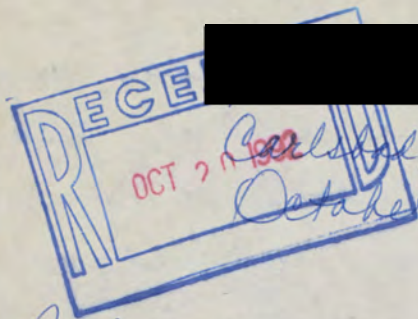




Dear Brian :

My usual enjoyment of C. Span has been blurred by my sense of indignation -- first, the overwhelming attention given to Mr. Perot's original campaign! When he withdrew Governor Clinton or Senator Gore or their supporters seemed to take over -- all to the disadvantage of President Bush's campaign -- not to mention the obvious bias and disinformation from most guest journalists.

Is it possible last night's actions by the cameraman escaped everyone's attention except mine?
(over)

Most of Mr. Bush's segments included a few head shots of him alone; but most views included Mr. Clinton -- shaking his head, grimacing, sneering -- doing everything he could to cancel the effect of Mr. Bush's speech. He's an experienced cameraman -- he knew what he was doing -- but collusion ??? Surely not!

When Mr. Clinton spoke, miraculously, he managed to have a clear field -- good, solitary head shots! Even when Mr. Bush or Mr. Perot were occasionally included (we must keep up appearances) they were listening politely.

This is one more example of underlings (in this case, the cameraman) subverting the

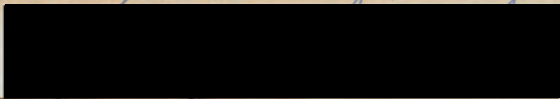
efforts of the "Top Brass" (Commission co-chairmen) to be fair. It is also a good example of character! or lack thereof! (I tried to phone but failed to connect.)

My hope is that Leo Durocher was wrong when he said, "Nice guys finish last." Last night Mr. Clinton acted more like a school boy making faces behind the teacher's back.

Mr. Perot, for all his self-aggrandizement, can't keep to a schedule and doesn't "play fair." Mr. Bush, I hope, will prevail when people begin to realize that the whole world is in a slowdown -- we're all affected; and no one leader can work miracles in spite of promises to the contrary. (over)

I'm sure you're trying to be fair at C-Span, but you're our only refuge. I've ceased watching news on the major networks or ~~(^{pardon me!} CNN)~~ CNN. I read several papers and find many items never touched on TV news. But they're never repeated - - whereas these trite, memorized lines are spoken over and over again, disguised as news because of a changed locale.

I've been a Democrat and a Republican. I voted for FDR (never even knew he was crippled or unfaithful) Adlai Stevenson, John F. Kennedy (ignorant there, too) but changed my registration after President Johnson. Keep up the good work.
Sincerely,



POLITICS & POLICY

TV News Drops Kid-Glove Coverage of Election, Trading Staged Sound Bites for Hard Analysis

By ALAN L. OTTEN
Special to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
WASHINGTON — It was the perfect photo opportunity.

There stood President Bush with the president of Mexico and the prime minister of Canada, watching their representatives initial the North American Free Trade Agreement — an agreement Mr. Bush says will mean lots more jobs for U.S. workers.

But along with the picture came the voice of NBC White House correspondent John Cochran: "To-day President Bush said he didn't want to talk about politics. He didn't have time. The ceremony here did it for him."

"Was this trip necessary? No, not really. The agreement was reached last summer and it won't be legal until the legislatures in each country accept it. But it gave the president a statesmanlike photo opportunity in a state he must carry: Texas."

The network evening news shows aren't as kind to presidential candidates as they used to be. No more Mr. Nice Guys, playing things pretty much the way the campaigns want it.

A week's watching in the run-up to last night's debate discovers major changes from 1988 and earlier. The network news programs are conscientiously ignoring most of the photo ops the candidates so carefully stage, and on the rare occasion the networks do carry one, they usually accompany it with balancing or even deflating analysis.

The networks are doing relatively long, hard-hitting pieces comparing the candidates' records and programs on particular issues — such as health or education or the environment — and pointing out just how one man or the other is straying from the facts. They're regularly doing critical examinations of the candidates' speeches, and their political commercials.

