

ON MY MIND  
A. M. RosenthalHow to Be  
Crazy in  
New York

New York Jews who vote against David Dinkins just because they do not like Jesse Jackson are doing a disservice not only to the candidate but to the city, Jews, blacks, Israel — yes, and maybe to Jesse Jackson, too.

There, that is a diluted, moderate version of what I feel when I hear about Jews — and some non-Jews — who say they do not want Mr. Dinkins for mayor because of what Mr. Jackson said about Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization or did not say about Louis Farrakhan.

What I really wanted to write was that these New Yorkers were crazy. But being trained in New York Times moderation, and also caged enough to seek expert advice, I called Mayor Ed Koch.

Mr. Koch is the best Mayor the city has had, and if I cannot vote for him, at least I can call him up for a little common-sense pith now and then.

Also, Ed Koch is the world's outstanding expert on the subject. He once said any Jew or supporter of Israel who voted for Mr. Jackson for President must be crazy. Mr. Koch has the political lumps to show for that statement.

"Mayor," I said, "would you say that any Jew who refuses to vote for Dinkins because of Jackson is crazy?"

"Yes," said the Mayor, "yes, I think I would say that."

"On the record?"

"Hooh," said the Mayor. "Hooh."

Over the phone I could feel him touch his bruises. Then Mr. Koch's Kochness prevailed.

"Yes," he said. "On the record. Crazy — and unfair. David has denounced Farrakhan and is a friend of Israel — unfair."

The Mayor will vote for Mr. Dinkins, saints that both are, but I will wait until Election Day to decide. Given Rudolph Giuliani's lack of experience I am not sure what kind of city he would run. Given Mr. Dinkins's lack of precision and some of his friends, too far left for my taste, I

David,  
Jesse and  
the saint  
of Gracie  
Mansion.

am not sure what kind he would run either. We still have 10 days to squeeze more clarity out of both.

I am hardly unaware of Jewish sensitivities about Israel. But to vote against Mr. Dinkins because of Mr. Jackson's attitude strikes me as wrong. Before he became a candidate, Mr. Dinkins distanced himself from those things most Jews find objectionable about Mr. Jackson.

David Dinkins did not have to be threatened or coaxed to fight against black anti-Semites like Mr. Farrakhan. He did not have to be courted to take a position in favor of Israel and its security. The fact that such a stance is considered good politics in New York has not swayed blacks opposed to Israel; it is not good politics among them.

Certainly New Yorkers may find other Jackson positions objectionable — his romanticism about the third world, his economic theories, whatever.

Many centrist Democrats feel that the new rules for choosing delegates to the National Convention, to which Mr. Jackson and Gov. Michael Dukakis agreed, may turn the next convention over to the Jackson people. They think that would smash the party entirely.

The place to fight that out is within the party, not the New York mayoral election, which is no longer between wings of the Democratic Party but between Mr. Dinkins and Rudy Giuliani.

Mr. Jackson and I do not see eye to eye about Israel, economics or other matters. That does not seem to terrify him.

Sometimes it should be remembered that it was not Mr. Jackson's photograph hugging Yasir Arafat that built up the P.L.O. but the decision of George Shultz and Ronald Reagan to negotiate with it — with George Bush's enthusiastic support.

Should we all therefore vote against Mr. Giuliani or demand that he renounce Presidents Reagan and Bush?

Mr. Jackson's politics make me uneasy. But I have heard him speak about this country with belief, positiveness and hope and seen children and parents draw strength from his words.

Walter Mitty and I have this dream. Someday Jesse Jackson will call up and say, "Abe, you are absolutely right: Arafat is no good, the Middle East problem is caused by Arab rejectionism of Israel, left-wing economics is musty, I renounce Farrakhan, and I want to be President of the United States, not the third world."

Meantime, while I hold my breath, I think it is wrong to say that any black candidate who opposes Mr. Jackson on the issues most important to the voter but who declines to commit political suicide by declaring Mr. Jackson anathema should not have the support of whites in general and Jews in particular.

