

RESEARCH REPORTS

Reviews of new research at public agencies and private institutions

"National Guard: Peacetime Training Did Not Adequately Prepare Combat Brigades for Gulf War."

U.S. General Accounting Office, P.O. Box 6015, Gaithersburg, Md. 20877. 55 pp. No charge. (GAO/NSIAD-91-263)

Since the mid-1970s, the U.S. Army has been critically dependent on its reserves. Not only was the Army Reserve given vital *support* responsibilities (e.g., transportation) but Army National Guard *combat* units were assigned to "round out" certain active Army divisions—to be deployed shortly after they were in the event of war. In the Persian Gulf War, however, reports Congress' General Accounting Office, the plans to use the roundout brigades fell apart.

After Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, two active Army divisions—the 24th Infantry and the 1st Cavalry—were sent to the Gulf without their designated Guard roundout units. (Other active Army brigades went in their stead.) The Guard units were not even called up, because federal law restricted reservists to a maximum of 180 days of active duty. In November and December, after that law was lifted, three Guard brigades—each with about 4,000 soldiers—were activated. In February 1991, after extensive training, only one of the

three—the 48th Infantry Brigade—was pronounced ready for combat. That was on the day the Gulf War ended.

What accounts for the sorry performance?

When the roundout Guard units' "weekend warriors" first went on active duty in November, their commanders badly underestimated the amount of training needed to get them combat-ready. Many—from 15 percent in the 155th Armor Brigade to 19 percent in the 48th Infantry—had not been fully trained to do their assigned jobs. Nearly 600 soldiers had to be given formal schooling in more than 42 different specialties; earlier training would have taken time away from their civilian jobs.

Many Guard soldiers also lacked battlefield survival skills, the GAO says, because the battlefield exercises in the Guard's annual two-week training stints were in most cases unrealistic. Moreover, the Army found that about one-third of the soldiers in the three roundout brigades had either dental conditions or in-

complete dental records that, according to Army regulations, would have prevented them from being deployed. (In most cases, however, the regulations could have been waived.) An undetermined number of other Guard members, mostly over age 40, had serious medical ailments, such as ulcers or chronic asthma. More than 250 in the 48th Brigade had to be sent to Fort Stewart, Georgia, for treatment.

There were other problems. For example, many Guard officers and NCOs were found lacking in basic leadership skills. One brigade's NCOs, the GAO reports, suffered from "a lack of initiative, of discipline, [and] of proficiency in basic soldiering skills, and [had] a 'so what' attitude."

The various reserve *support* units—including many from the Guard—had fewer snafus. Some 147,000 Army reservists were called up, and 74,000 were sent to the Persian Gulf. But the Army, reports the GAO, is now reassessing "the future role of its reserve roundout units."

"Policy Implications of Greenhouse Warming."

National Acad. Press, 2101 Constitution Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20418. 127 pp. \$14.95.

The broiling summer of 1988, coming just three years after the discovery of a hole in the ozone layer over Antarctica, created global alarm about "the greenhouse effect"—the accumulation in the atmosphere of carbon dioxide and other gases that might cause global warming. Many envi-

ronmentalists warned of shifting weather patterns, rising ocean levels, and other dire consequences.

Yet, according to this report by a National Academy of Sciences panel, much uncertainty exists among scientists. During the last 100 years, the average global temperature has in-

creased by between 0.5 and 1.1 degrees F, but how much, *if any*, of that increase was due to greenhouse warming scientists do not know. By the year 2030, computer simulations project, temperatures could rise by 3.4–9.4 degrees F. At the upper end of that range, the average global climate would be

warmer than at any time in the last million years. But the simulations all use "untested and unvalidated hypotheses."

Nevertheless, the threat should be taken seriously, the panel says. It believes that in the United States—if not in poor countries or ones with fewer climate zones—people "could probably adapt to the likely changes." In some regions, the changes would be for the worse; in others, for the better.

