achieved notoriety last year after it was detected in Chesapeake Bay, killing tens of thousands of fish. It may also have caused nausea, memory loss and stomach cramps in fisherman and others in close contact with the water. For all that, the direct damage caused by algal blooms is probably more aesthetic than economic. According to an unpublished study† of the cost of blooms off America in 1987-92, the total bill averages only about \$40m a year.

One explanation for the recent flourishing of blooms is that new species of alga are being intro-

Beachcombed

Beach debris from Ducie Island

Item	Number
Unidentified (or broken) plastic pieces	268
Glass bottles	171
Bottle tops	74
Plastic bottles	71
Buoys: small	67
Buoys: pieces	66
Buoys: large	46
Pieces of rope	44
Segments of plastic pipe	29
Shoes	25
Jars	18
Crates	14
Copper sheeting from hulls of wrecks	8
Aerosol cans	7
Food or drink cans	7
Fluorescent tubes	6
Light bulbs	6
Jerry cans	4
Cigarette lighters	3
Pen tops	2
Dolls' heads	2
Gloves (1 pair)	2
Asthma inhaler	1
Construction-worker's hat	1
Football (punctured)	1
Glue syringe	1
Lorry-tyre	1
Plastic coat-hanger	1
Plastic foot-mat	1
Plastic skittle	1
Small gas cylinder	1
Tea strainer	1
Tinned meat pie	1
Toy soldier	1
Toy aeroplane	0.5

Source: T. Benton

*"The Wealth of Oceans", by Michael Weber and Judith Gradwohl. Norton, 1995

†"Estimated Annual Economic Impacts Resulting from Harmful Algal Blooms in the United States", by D.M. Anderson, P. Hoagland, Y. Kaoru and A.W. White, 1998





duced in the ballast water of ships and in new species of farmed shellfish. This form of "pollution" has a long history, but it has worsened with the growth in shipping traffic. According to Sea Grant, part of NOAA, in 1850 one new species was introduced into America every 36 weeks. By 1985 the rate had increased to one every 12 weeks. Ronald Baird, of Sea Grant, complains that it is hard to find a native species in San Francisco Bay these days.

The new species can do great damage. At one point in 1992, smacks of comb-jellyfish, *Mnemiopsis leidyi*, accounted for 90% of the Black Sea's entire wet biomass, according to one Russian scientist. *Mnemiopsis* not only competes with fish for food, but eats fish eggs and larvae too. In the Mediterranean, where local sea plants have been weakened by pollution, an alga called *Caulerpa taxifolia* has taken root. It was discovered 14 years ago on the beach below the Monaco Oceanographic



Dead fish bloom

Museum. The museum, then run by the late Jacques Cousteau, was growing the weed in its tanks.

As well as producing waste, people use a lot of land. In Maryland, for example, half an acre is developed for each new resident. In the rich world, many of the remaining undeveloped sites are now protected by law.

Marine habitats are lost too. Estuaries and wetlands are important nurseries for juvenile fish and crustaceans. Ocean-going salmon returning to their river to spawn find their way blocked by dams. And even if they manage to climb the river, many of their smolt are chewed up by power-station turbines on the way back to the sea. Farmers have converted mangrove swamps into brackish ponds for shrimp and fish. In Thailand, about 30% of the mangroves have been lost to aquaculture, in the Philippines as many as half.

The most alarming loss of habitat, however, is on coral reefs. According to SeaWeb, a charity based in Washington, DC, that provides information about the marine environment, 10% of the world's reefs have been destroyed and another 30% will all but disappear within the next 20 years. And this is one of the more sober estimates.

The loss of reef has a host of causes. Sediment

from forestry sluices into coastal waters, smothering coral. Tourism disrupts the habitat. In a single day the anchor of a cruise ship can destroy an area of coral reef half the size of a football pitch. The rubble left behind kills more reef later. Overfishing removes the fish that graze on algae. In Jamaica, this led to a population explosion among algae-grazing sea urchins, and when those succumbed to a disease in the early 1980s, the algae overran the coral.

In Asia, fish are often caught by using bombs and cyanide. The explosive came first, left over from the second world war. But sodium cyanide is better for stunning the fish, and is less likely to injure the fisherman. Both techniques are used to capture live fish for aquaria and for restaurants in Hong Kong. Wealthy Chinese like to see their supper on the fin before they eat it.

These methods have a disastrous effect on fish. The most valuable species are few and far between and grow slowly. Carl Safina, an environmental activist, mentions* a Napoleon wrasse at Hong Kong's Ocean Park aquarium that took nearly 20 years to grow from 450 grammes (1lb) to 32kg; a large specimen on the reef can reach more than 180kg. The fishing also tears the coral apart or poisons it. Coral takes about 40 years to recover from blast fishing.

Blast and cyanide fishing are illegal in most countries; in the Philippines they have been banned since 1979. Yet they continue, despite the risks to the fishermen (it is not unusual to see a Filipino fisherman who has lost a hand). The reason is money. Studies of the effects of anchor damage, cyanide and blast fishing in the north-western Philippines, published last year by John McManus and Rodolfo Reyes of ICLARM and Cleto Nanola of the University of the Philippines suggest that a traditional Filipino fisherman can expect to earn around \$1 a day, while a blast fisher might earn \$15-40 from a single catch.

Even if they are reluctant to fish, many fishermen need to pay back money they have borrowed from the boats from Hong Kong. In any case, the Hong Kongers are prepared to pay a lot. One official at the World Bank was told about live groupers (big reef fish) selling in Hong Kong last year for HK\$10,000 (\$1,300) apiece.

Many people, rich and poor, want to live by the sea, and many of those who can't want to visit it. In developing countries coastal planners have trouble just coping with the local population. According to Stephen Lintner of the World Bank, they are swamped by the arrival of poor migrants from inland. In developed countries things are not so much better organised. Tom Collins, of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in California, was part of a committee to manage San Diego Bay on which 30 groups were represented, including federal, state and city government, and various lobbies. It took five years to agree on the scientific data needed to understand the bay's ecosystems, and another five years to prepare a plan of action. But by that time some people had retired, there was a new agenda, and funding was hard to come by. After a decade's work, the programme looks like fizzling out.

*"Song for the Blue Ocean", by Carl Safina, Henry Holt, 1997

Going deep

TO CALL the planet we cling to "earth" is to be grossly anthropocentric. "Ocean" would be more accurate. Almost 71% of our planet's surface is covered by sea (by an odd coincidence, precisely the proportion of the human body that is salt water). Similarly, when people talk about the ocean, they usually mean coastal waters, or possibly the seas over the continental shelf. In fact, the shelf covers only 6% of the planet's surface, and those people who venture into the open ocean usually skim whales, tuna and other large creatures from the surface, or rush to safety on the other side. Of the volume of the planet in which traces of life can be found, something over 90% is deep under water.

By virtue of its inaccessibility to man, the deep is as pristine an environment as can be (though scientists trawling 4km down complain of the coke cans and clinker they find everywhere). The deep is owned by nobody and governed by international treaty, unlike coastal waters, which are under the control of the states that border them. In this sense the deep-water environment is the ultimate commons—one that is all the harder to manage sensibly because so little is known about it.

Modest trawl-sampling of the deep began only in 1872 with the British ship *HMS Challenger*. On its four-year voyage, *Challenger* found 103 new species. They are still stored in tall glass jars in the basement of London's Natural History Museum, shoulder to shoulder with specimens collected by *HMS Beagle*, which had carried Darwin to the Galapagos Islands 37 years earlier.

The discovery of new species, which began with animals washed up on the shore in the 18th century, has shown no sign of slowing (see chart 2). Indeed, an animal as large as the megamouth shark, which is 4.5 metres (15 feet) long and weighs 750kg, was one of the horrors of the half-known deep that turned up only a few years ago. The shark, which lives only 300 metres down, has since been caught alive on several occasions. Deeper-living creatures rarely survive the journey to the surface. A deep-water scientist will almost never hold a living specimen of the creatures he spends a lifetime studying.

Life below the surface ranges from gloomy to black. At only 10 metres down, most of the red light

in the spectrum has been absorbed, which is why the underwater has a greeny-blue tint. At 50 metres, only 5% of the light is left. At 150 metres, photosynthesis stops. In even the clearest ocean, below 1,000 metres it is eternally night.

For the animals in the deep (there are no plants and, oddly perhaps, no insects, the most successful land animals), everything comes from the surface. The fish swimming freely in the body of the water column, known as pelagic fish, and those near the bottom, called demersal fish, each take their share of the surface crumbs as they fall to the sea floor. With increasing depth, there is less to be had. As a rule, only about 5% of the food at the surface is available to creatures lower down, and four-fifths of that is captured before it reaches the sea bed.

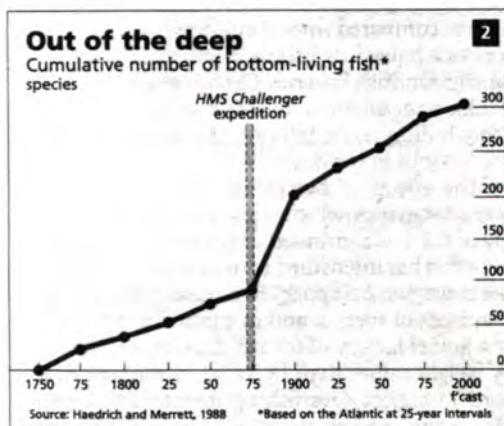
Because many deep-sea creatures make their own light, there is still a need for disguise in the dark deep. This is why many deep-living species, such as *Gonostoma bathyphilum*, a 10cm-long machete-shaped fish, are completely black. A few, such as the orange roughy and the 7cm-long deep shrimp, *Acanthephyra purpurea*, are bright scarlet—a colour that is invisible in the lunar glow from other creatures' luminescent organs. Some species, such as the angler fish, produce light to attract prey. In others living and feeding near the bottom, such as the grenadier, the light organs presumably warn off predators or signal to mates.

Because food is scarce, many animals grow slowly and live a long time. The Pacific slope-dwelling grenadier respire at one hundredth the rate of its distant relative, the Atlantic cod. The abyssal grenadier has a liver that can store enough food to keep it going for 186 days if needs be. Some species forage, whereas others probably live in suspended animation, waiting to be roused by a passing morsel. All the really deep species are adapted to the intense pressure: at the deepest parts of the ocean this can reach 1,100 atmospheres, the equivalent of 50 jumbo jets weighing down on a human.

In the open ocean, surface nutrients are limited and phytoplankton are scarce. In effect, the high seas are a blue desert. On the sea bed far below, therefore, most of the sediment is mineral, and accumulates at a rate of only 1mm every thousand years. Where there is more phytoplankton on the surface, nearer the continental shelf, a more nutritious silt washes down. These areas contain more of the life that is found everywhere on the sea floor, including worms, crabs, bivalves and the odd sea cucumber. Buried in the sediment are many sorts of tiny organism. Some scientists think that the sea floor may contain up to 10m different species. But that is pure guesswork: according to Elisabeth Mann Borgese of Dalhousie University, in Canada, only 1.5% of the sea bed has been explored.

Here and there, this watery desert is dotted with islands of fire. Nine-tenths of this planet's volcanic activity takes place on the sea floor. Water that has seeped into the earth's crust is heated and driven out into the cold sea in mineral-charged jets called black smokers. It is dark here too, but there are colo-

Davy Jones's locker is the ultimate commons: vast, ownerless and largely unknown





Jaws

nies of bacteria that can metabolise the abundant hydrogen sulphide (a substance poisonous to most life). Some of the bacteria are free-living, others find a home in shrimps, clams and worms, which harvest them for food. An entire ecosystem, including crabs and snails, lives off the shrimps and clams.

Growth is faster here than on the rest of the sea floor. A 22cm giant clam could be just six-and-a-half years old, whereas shells from sediments in 3,800 metres of North Atlantic water were found to have grown to only 8mm in roughly a century. Other bacteria live in or near the chimneys of minerals that are deposited by the saturated water. According to Holger Jannasch, a scientist at Woods Hole and one of the first explorers of hot vents, some of these crea-

tures can survive at 113°C, far beyond the temperature used for pasteurisation. The implications have not been lost on biotechnologists, who see a potential for exploiting the newly found enzymes.

Indeed, exploitation of the deep seems only a matter of time. At the end of last year an Australian firm, the Nautilus Mineral Corporation, won a licence to extract gold from the chimneys left by extinct hot vents at depths of 1.2-1.7km in the Bismarck Sea off the coast of Papua New Guinea. The reserves, richer than many on land, could be worth billions of dollars, says the firm. Further in the future, it may be possible to extract metals from the manganese nodules that collect like tennis balls on the sea floor (an idea that enjoyed a vogue in the 1970s, but proved uneconomic then). And at depths below 300 metres, methane is locked away in cages of water molecules. Off the coast of Central America huge deposits have been found that might one day become a source of natural gas.

Fisheries are also extending into deeper waters, with the Patagonian toothfish in the Southern Ocean, and the orange roughy, which is fished from depths of 400 metres to 1,800 metres off the coast of Australia and New Zealand and in the Atlantic. In a recent book*, Nigel Merrett of the Natural History Museum in London and Richard Haedrich of the Memorial University in Canada warn against this deep-water fishing. Because food is scarce, deep-living fish grow slowly, and some spawn only once in their long lives. There are few predators in the deep, probably because there is not much to prey on. A new predator armed with nets and a diesel engine might, literally, clean up—and leave nothing.

*"Deep-Sea Demersal Fish and Fisheries", by Nigel Merrett and Richard Haedrich. Chapman & Hall, 1997

A fisherman's tale

Overfishing is one part human nature, and two parts poor management

AT DAWN the boats across the Marican Strait dim their floodlights and haul in their nets. Light-fishing is illegal in the Philippines, but the law is routinely ignored. It is a better way of catching fish, and fish are increasingly hard to come by in the South China Sea.

The boats take their haul to market in Anilao, 20 minutes down the coast. Bonito are for sale at the water's edge, and stalls a few paces from the harbour offer rabbit fish, snappers, goat fish and a ropey-looking marlin. The market, which starts at around 6.30am, used to last until mid-morning, but this Saturday the tubs of fish are gone by 8am. Many fish are small, some below spawning age. Filipinos now serve guests species of fish that they barely considered edible a decade ago. One market trader has given up fish and taken to selling chicken instead.

The scarcity is the result of overfishing, and it affects both poor and rich countries, polluted and unpolluted. Although the rich world can afford to manage its fisheries, and commands the expertise of some of the world's best fisheries biologists, it has brought some spectacular failures on itself. In the Grand Banks, off the coast of New England and Canada, it has presided over the collapse of possi-

bly the world's most valuable fishing grounds.

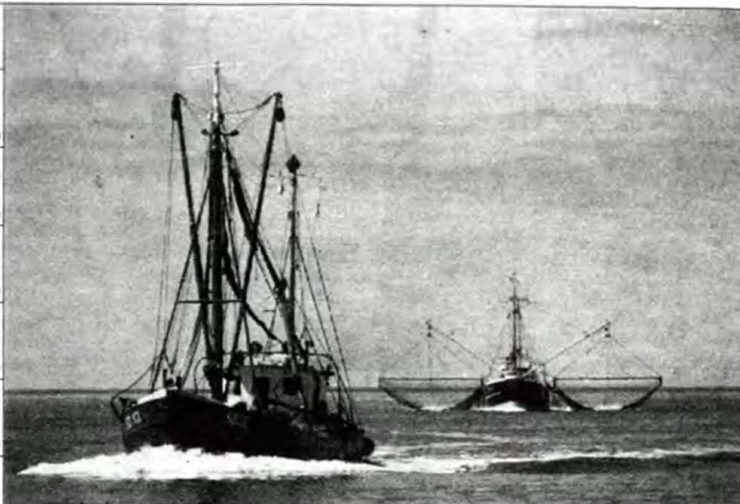
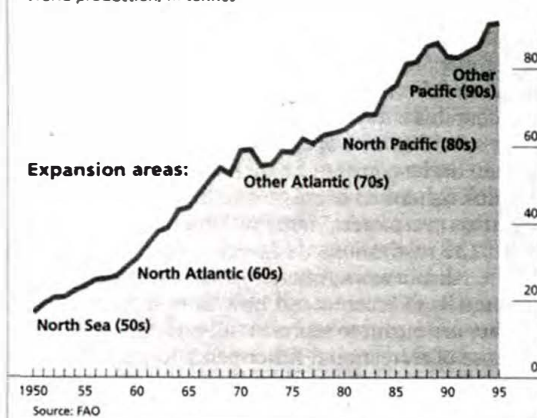
The banks' abundance was legendary. In his recent book on the cod, Mark Kurlansky recalls that when Cartier "discovered" the mouth of the St Lawrence river in 1534, he found a thousand Basque vessels already fishing there. Eventually, the banks attracted fishermen from all over the Atlantic. But by 1992, the biomass of spawning cod off Newfoundland and Labrador had fallen to only 22,000 tonnes, compared with 1.6m tonnes 30 years earlier. America halved its fishing effort in the New England groundfish fisheries. Canada closed the Grand Banks, announcing a five-year aid package worth C\$1.5 billion (\$1.05 billion). The collapse has cost 40,000 jobs in Newfoundland.

The effects of overfishing are masked by the overall statistics, which show that the world's supply of fish has continued to grow nicely as the fishing effort has intensified in one ocean after another (see chart 3 on next page). But the statistics aggregate hundreds of species, and in a practice reminiscent of a Soviet factory of former days, report the catch by weight rather than by value—a number that is hard to collect. Overfishing threatens to become ubiquitous, and on the whole has not been reme-



Economy of scales

Chronology of fisheries expansion
World production, m tonnes



died even in fishing grounds such as the North Sea, where it was first identified as long ago as the beginning of this century.

The world catch of demersal fish (which include the best fish to eat, such as cod and haddock) has not grown since the early 1970s (see chart 4). Instead, the growth in landings has come from aquaculture and large volumes of pelagic fish, such as the Peruvian anchoveta, that are used mostly to make meal. One study suggests that there are now more low-value pelagic fish precisely because large numbers of their valuable predators have been taken. Indeed, as people "fish down the food chain" in this way, the available catch might increase disproportionately, since predators consume more than their own weight in prey. In some fisheries, therefore, the volume of the catch has grown even as its value has fallen.

The overfishing is spreading. The FAO, which does more than anyone to monitor the world's fisheries, says that 35% of the 200 main stocks are currently in decline and 25% at their peak. Almost all were underexploited a few decades ago. Stocks that have crashed are rarely given the chance to recover completely. Except for stocks in the south-east Pacific (where the newly discovered Japanese pilchard has boosted catches), the stocks classified by the FAO in 1992 as overexploited have been in decline for three decades. Over that period the catch of these stocks has fallen by 4m tonnes, or a third.

First catch your handout

The reason why overfishing can easily happen is that in most fisheries just about anyone has the right to have a go, and plenty have exercised that right. In past decades, the number of fishermen, as well as fish farmers, has been growing across the developing world. According to Richard Grainger of the FAO, the total worldwide has more than doubled in the past 25 years.

"Open access" can lead to absurd races for fish. In Alaska in the early 1990s anyone could catch sable fish, although the overall total was controlled. As a result, a year's worth of sable fish were usually caught off the coast of Alaska in under a week. Not only are such scrambles dangerous for fishermen but, since most people will pay less for a frozen fish than a fresh one, they are wasteful too. In most fish-

eries there is no finishing line: the race goes on, week after week, month after month.

But overfishing is more than, in the language of economists, "a tragedy of the commons". Governments have used subsidies to encourage people to work and invest in fishing, especially after territorial waters were extended to 200 miles in the 1970s and foreign fleets were kicked out. A new study by the World Bank* estimates that these subsidies are worth a total of up to \$16 billion a year. They come in many forms, including direct aid for building boats and state-financed fisheries management.

Even America, having scrapped programmes to expand the national fleet, still exempts fishing from fuel duty and lets fishermen defer income tax. Fishermen exploit a resource that belongs to everyone, without paying rent—unlike, say, companies that log government-owned land. If you count that as a subsidy too, the study says, the total aid to fishing worldwide amounts to as much as \$21 billion. This is more than a quarter of fishing boats' total revenues, making fishing one of the most subsidised industries anywhere (though less so than farming).

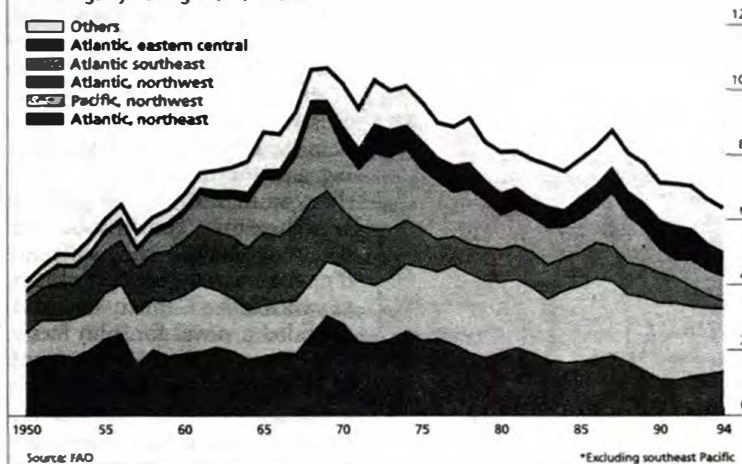
The combination of open access and subsidy in-



*Subsidies in World Fisheries: a Re-examination". by Matteo Milazzo. World Bank, 1998

Sinking feeling

Landings by fishing area*, m tonnes





By hook or by crook



evitably leads to overcapacity. FAO scientists estimate that 53% of the world's fishing fleet is superfluous. In 1996 the EU decided that its fleet should be cut by 40% over six years (although it later retreated from this goal). According to an American estimate, Russia should lose two-thirds of its fleet.

Nevertheless, some countries are still expanding their fishing industries. The number of Chinese fishermen quadrupled between 1970 and 1990. The distant-water fleet has grown especially fast and Chinese officials say they want it to grow further. The EU has bought licences in such places as Africa as a way to deal with overcapacity at home. When Morocco and Namibia tried to end these agreements in the 1990s, the EU applied intense diplomatic pressure. The EU has sometimes paid its fishermen to give up their boats and exported the surplus hulls. The extra boats that arrived in Argentina helped destroy the hake fishery there.

All this points to another factor in overfishing: increasing technological sophistication. Distant-water fleets bring industrial fishing to countries such as Gabon or Guinea, which do not have big boats of their own. Technology has improved rapidly. The last American sailing boat was fishing on the Grand Banks as recently as 1963. What with new engines, satellite navigation, sonar, computerised gear, you name it, it is still improving all the time. Andy Smith, of the FAO, reckons that even if the fleet's tonnage remained the same, its fishing capacity would increase by 3% a year.

In the face of overfishing, governments have tried to control both the effort that goes into fishing and the catch. This has two shortcomings. The first is that not enough may be known about the fish. The collapse of the Pacific sardine fishery in the 1940s (see chart 5), which killed Cannery Row and provided a novel for John Steinbeck, was once regarded as a result of overfishing. Research on sediments by the Scripps Institution shows that the collapse was in fact a natural oscillation. In such cir-

cumstances, overfishing makes matters worse. Michael Mullin of Scripps says it delayed the return of the sardine by about 15 years.

The obvious answer is to manage fish stocks conservatively. But that is to ignore the other shortcoming of government controls: the bad blood between fishermen and fisheries managers. To a large extent this is a symptom of the overcapacity created by subsidies and open access, which keeps fishermen under constant financial pressure. "Scientists think fishermen overfish, and fishermen think scientists overprotect," laments James Baker of NOAA.

The institutions designed to manage fisheries often do not work. America has set up eight regional councils to recommend how to manage fisheries. They are meant to represent all interests, including those of recreational fishermen and conservationists, but some of them have been hijacked by commercial fishermen. Canada's more autocratic system has proved even less effective. At the end of March the Canadian parliament recommended sacking the officials responsible for the Atlantic cod fishery. The EU's common fishery policy is widely loathed for failing either to conserve stocks or to keep fishermen happy. Developing countries often have no fisheries management at all. What laws there are tend to be ignored—sometimes by foreign fleets that have bribed their way in.

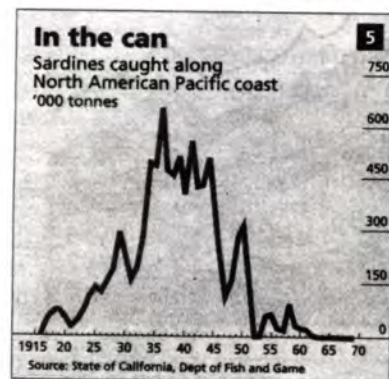
The damage from overfishing is mostly economic. According to Mr Grainger of the FAO, the world catch, worth more than \$80 billion, could be 10-20% larger with good fisheries management. America estimates that the profits from its part of the Grand Banks could be \$150m higher. In many poor countries an individual fisherman's catch has barely grown since 1981; sometimes it has dropped.

Fishing also seems to bring even supposedly friendly countries to blows. In 1995 Canada arrested the *Estai*, a Spanish boat from Vigo, which led to a row with the EU. The British have been getting worked up for years about Spanish "quota hoppers", boats that have, quite legally, bought the right to fish from British skippers. Canada and America fight a running battle over salmon on the north-western coast. Last year a gang of Canadian fishermen blockaded an American ferry in British Columbia. Japan and South Korea have been sparing over the fishing around some rocks the Japanese call Take-shima and the Koreans Tok-to.

But there is a less-noticed toll, too. Some types of fishing lead to large amounts of "by-catch", made up of unwanted species. Nobody knows how much is killed this way, but the best estimate is 22m tonnes, roughly a quarter of the total wild catch.

