

Terry Edmonds

Terry —

Some intentional
edits suggested by
Helen Howell, our
new recruit. I
agree with unless
otherwise noted. But
I leave final decision to
you. The thing I felt

most strongly
about was
the "defining
challenge" stuff.

Thanks,



WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: DECEMBER 1, 1995 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: DECEMBER 4 9:00am

SUBJECT: REMARKS TO THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON HIV AND AIDS

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	☒	☐	McCURRY	☐	☐
PANETTA	☒	☐	McGINTY	☐	☐
McLARTY	☐	☐	NASH	☐	☐
ICKES	☒	☐	QUINN	☐	☐
BOWLES	☐	☐	RASCO	☒	☐
RIVLIN	☐	☐	SOSNIK	☒	☐
BAER	☒	☐	STEPHANOPOULOS	☒	☐
CURRY	☐	☐	STIGLITZ	☐	☐
EMANUEL	☐	☐	STREETT	☐	☐
GIBBONS	☐	☐	TYSON	☐	☐
GRIFFIN	☐	☐	WALLEY	☐	☐
HALE	☐	☐	WILLIAMS	☐	☐
HERMAN	☐	☐	<u>M. Scott</u>	☒	☐
HIGGINS	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐
KLAIN	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐
LAKE	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐
LINDSEY	☐	☐	_____	☐	☐

REMARKS: PLEASE REVIEW AND SEND COMMENTS TO TERRY EDMONDS BY 9:00AM MONDAY. THANK YOU.

RESPONSE:

12/1/95
12:30 pm

Here is a draft of the President's remarks to the White House Conference on HIV and AIDS. Please review and send comments to Terry Edmonds by 9:00 Monday.

cc: George Stephanopoulos
Carol Rasco
Harold Ickes
Doug Sosnik
Don Baer

95 DEC 11 P12:56

draft 12/1/95

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON HIV AND AIDS
THE WHITE HOUSE
DECEMBER 6, 1995

95 DEC 1
P/2: 56

[Acknowledgements: Patsy Fleming, Secretary Shalala [other Cabinet members?], Scott Hitt, distinguished guests.] *upbeat stat (?)*

Let me first welcome each of you to this historic White House Conference on HIV and AIDS. You are the frontline faces and voices of our national commitment to conquer the devastating disease ~~known as~~ AIDS. I welcome you and I thank you, not only for your participation here today but for the work you do every day to improve the lives of the people of our nation and around the world.

I'd also like to thank Dr. Hitt and the members of the President's Advisory Council on HIV and AIDS for their work on this critical issue and for suggesting that we convene this meeting.

And I want to express my appreciation to the two extraordinary Americans who have just shared the stories of their lives with all of us. It is the passion, the commitment, and, yes, the anger of people like Sean Sasser and Eileen Mitzman that remind us all of the extraordinary courage it takes to hold on to hope as we continue to even the odds in this struggle.

Each generation of Americans has ^{II} faced an important challenge that has, in many ways, defined their time here on earth. For my parents' generation, World War ~~Two~~ was that defining moment, unifying a nation against a common foe. For my ~~own~~ generation, the civil rights movement provided the focus and the drive of our lives. But ~~for the generation of my own child and all of those in her age group, the epidemic of HIV and AIDS may well be that defining challenge.~~ *my daughter's daughter*

My daughter and her friends are growing up in the shadow of something we could never have imagined. They are coming of age in ^a world ^{where} AIDS is a very sobering reality.

That reality has already changed the lives of all of us in this room. It has taken from us too many friends and ~~too many~~ loved ones much too soon. It has shaken our faith in the future. But it has also brought us together and inspired a community spirit that strengthens our values as a nation.

It is our collective responsibility to rise to this challenge and change the future for our ourselves, ~~for~~ our children, and ~~for~~ ^{our} ~~their~~ children. We can do this. In fact, we must do this.

grandchildren
grand

I want to share with you the story of just one of the people who is here today -- ~~just~~ one of the human faces and human voices of AIDS.

It's the story of a young man who grew up in a typical American suburb as part of a typical American family. He attended college and became politically active. His quick mind and active spirit marked him as a "comer," and after graduating he joined the Corporation for National Service to help start AmeriCorps. It was while he was working for AmeriCorps that he found out he ~~was~~ ^{is} HIV-positive. He was 23 years old.

Demetri Moshoyannis took that news as a challenge, ^{-- a} a challenge to use his communication ^{skills}, his organizational ^{skills}, and his leadership skills to educate and support his peers and help them escape the fate that ~~had been~~ visited upon him.

It's that combination of heartbreak and hope that makes this epidemic so unique. ~~And it is what~~ challenges all of us to channel our energy and our talent into the fight to make AIDS ~~a thing of the past~~ ^{eliminate} AIDS.

Ten days ago, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that our nation has reached another sad milestone in the AIDS epidemic. Half a million Americans have now been diagnosed with AIDS and more than 300,000 men, women, and children have already died of AIDS.

As we meet ^{today} ~~on this day~~, 120 more Americans will lose their lives to AIDS, another 220 people will be diagnosed with the disease, and nearly 140 people in this country will become infected with HIV. And that will happen again tomorrow and the day after that ~~and the day after that~~. It will continue to happen until we succeed in our efforts to defeat this epidemic.

That is why this meeting is so important. It is an opportunity for us to refocus and reenergize our national commitment to ending this epidemic. It is a time to rally our troops for the fight ahead and arm them with the weapons they need to win this battle. You and I have some important work to do.

We have a common goal -- a cure ^{set} ~~for~~ for all those who are living with HIV and a vaccine to protect ~~all of us~~ from this deadly virus. Let's be very clear on that. A cure and a vaccine are our number one priority.

In my own lifetime, we have eliminated smallpox from our planet. We have eliminated polio from our hemisphere. And we are within striking distance of controlling measles. We must -- we must -- find a way to rid our planet of the threat of HIV.

I am proud of the work we have done in these last three years to infuse new resources, new focus, and new leadership into our AIDS research effort. We have increased funding for AIDS research by more than 25 percent. We have dramatically strengthened the Office of AIDS Research, and we have focused our work on basic science and applied research so that we can ~~concurrently~~ unlock the mysteries of HIV while we pursue treatment opportunities ~~that~~ ^{to} extend and improve the quality of ~~the lives of~~ ^{A life for} people living with HIV.

This investment in science has already paid tremendous dividends. Today, people with HIV live twice as long as they did just ten years ago. AIDS-related conditions that often meant a quick and many times painful death for people living with HIV can now be treated and even prevented.

And we have reason to believe that there will ^{be} more progress in the near future. New classes of AIDS drugs, ~~are~~ being approved for use by the FDA, ~~that~~ will help to restore the damaged immune systems of people with HIV. Combination drug therapies are showing great promise as a means for controlling the virus in the human body.

^{And just} And just last year we were able to show that the use of drug therapy could actually block HIV transmission from mother to child. Our scientists tell me that it is within our grasp to virtually eliminate pediatric AIDS by the end of this decade. This is neither science fiction nor a distant dream. It can be accomplished by offering all pregnant women HIV counseling and testing, and guaranteeing that they have access to the treatment they need to protect their unborn children. If we do this, we can have a generation of Americans born without HIV. We can do this -- and we will.

^{set} [pro-life terminology]

These advances have resulted in longer and fuller lives for people living with HIV, but are they enough? Absolutely not! We must do more.

I am taking three steps today that I believe will move us forward at a faster pace.

First, I am asking the Vice President to convene a meeting of scientists and leaders of the pharmaceutical industry to identify ways to accelerate the development of vaccines, therapeutics, and microbicides that can protect people from HIV and the infections it causes. There are no guarantees in science, but the collective will of government and industry can overcome even the biggest obstacles.

Second, I am asking Patsy Fleming to convene an interdepartmental task force working group to develop a coordinated plan for AIDS

research, including a coordinated research budget. I will expect their report within 90 days.

Third, I want to ~~make clear~~ ^{clarify} my personal commitment to make every feasible effort to find a cure and an effective vaccine or vaccines. To that end, I am intensifying my relationship with the Office of National AIDS Policy. We can't afford to miss any new opportunities. We can't afford any unnecessary delays. That's why I am asking Patsy Fleming to provide me even more regular updates on the emerging opportunities and obstacles in this struggle. No President can promise success in such an effort but I need to know what needs to be done to move ~~this~~ ^{us} forward. ~~along~~

Of course our work does not end in the laboratories of our great research institutions. It continues in the clinics and the hospitals and the doctors' offices around the country where people with HIV and AIDS go for the care they need to survive, ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~maintain their health~~ and to preserve their dignity. When we make advances in science we must match those strides with improvements in our delivery of health care.

For people with AIDS, the current discussions over a balanced federal budget are not some distant political firefight. Let me talk for a few minutes about a subject that is very important to me -- the future of Medicaid.

For people with AIDS, Medicaid is a lifeline of support. Medicaid provides health care for nearly half of the 200,000 Americans who are living with AIDS including 90 percent of the children. It provides access to doctors, hospitals, prescription drugs, and home care that allows people with HIV and AIDS to live their lives more fully. Medicaid pays for ~~the~~ drugs that keep HIV under control for longer and longer periods of time, and it pays for ~~the~~ drugs that prevent ~~the~~ infections that often end the lives of those with AIDS. Medicaid pays for the care that allows families to stay together.

Yet today, Medicaid is under attack by the Republican leaders in Congress who want to slash ~~its~~ spending and eliminate the thirty-year ~~common ground~~ commitment we have made to the poor, the elderly, and those with disabilities. We cannot, we must not, and I will not allow us to destroy this vital lifeline.

Medicaid cannot do the job alone. That's why we created the Ryan White CARE Act to plug the holes in our health care system that left many people with HIV and AIDS out in the cold. Last year, more than 360,000 Americans received care under the Ryan White Act.

When I ran for President, I promised to fully fund the CARE Act and we have. Funding has increased by 108 percent, more than

doubling the number of cities receiving funds and enabling every state in the country to receive some level of assistance.

last The CARE Act must be extended for another five years. Both houses of Congress have approved legislation to accomplish this but final legislation remains stalled. That's why ~~on last~~ *I sent a letter* Friday, World AIDS Day, ~~I sent a letter~~ to the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader, asking them to make every effort to get me a final bill by the end of this month so that I can sign it, and we can get on with the work ahead.

I am also fighting for ~~the~~ *g* funding increases that *I have* requested for the CARE Act as well as housing programs for people with AIDS and our AIDS prevention programs at CDC.

I am concerned by the continued rate of new infections in this country. In the 1980s, we made important progress in reducing the number of new infections by nearly 50 percent. But for the last five years, the estimated number of infections has hovered between 40,000 and 60,000 per year. We also know that as many as half of those infections occur among people under the age of 25 and half are among teenagers. Any new infection is an unnecessary infection. I am setting a goal, today, of reducing the number of new infections in the United States by half in the next five years and to zero within the next decade.

Until we have a cure and a vaccine, education and prevention are our best hope. For prevention to work it must be targeted and it must be sustained. We saw that at work in the gay community in the 1980s, when activists overcame the inertia of ~~their~~ government to protect ~~their~~ lives.

We must pay particular attention to two populations who are at the center of this epidemic -- young people and those who abuse drugs. I was pleased to see the new public service announcements released last week by Secretary Shalala. They point young people toward the tools they need to protect themselves.

We also need to recognize that substance abuse treatment is a form of HIV prevention. We must ensure that those who are receiving drug treatment also receive AIDS prevention services at the same time. We have increased the number of drug treatment slots available in this country and I am working to convince ~~the~~ Congress to approve our requests ~~for money to bring that number even higher~~ *to fund even more.*

I have also asked the CDC to convene a meeting of state and local health officials and their counterparts on substance abuse to develop an action plan to assure the integration of HIV prevention and substance abuse prevention.

We cannot afford to freeze prevention funding -- as the Republicans in Congress have proposed -- because the epidemic cannot be frozen. It will just grow and grow and grow.

We also cannot forget the basic human rights of people living with HIV and AIDS. The stories of AIDS related discrimination break the hearts of all Americans of conscience.

Five years ago, our nation took a huge step forward toward a more just society when we enacted the Americans with Disabilities Act. It offers more than 40 million Americans who are living with physical or mental disabilities -- including those who are living with HIV and AIDS -- protection against discrimination.