U.S. industry would be little affected; farmers are used to adjusting to climate changes; and valuable forests could be managed so as to adapt.

Changes in water supply could be offset by various means, one being price hikes to encourage conservation. Protecting coastal cities against storms if sea levels rose would be costly but feasible.

Most vulnerable would be coastal swamps and marshlands, already threatened by development and pollution, and natural ecosystems of plants and animals. Some ecosystems probably would be shattered. New species would likely become dominant; some species might become extinct.

Even though Americans could probably adapt, the panel concludes, the costs of

adaptation and the possibility of "extremely unpleasant surprises" make it prudent to take out low-cost "insurance"—i.e. to take inexpensive measures to reduce or offset greenhouse-gas emissions. These include improving energy efficiency and cutting use of chlorofluorocarbons (often used in refrigeration equipment). The panel believes that the United States could cut emissions of greenhouse gases at very low cost—in some cases, perhaps even at a net savings. But, for now at least, the panel says, very expensive measures to ward off global warming are "not justified."

"Traffic Safety and the Driver."

Van Nostrand Reinhold, 115 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10003. 405 pp. \$51.95.

Author: *Leonard Evans*

In 1975, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration predicted that U.S. traffic deaths would soar from 44,525 to 72,300 by 1985. The logic seemed unassailable: More (and lighter) vehicles on the road would mean more fatal accidents. Yet traffic deaths fell by two percent, to 43,825.

In fact, notes Evans, a researcher at General Motors Research Labs, there has been a long decline in traffic death rates, from 150 fatalities per billion kilometers driven in 1921 to fewer than 15 in 1988.

Obviously, traffic laws and new auto-safety technology (e.g., seat belts) have contributed, but Evans says that the biggest single factor has been changes in human behavior—a wider acceptance of the mores of the road. Thus, the United States, whose citizens

have the longest experience with the auto, has the lowest traffic death rate (.24 per 1,000 vehicles) of 21 countries studied. (The highest rate: Liberia's 36 fatalities per 1,000 vehicles).

An obvious example of changed behavior is drunk driving, once viewed with indifference, but now, thanks largely to citizens groups' efforts in the 1980s, universally condemned. By 1987, Evans estimates, reduced drunk driving cut fatalities by 6,000. Still, alcohol is a factor in 22,000 traffic-related deaths annually.

"The problem of traffic crashes," Evans points out, "is much more one of drivers doing things that they know they ought not to do, than of drivers not knowing what to do." Thus, youngsters who take driver-education classes are just as likely to be involved in

accidents as are their unschooled peers.

Human nature being what it is, it is hard to predict the effects of changes in traffic conditions. Thus, fatalities drop in rain or snow; crashes are more numerous, but because drivers compensate for the conditions they are less severe. Yet one five-year study of painted crosswalks found that pedestrians using them were twice as likely to be hit by a car as were those using unmarked ones. Evans believes that the painted crosswalks created a sense of security in the pedestrians not matched by an increase in driver caution.

The road to greater safety? Evans favors promoting driver courtesy, ending Hollywood's glamorization of hot-rodders, and strengthening efforts to curb drunk driving.

COMMENTARY

We welcome timely letters from readers, especially those who wish to amplify or correct information published in the Quarterly and/or react to the views expressed in our essays. The writer's telephone number and address should be included. For reasons of space, letters are usually edited for publication. Some letters are received in response to the editors' requests for comment.

Romanticizing the Establishment

After referring to an aspect of my work as "comical," the editor of this snobbish journal had enough grace or gall or guilt to invite me to comment on the three pieces on "The American Establishment" [WQ, Autumn '91] in 300 words or fewer. First, the fact that no social scientists were asked to contribute is a commentary on the condescending attitude of precious humanists toward political sociology. Second, the piece by Max Holland on John McCloy ["Citizen McCloy"] is an excellent historical contribution that adds greatly to our understanding of the American power elite and corroborates everything I ever claimed in *Who Rules America* (1967), *The Higher Circles* (1970), or *The Powers That Be* (1979).