On the whole, overfishing does not lead to the biological extinction of species. Left for a few years, the fish seem to recover. According to Pamela Mace, a distinguished fisheries biologist with NOAA, this has happened with herring in Norway and the Gulf of Maine, and striped bass on the Atlantic coast of America. But trawling can damage the sea bed. Some parts of the benthic habitat are scoured several times a year, which gives the animals and plants insufficient time to recover.

Yet fishing does have subtler genetic consequences. Rather than destroy, say, the herring species in its entirety, it may destroy particular groups of fish, such as spring-spawning herring. Surviving



fish may also be changed by the relentless hunt. The cod on the Grand Banks now reach sexual maturity at two years of age, instead of four as they used to—presumably because early-maturing fish have a better chance of spawning. And there is no guarantee that ecosystems will re-establish themselves. The Grand Banks have become home to the Arctic cod, which competes with its Atlantic cousin for food.

Although most fish will not die out as a result of overfishing, a few species of marine animals are threatened with extinction. Most at risk are valuable animals that are stationary. Paul Dayton and Mia Tegner from Scripps have tracked the decline of the white abalone, a shellfish living in the kelp off the Californian coast that has been ruthlessly pursued. Fishermen took 65 tonnes of white abalone in 1972. Now the scientists think that only a few dozen specimens remain. Large, slow-growing creatures, such as whales, are also in danger, as are sharks and skates, which reach sexual maturity late and have few offspring. Sturgeon are included on the list of endangered species. So are sharks, which are killed for their fins.

Fish and ships

The future of fishing rests on two pillars. The first is better management. This is not a matter of coming up with some big idea, but of making lots of detailed improvements, often at local level. Access can be limited by licensing. Fishermen can be rewarded for husbanding the stock. Satellites and electronic logs can help enforcement officers catch offenders at sea. New gear can reduce the by-catch and protect endangered species, such as turtles and sea birds.

The second pillar is aquaculture. This is growing rapidly, more than doubling in volume to 28m tonnes and almost trebling in value to \$43 billion between 1986 and 1995, according to a new report by the FAO. About half of this takes place in fresh-

water ponds.

Aquaculture is usually pilloried for the pollution it causes. The culprits are shrimp and fin fish such as salmon. A study in 1994 found that 80kg of nitrogen compounds and 7.5kg of phosphates were produced for each tonne of farmed salmon, and that 70-80% of the antibiotics that were supposed to protect the fish went to waste. Shrimp cultivation can also pollute, but spectacular outbreaks of disease in Asia farms have been a great incentive for better management.

Pollution from fish farming can be avoided. It is hardly in the farmers' interest to waste medicine and feed. Moreover, carnivorous finfish and crustaceans make up a tenth of marine aquaculture by weight. A far larger proportion is seaweed and shellfish, which are filter-feeders and require no added food. Because they depend on clean water, their farmers are likely to seek a clean environment.

The real worry about aquaculture is genetic. New species, strains and breeds are being used in aquaculture, and being created by it. When fish are farmed, they become domesticated. Farm-bred rainbow trout come to the surface when people approach; their wild cousins hide. Farmed tilapia can be handled without struggling; the wild fish suffer. Such differences will grow as strains are bred in captivity. More importantly, there is a great temptation to breed improved varieties: salmon that will grow faster, taste better and keep fresher.

These fish may present a danger to wild strains. True, many are unfit to survive outside their cages. True again, breeders will be able to make almost all the hatchlings sterile, or dependent upon some man-made chemical. But these safeguards are not yet absolute, and experience has shown that farmed fish will escape to the wild. As things stand, an escaped gene is more of a threat in the boundless sea than it ever would be on land.



Come the storm-blast . . .

CANADIANS are used to snow. But last winter brought something worse: ice that paralysed Quebec, twisted electricity pylons like wire coat-hangers and deprived 3m people of power, some of them for weeks. The country's armed-services chief described Montreal's South Shore as "Sarajevo without the bullets".

The ice storm was caused by El Niño, a weather pattern produced by a change in the Pacific Ocean currents that in the past year has been blamed for almost every twitch of the North American barometer. The ice started as moisture, carried northwards on a current of warm air. In any normal winter it would have fallen as snow. But El Niño creates wetter and warmer weather on America's east coast. This year the extra water froze only when it fell into the cold Canadian airmass below. Proof, if any were needed, that changes in the ocean can have freak effects thousands of miles away.

There was a time when meteorologists looked on the ocean in two contradictory ways: as an infinite reservoir of heat and water, and as a passive recipient of changes in the atmosphere, cooling or

warming in response. As John Woods of Imperial College in London explains, this is changing now, partly because more powerful computers can model what goes on in the water, but also because of worries about climate change. And there is a growing conviction that fluctuations in ocean currents are important in their own right—especially as oil and gas production moves into deeper waters.

The ocean matters to the climate in three ways. First, it acts as a store for water, heat and carbon. The ocean contains 96% of the planet's water, and 50 times as much carbon as the atmosphere. The top 3 metres of the ocean can store the same amount of heat as the entire atmosphere. The ocean also transports prodigious amounts of water, heat and carbon. The various currents that operate between 30° and 40° north, mainly the Gulf Stream in the Atlantic and the Kuroshio in the Pacific, between them carry 2 petawatts of heat northwards, the equivalent of 1,000 large power stations. The Gulf Stream shifts up to 150m cubic metres of water a second, over 100 times more than all the world's fresh-water rivers put together. Lastly, there are exchanges be-

... the ocean is equal partner to the air



tween the ocean and the atmosphere through warming and cooling, evaporation and rainfall, and photosynthesis. Some parts of the ocean lose more water vapour than they receive in rain, and vice versa. The Pacific, for example, is less saline and therefore less dense than the Atlantic, and stands almost half a metre higher.

The whole climatic machine is driven by the sun and the earth. In the tropics the sun strikes squarely from directly overhead. But in temperate and polar latitudes, the earth's surface curves away from the sun, so its beams strike only obliquely. The surplus energy arriving at the equator then spreads to the poles in currents of warm water and warm water-laden air. The ocean currents, called gyres, are swirled around by the earth's rotation and crimped by its land masses.

This is uncontroversial. So is forecasting tomorrow's weather, which will follow predictably from today's. However, an unknown lurks between the specificities of weather and the generalities of meteorology: nobody can say much that is useful about the climate next year.

And that is the big achievement of the scientists who successfully forecast El Niño several months in advance. The value of accurate El Niño forecasts to agriculture in the southern United States has been put at \$260m by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. And those people who heeded official advice and mended their roofs before the "pineapple expresses" began to roll in from the Pacific saved themselves untold trouble.

As Daniel Cayan, of the Scripps Institution, points out, El Niño is probably the easiest such phenomenon to understand: it follows a regular cycle, and its effects are widespread. Recently, other systems have been found in the temperate latitudes of the Atlantic and the Pacific. Many others may be waiting to be discovered.

Mike McCartney and his colleagues at Woods Hole have studied a phenomenon called the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO). When the NAO is high, that means a high-pressure region in the Azores and a low near Iceland. Westerly winds are warmed as

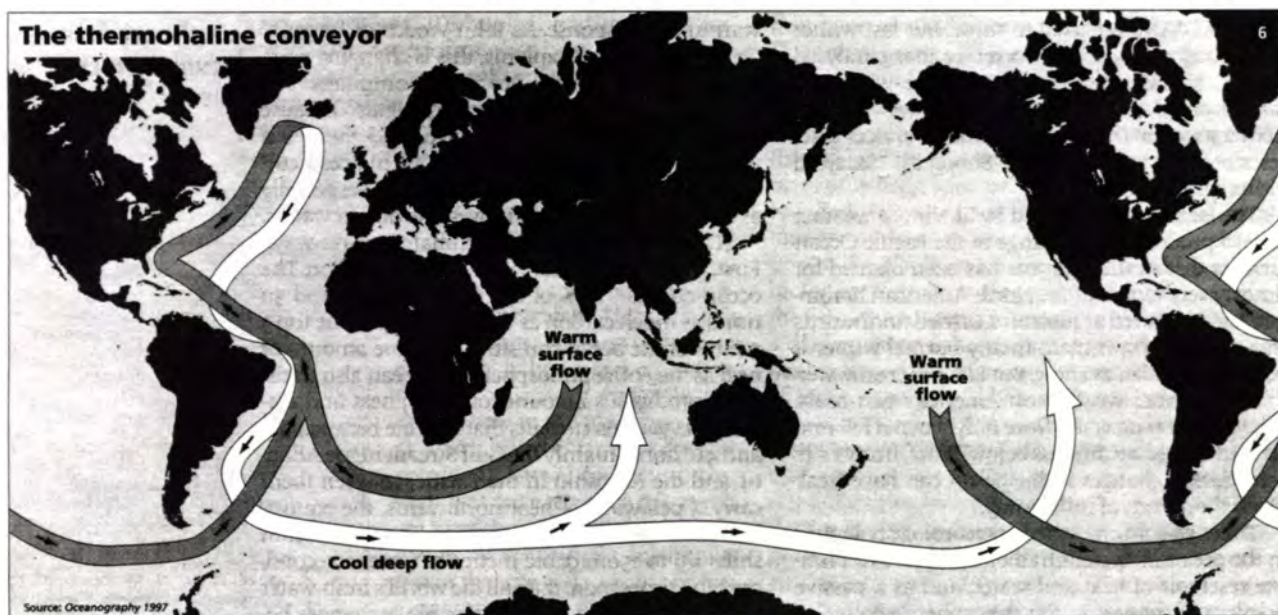
they cross the Atlantic from North America to Europe, bringing mild weather with them. When the oscillation switches to a new phase, the Icelandic low moves to the south. The prevailing winds over Europe now contain cold, dry polar air, leading to harsher weather. They cross the ocean towards Canada, becoming warmer as they do so, and bringing mild weather to Labrador. The NAO flips from one state to the other many times a year. For a few decades one state is more common than the other, before its opposite again prevails. It is this longer-term pattern that particularly interests scientists.

The rapidly changing atmosphere is a flibbertigibbet without permanence. This has led Mr McCartney to conclude that the long-term pattern is caused by alternating packets of cold and warm water passing along the north Atlantic gyre. Because the packets of water take a few decades to work their way through the currents, the NAO has a "memory".

Another system that has been discovered is the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO), in the north Pacific, which has been extensively studied by Tim Barnett of Scripps with scientists from the Max-Planck-Institut for meteorology in Hamburg. It, too, may depend upon the stately progression of warmer or colder water around the gyre.

The PDO and the NAO now hint at the possibility of proper long-term forecasts. But aside from such practical applications, understanding systems in which the ocean and the atmosphere interact is vital in gauging how the climate is changing naturally—and therefore how much of the warming seen in the past century is due to mankind.

Indeed, climate change has lent a sense of urgency to oceanography. Curiosities have taken on a new significance. One oddity, called the Younger Dryas, a short ice age roughly 12,500 years ago, chilled the entire northern hemisphere during a period of warming. In a decade or so the temperature fell several degrees, staying low for some 1,300 years. The scientists of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), who study global warming, have identified such sudden events as one of the surprises that today's climate might spring again.



Wallace Broecker of Columbia University in New York has suggested that the Younger Dryas was caused by a breakdown in the "thermohaline circulation", which carries heat in the ocean northwards from the equator. Normally, warm currents lose heat and water to the air on their way to the pole. Eventually, somewhere near Iceland, the cold and salty water becomes dense enough to sink to the ocean floor, where it begins a submarine trek back southwards (see map 6 on previous page). Mr Broecker speculated that fresh water from a melting ice sheet could form a "cap" that stops the current sinking. Having blocked the circulation, it would prevent the arrival of equatorial heat at the poles.

Nobody knows whether such a mechanism is possible today. Although computer models can recreate the effect, some scientists doubt whether there is enough fresh water in the north Atlantic Ocean to cap the circulation. However, large pools of fresh water have been observed there. Robert Dickson, from the fisheries laboratory in Lowestoft on the east coast of Britain, followed a "great salinity anomaly" (a pool of water less saline than the surrounding sea) as it proceeded around the north Atlantic in the late 1960s to early 1980s. He is tracking a new salinity anomaly even now.

Sea surge

Climate change is surrounded by huge uncertainty. Assuming there is no Younger-Dryas-like ice age, one concern is a rise in the sea level. This has varied enormously in the past. Towards the end of the last ice age 18,000 years ago the sea was at least 100 metres lower than it is today. Conversely, 120,000 years ago, when the earth was slightly warmer than it is today, the sea was 5-6 metres higher than now.

Even the half-metre rise during the next century predicted by the IPCC is worrying for maritime countries, which may have to decide how to strengthen their coastal defences. For some it could be disastrous. Some 7% of the area of Bangladesh, with 6m inhabitants, is less than a metre above sea level. A rise of 3 metres would drive 30m Bangladeshis from their homes. Moreover, as people extract ground water for drinking, the country is sinking. By 2100 it could easily have dropped by 1.2 metres. And even if land is not permanently under water, it is vulnerable to storms, which in April 1991 killed 100,000 Bangladeshis.

The 1,190 islands in the Maldives and the Marshall Islands are an average of only 3 metres above sea level. According to Sir John Houghton, of the



A perfect storm

IPCC, a half-metre rise would take much of their land and turn up to half of their freshwater to brine.

A changing climate would affect sea life too. The current El Niño has reduced the plankton on the Californian coast by 70%. Salmon have deserted America and moved north to Canada and Alaska.

El Niños are a common event, and their effect is not likely to be lasting. Climate change would be different. Marea Hatzilios of the World Bank fears that coral, which are sensitive to temperature, will not be able to adapt, and will die. Keith Brander, of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, in Copenhagen, has shown how a warm period coincided with the appearance of cod off the coast of Greenland in the 1920s. Forty years later, when the weather turned cold again, they disappeared almost immediately. Andrew Bakun of the FAO speculates that there is a climatic link between the simultaneous variations in the stocks of pelagic fish seen on different sides of the world, such as pilchards off South Africa and anchoveta off Peru.

American officials complain that it has been impossible to negotiate with Canada over the northward-shifting salmon. Imagine the shift repeated, stock after stock, country after country. There might be fewer fish, and there would be no guarantee that those fish which migrate beyond the range of a particular fleet would be replaced. Some of those in the rich world who depend upon fishing for their livelihood would no longer have anything to catch. Some of those in poor countries who depend upon fish for their food would go hungry.

Bobbing bytes

COASTAL waters, fishing and climate change all require more attention from governments. The exception is shipping. There was a time when maritime strategists were busy discovering a route to the Indies, finding the longitude, and deciding whether dreadnoughts should burn coal or oil. Today, shipping gets its share of criticism for things like spilling oil and dumping rubbish at sea, but it is no longer the political issue it was. This is thanks partly to international laws and codes, many of

which took decades to hammer out, and which now guarantee right of way and safe passage. But efficiency born of new technology and competition has also played its part.

Take, for example, containerisation, which amounted to building a logistical Internet decades before the real thing was invented. Like a packet of data, a container is just a box with an address. Like the World Wide Web, container routes have the economies of a network: the more users, the greater

Shipping shows a way to manage the use of the sea



Packet-boat



the benefit. As railways, shipping lines and haulage firms adapted their equipment to carry containers, the efficiencies mounted rapidly.

Containers are digital. Container ships no longer carry varied cargo, but standard boxes measured in one or two TEUs—20-foot-equivalent units. The point of containerisation is that the content of each box is irrelevant. It is the box itself that matters to the crane operators, shipping lines, railways and lorry drivers that handle them. Because every container is identical, it is simply another "packet" to be routed through the transport network.

The idea dates back to the 1950s, when vacuum tubes were still warm. It was the brainchild of Malcom McLean, a haulier from Cape Fear, North Carolina. The shipping lines and railway companies dismissed his scheme but Mr McLean, undeterred, bought a coastal tanker and converted it to carry lorry trailers. On April 26th 1956, the *Ideal X* carried its load from Port Newark, New York, to Houston in Texas. The voyage was a success, and within a decade shipping lines were convinced that international routes could also be served by container. Ten years after the *Ideal X*'s voyage, the *American Racer* sailed for Europe.

The unions quickly saw the threat of what became known as the "longshoreman's coffin". The shipping lines were not too enthusiastic either. In a dilemma that will be familiar to today's telephone companies, they were loth to spend money on a container network when they had already invested heavily in old-fashioned equipment.

Yet the savings have proved immense. Thanks to containers, sea transport these days represents only 1-1.5% of the total cost of a typical product, compared with 5-10% before their introduction. A ship

spends 24 hours in port today, rather than three weeks under the old system of pallets. In total, 60% by value of sea-borne trade now goes by container.

Inevitably, there have been losers. The jobs of hundreds of thousands of dockers have disappeared. In 1956, 31,000 longshoremen were employed in the ports run by

the New York Port Authority (NYPA); now barely a tenth of that number are left. The world's great harbours have suffered too. Container ships require a new sort of dockside crane and loading yard, so the NYPA built Port Elizabeth in New Jersey, the first harbour for container ships. The life went out of the old docks in such cities as Copenhagen and London. One of the bosses of a container line recently admitted to the *Journal of Commerce*, a sister publication of *The Economist*, that the business has lost its romance.

In the same way that globalisation has led to competition in telecoms and the privatisation of the old state-owned monopolies, so the logic of containerisation has undermined the two governmental pillars of merchant shipping. The first is national ownership. Shipping was once so central to a nation's prosperity that it was treated as a protected industry. Governments wanted to be sure that a merchant navy was always at their disposal, and that hostile powers would not be able to cut off trade. Shipping lines were not for sale to foreigners.

But the 1990s have seen a series of international shipping mergers. Last year Neptune Orient Lines (NOL) of Singapore paid \$825m for American President Lines (APL) of California, America's second-largest container line. Britain's P&O and Nedlloyd of the Netherlands have already merged their container businesses to create one of the world's largest shipping lines. South Korea's Hanjin has bought a majority share of DSR-Senator. There have been many smaller deals as well.

National boundaries have been further blurred by alliances in which shipping lines join forces to buy road, rail and port capacity. Mr McLean's Sea-Land has an alliance with Maersk of Denmark. Hyundai Merchant Marine, Mitsui OSK Line and the new NOL/APL are in what they call the Global Alliance. And P&O Nedlloyd has joined four other lines in the "Grand Alliance".

These manoeuvres are designed to lower costs in an industry that has been plagued by overcapacity. During the past decade, prices for most trades have been steady or falling (see chart 7). According to John Reeve, of A.T. Kearney, a management consultancy, volume has grown by an average of 9.4% a year since 1991, against only 4.1% for sales revenue.

Modes and nodes

Customers worry that the consolidation will reduce competition, and that fear is undermining the second principle of merchant shipping, immunity from antitrust prosecution. There was a logic to this when there were fewer ships and no communications. The first ship to market gets the best price for its commodity; late arrivals sell into a glut. In order to avoid booms and busts and ensure a steady supply for consumers, shipping lines were allowed to organise "conferences" for each trade. These set rates and helped establish timetables for sailings.

The shipping lines claim that the conferences are still beneficial. In general, there are enough lines outside the agreement to keep prices down, though the conference running the trade between Europe and America did manage to impose a notorious hike in prices at the start of the 1990s. However, the conferences restrict innovation in services and technology by limiting the ability of the lines to



charge different prices. Partly because those outside the lines, such as China's Cosco and Taiwan's Evergreen, have thrived, the days of the conferences are probably numbered. In March, for example, the American senate passed a law which proposes that lines be able to strike exclusive deals with customers. This will, in effect, remove the largest customers from the conference system.

With the decline of conferences and of national ownership, merchant shipping is starting to look like just another business. When America shipped huge amounts of materials for the Gulf war, nobody seemed to mind that many of the ships it used were owned by foreign lines. According to Mr Reeve, the

process will go further as shipping is subsumed by its homologue, the Internet. In an electronic world, the real power lies with the brain that buys and sells space on lorries, trains and ships, not the brawn that shifts the goods. The sea will become just a node between routers. People will still share the destination of John Masefield, who "must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky"; but few will share this British poet's quest. Nobody seeks a tall ship in the container age.

These days, shipping is governed by international law and the market. It is efficient and—generally—well organised. How can fishing and coastal waters best achieve a similar balance?



The deep green sea

THE politics of the sea suffers from three twists that also complicate the politics of other environments. First, nobody knows exactly how marine environments are affected by people, so policy will usually have to be devised before there is conclusive proof of, say, a rise in the sea level or the destruction of habitat.

Second, much that happens in and around the sea involves what economists call externalities—things that entail costs which the beneficiary does not fully bear. When a trawler damages the sea bed, it is the whole fleet that pays the price in lost fish. When a shrimp farmer fells mangroves, he does not pay for making the coast more prone to storm damage and erosion.

Third, just about any policy directed at the sea seems to involve a bewildering number of government bureaucracies—and possibly several countries as well. America's Environmental Protection Agency reports that shallow marine habitat in the mid-Atlantic region is regulated by 17 agencies (and this number does not include local jurisdictions). The FAO estimates that roughly a seventh of the fish caught at sea are part of stocks that straddle an international boundary.

Wavelength

Given these complications, how should the sea be treated? Marine environments vary enormously, but here are eight rules that apply to most:

- If you want to protect an environment, stop subsidising its destruction. There are already too many fishermen, so it does not make sense to spend public money to attract more. Ultimately, fishermen should pay a rent for the fish they catch.
- Limit access to resources. The oyster is a good example. In mid-19th-century Britain the poor used to get through around 500m oysters a year. "Poverty and oysters always seems to go together," as Sam Weller observed in Dickens's "Pickwick Papers". Common ownership of the foreshore and sewage, leading to overfishing and poisoning, put paid to that. Today the British slurp only a few million of the molluscs a year.

By contrast, 19th-century France controlled pollution and passed laws to limit oyster fishing. Later it restricted concessions to specially trained people. Like the British, the French were big oyster eaters

then, but unlike the British they never stopped. Today they scoff 2 billion of the things a year.

- Where possible, put resources into private hands. A number of countries have given individual fishermen a fixed share of the catch. These quotas are permanent and can be bought or sold, so they reflect the value of the fish that are still in the water. Quotas encourage fishermen to think about investing in conserving the stock instead of trying to catch the fish before someone else grabs them.

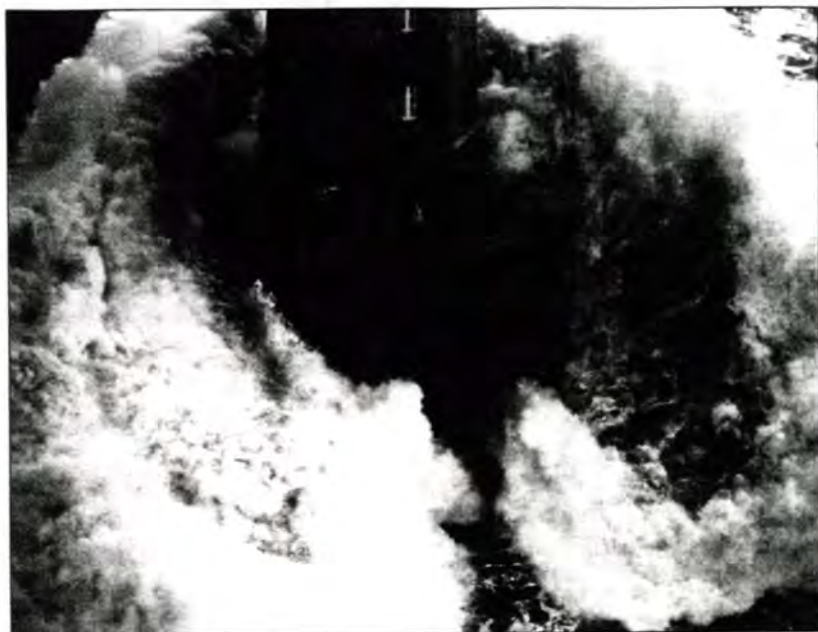
Transferable quota systems have been tried in a range of countries, including New Zealand, Australia, America, Chile, Iceland and the Netherlands. Others, such as Argentina, are thinking about them. Where they are in operation, the fishermen have begun to use words such as "product" and "customers". They complain that the joy has gone out of the life—but they are making money.

- Recognise that, except in emergencies, both central governments and international organisations make poor administrators. This is because coastal waters and fishing are complex, involving dozens of competing interests. Central authorities often lack the information they need to design a regime for the coast and fisheries, let alone enforce it.

The centre can, however, pass laws and offer advice. Governments can delegate powers to local authorities to manage their part of the coast and lay down procedures and budgets. The FAO has produced a useful "code of conduct for responsible fisheries", which includes details on coastal-zone management and aquaculture. There is also an international agreement on managing stocks that straddle international borders. The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) helps to take the politics out of management by offering independent assessments of stocks.

- Get people to look after themselves. San Salvador Island, in the north of the Philippines, has been involved in a project to create "community management" of the coral reef. In the 1980s the villagers were using cyanide and explosives to fish the reef. Catches had fallen from more than 20kg of fish per trip in the 1960s to under 5kg by the end of the 1980s. In 1989, after encouragement from a local environmental group and a popular vote, San Salvador created a 137-hectare marine reserve, including a portion of the reef, in the best-preserved part

A user's guide



Handle with care

of the shoreline. Fishing was banned, the villagers helped patrol the reserve and violators were punished. Within two years the villagers' catches outside the reserve had increased by about a third.

The strength of a community is that it can impose social norms, which are as important as legislation in guiding people's conduct. In industrialised countries, quota-owners may eventually start to behave like communities too. In New Zealand, quota-holders have begun to form associations to decide the policy for their stock. In Iceland it has become socially unacceptable for fishermen to cheat. Those who do face their friends' scorn long before they face prosecution.

- Set up reserves to preserve important habitat. The San Salvadorians were on to a good thing. Reserves are now seen as a way to protect fish stocks in developing and developed countries alike.