Refashioning Network Coverage

"After the 1988 election, there were endless post-mortem conferences at all the networks," says Tim Russert, head of NBC's Washington bureau. "And the sense of them all was, 'Never again.' We could no longer be slaves to photo opportunities; we had to use them as a peg to tell a more substantive story. We had to dissect the political ads. We really had to do a better job of trying to distinguish the issue differences between the candidates."

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—Tim Russert, NBC News Washington bureau chief

So NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw this year has "Campaign Close-Up" and "Ad Watch." ABC's World News Tonight with Peter Jennings has "American Agenda" taking an in-depth look at a different issue each night. CBS Evening News with Katie Couric runs almost daily a "Campaign 92 Reality Check." The McNeil-Lehrer News Hour has its "Fact or Fiction" analysis and "Issue and Debate" panel discussions. CNN's special assignment team provides critical campaign analyses under the title "Democracy in America."

On Mr. Bush's photo op on the trade agreement, the other networks commented just about as pointedly as did NBC. CBS, for instance, followed the signing ceremony with a segment talking to "scared and angry" workers at the about-to-close Willow Run, Mich., auto plant. Then White House correspondent Susan Spencer noted that the trade agreement ceremony was Mr. Bush's fifth visit to Texas since the GOP convention, and that Democratic candidate Clinton's strong showing "has forced the president to defend his home turf when he'd rather be campaigning elsewhere."

Speedier Research

"Tough talk with pretty pictures," is the way the authors of a recent Harvard study describe this particular TV technique. Campaign officials used to say that they didn't care about the "voice over" so long as the program showed the pretty pictures. That, however, was before the talk got quite so tough.

Stephen Hess, a media watcher at the Brookings Institution, suggests that another factor making for more critical coverage is the proliferation of databases. "Now you can push a button and find out just what Clinton might have said about abortion five years ago or what Bush said about government spending during the 1984 primaries. And so when a candidate makes a statement on Tuesday, the news

programs can present that statement and also can set the record straight at the same time."

And the nightly news shows are straying further and further from covering the day's events. An example: last Thursday night's "Reality Check" on CBS had correspondent Bruce Morton warning new losses for the taxpayers could come if the government must take over, under a new law going into effect Dec. 1, a large number of shaky commercial banks. Yet, he said, the presidential candidates are silent on this important issue.

Maybe, he suggested, that was because "President's Bush's son Neil was involved in a famous failed savings and loan, the Silverado. And his major challenger may be gun-shy on the issue too, since Gov. and Mrs. Clinton had business dealings with a failed S&L in Little Rock. . . . Politicians have a single word for this issue. The word is, 'Shhh.'"

Another example: CNN reporter Brooks Jackson shows a Clinton TV commercial claiming that "even Bush's own Secretary of Labor just called job growth in Arkansas 'enormous.'" (Mr. Clinton repeated the claim in last night's presidential debate.) What Secretary Lynn Martin actually told a news conference, Mr. Jackson notes, was that Arkansas has low wages and dead-end jobs. Then, replying to a question, she said, "If you say Arkansas's growth is enormous, if you are working from a low base, it's true. It turns out it's below the national average."

To even things up, though, CNN also showed President Bush citing a think-tank report that ranked Arkansas 50th in the nation in environmental policy. Viewers are told that the report actually blamed the state legislature for the situation and also declared the president's own environmental record far worse.

Presumably, the tougher network approach is giving viewers a somewhat more honest view of the choices they're facing,

Albert Gore Sr. Enjoys His Return To the Spotlight

As He Campaigns for His Son, Ex-Senator Gets a Taste of What Might Have Been

By RICH JAROSLOVSKY
Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
CARTHAGE, Tenn. — At the age of 84, Albert Gore Sr. is back in the spotlight one more time. And he is loving every minute of it.

In the happy chaos of the podium on the last night of the Democratic convention, one image stood out: Mr. Gore, father of vice presidential nominee Al Gore and himself a former congressman and senator, giving an ebullient V-for-victory sign, then hoisting his nine-year-old grandson into the air to acknowledge the crowd's cheers.

In the back of his mind at that moment were a lifetime's worth of political battles won and lost, and of a moment 36 years ago when he might have been acknowledging a convention's cheers for himself. "To have been that close [my-

self], it was quite understandable why I was so exuberant," he says.