The Justice Department, the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, and the Department of Health and Human Services have been vigorously enforcing the A.D.A. And we are about to launch a new effort to ensure that health care facilities -- nursing homes in particular -- are providing equal access to people with HIV or AIDS.

Still, all of us can do more. We can start by cleaning our own house. I am asking Patsy Fleming to conduct an immediate 60-day review of all government programs that require HIV testing as a condition of participation in government service and government programs. Those that do not have a strong public health ~~rational~~ must be amended or they must ~~be~~ended.

[rationale] We must continue to examine our societal attitudes toward racial and ethnic minorities, gays and lesbians, and others for whom the fear of AIDS becomes a convenient excuse for discrimination. We cannot let our fear outweigh our common sense or our compassion. If we do, all of us will lose.

As I have said before, ~~the thing we have to remember is~~ ^{we must remember} that people with AIDS, and those who are living with HIV, are part of our American family. Whether they are gay or straight, black, white, Native American, Latino or Asian American, they are our sons and daughters; our brothers and sisters; ~~our aunts and uncles; and~~ our mothers and fathers; ~~our grandmothers and grandfathers.~~ They are Americans one and all. They need our compassion. They deserve our respect.

Finally, let me say that the fight against AIDS is international in scope. HIV knows no geographic boundaries. It is found on every continent and virtually every country. The World Health Organization estimates that more than 18 million men, women, and children are living with HIV around the world. The United States is and will remain a full partner in the international effort to fight the pandemic.

this

As a world leader, we have a moral and a national responsibility to help developing nations with prevention programs, medical care, and other vital services. We also have much to learn from them. And when we do find the cure and the vaccine that we seek, it will not only be a victory for America, it will be a victory for the world.

When this country was in the throes of another sickness that threatened to tear us apart -- the sickness of slavery -- Frederick Douglas, the great American abolitionist, wrote:

"It is not light that is needed, but fire. It is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake. The feeling of the nation must be quickened. The conscience of the nation must be roused. The propriety of the nation must be startled."

Each of you have been the thunder and the lightening. Each of you is helping to awaken the conscience of our nation. Our challenge is to draw more of our citizens into our circle of hope. Together, I am certain, we can change our future for the better.

Thank you and God bless you all.

12-1-93

Todd -

James Castello
has asked for the
attached document -
Okay to give to him?

Yes ☒

No ☐

Carol

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Dear Donald:

Thank you for your letter regarding the bill to disapprove of amendments to the Federal Sentencing Guidelines relating to the lowering of crack sentences. As you know, I signed this bill on October 30, 1995.

You are correct in emphasizing the importance of fairness in the criminal justice system. I am committed to ensuring that federal law enforcement under my Administration adheres to the principle of equal protection under the law. However, I believe that tough penalties are warranted for crack distribution because of the devastating impact crack has had on communities across America, especially inner-city communities.

Current federal law does require a substantial disparity between sentences for crack as compared to equal amounts of powder cocaine, and for that reason I stated, upon signing the bill, that some adjustment to the current sentencing scheme is warranted. The legislation I signed directs the United States Sentencing Commission to submit new recommendations to Congress. I have also ordered the Attorney General to promptly develop enforcement strategies to punish those who traffic in large amounts of powder cocaine, with knowledge that it will be converted into crack, as severely as we punish those who distribute crack itself.

Moreover, the crime bill that we proposed and that was enacted last year created a safety valve that allows judges to depart from the mandatory minimum penalties for crack cocaine if the defendant doesn't have a prior criminal record, did not use violence or cause serious injury or death, was not a leader or organizer and cooperated with the government.

What we need is a sentencing scheme that is tough but fair. I want to assure you that I am willing and ready to work with you, the Commission, and the Department of Justice to address this important issue.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

The Honorable Donald Payne
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
November 21, 1995

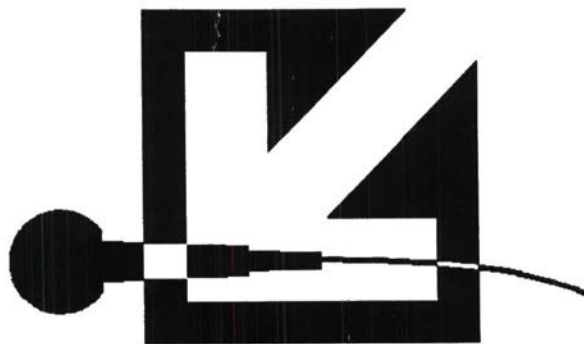
MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: SUSAN BROPHY *SB*
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE

Attached for your signature are letters to various members of the Congressional Black Caucus concerning federal sentencing guidelines. The letters will be sent to:

Donald Payne (D-NJ)
Maxine Waters (D-CA)
Floyd Flake (D-NY)
Bennie Thompson (D-MS)
James Clyburn (D-SC)
Kweisi Mfume (D-MD)
Charles Rangel (D-NY)
Melvin Watt (D-NC)
William Jefferson (D-LA)
Corrine Brown (D-FL)
Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)
John Lewis (D-GA)
Earl Hilliard (D-AL)
Cynthia McKinney (D-GA)
Major Owens (D-NY)
Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX)
Edolphus Towns (D-NY)
Barbara-Rose Collins (D-MI)
Robert Scott (D-VA)
Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC)

95 NOV 21 PM 23



south by southwest

November 30, 1995

President Bill Clinton
c/o Mr. Leon Panetta, Chief of Staff
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

As you may or may not be aware, this next March will mark the tenth anniversary of the first South By Southwest Music and Media Conference (SXSW), an event that has made a unique contribution to pop culture in recent years. SXSW is a music industry conference and music festival, and has grown to become the largest event of its kind in North America. Our hope is that you would come to Austin and deliver the SXSW keynote address on March 14, 1996 at 10:30 am. Our plan would be to have the Reverend Al Green perform following your remarks.

Past SXSW keynote speakers include another Arkansas native, Mr. Johnny Cash, and Texas Governor Ann Richards. You would have the opportunity to address an audience of up to 5000 people from all across the United States and a dozen other countries. Most of the audience of SXSW registrants would be musicians and journalists, along with executives from virtually every important music business company from Los Angeles, New York, and Nashville. The journalists will primarily be lifestyle writers and music critics across a wide spectrum: from the alternative weeklies (LA Weekly, Chicago Reader) to major dailies (New York Times, Dallas Morning News) to music magazines (SPIN, Rolling Stone) to cable (MTV, VH1).

SXSW's function in the entertainment world is to offer a convention geared more for the creative side of the music business, than the manufacturing/sales side. Our registrants are the artists themselves along with the business people and talent scouts who work with them to promote and develop their careers. Nearly six hundred groups and solo artists will perform over four nights of the music festival, showcasing to the journalists and talent buyers present at the conference. Speaking at SXSW would afford you an avenue to directly address key members of the nation's creative community for music, and the media outlets that cover that industry.

SXSW can offer something unique to you beyond more exposure in Rolling Stone and on MTV. SXSW is in many ways a tribal meeting, or network, of people in the music business whose bond is that they are passionate about encouraging the success of great music. Our registrants are very concerned about where our culture is heading, and they would be a very open and friendly audience during an important period of the campaign. If you could harness the potential energy of the influential, creative people attending SXSW next March, it would have profound implications for your ability to shape ideas in popular culture during your second term. Plus, folks almost always have a lot of fun while they're at SXSW.

On a more personal note, for those of us here in Austin and at SXSW, it would be an honor beyond our ability to fully comprehend, if you were able to make time to join us next March.

Kindest regards,

Roland Swenson
Managing Director

from Panetta's office

should we send to
scheduling for
appropriate action?

Deb

p.o. box 4999 • Austin, TX 78765 • 512/467-7979 • fax 512/451-0754

cc: Cong. Lloyd Doggett

LLOYD DOGGETT
10TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

COMMITTEE ON THE
BUDGET

COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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(202) 225-4886
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Mr. Roland Swenson
Managing Director
South by Southwest
PO Box 4999
Austin, TX 78765

Dear Mr. Swenson:

Thank you for your recent communication regarding the 10th anniversary of the South by Southwest Music and Media Conference. Although we're still several months away from this important and wildly successful program, it seems though you and your staff are well on the way to creating another great Austin cultural event.

To that end, I am pleased to offer as much support as possible in inviting President Clinton to deliver SXSW's keynote address on March 14.

I believe the best way to proceed is for you to directly invite the President to address the audience, then for me to follow up with a letter urging him to attend. I agree that, should the President agree to deliver remarks at SXSW, it would be beneficial for everyone involved. Clearly, SXSW has created a strong following at the local, national and international levels, and I hope that the President will seriously consider this opportunity.

Your invitation to President Clinton should be directed to:

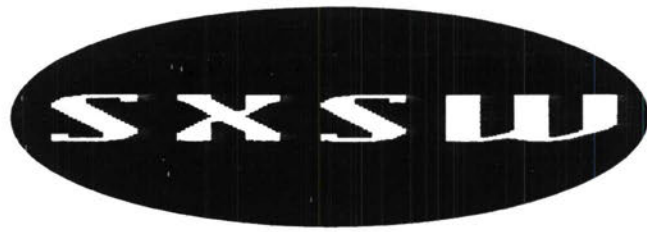
Mr. Leon Panetta
Chief of Staff
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20500

Please provide a copy of your correspondence with the White House to my Washington office, and I will follow-up with the appropriate scheduling staff there. I hope that together we can help make this work!

Sincerely


Lloyd Doggett

LD:jcn



BEST

OF

PRESS

95

march 15 - 19
austin, texas

A SMASHING TIME

At SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST, if you schmooze, you lose

By David Fricke

ANYONE WHO THINKS the annual South by Southwest Music and Media Conference, in Austin, Texas, has become too big for its own good wasn't at the Austin Music Hall at 8 p.m. on March 16.

While many of SXSW '95's more than 4,600 registrants were dawdling over barbecue dinners or networking in the lobby bar of the Four Seasons hotel, country-music patriarch Willie Nelson jump-started the con-fab's long clubland weekend — four nights, 32 venues and 550 acts — with a memorable surprise appearance, performing an hour's worth of sweet, twangy Western swing for an astonishingly small audience of barely 200 badge holders. Unfazed by the turnout and fronting a fine quintet of old-timers, including the great violinist Johnny Gimble, a former member of Bob Wills' Texas Playboys, Nelson plainly enjoyed the parlor-room intimacy of the show, taking requests for "Blue Eyes Crying in the Rain" and "Whiskey River." After two encores, he even hung around to autograph laminated SXSW passes for awestruck fans.

Which just goes to prove, when you schmooze, you lose.

There was still plenty of evidence that SXSW — which celebrated its ninth birthday this year — has become the pre-eminent alterna-rock expense-account shindig on the music-industry calendar. One well-placed incendiary device at Liberty Lunch would have wiped out much of the American rock-crit establishment, which turned out en masse to see the country-feedback combo Wilco. At the Steamboat you couldn't flex your elbow in the sardine-tight crowd without jabbing some industry sharpie on hand to catch the high-speed pop of the Presidents of the United States of America.

They were worth the crush. Starting with a lyrically customized shot of the MC5's "Kick Out the Jams" ("Well, I've been elected to rock your asses till midnight/This is my term, I've shaved off my perm, but it's all right!"), the Seattle trio whipped through its manic-punk originals like the Minutemen with a Cheap Trick jones. Guitarist Dave Dederer and bassist Chris Ballew used only five strings between 'em — Dederer's ax had three,



Escovedo with Buick MacKane



Hamell: Attack-dog folk

Ballew's "bassitar" got the rest — but fattened up their skeletal harmonics with crude, fuzz-toned exuberance.

Bald, bold and superbard, Edward Hamell — who works the Austin club circuit as Hamell on Trial — didn't even use electricity. Looking like a homicidal Otto Preminger and armed with just a battered acoustic guitar, Hamell blew away a capacity house at the Electric Lounge with his attack-dog protest folk and ferocious staccato strumming (think Hüsker Dü on Folkways Records). After doing one sidesplitting talking blues about how he once bumped into John Lennon at an art museum in Syracuse, N.Y., in the early '70s (Lennon told him to "fuck off"), Hamell laid out his core lyric philosophy with a line from his potent debut LP, *Big as Life*: "I'm all alone now, and I got my guitar/Let's think about some stuff we can smash."