Third, the piece by John Judis ["Twilight of the Gods"] is old hat through the mid-1970s, thanks to Laurence Shoup and William Minter's *Imperial Brain Trust* (1977), and wrong for the '80s. Judis romanticizes the past by overlooking the degree of dissension there actually was, and overemphasizes the degree of fragmentation there is today because he is too (breathlessly) close to the action. Fourth, it is ridiculous to include Schrag's *The Decline of the WASP* and Christopher's *Crashing the Gates* on any serious book list. Fifth, the list lacks social science books: it should include Michael Useem's *The Inner Circle* (1984), Beth Mintz and Michael Schwartz's *The Power Structure of American Business* (1985), and my own *The Power Elite and The State* (1990), at the very least.

Finally, the comment about my work shows a lack of understanding of the use of indicators of upper-class standing in studies of large groups of decision-makers. The use of such indicators is explained in chapter one of *The Higher Circles* and on pages 44-49 of my *Who Rules America Now?* (1983).

Only the Holland piece was worth the price of admission.

Professor G. William Domhoff
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Justifying the Means

Your articles on the rise and fall of the American

Establishment will further fuel the nostalgia for the good old days, when a few wise men ran the show. There is, to be sure, some reason for nostalgia. A Bud McFarland is a sorry successor to a Bob Lovett. But I am reminded of a letter I saw in James Forrestal's papers at Princeton. As I recall the letter, Forrestal, who had been Navy Secretary in World War II, wrote Jack McCloy after the war that it was a good thing the United States won—because he and McCloy would both be in jail if they had lost. Like Ollie North and McFarland, men like McCloy and Forrestal stretched the law in furtherance of their cause. The difference, of course, is that the cause was more worthy in World War II, and that the old guard was clever enough to win—and not get caught.

Evan Thomas
Washington Bureau Chief
Newsweek

New World Order—or Disorder?

Commencing under progressive-era presidents (Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson), the Establishment came of age in the administration of the second Roosevelt. For him the Establishment managed World War II; for his successor it wrote the ground rules for the Cold War (1947-1989). With these rules it supervised a global security regime. All went well until the Vietnam War, a conflict from which the Establishment suffered serious damage.

It was fundamentally an elite meritocracy. Obviously, if you were a WASP and well-born you had a head start, but children of less well-off families won admittance (John McCloy, Clark Clifford, Dean Rusk) to be followed by the classic outsiders—Catholics, Jews, and blacks (Zbigniew Brzezinski, Henry Kissinger, and Andrew Young). Dominated by men, it did not reject women (Clare Booth Luce, Jeane Kirkpatrick).

Both authors see disarray, a lack of mission. Arguably, those who operated a security regime should be able to forge a new collaboration, the trade regime that will either be built in this decade, resulting in an ordered world, or won't be built, resulting in a new world disorder. With the Cold War over, the three surviving platforms of

wealth—North America, Northeast Asia, and Northwest Europe—need governing elites with an enforceable international consensus. It won't be easy: Japan has plenty of power but no purpose, the United States has some purpose but not enough power, and Europe has plenty of internal problems. But time will not wait for the three. Either they work together, a difficult task for Americans who like to rule alone, or they fall separately, something Japanese and German elites have experienced.

Patrick Lloyd Hatcher
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Establishing Values

Here we go on another lap around the track of the American Establishment, a derby American scholars have been running ever since E. Digby Baltzell wrote *The Protestant Establishment* in 1964. The course of analyses which follows Baltzell's lead is familiar: They start their subjects at prep school, follow them down the backstretch into the Ivy League, flash through Wall Street on the clubhouse turn, and thunder into the State Department at the finish. Max Holland and John Judis make as interesting a race of it as possible, considering the fact that we have seen it so many times before.