Wrong, crazy, and as the current Saint of Gracie Mansion says, unfair. □

## Do the Joint Chiefs Fear All Risks?

By Edward Luttwak

WASHINGTON The Panama controversy should not be allowed to degenerate into a personal squabble between the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and a former Assistant Secretary of State. Our inaction in the coup raises the larger question of the entire equilibrium of our external policy making when force is involved. Perhaps we should never intervene anywhere, but that decision should be made in each instance by our Presidents, after evaluating suitably energetic military options against suitably prudent foreign and domestic policy objections.

Whether U.S. troops should have intervened in the anti-Noriega coup earlier this month is a question best left to specialists. There is, however, no question that the Joint Chiefs and the U.S. Southern Command — the joint, all-services' headquarters for Latin America — should have presented realistic intervention options to the President. They clearly did not.

We now know why the Joint Chiefs had no contingency plans to offer to the President. In order to resist successive calls by the State Department for action against Gen. Manuel Noriega, they had magnified the risks so hugely that it would have been totally illogical for them to come up with any realistic plans. In a letter to *The New York Times*, Adm. William J. Crowe Jr., the former Chairman, wrote that to establish a Panamanian government in exile on a U.S. base in

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Panama "would have required bringing in thousands of U.S. troops to secure the base against attack."

Attack from whom? The Panamanian army, not normally considered one of the world's elite forces, is only 3,500 strong and armed with nothing heavier than some armored cars, light mortars and bazookas. Only suicidal bravery could have induced Panamanian troops to attack a U.S. base — and the U.S. brigade normally

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stationed in Panama could have resisted with ease.

If thousands of additional troops were really necessary, then it follows that the number of U.S. troops needed to defend against any one Soviet tank army (several are still in East Germany) must run to the hundreds of thousands.

The most charitable explanation is that the Joint Chiefs did not truly fear the Panamanians, but rather the bureaucratic risks of military action. Any use of force can easily go wrong, and virtually any U.S. military action will evoke some criticism, tactical if not political — and often both.

The Chiefs' sovereign remedy for all risks of military failure and criticisms is the standard remedy of all

exposed bureaucracies. When called to act, they respond with obstructionism — and the refusal to prepare for action is their first line of defense.

What happened in Panama was not an isolated case. Consider what happened in Grenada. For months, President Reagan had been proclaiming the danger he saw in the island's "Marxist-Leninist" regime. But when he ordered the military action in October 1983, the Joint Chiefs had made no preparations (the troops went in without decent maps) and no contingency plans.

In the case of the December 1983 Lebanon air strike, after the October attack on the Marines in Beirut, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and the Joint Chiefs again resisted all action. When President Reagan suddenly ordered the air strike anyway, the aircraft went in without proper bomb loads or tactical preparations to avoid anti-aircraft fire. Thus, two aircraft were lost and a pilot killed with no real targets destroyed at all.

There are many more cases that never happened. Several hostage-rescue and other commando operations, for example, have been successfully blocked over the years at the planning stage, usually with the excuse that the available intelligence was not totally conclusive (it never is).

Nor do the Chiefs hesitate to rely on foreign policy objections in a stance which amounts to a usurpation of civilian functions. In the case of Panama, the Chiefs stressed that a sinister precedent would be set for all our allies around the world if a U.S. garrison engaged in hostile acts against the host government. And they emphasized the negative political impact of any use of force throughout Latin America.

These are not bad arguments; in fact, they are very good arguments.

But they are not military arguments. It is the State Department that is best qualified to assess the foreign policy implications of military action. And it is the President, with his National Security Council staff and political advisors, who is best qualified to adjudicate the external and domestic implications of military action.

But because the Chiefs oppose virtually any use of force, officials at the State Department and the White

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House are forced into the advocacy of military action. Ironically, the final result of this role reversal is that when the Chiefs do advance sound military arguments, they are ignored as bureaucratic excuses.

We should not be fobbed off by sentimental protestations that the lives of young Americans can only be risked for "vital" interests. The reason we have such a large military establishment is precisely to protect non-vital interests as well.