For sheer kitsch-defying chutzpah, it was hard to beat *Jesus Christ Superstar — A Resurrection*, a remarkably earnest stage recreation at the Austin Music Hall of the Andrew Lloyd Webber/Tim Rice musical, which was based on the recent double-CD tribute album of the same name. Now let's face it: Lloyd Webber's cod-pop score and Rice's hippie-theology libretto were basically *Hair* in a hair shirt, *Cats* with camels.



A couple of crazy Presidents

But it was hard not to admire the low-budget verve with which the cast — 70-plus members strong, featuring members of Atlanta and Athens, Ga., bands like Five-Eight, Big Fish Ensemble and Uncle Green — refried the Gospels: moshing disciples; Pharisees dressed up like *Star Wars* barflies; beer kegs rolled out, frat-party style, for the Last Supper. And in an ingenious (or blasphemous, depending on your interpretation) casting twist, the roles of Christ and Mary Magdalene were both played by lesbians — Amy Ray and Emily Saliers, respectively, of the Indigo Girls.

Other revelations, many of them well off the beaten biz-weasel track, included the atomic punkabilly and gold-lamé Elvis gyrations of ex-Flamin' Groovie Roy Loney; Paul K and the Weathermen's gnarly folk blues, charged with the argumentative kick of Neil Young's *Time Fades*

Away band; the pure dance-party joy of conjunto accordion master Flaco Jimenez; the Dashboard Saviors' gin-soaked roots 'n' distortion grooves; and the white-knuckled riff crunch of singer/songwriter Alejandro Escovedo's garage-glam side project Buick MacKane (the name comes from a T. Rex song title), who managed to do equal demolition-guitar justice to Rod Stewart's "Hot Legs" and "Loose," by the Stooges.

And then there were Vida, featuring the battle-hardened punk icons Dez Cadena, former singer and guitarist with Black Flag, and George Hurley, the ex-drummer of the Minutemen. Hitting the stage at Emo's Jr. in the early evening, the band raged through a set of muscular, unrepentantly grungy metal for about a dozen people. While the schmooze was in full effect elsewhere, Vida lit into "Ponce," a Thin Lizzy-meets-the-Flag fuzz bomb powered by Cadena's die-hard chorus: "For life/For love/For music!"

Next year the band should put that on a sign and hang it over the Four Seasons bar — as a reminder.

Cowboys and Indies

BY ROBERT SEIDENBERG AND DAVID BROWNE

*Austin's South
by Southwest
comes of age
as rock's top
schmoozefest*



MARY KARLZEN is struggling to be noticed. In a meeting room at the Austin Convention Center, the Florida-based folk-rocker is performing on a makeshift stage, but many of the record-company execs, music critics, and hangers-on in the audience are more interested in the free Tex-Mex food and beer in back. Faced with one of her toughest—and most important—gigs, Karlzen tries to empathize with the overstimulated crowd. “I’m not Jill [Sobule], and I’m not Jewel,” she says with a laugh, distinguishing herself from the other distaff performers at this Atlantic Records bash. “I know we all start to blend together after a while.”

They certainly did. Karlzen was among the more than 550 artists performing at the South by Southwest Music Conference, where, from March 15 to 19, the Lone Star State was anything but lonely. In its ninth year, the conference has evolved from a fun-in-the-sun music-industry spring break into a mandatory event for 4,700 record-company suits, song publishers, journalists, booking agents, attorneys, and managers. One major-label executive



checked into his hotel only to be handed a huge sack of unsolicited tapes along with his room key.

The festival's most anticipated event was a show by Soul Asylum, whose rise from loud, unrepentant garage bashers to platinum, folkier pop stars mirrors the erosion of the lines between alternative and mainstream. The biggest buzz, though, went to two bands who could be on the same runaway train to success. Elastica, England's next Next Big Thing, reenergized the decade-old new-wave sound, while Dayton, Ohio's Guided by Voices spurned the low-fi

**ANARCHY
IN THE U.S.A.:**
7 Year Bitch,
above, and Britain's
Compulsion rocked
the hacks and flacks
with good old-
fashioned punk

City of Dreams

by Will Hermes

Here in Austin, a honky-tonk city, where sometimes our collective desperation is like a knife-edge on the night. Where we drink, dance, take the drugs, laugh, cry, want, fuck, think, mock, gossip... where the dark adolescent drive to consume one's own innocence has become a way of life and lasted into what's becoming the middle-age of some of us. To cruise past 30 unable to rid ourselves of adolescent drives and dreams is our peculiar fate.

—Michael Ventura, writing in 1977 in *The Austin Sun*.

DURING THE ANNUAL South by Southwest (SXSW) Music Conference, which takes place on the third weekend in March, Austin, Texas, becomes a fantasy land where dozens of your favorite bands play every night; where no one, except the tireless conference staffers, seems to have a day job; and where the question of whether or not music can change the world is moot because music—along with tequila, brew, and barbecue—is the world.

Outsiders like myself may be forgiven for thinking the town is like this all the time. Its history as an incubator of cross-bred alternative music is certainly the stuff of myth: the mid-'60s folk scenes at Threadgill's and the 11th Door, which showcased the likes of Mance Lipscomb, Lightnin' Hopkins, Jerry Jeff Walker, and the young Janis Joplin. The rise and fall of psychedelic rock pioneer Roky Erickson and the 13th Floor Elevators. Willie Nelson's 1971 homecoming from Nashville to grow his hair, smoke lots of weed, and make country music by his own rules. The new generation of progressive country artists: Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Butch Hancock, Joe Ely, Nanci Griffith, Robert Earl Keen, Junior Brown, Tish Hinojosa, et al. Indie rock heroes like the Butthole Surfers, the True Believers, Kathy McCarty and Glass Eye, Daniel Johnston. The vital Tex-Mex *tejanos/conjuntos* circuit. The music scene is so integral to the fabric of the Texas capital that it's become the subject of at least one scholarly text (Barry Shank's exhaustive and quite readable *Dissonant Identities: The Rock 'n' Roll Scene in Austin, Texas*, published last year by Wesleyan University Press).

It's precisely this history that led to the creation of SXSW in 1987 as a way for Austin's idiosyncratic home-grown scene to draw a greater share of national attention. Originally an offshoot of NYC's now-defunct New Music Seminar, SXSW has this year become the most significant new music festival in the country, drawing

unknown and well-known acts from all over the world. Some artists come with the hopes of getting a record deal; others who may be further along career wise come just to play and hang with friends. The audience is a mixture of industry types—A & R people, publicists, journalists, radio folks, other artists, and just plain fans (the daytime panel discussions are open only to conference registrants, but the evening club showcases are generally open to all comers; a \$40 wristband gets you into most of the 500-plus gigs over the four-day run). In spite of the large industry presence, the vibe this year, as always, was crazy beautiful, with everyone running from club to club, dancing, drinking too much, hugging people they barely know.

In short, it's a bender, and like all benders, it can leave you ill-equipped to re-enter the real world. But if SXSW is about anything, it's about making the real world conform to its own idealistic vision, not the other way around—to offer a paradigm for making the musical life a viable option not just for hungry, crash-and-burn twenty-somethings, but for artists in it for the long haul.

This, needless to say, is a refreshing turn around from music business-as-usual. As pimps of youth, the industry seems happy to deal with artists as if they were professional athletes, good for a few years in their prime, ultimately disposable and replaceable. But the beauty of SXSW, and of the Austin scene in general, lies in an attitude and an aesthetic that sees beyond pop's cult of youth. The reverence accorded graying heroes Jimmie Dale Gilmore and Willie Nelson—both of whom played wonderful sets made up largely of new material—said a lot about the musical values here. The hybridizing of rock, country, folk, and blues storytelling that defines the Austin sound is a music geared toward a longer shelf-life than most of mall-ternative rock's flavor-of-the-month. And this year's scene was full of craft-oriented role-models who, in terms of next-big-thingness, have been there and back again and lived to tell the tale: Alex Chilton, Graham Parker, Robyn Hitchcock, Mitch Easter, Alejandro Escovedo, Chris Stamey, Jim Mastro, Peter Holsapple.

And our own Bob Mould, a recent Austin transplant who delivered this year's SXSW keynote address. A better choice to kick things off would be tough to imagine: Mould's decade-plus in rock & roll has been marked by the usual vagaries of the marketplace and of band chemistries, but defined at the same time by unflinching artistic integrity and prowess, and an uncompromising commitment to controlling the terms of his career.

Pacing nervously around the ballroom with a headset mic, Mould



Kevin and Marg Harcourt, otherwise known as The Harcourts: Austin's South by Southwest conference showcased music beyond the cult of youth.

shouldered his mantle as indie-rock elder-statesman with what seemed the proper balance of discomfort and matter-of-fact self-righteousness. He disparaged record labels for "treating artists as if they were making software programs" rather than art, and urged companies to be facilitators and supporters of the artistic vision—not to "try and remix everything" or always to be "looking to fire the recalcitrant drummer" (he was polite enough not to mention any names). Certain bizzers were pissy that Mould spent much of his address taking the industry to task. But musicians weren't let off the hook, either. Mould placed blame on the stereotypical "aloof, negligent artist" for allowing the industry to prey on him or her and for fostering the attitude that musicians are irresponsible children when it comes to business matters. "Get your shit together" is how he summed up his artist development program.

Maybe this is old news to some of us, but as we speak, there is a new generation of musicians queuing up with their art in hand and not much of a clue about how to get noticed and get paid, let alone how to actually build a long-term career out of doing what they love. And while there were encouraging young success stories this year in Austin (the major-label signings of indie-minded country songstress Kelly Willis and girl-punk classicists Pork prominent among them), it was to this writer the continued presence of an older generation of indie-rockers that made SXSW the inspiring event it was.

One of the most satisfying and perspective-granting moments was seeing ex-dB and one-time R.E.M. sideman Holsapple play an acoustic set in a little tent set up in the exhibition hall. Now married to Continental Drifter Susan Cowdill and living in New

Orleans, where he plays once a week at a local bar (no cover!), he presented a set of new songs that were, not surprisingly, cutting and brilliant. Some deal with failed relationships (always a favorite Holsapple theme). But others deal with the contradictions and struggles of adulthood when protracted adolescence threatens to become impacted. "I Am a Tree" sketches out a self-abusive character in the throes of deep denial. "Used Guitar" is a sardonic look at career options after the rock & roll dreams pale. Most affecting, though, was "Today Could Be the Day," an exercise in guarded but genuine optimism that Holsapple dedicated to one-time dBs producer Greg Edward, who recently committed suicide.

Holsapple ended with a funny/sad tune called "Invisible Boyfriend," for which he was joined by the Psycho Sisters, a duo of Susan Cowdill and ex-Bangle Vicki Peterson. All three kept an eye on 2-year-old Miranda Holsapple, who danced with her teddy bear at the foot of the stage. Incredibly, Miranda's dad noted that he has yet to find a label for his nearly completed solo album, and that if anyone thought they could move more than 2,000 copies, they should speak with him after the set. (Hello out there Bar None, Medium Cool, ESD...)

But there it is. Major-label courtships come and go, but the music—if it's cared for—can remain a source of both livelihood and spiritual strength. And, of course, community. Holsapple had his: Fellow ex-dB Stamey congratulated him after his set, and later played a few of his new tunes with ex-Bongos guitarist Jim Mastro. That evening they'd all get together with Mitch Easter for a late-night revival session that celebrated the roots of alterna-pop.

On the Minneapolis front (which was huge, at least partly due to the sharp ears of ex-First Ave. and Uptown employee Leah Wilkes, who now books acts for SXSW), there was a similar sense of community. Soul Asylum and the Jayhawks played triumphant headlining sets (SA's new material sounds like they're out to conquer the world). Polara apparently set a record for packing the most A & R folks into a single room, with the Delilahs coming in a close second. Turn around on any given evening and there was Maggie from the Uptown, Conrad from First Ave., Linda from the Caboose, Kevin Cole from Rev-105, Ali Loeffel from Radio K, Steve Daly from ESD, Peter Jespersen from Twin Tone, Sue McLean from Triad, the Pi Press's Jim Walsh and the Strib's Neal Justin, even Minneapolis music's patron saint (and Babes In Toyland drummer) Lori Barbero. Dave Pirner floated around backstage at the Jayhawks headlining set and joined Victoria Williams for a couple of woozy tunes at her gig the next night, as did hubby Mark Olson. In fact, it was the sight of Olson and Williams, decorously walking arm in arm in the wee hours of a soft Austin morning in the direction of a gig by TC supergroup Golden Smog that made me think, Hey—maybe we can all keep doing this, as some songwriter once said, until we're old and grey.