Readers who crave a little variety should begin by asking themselves why the values of the old Establishment are assumed to have been the property of the upper class. Surely the most interesting and poignant detail in Mr. Holland's essay is the fact that McCloy's parents—a Scotch-Irish actuary and a Pennsylvania Dutch hairdresser—"believed firmly in the Victorian virtues of thrift, duty, morality, struggle, and self-improvement."

If these convictions were instilled only at Groton, the elder McCloy's would not have held them. Where then did they come from? This question leads us back to such subjects as low church Protestant piety, Whig politics, perhaps even the *Autobiography* of Benjamin Franklin. Large and elusive matters—but they provide a nexus for understanding American history as a whole, not just the history of the elite.

It's time we understood Mr. and Mrs. McCloy, as well as their son—for without them, we wouldn't have him. Without latter-day versions of them, we will not get the successors to him that Mr. Judis craves.

Richard Brookhiser
Author, *The Way of the WASP*
(The Free Press, 1991)

Stop Blaming Columbus

Criticism enveloping the approaching quincentennial celebration of Columbus's famous voyage ["Columbus and the Labyrinth of History," *WQ*, Autumn '91] commonly overlooks the fact that even if Columbus had not sailed in 1492, other European vessels would have discovered lands on the other side of the Atlantic—and within a very narrow time frame at that. Cabral's encounter with Brazil en route to India in 1500 proves that European techniques of navigation had reached a level that made transatlantic crossings inevitable.

A further implication of this circumstance is that once ocean crossings started, Old World infections were bound to devastate the disease-inexperienced populations in the New World. Epidemiological vulnerability is what destroyed Indian populations and cultures, not European weapons or intentions. The cost was heavy indeed for Native Americans to bear, but no greater than other previously isolated populations suffered when the outer world broke in upon them.

Only by undoing the ecosystem, of which Columbus's critics are particularly fond, could the disaster to native American populations have been prevented. Moreover, in the half millenium since transoceanic contacts began, initial shocks to the world's biological and cultural systems have settled into a global process of interaction whose net effect has been the enlargement of human knowledge, power, and wealth.

We should recognize the very heavy costs paid by previous isolated populations when global communications exposed them to new buffetings. But we should also celebrate the gains that have come to humanity as a whole and to the peoples of the United States in particular across the past 500 years as a result of the same process of globalization. This, I submit, is the only appropriate response to the Quincentenary of 1992.

William H. McNeill
Colebrook, Conn.

Revealing the Labyrinth

Mr. Wilford's chief difficulty, it seems to me, is that he has no real feeling for the true labyrinth of history that his article purportedly examines. If he had he would understand that things are much more complex, and usually more interesting, than he makes them out to be, and that much of what he retails as fact is questionable and unproven, in the delightful way that history is likely to be seen.

There are countless examples of his bold statements that are simply unproven, and a number

quite unlikely: that Columbus came from "humble and obscure origins" in Genoa (the birthplace issue has by no means been settled, or that the Genoese "Christofforo Columbo" is the same as the Spanish Cristobal Colon); that Columbus and his officers "dropped to their knees in prayer" after their landfall (nothing about this in the log, and the only source is Fernando Colon, who wasn't there); that Columbus had an obsessive, "daring scheme" to sail west from Europe and was the "first with the stubborn courage to stake his life" on it (there is no evidence prior to 1492 of such a scheme and Portugal had sent out many a courageous seaman on perhaps two dozen voyages into the Atlantic between 1431 and 1486). And so on, throughout the article. Not, mind you, that I am claiming that Mr. Wilford is necessarily wrong, only that he cannot be absolutely sure, nor can we, for the historical record here is murky—and labyrinthine.

But on two substantial issues this careless assertion of fact is quite important in matters Columbian and deserves a little more attention.