The Joint Chiefs should be redirected to their proper military role, as befits leaders so insistent on spending so much on "readiness" — that, after all, is short for "instantaneous war readiness." □

IN THE NATION  
Tom WickerBush  
On the  
Run

The passage of severe anti-abortion laws in the Pennsylvania Legislature may well have looked to President Bush like a single point of light on a darkening horizon.

The Pennsylvania action came only a day before the House of Representatives upheld Mr. Bush's veto of legislation that would have provided Federal funds for abortions for poor women who were the victims of rape or incest. But the House action was a sort of Pyrrhic victory — pro-choice representatives formed a substantial 231-vote majority, but failed to get the two-thirds needed to override a veto. And Mr. Bush may have further saddled himself and his party with the burden of opposing abortion rights when the public trend seems to be moving in the opposite direction.

What appears to be happening is that, whatever Americans may think about the ethics and morality of abortion, women and families do not want the right to abortion foreclosed by Federal law. When the Supreme Court, in the Webster decision announced this summer, was perceived to move in that direction, though in fact the law of the land was not changed, abortion rights advocates began to mobilize their strength.

This year, Democratic candidates are in the lead for governorships in Virginia and New Jersey, and for mayor of New York City. All three have taken and been aided by pro-choice positions. In Florida, Illinois, Texas and Minnesota, anti-abortion forces have recently been rebuffed. The House reversed its previous stand and approved the legislation Mr. Bush has just vetoed.

Everywhere but in Pennsylvania, the political tide seems favorable to the pro-choice position. And it's the Democrats as a party who have most closely identified themselves with that position. Both Presidents Reagan and Bush and the Republican Party in its platforms have allied themselves with the anti-abortionists.

Even Pennsylvania's legislation could be damaging to Republicans in

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the long run, though Gov. Robert Casey, a Democrat, says he will sign it. If that legislation becomes the vehicle by which the Supreme Court outlaws abortion altogether, reversing its Roe v. Wade decision, the trend of events suggests the Republicans will be the losers politically.

Representative Bill Green, the New York Republican, said he feared Mr. Bush "may well have stumbled on the one issue that could cost him the election in 1992."

On a number of other issues, however, the President's recent performance has hardly been magisterial. In the Senate he suffered deserved rebuke when his proposed constitutional amendment to water down the Bill of Rights failed by far to get the necessary 67 votes. If Mr. Bush wasn't embarrassed, he should have been. His Yale education was wasted if he didn't realize he was tampering with free speech and the right to dissent; and as an experienced politician he must have known that his proposed amendment was transparent in its attempt to exploit a transient public passion. Fortunately, the wise restraints of the Constitution he sought to weaken allowed time for that passion to cool before the vote.

The President appears to have been thwarted by the Senate again, at least for now, in his ill-conceived effort to restore a capital gains tax loophole. In view of a Federal deficit that seems to prevent so much needed action, and Mr. Bush's ritual rejection of demands to raise taxes in response, his attempt to cut taxes for some seems quixotic. It tends to shift the political burden from Democrats' supposed big spending to Republicans' supposed desire to benefit the rich at the expense of the poor, and would increase the deficit by \$67 billion over the next decade.

Mr. Bush's obvious caution served him well when he rejected strong intervention in the recent coup attempt in Panama. But it seemed to underline a passive approach that for the first nine months of his Administration caused him to appear more alarmed than emboldened by the remarkable events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

James Baker, the Secretary of State, made clear in two recent speeches that the President wished Mikhail Gorbachev well in his reform efforts and was prepared to offer him assistance. Until then, nostalgia for old cold-war certainties and an inability to seize the apparent opportunities offered seemed to mark the Administration.

Mr. Bush now says he is not worried about the reunification of Germany — a remote prospect until recently. Even these statements cannot dispel the impression that he is running to catch up to events — not exactly the forceful stance Americans expect of their President. □



## Conservatism: The Agony of Victory

By Edwin Feulner

WASHINGTON The conservative cause to which I've devoted the last 25 years of my life is said to be cracking up, burning out, or, at the very least, running out of steam. And it's conservatives who are saying so. But I wouldn't bet the family farm on the demise of conservatism.