Thankfully, there were plenty of examples of how this is possible. One of the most offbeat groups I met were The Harcourts, Marg and Kevin. Originally from Saskatchewan, Canada, they now call an RV home (Marg will show you photos of it if you ask). They've been married 21 years, recorded 14 albums, and been touring continuously for the past eight years. The duo perform their music—a high, lonesome country gospel sound that harkens back to the original Carter Family—in shopping malls, trailer parks, music festivals, and outdoor fairs throughout Canada. Their kids, Karrie and Jason, traveled with them for years, studying via correspondence school; now in their early 20s, they've both flown the coop, leaving Marg and Kevin to their music and the endless road. "It may not be the life for everyone, but we enjoy it," Marge says. "We love the people."

At last check, The Harcourts haven't been approached for a slot on MTV *Unplugged*. But like many of their brethren carrying guitar cases up and down 6th Street earlier this month, they've found a way to make a life—and a family—through their music, in a culture that seems to define success solely in terms of gross fame and major-label juice. After watching too many artists and bizzers go down in flames recently, this seems to me the stuff that rock & roll dreams may really be made of.

The Harcourts can be reached at 1-800-267-5037, or through ATI Records, 75 Parkway Ave., Markham, Ontario, Canada L3P 2H1. Info on South by Southwest can be obtained from them at P.O. Box 4999, Austin, Texas 78765.

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Living E

Hot acts in the forecast



AMERICAN RECORDINGS

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JUERGEN TELLER

□ You might want to keep your eyes (and ears) on the artists who made a name for themselves during a music showcase in Austin, Texas.

By Parry Gettelman

SENTINEL POPULAR MUSIC CRITIC

AUSTIN, Texas — Forecasting tropical storms 12 months in advance is only slightly riskier than predicting which music acts will be the rage in the coming year. You never know when a crummy little summer squall will go to the top of the charts or when the Next Big Thing will have to be downgraded to a tropical depression.

But meteorologists have their maps and weather satellites, and music mavens have South by Southwest (commonly abbreviated SXSW), an industry conference held every March in Austin. It started out in 1987 primarily as a showcase for unsigned bands from the Lone Star State. It has since eclipsed the New Music Seminar in New York City as a match-making opportunity for bands and labels and as a place for labels to launch — or try to launch — the careers of acts on their rosters.

Past SXSW signees include such hitmakers as Green Day, Veruca Salt, Lisa Loeb, Frente! and Gin Blossoms. Rykodisc band Morphine built excitement early in its career with a stunning show at SXSW. And although modern rock/alternative acts dominate the 450 showcases, American Recordings used an SXSW slot to help build a buzz and broaden the demographic for veteran country artist Johnny Cash. The Subdudes, a New Orleans band with its own folkie blend of rock and soul, found a new record label at SXSW and went on to success at the burgeoning Triple A radio format (for rock fans who have graduated from alternative rock or are tired of the same old soft-rock oldies.)

Of course, making a mark at SXSW is no guarantee of a brilliant career. Anyone remember Poi Dog Pondering, the Austin-based band that was the talk of SXSW a few years back? Still, success at this year's SXSW gave many artists a better-than-average chance at finding their audiences.

Here are some of the artists who played the best sets, drew the biggest crowds and/or received the most raves over the four nights (and days) of SXSW.

Your basic major trend

Austin has long been a hotbed of country rock and roots rock, so it's fitting the latest revival of same should start to gather momentum at SXSW. Many of the most-touted, most-raved-about, must-see bands fell into this cate-

Alternative acts intersect at South by Southwest

By Edna Gundersen
USA TODAY

AUSTIN, Texas — South by Southwest can be a musical game of Where's Waldo. Seeking the unique, 5,000 talent scouts, critics and music biz types scour Antone's, the Electric Lounge, La Zona Rosa and other clubs, then ricochet between packed joints along Sixth Street, a cow town version of New Orleans' Bourbon Street.

About 575 acts played over five days at this year's confab, which ended Sunday after delivering a glut of coed, lo-fi, pop-punk garage bands and alternative rock clichés (women bass players, flannel, feedback, proudly sour notes).

The dearth of talented unknowns and trailblazers made the treasure hunt tougher than usual, but still worthwhile.

Despite flagrant hype and the oppressive presence of too many established bands, SXSW yielded gems aplenty.

The Bottle Rockets, a rootsy Missouri-based blend of Neil Young and Lynyrd Skynyrd, is negotiating an attractive record contract on the strength of its well-received showcase and acclaimed second album, *The Brooklyn Side*. And Austin rock band Pork got an offer from Elektra just as the players were pondering a breakup.

Some SXSW acts simply enjoy the party vibe and keep low expectations (Nebraska rock trio Mercy Rule taped a sign on their speaker: "We need a place to stay tonight"). But most perform in hopes of landing lucrative record deals.

Last year's big scorers were country warhorse Johnny Cash, making his debut as a Gen X folk hero, and Chicago's Veruca Salt, which sparked a label feeding frenzy before signing a \$500,000 deal with Geffen. They could barely play but had attitude galore.

Austin band Sincola, signed by Caroline Records after a '94 gig at SXSW, made a triumphant return this year, playing scrappy, rhythmic alterna-punk from its new album, *What the Nothinghead Said*. An alluring cross between the Pixies and the Breeders, the band is proving to be more than a flash in the panhandle. Also emerging from the hometown underground is Ed Hall, an alternative rock trio that wowed jaded record execs with spacey rhythms and guitar chaos.



Photos by E.G. Gallagher

BUSH: The hot British band, with singer Gavin Rossdale, drew raves at SXSW; its album 'Sixteen Stone' is No. 24 in 'Billboard.'



ROKY ERICKSON: The psychedelic visionary doesn't crave stardom.

Just catching the industry's ear is a difficult task, considering the competition. Rapid climbers Bush and Elastica, already enjoying major label deals, were top draws, as were Lone Star fixture Willie Nelson and firmly established Soul Asylum (pre-viewing tunes from an upcoming album).

Good music lurked in the fringes, but little matched the purity and originality of local benchmark Roky Erickson, the founding father of Texas psychedelia. Joined by rocker Henry Rollins, the singer/songwriter cropped up at the Iron Works BBQ to celebrate the release of *All That May Do My Rhyme*, his first album in 10 years.

and to sign copies of his lyrics book, *Openers II*. But the troubled visionary, whose '60s band 13th Floor Elevators influenced a slew of modern rockers, couldn't tolerate the press of fans and stood up after 10 minutes. "I need to take a walk," Erickson said. He retreated to the parking lot trailed by acolytes and autograph hounds, then holed up in a car — refreshing proof that not all players are clawing toward the limelight.

MUSIC/EDNA GUNDERSEN NEWS & VIEWS

Breakthroughs and bomb outs

AUSTIN — Texas wasn't the only geographic reference point deep in the heart of this year's South by Southwest gathering.

Highlights included British bands Bush and Elastica, both poised to break the long U.S. embargo on U.K. talent. Minneapolis provided such treats as the Jayhawks and Soul Asylum, as well as newcomer Polara. And a couple of promising acts are incubating in Southern California, which recently spawned Offspring.

The biggest surprises were hallowed acts that failed to live up to their hype. Nobody was stunned when obscure band Baboon, punk noise punctuated by a badly played trombone, proved dreadful, but few expected lauded Guided by Voices to bomb. And bomb they did, deflating a buzz that has swelled dramatically since the release of last year's charmingly tinny *Bee Thousand*. Flat vocals and bombastic, Journeylike arena rock had some mulling the band's moniker: Divine inspiration? Or phantoms encouraging torture?

Offsetting such disappointments were new and old low-profile acts that exceeded expectations. Among them:

► **Sublime.** The Long Beach, Calif., punkers pummeled fans with rapid-fire vocals and rhythms. They're already hot on radio with the wry *Date Rape* from their 1992 debut *40 Oz. to Freedom*. Second album *Robbin' the Hood* is also out on the



LUCINDA WILLIAMS: Previewed songs from her upcoming album

band's Skunk Records. Now big-time MCA is stepping in to widen distribution.

► **The Rugburns.** The San Diego band's explosive show included a hilarious *Me and Eddie Vedder*. Together 10 years, the Rugburns shamelessly ply juke-joint comedy rock full of mockery and revelry, a refreshing detour from today's shoe-gazers. Current EP is *Mommy I'm Sorry*.

► **Lucinda Williams.** The silver-voiced singer/songwriter was backed by former Faces organist Ian McLagan in a set that unveiled rootsy new material from an album due in June on hip American Recordings, her new label.

► **Polara.** Singer and



Photos by E.G. Gallagher

SUBLIME: The Southern California punk rockers, with bass player Eric Wilson, wowed crowds with their quick pacing.

multi-instrumentalist Ed Ackerson leads the latest Minneapolis creation, an underground supergroup that includes John Strohm of Blake Babies and Matt Wilson of Trip Shakespeare. The droning guitars, vocal aberrations and intriguing sonic noise on their self-titled debut are a cut above current Nirvana-bes.

► **Jack Logan.** One of 1994's most intriguing arrivals had been stockpiling songs for years in Athens, Ga., where producer Peter Jesperson of Medium Cool Records discovered him and produced the double album *Bulk*. Logan and his ragtag Liquor Cabinet performed a lively mix of roadhouse rock, blues and ballads.

► **The Tragically Hip.** The Kingston, Ontario, band is mega-huge at home but still tragically underappreciated here. That could change with the stunning new album *Day for Night*. In Canada, it hit No. 1 and sold 300,000 copies in four days.

► **Grant McLennan.** The

singer/songwriter, half of Australia's defunct but acclaimed Go-Betweens, is getting raves for his third solo album, the excellent *Horsebreaker Star*, melodic folk-pop with a punk attitude.

► **Yo La Tengo.** The Hoboken, N.J., trio melds airy pop, pretaped electronic din, feedback and rock crunch to create tense and hypnotic soundscapes. Seventh album *Electr-O-Pura* is due April 25.

► **Charlie Sexton.** A vet at 26, Sexton has left behind the teen-idol image of his debut 10 years ago and his later blues-rocking Arc Angels to plow new ground. In two shows, the Austin-based singer/guitarist brought to life the dark, confessional songs of current album *Under the Wishing Tree*.

► **Presidents of the United States of America.** Or just call them PUT-USA. The Seattle band's brash bulldozer rock, including a manic cover of *Video Killed the Radio Star*, wowed a packed house. Its debut is due this month on the tiny PopLlama label.

StateWide

Reality Bit

With a song on a hit movie sound track, Dallasite Lisa Loeb is ready to make a deal.

Dallas native currently residing in New York City, the convention was just another step in her well-planned rock and roll career. Loeb was the It Girl of the eighth annual SXSW, attracting more than a dozen label representatives to her showcase performance with her band, Nine Stories, at Chances nightclub.

Unlike the undiscovered acts, Loeb already has a successful demo recording, "Stay," an upbeat and airy pop confection that was included on the sound track of the movie *Reality Bites*. In the past few months, the tune became popular with radio programmers and listeners alike ("It's the number one record on KRBE in Houston," she says), with practically no promotion from RCA, the label that released the sound track. (RCA has since invested big bucks in promoting the album, including a budget to shoot a music video of Loeb and her band.) With some sizzling gossip added to the package—the director of her new video is no other than *Details* cover boy and *Reality Bites* grunge rocker Ethan Hawke, her longtime friend—the music biz frenzy that surrounded her at SXSW was almost predictable.

But Loeb wasn't biting—at least, not just yet. Though her music suggests innocence, Loeb knows exactly what she wants, and cutting a deal at SXSW wasn't part of her plan. After all, this was her third year to perform at SXSW; she had done her homework.

"The first year, I stayed away from the business thing altogether," she says. "I just had fun. The second year, I hung out at the Four Seasons and met all kinds of industry people. This year my attorney instructed me to stay away from the Four Seasons, so I just stayed in my hotel and had meetings with a bunch of people from different record companies."

She also interviewed potential managers, booking

agents, and promotion people, as well as representatives of companies that would like to put out her CD. "I'm doing it all at once," she says. "I'm looking at some good high-powered managers, and I'm looking for a booking agent. I'm looking for a deal. I want to know what people think is possible and what is not. And I always hope their interest in me is based on liking the music and not because of the buzz." But the buzz was hard to ignore. "It was very intense," Loeb said of her whirlwind week in Austin. "A lot of people I met last year are now in positions to make deals."