Three researchers based in Nouméa in New Caledonia, 800 miles off the east coast of Australia, recently published a study* on how reserves can protect coral reefs. They looked at the fish around five islands in New Caledonia's south-western lagoon before the reserves were created, and again five years later. They concluded that in the reserves the number of different species had grown by 67%, the number of fish by 160% and the biomass by 246%. Those islands where the reserves were most closely watched seemed to improve more than the others.

Reserves not only provide a sanctuary for fish, but a stock that can migrate to areas open to fishing. Moreover, they can provide a reference point against which scientists can measure the change in environments elsewhere. As Paul Dayton of Scripps observes, one of the difficulties of managing marine resources is that nobody any longer has a clear idea of what a normal habitat is like.

There is a movement in America to get 20% of the coastal waters set aside as reserves within the next 20 years. The campaign is a good idea, but the target is somewhat arbitrary. Nobody really knows how big reserves need to be or how to design them.

- The flip side of sanctuaries inside reserves is exploitation outside. As long as the marine environment is safeguarded by the sorts of rules outlined above, there is no reason not to use the sea to the full. The purpose of managing coastal waters is not to keep them in a "natural" state. That would be impossible, largely because most coastlines have already been altered by such things as dams, pollution and aquaculture. Instead, management should make these areas more useful.

Fishermen might want to "fertilise" the water to help plankton to grow. Oil companies might want to dispose of rigs in deep water, where they might do less harm than if they were dismantled near the shore. Although they are unpleasant, algal blooms might not justify expensive remedial action.

- Lastly, governments should remember that there is more than one marine environment. John Steele of Woods Hole argues for different types of management in different places. The coast needs to be actively managed because so many people have competing claims to it. Policy cannot recreate a pristine coastal environment even if that were

thought desirable. Deep waters, on the other hand, are vast and pristine, and have no need for management. The task there is conservation: to ensure that species are not destroyed, that the harmful effects of mining or dumping are limited. In-between lies the continental shelf, where fishing is intensive and most oil and gas is produced. Here people must strive to find a balance between management and conservation.

The great mirror

Baudelaire described the sea as the mirror of a free man. In superstitious times the sea reflected the fear of monsters and raiding parties. In the age of empire its glassy surface dispatched fleets and trade. For the romantics the sublime sea represented freedom from stuffy, money-obsessed convention. At the end of the 20th century, it seems, the brine is clouded with environmental pessimism.

More mouths, more money and more mess lead to an exploited sea, runs the refrain. In developing countries it is hard to manage resources for the long term, and even successful schemes are vulnerable to changes in the local hierarchy. Rich countries seem to get bogged down in politics.

The pity is that if people gave the sea a chance, it would repay them handsomely. Because it has few boundaries, it has always been subjected to constant change. Within limits, this has made marine life adaptable and resilient; but humanity has, in places, begun to test those limits. If people want both to preserve the sea and extract the full benefit from it, they must now moderate their demands, and structure them. They must put aside ideas of the sea's immensity and power, and instead take stewardship of the ocean, with all the privileges and responsibilities that implies.

*"Effects of Marine Reserves on Coral Reef Fish Communities from Five Islands in New Caledonia", by L. Wantiez, P. Thollot and M. Kulbicki. *Coral Reefs*, November 1997

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Rwanda bleeds on

Stalley
Stalley like good
advice - B.

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An honest and open examination of the past is needed before the outside world can put real pressure on Rwanda's curmudgeonly rulers

REMEMBER Rwanda? Four years ago, when the killing there was at its zenith, the world did not want to know about this bloodstained corner of Africa, still less to get involved. Since then the truth has trickled out, not just about the scale of the genocide—some 800,000 people, mostly Tutsis, were killed—but also about those who chose to stand aside, leaving the killers to their brutal business. Today Rwanda is a shattered country, with little sign of justice or atonement. The world still prefers to avert its eyes. If any reconciliation is ever to take place, Rwandans, both Hutus and Tutsis, will have to revisit the awful spring of 1994. So will the United Nations and the powers that stand behind it.

The Tutsi-led government likes to blame the UN for all Rwanda's ills. Earlier this month, the country's president boycotted the dinner he himself was giving in honour of the visit of Kofi Annan, the UN secretary-general—a snub Mr Annan had apparently earned for his "arrogance". Rwanda then threw out a UN human-rights official, saying he was a threat to national security, in fact because he had criticised the execution of 22 people convicted of taking part in the genocide.

Mr Annan was the UN's head of peacekeeping in 1994, and the Rwandan government will let no one forget that the UN did nothing to stop the killing then. But that may not have been Mr Annan's fault. The UN has no troops of its own. It relies on its members to provide them, and on the great powers on the Security Council to authorise their use. In 1994 the great powers, except France, were resolutely opposed to intervening in Rwanda. When the genocide started, America, smarting from its experiences in Somalia, demanded that the UN's 2,500-strong force in Rwanda be cut, not expanded.

Discreditable as this was, it hardly excuses the present Rwandan government's behaviour. Those now in power led the rebel army that drove out the Hutu killers in 1994. This is

the sole basis of their legitimacy. They have not been elected. They are not open or accountable. They preach reconciliation and have brought Hutus, in some number, into government. But power lies with the Tutsis, who are doing little to heal the wounds or mend the fabric. They treat outsiders with prickly anger. And in their awful prisons are 130,000 people accused of crimes of genocide. If the wheels of justice turn at their current rate, most will die of old age before coming to trial.

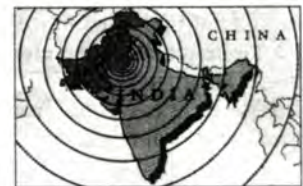
Rwanda does not look as if it is travelling the path to reconciliation and peace. It has poisoned the whole Great Lakes region. Anti-government forces are gathering strength both inside Rwanda and in neighbouring Congo. In the north-west, extremist Hutus wage a murderous terror campaign, countered by a just-as-deadly campaign by the army.

Rwanda needs help, and should get it. That means the UN and its agencies must remain engaged. To remove some of the sting of the Rwandan criticisms, the UN—and, above all, the countries that run the UN—must investigate more thoroughly their role in the failures of 1994. Belgium has done so; France is following suit. But the United States has still to examine the record. The best course would probably be an inquiry by the UN itself, aimed at revealing how much it, and so all its influential members, knew about the genocide before it happened, and why more was not done to stop it.

Outsiders should also ask why the UN has spent over \$120m on its international tribunal for Rwanda (caseload, 23) while only half that sum has been found to help rebuild Rwanda's judicial and penal systems (caseload, 130,000). The urgent need is to try the ring-leaders responsible for the genocide, and to give an amnesty to the smaller fry. Greater self-criticism, and generosity, among outsiders would enable them to put more pressure on the Rwandan government to promote the national reconciliation it so emptily talks about.

Pakistan's moment

Stalley - This really good
B.



Don't blow it

AS THE government of Pakistan may soon prove, it is easier to start a nuclear chain reaction than to stop one once it has started. Pakistan's first stunned response to India's nuclear tests last week quickly turned to anger that India could step so brazenly across the nuclear threshold. Then came fury at the shrill triumphalism of India's governing Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Then followed disgust that, with the exceptions of America, Japan and a few others, the volley of criticism directed at India from around the world was not at once matched by actions—cutting aid, loans, technology, trade and defence ties—that would exact a truly painful price for India's flagrant disregard of the anti-testing

norm. So will Pakistan now follow India's nuclear lead?

The most likely answer is that it will. Pakistan has the technology and is readying its test site. Sibling rivalry—bitter since birth—has long dictated that Pakistan must strain every military sinew to match technologically whatever India can do. Both have long had the ability to build the bomb, but officially haven't. Now that India has blasted away all ambiguity and declared itself a nuclear-weapons power, Pakistan is unlikely to want to keep the veil of modesty over its nuclear capabilities. All the more so since answering India's nuclear blast with a Pakistani counter-blast would be greeted with huge popular approval at home. Indeed the government may

fear that failure to do so quickly could prove electorally fatal.

Yet it would be wrong to assume that Pakistan's government has no choice. The popularity induced by such technology spectacles can be punishingly short-lived—as Indira Gandhi found to her cost after India's first, supposedly "peaceful", nuclear explosion in 1974, and as India's new government may soon discover as it moves on to the more mundane and difficult job of governing the country. And Pakistan probably does not need to carry out a test to be sure of its own deterrent: it almost certainly already has the blueprint of a Chinese-designed nuclear warhead. Meanwhile India not only expects but would positively welcome a Pakistani test since it would deflect opprobrium from itself and help to save it from the pariah status that now threatens to befall it.

The glow of self-restraint

There are other reasons, too, for Pakistan to hesitate before taking the next fateful step up the ladder of nuclear escalation. America, Japan and others will apply the same sanctions to Pakistan as they have to India, but these will hit debt-engumbered Pakistan disproportionately harder: while India may hope to swat most of them aside, Pakistan cannot. All the more reason why those countries, notably but not only Britain, that have shamefully refused to apply sanctions to India should think again. The more India suffers economically for its actions, the more reassured Pakistan will feel, and the stronger will be the economic arguments against a matching Pakistani test. It would help, too, if such mounting costs to

India could be set alongside real benefits—aid, debt relief, technology—for Pakistan.

The final calculation of costs and benefits will follow the talks Pakistan's emissaries have been having this week with other governments around the world, including Pakistan's chief military ally, China. But there is also a potentially huge benefit to Pakistan from not testing that cannot be measured in cash terms. For decades Pakistan has been overlooked as an awkward, badly behaved little brother: its politics venal, its government usurped by military men of little vision. India, by contrast, though its politics can also be venal and its governments weak and short-sighted, has nonetheless enjoyed far greater respect as a plucky democracy on its way, however haltingly, to acceptance as a mature and responsible power. If Pakistan could keep its finger off the nuclear button, however, this would be the moment to turn the political tables on India. Pakistan's refusal to be stamped over the nuclear brink would contrast memorably with the crude and blinkered nationalism of India's BJP-led government.

And if Pakistan does go ahead with a test? Many governments have held off applying sanctions to India, even though that makes a Pakistani test more likely, in the hope that both, having tested their weapons, will then sign the comprehensive test-ban treaty. Don't count on it. Cocksure India wants to set conditions for merely respecting certain bits of the treaty. Either way, letting India off lightly merely enlarges the hole India has blown in efforts to halt the spread of nuclear weapons—and shows others, not just Pakistan, the way through.

Geneva's trade convention

Photo-opportunities clinched, real ones missed

IF MUTUAL back-patting is your thing, the place to be this week was Geneva, where ministers from around the world gathered to raise a glass to the multilateral trading system, which turned 50 this year, and to swap haven't-we-done-wells. They cheered the GATT's success in razing protectionist walls, the new World Trade Organisation's impressive record in arbitrating trade quarrels, their own success in wrapping up the leftovers of the eight-year-long Uruguay round, and more. To cap it all, Bill Clinton dropped by (albeit reluctantly) with some ideas for reforming the WTO and an offer to host the next global trade summit next year. That even got a clap from Fidel Castro, seated yards away.

Presumably, then, the march towards global free trade is as determined as ever? Not quite. There was progress here and there, to be sure. Hours before Mr Clinton spoke, America and the European Union resolved one of their bitterest trade rows, over foreign investment in Cuba and Iran. After he left, the WTO's members clinched an agreement to keep transactions on the Internet duty-free; several rich countries vowed to eliminate tariffs on imports from the poorest nations; and all agreed to talk again soon about trade in services and heavily subsidised farm products. But what matters more are the questions that were not resolved: the "new issues" of competition rules and environmental protection, and whether to begin work on a ninth round of global trade talks.



Starting a new round was bound to be difficult. Many poor countries say they haven't yet digested the last one; some rich countries balk at the thought of another eight-year haul. But the ambivalence of the European Union and America is making matters worse. Sir Leon Brittan, the EU's trade commissioner, has called for a "millennium" round, but his free-trade credibility is ever undermined by the countries he represents. How can we take him seriously, ask the EU's trading partners, when EU members still impose tight restrictions on many imports and subsidise their farmers so heavily? And as the world's biggest exporter by some way, America has traditionally pushed multilateral liberalisation hard, even when other big countries wavered. That is no longer so.

A wavering champion

A first sign was Mr Clinton's belated, half-hearted and ultimately unsuccessful attempt to win fast-track trade-negotiating authority last year. But he has also damaged America's multilateral credentials by concentrating on regional trade agreements, such as NAFTA and the Free Trade Area of the Americas, which distort trade by discriminating against non-members. The administration is wary of global trade pacts partly because it fears offending environmentalists, protectionist-minded Democrats and trade unions. The United States has even said it might refuse to comply with WTO rul-

JOHN A. KITZHABER
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a whole?*

BJ

April 28, 1998

The Honorable Albert Gore, Jr.
Vice President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500
Facsimile No. 202-456-2889 --attn: Fred Duvall

Dear Vice President Gore:

I appreciate your willingness to take the time to talk to me briefly on Wednesday concerning issues in the Columbia River Basin. Before we talk tomorrow I want to share with you some thoughts which may facilitate our conversation.

The Clinton Administration is poised to appoint a new administrator for the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) -- clearly the most important federal post in the Northwest for determining the future of the Columbia River. This appointment will send a very clear message concerning how serious the Administration is about its commitment to change on the Columbia River.

The Administration's official, public position supports change in Columbia River management to bring about both fish recovery and reform at the BPA. Indeed, Katie McGinty, on her fact-finding visit to Oregon earlier this month made three strong commitments on behalf of the President:

- 1) the Administration will not let the salmon go extinct;
- 2) the Administration will respect Tribal treaty rights; and
- 3) the Administration will work to resolve the regional power issues.

To meet these commitments, there needs to be a change at the top of the BPA -- an agency with a remarkably entrenched bureaucracy.

If someone is appointed to this position who is not committed to fish recovery as a primary mission of Bonneville -- or who is not a proven change agent -- the message will be clear: the Administration is not serious about changing the way the Columbia River is managed. In fact, without these changes, it will be impossible to accomplish the three commitments mentioned above.

I feel strongly about this point because nearly all the initiatives regarding Bonneville in the last three years have come from the states -- particularly from Oregon -- because Bonneville does not have the leadership for change. In short, I have been providing the regional leadership for the initiatives necessary to accomplish the objectives laid out by the Clinton Administration.

Specifically, these initiatives are:

- The Comprehensive Review of the Northwest Energy System (Oregon initiated)
- The three Sovereigns Process (Oregon initiated)
- The Northwest Energy Transition Board (Oregon co-initiated and a major participant)
- The Bonneville Cost Control Panel (Oregon a major participant)

Two of these initiatives are particularly critical to the pending appointment at BPA: the Northwest Environmental Transition Board and the Three Sovereigns Process. The Transition Board in conjunction with the Cost Control Panel is urging Bonneville to significantly reduce its costs. Since competitive pressure is relaxing, it will become more difficult to get BPA to make the cuts recommended to reduce rates. We need an administrator with the ability to ensure that it happens.

Second is the Three Sovereigns Process. As you know, it is an effort to develop a new governance structure for Columbia River management, and I believe that it offers us the last, best hope of breaking the deadlock on critical Columbia River issues which have for years fallen victim to the intervention of one interest or another. I remind you that the Clinton Administration, the four Northwest governors and the Columbia River Indian Tribes have been working on this effort since June of 1997.

The current uncertainty about whether the Administration will make a political or a policy decision concerning the appointment of a new BPA administrator is serving to jeopardize the success of the Three Sovereigns. Already, the irrigators -- and other stakeholders on the Columbia -- have launched a major assault on the three Sovereigns Process (I have enclosed a "policy memo" from the Columbia-Snake River Irrigators Association to illustrate this point). It is clear that these stakeholders are encouraged by the equivocation of the Administration and the hope that a status quo BPA administrator will be appointed.

Why do those stakeholders prefer the status quo? Because they fear change -- yet change must occur if we are to achieve our objectives. In addition, there is some question about the willingness of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to enforce the Endangered Species Act (ESA) since NMFS has undertaken no enforcement action whatsoever in the Columbia River Basin in the six years that the Snake River chinook have been listed under the ESA.

Furthermore, while the long awaited NMFS Biological Opinion (recovery plan) is scheduled for release in 1999 -- the year before a presidential election -- many believe this politically explosive issue will be deferred until 2001. Mr. Vice President, the fisheries resource simply cannot wait that long.

I realize that Senator Murray has opposed the appointment of Roy Hemmingway for the BPA post in spite of his clear qualifications for the job. Her "anyone but Hemmingway" position has led us finally, after months of delay, to Ms. Judi Johansen.

I have interviewed all major candidates for this position, including Judi Johansen. I found her to be personable and intelligent. But she emerges from the very BPA bureaucracy we seek to change; she has no experience with fish issues (I am not aware of a single environmental organization supporting her); she does not possess an in depth understanding of the difficult issues on the river, nor does she have experience with the complex political environment in which Bonneville operates. For these reasons, and because of the high stakes involved, I must strongly oppose her selection.

If Judi Johansen is appointed, it will send a clear message that the Administration has elevated politics above policy on the Columbia River. And if this happens, why should anyone (including myself) believe that politics will not govern in the future when even more contentious decisions on the Columbia River need to be made.

Again, Mr. Vice President, I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you and look forward to our conversation tomorrow.

Sincerely,



John A. Kitzhaber, M.D.

SINATRA REMEMBERED
THE NEW NUCLEAR MENACE

U.S. News

& WORLD REPORT

MAY 25, 1998

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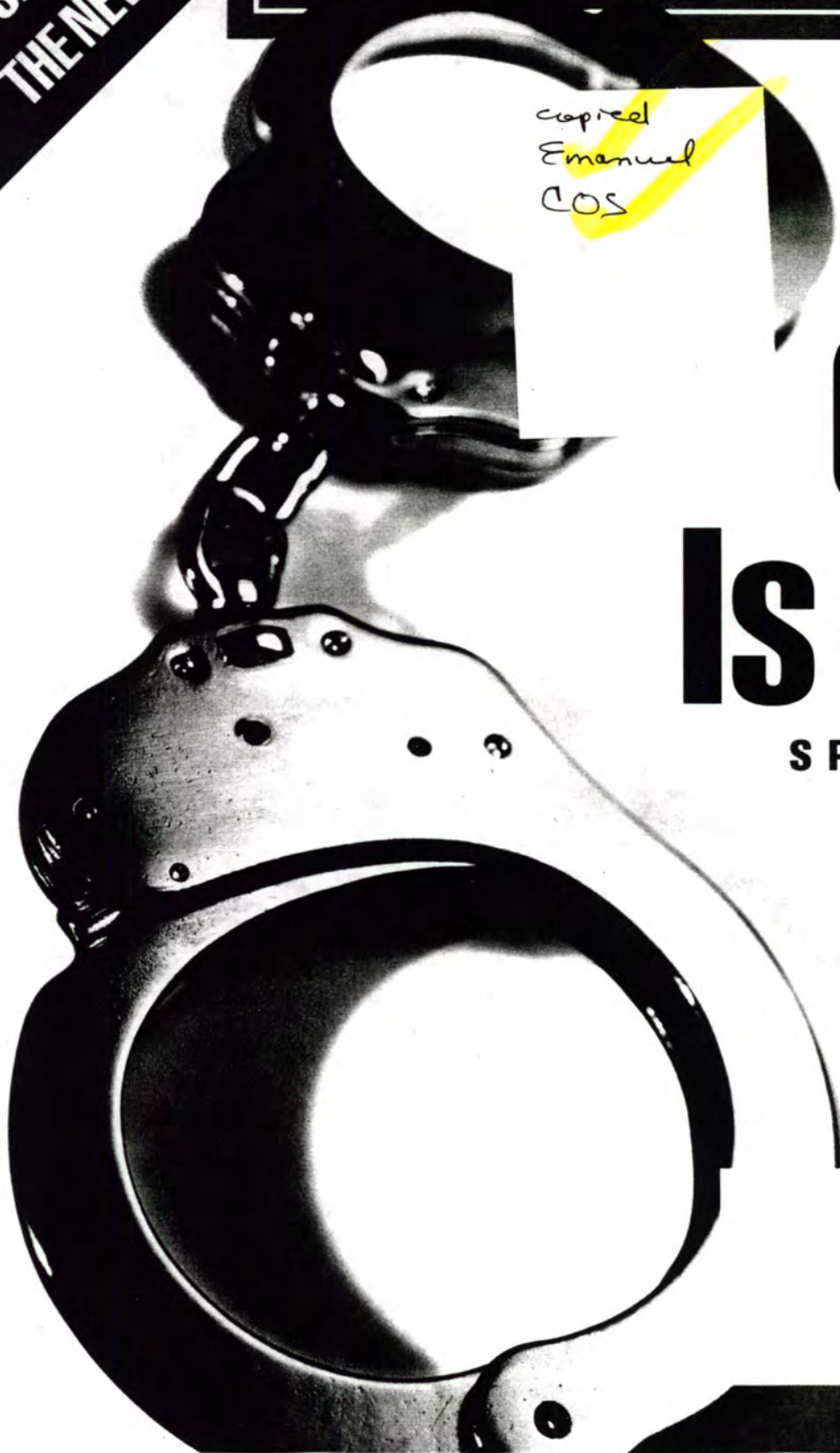
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Why Crime Is Down

SPECIAL REPORT

The Real Story



BY GORDON WITKIN

Less than a decade ago, violent crime seemed like one of those things people would just have to get used to. "It's possible you won't be able to solve this problem," New York Gov. Mario Cuomo said in 1989. "That's how horrible it is." From 1984 to 1993, the number of murders nationwide climbed 31 percent. During that period, 216,986 people were killed in the United States. When, in 1992,

7-year-old Dantrell Davis was killed in Chicago by a sniper while walking to elementary school holding his mother's hand, there was outrage but little surprise. By then, neighborhoods like his had acquired monikers—the "Graveyard," the "War Zone," or "Beirut." Violence, and—just as important—fear, spread almost everywhere. The situation aggravated race relations, destroyed businesses, accelerated flight from the cities, and trapped children indoors. Violent crime seemed to affect virtually everything, and it seemed intractable.

Then something extraordinary happened. Starting in 1994, violent crime began falling. The number of such crimes reported in 1996 was 13 percent below the 1992 level, and preliminary figures released this week by the FBI show an additional 5 percent drop in 1997. The trend line is even more steeply down for murder, which is considered the most reliable crime statistic because such a high percentage of killings are reported. From 1993 to 1996 the number of murders

dropped by 20 percent—from 24,526 (a rate of 9.5 per 100,000 residents) to 19,645 (a rate of 7.4 per 100,000)—and the preliminary FBI numbers indicate an additional 9 percent murder reduction in 1997. The 590 murders in Los Angeles in 1997 were the fewest in 20 years. Boston had 43 murders in 1997, a 36-year low. In March, for the first time since the 1960s, Brooklyn went a full week without a single murder; a decade ago Brooklyn was suffering 13 to 15 killings weekly. It's hard to think of a social trend of greater significance.

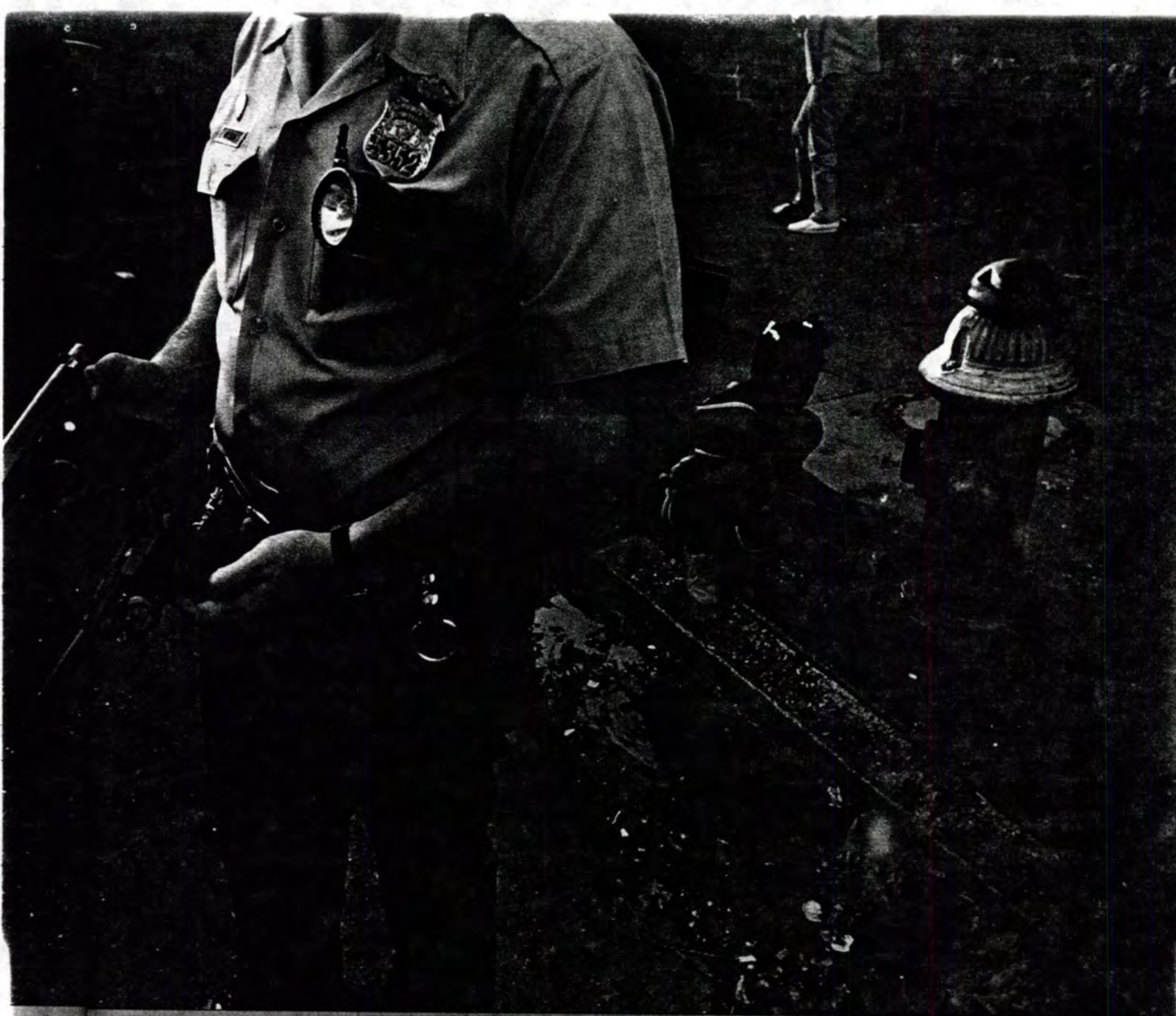
Yet the national causes of the improvement remain mysterious. Not surprisingly, economists say it was the economy, demographers credit demography, cops say it was better police work, and politicians say it was their "get tough" policies. The news media have split the difference and concluded that it was a variety of causes.

