

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

When Is It Patriotic to Criticize the President?

Ion Mihai Pacepa's commentary ("Propaganda Redux," op-ed, Aug. 7) fails to consider that, historically, American presidents are often severely criticized by their political opponents. Americans love to voice their opposition—that is what we do best.

The change in the present generation of political rancor is the avowed use of procedures to attack presidential initiatives or appointees. American history instructs us that many politicians voiced their opposition to wars conducted by this country, but it is hard to affect the sense of urgency evoked in the perils of World War II. Presidents are not the embodiment of America, nor are these present times equivalent to the 1940s. Unity has its price and Americans are no longer willing to sacrifice their speech to secure international approval.

DANIEL H. ERSKINE
White Plains, N.Y.

Lt. Gen. Pacepa asserts that "international respect for America is directly proportional to America's own respect for its president," implying that there is a causal relationship between domestic criticism of President Bush and the international community's esteem for the U.S. On the contrary, the most logical and straightforward explanation for the president's immense unpopularity, both here and abroad, is widespread recognition of the inefficacy and harmfulness of his administration's policies.

The notion that Americans should hold their tongue lest they invite international distrust of their leaders is perverse and absurd. Americans owe it to themselves and to the world to speak out against bad leadership both at home and abroad. Pretending that such leadership doesn't exist is never a reasonable solution.

lieutenant general: No one in this world has curriculum vitae adequate to the job of being president of the U.S.; and Americans at all levels talk much about things they do not understand, not having done their homework. Reading the Journal—and especially this fine commentary—helps to reduce that common deficiency.

IVAN HILLS
Rockland, Maine

Although one is happy that Lt. Gen. Pacepa was able to escape communist Eastern Europe and begin a new life in the U.S., it must be pointed out that he seems to harbor some misconceptions about the role of the state in his adopted country. Unlike in the Communist regimes he once served as an intelligence agent—where, as he points out, "the leader is all"—here the leader and government must be accountable to the people. We pledge our allegiance to a country, neither leader nor government. Our leaders must earn loyalty by being, at minimum, straightforward, truthful and competent.

JACK CLINKMAN
Glenview, Ill.

Many thanks to Lt. Gen. Pacepa for his perceptive commentary. As a 30-plus-year veteran of the military and the CIA's clandestine services I can attest to the accuracy of his observations. Lenin once termed as "useful idiots" those whose actions furthered Communist aims through their acceptance of Communist propaganda.

The American left and its abettors in the Democratic Party have fallen into this trap. They cheer and magnify any battlefield setback, daily defame the duly elected leader of the U.S. at home and abroad, and ignore the deadly intentions and capabilities of those who seek the de-

Cancer Drugs: No Remission For FDA Omission

It is unacceptable that people desperately waiting for effective treatment can't access these treatments because the Food and Drug Administration insists that the same drug must work on everyone ("Cancer Drug Fails, So Maker Tries New Pitch," page one, Aug. 2). It is well documented that people respond differently to medications due to a number of factors including age, race, gender and progression of their disease. In other words, what works for one patient may not work as well for another.

The future of medical research must be to determine for which subgroups of patients different treatments are likely to be most effective. This will lead to more targeted treatments which, in turn, will lead to fewer medication failures and errors, shorter delays to effective treatment, improved health outcomes and, ultimately, lower health-care costs.

By continuing to disregard information on the effectiveness of treatments within subgroups and instead rely on the one-medicine-for-all approach of the last century, the FDA is failing our patients. The FDA has the opportunity to improve health-care delivery by approving drugs that are shown to be effective within well-defined groups of people. We encourage them to take this important step.

KAREN A. VICARI, J.D.
Executive Director
Alliance for Better Medicine
Sacramento, Calif.

Our Energy Needs Are Clear

Concerns over nuclear-safety issues are consistently overblown, to the dangerous detriment of other critical considerations ("Nuclear Safety Reports Called Into Question," page one, Aug. 3). Whether or not our carbon-dioxide emissions are responsible for the possibility of

When Pigs Fry

My Tofurky kielbasa and my Smart Dogs didn't need castration or anesthesia ("These Little Pigs Get Special Care From Norwegians," page one, Aug. 6). No need to swallow any cholesterol medicines with my Fakin' Bacon strips either.

PAT SOMMER
Laguna Beach, Calif.

Your front-page placement of the article says a lot about how far we have come in our battle to have animal issues taken seriously by society. We may need to use animal-derived products, but there is a responsible way to do it.

LOUIS GAMBOGI
Pittsburgh

Nardelli: A New Era, Indeed

I read with bemused dismay that Cerberus Capital Management has appointed former Home Depot Chief Executive Robert Nardelli to the top spot at Chrysler ("Chrysler's New Era Begins Under Nardelli," Corporate Focus, Aug. 7). Mr. Nardelli turned Home Depot, a great American success story, into a staggering mediocrity. For this he took a short hike with an unbelievable load of cash, an outrage even by current bloated standards.

Mr. Nardelli and his ilk will continue to enrich themselves by eroding the foundations of a once-robust economy. For this we have only ourselves to blame: consumers for whom price is the only concern, investors for whom short-term gains are the only metric and boards of directors whose timidity is exceeded only by their greed.

BARRY WILLIS
Novato, Calif.

Howling at the 'Cover-Up'

In response to "The Great Hotel Cover-Up" (Weekend Journal, July 27): It is ironic that Lisa Peterson, com-

A Bad Korean Trad

Your editorial "Tradin America" (Aug. 7) makes a incorrect arguments about between the U.S. and Korea, pact of the proposed Free Trade ment (FTA) between the tries.

You correctly note tha and South Korea have a hu nce in auto trade, and that rea has failed to follow tl past commitments to recti balance. But the proposec not provide any meaning on this issue. The proposed allows Korea to maintain m nontariff barriers that have Japanese and European-m cles out of their market.

World-wide, developm ies average 40% market tion by imported vehicles; the figure is just 3.6%. Yo correct to say that Europea ers are "doing just fine" in : rea. No manufacturer from try—not Ford, not GM, no not Volkswagen—is allow port significant volumes in rean market.

The editorial also implic: is supporting the U.S.-Kore fact, the company has rema tral. GM's joint venture wtl has allowed GM to import Ko cles into the U.S., but even v rean partner, the company is vented from exporting any si number of U.S.-made vehicl rea.

A serious attempt to deal imbalance in auto trade bet U.S. and Korea must requ measurable action to open rean market. The proposed l not meet this test and shou jected.

RON GETTI
United Auto