Loeb got the show business bug while attending Hockaday School (class of 1986) in Dallas. "My friends and I used to interview people with our super 8 cameras just for fun," she says. She started writing songs and performing as an undergraduate at Brown University. Good fortune struck after she moved to New York and she and her band recorded some demo tracks. Loeb wrote a song for Hawke to perform in *Reality Bites*, but when that didn't pan out, Hawke helped get her song "Stay" on the movie's sound track.

For an unsigned act, Lisa Loeb keeps a tight schedule. "This week I have a show in New York and a video to shoot and a radio show in Houston to do, and then I go to L.A. to meet some more record company people," she says. "Then I'll be ready to make a deal." Her recipe for success? "Write music, play music, do shows, and most important, keep a mailing list." ✦

J.N.P.



Solid Loeb: Her demo "Stay" has made her a music industry darling.



ROCK & POP



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE BASTON

Veruca Salt

An Intimate Party of 4,000

Seven Years Gone, South By Southwest Is More Fun Than Ever

By Natalie Nichols

Although it seemed busier than ever, with more than four thousand music-biz folk attending and more than five hundred acts performing, the seventh annual South by Southwest Music & Media Conference (held March 16-20 in Austin, Texas) felt like an intimate party.

It wasn't just that, after a couple of days of intensive schmoozing, I felt like I had met almost everyone there; it was also that, while business was certainly being done at a feverish pace, folks all seemed so doggone happy to be there. It started with keynote speaker Johnny Cash, who basically said "Thanks for comin'; glad to be here," and performed three songs on acoustic guitar. He talked about his new album, due this month from Rick Rubin's American Recordings label, and how exciting it was to finally make the stripped-down record he'd always wanted to do. Now, the home of Danzig et al. may seem an unusual berth for country legend Cash, but, then again, he did a traditional tune about spouse murder, "Delia's Gone," that could give Snoop Doggy Dogg a run for his money.

Anyway, maybe we were all just blissed out because of the wonderfully warm weather, but I think Cash's remarks helped focus our attention on the joys of music. True, during the day, there were panel discussions and workshops on everything from copyrighting to sexuality, and the SXSW trade show hawked products, publications, and performers galore. But at night we all came together for one purpose: to have a helluva good time.

Indeed, the festival jump-started my love of music, which I have a bad tendency to let be obscured by the inevitable routine of music journalism. "God," I thought on Wednesday night, gulping relatively clean Texas air on my way to the traditional journalists-publicists soiree at the cozy punk pub Emo's, "this is fun!" The party was less a schmoozefest than an exchange of ideas: Who are you gonna see? What are they like? What do you know about this band? It was a dialogue that continued for five days, with innumerable participants.

Among the more constant voices in my ear was Austin-based, self-proclaimed "free-lance punk terrorist" Tim Stegall, whose byline appears in the *Austin Chronicle*, *Alternative Press*, *The Bob*, and *Warp*, among others, and who always has a line on the best local bands. (Stegall himself fronts a band, *The Hormones*, whose sound is vintage punk with a dash of sixties pop, and whose demo tape really swings.) In fact, he turned me on to Austin quintet *Sincola*, the best thing I heard all week.

Led by the eccentrically engaging Rebecca Cannon, whose style is reminiscent of hyper new-wave frontwomen of yore, *Sincola* generates waves of densely sonic, visceral punk-rock-pop. Cannon's lilting, staccato vocals are disarmingly candid and darkly ironic on songs ranging from the snarling epithet "Bitch" to a hair-raising tale of a friend's abusive father. *Sincola* has a CD EP and a vinyl single, both available from the Austin label Rise Records (2116 Guadalupe, #210, Austin, TX 78705), which carries a lot of cool tuneage.

Opening for *Sincola* was Boston's *Letters to Cleo*, another band with a charismatic frontwoman — blonde, bouncy, and sporting a Cheap Trick T-shirt. The music was throwback power-pop/new wave, buoyant and just a little bit grungy; check out the group's CD, *Aurora Gory Alice*, on Cherrydisc.

Since we were doing so well with female vocalists, we went out and heard some more: *Arson Garden*, from Bloomington, Indiana, had a powerhouse lead singer and a cool, dreamy-grinding sound. Even better, however, was Chicago quartet *Veruca Salt*, named for the snotty rich girl in *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*. This fetching blend of droning, noisy guitar grind and sweetly singsong harmonies bore the influences of Pixies, Throwing Muses, Breeders, etc., with songs at once ethereal and gritty, placid and frenetic. The standout "All Hail Me" is available on the seven-inch single *Seether* (Minty Fresh), at Aron's, Rhino, and the Virgin Megastore, or by mail from Parasol, 202 S. First St., Champaign, IL 61820, (217) 355-2555.

We even heard some swell acts with nary a woman on stage, like former replacement Replacement *Slim Dunlap*, whose late-night set of raucously sloppy rock

had 'em lined up down the block at the aptly named Hole in the Wall. At their Rykodisc showcase, indie darlings *Morphine* made strangely pleasing sounds with only a saxophone, drums, and a two-string bass. And *The Health & Happiness Show* won hearts with a self-deprecating introduction — "We're from Hoboken, New Jersey, and we're sorry about that" — and fans with its uniquely poppy country-folk rock.

I had hoped to hear more roots music this year, but the only thing that vaguely fit into that category was Tucson's *Doo Rag* ... not your traditional roots act. It's basically two guys in work clothes and gimme caps: a percussionist hunched intently over his makeshift trap — a battered cardboard box, a crumpled metal pail anchored by a brick, an overturned washtub, an empty film reel for a cymbal — and a vocalist-guitarist playing slide on a battered National steel, nasally caterwauling into a microphone that's straight outta some Dr. Seuss book — a brass horn attached to an old vacuum cleaner hose (vacuum still attached). It produced a muddy, distorted vocal, not unlike that of twenties blues recordings. The music itself — which we playfully labeled "hillbilly Tom Waits" — had an urgently anachronistic charm and spastic energy. The place was packed — I think we even saw Beck there, perhaps picking up pointers. Anyway, you can hear *Doo Rag* for yourself at Fuzzylund on Saturday, April 9.

As usual, I missed plenty of great stuff. Like Johnny Cash's showcase at Emo's, and eccentric axeman *Junior Walker*. Not to mention Doug Sahm's new *Sir Douglas Quintet*, recently signed to a deal with Elektra, whose cassette single contains a fine rendition of the 13th Floor Elevators' "You Don't Know." I had to pass up seeing ex-Dead Boy *Cheetah Chrome* with a new band, *Humungus*, as well as former *Adverts* frontman T. V. Smith's solo set on Saturday night. I even missed Austin punk trio *Pork*, one of my favorites from previous years. If you liked what you heard during their L.A. gigs last year, however, a new CD is due this summer. Can't wait!

SXSW is not just for freeloading journalists, high-powered industry folk, or even musicians; plain ol' fans are finding it a Mecca worth planning a pilgrimage to. Registration for the whole conference costs about \$300, but there are less expensive options that allow you to partake of the music alone. For information on attending or participating, call (512) 467-7979, and start planning now for next year. I suppose you'll have a lot to say about it.



Best of
1994
Press Clips

Living history steals the show at SXSW

AMERICAN STARS N' BARS

By David Fricke

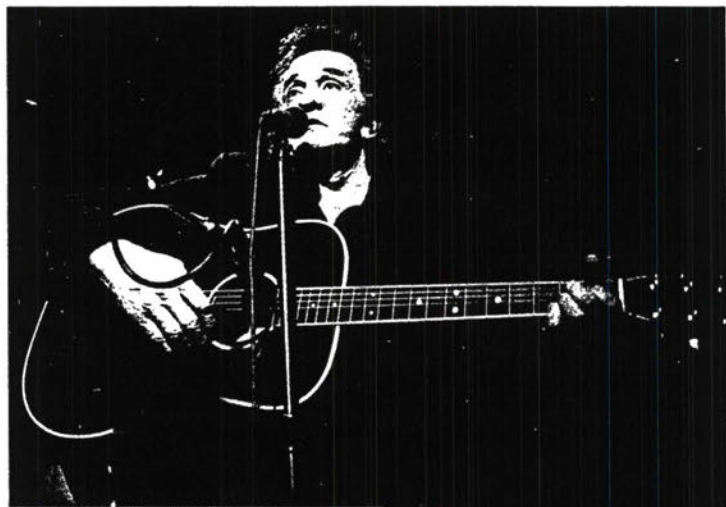
JOHNNY CASH AT EMO'S singing 'Bird on a Wire.' Can it get any better than this?" whispered an awe-struck bystander as the Man in Black — his unmistakable craggy visage looking like an outtake from Mount Rushmore, that gently booming baritone hitting low notes unknown even to Nick Cave — wrapped up a heart-stopping performance of the Leonard Cohen song at this jam-packed, micro-sized punk club in Austin, Texas.

Even in a city where remarkable music is the norm, on a long March weekend when an invasion of top-shelf, out-of-town talent ups the ante dramatically, Cash's appearance at Emo's on the opening night of the eighth annual South by Southwest Music and Media Conference was a near-religious experience. It was also a stunning preview of the singer's new, no-frills, Rick Rubin-produced album and the standard by which everything that followed during the confab was judged.

Any whiff of hype — either from the guest-list panic that prefaced the show or the more general complaint from some locals that SXSW, which topped 500 showcasing acts and 4,000 registrants this year, had become too big and star struck for its own good — evaporated the moment Cash opened his mouth. He was accompanied only by his rudimentary picking on an acoustic guitar. It was black, of course. So was the humor. Cash murdered his lyin', cheatin' woman in the very first verse of "Delia's Gone," a revenge fantasy equal to anything in Ice Cube's repertoire.

Confession and remorse also weighed in hard on Cash's stately, low-slung voice in barroom prayers like Nick Lowe's "The Beast in Me," Glenn Danzig's "Thirteen" and Cash's own sepulchral "Redemption." There were rumors that Cash would be backed up by Nick Cave's Bad Seeds (not true, but a nice idea, actually), but even coping with a double whammy of jet lag and laryngitis, Cash had all the mythic aura and deep vocal dignity to carry the show himself. And that was *before* he brought out the Tennessee Three, which included Cash's longtime drummer W.S. Holland, for a whip through a second, half-hour set of vintage Sun and Columbia hits.

So did it get any better? Well, it definitely got weirder. Around the corner at



ALL THE BEST (FROM TOP): JOHNNY CASH; THE TRUE BELIEVERS; DOUG SAHM AND HIS CREW

Emo's Jr., Radial Spangle, a trio from Norman, Okla., was peddling an impressive brand of shriek-guitar mysticism with flattering echoes of Mercury Rev. Over at the City Coliseum, a huge gym-like room strung with beer-garden lights for that West Texas prom-night effect, Jimmie Dale Gilmore capped his annual spring song-and-dance party by stomping through Townes Van Zandt's "Buckskin Stallion" with those Seattle crunch-rock pups Mudhoney.

And then there was guitarist Evan Johns and his nut-case party-rock orchestra, the Gay Sportscasters, who were definitely not sportscasters anyway, and entertained the last-call crowd at the Continental Club with a riotous disemboweling of Gary Glitter's "Rock & Roll, Part 2" and one country-corn ballad distinguished by the inspirational rhyme "Here I stand/With my dick in my hand/Writing your name in the sand."

OK, but did it get any better? That depends on how you feel about a 62-year-old country gentleman like Cash stealing the limelight from a weekend's worth of younger, struggling tunesmiths and alternative-rock hot dogs. Or, on the other hand, how you feel about the devaluation of the *a* word in the current marketplace. Still, this is a music city where, at this year's Austin Music Awards, Al Jourgensen of Ministry (a recent émigré) presented ax wrangler Junior Brown with the Best Country Band trophy, and nobody blinked at the incongruity.

Besides, here in the de facto seat of

"Wild Eyed and Wound Up" with a hell-bent urgency and chrome-riff crispness that did their Austin legend justice and left the devoted speaking in tongues out in the parking lot.

The irrepressible Doug Sahm was also back, with the Sir Douglas Quintet in tow, to prove that any reports of his retirement were grossly mistaken. Never mind that the band was actually an octet and that the younger half, featuring Doug's son Shawn on guitar, had serious heavy-metal-hair presence. Augie Meyers of the original SDQ was back behind the Vox organ, ex-Creedence drummer Doug Clifford kept heartbeat time, and Sahm — looking oh so smart in a pink vest, shades and a deerstalker cap — did not cheat on the Tex-Mex groove quotient in either the timeless "Mendocino" or the more recent, amped-up "She Would If She Could" (basically '96 Tears' with G n' R fuzz).