But while the drop in crime can be linked to many factors, one really is more important than others. If we ap-



The CRIME

What's behind the dramatic drop in crime? The prime suspect is



THE Bust

pect is not police, nor prisons, nor prevention

1989

War zone.

A policeman in North Philadelphia with two guns discarded by a suspected drug dealer during a chase. Scenes like this, and a high murder rate, seemed to be permanent parts of American life. But from 1993 to 1996, murders fell a striking 20 percent, and this week the FBI announced an additional 9 percent reduction for 1997.

proach the question of who ambushed the crime rate as a detective might approach a murder case, it turns out that there is a prime suspect.

THE ECONOMY? Many social scientists have long believed in some sort of link between poverty and crime, so there's a simple logic to the idea that a booming economy—a 4.3 percent unemployment rate at last count—must be driving crime rates lower. With more hope of finding legal jobs, young people are less likely to see crime as a necessary or desirable option.

But while possibly a factor, prosperity is probably not the key. Robbery and burglary fluctuate with economic conditions—but murders generally do not, according to Philip Cook, a Duke University public policy professor. For instance, crime rates rose sharply in the 1960s, a period of low unemployment. During the 1970s, Sun Belt cities had faster rates of economic growth than older cities—and higher crime rates too. New York City retains a stubbornly high unemployment rate of 9 percent, yet murders there have fallen 66 percent since 1990.

PREVENTION? There is clearly merit to the idea that investing in high-risk youngsters might help prevent violent crime, and experts say high-quality prevention

initiatives can reduce violence rates by 20 percent to 25 percent. For instance, so-called early intervention programs that get at-risk kids into preschools at a young age and teach parenting skills to new mothers and fathers can have long-lasting positive effects. After-school programs involving music, sports, and drama can also be valuable, in light of research showing that the peak hours for juvenile violent crime are from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m.

But the good news pretty much ends there. Studies show that many prevention programs don't work, and others may or may not be effective, since so few have been evaluated. Among the ineffective approaches are some politically popular ideas like neighborhood block watches and citywide gun buy-back programs. For the moment, the overall effects of prevention programs on crime are thought to be modest.

FEWER BATTERED WIVES? One of the most surprising components of the drop in violent crime is the steady 20-year slide in domestic murders. Killings involving intimate partners—spouses, ex-spouses, boyfriends, or girlfriends—fell from nearly 3,000 in 1976 to just over 1,800 in 1996, a decline of 40 percent. And though 3 of every 4 victims in 1996 were women, the largest portion of the decline by far was in the killing of men, especially black men killed by their female partners.

Fewer murders

	1996	1997	Totals
New York	983	767	797
Chicago	738	590	420
Los Angeles	409	261	254
Philadelphia			
Houston			

Sources: Local police departments, FBI Uniform Crime Reports

PHOTOGRAPHY BY EUGENE RICHARDS



In part, there are fewer killings *by* spouses because there are fewer young people *with* spouses. In 1970, 55 percent of men ages 20 to 24 had never been married. By 1992, the proportion had increased to 80 percent. Experts say that women are also benefiting from more opportunities to escape bad relationships. Women are more financially independent, and organizations devoted to helping women in abusive relationships—hot lines, counseling centers, legal clinics, shelters—have grown dramatically after first emerging in the early 1970s.

But in 1996, there were only 447 fewer “domestics” than in 1993, accounting for just 9 percent of the murder reduction.

PRISONS? When crime started dropping, one of the first explanations experts





1998

Back in charge. Members of the 161st Street block association in Manhattan. Left, group leader John Matthews, near a closed-down crack house.

considered was the shift of criminals from the streets to prisons. The number of people incarcerated in federal and state prisons and local jails has gone from 744,208 in 1985 to 1,725,842 as of last summer. Tough legislation in the 1980s increased the sentences for many crimes, especially drug offenses. From 1924 to 1974, America's incarceration rate was strikingly stable (about 110 per 100,000 population); since then the rate has almost quadrupled.

Some of the new criminals were arrested for "nonviolent" crimes (notably drug dealing). Still, criminologists generally believe that most new prisoners were incarcerated for violent crimes. One study showed that between 1979 and 1991, the number of offenders sent to state prisons for violent crimes doubled. Other stud-

ies—albeit controversial—argue that each additional prisoner locked up means from 12 to 17 fewer crimes per year. Even liberal criminologist Franklin Zimring, while decrying the increase in drug incarcerations, concedes that "when you lock up an extra million people, it's got to have some effect on the crime rate." The more conservative social scientist James Q. Wilson is less grudging: "Putting people in prison is the single most important thing we've done."

But regional variations undermine the notion that imprisonment played the major role nationwide. New York City has

displayed some of the most dramatic drops in crime, but the state prison population—70 percent of which is from the city—has increased only about 8 percent since 1993. Conversely, the law-and-order state Utah raised its incarceration rate by 19 percent from 1993 to 1996—but its violent-crime rate went up. Imprisonment, therefore, seems to be important but not the underlying cause of the crime drop.

POLICE? No factor has been cited more often to explain the crime drop than better policing. And at first glance, there is a strong case that an improvement in polic-

ing techniques is indeed the key. During much of the 1970s and 1980s, the police themselves had argued there was little they could do about crime, that rates were determined by demographics and social conditions. But nurtured by reform-minded groups like the Police Foundation and the Police Executive Research Forum, a more educated, innovative brand of cop has ascended to the chief's chair in the 1990s.

The influence of the new breed has been most dramatically displayed in New York. Commissioner William Bratton and his successor, Howard Safir, created a model of policing that is important for two reasons. The drop in murders in the Big Apple—from 1,946 in 1993 to 983 in 1996—accounted by itself for 20 percent of the drop nationwide. And other big-city departments have adopted some of New York's crime-fighting innovations.

Bratton put primary responsibility in the hands of his 76 precinct commanders and then held them personally accountable for reducing crime in their neighborhoods. To facilitate this program, he used a process called "Compstat," for "compare statistics." The NYPD can now plot each reported crime on a color map that gives police a more sophisticated understanding of crime trends, patterns, and "hot spots." The maps serve as the basis for twice-weekly strategy meetings that involve grilling the commanders and brainstorming on crime-fighting tactics and deployments. The sessions have enabled the commissioners to weed out weak per-

formers; Bratton replaced half his precinct commanders within a year. "The focus on actual results is perhaps the most significant cultural change in policing since the turn of the century," says University of Maryland criminologist Lawrence Sherman. Other cities have shifted resources toward the high-crime "hot spots." The New Orleans Police Department has built substations and deployed cops 24 hours a day in troubled public housing, which has helped bring the city's murder count down from 421 in 1994 to just 266 last year.

Many experts also attribute part of New York's success to Bratton's focus on nuisance crimes—street prostitution, public urination, or blaring boomboxes. Bratton consciously took to heart the "broken windows" theory postulated by James Q. Wilson and criminologist George Kelling in a 1982 *Atlantic Monthly* article: that just as a broken window left untended is a sign that nobody cares and will inevitably lead to more broken windows, so too, small crimes like vandalism will lead to more serious crimes if left unpunished. Supporters believe that New York's attention to low-level crimes encouraged honest citizens to begin reclaiming their neighborhoods. New York cops also found that many of these lawbreakers were wanted on warrants, were carrying illegal weapons, or provided intelligence on other crimes.

After years of skepticism, researchers are also starting to believe that having more cops makes a difference. In 1960,

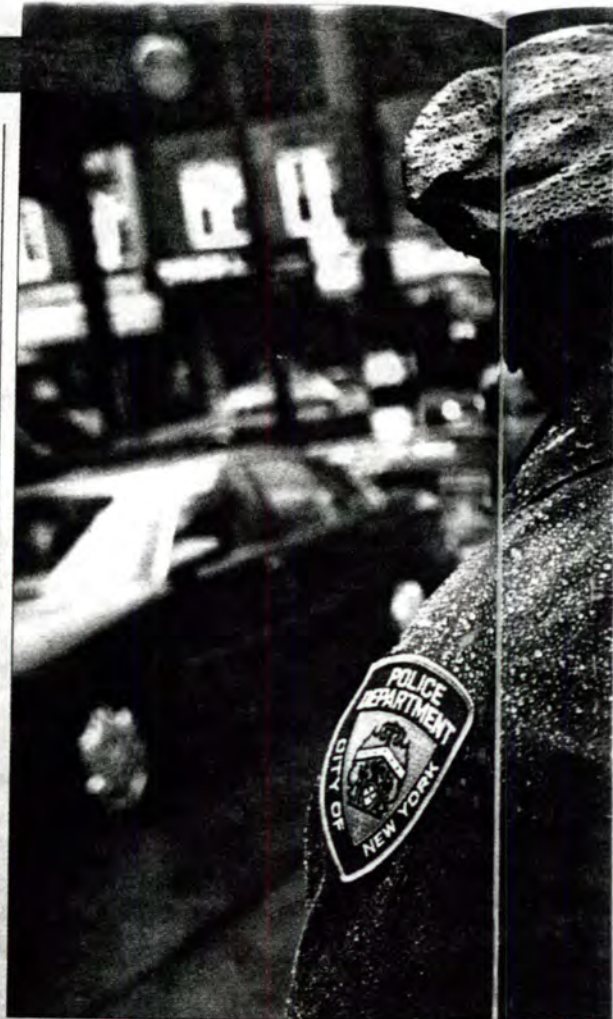
there were three reports of violent crime for every police officer in Los Angeles. By 1990, there were 10 reported crimes for every cop. In the 1970s and 1980s, many big-city police departments actually shrank because of budget crunches. But now in Los Angeles, the ratio is back down to 6.9 crimes per cop, in part because the city has added 2,270 police since mid-1993; murder there has plummeted. Houston has added 1,400 cops since 1991, and the murder rate there has fallen by 58 percent. And the Clinton administration has helped to fund 70,000 new local police officers, though the political imperative of spreading them broadly has diluted the program's impact.

Almost all the experts now agree this smarter policing deserves a hefty chunk of credit for the drop in violent crime. But a closer look at regional variations again raises questions. The crime rate has also dropped precipitously in cities like Washington, D.C., where the police department has been, at best, troubled and, at worst, thoroughly dysfunctional. Conversely, a metropolitan area like Nashville, which has increased its police manpower by 16 percent since 1994, has nonetheless seen its annual murder totals climb from 73 to



1990

Tools of the trade. Much of the increase in violent crime in the '80s and the early '90s was among young people using guns.





1998

Road block. The police stop cars in Queens, N.Y., to check drivers' licenses. Cracking down on small infractions has helped reduce major crimes.

112 in that time. Clearly, smarter policing was spectacularly decisive in some cities like New York, but it probably was not the key factor nationwide.

CRACK. To truly understand why crime went down, it's important to review the recent history of murder. After a brief post-World War II spike, crime resumed a decades-long drop. The murder rate reached a low of 4.5 per 100,000 people in 1957 and 1958. Why? The usual explanations apply: The economy was good, communities were stable, guns were scarce on the streets, and most marriages were intact.

Then, starting in the mid-1960s, crime began to rise. Conservatives like to attribute this to loose morals, but a far more likely explanation is simple demographics. Beginning in this period, the huge post-World War II baby boom generation moved into its crime-prone late teens and 20s. A

child born in 1946 turned 19 in 1965. The baby boomers peaked at 35 percent of the population in 1980, and so did the murder rate, at 10.2 per 100,000.

At that point, the situation began to turn around. Those crime-prone baby boomers became more law-abiding adults. Between 1980 and 1985, the mur-

der rate dropped by 23 percent. Demographically, the downward trend should have continued into the early 1990s, since the number of volatile 15-to-24-year-olds shrank from 42 million in 1980 to 38 million a decade later.

But around 1986, something scary and unexpected began to occur—the spread of crack cocaine. The recipe that used heat and baking soda to turn cocaine hydrochloride, or powder, into crack created a smokable, pre-packaged product with a unit price low enough to lure the masses. Cocaine powder required an investment of at least \$75 to \$100 for a gram, but a hit of crack was \$5. Economically depressed inner-city neighborhoods provided fertile ground for the drug.

The result was an explosion of street-corner crack markets that proved dangerously unstable for a number of reasons. First, the crack "high" lasts as little as 10 minutes, so users often want more right away. That means a large number of transactions involving extremely agitated people. To buy more, they needed cash quickly, and they were often willing to rob people at gunpoint to get it. The lucrative environment of crack's formative years also created a dangerous number of disputes between buyers and sellers, or buyers and rip-off art-

ists, and a feverish competition for retail turf.

Criminologists like Alfred Blumstein of Carnegie Mellon University also believe the crack markets kicked off an incendiary chain reaction involving kids and guns. The sheer number of transactions required crack-selling organizations to recruit large numbers of inner-city, minority teens—many of whom saw no other job opportunities—to act as street-level worker bees. These kids were carrying both drugs and cash, and they felt compelled to carry guns as well to protect themselves from robberies. This behavior spread beyond the drug trade, as those not involved began carrying guns to protect themselves from those who were. "Many also saw guns as conferring a measure of status and power," writes Blumstein. "Gun possession escalated into an arms race that diffused the weapons broadly throughout the community." And

The young and the ruthless

Murderers are getting younger and using guns more.



so the typical teenage dispute—over a girl, a ballgame, or “respect”—that years before might have resulted in a fistfight was now resulting in shooting. And dying.

The statistics from that era couldn't be clearer. The overall murder rate soared from 7.9 per 100,000 in 1985 to 9.8 per 100,000 in 1991, but the rate of murders by adults was stable, and so was the rate among young people using weapons other than firearms. In other words, virtually the entire violent-crime wave of the late 1980s and early 1990s could be blamed on young people with guns (charts, Page 33).

Then, starting in the early 1990s, the crack crisis began to wane in America's big cities. The proportion of youthful arrestees testing positive for cocaine in Detroit, for instance, dropped from 45 percent in 1987 to just 5 percent in 1996. In Manhattan, the proportion fell from 70 percent in 1987 to 21 percent in 1996. A variety of studies also suggest that today's crack market is increasingly dominated by an older, mostly male group of heavy users. That's good news, because this age group is less prone to violence, and many of these users have long-term, stable relationships with their suppliers.

Why have young people turned off crack? Many observers cite the “younger brother syndrome,” in which teens are turned away from the drug because of an emaciated older sibling ravaged by addiction or confined to a wheelchair from a bullet fired in a crack deal gone bad. “A

strong social norm against crack use began gathering momentum around 1989 or 1990. Youths have decided that crack is not cool,” says Bruce Johnson of the National Development and Research Institutes in New York (“Ex-cons on Crime,” Page 37).

The level of violence associated with the crack markets themselves has also dropped as the result of a brutal settling-out process. Cops say the worst of the Wild West brawls over turf have been fought, and territories have been established. Many of the most reckless players from the late 1980s are dead or in prison, and those remaining have found peaceful ways to resolve disputes.

Police and imprisonment did play a narrowly focused role in stemming the crack problem. Many big-city departments—to some extent jarred into action by the unexpected crack epidemic—teamed with federal agencies to break up violent crack-selling gangs and wipe out street-corner retail markets; in New York, Commissioner Safir, for instance, has enlisted the feds in a large-scale offensive against drug trafficking in northern Manhattan. Local police pressure—along with the proliferation of beepers and cellular phones—has

moved at least some of the crack markets indoors. One low-profile Brooklyn dealer told researcher Richard Curtis that prior to the police sweeps of the early 1990s, “Who'd bother to call me on my beeper? Wouldn't have to. You could buy it like a supermarket. [But when the police destroyed the supermarkets], they created my business.” In terms of reducing violence, indoors is “a wonderful place for the market to be,” says Mark Kleiman of the School of Public Policy and Social Research at the University of California-Los Angeles. “A guy standing on a street corner selling drugs has basically painted a target on his shirt. He'd better be ready to defend himself. A guy with a beeper and a client list doesn't have to shoot anyone.”

Experts believe that the link between crack, guns, and crime can also be demonstrated in places where crime *hasn't* dropped—smaller cities in the heartland where crack has only recently arrived. Indianapolis, traditionally a low-crime city, “was very late in the cocaine epidemic,” says Mayor Stephen Goldsmith, “but then the drug wars followed crack, and continue to drive the homicide rate to unacceptable levels” (charts, above). Crack vials and crime-scene tape have become part of the day-to-day routine in neighborhoods like the Meadows. The proportion of Indianapolis arrestees testing positive for cocaine jumped from 24 percent in 1992 to 50 percent in 1994, and it has dipped only slightly since. The city's murder count, which was only 57 as recently as 1987, rose to 118 last year.

But in most big cities, the story is increasingly one of relative peace. The passing of the crack epidemic—along with the associat-

The trends of two cities

Drug use and murder rates often go hand in hand.



1988

Crack. The high lasted only 10 minutes, so crack users often wanted more right away. That meant transactions involving extremely agitated people.

ed reduction in fear—is helping to disrupt the crucial link between kids and guns, with a hefty assist from the cops' antigun enforcement efforts. In New York, "our street research tells us kids are less inclined to carry guns these days," says Jeffrey Fagan of Columbia University's Center for Violence Research and Prevention.

The result is that violence among young people—which had pushed crime rates up starting in the mid-1980s—is finally headed in the opposite direction. Juvenile murder arrests declined by 3 percent from 1993 to 1994, 14 percent from 1994 to 1995, and another 14 percent from 1995 to 1996.

Still, the numbers obscure a sobering reality driven home by horrors like the shootings in Jonesboro, Ark. Though the 1996 juvenile murder arrest rate was the lowest since 1989, it was still 50 percent higher than the rate in the early 1980s. "The youth homicide problem looks better, but only because the early 1990s were so bad," says criminologist James Alan Fox of Northeastern University. "So let's not fool ourselves into thinking everything's resolved. It's not."

This raises another question: Is there any way of keeping crime from getting worse again? Law enforcement officials are well aware that baby boomers' children are now reaching the traditionally crime-prone years of 15 to 24. Between 1996 and 2005, the teenage population will have increased by 20 percent, to more than 30 million by 2006—the largest number of teens since 1975. Some criminologists predict a *Mad Max* landscape of "superpredators," in which the number of teenage killers could once again top 4,000, as it did in the early 1990s.

Others argue that the fears are overblown: that the year-to-year rise is small and won't be that noticeable, that the growth in the number of teenagers will be offset by a continued fall in the crime rate for adults, and that the drop in teen violence for the past three years proves that it's hard to predict what teens will do. "Demographics do not have to be destiny," argues Attorney General Janet Reno. Perhaps not. In the past 15 years, public policy has indeed made a difference, by improving policing and incarcerating more criminals. But hindsight also teaches that sometimes things come along—like crack—that are unforeseeable and relatively impervious to political solutions. It's not clear whether policy makers or the public can develop the wisdom or political will to identify such incipient trends—a new popular drug, for example—and address them before they trigger another crime wave.

Criminals on crime

Cons, ex-cons, and street-savvy kids say violence got so bad it even scared them

BY JAMES LARDNER

If you're looking for experts on crime, it's hard to find a place with more of them than Rikers Island, a 400-acre mass of rock and landfill in the waters behind New York's LaGuardia Airport. Compared with the politicians, police chiefs, and criminologists who do most of the pronouncing on the subject, the 15,000 or so prisoners on Rikers aren't very reliable about data and are prone to long recitations of personal grievances. But their observations may nevertheless help explain—sometimes unintentionally—the recent declines.

Mention the police, for example, and a heavyset 21-year-old named Barry will give you an earful about the injustices they have done him, from the time he got grilled as a suspected gang member on the basis of his red jacket ("Red is my color! I've been wearing red since I was a little kid coming out of my mother's womb!") down to the attempted-robbery charge on which he is currently awaiting trial. "They said

I tried to rob a *female!*" he exclaims, as though the absurdity of it ought to be apparent to anyone.

No evidence. After finishing a recent prison term upstate for a drug-related offense, Barry noticed that the police in his part of the Bronx were stopping people more often than he remembered. "And ain't no more stop, ask some questions, send you on your way," he points out. "Now it's 'Get your hands on the f---ing wall, shut up, turn around,' and if you're lucky you might not get anything planted on you. And when you go in front of the judge, ain't no more 'Let's see what the deal is. Let's see if the cop is lying.' It's whatever the cops say, 'That's what we hitting you with—take it or leave it.' They're taking people to trial with no evidence: no drugs, no type of paraphernalia. They're

arresting people for no apparent reason. That's why crime is down."

If this sounds illogical, it's a form of illogic embraced by many of Barry's peers. They may not like the police, but they do not deny the deterrent effect (or the direct effect) of putting po-

'[My children] saw me go through changes like Jekyll and Hyde.'

—Robert Marin, former drug user



Marin hopes his children will be scared onto a straight path by having watched him.



1998

Role model. The death of "Macho," a gang leader memorialized here in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, made some of his friends "slow down."

dramatic example of what Richard Curtis, an ethnographer who teaches at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice,

tential perpetrators out of circulation. Indeed, they have good reason to believe in the principle of deterrence, for the crime rate on Rikers Island itself has plummeted, with stabbings and slashings at fewer than 20 a month in early 1998, down from a high of 139 in July of 1994. And the inmates and their keepers offer much the same explanation: Violence behind bars is now taken seriously, and conviction usually means significant added time. "Slash somebody inside the jail system, and it's 8½ to 25—they post it all over the place," says Orin, a wiry 48-year-old.

Family business. But interviews with criminals, accused criminals, former criminals, and street-savvy kids in Phoenix, New York City, and Newark, N.J., highlighted another important development: a new awareness of the harm done by hard drugs, and especially by crack cocaine, associated with some of the worst violence of the past decade. Robert Marin, a 44-year-old machinist, regrets that he didn't know anyone who used drugs when he was growing up in Phoenix. His own children, he says, have the advantage of

knowing him: "They saw me in and out of jail, they saw the arguments, they saw me go through all different kinds of changes like Jekyll and Hyde, you know? I turned them off as a father."

Many former drug users and dealers say that fear of arrest and imprisonment was only one reason to stop—and no more important a reason than, say, the damage drugs do to work and family lives, or the risk of being shot in a drug-related dispute. Hubert Jones, 33, chose to enroll in a hard-nosed residential drug-treatment program, Integrity House in Newark, after being arrested on a minor drug charge. (He counts it a blessing he wasn't arrested for something more serious since he was involved in the sale of guns and drugs.) He knew something about the likely alternative—prison—from an older brother who is serving a murder sentence. In addition, he has two brothers who were shot to death on the streets of Camden, N.J., the family's hometown. His oldest brother is serving time for murdering the murderer of the second oldest.

Hubert Jones is perhaps an unusually

calls the "younger-brother syndrome." For more than a decade, Curtis has been interviewing young people in poor Brooklyn neighborhoods. What he has found there is a growing subculture of young men and women who steer clear of crime, guns, and hard drugs. "I stay off the streets, 'cuz the streets gets you nowhere," says a 16-year-old high school sophomore who gives his name as Chub, interviewed in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn. "Cut school and stay on the streets, and either you will get locked up, or if you mess with the wrong person, you'll be 6 feet deep, you know?"

Chub, who is smoking a Newport cigarette and has a stocking cap on his head for hairstyling purposes, says that he doesn't have any respect for anyone who uses crack, because "they're uncivilized—they'll do anything to get their drug." In this view of crack users, he is backed by two 16-year-old friends, Jessica and Christina, and by a 21-year-old friend of theirs, slouched in a nearby chair and drinking from a bottle of Olde English malt liquor, who (setting off a wave of chortling

from his companions) claims that he is known by the nickname 'the Destroyer.'

Chub and his friends lend support to the theory that when the police do more stopping and searching, people become more reluctant to carry guns in public. Guns have become uncool, according to the Destroyer, who adds that he knows people who have no fondness for the police but will nonetheless call them if they see someone with a gun. "Everybody's snitching everybody out," he says. "That's how people is these days." But while the members of this foursome know people who are in prison, they have more to say about the violent death of someone named Macho, who was the leader of what the Destroyer refers to as "our gang, the BBBs." Although Chub says it wasn't a gang—it was "just the block, man"—all four remember the date, Nov. 29, 1994, when Macho was shot in the hand, shoulder, and head by "some Dominican banana boat." Macho's murder—memorialized in spray paint on the brick exterior of a nearby grocery—made them realize it was "time to slow down," Christina says. "People started going to school more—people started getting jobs," Chub says.

Wanderlust. There is a worrisome fragility to the state of calm they describe, however. Staying in school is hard work, to hear Chub tell it. In the afternoons, especially, he has fits of wanderlust, and has to remind himself that with just a GED instead of a regular diploma, "the only college you can go to is City College, that's it."