Besides, he says cheerfully, the three generations of Gores were a nice response to Republican "family values" talk. "We sort of rammed family values down their throat."

Family has always been important in Tennessee — especially in politics. Besides the Gores, Democratic Reps. Bob Clement and Jim Cooper are the sons of former governors. To win his seat in 1982, Mr. Cooper defeated Cissy Baker, daughter of Sen. Howard Baker Jr., and granddaughter of Congressman Howard Baker Sr.

The most striking thing about Tennessee politics, though, is the sheer number of politicians of national stature from both parties who have emerged over the past 40 years. While larger, more economically important states like Ohio and Pennsylvania have yielded few if any national figures, Volunteer State Democrats have produced the two Gores and the late Sen. Estes Kefauver, twice a candidate for president; its Republicans have produced former Sens. Baker and Bill Brock, who went on to be one of the GOP's most successful national chairmen, and former Gov. Lamar Alexander, now President Bush's secretary of education.

The reason is the state's political geography, says Merle Black, an Emory University expert on Southern politics. The eastern part of the state has been Republican since the time of the Civil War, and the "historical roots of Tennessee Republicanism gave them a different orientation toward national politics than the Goldwater Republicans," he says. The middle and western parts of the state have been traditionally Democratic. But rather than polarize the state, those divisions have generally required politicians of both parties to reach out for support, effectively driving them toward the political center.

Even by Tennessee standards, though, Albert Gore Sr. was a maverick, a populist who regularly voted against the wishes of his constituents when he felt the broader national interest required it.

"Albert is an old-style senator, a Roman senator really," David Halberstam wrote in a magazine article about Mr. Gore's last Senate race in 1970. "One can almost imagine him seated with Webster, Calhoun and Clay. In fact, it is hard to imagine Albert as anything but a senator."

Yet there was one day at the 1956 Democratic convention when Albert Gore might have become more than a senator. As the convention opened, Tennessee boasted not one potential vice presidential candidate, but three. Gov. Frank Clement, "the Boy Orator of the Cumberland," killed his chances with an old-fashioned stentorian of a keynote speech that led columnist Red Smith to write the next day, "The Republican Party was smote by the

jawbone of an ass." But when presidential nominee Adlai Stevenson threw the choice of vice presidential candidate to the delegates themselves, both Sens. Kefauver and Gore jumped in, as did Sen. John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts.

Through two ballots and most of a third, Sen. Gore held on, hoping one or the other of the frontrunners would falter and the convention would turn to him. But when his own support showed signs of cracking, he withdrew in favor of Sen. Kefauver, who won the nomination, and rode the ticket to crushing defeat in the fall.

John Kennedy "was so excited at me for about two years," Mr. Gore recalls, "but finally said, 'Albert, you did me a favor. If I had been on the ticket it would have lost just as bad, but my religion would have been blamed for it.'"

Over the years, it was hard to find a major issue of his times that Albert Gore wasn't involved in, from the atomic-bomb project to the Vietnam War and, most of all, race. Mr. Gore refused to sign the Southern Manifesto opposing integration, and voted for civil rights bills. His years of apostasy finally caught up with Mr. Gore in 1970. An early and ardent foe of the Nixon White House in one of the meanest races the state has ever seen.

After his defeat by Mr. Brock, Mr. Gore built a second career in law and business. (He remains a director of Occidental Petroleum Corp.) After his son was nominated for the vice presidency, Mr. Gore and his wife, Pauline, 80, planned only a limited schedule of appearances. But now they're finding it harder and harder to say no.

Mr. Gore likes to go places "where they appreciate my corny sense of humor" — speaking to Southern state legislators, for instance. Mrs. Gore, a high-powered attorney when Hillary Clinton and Marilyn Quayle were scarcely still in diapers, is, her husband notes, "the ultimate antidote to the attacks on Hillary."

Mrs. Gore, reputed by friends to have the sharpest political instinct in the family, won't yet let herself predict how the election will come out. Gov. Bill Clinton hasn't yet put it away, she says; people are still a little edgy about him and still want to be reassured before they commit.