There was no shortage of youngsters with attitude on the SXSW gig slate. At Emo's, the Ramonesish pop-grrrl trio Pork, powered by a stand-up drummer in the fine Maureen Tucker tradition, let fly a barrage of hooky buzz bombs. Laika and the Cosmonauts, from Finland, played vintage '60s surf instrumentals as if to the manner and sunshine born, reconstructing

even the old *Mission Impossible* theme as some kind of hyper "Miserlou." Mountain Clyde, four hairy scruffs who made the trip down from Lawrence, Kan., overcame the lack of promise in their rather dorky name with a fine line in minor-chord, prairie-metal grit, delivered by a singer with the full-throated bassy resonance of Eddie Vedder and little of the overheated angst.

But sometimes, if you really want to party, you have to call in an expert. Missing in action since he left NRBQ in the early '70s, that band's original lead guitarist, Steve Ferguson, turned up at SXSW with his band of hard-bitten blues-rock gangsters, Derby Sauce, and smoked

the crowd at Babe's with a set of hard, funky bedrock & roll. Looking like a beatnik swami in his fedlike headgear and beaded necklaces, Ferguson fired off stinging Chuck Berryesque outbursts and hairpin blues turns on his Telecaster, making up for his years in the wilderness with a smoldering reprise of his old NRBQ showcase number, "Flat Foot Flewzy."

"My wife is a gourmet pastry chef," Ferguson announced, "and I've been doing this here thing for some 32 years. We concluded that if I do the shakin' and she does the bakin', everything would be cool."

Now, really, can it get any better than that?



Texas music tradition, history is a living thing, and those who don't learn from it always get another chance. To celebrate a new CD reissue coupling their two mid-'80s albums, the True Believers — featuring the triple-guitar front line of Jon Dee Graham and brothers Alejandro and Javier Escovedo — re-convened at SXSW to show why they were once the toast of this town. Even local disciples concede that the Believers' recordings never captured the band's Moby Grape-meets-Mott the Hoople stage prowess. But at the Terrace, the Believers (who broke up in '87) tore into old songs like "Hard Road," "One Moment to Another" and

Beck, Johnny Cash top SXSW music conference

SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST 94 MUSIC CONFERENCE, Austin, Texas. Wednesday (March 16) through Friday (March 20).

By **TIM PERLICH**

AUSTIN, TEXAS Even without the presence of one of the world's largest music festivals, the hospitable capital town of Austin is a hotbed of musical activity. During the delightfully balmy week set aside for South By Southwest (SXSW), the frenzied



buzz around the local scene gets turned up one — no, probably 10 — notches louder.

It's not just the city's numerous live-music venues that are stacked five, six or seven artists deep each night. The music spills over onto the streets and into parking lots, pool halls, record stores, cocktail lounges, barbecue pits, hotel lobbies, video stores, condom shops and the hallways of nearby malls.

Anywhere people gather, someone is bound to set up and pitch their songs. You don't have to look for people making music at SXSW — they'll find you. And these aren't your regular coin-collecting, street-corner buskers. We're talking about world-class creative talents with substantial catalogues of recordings and sometimes even Grammy nominations.



Guitar slasher Herman the German and Das Cowboy drummer Jeff Morré tore up Austin's Love Joys nightclub.

On Friday afternoon, traditional Tex-Mex border-music accordion wiz Santiago Jimenez, Jr. and his stacked conjunto, featuring Bad Livers bass fiddle plucker Mark Rubin, performed a rousing set of rancheras and corridos for browsers at Waterloo Records.

Having a powerful singer/songwriter like Sarah Elizabeth Camp-

bell — an earthy, Texas-flavoured Rita MacNeil — accompany the spicy Huevos Rancheros for Sunday-morning brunch at La Zona Rosa, followed by the sweet honky-tonk harmonies of the Texana Dames for dessert, tends to put momentary sensations like Beck in their proper perspective.

Zany loser

The irrepressibly sassy Los Angeles-based Loser boy, backed by a swingin' pick-up group starring Oiler bassist Dave Gomez, Walt Mink drummer Joey Waronker and guitarist/human beatboxer Chris Ballew, erupted with an enjoyably chaotic outpouring of his bedroom delta-punk babble at the cattle-packed Emo's. But even with a flashy breakdancing display and an a capella encore of his catchy hit tune, Beck was overshadowed by the not-too-secret opening performance by Rick Rubin's pal Johnny Cash.

Hearing the man in black rip through 90 minutes of wildly deranged new tunes about shotguns and women, prisons, Vietnam vets and a man who died of dehydration from crying too much made it almost worth missing Jimmie Dale Gilmore's St. Patrick's Day party at the Austin City Coliseum — almost, but not quite.

As the profile of SXSW continues to rise, largely due to the event's exciting assortment of performers and its exemplary organization — almost every artist started on time and in their scheduled slot — the range of non-affiliated events or

"outlaw shows" staged concurrently around Austin increases at the same pace.

The informal, join-right-in nature of Gilmore's outlaw City Coliseum bash — featuring a head-spinning exhibition of impromptu hoedowns involving a rockin' Michelle Shocked, Rodney Crowell, Joe Ely, Angela Strehli, Monte Warden, Santiago Jimenez, Jr., Syd Straw, Butch Hancock and Tish Hinojosa — reflected all the best qualities of Austin's self-supporting music scene.

Mudhoney and Gilmore's oddball jam on Townes Van Zandt's Buckskin Stallion Blues and a surprise reunion of the original Flatlanders put the spirited, slap-dash blowout over the top.

Like other prestigious music festivals that began as showcases for unsigned artists, SXSW is slowly being co-opted by major record labels to serve as a springboard for newer signings like Virgin's soul folkie Ben Harper and Sony's alternative scrappers House of Large Sizes and Queen Sarah Saturday, as well as exposing veteran acts like MCA's Mavericks, BMG's Lee Roy Parnell and PolyGram's Sue Medley, who've yet to hit mainstream paydirt.

Exciting barrage

Still, some of SXSW's most exciting performances were sprung by unaffiliated artists like the returning Continental Drifters, fronted by Susan Cowsill and ex-Go-Go Vicki Peterson, and Tucson's geeky garage-blues duo, Doo Rag.

Skinny Bob Log and Thermos Malling knocked an Emo Jr. crowd flat with a quadruple-time barrage of Sleepy John Estes and Muddy Waters standards clanked out on a galvanized drum, a beat-up National steel guitar and a knot of vacuum cleaner hose.

Then there's local guitar maestro Herman the German, renowned for both his Deutsche-filtered Bo Diddley and Joe Maphis breakdowns and his unique stagewear — farmer overalls set off by jackboots and a spiked helmet. Between raunchy instro-polkas and searing surf runs, Herman cranks out such an awesome six-string blitz that his Kaiser Wilhelm shtick doesn't come across anywhere near as goofy as it sounds.

Apart from the unfortunate underrepresentation of blues, jazz, gospel, zydeco and tejano music, the weak link of the fest was, once again, the panel discussions.

Whether or not the argumentative edge of the conference delegates is dulled by the sunshine, the glut of exceptional performances and Austin's fine down-home cuisine, the fact remains that SXSW panels function, at best, as tutorials and at worst — as when label executives re-enacted the chain of events that unfold when a band member is found to be a junkie — a confused, misinformed and ultimately pointless exercise.

But, hey, after a week baking in summer-like heat and seeing a year's worth of mind-roasting music in five nights, who's complaining?



Accordionist Santiago Jimenez, Jr. squeezed out his hot Tex-Mex licks for a Waterloo record store crowd.

The Living Arts

The New York Times

Critic's Notebook

A Texas Conference With an Agenda You Can Dance To

By JON PARELES

Special to The New York Times

AUSTIN, Tex., March 20 — About halfway through his annual all-star concert, Jimmie Dale Gilmore peered fondly at the crowd in the City Coliseum here. "There's something so different playing at home," he said, and considered for a moment. "It's good, though."

Home for Mr. Gilmore is Austin, Texas's capital and the site of the state university. The historical combination of rowdy legislators and eager students has yielded an extraordinary concentration of bars where live music is performed. Since the 1960's, when the Sir Douglas Quintet fused norteño, or Tex-Mex music, with garage-band rock, and the 1970's, when Willie Nelson came up with a personal, eclectic country music, Austin has harbored nonconformists with a lingering sense of tradition.

For the last eight years, Austin has drawn increasing numbers of musicians, moguls and hangers-on to the five-day South by Southwest Music and Media Conference, which ended today. About 4,200 people attended the event, which moved last year from a hotel to the Austin Convention Center to accommodate the throng. This year's expanded South by Southwest included free outdoor concerts at dinner hour and a Texas independent-film festival.

South by Southwest is one symbol of rock's increasing regionalism. Many music-business developments over the last decade — notably the concentration of the recording business in a half-dozen conglomerates and the arrival of MTV, a national music outlet — had promised just the opposite: more impersonal corporate imperatives, more homogenized audience tastes. The recording business



Bill Albrecht for The New York Times

Jimmie Dale Gilmore at the South by Southwest Music and Media Conference in Austin, Tex.

likes to believe that it knows just what the general public wants; then along comes an unanticipated local scene, like the wave of moody hard-rock bands from Seattle, to prove the business wrong.

South by Southwest is an annual reminder that not every musician and not every listener hears rock the way it's experienced on the coasts. "When we started South by Southwest," said its managing director, Roland Swenson, "the aim was to link up music-business people and musicians who don't live in New York, Los Angeles or Nashville."

In outline, the conference resembles the New Music Seminar, held every July in New York. By day, South by Southwest is a trade convention, with exhibitions and panel dis-

Continued on Page B2

M u s i c ★ M e c c a



If it's mid-March, it must be Austin. This year, the annual South By Southwest music convention had Johnny Cash, Jimmie Dale Gilmore and a rock 'n' roll 'Jeopardy.'

Stories by RICH KANE
Special to the Register

If only Orange County were a little like Austin, Texas.

This is a town where each City Council meeting is opened by a performance from a local band. KGSR-FM, the city's hippest commercial radio station, plays loads of Richard Thompson, Lucinda Williams and lots of great bands you'd never hear anywhere else.

And last November, Austin erected a statue of hometown hero Stevie Ray Vaughan on the bank of the river that flows through the city. (Leo Fender cast in bronze somewhere in O.C., anyone?)

It's this music-friendly atmosphere that makes Austin a perfect locale for one of the biggest, fastest-growing music festivals and music industry conferences in the country: South by Southwest, held March 16-20.

Officially dubbed the South by Southwest Music and Media Conference (and routinely shortened to the more compact SXSW), the festival/convention/party/schmoozapalooza is a chance for up-and-coming bands around the world to get noticed by booking agents, prospective managers, rock critics and record-industry types who could help them become the next Pearl Jam.

"People in the industry come

Sue Cummings, music editor of the L.A. Weekly. "It's also really amenable to music people."

The first SXSW in 1987 drew about 700 people. This year, the official registration topped 4,000.

Seven years ago, organizers had to talk 150 regional bands into playing the first festival. Not anymore. Of 3,200 demos SXSW received this year, only 500 bands and artists got picked. (A few of the chosen, such as the Cadillac Tramps, Slapbak, and Big Sandy & the Fly-Rite Boys, were from Orange County.)

It now becomes a kind of validity point for a band to say it has played SXSW, festival co-founder Louis Jay Meyers said.

"I know that when a lot of club owners get a tape, if they know a band has played for us, they'll listen to it quicker than if it's just totally unsolicited."

Most of the music-industry events happened during the day at the Austin Convention Center, where a trade show and various panel discussions take place.

Country legend Johnny Cash gave the keynote address — mostly through his music, as he showcased a set of new songs. But he did speak a few words: "My heart was really in taking the guitar and showing the folks what I had."

"It's the joy of doing something the way it feels right, right here," he continued, pointing to his gut, "and right here," (pointing to his head) "and right here," (pointing to his feet).



SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST: A supremely music-friendly city that actually honors local hero Stevie Ray Vaughan with a statue (left top), Austin hosted the likes of Johnny Cash, top, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, above right, and industry folk such as O.C.'s Doctor Dream Records (left) at its annual music convention/festival this month.

"And it has nothing to do with age, grandchildren."