"I'll be on his case," the Destroyer says. "See, I'm a dropout already. He still got his chance to get a diploma."

The Destroyer has a part-time job that is even more of a trial for him than school is for Chub. He is paid \$120 a week for roughly 25 hours of work as a deliveryman for a local shopping center. "The jobs they got out here is no good," he complains. And the police, he adds, check him out just as often as they did a few years ago, when he was selling drugs. "If you did bad and then you do good, they still going to harass you," he says. "They be playing with people's feelings, you know? One of these days, I'll be getting mad. One of these days, somebody's going to get me ticked off and I'm going to turn into a psycho man."

"Don't do that," Chub says, softly. ■

A couch-potato factor

The drop in property crime may owe less to gates and alarms than to cable TV watching

DAVID BUTOW—SABA FOR USNIAPR



BY WARREN COHEN

Yes, someone is murdered in the United States every 27 minutes on average. But in the interval between killings, 70 cars will be stolen, 125 homes will be burglarized, and 405 items will be swiped from someone's office or back yard. Although murders and assaults capture the most national attention, property offenses such as burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft outnumber violent crimes by a 7 to 1 ratio, with annual losses conservatively estimated at \$15 billion or more. And from 1960 through 1980, the property-crime rate tripled.

But starting in 1980, while violent crime was still rising, the property-crime rate began to fall. Since then, it has dropped by 21.2 percent, including a 5 percent drop in the preliminary FBI figures for 1997. In fact, the U.S. burglary and motor vehicle theft rates are now lower than they are in such safe-seeming countries as England,

Denmark, and Sweden. What happened?

The property-crime spurt of the 1960s is partially explained by subtle societal changes that increased criminal opportunities. For example, many city dwellers moved to the suburbs, where fewer nosy neighbors meant fewer watchful neighbors, making it easier for burglars to operate without detection. Women's participation in the labor force increased from 38 percent in 1960 to 52 percent in 1980, so more houses sat empty during the day, when at least a third of all burglaries occur. And small shops with observant counter help gradually gave way to giant shopping centers and malls, providing greater opportunities for shoplifting.

Youths, in particular, found ever wider opportunities for criminal mischief. With both parents often working and commute times lengthening, kids received less supervision. Busing led to larger schools with more students than teachers could adequately manage. And rising prosperity pro-

As more people use credit cards instead of cash, purse snatchings have declined.

vided more teens with cars, enabling them to stray farther from watchful parents and neighbors. The resulting increases in crime basically caught off-guard a country that didn't lock its doors at night."

Happily, a number of more recent trends have conspired to make committing property crimes more difficult. The proliferation of VCRs and cable TV has made people more likely to stay home at night, which in turn deters burglars. Two-car garages, a feature of only 42 percent of new homes in 1972, now accompany 78 percent of new homes. These protect cars as well as other frequently targeted items like bicycles.

Supply and demand. The abundance of popular consumer items has also helped cut demand for stolen goods: 98 percent of all homes already have a VCR, so demand for these stolen goods has waned. Criminologists say the street prices for most stolen household goods have dropped by a fifth in the past two decades. (Ironically, the lower profitability of stealing household goods may have contributed to the rise in violent crime in the 1980s and early 1990s, by leading some thieves to turn to robbery and drug dealing, crimes more immediately rewarding than breaking and entering.)

Another factor in the decline of property crime has been the rise of credit cards. In 1990, Americans used credit and debit cards for retail purchases 191 million times; by 1996 that number had exploded to 1.1 billion. With people carrying less cash, pocket-picking and purse-snatching have dropped 53.2 percent over six years, the fastest declining categories among all larcenies.

In addition to these lifestyle and economic changes, the past several years have seen a wave of deliberate efforts by Americans to protect themselves against property crime. In most parts of the country, unlocked front doors are a thing of the past. Roughly a fifth of homes now have alarm systems, compared with less than 1 percent in the early 1970s. (By contrast, gun ownership, sometimes credited with reducing property crimes, probably has not increased, holding steady at an estimated 35 percent or more of households since the 1960s.) The number of gated communities with fences and guard stations restricting access has jumped from roughly 2,500 in the early 1970s to about 20,000 today. Car-alarm sales have climbed from tens of millions of dollars in the 1970s to \$478 mil-

lion in 1996. And since its 1986 introduction, consumers have purchased more than 35 million units of The Club, a device that locks steering wheels. Meanwhile, the percentage of retail businesses with closed-circuit-television security systems has soared to 73 percent since the devices started being deployed in the early 1980s. In all, private security spending has risen from \$8 billion in 1975 to \$80 billion last year, a figure that includes pay for 1.8 million private security employees.

Many of these precautions can protect

streets, cul-de-sacs, and speed bumps. In addition to hindering quick getaways, these precautions also prompt more people to spend time outside, where they act as informal watchmen.

The key to most crime prevention is simply ensuring that crooks know that someone is paying attention. A good example is the Huntsville, Ala., school system. During the 1980s, it averaged about eight burglaries each week, and its insurance company warned that its coverage would be stripped. Then the town invest-

ed \$1.7 million in a closed-circuit-television system and installed 250 cameras in all 44 area schools. The first year the system was in use, security officers caught 250 thieves; since then, the burglary rate has dropped to about five per year. The now-above-average safety record has helped reduce the school district's insurance premiums by an estimated \$3 million since the installation.

Similarly, following a rash of daytime burglaries in 1979, Rohnert Park, Calif., assigned police officers to patrol the streets looking for truants. Area businesses were asked to call police if they saw youths out and about during school hours. Students who were caught were returned to school; numerous infractions could delay a teen receiving his driver's license. Since the program was instituted, the city's daytime burglary rate has fallen 86 percent.

There are encouraging signs that property-crime rates will continue to drop nationally. Technological changes such as the spread of personal computers are creating more opportunities for stay-at-home workers, who can also act as neighborhood guardians. It's also possible that as burglars and petty crooks move to other activities, tricks of the trade such as how to identify an unoccupied house may not get passed along to another generation.

But after two decades of steady decline, the property-crime rate is still about five times greater today than it was in the 1950s, leaving plenty of room for improvement. If recent history is any guide, many of the developments that will determine future property-crime rates will be lifestyle changes (such as widespread use of VCRs or credit cards) that on the face of them have nothing to do with crime. But deliberate precautions against criminal opportunity will also play an important role, especially those that emphasize keeping a watch on the community. The truth is that paranoia often works. ■



DAVID BUTOW—SABA FOR USNEWS

Alarms and devices such as The Club divert thieves to unprotected cars but probably don't affect the overall theft rate.

individual car and home owners, but overall they have probably shifted the incidence of property crimes more than they have reduced them. Alarms and devices such as The Club primarily divert thieves to unprotected homes or cars. And, surprisingly, no studies demonstrate that gated communities are safer than other housing options, possibly because residents grow lax about security and leave gates open during the day or forget to close their garage doors. An alternative that has proved more successful is limiting traffic with measures such as one-way

May 26, 1998

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5-26-98

RECOMMENDED TELEPHONE CALL

TO: The winner of the Kentucky U.S. Senate Democratic primary. Craig Smith will call you when the results are known. The candidates are:

- Rep. Scotty Baesler
- Charlie Owen
- Lt. Governor Steve Henry

copied
Smith
COS

DATE: May 26, 1998

FROM: Craig T. Smith and Linda Moore

PURPOSE: To congratulate him on winning the hard-fought contest for the Democratic nomination and to wish him well in the general election contest against Rep. Jim Bunning (R).

BACKGROUND: Rep. Baesler held the lead in this contest from the beginning, but in the last two weeks polling showed his support declining while support for Owen and Henry grew, resulting in a very tight race. Owen spent more than any primary candidate in Kentucky history, and is expected to top the list nationwide.

A Mason-Dixon/PMR released today tested general election matchups with presumptive Republican nominee Rep. Jim Bunning. The results follow:

Baesler 44%	Henry 40%	Bunning 40%
Bunning 34%	Bunning 38%	Owen 31%

CONTACT PERSON & TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

5/27/98
Political Affairs
informed call
made

•Baesler contacts: Bob Wiseman and Jenny Carter at cell numbers 606-339-5940 and 606-229-4256, Baesler home number is 606-263-3725

•Owen contacts: Jesse McKnight and Kim Geveden at cell numbers 502-682-0208 or 502-682-2010

•Henry contact: Mark Gaunce at cell number 502-445-2497

DATE OF SUBMISSION: May 26, 1998

ACTION: _____



AMBASSADOR OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
OTTAWA, CANADA

Boyle

May 18, 1998

Dear Mr. President:

As I look out on the Ottawa River on this beautiful day, I want to tell you every word I am doing at the moment to you and your family to exhilarate you and your family. As you know, larger than all of the EU combined. I want to prevail on you to visit Ottawa one more time. I would, of course, accept any time; however, next year we will dedicate the opening of our new Embassy in Ottawa, the only completely new Embassy being constructed by the U.S. It would be an honor if you could come in June or July, 1999 to participate - July 4th would work. Of course we would work out the other diplomatic meetings but I believe your presence at the dedication of our new Embassy in the capital city of our neighbor, our

Send to Scheduling?

Yes ☒

No ☐

cc: Cindy Berger
USC

Yes ☒

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5/27/98



AMBASSADOR OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
OTTAWA, CANADA

2006

May 18, 1998

Dear Mr. President.

As I look out on the Ottawa River on this beautiful Spring day, I want to take a moment to tell you that Patti and I think of you and Hillary every day. I know the burden is heavy but you are doing a remarkable job and the American people and the world know it. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

This is a great job that you have given me. I exhilarate in the challenges and opportunities each day. As you know, Canada is our biggest trading partner, larger than all of the EU combined. I want to prevail on you to visit Ottawa one more time. I would, of course, accept any time; however, next year we will dedicate the opening of our new Embassy in Ottawa, the only completely new Embassy being constructed by the U.S. It would be an honor if you could come in June or July, 1999 to participate - July 4th would work. Of course we would work out the other diplomatic meetings but I believe your presence at the dedication of our new Embassy in the capital city of our neighbor, our



AMBASSADOR OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
OTTAWA, CANADA

best friend, our ally and our largest trading partner would be a remarkable statement. In any event, I intend to nag you until you come see us so you might as well choose June or July of next year.

While this experience is one I would not trade for anything, I must admit that I am going through some withdrawal pains as we approach the first statewide election in Georgia in 20 years that will take place without my involvement. Patti tells me not to worry, that they will actually hold the election - that doesn't make me feel better.

Thank you again for this opportunity. I believe I am doing a good job. Please do give serious thought to coming - it's only a hour flight and the same time zone.

Our best to Hillary and all my friends in the West Wing. All the best to you and our country.

Sincerely,
L Gordon


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 Little Rock, Arkansas 72211-9111

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Fax #	228-512	Fax #	

5127198

Send to Burkhardt?

Yes

No

58

May 19, 1998

 President Clinton
 White House
 Washington, D.C.

Regarding: Addition

Dear Bill:

Sitting at the Central High graduation last night I had several occasions to think about associations with you and your family. I saw Joe Purvis and remembered meeting both of you at Boy's State 35 years ago. I looked at my healthy son, Johnnie, who will graduate from Central next year and thought of the help Hillary gave us in working through medical malpractice problems that endangered Johnnie and his twin, Mary, at their birth. Later our children were with Chelsea in the UALR gifted math program and the Concordia Language camps.

I also remembered your visit to Arkansas Systems 15 years ago. We were a 50 person company and you helped us dedicate an ATM lab in our buildings on Kanis Road. Now, we have a wonderful building on the Chenal Parkway and employee 140 people, serving customers in 70 countries. We have plans to grow, employing more people and bringing income from around the world into Arkansas. It is challenging, but we are living out the vision of a small, successful company in a global economy.

In the Central High graduation, the differences between 1963 and 1998 were apparent. The student body reflects the diversity of America and the world in a way our classes of 1964 at Hot Springs and Fort Smith did not. All the races of man were represented in the graduation speakers, including immigrant families from Vietnam, China and Russia.

The same is true of the employees of our small, global company. We have employees born in Iceland, Malaysia, Poland, China, and elsewhere. Some come with skills and experience that does not exist in the U.S., such as working with European payment systems or deploying smart card payment systems. Some come with skills that are available, but in short supply here. Our economy is growing, thanks to good policies and the opening of new global markets, and we need creative educated workers.

President Clinton
Page 2

We need immigration policies that recognize that in an open global society, based on an economy of ideas and information, the key to economic competitiveness is the ability to attract the best minds, regardless of their race, or national origin. **In short, to thrive we need the people that come to the U.S. on H1B visas, and we need more of them to help fuel our growth.** We certainly need to produce more of these people here, but that is a process that starts with social and educational policies that affect very young children and it will take a long time to make significant changes.

I hope to convince you that, for now, we need additional H1B visas. I have an Indonesian friend, with a job offer from ARKSYS, and 10 years experience in implementing smart card payment systems. He sits with his family in danger of violence, while he waits for the new H1B visa.

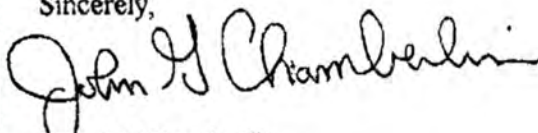
If there are no additional H1B visas, it is not Microsoft that will suffer. They will pay more and attract the individuals they need. I look across our suburban lake and see the new Acxiom buildings rising from the cleared ground. We and Acxiom may hire people back and forth across the lake, fighting for a limited labor market, generating inflation, and limiting our mutual abilities to grow. More H1B visas would help prevent this scenario from happening.

Each new person who comes in on an H1B adds to our economy. The largest house bought in Little Rock last week was purchased by an immigrant who came to us on an H1B and then moved to Acxiom. His family increased housing starts, automobile sales, and grocery store sales. They have helped create jobs in Arkansas, they do not take jobs from people already here.

H1B visas are also a quality of society issue. I have helped sponsor a handicapped child at Arkansas Children's Hospital. Natasha attends Forest Heights Junior High in Little Rock and her development plan includes occupational therapy and physical therapy. The school district has lost the physical therapist and can not find another. The occupational therapist is here through the H1B program, and they may need to bring in another H1B visa holder to fill the physical therapy position.

I hope you will consider your options on the bills related to H1B visas and choose to sign them. We need them to build both a strong economy and a fair American society.

Sincerely,



John G. Chamberlin
Senior Vice President

5/28/98

P.O. BOX 907,
PARK RIDGE Q4125,
BRISBANE,
AUSTRALIA.

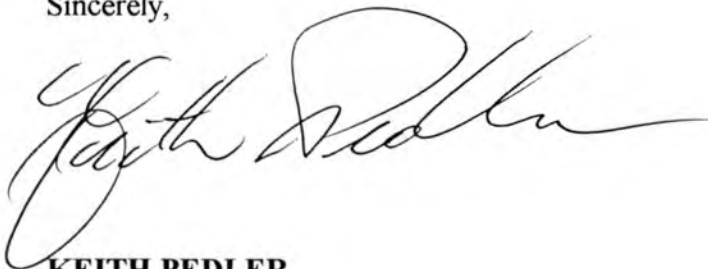
15th May 1998

Nancy V. Hernreich,
Director of Oval Office Operations,
The White House,
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.,
WASHINGTON DC. 20500,
U.S.A.

Dear Ms Hernreich,

I hope you will read this information concerning "Gunsafe", the only proven method of protecting children from firearms they find in the home, and that you will convey it to the President.

Sincerely,



KEITH PEDLER
Justice of the Peace

5-27-98

Send to Beukhardt?

Yes ☒
No ☐

GUN SAFETY

**THERE IS A
BETTER WAY**

**PLEASE READ
THIS**

POST OFFICE BOX 907,
PARK RIDGE Q4125,
AUSTRALIA.

President of the United States of America,
The White House,
WASHINGTON DC.
USA.

Dear Mr President,

No doubt you are very concerned about the current bitter controversy raging between opposing groups over Gun Control Legislation, and there would appear to be no easy way to reconcile the wishes of both legitimate firearms owners, and those who demand total abolition.

Compromises such as licensing, or limitations on numbers owned and/or calibres, seem to inflame emotions on both sides, while incurring great administrative cost, and doing little to minimise gun accidents and crime.

I hope you will be interested in the enclosed information relating to my proven invention 'GUNSAFE', which for the first time renders firearms completely harmless whilst not in use, by clamping on the end of the barrel with soft self-aligning jaws, and safely trapping the projectile in case of unintentional discharge. No damage results to the gun, all calibres including big-game and military types are accommodated, and the device is re-useable.

Children, in particular, are totally safeguarded from their natural inquisitiveness, which as you know, leads to large numbers of deaths and mutilations annually. Sadly, youngsters have a compulsion to pick up guns, point them at parent, or friend, or brother, and shout "bang". All too often the "bang" is real.

Police ballistics experts have proved 'GUNSAFE' is 100% effective, and it has been demonstrated publicly at our Parliament House in Sydney. Women can see at a glance that 'GUNSAFE' is fitted to a gun, and that it is, therefore, harmless. No knowledge of weapons, and their many variations, is necessary. (I can provide videos of public demonstrations and tests). It was recently televised across the

USA on "Beyond 2000", an Australian series highlighting new developments of all kinds.

May I respectfully suggest, that your administration could give consideration to the mandatory use of 'GUNSAFE' on all rifles, handguns and shotguns -

- [a] In public places
- [b] In transit, particularly in aircraft (in fact all public transport) and in private vehicles en-route to accredited ranges or open country
- [c] Sold by mail order
- [d] Sold by storekeepers, or any licensed gun dealer, over the counter
- [e] After repair
- [f] Being carried over State lines
- [g] In police vehicles (not on the person of an officer)
- [h] In private places when not being securely locked up

It will automatically be an offence, for any unauthorised person to be at large in possession of a firearm, without 'GUNSAFE' fitted.

You will immediately see all kinds of difficulties and objections in this, but with determination, and most importantly the right people, I am quite confident that workable and welcome legislation will result. Furthermore, I can probably answer most of the obvious objections for you immediately, as I have been closely involved in all aspects of the proposal for some time. One well established fact is that the shooting fraternity e.g. the N.R.A., are opposed to it, just as they oppose all gun law. But you can take the wind right out of the sails of those who want drastic, useless restrictions - 'GUNSAFE' IS TRULY A WORLD 'FIRST'.

'GUNSAFE' is not intended for field or range use, but it will safeguard children and adults from the vast numbers of guns kept in homes and elsewhere across the country. You will find people whose children have died through THEIR carelessness, and the ever prevalent attitude "it won't happen to me", are only too eager to be interviewed, and to blame themselves in public.

Every one of them will endorse 'GUNSAFE', as will Police and medical personnel who have the sad task of picking up the pieces, both dead and alive.

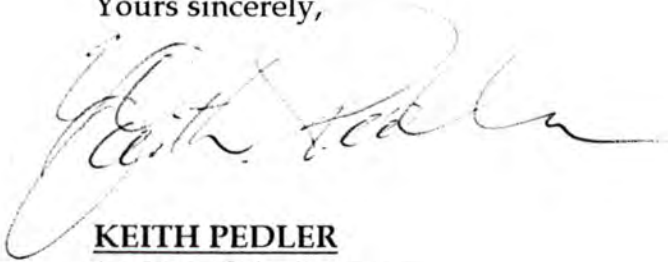
This is NOT the crank notion of a daydreaming inventor, by the way. Your staff could check my credentials with, for example the former Premier of this State, the Honourable Sir Johannes Bjelke-Petersen, M.L.A., or his wife, Senator Lady Florence Bjelke-Petersen, who have one of my devices. It is also used by Australian Customs - Drugs Task Force Officers.

Please do not dismiss this matter lightly, rarely does a proven cheap and simple solution to a great social problem come along. With your assistance and guidance, 'GUNSAFE' will save a great number of children from death or ghastly injury.

It is astonishing that we have voluminous regulations covering the safe handling and storage of poisons, explosives, electricity, fuels etc, but not firearms, although they are the only product freely on sale which is actually DESIGNED to kill.

Let us earn the gratitude of the American people!

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Keith Pedler', written in dark ink.

KEITH PEDLER
Justice of the Peace

BITING THE BULLET

We all have to face the fact that shooting accidents occur, sometimes despite normal precautions. Gunsafe, a new Australian invention, provides the ultimate protection — it stops an accidentally-fired shot as it leaves the barrel.



Keith Pedler with his Gunsafe device fitted to a 12 g shotgun.

SHOOTERS know how to look after themselves when they're handling guns, but to hell with anyone else. Not a conscious attitude, perhaps, but nevertheless, one our community seems to harbor. Statistics prove it — 46 Australians died from accidental shootings in 1973-74, and similar numbers have died each year since. Not to mention the 136 injury-producing gun accidents that were reported, and the considerably larger number that weren't. The fact is, guns are unintentionally discharged, and people are killed and wounded — a third of them indoors or in vehicles. Yet few shooters seem to take safety precautions when they bring their guns home.

The statistics might be frightening, but the effect on the people involved in an accidental shooting is considerably more serious. It's difficult to imagine how you would feel if your child killed your wife with your "unloaded" rifle — perhaps by holding on to the trigger as your wife tried to take it out of the child's playful clutches. Or the kids found a round and got your rifle out of the wardrobe to see whether it fitted. And one of them was shot.

These cases are not figments of the imagination — they're statistics.

About six months ago newspapers, radio and television right around Australia made a song and dance about a "revolutionary new gun safety device" which had been developed by a Sydney gun enthusiast named Keith Pedler. The device was called Gunsafe. Basically it was a rubber-lined steel cap that fitted over the muzzle of a firearm and was said to stop any bullet or shot fired into it, without damaging anything but the device itself. There was talk of legislation to make it compulsory to buy a Gunsafe with every firearm. Shooters' hackles went up, anti-gunners

rubbed their hands, and a lot of people wondered just how effective the device would be. After all, would a shooter who neglected basic safety precautions bother — or remember — to fit one? And the safety conscious wouldn't need one anyway. Besides, there are already trigger locks, interruptors and safety catches available — why spend more money on a bulky, ugly lump of metal to disfigure your rifle?

With this in mind OUTDOORS visited Keith Pedler some time after the popular fuss had died down. Ex-army, engineer, gun enthusiast for 30-odd years, licensed pistol dealer, gunsmith — and father of small children. His workshop was crammed with boxes of bits that have been part of the two-and-a-half year development of the Gunsafe device. An over-and-under shotgun and a couple of high power rifles sat muzzled among a collection of powerful ammunition behind a child-proof door.

Pedler loaded number four shot, SG, .300 Weatherby Magnum and .243 and fired into Gunsafes which already showed the bulges of having been used. Noise, smoke and a little more bulge. The thing worked. All those charges are pretty hot stuff but the inventor confidently blasted away, only metres in front of a concrete wall. There was no sign of the device slipping off the barrel, no sign of blowback, and no sign of the metal splitting.

"We're tooling up now, and production models will look prettier than this," he said. "We'll also be using a special seamless alloy so they will be even stronger, too. But there's no doubt it works. I've repeatedly tested the prototypes with the heaviest charges sold in Australia (even .460 Weatherby Magnums) and the design has handled them all — repeatedly. They have to be

strong because I want to sell them, among other places, on the American market, and everyone knows their love of extremely high-powered cartridges. I have to be able to stand up in front of them and confidently say 'it will handle anything'."

NSW police ballisticians have tested the device, and they acknowledge its effectiveness. But it's effective only when fitted, so as few people regard themselves as negligent or idiots, who would buy and fit one?

"The enthusiast will be the hardest to sell to," Keith admitted. "But what I'm aiming at primarily is protecting the third parties, not the shooter. It's the idiot factor that pops up so often — accidents you couldn't possibly imagine. Yet they happen, despite the owner taking precautions, and sometimes — like one I recently tried to follow up — completely destroy families. By having a device like this on the end of the barrel, it doesn't matter what happens — nobody can get hurt.

"I think women will be the strongest allies — many will probably buy a Gunsafe for their husbands, and even more will insist that it's put on the gun. Unlike safety catches and so on, anyone can see a gun is safe if it has one of these on the end. You don't have to know anything about guns. As well, when a Gunsafe saves a life, the grapevine will very quickly spread the word. Once women know it's available, I think their insistence that it be used, will save more lives.

"It's not expensive, either, when you consider the average gun sale these days is about \$250. Putting \$ on top of that is not much when you consider the heartbreak it could save. The insurance cover alone is worth the money."

The insurance. As a bonus, and included in the initial price, there is a

\$10,000 personal accident cover, and a \$250,000 personal liability cover, regulated by one of the largest insurance companies in the world, North America, through brokers Stewart Wrightson and Co in Sydney. Final details were still to be worked out, but there will be no premiums — the original price will give cover for at least 10 years (the estimated life of most guns), or run for a month after the Gunsafe has been used. The idea of that is to give someone who has an accidental discharge time to buy a new device and fit it — as they'll no doubt be extra keen to do!

One of the biggest objections Keith foresees is that of damage to the gun barrel. From what we saw, there is no danger. The guns he has been using for testing and demonstrations don't have a mark on them. No blowback has pitted the muzzle, neither have the clamps scratched the bluing.

And what about the legislation to make Gunsafe compulsory?

"The way I see it, the community is moving towards the stage where we are going to have restrictive firearms laws thrust upon us by some grandstanding politician — dopey legislation such as the recent proposal that everyone be restricted to owning only three guns. I mean, it takes only one shot to kill, so what good would that do? But if legislation such as fitting a safety device like Gunsafe were brought in, it might satisfy the anti-gunners, without hindering shooters and making things safer for those around them. Sure, I'd stand to make money, but it might head off some pretty stupid alternatives."