Her husband, though, professes little doubt about the outcome: "A big victory," he says confidently. After the Democratic ticket appeared in Carthage, a friend told Mr. Gore he felt he had just seen the president of the United States for the next 16 years. "I say, Amen to that!" Albert Gore says happily.

Canadian Jobless Rate Declines

OTTAWA — Canada's unemployment rate declined to 11.4% in September from 11.6% in August, said Statistics Canada, a government agency.



Albert Gore Sr.

** Strange! The reporter doesn't mention "Love Canal" scandal. It might tarnish the "Environmental Kals" on Albert Gore, Jr. (It's just as fair as blaming Mrs. Bush for son Neil's activities)*

Journalists were more subtle in their antagonism to Pres. Bush in 1988 (but not to V.P. Quayle). Could their "conferences" have belittled their coverage (that all saw "Safety in numbers")?

When a woman introduced Pres. Bush for his "State of the Union address" she didn't tell him as president! She (I think it was) asked about a speech about "Rebuilding political dialogue in the middle of the introduction."

I read a column by Tim Russert backing Pres. Bush on 9/11 that made me red-neck! I didn't know who he was — but later saw him on C-Span.

Our paper features biased towards market barbed to Pres. Clinton. (my articles quite frequently by Mark Barabak to Pres. Clinton who also appeared on C-Span (my only way of knowing them). Shows how those in power suppress their lack of objectivity.

Apparently the print journalists did follow up Clinton's statements with disclaimers (as Clinton's wife did not).

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Why do you think the 3 networks are losing viewers?

The only time I heard a journalist say anything favorable "President Bush was when Brit Hane — after listening to his fellow journalists' Cokie Roberts + George Will's critique the GOP Convention as negative — he indicated their failure to recall the Democratic Convention — when Maxine Waters called Pres. Bush a racist + a bigot — no one wailed indignantly about that — not even Judy Woodruff.

who talked pretty nicely to Mrs. Bush & asking pointed questions but Bush always answers in a way that avoids the question.

I guess it's "Back to the books!"

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Chills which used to have a balance between "pro" & "anti" Pres. Bush, have evolved into nothing but "anti-Bush" programs — which I cease watching. Even C-Span bothers me. Every panelist is anti-Bush.

Letters to the Editor

We Know a Sow's Ear When We See It

In his Sept. 23 editorial-page article, "We've Got Zero Inflation — and Faster Growth," David Ranson suggests that the economy has been growing at a robust rate, but that due to statistical inaccuracies we are unaware of it. He also suggests that these economic figures are brought to the fore by "partisan journalists" who incite "angry voters." This sounds suspiciously like the official denial President Bush finally abandoned this spring — the same denial that angered the voting public to begin with and started this administration on its popularity slide.

If the economy is growing at the respectable rate Mr. Ranson suggests, why has unemployment ballooned to nearly 8%, with little sign of improvement? Surely it's not because corporate CEOs and small-business people are ignoring their own improving earnings (which Mr. Ranson's figures would indicate), while they lay off workers based solely upon erroneous macroeconomic figures fed to them by "partisan journalists."

Moreover, by Mr. Ranson's own admission, the public has a "for God's sake do something" attitude regarding the economy. Does Mr. Ranson believe this un-

agency comes from individuals being misled by "partisan journalists" into believing that real gross domestic product is growing much slower than it actually is? If so, I believe he is out of touch with real people. I contend most people pay little attention to these figures and many do not even know what GDP is. Instead, the urgency comes from watching a poorly performing economy manifest itself in their own lives.

Certainly there are some encouraging economic figures out there, as Mr. Ranson suggests. And possibly the growth in GDP is slightly understated and inflation overstated. But to suggest the media have duped us into believing the economy is sluggish when in fact it is growing at nearly 4% a year is like saying "partisan journalists" convinced us the economy is a sow's ear when indeed it is a silk purse.

PAUL HUGHES

Geneseo, Ill.

SPECTRE a Novel Idea; SMERSH a Grim Reality

In your Oct. 5 editorial "Beyond BCCI, SMERSH?" you write: "Running through these connections is the suggestion of something out of a James Bond novel—SMERSH, a vast international criminal network in many ways more powerful than individual governments."