First, he blandly asserts that Columbus was going to "the fabled shores of the Indies" celebrated by Marco Polo. As I tried to show in my book (*The Conquest of Paradise*, 1990), the reasons for doubting this far outweigh the reasons for supposing it. In fact the supposition rests on the evidence of the prologue to the first log, and that only, and it is a highly suspicious document that may well have been written on the voyage home, not on the way out, and in order to deceive his sovereigns, as he often did. Against that there are the indisputably authentic exchanges with those sovereigns saying only that he was sailing to "Islands and Mainlands" in the Ocean Sea that he shall "discover," meaning unknown lands, obviously. The fact that he went on that first voyage with only trifling trading truck—certainly nothing you would swap with the potentates of the East—and without so much as a single soldier to protect him as he went around "taking possession of" island after island, certainly nothing you would do if you thought you were on territory controlled by those mighty rulers, backs up this claim. It is time that historians stopped pushing Fernando Colon's heroic view of his father and instead faced the known facts that clearly suggest, even if they cannot prove, that Columbus went sailing for nothing more than unknown lands and the treasures they would contain.

Second, Wilford states flatly that "Columbus insisted to his dying day that he had reached the Indies" (though a few pages later he says we "cannot be sure" of that traditional story. Again as I have showed, this idea of Columbus's was fairly short-lived, useful mostly to convince the sovereigns to give him a second journey, and by the third voyage

he knows (and on the fourth confirms) that he has found a new continent (South America), hitherto unknown, an "*Otro Mundo*" so important that he conjures up angels from God to tell him how important it is. Far from never recognizing "he had found something other than Asia," he makes his geography quite explicit in his *Lettera Rarissima* of 1503 and refers directly to the West Indies in his *Book of Privileges* of 1501-2; by the time he died in 1506 he well knew, in the words of the master Columbian historian John Boyd Thacher "that between the country of the Great Khan and the shores of Europe lay great continental lands and that he—Christopher Columbus—and none other was their discoverer."

The labyrinth of history can sometimes be confusing—but it is also sometimes a great deal of fun.

I do not want to seem churlish to Mr. Wilford—his book, after all, owes a great deal to my own, particularly in its treatment of Columbus's reputation over the centuries, and I only wish he had had time to read it more closely—but permit me to close by correcting a few matters where I think we can say with some certainty that he has passed beyond the unproven to the erroneous. Columbus did not sail to Central America "instead" of Santo Domingo on the fourth voyage, and indeed sailed directly to and would have put in there had he not been refused entry by the governor; not all the Taino dugouts were long enough to hold 40 men, though some were; Santangel was not the "chief financial adviser" to the court, though he was *escribano de racion* (household treasurer) for Ferdinand and did use his influence apparently to get money for the first voyage; and history books certainly did not ignore Columbus after his death, considering that he appeared in 142 works in 385 editions in the century after his death, including all the major works of history from the *Paesi novamente ritrovati* in 1507 to George Abbot's *A Briefe Description* in 1599.

It is all right for Mr. Wilford to attempt to stake out ground for himself as a dispassionate journalist in the Columbian fields, suggesting that my own work is somehow off to one side where people are judged by "anachronistic" standards, but if he wants to be a real historian instead of a mere journalist he will have to allow his gaze to range a bit wider and his attention to delve a bit deeper into the real complexities of what history is and how we surmise it. Of course he might then discover the real labyrinth, and that may be more than a journalist has time for.

Kirkpatrick Sale
Author,

The Conquest of Paradise
New York, N.Y.

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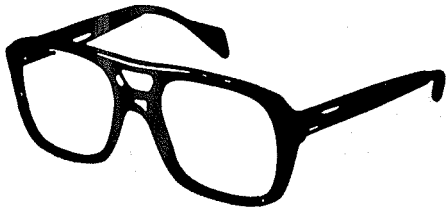
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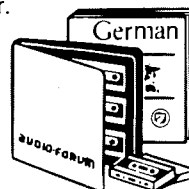
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