But despite initial State Government manoeuvring, legislation now seems unlikely.

Gunsafe is made of heavy gauge cold drawn steel tubing filled and coated

with rubber, which traps all fragments and fine shot. The nose is 40 mm thick solid steel. Propellant gases are vented sideways, and projectile fragments are trapped inside the soft filling. The weight of the unit — about 1.36 kg — should stop smaller children pointing a rifle at another person, perhaps beginning basic safety training. The device tightens with a wing-nut arrangement, and can be padlocked in place. Removal, in the rare case of self-protection, would be rapid — provided you could quickly find the key. The padlock is, however, not essential — it's an additional safety measure.

The NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, and the Department of the Attorney General and of Justice, published a paper on accidental shootings for 1973-74. The figures quoted earlier were taken from that, but the paper also said that 19 percent of the fatal gun accidents in 73-74 happened to children between the ages of 10 and 14. That age appears to be the most inquisitive and there are also few places in the home children of that age cannot reach. The authors of the paper said .22 rifles and 12 gauge shotguns (the most common arms) accounted for 76 percent of the deaths.

Their comment that "there is little chance of the untrained person knowing whether the weapon is loaded or unloaded" was one of the factors Pedler considered with his device. As he said, few shooters take the basic military precaution of rifle in one place, ammo somewhere else, and bolt in a third place. Anyway, there are so many other types of action that the idea is not totally effective when applied to civilian sporting arms.

So, Gunsafe works. It will be sold only by mail order, he says, to keep the price down. Will you be using it? *



PURCHASE ORDER

AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS SERVICE

B157(2/85)

PURCHASE ORDER
NUMBER

810027-6
FORM. 13 (Finance Reg.-52A)

TO:

GUNSAFE SYSTEM

DELIVER TO:

COLLECT

=====

Description of Supplies	Qty.	Rate	Amount
# SAFETY DEVICES FOR OFFICIAL WEAPONS	11		
PLEASE NOTE: INVOICES NOT CORRECTLY RENDERED MAY BE RETURNED FOR AMENDMENT. Payment will be made within 30 days if goods have been received and correctly invoiced. The invoice must quote this Purchase Order and/or contract number. PREFERENCE POLICY: Where this order stems from a quotation offering supplies of Australian or New Zealand origin, supplies from third countries may not be accepted unless prior approval is granted by the Commonwealth.			
ENQUIRIES Supply : J FREDRICK 8353383 Payment : ACCOUNTANT (07) 835-3024			

ereby certify that these goods are free
m Sales Tax as they are for the official
e of the Department and are not for
ale.

OFFICER AUTHORISED TO ORDER

[Signature] 15788

TOTAL
AMOUNT

AYMENT
OF
COUNTS

A Claim Form (FF12) quoting this Order No.
and with the relevant invoice and dockets
attached should be rendered without delay to:

Accountant
AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS SERVICE
GPO BOX 1464
BRISBANE QLE 4001



**AUSTRALIAN
CUSTOMS SERVICE**

AS USED BY AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS
DRUG TASK FORCE.

JEFF FREDRICK
BARRIER ENFORCEMENT
CONTRABAND ENFORCEMENT TEAM

AUSTRALIA HOUSE 383 ADELAIDE ST BRISBANE 4000
PHONE 835 3376 FAX 835 3491

Gunshot wounds in children a major problem in urban US.

BOSTON.— Children as young as 10 in the United States are shooting themselves.

In Detroit, one of the few cities to keep track of young gun victims, 365 children aged 17 or under were hit by bullets in 1986 and 43 died. In the first six months of this year, 197 were shot and 22 died.

In a study of 300 Los Angeles shooting victims under the age of 15 between 1974 and 1984, Dr Gary Ordag of Martin Luther King jun. General Hospital in Watts, a poor section of the city, found "a clear trend toward even younger victims," including a dozen under 10.

But doctors said they were most disturbed by children who used guns on themselves. Suicide is the second leading cause of death of children after accidents, and guns are the preferred method, they said.

"I've seen children as young as 10 shoot themselves," said Dr Catherine Musemeche, a Houston area paediatric surgeon. "It's a very effective weapon and it's available. If a kid wants to kill himself the gun is right there in the home."

Gunshot wounds in children — whether from a feud over drugs, an accidental firing of a parent's weapon or a suicide attempt — have become a major medical problem in US urban areas, according to doctors at a paediatric trauma conference in Boston.

"Everyone used to assume that it was children in ghettos who were getting shot," said Dr Musemeche.

"But according to my observations, you can't generalise about socio-economic factors anymore."

"If there are guns in the home and children can get at them, then more than likely someone will get shot," she said.

The problem had grown over the past decade, the experts said.

While gunshot wounds constituted only 2 percent to 6 percent of paediatric emergency admissions, the injuries

Shootings come out of the ghetto



FLASHBACK to July, 1984 — a young boy is assisted by a paramedic after he was shot by a gunman who killed 20 people at a McDonald's restaurant in San Ysidro, California.

frequently resulted in disability or death.

Research indicates that the mortality rate for children with gunshot wounds is about 9 percent, compared with 5 percent in motor vehicle accidents and 2 percent in bicycle accidents.

Dr Musemeche said that in the first three months of 1986 there was a sharp increase in young patients with gunshot wounds at her institution, University Children's Hospital at Hermann, which prompted the hospital to study the problem.

In a paper presented at the Boston meeting, Dr Musemeche and her colleagues said 107 children aged six months to 16 years were admitted with gunshot wounds from 1981-1986 and 23 died.

According to the Houston study, 40 patients were shot during play, and 12 in suicide attempts.

Weapons used included 39 handguns, 11 rifles, 11 shotguns, 12 BB (air) guns.

"It's the BB guns that are really scary," said Dr Stuart Lacey, paediatric surgeon at the

University of North Carolina School of Medicine in Chapel Hill.

"Parents buy them for their kids because they remember them as toys but the BB guns sold today are high-powered rifles. They are lethal weapons that can pierce a skull."

Doctors at the conference heard papers about childhood risks ranging from car accidents to snakebites, but they were particularly angry about gunshot wounds in children under 16.

"This is a tremendously evil injury because it is totally preventable," said Dr Barbara Barlow, chief paediatric surgeon at New York's Harlem Hospital. "It is only within the last few years that paediatric surgeons have realised the magnitude of this problem. Now they all want gun control."

Dr Barlow, who pioneered research on children with gunshot wounds, said her hospital rarely saw gunshot wounds prior to 1970 but between 1970 and 1986 Harlem Hospital admitted 173 children with such injuries.

"We see gunshot wounds in children that range in age from a couple of months old to 16," she said. "And these are not adults shooting children. Most children are shot by other children."

Dr Barlow said most of her patients were shot during drug-related incidents, either as innocent bystanders or because they were involved in drug traffic themselves.

"We do not have many play-related accidents and we do not have child suicides. In Harlem children do not shoot themselves," she said.

Because Harlem was known as a ghetto, the medical community initially considered her research a description of a problem unique to poor areas.

But she said she expected Dr Musemeche's Houston study to have a more chilling impact as it is "frightening because she is dealing with a private hospital in an affluent community".

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE OF ADVISORS ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20502

May 27, 1998

98 MAY 27 PM 3:21

MEMORANDUM FOR PHIL CAPLAN,
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT AND STAFF SECRETARY

FROM: JOAN P. PORTER, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, ~~JP~~
PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE OF ADVISORS ON SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY (PCAST)

RE: PCAST Letter on International Cooperative Activities in Energy R&D

The attached letter from PCAST Co-Chair John Young offers to review, in concert with the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC), the "existing array of international cooperative activities in energy R&D in which the United States is engaged, and to participate in the generation of recommendations that would make them a more robust basis for addressing climate change in the context of global economic development and related issues of capacity building and international competition."

OSTP will be pleased to work with you to prepare the President's response. Please call me at 6-6101 if you need further information.

Attachment

5/27/98

Send to Burkhardt?

Yes ☒

No ☐

Coordinate w/ Stern? Yes ☒

No ☐

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE OF ADVISORS ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20502

May 15, 1998

President William J. Clinton
White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you have stated so clearly, the issue of climate change presents the United States and the world with one of the great challenges of the 21st century. Measurements and analyses by climate scientists have been reinforcing almost daily the conclusion of the 1995 assessment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Global impacts of human activities on climate are real, are already being experienced, and are likely to grow in the next century to levels highly disruptive to human well-being, in countries both rich and poor, unless adequate countervailing actions are taken.

The Kyoto protocol to the Framework Convention on Climate Change is a strong first step toward meeting the climate challenge. But if the judgment of the IPCC and the great majority of climate scientists about the probable course and consequences of anthropogenic climate changes proves correct, as we in PCAST think likely, then meeting the emissions limits set in Kyoto is only a down payment on the changes required over the long run. The development of a plan to address that longer run challenge should begin now.

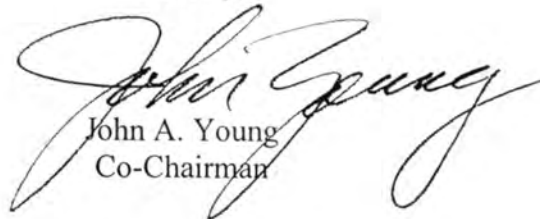
At the heart of this issue are the respective roles of the industrialized and developing countries in the creation of the problem and in its solution. Ways must be found for the developing countries to achieve their economic aspirations without concomitant increases in greenhouse gas emissions, and ways must be found to maintain and expand the prosperity of the industrialized countries while their emissions are being reduced.

Technology must be a cornerstone of the solution. And as you have noted, this should be seen more as an opportunity than as a burden. Your Climate Change Technology Initiative is an excellent beginning to accelerate development and deployment of new technologies. These advances in technology will bring a range of environmental and economic benefits. The firms and countries that learn first and best how to provide the goods and services that people want in energy-saving and emissions-reducing ways will prosper from this knowledge. How far and how fast emissions reductions ought to proceed, and at what cost and benefit, are key questions for industrial, transition, and developing countries alike as they work to achieve the goal of the climate treaty--"stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous interference with the climate system."

What must now be fashioned to supplement those agreements is a global collaborative framework for greenhouse-gas reductions. Robust and comprehensive international cooperation among industrial, transition, and developing countries in research and development on advanced energy technologies could serve as the cornerstone of such a collaborative framework. This could provide the basis for delivering the increased quantities of affordable energy that meeting the economic aspirations of the developing countries will require, while simultaneously reducing their greenhouse-gas emissions.

PCAST would be pleased to review, in concert with the NSTC, the existing array of international cooperative activities in energy R&D in which the United States is engaged, and to participate in the generation of recommendations that would make them a more robust basis for addressing climate change in the context of global economic development and related issues of capacity building and international competition. The insights gleaned from such a review would also have important implications for our broader international S&T engagements, helping us analyze the broader issues of the Federal activities and strategies in international science and technology. Strong international cooperation is going to become a much more important tool in achieving our international objectives, from climate change, to biodiversity, to emerging infectious diseases. We look forward to pursuing these possibilities with you further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John A. Young". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping "J" and "Y".

John A. Young
Co-Chairman

Copied
Speaking
COS



THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

5-27-98

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20515

IAM J. JEFFERSON
SECOND DISTRICT
LOUISIANA

Gene S

Can we help
let them? Should
we? Advice
KSAO →

BL

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
5-27-98

Mr. President:

Please recall my discussion
with you respecting your
support of an African American
led EPIC Fund for
Africa.

I would deeply appreciate
your attention to this
matter at your earliest
possible convenience. Obviously,
it is deemed to hold a
50 million investment
together for the project or these
investors have for several months
now. I enclose a delegation letter
from representatives of my State in support of the Fund.

Sincerely,

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

May 6, 1998

Mr. George Munoz
President and CEO
Overseas Private Investment Corporation
1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20527-0001

Dear Mr. Munoz:

We wish to bring to your attention our support of OPIC's interest in establishing funds to invest in infrastructure and business development in Africa. Of the twenty-five such funds authorized by OPIC, totaling over \$3 billion in initial capitalizations, only three funds totaling \$295 million have been authorized for African investment. Since Africa returned the highest investment of any continent in the world last year, it is more than a moral imperative, it is simply good business for OPIC and U.S. investors, to facilitate U.S. investment in Africa.

In this regard, we are delighted to learn that three leading African American businessmen from our State of Louisiana - - Messrs. Alden McDonald, Norbert Simmons and James Smith - - have applied to OPIC to operate a fund to invest in Africa under the name "Continental Africa Equity Fund." Theirs is to be a leveraged fund, like most of the other funds OPIC has authorized, of \$150 million. The Continental Africa Equity Fund's \$150 million will be comprised of \$100 million to be loaned to the Fund by OPIC and \$50 million to be raised by Mr. McDonald, Simmons, Smith and others as general partners. Although, OPIC does not require that the general partners raise their matching portion of \$50 million prior to OPIC's approval, these general partners have already done so. They have also established a network of officers and a reliable organization of African investment specialists on the ground in three major locations on the African continent who can assist in identifying and managing investment opportunities in Africa. Their application for the Continental Africa Fund has been completed and has been pending since last November, well before the May 30, 1998 "Call" for other Africa fund proposals was made. They are hopeful that their application can be approved and voted upon before June 30, 1998 in accordance with the process for consideration of proposal that was in place at the time their application was submitted.

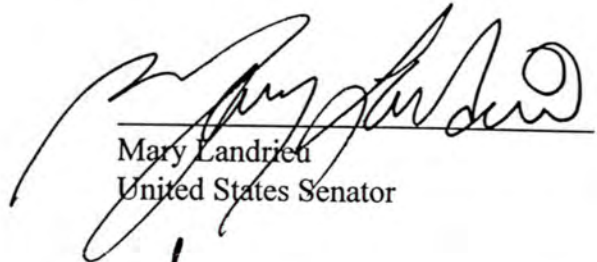
Mr. McDonald is the President of Liberty Bank & Trust Company, one of the largest, most successful African American banking institutions in our nation. Mr. Simmons is an investment banker and entrepreneur, heavily invested in the real estate, hospitality and gaming industries in our State. Mr. Smith is the President and CEO of SEMA, Inc., a high tech firm which employs

hundreds of workers in data processing and information technology. We are proud to commend these three leading citizens of our state and their project - - the Continental Equity Africa Fund - - to you and urge your consideration toward its approval.

Sincerely,



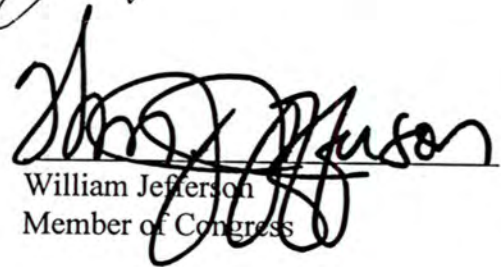
John Breaux
United States Senator



Mary Landrieu
United States Senator



Bob Livingston
Member of Congress



William Jefferson
Member of Congress

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 27, 1998 98 MAY 27 PM 5:38

Mr. President: 5/27/98

It is my understanding that Paul,
Doug and Sid concur with this
recommendation.

Phil Caplan *Phil*

*Answer
Don't want to let
the other countries
Be*

*Copied
McCurry
Tobe
COS
Scheduling*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

1998 MAY 27 PM 4:03

1998 MAY 27 PM 5:33

May 27, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

5/27/98

FROM: Mike McCurry
Assistant to the President and Press Secretary

Amy Weiss Tobe *AWT*
Deputy Assistant to the President and
Deputy Press Secretary for Operations

SUBJECT: May 28, 1998 Off the Record time

We propose you meet with Lars-Erik Nelson of the *New York Daily News* for your off-the-record session tomorrow. In a letter to Mike, Lars-Erik indicated that, during a conversation at the White House Correspondents Dinner, you expressed an interest in meeting with him. An off-the-record session provides the best venue for satisfying this request. You would meet with Nelson alone instead of with him and his colleagues as he requests. We have attached the letter from Lars as well as his article in today's paper.

Please indicate whether you would like to meet with him tomorrow.

YES ☒
NO ☐

New York Daily News

Washington Bureau
1615 M Street NW
Washington DC 20036

From: Lars-Erik Nelson
April 27, 1998

pls. submit
for OTR

~~Mike~~
AUT - Daisy ~~Loit~~
I want him/then
for OTR soon!
- M

Sidney Blumenthal,
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear Sidney,

Pursuant to our telephone conversation: In a brief chat with the President Saturday night I said I would like to see him, (which I have not done since a joint meeting with three or four other columnists three or four years ago.) He seemed genuinely eager at this prospect; indeed, there was no mistaking the warmth and sincerity of his response. Instantly, he said he would command Mr. McCurry to arrange such an appointment, and in fact the joy of his anticipation seemed marred only by his chagrin that such tete-a-tetes between the two of us had not been instituted long before and continued on a regular and frequent schedule. I left feeling that I was the President's most valued and trusted friend, and that we had been kept apart only by the machinations of jealous underlings. Or perhaps I infer too much.

In any case, I write in hopes that I will be inserted somehow into his schedule. If possible, I would like to bring along Tom DeFrank, the Bureau Chief, and Kathy Kiely, the White House correspondent. Best regards to your able colleagues.

Sincerely,

DAILY @ NEWS

50c

http://www.msnnews.com

NEW YORK'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

Wednesday, May 27, 1998

Truth is casualty of China tale



LARS-ERIK NELSON

Washington — As a school-boy living in Brooklyn during the 1930s, Bernard Schwartz remembers being so poor that when he was admitted to prestigious Townsend Harris High

School, his parents sat at the kitchen table trying to figure out how to come up with the nickel subway fare.

On the wall was a picture of former President Franklin D. Roosevelt, revered for pulling America out of the Depression and, later, for helping to save the world from Adolf Hitler.

Schwartz became a life-long Democrat and, after he turned into a multimillionaire, an extremely generous one. He gives, he says, because he believes. But now he finds himself in the crossfire of one of the most cynical political attacks in our nation's history.

Right-wingers are charging that in exchange for \$1 million in campaign contributions, Schwartz' Loral Corp. persuaded President Clinton to let China obtain the technology to improve the accuracy of its nuclear missiles.

It is a cynical attack because those leading it — from The New York Times to the lunatic fringes of the Republican Party — know that it is not true. If they really believed what they are saying, they would be demanding that Clinton be impeached for treason.

You want a "high crime and misdemeanor"? Forget Monica Lewinsky; helping a potential enemy to develop the ability to annihilate your country qualifies as an impeachable offense.

True, Schwartz did make large contributions to the Democrats. True, Clinton signed a waiver to let Loral launch a satellite aboard a Chinese rocket — following a practice begun by former President Ronald Reagan.



ARM WILLS DAILY NEWS PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

True, Loral did confirm to the Chinese that a faulty soldering joint caused the explosion of one rocket with a Loral satellite on top. But none of that contributes to China's nuclear threat.

Clinton's foes are now trumpeting as "news" the fact that China has nuclear warheads aimed at the United States. This has been true for nearly 30 years. Clinton and Loral are accused of helping to make Chinese missiles more accurate. This is nonsense. No guidance technology was transferred — and none would be of critical interest to China.

"The Chinese don't care what part of Los Angeles they blow up," says John Pike, a space expert at the Federation of American Scientists. "In nuclear war, horseshoes and hand grenades, close counts. Hell, we missed Nagasaki — not that it made any difference to the poor people of Nagasaki."

Nevertheless, Sen. Richard Shelby (R-Ala.), chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, talks darkly about "the sale of guidance systems to China." There was no such sale. Loral sent China U.S. communications satellites to be launched into space. They were launched. They are now in space. Period.

What is most alarming about this story, however, is that truth no longer matters. All that counts is whether the accusations can be kept alive long enough to embarrass the Clinton administration — and perhaps intimidate Democratic contributors — until the next scandal comes along.

In the middle of a two-column editorial denouncing Clinton, The Wall Street Journal slipped in this breathtaking bit of honesty: "It is probably not provable, and may not even be strictly true, that the President of the United States deliberately sold missile technology for political contributions."

Nevertheless, let's bash him over the head until the public catches on that there is nothing to this scandal. Then we can hype another one.

"This story is essentially made up out of whole cloth," says Pike, who has been following the ins and outs of nuclear warfare since the depths of the Cold War. "This is the weirdest thing I've ever seen, and I've seen some pretty weird ones."

As for Schwartz, he says he will keep on contributing money to Democrats. He refuses to be swayed by lies.



THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

(Research, Development and Acquisition)

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350-1000

May 26, 1998

98 MAY 27 PM 2:25

The Honorable William J. Clinton
President, The United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

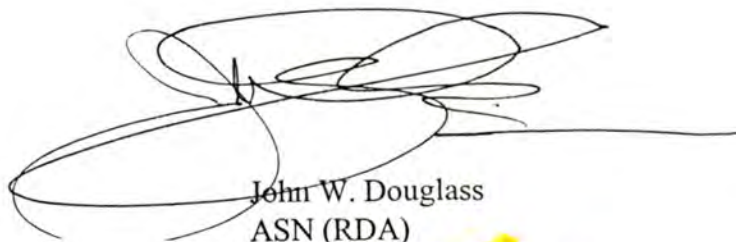
Dear Mr. President,

It is with mixed emotion that I write to you to formally tender my resignation as your Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition. Working under your leadership, we have provided our young sailors and marines the best equipment available to any Navy—bar none. At the same time, we saved billions of dollars through Acquisition Reform.

The leadership provided by Secretaries Perry, Cohen, Hamre, Dalton, Kaminski, and Gansler have allowed your Navy and Marine Corps Acquisition communities to re-invent themselves and emerge leaner and more effective. With your permission and in coordination with the leadership in the Department of the Navy, I plan to terminate my appointment in late August of this summer. After almost 35 years of continuous federal service I leave with great pride in my service to our country. At the same time it is difficult to set aside the mantle of responsibility, knowing there are enormous challenges still to be faced.

Susan and I wish you and Hillary the very best as you continue your service to America. May the Lord bless you and keep you and may God continue to bless and keep our Nation free.

Very respectfully,


John W. Douglass
ASN (RDA)

5/27/98

Send to Burkhardt?

Yes ☒

No ☐

cc. Executive Clerk.

Yes ☒

No ☐

Copy to: Honorable William S. Cohen
Honorable John H. Dalton

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

5/27/98
5/27/98

Send to Burkhardt?

Yes

no

✓

98 MAY 27 PM 3:09

The Hon
Presiden
1600 Pei
Washing

Dear Mr

Mr. Pres
it being a

ta region and
Everyone we

have visited with on this matter is totally in favor of the region receiving the funds that your budget has proposed. However, the LMDD Center Board of Directors and others that we have talked to are questioning whether or not using the ARC for this process is wise.

The LMDDC Board has gone on record opposing the funding being made available through the ARC or another new federal entity, namely, the "Delta Regional Commission". You will recall that the Delta Commission held lengthy discussions on setting up a new federal commission or expanding the ARC to handle the Delta region. Both ideas were rejected in 1990 and our Board still thinks that there is a better way.

We want to recommend that the funding be placed into the USDA budget and earmarked for the Delta region. The USDA already has Offices of Rural Development and Community Development that are working in the region with the designated EC's and the Delta Empowerment Zone and with our organization and others. The Board members feel that with the USDA as the lead federal agency, the funds could be administered through organizations already in place, including the state development districts. This would allow the Delta entities and organizations, such as the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center, to serve the roll that they were established to have in affecting economic development.

Please keep in mind that the Center is not against the ARC because it has been a major catalyst for helping Appalachia move forward from the deep throws of poverty it suffered in the 1960's. Neither does this conclude our working with or through the ARC or a new Delta Regional Commission to assist the region. However, with the makeup of the current Congress and its views on creating new government entities, we feel that our alternative certainly merits consideration.

Again, we thank you and express our deep appreciation for your proposal to fund an effort that will address the request you made to the Congress and the White House back in 1990 when you

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
May 20, 1998
Page 2

delivered the **Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission's final report, "The Delta Initiatives"**. You can count on the LMDD Center and its Board to support your efforts to bring federal partnerships to the Delta, and we believe that members of the Congress and the Senate and most of the governors from the region will back the effort, if the proposal is structured to provide the maximum benefits at the lowest possible costs. Our current federal partners at the USDA certainly have been helpful and stand ready to work with the other federal departments to assist us make something positive happen for rural and community development in the Delta.

With sincerest personal regards, I am

Your friend,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rhonda Vinson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the text "Your friend,".

Dr. Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson - LMDDC

c: Vice President Al Gore
LMDDC Board
Secretary Dan Glickman

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 20, 1998

The Honorable Al Gore, Jr.
Vice President of the United States
Old Executive Office Building
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Vice President:

Earlier our organization had written the President about the proposal in the 1999 Federal Budget for funding for the Lower Mississippi Delta Region. We and everyone we have visited with about this proposal strongly favor the funding of efforts to strengthen the Delta region's economic situation. However, the proposed funding for the Delta region being administered through the Appalachian Regional Commission is a matter of concern. The LMDD Center Board of Directors and others in the region are questioning whether or not the administration and the funding being placed in the ARC, even for a short incubation period, is wise.

The Board members have gone on record as opposing the funding being made available through the present or an expanded Appalachian Regional Commission or a new federal entity, namely, the "Delta Regional Commission". The federally created Lower Mississippi Delta Commission discussed this option, at length, prior to releasing the final Commission report to the Congress in 1990. The Commissioners rejected the idea of creating a new federal entity or the expansion of the ARC to administer Delta programs, and our Board still thinks that there is a better way.