Actually, SMERSH was the real thing. It was Stalin's military counterintelligence service during World War II, and its name was derived from the Russian words, *smert shpionin*, which mean "death to spies." SMERSH was guilty of appalling atrocities (almost all committed against Soviet citizens) during the war.

PHILIP AVERBUCK

Watertown, Mass.

The international organization of evil-doers in Ian Fleming's James Bond novels was SPECTRE (Special Executive for Counterespionage, Terrorism, Revenge and Extortion). All of the movies involved SPECTRE, even when the novels on which they were (loosely) based involved SMERSH.

A lot of us who wondered how the Bond villains managed to do things like hollow out volcanoes and build underground fortresses in the Caribbean without building permits or attracting the curiosity of the authorities have found it easier to suspend disbelief after the antics of BCCI.

EDWARD B. FUREY JR.

Woodhaven, N.Y.

Spurned for Decades, Vindicated at Last!

Your Sept. 11 special report on Education was wonderful to read. "Invented spelling," "reinvented math," "active learning"—what a pleasure for us all at this particular institution to see them taken seriously on your pages.

We have been applying the principles of John Dewey here for 70 years—modifying them somewhat as we have gone along, but adhering to their essentials in a way that now gives us that special pleasure reserved only for unfashionable people who suddenly find themselves all the rage.

We have weathered being lampooned as un-American by Joseph McCarthy and his followers. We have, with reefed sails and battered hatches, beaten our way through stormy passages, in which one could only whisper the word "progressive"—for so long taken to be synonymous with permissive or a code word for the notion that those in doubt should lower their standards. And now, *mirabile dictu*, as the millennium approaches, the very things for which we stand and have always stood—"student as worker, teacher as coach," "digging for knowledge," "teaching values"—are headlines in a newspaper that aims to define and support what works and is proved.

ANDREW J. McLAREN

Director

Little Red School House and Elisabeth Irwin High School

New York

It Wasn't a Raid

Regarding your Sept. 11 Enterprise article "S&L Sues Smaller Rival Claiming a Raid on Employees": The amount of public support the article has generated on our behalf has been substantial. Apparently, many small-business people are fed up with the misuse of our legal system by our larger rivals.

I would like to clarify that at no time prior to my dismissal from Carteret Savings Bank did I persuade Carteret employees to leave the company. I was recruited as part of a group of employees Consumer First Mortgage Inc. spoke with. The decision made by my colleagues to leave Carteret was based on their own dissatisfaction with the company.

MICHAEL E. COLLINS JR.

Vice President

Consumer First Mortgage

Freehold, N.J.

Why the World Is Wary of Clinton's Team

If American voters elect Bill Clinton president Nov. 3, they will be voting for an as-yet-unknown Clinton team that in January will take control of history's most massive, expensive and powerful government. On second thought, strike that word "control." It will manipulate a \$1.5 trillion government enterprise, but it is highly unlikely that it will control it.

Given the U.S.'s capacity for both good and harm by mere virtue of its size, it is not surprising that non-Americans are wondering what they can expect from a Clinton government. Opinion polls around the globe reflect trepidation about that prospect. The concerns are justified, not just because no one really knows whom Mr. Clinton will pick for key spots, but also because of what is known about some of the people he might choose. That a Clinton

Indeed, Mr. Clinton has made no secret of his intent to spend more money and levy more taxes. If Mr. Bush is a Keynesian who thinks economies are "stimulated" by taking from producers and giving to non-producers, Mr. Clinton and his advisers are super-Keynesians. It is ironic that Mr. Clinton is leading in the pre-election polls in a country where other polls show that the voters have had it up to here with a Washington that he proposes to make fatter still. Such is the level of discontent.

The Clinton administration will almost certainly be more protectionist than the Bush administration, the Democrat's recent lip service to the North American Free Trade Agreement notwithstanding. Some of his closest advisers espouse "managed trade," which is the world's latest euphemism for throwing up barriers to commerce. House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt, assuming that he is re-elected and that the Democrats retain control of the House—both of which are likely—will have more luck whispering protectionist sweet nothings in the ear of a member of his own party than he has had with George Bush. Rep. Gephardt and friends have provided America's presidency with powerful weapons for starting and waging trade wars, and one day one of them will go off and kill a lot of American jobs. When some of Mr. Clinton's advisers say they are "pro-business," they mean that they are in favor of shielding American business from competition, which means they are anti-consumer.