At the panels, topics this year ranged from a give-and-take about the ethical dilemma of recording

to used-CD stores, to an examination of how and why Charles Manson has become a current rock icon.

There also were discussions

Is My Record Not In the Stores?," "Avoiding Bad Press and "Criticizing The Scene" (in which Michael Roberts of Denver alternative paper Westword asked the question: "Is My Record Not In the Stores?")



POLLSTAR®

April 4, 1994

The SXSW Alternative, eh



Canadian Talent Buyer Of The Year **Elliott Lefko** of MCA Concerts Canada, who skipped Canadian Music Week and the Junos to catch the SXSW talent showcases, is flanked by POLLSTAR's **Brad Snavelly** (L) and prime alternative talent buying competitor **Dan Webster** (R) of Donald K. Donald Productions.

South By Southwest A Hit

More than 500 bands and nearly 4,000 registered participants gathered in Austin, Texas March 16th for the eighth annual South By Southwest music and media conference. Eight years ago SXSW was designed as a regional confab, drawing mainly upon Austin bands. This year almost 3,200 musical acts from around the world submitted applications for showcases, with hopes of a shot at getting the attention of a record exec, agent, manager, promoter, club owner or music journalist. The vast majority of the acts which showcased at SXSW's 28 different venues were unsigned, but a few better known acts also participated, including Mojo Nixon, Jello Biafra, Cracker, Rodney Crowell, Sam Phillips, Rodney Foster and Johnny Cash, who reportedly was the biggest hit of the conference. The daytime panel discussions were as varied as the performers, touching on a plethora of topics such as: Keeping Your Artists and Keeping Them Happy; Interactive Media; Musical Day Jobs for Working Musicians; A&R Methodologies; Junkie in the Band; Criticizing the Scene; Corruption — A Tradition; and Avoiding Bad Press. All in all, SXSW was a major success and is now clearly one of the most popular A&R oriented conferences in the music industry.

Showcasing Their Opinions At SXSW



Participating in SXSW's venue and booking panel were (L-R) **Don Strasburg** of the Fox Theatre in Boulder; **Andy Cirzan** of Jam Productions; manager **Jim Grant** of Seriously Inc.; **Roger Jansen** of Avalon Nite Club in Chicago; **Seth**

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20500

DATE: Dec. 1

TO:

Andy Sens

FROM: Staff Secretary

There's 1 significant point Nunn raises that this otherwise strong letter does not address: how are Ukraine & Baltics going to feel more secure with a NATO that expands east but stops short of their borders - leading Russia to perceive them in a "buffer zone." (p. 6 of cover)

Nunn's speech. Shouldn't
we address that concept?

Indy

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

November 29, 1995

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: ANTHONY LAKE
PATRICK GRIFFIN *PG*

SUBJECT: Letter to Senator Sam Nunn

95 NOV 29
11:12Purpose

To reply to a letter from Senator Sam Nunn expressing his concerns about NATO enlargement.

Background

Senator Nunn has reservations about the pace of NATO enlargement which he first raised in a speech to the SACLANT seminar at Norfolk, Virginia last June. Nunn is concerned that too rapid enlargement will anger the Russians and prove destabilizing. He recommends instead that we delay NATO enlargement until the EU expands. Our proposed response at Tab A emphasizes that enlargement is not motivated by concerns over a Russian threat, but by a desire to ensure the success of democratic and economic reforms in Central and Eastern Europe.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the letter at Tab A.

Attachments

Tab A Letter to Senator Nunn
Tab B Incoming correspondence

cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Dear Sam:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter on NATO enlargement, enclosing your presentation to the SACLANT seminar last June. I want to respond to the concerns you have raised about the pace of the enlargement process.

When NATO heads of government committed themselves at the January 1994 Brussels summit to enlarging the Alliance, we did so for several important reasons. First, we wanted to ensure that the still developing democratic and market economic transformation under way on NATO's eastern flank, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe, would be consolidated. We also felt it necessary to respond to a sense of profound insecurity felt by many of these nations as they emerged from decades of Soviet domination. By firmly anchoring these nations in the West, we could advance Transatlantic security by expanding the community of democracies. The growth of the Atlantic Alliance would make a critical contribution in Central and Eastern Europe's return to the Western world just as it did for Western Europe in the years after 1945.

The prospect of eventual NATO membership has already played an important role in furthering these ends. Many of our interlocutors in Central and Eastern European governments have told us, and our own observations confirm, that the prospect of NATO membership has motivated them to keep democratic and market reforms on track, to maintain a pro-Western internal political consensus and to work hard at settling their disputes with neighbors over ethnic minority rights and territorial issues.

We have always recognized that enlargement is a complex undertaking that cannot be accomplished overnight. From the very beginning, we and our Allies have pursued a "gradual, deliberate, transparent" process leading to eventual enlargement. The process began with a thorough NATO study of the subject, focusing on the "why" and "how" of enlargement. The study was concluded in September and presented to Partnership for Peace (PFP) members. As the study makes clear, those nations interested in NATO membership need to take a variety of political and military

steps to enhance their prospects for membership. These run the gamut from firming up civilian control over the military to meeting minimum standards of interoperability with NATO forces.

As we move into the next phase of the enlargement process during 1996, the emphasis will be on intensive bilateral consultations between NATO and interested PFP partners aimed at helping them take the steps outlined in the NATO study. Any interested partner would be eligible to pursue this. Participation will enhance their prospects for eventual membership, but will not guarantee it. Nor is there a specific timetable for inviting participants to begin accession talks leading to membership. Such decisions will be taken by NATO, when appropriate, based on an overall assessment of Alliance security and interests. Yet we need to move ahead, acting on our commitments and responding to the good faith efforts of Europe's new democracies.

EU enlargement, like NATO enlargement, will serve the objectives of European integration and support for the democratic and economic transformation in Central and Eastern Europe. But it is a fundamentally different process with its own logic and timetable. As you know, prospects for early EU enlargement into Central and Eastern Europe have begun to recede. Expansion into the region may not come until the middle of the next decade or even later. The prospect of such delay is already causing great concern in Central and Eastern Europe. If NATO were to postpone its own plans for enlargement pending enlargement by the EU, this could lead to a massive crisis of confidence among governments and publics in the region and threaten the progress and stability that we have all worked so hard to sustain.

You are, of course, quite correct to raise concerns about the Russian reaction to enlargement. We are well aware of their current opposition to enlargement, which they fear could isolate them and marginalize their role in Europe. We are working hard to overcome their apprehension by making clear that we regard a major substantive Russian role in European security affairs as essential to Europe's long-term stability and by pressing to build Russian links to NATO, both through the Partnership for Peace and through the development of a NATO-Russia relationship that goes beyond PFP and develops common approaches on security issues. Consistent with this, we have worked hard to devise a framework for a Russian role in the prospective NATO-led implementation force (IFOR) that meets their needs for participation while ensuring overall NATO command of the operation.

Our policy aims to strike a careful balance between the interests of those countries that seek early entry into NATO and Russia, which opposes that prospect. We believe that the careful and

deliberate strategy that we are pursuing offers the possibility of extending the benefits of Alliance membership to NATO's east while at the same time promoting the development of a robust and positive NATO-Russia relationship. We are confident that, if we keep to our measured course, we will be able to move forward with enlargement while overcoming Russian fears of marginalization.

We hope that Russia will come to understand that enlargement, by fostering greater stability on its western flank, has benefits for it and that the Alliance is changing in a way that does not threaten Russia. In the meantime, we should not allow Russia's misconceptions and groundless fears to set the terms and framework of our own policy. If, in response to these, we were to abandon our own carefully-considered plans and draw back from enlargement, the impact on Central and Eastern Europe would be chilling and, I believe, ultimately destabilizing. In addition, the impact on NATO, in backing away from one of the most important decisions it has ever made, would erode Alliance solidarity and undermine NATO's sense of mission.

The decision to enlarge NATO was not motivated by concerns over a Russian threat to Central and Eastern Europe and should not depend on it. Enlarging NATO only in the event of an imminent Russian threat would give Central European countries a perverse incentive in their relations with Moscow. Linking NATO's enlargement to a Russian threat would also vindicate charges by Russian nationalists that NATO is indeed directed against Moscow. A threat-based enlargement is not the only precedent for inviting new democracies into the Alliance. We did not invite Spain to join the Alliance because we feared military aggression through the Iberian Peninsula but in order to help tie post-Franco Spain to the West.

I believe it is far better to keep to the measured and deliberate course that NATO has agreed to and to avoid accelerating or decelerating the process in response to the vagaries of external events. I am convinced that NATO enlargement will strongly promote the cause of democracy and stability in Central and Eastern Europe and give reality to our long-sought goal of an undivided Europe, free from the specter of totalitarian rule.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Sam Nunn
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

11-10-95

8363

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

95 NOV 11 P6:30

November 1, 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

SUSAN BROPHY *SB*

SUBJECT:

CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE

Attached are letters from the following Members of Congress
that I thought ~~you might like to see:~~

- 1) Sam Nunn (D-GA);
- 2) Barbara Kennelly (D-CT);
- 3) Christopher Dodd (D-CT); and
- 4) John Dingell (D-MI)

Denny/Sandy
we need to know
then a report - what's
going?
PK

JOHN W. WARNER, VIRGINIA
WILLIAM S. COHEN, MAINE
JOHN MCCAIN, ARIZONA
TRENT LOTT, MISSISSIPPI
DAN COATS, INDIANA
BOB SMITH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
DIRK KEMPTHORNE, IDAHO
KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON, TEXAS
JAMES M. INHOFE, OKLAHOMA
RICK SANTORUM, PENNSYLVANIA

RICHARD L. REYNARD, STAFF DIRECTOR
ARNOLD L. PUNARO, STAFF DIRECTOR FOR THE MINORITY

STROM THURMOND, SOUTH CAROLINA, CHAIRMAN
SAM NUNN, GEORGIA
J. JAMES EXON, NEBRASKA
CARL LEVIN, MICHIGAN
EDWARD M. KENNEDY, MASSACHUSETTS
JEFF BINGAMAN, NEW MEXICO
JOHN GLENN, OHIO
ROBERT C. BYRD, WEST VIRGINIA
CHARLES S. ROBB, VIRGINIA
JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN, CONNECTICUT
RICHARD H. BRYAN, NEVADA

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6050

October 26, 1995

President Bill Clinton
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Following up our conversation at the Truman commemoration last evening, I am enclosing the text of a speech I made on NATO enlargement at a NATO meeting in Norfolk, Virginia last June.

Essentially, I believe our interests and those of our friends in East and West Europe would be best served by a two-track approach to NATO enlargement. Track one would be based on Eastern European admission to the European Union, with Western European Union and full NATO membership following shortly thereafter.

- This approach would recognize that there is no present threat to Europe from Russia. It would focus instead on Eastern Europe's economic needs.

- It would also not excite Russian paranoia and would not provoke a Russian military response, such as the redeployment of Russian tactical nuclear weapons.

Track two would be threat-based and would bring accelerated NATO membership for Eastern European countries as soon as Russia comes to pose a real threat to that region. We would in effect put Russia on notice that rapid NATO expansion will depend upon Russian behavior.

I hope you find the speech to be of interest.

Sincerely,



Sam Nunn

*I enjoyed our
conversation.
Sam*

THE FUTURE OF NATO IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD

Speech to the SACLANT Seminar 95

June 22, 1995 - Norfolk, Virginia

I. INTRODUCTION: THE IMPORTANCE OF NATO ENLARGEMENT

Thank you, General Sheehan, for your kind introduction. Secretary General Claes, NATO Military Committee Chairman Field Marshal Vincent, distinguished NATO ambassadors, distinguished military commanders, distinguished guests, I am honored to be with you this morning to discuss the role of NATO in the post-Cold War period.

The pivotal issue of NATO expansion deserves thorough and careful consideration, because it has important ramifications:

- for the future of NATO;
- for the countries of central and eastern Europe;
- for the future of Russia and the other countries of the former Soviet Union; and
- for the future security order throughout Europe, east and west.

II. NEW SECURITY SITUATION

NATO was established primarily to protect the Western democracies from an expansionist Soviet Union that seemed determined to spread its influence through subversion, political intimidation and the threat of military force.

When NATO was formed in the late 1940s, Europe was faced with postwar devastation and the emergence of Soviet aggression and confrontation. Western consensus developed around two critical concepts that were decisive in winning the Cold War and in winning the peace:

- First, Germany and Japan should not be isolated but should be

integrated into the community of democratic nations.