The critics are of two minds — those who say we've won and those who say we can't.

In the first school are those who despair that there isn't much left to talk about. The debate is over. Who admits to being for big government and high taxes anymore? When's the last time you heard even a pointy-headed liberal sing the praises of Third World socialism? We have so captured the moral and intellectual imagination of the world that some have even declared ideological conflict passé: "endism," is what they call it.

If all that's true, others wonder what old cold warriors are supposed to do now that Marxism is on the run even in the Soviet Union. Declare victory and go home?

Is it time, as a foreign policy analyst at another conservative think tank put it recently, to abandon foreign affairs and take up the history of jazz? Is it time to declare victory in the war of ideas?

In the second school are those who appear ready to declare defeat and go home. You can never reduce the size of government, they say, because Congress uses the power of the purse

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to get re-elected, handing out goodies even if there's no money to pay for them. It's time to give up, they say, we've won all the battles but lost the war.

Has conservatism, the major political force of the 1980's, really come to this? Not yet. But the danger signs are unmistakable.

The 1990's will demand not only new policies from conservatives — and worry not, we have plenty of those to offer — but also a new atti-

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tude toward public service. It is here that conservatives have a real problem.

In the concluding lines of his biography of William F. Buckley Jr., John Judis writes, "With Reagan gone . . . conservatives . . . will once again become the target for liberal barbs. Buckley could find himself in a familiar role — as a member of an embattled minority standing athwart history and yelling stop."

Some conservatives seem to like it that way. It livens up their lives without imposing any of the irritating responsibilities of power. But if conservatives are serious about changing public policy in fundamental ways, they must stop acting as if nothing has changed since the days when they

were jeering Jimmy Carter and company from the back of the balcony.

I'm assuming, of course, that our ultimate goal is to see our ideas have impact beyond op-ed pages, journals and talk shows. In those arenas, we've more than held our own.

But liberalism still reigns in Congress: Just compare the level of Federal spending today with the level in 1981, when Ronald Reagan came to Washington vowing to get government off our backs.

Completing the revolution Mr. Reagan began requires a serious commitment from conservatives willing to take on the less glamorous tasks of government and grass-roots politics: political organizing, providing constituent services, recruiting candidates for local office, writing legislation and working with, and within, the bureaucracy to implement change. Like George Bush, perhaps, we must dare to be dull.

We must also move from nay saying to yea saying. Sure, communism (Gorbomania notwithstanding) and the welfare state are still there to kick around. The question is: Do we get energized only by polemics?

Are we so far out of our element without something to attack that we prefer self-flagellation to policy formulation, as recent bickerings among cultural conservatives, neoconservatives, traditional conservatives and New Rightists would seem to indicate?

In the 1990s, conservatives can't be content to be defined merely by how well we discredit our enemies. Everyone knows what we're against. We now need to do a better job of working for what we support or we'll be no better than the 1960's radical who said that his primary goal in life was to dance on the ashes of the "establishment."

The difficult truth is that the skills

needed to govern, build political coalitions and change policy are less polemical than diplomatic, and diplomacy requires more patience and persistence than many conservatives seem able to muster. Unless this changes soon, we'll squander our chance to forge a governing coalition that could rival the New Deal coalition.

To create such a majority will require reaching beyond the present union of foreign policy hardliners,

We have  
changed the  
debate — now  
on to hard,  
dull politics.

economic libertarians and social issue conservatives to those left behind by the Great Society and not yet reached by the Reagan economic recovery — blacks and Hispanics in the inner cities.

If we fail to build such a governing majority, we can go back to the great fun of being an embattled minority and stop pretending that we're fit to govern the country.

Conservatives must move from stop to go, from making points to making change, from visions of a better society to translating the visions into reality. The thrill may be gone, but with our most important work staring us in the face, it's time to stand and deliver, not walk away. □