Most of Mr. Clinton's advisers are unknown outside the Washington hot-house, with the possible exception of the prolific author Robert Reich, who has reduced economic analysis to the level of dream interpretation. Most are well within the mainstream of American politics. But that is not the same place as the mainstream of American attitudes toward politics. Those views are by and large skepti-

cal of government's ability to manage all the things it tries to run.

Robert Shapiro and Roger Altman, both tipped for high economic posts, are simply conventional liberals, with nothing more radical in their kit bags than the usual tax-and-spend formulas that Democrats have used for winning elections for eons. Mr. Shapiro also doesn't mind a little soak-the-rich rhetoric now and then.

But the range of mind-sets also includes Al Gore's radical environmentalism—which if implemented could heap further unnecessary burdens on the overloaded U.S. economy. Then there are the even more radical views of Derek Shearer, late of the People's Republic of Santa Monica. Mr. Shearer might be a bit too wild for a policy job, but it is remarkable that Mr.

of American politics that essentially believes in addressing all problems by employing the spending and police powers of government.

It is useful to keep in mind that while there are new administrations with new faces in American politics, there is nothing much new under the sun in the various ways political leaders choose to run governments. The range is from government by plebiscite, à la Switzerland, to absolute control over everything by a single small political class, à la the former Soviet Union.

Reaganomics, or supply-side economics, was nothing more than classical economics. When the world of work was simpler, classical economists knew from direct observation that people had to produce if they wanted to consume. Ronald Reagan, who went to a small Midwestern college untouched by Keynesian fashion, studied common-sense economics and hence knew that it was good economic policy for government to reduce burdens of taxation and regulation and hence give people more freedom to invest and produce. George Bush never quite grasped that lesson and hence believed, along with a lot of Democrats, that government's only job is to stimulate demand. He has paid dearly for it.

The Clinton team will follow those same lights, gratifying itself, Congress and the federal bureaucracy by dipping still further into all aspects of American life. It will not stimulate an economy afflicted by all manner of burdens on production and inhibitions to investment. That failure will tempt the "pro-business" Clinton team to put up new barriers to competition to try to protect industries that government has helped sicken. That won't work either. That is why a lot of people around the world are anxious over the future of the world's largest military power and political economy.

A Clinton government most likely will work even harder at doing all the things the Bush government has done wrong.

Clinton has a close counselor from the far left at a time when socialism is collapsing around the world. For what it's worth, Mr. Shearer claims he is not a socialist—not really.

American politics is, of course, a rich melange of political tendencies. By his own lights, Mr. Clinton is a middle-of-the-roader, just as Jimmy Carter professed to be when he came out of Georgia to the White House. The problem is that a fresh administration will move in a direction dictated by the attitudes toward government of the group of people a president selects to run that government. Mr. Clinton will draw his appointees—and there will be some 2,000 of them eventually to posts of some importance—from that wing

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A Half-Baked Idea That's Anti-Consumer

In regard to your Sept. 23 article "Let Drivers Opt Out of Auto Tort System" (Rule of Law, op-ed page), you quote from our "Pay-at-The-Pump, Private No-Fault Auto Insurance" plan (which would cut out insurance costs in half) as if we support this opt-out, no-fault system.

The National Insurance Consumer Organization opposes this half-baked idea because it is anti-consumer. For instance, the opt-out plan, while not taking care of the seriously injured, saves far less money than our plan, which fully compensates all medical and rehabilitation costs. If you chose to quote us out of context, then you should have identified the report, indicating to the reader that the quote relates to an altogether different approach to no-fault, one that is pro-consumer, not pro-insurer.

J. ROBERT HUNTER

President

National Insurance Consumer Organization

Alexandria, Va.

Pepper . . . and Salt

Short Circuit
While I study the birds on our power lines,
As they chirp with voices muted,
I warn them, "Don't put the other foot on the ground,
Or you'll all be electrocuted!"

Peter Lind Hayes.

Typical Man

Christopher Columbus discovered the New World when he really wanted to sail to the Indies. But like many men, he wouldn't stop to ask for directions.

—Bruce Kafaroff.