-- Second, the western democracies should pursue together a policy of containment, and unite in NATO to carry out this policy.

Integration and containment succeeded:

-- The Berlin Wall is down and Germany is united.

-- Eastern Europe and the Baltics are free at last.

-- The Soviet Empire has disintegrated and Russia is struggling to try to establish a market economy and some semblance of democracy.

For almost half a century, NATO's military strength was our defensive shield against aggression by the Soviet Union, but our offensive sword was our free societies, our innovative and energetic peoples, our free market systems and our free flow of ideas.

With the end of the Cold War, we have witnessed a heart-pounding, terrain-altering set of earthquakes centered in the former Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe. These seismic events have ended an international era.

The European security environment has changed. We have moved from a world of high risk, but also high stability because of the danger of escalation and balance of terror, to a world of much lower risk but much less stability. In a strange and even tragic sense, the world has been made safer for racial, ethnic, class and religious vengeance, savagery and civil war. Such tragedy has come to the people of Bosnia, Somalia, Haiti, Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia, Sudan, Tajikistan, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and many others.

The dust has not settled. Bosnia continues to erode NATO's credibility and confidence. Yet it is clear that the overall security and freedom of Europe has dramatically improved.

-- The Eastern European countries, the Baltic countries, and many of the countries of the former Soviet Union have become fully independent, are turning westward, and are anxious to become part of the European community and to join NATO as full members.

-- We are no longer preoccupied with the crucial Cold War issue of how much warning time NATO would have in advance of a massive conventional attack westward by the Warsaw Pact.

- During the Cold War, we worried about a Soviet invasion deep into Western Europe. As Michael Mandelbaum points out, the current debacle in Chechnya indicates that Russia today has serious trouble invading itself.

- Today, our military planners estimate that preparation for a Russian conventional military attack, even against Eastern Europe, would take several years at a minimum -- assuming the resources could be found to rebuild the undermanned, underfunded, poorly trained and poorly disciplined Russian military establishment.

- Russia itself has gone from being the center of a menacing, totalitarian global empire to an economically-weak, psychologically-troubled country struggling to move toward democracy and a market-based economy.

- A multilateral security system is forming across Europe that reduces nuclear and conventional armaments and makes a surprise attack by Russian conventional military forces toward the west increasingly unlikely.

- I have in mind the cumulative effect of such agreements as the INF Treaty, the CFE Treaty, the unilateral U.S. and Soviet decisions to reduce tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, the START I and pending START II Treaties, and the pending Chemical Weapons Convention and Open Skies Treaty.

- These mechanisms are far from perfect, several await ratification, and they require vigorous verification and full implementation. Yet even at this stage, they significantly enhance warning time that today is measured in years rather than in days or in months.

We are all aware of the dramatic change in the threat environment in Europe resulting from these changes.

- The immediate danger is posed by violent terrorist groups; by isolated rogue states; by ethnic, religious, and other types of sub-national passion that can flare into vicious armed conflict. The lethality of any and all of these threats can be greatly magnified by the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as by the spread of destabilizing conventional weapons.

- This audience is well aware that Russia currently possesses over 20,000 nuclear weapons, at least 40 thousand tons of chemical weapons, advanced biological warfare capabilities, hundreds of

tons of fissile material, huge stores of conventional weapons, plus thousands of scientists and technicians skilled in manufacturing weapons of mass destruction.

- This is the first time in history that an empire has disintegrated while possessing such enormous destructive capabilities. Even if these capabilities are greatly reduced, the know-how, the production capability, and the dangers of proliferation will endure for many years. This is the number one security threat for America, for NATO, and for the world.

- As we contemplate NATO enlargement, we must carefully measure its effect on this proliferation threat.

-- In the longer term, we cannot dismiss the possibility of a resurgent and threatening Russia.

Russia not only has inherited the still dangerous remnants of the Soviet war machine. In addition, even in its currently weakened condition, Russia possesses great potential in human and material resources. By virtue of its size and strategic location, Russia exerts considerable weight in Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Meanwhile, Russia has inherited the USSR's veto power in the UN Security Council and therefore has a major voice in multilateral decision making.

Russia will be a major factor, for better or for worse, across the entire spectrum of actual and potential threats.

-- Russia can fuel regional conflicts with high technology conventional weapons, along with political and other material support.

- Or Russia can cooperate with us in defusing such conflicts, particularly by preventing the spread of Russian weaponry to irresponsible hands.

-- Russia can itself emerge as a militarily aggressive power.

- Or Russia can assist us in averting new rivalry among major powers that poisons the international security environment.

-- Russia can pursue a confrontational course that undermines security and cooperation in Europe.

- Or it can work with us to broaden and strengthen the emerging system of multilateral security in Europe.

Out of all this background come five fundamental points:

- First, preventing or curbing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is the most important and most difficult security challenge we face.
- Second, Russia is a vast reservoir of weaponry, weapons material and weapons know-how. Thousands of people in Russia and throughout the former Soviet Union have the knowledge, the access, and strong economic incentives to engage in weapons traffic.
- Third, increased Russian isolation, paranoia or instability would make this security challenge more difficult and more dangerous.
- Fourth, although the West cannot control events in Russia, and probably can assist political and economic reform there only on the margins, as the medical doctors say, our first principle should be DO NO HARM.
- Fifth, we must avoid being so preoccupied with NATO enlargement that we ignore the consequences it may have for even more important security priorities.

III. PROBLEMS WITH THE CURRENT APPROACH TO NATO ENLARGEMENT

It is against this background that I offer a few observations on the current approach to NATO enlargement.

NATO's announced position is that the question of enlargement is not whether, but when and how. Somehow I have missed any logical explanation of **WHY**. I cannot speak of public opinion in other countries, but in America when the enlargement debate focuses on issues of NATO nuclear policy, NATO troop deployments, and formal NATO military commitments -- played against the background of repercussions in Russia -- somebody had better be able to explain to the American people WHY, or at least WHY NOW.

NATO was founded on a fundamental truth: the vital interests of the countries of NATO were put at risk by the military power and political intimidation of the Soviet Union. As President Harry Truman said in his memoirs: "The [NATO] pact was a shield against aggression and against the

fear of aggression...." Because NATO was built on this fundamental truth, and because we discussed it openly and faced it truthfully with our people, the alliance endured and prevailed.

Today, we seem to be saying different things to different people on the subject of NATO enlargement.

-- To the Partnership for Peace countries, we are saying that you are all theoretically eligible and if you meet NATO's entrance criteria (as yet not fully spelled out), you will move to the top of the list.

-- To the Russians, we are also saying that NATO enlargement is not threat-based and not aimed at you. In fact, you too can eventually become a member of NATO. This raises serious questions.

-- Are we really going to be able to convince the East Europeans that we are protecting them from their historical threats, while we convince the Russians that NATO's enlargement has nothing to do with Russia as a potential military threat?

-- Are we really going to be able to convince Ukraine and the Baltic countries that they are somehow more secure when NATO expands eastward but draws protective lines short of their borders and places them in what the Russians are bound to perceive as the "buffer zone?"

In short, are we trying to bridge the unbridgeable, to explain the unexplainable? Are we deluding others or are we deluding ourselves?

The advantages of NATO's current course toward enlargement cannot be ignored. If NATO expands in the near term to take in the Visegrad countries, these countries would gain in self-confidence and stability. It is possible that border disputes and major ethnic conflicts presumably would be settled before entry -- for instance, the dispute involving the Hungarian minority in Romania.

However, the serious disadvantages must be thought through carefully.

For example, my conversations with Russian government officials, members of the Russian parliament across the political spectrum, and non-official Russian foreign policy specialists convince me that rapid NATO enlargement will be widely misunderstood in Russia and will have a serious negative impact on political and economic reform in that country. There are several reasons for this:

-- At the moment, Russian nationalism is on the rise and reformers are on

the defensive. The Russian military establishment and the still huge military-industrial complex that undergirds it are dispirited and resentful.

-- The average Russian voter has trouble making ends meet, is unsure what the future may hold, but is well aware that Russia has gone from being the seat of a global empire and the headquarters of a military superpower to a vastly weakened international status.

-- Russian nationalists feed this sense of loss and uncertainty by proclaiming that rapid NATO enlargement is intended to take advantage of a weakened Russia and will pose a grave security threat to the Russian people. Russian demagogues argue that Russia must establish a new global empire to counter an expansionist west. They smile with glee every time NATO expansion is mentioned.

-- Russian democrats do not see an immediate military threat from an enlarged NATO but fear the reaction of the Russian people. The democrats worry that alarmist messages, however distorted, will set back democracy by increasing popular tolerance for authoritarianism and renewed military spending within Russia, and by isolating Russia from western democracies.

In short, if NATO enlargement stays on its current course, reaction in Russia is likely to be a sense of isolation by those committed to democracy and economic reform, with varying degrees of paranoia, nationalism and demagoguery emerging from across the current political spectrum.

In the next few years, Russia will have neither the resources nor the wherewithal to respond with a conventional military build-up. If, however, the more nationalist and extreme political forces gain the upper hand, by election or otherwise, we are likely to see other responses that are more achievable and more dangerous to European stability. For example:

-- While Russia would take years to mount a sustained military threat to eastern Europe, it can within weeks or months exert severe external and internal pressure on its immediate neighbors to the west -- including the Baltic countries and Ukraine. This could set in motion a dangerous action-reaction cycle.

-- Moreover, because a conventional military response from Russia in answer to NATO enlargement is infeasible, a nuclear response, in the form of a higher alert status for Russia's remaining strategic nuclear weapons and conceivably renewed deployment of tactical nuclear weapons, is more likely. The security of NATO, Russia's neighbors, and

the countries of eastern Europe will not be enhanced if the Russian military finger moves closer to the nuclear trigger.

By forcing the pace of NATO enlargement at a volatile and unpredictable moment in Russia's history, we could place ourselves in the worst of all security environments: rapidly declining defense budgets, broader responsibilities, and heightened instability. We will also find ourselves with increasingly difficult relations with the most important country in the world in terms of potential for proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

This is the stuff that self-fulfilling prophecies, and historic tragedies, are made of.

IV. SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALLIANCE POLICY

Where do we go from here? I recognize that it is much easier to criticize than to construct, but I do have a few suggestions.

I suggest a two-track approach to NATO enlargement.

-- The first track would be evolutionary and would depend on political and economic developments within the European countries who aspire to full NATO membership. When a country becomes eligible for European Union membership, it will also be eligible to join the Western European Union and then be prepared for NATO membership, subject of course to NATO approval.

- This is a natural process connecting economic and security interests.

- We can honestly say to Russia that this process is not aimed at you.

-- The second track would be threat-based. An accelerated, and if necessary immediate, expansion of NATO would depend on Russian behavior. We should be candid with the Russian leadership, and above all honest with the Russian people, by telling them frankly:

- If you respect the sovereignty of your neighbors, carry out your solemn arms control commitments and other international obligations, and if you continue on the path toward democracy and economic reform, your neighbors will not view you as a threat, and neither will NATO.

- We will watch, however, and react:

- (1) to aggressive moves against other sovereign states;
- (2) to militarily significant violations of your arms control and other legally binding obligations pertinent to the security of Europe;
- (3) to the emergence of a non-democratic Russian government that impedes fair elections, suppresses domestic freedoms, or institutes a foreign policy incompatible with the existing European security system.

-These developments would be threatening to the security of Europe and would require a significant NATO response, including expansion eastward. We would be enlarging NATO based on a real threat. We would not, however, be helping to create the very threat we are trying to guard against.

Finally, Partnership for Peace is a sound framework for this two-track approach. Its role would be to prepare candidate countries and NATO itself for enlargement on either track. Programs of joint training and exercises, development of a common operational doctrine, and establishment of inter-operable weaponry, technology and communications would continue, based on more realistic contingencies. Tough issues such as nuclear policy and forward stationing of NATO troops would be discussed in a threat-based framework, one which we hope would remain theoretical.

As the Russian leaders and people make their important choices, they should know that Russian behavior will be a key and relevant factor for NATO's future. This straightforward approach is also important for our citizens, who will have to pay the bills and make the sacrifices required by expanded NATO security commitments.

The profound historical contrast between post-World War I Germany and post-World War II Germany should tell us that neo-containment of Russia is not the answer at this critical historical juncture. If future developments require the containment of Russia, it should be real containment, based on real threats.

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