We are formally proposing to you and the President the idea that funding be placed into the USDA budget, earmarked for the Delta region. The USDA already has Offices of Rural Development and Community Development that are working in the region with EC's and the Delta Empowerment Zone and with our organization and others. The Board members feel that, with the USDA as the lead federal agency, the funds could be administered through organizations already in place, including the state development districts. This would allow the already active Delta entities and organizations, such as the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center, carry out the rolls that they were established to serve in affecting economic development in the Delta. (See attached letters sent to the Delta Delegation).

We also emphasize to you that the Center is not against the ARC or Dr. Jesse White. The LMDDC Board knows that ARC has been a major catalyst for helping Appalachia move forward

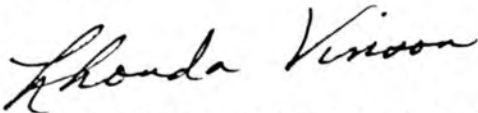
The Honorable Al Gore, Jr.
May 20, 1998
Page 2

from the deep throws of poverty it suffered in the 1960's. Again, we reiterate that our position does not preclude our willingness to work with the ARC or a new Delta Regional Commission if Congress so chooses to pass legislation to that effect. However, given the current Congress and its apparent views on creating new government entities, we feel that our alternative certainly merits consideration.

Again, we thank you and the President for the proposal to fund an effort that will address the request made to the Congress and the White House back in 1990 when then Governor Clinton delivered the **Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission's final report, "The Delta Initiatives"**. You can count on the LMDD Center and its Board to support Administration efforts to bring this assistance to the Delta, and we believe that members of the U. S. Senate and House and most of the governors from the region will also support these efforts, if the proposal is structured to provide the maximum benefits at the lowest possible costs. Our current federal partners at the USDA certainly stand ready to cooperate with other federal departments and organizations in the Delta to assist the region make something positive happen for rural and community development in the Delta.

With sincerest personal regards, I am

Your friend,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rhonda Vinson".

Dr. Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson - LMDDC

c: President Bill Clinton ✓
Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman
LMDDC Board

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 15, 1998

The Honorable Trent Lott
U. S. Senate
487 Russell SOB
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Lott:

In this year's budget proposed by President Clinton, the first attempt is being made to provide direct funding to help the Lower Mississippi Delta region improve its economic condition. The proposal, as envisioned in the budget, is not a new idea since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission considered the idea of creating a new federal commission (Delta Regional Commission), to work in the region, prior to delivering its final report in 1990. Even the idea of working through an expanded or altered Appalachian Regional Commission was discussed. These proposals were rejected by the Delta Commissioners in 1990 because they did not feel that creation of a new federal entity was right for the Delta at that time and The Board of Directors of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center still agrees with that decision. After much deliberation and discussion, the Board would like for you to know that it is opposed to having the \$26 million funding, proposed by the President, channeled through the ARC or a similarly structured federal entity.

Let us clearly state that we do not oppose the Appalachian Regional Commission and would hardly commend it for having helped that region of the U.S. in countless ways over the past thirty three years. LMDD Center Board Members do not believe that the Delta region needs the same kind of program at this time.

The Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center was established to assure that the work of the Commission was not ignored and to provide the Congress and the Administration time to decide on a course of action that would help the Delta to build federal, state and local partnerships to improve the region. The timing appears be right for this to happen and we are very supportive of the Administration's effort to address the needs of the Delta region by proposing targeted funding for the purpose.

You might find it important that the Center has been operating for seven+ years since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission released its final report to the Congress on a very limited budget obtained from various sources. To our credit, we believe that the Center has made progress in helping the region, even under extremely difficult and limited financial situations. In fact, our record shows that at least 65% of all the funds that have been spent by the organization have gone directly toward actual projects that have or will benefit the Delta region. We are successful because we are able to partner with groups in the Delta and with already existing

"Realizing the Dream...Fulfilling the Potential"

The Honorable Trent Lott
May 15, 1998
Page 2

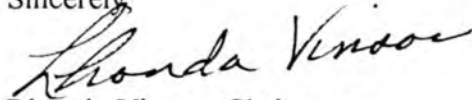
federal agencies such as USDA and the FHWA. What we have learned from this partnership approach becomes the backbone of our recommendation to you.

The Board has carefully considered the situation in the Delta today and is convinced that the proposed federal funding should definitely be provided, but it should be passed to the region through existing federal departments. The Board suggests that funding be placed into the U. S. Department of Agriculture budget where the Offices of Rural Development and Community Development have already been established. These offices and other agencies of the USDA have, for many years, worked cooperatively with many federal entities such as EPA, HUD, EDA and Transportation, to carry out aggressive rural and community development. Assigning the funding through USDA will allow USDA to partner with these other federal entities, already existing groups and organizations such as the LMDD Center, the newly formed Southern EZ/EC Forum and others to carry out Delta initiatives. Our Board would be opposed to the federal government setting up another layer of bureaucracy that would have to undergo a startup phase in order to successfully work in the region. We truly believe that there is no need to create a new federal Commission at this time. We certainly do not believe that expansion of the ARC staff in Washington, DC by 20 people at a cost of \$1.8 million to service the Delta region is a sensible alternative, even if it is only done for an eighteen month incubation period, as proposed, while a new federal Delta Regional Commission is created.

It is the Board's considered opinion that, working through the USDA, the LMDD Center should be considered as a key organization through which to channel the \$26 million, and as Chairperson of the LMDDC Board, I believe it would be in the best interest of our state and the other states that make up the Delta region to have this money in the Delta Region administered by people in the region.

Senator, we ask that you consider our position on this matter; and if you agree, work to help us and other organizations of the Delta region in our efforts to uplift the area. We feel very confident that with USDA as our partner, the LMDD Center and the region's other organizations (local, private, non-profit, state) can effectively and efficiently utilize the President's proposed funding for the Delta region.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson
LMDD Center Board of Directors

c: President Bill Clinton/
Vice President Al Gore

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 15, 1998

The Honorable Thad Cochran
U. S. Senate
326 Russell SOB
Washington, DC 2051

Dear Senator Cochran:

In this year's budget proposed by President Clinton, the first attempt is being made to provide direct funding to help the Lower Mississippi Delta region improve its economic condition. The proposal, as envisioned in the budget, is not a new idea since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission considered the idea of creating a new federal commission (Delta Regional Commission), to work in the region, prior to delivering its final report in 1990. Even the idea of working through an expanded or altered Appalachian Regional Commission was discussed. These proposals were rejected by the Delta Commissioners in 1990 because they did not feel that creation of a new federal entity was right for the Delta at that time and The Board of Directors of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center still agrees with that decision. After much deliberation and discussion, the Board would like for you to know that it is opposed to having the \$26 million funding, proposed by the President, channeled through the ARC or a similarly structured federal entity.

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The Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center was established to assure that the work of the Commission was not ignored and to provide the Congress and the Administration time to decide on a course of action that would help the Delta to build federal, state and local partnerships to improve the region. The timing appears be right for this to happen and we are very supportive of the Administration's effort to address the needs of the Delta region by proposing targeted funding for the purpose.

You might find it important that the Center has been operating for seven+ years since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission released its final report to the Congress on a very limited budget obtained from various sources. To our credit, we believe that the Center has made progress in helping the region, even under extremely difficult and limited financial situations. In fact, our record shows that at least 65% of all the funds that have been spent by the organization have gone directly toward actual projects that have or will benefit the Delta region. We are successful because we are able to partner with groups in the Delta and with already existing

"Realizing the Dream...Fulfilling the Potential"

The Honorable Thad Cochran

May 15, 1998

Page 2

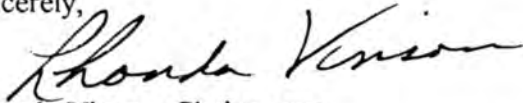
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Senator, we ask that you consider our position on this matter; and if you agree, work to help us and other organizations of the Delta region in our efforts to uplift the area. We feel very confident that with USDA as our partner, the LMDD Center and the region's other organizations (local, private, non-profit, state) can effectively and efficiently utilize the President's proposed funding for the Delta region.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson

LMDD Center Board of Directors

c: President Bill Clinton
Vice President Al Gore

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 15, 1998

The Honorable Fred Thompson
U. S. Senate
523 Dirksen SOB
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Thompson:

In this year's budget proposed by President Clinton, the first attempt is being made to provide direct funding to help the Lower Mississippi Delta region improve its economic condition. The proposal, as envisioned in the budget, is not a new idea since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission considered the idea of creating a new federal commission (Delta Regional Commission), to work in the region, prior to delivering its final report in 1990. Even the idea of working through an expanded or altered Appalachian Regional Commission was discussed. These proposals were rejected by the Delta Commissioners in 1990 because they did not feel that creation of a new federal entity was right for the Delta at that time and The Board of Directors of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center still agrees with that decision. After much deliberation and discussion, the Board would like for you to know that it is opposed to having the \$26 million funding, proposed by the President, channeled through the ARC or a similarly structured federal entity.

Let us clearly state that we do not oppose the Appalachian Regional Commission and would hardily commend it for having helped that region of the U.S. in countless ways over the past thirty three years. LMDD Center Board Members do not believe that the Delta region needs the same kind of program at this time.

The Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center was established to assure that the work of the Commission was not ignored and to provide the Congress and the Administration time to decide on a course of action that would help the Delta to build federal, state and local partnerships to improve the region. The timing appears be right for this to happen and we are very supportive of the Administration's effort to address the needs of the Delta region by proposing targeted funding for the purpose.

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"Realizing the Dream...Fulfilling the Potential"

The Honorable Fred Thompson
May 15, 1998
Page 2

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The Board has carefully considered the situation in the Delta today and is convinced that the proposed federal funding should definitely be provided, but it should be passed to the region through existing federal departments. The Board suggests that funding be placed into the U. S. Department of Agriculture budget where the Offices of Rural Development and Community Development have already been established. These offices and other agencies of the USDA have, for many years, worked cooperatively with many federal entities such as EPA, HUD, EDA and Transportation, to carry out aggressive rural and community development. Assigning the funding through USDA will allow USDA to partner with these other federal entities, already existing groups and organizations such as the LMDD Center, the newly formed Southern EZ/EC Forum and others to carry out Delta initiatives. Our Board would be opposed to the federal government setting up another layer of bureaucracy that would have to undergo a startup phase in order to successfully work in the region. We truly believe that there is no need to create a new federal Commission at this time. We certainly do not believe that expansion of the ARC staff in Washington, DC by 20 people at a cost of \$1.8 million to service the Delta region is a sensible alternative, even if it is only done for an eighteen month incubation period, as proposed, while a new federal Delta Regional Commission is created.

It is the Board's considered opinion that, working through the USDA, the LMDD Center should be considered as a key organization through which to channel the \$26 million, and as Chairperson of the LMDDC Board, I believe it would be in the best interest of our state and the other states that make up the Delta region to have this money in the Delta Region administered by people in the region.

Senator, we ask that you consider our position on this matter; and if you agree, work to help us and other organizations of the Delta region in our efforts to uplift the area. We feel very confident that with USDA as our partner, the LMDD Center and the region's other organizations (local, private, non-profit, state) can effectively and efficiently utilize the President's proposed funding for the Delta region.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson
LMDD Center Board of Directors

c: President Bill Clinton/
Vice President Al Gore

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 15, 1998

The Honorable Bill Frist
U. S. Senate
565 Dirksen SOB
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Frist:

In this year's budget proposed by President Clinton, the first attempt is being made to provide direct funding to help the Lower Mississippi Delta region improve its economic condition. The proposal, as envisioned in the budget, is not a new idea since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission considered the idea of creating a new federal commission (Delta Regional Commission), to work in the region, prior to delivering its final report in 1990. Even the idea of working through an expanded or altered Appalachian Regional Commission was discussed. These proposals were rejected by the Delta Commissioners in 1990 because they did not feel that creation of a new federal entity was right for the Delta at that time and The Board of Directors of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center still agrees with that decision. After much deliberation and discussion, the Board would like for you to know that it is opposed to having the \$26 million funding, proposed by the President, channeled through the ARC or a similarly structured federal entity.

Let us clearly state that we do not oppose the Appalachian Regional Commission and would hardily commend it for having helped that region of the U.S. in countless ways over the past thirty three years. LMDD Center Board Members do not believe that the Delta region needs the same kind of program at this time.

The Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center was established to assure that the work of the Commission was not ignored and to provide the Congress and the Administration time to decide on a course of action that would help the Delta to build federal, state and local partnerships to improve the region. The timing appears be right for this to happen and we are very supportive of the Administration's effort to address the needs of the Delta region by proposing targeted funding for the purpose.

You might find it important that the Center has been operating for seven+ years since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission released its final report to the Congress on a very limited budget obtained from various sources. To our credit, we believe that the Center has made progress in helping the region, even under extremely difficult and limited financial situations. In fact, our record shows that at least 65% of all the funds that have been spent by the organization have gone directly toward actual projects that have or will benefit the Delta region. We are successful because we are able to partner with groups in the Delta and with already existing

The Honorable Bill Frist
May 15, 1998
Page 2

federal agencies such as USDA and the FHWA. What we have learned from this partnership approach becomes the backbone of our recommendation to you.

The Board has carefully considered the situation in the Delta today and is convinced that the proposed federal funding should definitely be provided, but it should be passed to the region through existing federal departments. The Board suggests that funding be placed into the U. S. Department of Agriculture budget where the Offices of Rural Development and Community Development have already been established. These offices and other agencies of the USDA have, for many years, worked cooperatively with many federal entities such as EPA, HUD, EDA and Transportation, to carry out aggressive rural and community development. Assigning the funding through USDA will allow USDA to partner with these other federal entities, already existing groups and organizations such as the LMDD Center, the newly formed Southern EZ/EC Forum and others to carry out Delta initiatives. Our Board would be opposed to the federal government setting up another layer of bureaucracy that would have to undergo a startup phase in order to successfully work in the region. We truly believe that there is no need to create a new federal Commission at this time. We certainly do not believe that expansion of the ARC staff in Washington, DC by 20 people at a cost of \$1.8 million to service the Delta region is a sensible alternative, even if it is only done for an eighteen month incubation period, as proposed, while a new federal Delta Regional Commission is created.

It is the Board's considered opinion that, working through the USDA, the LMDD Center should be considered as a key organization through which to channel the \$26 million, and as Chairperson of the LMDDC Board, I believe it would be in the best interest of our state and the other states that make up the Delta region to have this money in the Delta Region administered by people in the region.

We ask that you consider our position on this matter; and if you agree, work to help us and other organizations of the Delta region in our efforts to uplift the area. We feel very confident that with USDA as our partner, the LMDD Center and the region's other organizations (local, private, non-profit, state) can effectively and efficiently utilize the President's proposed funding for the Delta region.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson
LMDD Center Board of Directors

c: President Bill Clinton /
Vice President Al Gore

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 15, 1998

The Honorable Dale Bumpers
U. S. Senate
229 Dirksen SOB
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Bumpers:

In this year's budget proposed by President Clinton, the first attempt is being made to provide direct funding to help the Lower Mississippi Delta region improve its economic condition. The proposal, as envisioned in the budget, is not a new idea since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission considered the idea of creating a new federal commission (Delta Regional Commission), to work in the region, prior to delivering its final report in 1990. Even the idea of working through an expanded or altered Appalachian Regional Commission was discussed. These proposals were rejected by the Delta Commissioners in 1990 because they did not feel that creation of a new federal entity was right for the Delta at that time and The Board of Directors of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center still agrees with that decision. After much deliberation and discussion, the Board would like for you to know that it is opposed to having the \$26 million funding, proposed by the President, channeled through the ARC or a similarly structured federal entity.

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The Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center was established to assure that the work of the Commission was not ignored and to provide the Congress and the Administration time to decide on a course of action that would help the Delta to build federal, state and local partnerships to improve the region. The timing appears be right for this to happen and we are very supportive of the Administration's effort to address the needs of the Delta region by proposing targeted funding for the purpose.

You might find it important that the Center has been operating for seven+ years since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission released its final report to the Congress on a very limited budget obtained from various sources. To our credit, we believe that the Center has made progress in helping the region, even under extremely difficult and limited financial situations. In fact, our record shows that at least 65% of all the funds that have been spent by the organization have gone directly toward actual projects that have or will benefit the Delta region. We are successful because we are able to partner with groups in the Delta and with already existing

"Realizing the Dream...Fulfilling the Potential"

The Honorable Dale Bumpers
May 15, 1998
Page 2

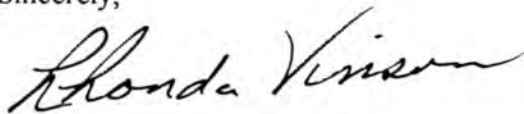
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The Board has carefully considered the situation in the Delta today and is convinced that the proposed federal funding should definitely be provided, but it should be passed to the region through existing federal departments. The Board suggests that funding be placed into the U. S. Department of Agriculture budget where the Offices of Rural Development and Community Development have already been established. These offices and other agencies of the USDA have, for many years, worked cooperatively with many federal entities such as EPA, HUD, EDA and Transportation, to carry out aggressive rural and community development. Assigning the funding through USDA will allow USDA to partner with these other federal entities, already existing groups and organizations such as the LMDD Center, the newly formed Southern EZ/EC Forum and others to carry out Delta initiatives. Our Board would be opposed to the federal government setting up another layer of bureaucracy that would have to undergo a startup phase in order to successfully work in the region. We truly believe that there is no need to create a new federal Commission at this time. We certainly do not believe that expansion of the ARC staff in Washington, DC by 20 people at a cost of \$1.8 million to service the Delta region is a sensible alternative, even if it is only done for an eighteen month incubation period, as proposed, while a new federal Delta Regional Commission is created.

It is the Board's considered opinion that, working through the USDA, the LMDD Center should be considered as a key organization through which to channel the \$26 million, and as Chairperson of the LMDDC Board, I believe it would be in the best interest of our state and the other states that make up the Delta region to have this money in the Delta Region administered by people in the region.

We ask that you consider our position on this matter; and if you agree, work to help us and other organizations of the Delta region in our efforts to uplift the area. We feel very confident that with USDA as our partner, the LMDD Center and the region's other organizations (local, private, non-profit, state) can effectively and efficiently utilize the President's proposed funding for the Delta.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson
LMDD Center Board of Directors

c: President Bill Clinton
Vice President Al Gore

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 15, 1998

The Honorable Tim Hutchinson
U. S. Senate
267 Russell SOB
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hutchinson:

In this year's budget proposed by President Clinton, the first attempt is being made to provide direct funding to help the Lower Mississippi Delta region improve its economic condition. The proposal, as envisioned in the budget, is not a new idea since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission considered the idea of creating a new federal commission (Delta Regional Commission), to work in the region, prior to delivering its final report in 1990. Even the idea of working through an expanded or altered Appalachian Regional Commission was discussed. These proposals were rejected by the Delta Commissioners in 1990 because they did not feel that creation of a new federal entity was right for the Delta at that time and The Board of Directors of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center still agrees with that decision. After much deliberation and discussion, the Board would like for you to know that it is opposed to having the \$26 million funding, proposed by the President, channeled through the ARC or a similarly structured federal entity.

Let us clearly state that we do not oppose the Appalachian Regional Commission and would hardly commend it for having helped that region of the U.S. in countless ways over the past thirty three years. LMDD Center Board Members do not believe that the Delta region needs the same kind of program at this time.

The Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center was established to assure that the work of the Commission was not ignored and to provide the Congress and the Administration time to decide on a course of action that would help the Delta to build federal, state and local partnerships to improve the region. The timing appears be right for this to happen and we are very supportive of the Administration's effort to address the needs of the Delta region by proposing targeted funding for the purpose.

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The Honorable Tim Hutchinson
May 15, 1998
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Senator, we ask that you consider our position on this matter; and if you agree, work to help us and other organizations of the Delta region in our efforts to uplift the area. We feel very confident that with USDA as our partner, the LMDD Center and the region's other organizations (local, private, non-profit, state) can effectively and efficiently utilize the President's proposed funding for the Delta region.

Sincerely,

Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson
LMDD Center Board of Directors

c: President Bill Clinton
Vice President Al Gore

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 15, 1998

The Honorable John Ashcroft
U. S. Senate
170 Russell SOB
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Ashcroft:

In this year's budget proposed by President Clinton, the first attempt is being made to provide direct funding to help the Lower Mississippi Delta region improve its economic condition. The proposal, as envisioned in the budget, is not a new idea since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission considered the idea of creating a new federal commission (Delta Regional Commission), to work in the region, prior to delivering its final report in 1990. Even the idea of working through an expanded or altered Appalachian Regional Commission was discussed. These proposals were rejected by the Delta Commissioners in 1990 because they did not feel that creation of a new federal entity was right for the Delta at that time and The Board of Directors of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center still agrees with that decision. After much deliberation and discussion, the Board would like for you to know that it is opposed to having the \$26 million funding, proposed by the President, channeled through the ARC or a similarly structured federal entity.

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The Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center was established to assure that the work of the Commission was not ignored and to provide the Congress and the Administration time to decide on a course of action that would help the Delta to build federal, state and local partnerships to improve the region. The timing appears be right for this to happen and we are very supportive of the Administration's effort to address the needs of the Delta region by proposing targeted funding for the purpose.

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The Honorable Senator Ashcroft
May 15, 1998
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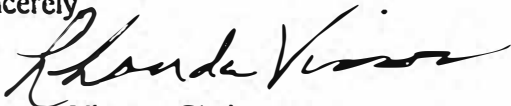
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It is the Board's considered opinion that, working through the USDA, the LMDD Center should be considered as a key organization through which to channel the \$26 million, and as Chairperson of the LMDDC Board, I believe it would be in the best interest of all the states that make up the Delta region to have this money in the Delta Region administered by people in the region.

We ask that you consider our position on this matter; and if you agree, work to help us and other organizations of the Delta region in our efforts to uplift the area. We feel very confident that with USDA as our partner, the LMDD Center and the region's other organizations (local, private, non-profit, state) can effectively and efficiently utilize the President's proposed funding for the Delta region.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson
LMDD Center Board of Directors

c: President Bill Clinton
Vice President Al Gore

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 15, 1998

The Honorable Christopher Bond
U. S. Senate
2930 Russell SOB
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Bond:

In this year's budget proposed by President Clinton, the first attempt is being made to provide direct funding to help the Lower Mississippi Delta region improve its economic condition. The proposal, as envisioned in the budget, is not a new idea since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission considered the idea of creating a new federal commission (Delta Regional Commission), to work in the region, prior to delivering its final report in 1990. Even the idea of working through an expanded or altered Appalachian Regional Commission was discussed. These proposals were rejected by the Delta Commissioners in 1990 because they did not feel that creation of a new federal entity was right for the Delta at that time and The Board of Directors of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center still agrees with that decision. After much deliberation and discussion, the Board would like for you to know that it is opposed to having the \$26 million funding, proposed by the President, channeled through the ARC or a similarly structured federal entity.

Let us clearly state that we do not oppose the Appalachian Regional Commission and would hardily commend it for having helped that region of the U.S. in countless ways over the past thirty three years. LMDD Center Board Members do not believe that the Delta region needs the same kind of program at this time.

The Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center was established to assure that the work of the Commission was not ignored and to provide the Congress and the Administration time to decide on a course of action that would help the Delta to build federal, state and local partnerships to improve the region. The timing appears be right for this to happen and we are very supportive of the Administration's effort to address the needs of the Delta region by proposing targeted funding for the purpose.

You might find it important that the Center has been operating for seven+ years since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission released its final report to the Congress on a very limited budget obtained from various sources. To our credit, we believe that the Center has made progress in helping the region, even under extremely difficult and limited financial situations. In fact, our record shows that at least 65% of all the funds that have been spent by the organization have gone directly toward actual projects that have or will benefit the Delta region. We are successful because we are able to partner with groups in the Delta and with already existing

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The Honorable Senator Bond

May 15, 1998

Page 2

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The Board has carefully considered the situation in the Delta today and is convinced that the proposed federal funding should definitely be provided, but it should be passed to the region through existing federal departments. The Board suggests that funding be placed into the U. S. Department of Agriculture budget where the Offices of Rural Development and Community Development have already been established. These offices and other agencies of the USDA have, for many years, worked cooperatively with many federal entities such as EPA, HUD, EDA and Transportation, to carry out aggressive rural and community development. Assigning the funding through USDA will allow USDA to partner with these other federal entities, already existing groups and organizations such as the LMDD Center, the newly formed Southern EZ/EC Forum and others to carry out Delta initiatives. Our Board would be opposed to the federal government setting up another layer of bureaucracy that would have to undergo a startup phase in order to successfully work in the region. We truly believe that there is no need to create a new federal Commission at this time. We certainly do not believe that expansion of the ARC staff in Washington, DC by 20 people at a cost of \$1.8 million to service the Delta region is a sensible alternative, even if it is only done for an eighteen month incubation period, as proposed, while a new federal Delta Regional Commission is created.

It is the Board's considered opinion that, working through the USDA, the LMDD Center should be considered as a key organization through which to channel the \$26 million, and as Chairperson of the LMDDC Board, I believe it would be in the best interest of our state and the other states that make up the Delta region to have this money in the Delta Region administered by people in the region.

Senator, we ask that you consider our position on this matter; and if you agree, work to help us and other organizations of the Delta region in our efforts to uplift the area. We feel very confident that with USDA as our partner, the LMDD Center and the region's other organizations (local, private, non-profit, state) can effectively and efficiently utilize the President's proposed funding for the Delta region.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson
LMDD Center Board of Directors

c: President Bill Clinton
Vice President Al Gore

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 15, 1998

The Honorable Mary Landrieu
U. S. Senate
136 Hart SOB
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Landrieu:

In this year's budget proposed by President Clinton, the first attempt is being made to provide direct funding to help the Lower Mississippi Delta region improve its economic condition. The proposal, as envisioned in the budget, is not a new idea since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission considered the idea of creating a new federal commission (Delta Regional Commission), to work in the region, prior to delivering its final report in 1990. Even the idea of working through an expanded or altered Appalachian Regional Commission was discussed. These proposals were rejected by the Delta Commissioners in 1990 because they did not feel that creation of a new federal entity was right for the Delta at that time and The Board of Directors of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center still agrees with that decision. After much deliberation and discussion, the Board would like for you to know that it is opposed to having the \$26 million funding, proposed by the President, channeled through the ARC or a similarly structured federal entity.

