National News

Fat (Sir) Henry says, 'Bring Saddam down'

Sir Henry Kissinger attacked President Clinton for not bombing Iraq after Saddam Hussein agreed to comply with the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) inspection regime, in a Sunday *Washington Post* commentary on Nov. 29. Under the headline "Bring Saddam Down," Kissinger railed that "the issue is not UNSCOM, but the continued rule of Saddam." Kissinger argued that "a reluctance to use force progressively erodes our credibility," and demanded that the United States take the next available excuse to unilaterally launch a massive bombing campaign against Saddam, the Revolutionary Guard, and any site that the U.S. suspects may be housing weapons of mass destruction.

While endorsing former Defense Assistant Secretary Richard Perle's call for an Iraqi "Contra" program (similar to the one Perle had helped George Bush run in Central America), Kissinger insisted that such an effort must be backed up by U.S. military units, that could be sent in if some Iraqi "freedom fighters" get into trouble.

Only a week earlier, Katharine Graham's *Washington Post* had quoted Lady Margaret Thatcher screeching that U.S. refusal to bomb Iraq represented "American impotence." Kissinger, Thatcher, and Perle all share high-level posts with Britain's Hollinger Corp. media empire, which has been working to draw President Clinton into bombing Iraq, in order to sabotage a New Bretton Woods financial system.

Banks offer loans for season football tickets

Season tickets for professional football games have become so expensive that, according to the Nov. 13 *Wall Street Journal*, banks are offering loans, and some fans are taking out second mortgages to feed their habit. The First American National Bank of Nashville and the Tennessee Oilers sent out mass mailings of pre-approved $5,000 "checks," which become loans when endorsed; the bank and the team are now working to sell another wave of season tickets for

a new stadium. The Buffalo Bills held an "open house" at their stadium, where Marine Midland Bank had a booth to offer financing for prospective ticket-buyers. In Miami, American Express is allowing Dolphins fans to charge season tickets on their cards, through a special arrangement with the team.

The *Journal* cites the case of a 29-year-old Congressional staffer who has borrowed more than $7,000 to finance his Baltimore Ravens season tickets, spending more than $2,000 in interest alone.

Many teams also now charge one-time "license" fees for the right to buy season tickets every year (many teams have waiting lists, and the demand is heavy for the best seats), with some teams charging as much as $5,000 a seat on top of ticket price.

McDougal acquitted in new defeat for Starr

"Everything that's happened to me in recent years has been about Bill Clinton," said Susan McDougal, after a Santa Monica, California jury acquitted her on Nov. 23, of nine counts of grand theft, forgery, and failure to file state income tax returns, following a 10-week trial involving her personal and business relations with the wife of conductor Zubin Mehta.

Although a state case, the acquittal is seen as another defeat for Kenneth Starr, who had had McDougal and her late husband convicted on charges relating to the Whitewater land deal. McDougal has always maintained that her conviction was aimed at forcing her to lie about President and Mrs. Clinton, before Starr's grand jury, which she refused to do. Starr slapped her in prison for 18 months for civil contempt, and is still holding criminal contempt charges over her head. "They wanted me to say things against Bill and Hillary Clinton. People say to me: 'Are you scared of Ken Starr? He better be scared of me because I'm on my way back."

The California jurors described McDougal as a sympathetic and mostly credible defendant, who, in their view, was victimized by overreaching Los Angeles prosecutors. One juror told the press, "I'm really flabbergasted. I don't know how this got through the system." Asked whether she thought Starr's office was involved in pushing the state prosecution, she replied, "In retrospect, you do have to ask yourself that question."

Atlantic Monthly exposes prison industry mania

The December issue of *Atlantic Monthly* features "The Prison-Industrial Complex," by Eric Schlosser, who shows that America imprisons more people—1.8 million—than any other nation, including China "with nearly five times our population." Schlosser notes that such "new products" as the B.O.S.S. ("body-orifice security scanner") and "new jobs," such as the "bed-brokers" who match inmates in overcrowded state prisons with empty beds elsewhere, are springing up in this new "industry."

Privatized prison corporate officers are making record incomes, he says, citing Wackenhut Corrections' CEO, who made $500,000 last year, nearly four times the salary of the head of the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

Schlosser incisively concludes: "The spirit of every age is manifest in its public works, in the great construction projects that leave an enduring mark on the landscape." At the turn of the century, there was the Panama Canal; in the New Deal, huge dams and bridges; in the 1950s, the national highway system. And in our age, huge prisons draped with razor wire.

Televangelists preach Y2K bug and 'end-times'

In what might be characterized as the second coming of Elmer Gantry, televangelist Jerry Falwell is proclaiming that the Year 2000 computer conundrum—known as the Y2K bug—is a "catastrophe" that could "start a worldwide religious revival leading to Christ's return to Earth," and that he would not be surprised if Christ appeared in 2000, according to the front page of the Nov. 24 *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. Falwell is now marketing a $28 videotape, "A Christian's Guide to the Millennium Bug," which he said has sold more than 1,900 copies since August.

The overweight Lynchburg evangelist tells his faithful that he intends to stock up on food, sugar, gasoline, and ammunition to protect his family in case the millennial catastrophe comes to pass.