Let us clearly state that we do not oppose the Appalachian Regional Commission and would hardly commend it for having helped that region of the U.S. in countless ways over the past thirty three years. LMDD Center Board Members do not believe that the Delta region needs the same kind of program at this time.

The Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center was established to assure that the work of the Commission was not ignored and to provide the Congress and the Administration time to decide on a course of action that would help the Delta to build federal, state and local partnerships to improve the region. The timing appears be right for this to happen and we are very supportive of the Administration's effort to address the needs of the Delta region by proposing targeted funding for the purpose.

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"Realizing the Dream...Fulfilling the Potential"

The Honorable Mary Landrieu
May 15, 1998
Page 2

successful because we are able to partner with groups in the Delta and with already existing federal agencies such as USDA and the FHWA. What we have learned from this partnership approach becomes the backbone of our recommendation to you.

The Board has carefully considered the situation in the Delta today and is convinced that the proposed federal funding should definitely be provided, but it should be passed to the region through existing federal departments. The Board suggests that funding be placed into the U. S. Department of Agriculture budget where the Offices of Rural Development and Community Development have already been established. These offices and other agencies of the USDA have, for many years, worked cooperatively with many federal entities such as EPA, HUD, EDA and Transportation, to carry out aggressive rural and community development. Assigning the funding through USDA will allow USDA to partner with these other federal entities, already existing groups and organizations such as the LMDD Center, the newly formed Southern EZ/EC Forum and others to carry out Delta initiatives. Our Board would be opposed to the federal government setting up another layer of bureaucracy that would have to undergo a startup phase in order to successfully work in the region. We truly believe that there is no need to create a new federal Commission at this time. We certainly do not believe that expansion of the ARC staff in Washington, DC by 20 people at a cost of \$1.8 million to service the Delta region is a sensible alternative, even if it is only done for an eighteen month incubation period, as proposed, while a new federal Delta Regional Commission is created.

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Senator, we ask that you consider our position on this matter; and if you agree, work to help us and other organizations of the Delta region in our efforts to uplift the area. We feel very confident that with USDA as our partner, the LMDD Center and the region's other organizations (local, private, non-profit, state) can effectively and efficiently utilize the President's proposed funding for the Delta region.

Sincerely



Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson
LMDD Center Board of Directors

c: President Bill Clinton
Vice President Al Gore

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 15, 1998

The Honorable John Breaux
U. S. Senate
516 Hart SOB
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Breaux:

In this year's budget proposed by President Clinton, the first attempt is being made to provide direct funding to help the Lower Mississippi Delta region improve its economic condition. The proposal, as envisioned in the budget, is not a new idea since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission considered the idea of creating a new federal commission (Delta Regional Commission), to work in the region, prior to delivering its final report in 1990. Even the idea of working through an expanded or altered Appalachian Regional Commission was discussed. These proposals were rejected by the Delta Commissioners in 1990 because they did not feel that creation of a new federal entity was right for the Delta at that time and The Board of Directors of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center still agrees with that decision. After much deliberation and discussion, the Board would like for you to know that it is opposed to having the \$26 million funding, proposed by the President, channeled through the ARC or a similarly structured federal entity.

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You might find it important that the Center has been operating for seven+ years since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission released its final report to the Congress on a very limited budget obtained from various sources. To our credit, we believe that the Center has made progress in helping the region, even under extremely difficult and limited financial situations. In fact, our record shows that at least 65% of all the funds that have been spent by the organization have gone directly toward actual projects that have or will benefit the Delta region. We are successful because we are able to partner with groups in the Delta and with already existing

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The Honorable John Breaux
May 15, 1998
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The Board has carefully considered the situation in the Delta today and is convinced that the proposed federal funding should definitely be provided, but it should be passed to the region through existing federal departments. The Board suggests that funding be placed into the U. S. Department of Agriculture budget where the Offices of Rural Development and Community Development have already been established. These offices and other agencies of the USDA have, for many years, worked cooperatively with many federal entities such as EPA, HUD, EDA and Transportation, to carry out aggressive rural and community development. Assigning the funding through USDA will allow USDA to partner with these other federal entities, already existing groups and organizations such as the LMDD Center, the newly formed Southern EZ/EC Forum and others to carry out Delta initiatives. Our Board would be opposed to the federal government setting up another layer of bureaucracy that would have to undergo a startup phase in order to successfully work in the region. We truly believe that there is no need to create a new federal Commission at this time. We certainly do not believe that expansion of the ARC staff in Washington, DC by 20 people at a cost of \$1.8 million to service the Delta region is a sensible alternative, even if it is only done for an eighteen month incubation period, as proposed, while a new federal Delta Regional Commission is created.

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We ask that you consider our position on this matter; and if you agree, work to help us and other organizations of the Delta region in our efforts to uplift the area. We feel very confident that with USDA as our partner, the LMDD Center and the region's other organizations (local, private, non-profit, state) can effectively and efficiently utilize the President's proposed funding for the Delta region.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson
LMDD Center Board of Directors

c: President Bill Clinton
Vice President Al Gore

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 15, 1998

The Honorable Richard Durbin
U. S. Senate
462 Dirksen SOB
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Durbin:

In this year's budget proposed by President Clinton, the first attempt is being made to provide direct funding to help the Lower Mississippi Delta region improve its economic condition. The proposal, as envisioned in the budget, is not a new idea since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission considered the idea of creating a new federal commission (Delta Regional Commission), to work in the region, prior to delivering its final report in 1990. Even the idea of working through an expanded or altered Appalachian Regional Commission was discussed. These proposals were rejected by the Delta Commissioners in 1990 because they did not feel that creation of a new federal entity was right for the Delta at that time, and The Board of Directors of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center still agrees with that decision. After much deliberation and discussion, the Board would like for you to know that it is opposed to having the \$26 million funding, proposed by the President, channeled through the ARC or a similarly structured federal entity.

Let us clearly state that we do not oppose the Appalachian Regional Commission and would hardly commend it for having helped that region of the U.S. in countless ways over the past thirty-three years. LMDD Center Board Members do not believe that the Delta region needs the same kind of program at this time.

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The Honorable Richard Durbin
May 15, 1998
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It is the Board's considered opinion that, working through the USDA, the LMDD Center should be considered as a key organization through which to channel the \$26 million, and as a representative on the LMDDC Board from Illinois, I believe it would be in the best interest of our state and the other states that make up the Delta region to have this money in the Delta Region administered by people in the region.

We ask that you consider our position on this matter; and if you agree, work to help us and other organizations of the Delta region in our efforts to uplift the area. We feel very confident that with USDA as our partner, the LMDD Center and the region's other organizations (local, private, non-profit, state) can effectively and efficiently utilize the President's proposed funding for the Delta region.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson
LMDD Center Board of Directors

c: President Bill Clinton
Vice President Al Gore

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 15, 1998

The Honorable Carol Mosely-Braun
U. S. Senate
320 Hart SOB
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Mosely-Braun:

In this year's budget proposed by President Clinton, the first attempt is being made to provide direct funding to help the Lower Mississippi Delta region improve its economic condition. The proposal, as envisioned in the budget, is not a new idea since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission considered the idea of creating a new federal commission (Delta Regional Commission), to work in the region, prior to delivering its final report in 1990. Even the idea of working through an expanded or altered Appalachian Regional Commission was discussed. These proposals were rejected by the Delta Commissioners in 1990 because they did not feel that creation of a new federal entity was right for the Delta at that time, and The Board of Directors of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center still agrees with that decision. After much deliberation and discussion, the Board would like for you to know that it is opposed to having the \$26 million funding, proposed by the President, channeled through the ARC or a similarly structured federal entity.

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The Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center was established to assure that the work of the Commission was not ignored and to provide the Congress and the Administration time to decide on a course of action that would help the Delta to build federal, state and local partnerships to improve the region. The timing appears be right for this to happen, and we are very supportive of the Administration's effort to address the needs of the Delta region by proposing targeted funding for the purpose.

You might find it important that the Center has been operating for seven+ years, since the Commission released its final report to the Congress, on a very limited budget obtained from various sources. To our credit, we believe that the Center has made progress in helping the region, even under extremely difficult and limited financial situations. In fact, our record shows that at least 65% of all the funds that have been spent by the organization have gone directly toward actual projects that have or will benefit the Delta region. We are successful because we are able to partner with groups in the Delta and with already existing federal agencies

The Honorable Carol Mosely-Braun
May 15, 1998
Page 2

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The Board has carefully considered the situation in the Delta today and is convinced that the proposed federal funding should definitely be provided, but it should be passed to the region through existing federal departments. The Board suggests that funding be placed into the U. S. Department of Agriculture budget where the Offices of Rural Development and Community Development have already been established. These offices and other agencies of the USDA have, for many years, worked cooperatively with many federal entities, such as EPA, HUD, EDA and Transportation, to carry out aggressive rural and community development. Assigning the funding through USDA will allow USDA to partner with these other federal entities, already existing groups and organizations such as the LMDD Center, the newly formed Southern EZ/EC Forum and others to carry out Delta initiatives. Our Board would be opposed to the federal government setting up another layer of bureaucracy that would have to undergo a startup phase in order to successfully work in the region. We truly believe that there is no need to create a new federal Commission at this time. We certainly do not believe that expansion of the ARC staff in Washington, DC by 20 people at a cost of \$1.8 million to service the Delta region is a sensible alternative, even if it is only done for an eighteen month incubation period, as proposed, while a new federal Delta Regional Commission is created.

It is the Board's considered opinion that, working through the USDA, the LMDD Center should be considered as a key organization through which to channel the \$26 million, and as a representative on the LMDDC Board from Illinois, I believe it would be in the best interest of our state and the other states that make up the Delta region to have this money in the Delta Region administered by people in the region.

Senator, we ask that you consider our position on this matter; and if you agree; work to help us and other organizations of the Delta region in our efforts to uplift the area. We feel very confident that with USDA as our partner, the LMDD Center and the region's other organizations (local, private, non-profit, state) can effectively and efficiently utilize the President's proposed funding for the Delta region.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson
LMDD Center Board of Directors

c: President Bill Clinton
Vice President Al Gore

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 15, 1998

The Honorable Wendell Ford
U. S. Senate
173A Russell SOB
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Ford:

In this year's budget proposed by President Clinton, the first attempt is being made to provide direct funding to help the Lower Mississippi Delta region improve its economic condition. The proposal, as envisioned in the budget, is not a new idea since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission considered the idea of creating a new federal commission (Delta Regional Commission), to work in the region, prior to delivering its final report in 1990. Even the idea of working through an expanded or altered Appalachian Regional Commission was discussed. These proposals were rejected by the Delta Commissioners in 1990 because they did not feel that creation of a new federal entity was right for the Delta at that time, and The Board of Directors of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center still agrees with that decision. After much deliberation and discussion, the Board would like for you to know that it is opposed to having the \$26 million funding, proposed by the President, channeled through the ARC or a similarly structured federal entity.

Let us clearly state that we do not oppose the Appalachian Regional Commission and would hardly commend it for having helped that region of the U.S. in countless ways over the past thirty-three years. LMDD Center Board Members do not believe that the Delta region needs the same kind of program at this time.

The Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center was established to assure that the work of the Commission was not ignored and to provide the Congress and the Administration time to decide on a course of action that would help the Delta to build federal, state and local partnerships to improve the region. The timing appears be right for this to happen, and we are very supportive of the Administration's effort to address the needs of the Delta region by proposing targeted funding for the purpose.

You might find it important that the Center has been operating for seven+ years, since the Commission released its final report to the Congress, on a very limited budget obtained from various sources. To our credit, we believe that the Center has made progress in helping the region, even under extremely difficult and limited financial situations. In fact, our record shows that at least 65% of all the funds that have been spent by the organization have gone directly toward actual projects that have or will benefit the Delta region. We are successful because we are able to partner with groups in the Delta and with already existing federal agencies

"Realizing the Dream...Fulfilling the Potential"

The Honorable Wendell Ford

May 15, 1998

Page 2

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The Board has carefully considered the situation in the Delta today and is convinced that the proposed federal funding should definitely be provided, but it should be passed to the region through existing federal departments. The Board suggests that funding be placed into the U. S. Department of Agriculture budget where the Offices of Rural Development and Community Development have already been established. These offices and other agencies of the USDA have, for many years, worked cooperatively with many federal entities, such as EPA, HUD, EDA and Transportation, to carry out aggressive rural and community development. Assigning the funding through USDA will allow USDA to partner with these other federal entities, already existing groups and organizations such as the LMDD Center, the newly formed Southern EZ/EC Forum and others to carry out Delta initiatives. Our Board would be opposed to the federal government setting up another layer of bureaucracy that would have to undergo a startup phase in order to successfully work in the region. We truly believe that there is no need to create a new federal Commission at this time. We certainly do not believe that expansion of the ARC staff in Washington, DC by 20 people at a cost of \$1.8 million to service the Delta region is a sensible alternative, even if it is only done for an eighteen month incubation period, as proposed, while a new federal Delta Regional Commission is created.

It is the Board's considered opinion that, working through the USDA, the LMDD Center should be considered as a key organization through which to channel the \$26 million, and as chairperson of the LMDDC Board, I believe it would be in the best interest of our state and the other states that make up the Delta region to have this money in the Delta Region administered by people in the region.

We ask that you consider our position on this matter; and if you agree, work to help us and other organizations of the Delta region in our efforts to uplift the area. We feel very confident that with USDA as our partner, the LMDD Center and the region's other organizations (local, private, non-profit, state) can effectively and efficiently utilize the President's proposed funding for the Delta region.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson

LMDD Center Board of Directors

c: President Bill Clinton/
Vice President Al Gore

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 15, 1998

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
U. S. Senate
363 Russell SOB
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator McConnell:

In this year's budget proposed by President Clinton, the first attempt is being made to provide direct funding to help the Lower Mississippi Delta region improve its economic condition. The proposal, as envisioned in the budget, is not a new idea since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission considered the idea of creating a new federal commission (Delta Regional Commission), to work in the region, prior to delivering its final report in 1990. Even the idea of working through an expanded or altered Appalachian Regional Commission was discussed. These proposals were rejected by the Delta Commissioners in 1990 because they did not feel that creation of a new federal entity was right for the Delta at that time, and The Board of Directors of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center still agrees with that decision. After much deliberation and discussion, the Board would like for you to know that it is opposed to having the \$26 million funding, proposed by the President, channeled through the ARC or a similarly structured federal entity.

Let us clearly state that we do not oppose the Appalachian Regional Commission and would hardly commend it for having helped that region of the U.S. in countless ways over the past thirty-three years. LMDD Center Board Members do not believe that the Delta region needs the same kind of program at this time.

The Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center was established to assure that the work of the Commission was not ignored and to provide the Congress and the Administration time to decide on a course of action that would help the Delta to build federal, state and local partnerships to improve the region. The timing appears be right for this to happen, and we are very supportive of the Administration's effort to address the needs of the Delta region by proposing targeted funding for the purpose.

You might find it important that the Center has been operating for seven+ years, since the Commission released its final report to the Congress, on a very limited budget obtained from various sources. To our credit, we believe that the Center has made progress in helping the region, even under extremely difficult and limited financial situations. In fact, our record shows that at least 65% of all the funds that have been spent by the organization have gone directly toward actual projects that have or will benefit the Delta region. We are successful because we are able to partner with groups in the Delta and with already existing

"Realizing the Dream...Fulfilling the Potential"

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
May 15, 1998
Page 2

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The Board has carefully considered the situation in the Delta today and is convinced that the proposed federal funding should definitely be provided, but it should be passed to the region through existing federal departments. The Board suggests that funding be placed into the U. S. Department of Agriculture budget where the Offices of Rural Development and Community Development have already been established. These offices and other agencies of the USDA have, for many years, worked cooperatively with many federal entities, such as EPA, HUD, EDA and Transportation, to carry out aggressive rural and community development. Assigning the funding through USDA will allow USDA to partner with these other federal entities, already existing groups and organizations such as the LMDD Center, the newly formed Southern EZ/EC Forum and others to carry out Delta initiatives. Our Board would be opposed to the federal government setting up another layer of bureaucracy that would have to undergo a startup phase in order to successfully work in the region. We truly believe that there is no need to create a new federal Commission at this time. We certainly do not believe that expansion of the ARC staff in Washington, DC by 20 people at a cost of \$1.8 million to service the Delta region is a sensible alternative, even if it is only done for an eighteen month incubation period, as proposed, while a new federal Delta Regional Commission is created.

It is the Board's considered opinion that, working through the USDA, the LMDD Center should be considered as a key organization through which to channel the \$26 million, and as Chairperson of the LMDDC Board, I believe it would be in the best interest of our state and the other states that make up the Delta region to have this money in the Delta Region administered by people in the region.

Senator, we ask that you consider our position on this matter; and if you agree, work to help us and other organizations of the Delta region in our efforts to uplift the area. We feel very confident that with USDA as our partner, the LMDD Center and the region's other organizations (local, private, non-profit, state) can effectively and efficiently utilize the President's proposed funding for the Delta region.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson
LMDD Center Board of Directors

c: President Bill Clinton
Vice President Al Gore

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7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 15, 1998

The Honorable Bob Livingston
U. S. House of Representatives
2406 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Bob:

In this year's budget proposed by President Clinton, the first attempt is being made to provide direct funding to help the Lower Mississippi Delta region improve its economic condition. The proposal, as envisioned in the budget, is not a new idea since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission considered the idea of creating a new federal commission (Delta Regional Commission), to work in the region, prior to delivering its final report in 1990. Even the idea of working through an expanded or altered Appalachian Regional Commission was discussed. These proposals were rejected by the Delta Commissioners in 1990 because they did not feel that creation of a new federal entity was right for the Delta at that time and The Board of Directors of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center still agrees with that decision. After much deliberation and discussion, the Board would like for you to know that it is opposed to having the \$26 million funding, proposed by the President, channeled through the ARC or a similarly structured federal entity.

Let us clearly state that we do not oppose the Appalachian Regional Commission and would hardily commend it for having helped that region of the U.S. in countless ways over the past thirty three years. LMDD Center Board Members do not believe that the Delta region needs the same kind of program at this time.

The Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center was established to assure that the work of the Commission was not ignored and to provide the Congress and the Administration time to decide on a course of action that would help the Delta to build federal, state and local partnerships to improve the region. The timing appears be right for this to happen and we are very supportive of the Administration's effort to address the needs of the Delta region by proposing targeted funding for the purpose.

You might find it important that the Center has been operating for seven+ years since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission released its final report to the Congress on a very limited budget obtained from various sources. To our credit, we believe that the Center has made progress in helping the region, even under extremely difficult and limited financial situations. In fact, our record shows that at least 65% of all the funds that have been spent by the organization have gone directly toward actual projects that have or will benefit the Delta region. We are successful because we are able to partner with groups in the Delta and with already existing

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The Honorable Bob Livingston
May 15, 1998
Page 2

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The Board has carefully considered the situation in the Delta today and is convinced that the proposed federal funding should definitely be provided, but it should be passed to the region through existing federal departments. The Board suggests that funding be placed into the U. S. Department of Agriculture budget where the Offices of Rural Development and Community Development have already been established. These offices and other agencies of the USDA have, for many years, worked cooperatively with many federal entities such as EPA, HUD, EDA and Transportation, to carry out aggressive rural and community development. Assigning the funding through USDA will allow USDA to partner with these other federal entities, already existing groups and organizations such as the LMDD Center, the newly formed Southern EZ/EC Forum and others to carry out Delta initiatives. Our Board would be opposed to the federal government setting up another layer of bureaucracy that would have to undergo a startup phase in order to successfully work in the region. We truly believe that there is no need to create a new federal Commission at this time. We certainly do not believe that expansion of the ARC staff in Washington, DC by 20 people at a cost of \$1.8 million to service the Delta region is a sensible alternative, even if it is only done for an eighteen month incubation period, as proposed, while a new federal Delta Regional Commission is created.

It is the Board's considered opinion that, working through the USDA, the LMDD Center should be considered as a key organization through which to channel the \$26 million, and as Chairperson of the LMDDC Board, I believe it would be in the best interest of our state and the other states that make up the Delta region to have this money in the Delta Region administered by people in the region.

Mr. Speaker, we ask that you consider our position on this matter; and if you agree, work to help us and other organizations of the Delta region in our efforts to uplift the area. We feel very confident that with USDA as our partner, the LMDD Center and the region's other organizations (local, private, non-profit, state) can effectively and efficiently utilize the President's proposed funding for the Delta region.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson
LMDD Center Board of Directors

c: President Bill Clinton
Vice President Al Gore

LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC.

7777 WALNUT GROVE ROAD, BOX 27

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

(901) 753-1400

May 15, 1998

The Honorable Richard Gephardt
U. S. House of Representatives
1226 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Gephardt:

In this year's budget proposed by President Clinton, the first attempt is being made to provide direct funding to help the Lower Mississippi Delta region improve its economic condition. The proposal, as envisioned in the budget, is not a new idea since the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission considered the idea of creating a new federal commission (Delta Regional Commission), to work in the region, prior to delivering its final report in 1990. Even the idea of working through an expanded or altered Appalachian Regional Commission was discussed. These proposals were rejected by the Delta Commissioners in 1990 because they did not feel that creation of a new federal entity was right for the Delta at that time and The Board of Directors of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center still agrees with that decision. After much deliberation and discussion, the Board would like for you to know that it is opposed to having the \$26 million funding, proposed by the President, channeled through the ARC or a similarly structured federal entity.

Let us clearly state that we do not oppose the Appalachian Regional Commission and would hardly commend it for having helped that region of the U.S. in countless ways over the past thirty three years. LMDD Center Board Members do not believe that the Delta region needs the same kind of program at this time.

The Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center was established to assure that the work of the Commission was not ignored and to provide the Congress and the Administration time to decide on a course of action that would help the Delta to build federal, state and local partnerships to improve the region. The timing appears be right for this to happen and we are very supportive of the Administration's effort to address the needs of the Delta region by proposing targeted funding for the purpose.

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The Honorable Richard Gephardt
May 15, 1998
Page 2

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The Board has carefully considered the situation in the Delta today and is convinced that the proposed federal funding should definitely be provided, but it should be passed to the region through existing federal departments. The Board suggests that funding be placed into the U. S. Department of Agriculture budget where the Offices of Rural Development and Community Development have already been established. These offices and other agencies of the USDA have, for many years, worked cooperatively with many federal entities such as EPA, HUD, EDA and Transportation, to carry out aggressive rural and community development. Assigning the funding through USDA will allow USDA to partner with these other federal entities, already existing groups and organizations such as the LMDD Center, the newly formed Southern EZ/EC Forum and others to carry out Delta initiatives. Our Board would be opposed to the federal government setting up another layer of bureaucracy that would have to undergo a startup phase in order to successfully work in the region. We truly believe that there is no need to create a new federal Commission at this time. We certainly do not believe that expansion of the ARC staff in Washington, DC by 20 people at a cost of \$1.8 million to service the Delta region is a sensible alternative, even if it is only done for an eighteen month incubation period, as proposed, while a new federal Delta Regional Commission is created.

It is the Board's considered opinion that, working through the USDA, the LMDD Center should be considered as a key organization through which to channel the \$26 million, and as Chairperson of the LMDDC Board, I believe it would be in the best interest of our state and the other states that make up the Delta region to have this money in the Delta Region administered by people in the region.

We ask that you consider our position on this matter; and if you agree, work to help us and other organizations of the Delta region in our efforts to uplift the area. We feel very confident that with USDA as our partner, the LMDD Center and the region's other organizations (local, private, non-profit, state) can effectively and efficiently utilize the President's proposed funding for the Delta region.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Vinson, Chairperson
LMDD Center Board of Directors

c: President Bill Clinton /
Vice President Al Gore

5/26/98
JH

USAID



U.S. AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

The Administrator

5/27/98

Send to Nash?

Yes ☒

No ☐

cc: John Podesta C
Sara Lathum
Burbine Bowler

May 26, 1998

President Bill Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President:

I understand that Bill Richardson may be in the
Energy Department. If this is accurate,
I am considering Bill's U.N. position.

I know the U.N. system well and have worked closely with the
Secretary General and the heads of the voluntary agencies. I
believe I would do a credible job in representing you at the
United Nations at a difficult time in the relationship.

As you know, your Secretary of State and National Security
Advisor are old friends from the Carter Administration. I
believe they would feel very comfortable working with me as a
part of the foreign policy team.

I have very much enjoyed the challenge of running USAID and
I have appreciated your support and that of Hillary's. My desire
to move into the U.N. position relates more to my need for a new
challenge than any unhappiness with my experience here.

I have been at USAID for five years now. The crisis
relating to Congress' desire to abolish the agency has passed.
Our reforms have given AID a strong reputation and there is a
much better understanding of the importance of foreign assistance
to our foreign policy objectives. I have done what I can do and
I would like now to return to the diplomatic arena, enriched by
my exposure to development work.

This is an unusual way to pursue a senior position, but I
wanted you to know firsthand of my interest. Our Africa trip
only added to my commitment to you and your Presidency and to my
desire to work more closely with you.

We need to resolve our disputes with the United Nations so that we can continue to use creative multilateral diplomacy to mitigate conflicts and pursue U.S. interests. A person with good relationships with Congress and within the Administration can help you advance that agenda. Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian", written in a cursive style.

J. Brian Atwood