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THEY SAID IT

"The leaders of all nations must now carefully consider their responsibilities and their future...."

"Some governments still turn a blind eye to the terrorists, hoping the threat will pass them by. They are mistaken. And some governments, while pledging to uphold the principles of the U.N., have cast their lot with the terrorists. They support them and harbor them, and they will find that their welcome guests are parasites that will weaken them, and eventually consume them.

"For every regime that sponsors terror, there is a price to be paid. And it will be paid. The allies of terror are equally guilty of murder and equally accountable to justice."

--President George W. Bush, remarks to the United Nations General Assembly, November 10, 2001.

YOU'RE NOT A WAR TIME CONSIGLIARI, COLIN.

Many years ago, I asked my old friend and boss at that time, Greg Smith, how many times I could write what was essentially the same story. And he responded, "Until everyone believes it." So this week, just in case there are some readers who don't yet believe it, I am going to return to a story I wrote last July entitled "Bush Unbound."

I am doing this because the events of last week convinced me that the central theme of that article, that *President Bush is going to shake the world to its foundations in the next four years*, is absolutely crucial to understanding what lies ahead during his second term, so much so that it will most probably run through everything I write for the next several years.

At the heart of this forecast is George Bush's affinity for viewing the world in vivid colors. I have no intention of doing an amateur psychological profile of the President of the United States. But anyone who has watched him at all during the past four years understands the following: that his world is made up of good guys and bad guys, or as he told the nations of the world just two months after the September 11 attacks, "You're either with us or against us in the fight against terror;" that his view of the world is informed by the Christian belief that genuine evil exists and that it is the obligation of good people to oppose it; that he has very strong views concerning the twin concepts of right and wrong; and finally, that he does not shrink from doing what he believes to be right, regardless of what other people or other nations think.

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These are generally good leadership traits. Overall, they reflect two of the four classical virtues of ancient Greece, namely a strong sense of the importance of justice and the courage to act justly. However, as Herodotus, the “father of history,” illustrated throughout his monumental narratives, when these characteristics are not accompanied by the other two Platonic virtues, wisdom and temperance, the result is hubris, which, as history demonstrates, leads inevitably to disaster. Time will tell whether Bush has these two in equal measure.

Lyndon Johnson, who lacked both, and could thus be seen as a modern substitute for Herodotus’ Croesus and Xerxes, once noted the frustration that results when wisdom is lacking, saying: “A president’s hardest task is not to do what is right, but to know what is right.” And, of course, the absence of temperance was at the root of all of his greatest failures, including Vietnam.

Last July, while musing about the nexus between President Bush’s character and the mortal threat of terrorism, I wrote the above mentioned piece, “Bush Unbound,” in which I concluded that if he were reelected he would act decisively to assure that Iran does not get nuclear weapons, that North Korea is shorn of its nuclear weapons program, and that Iran and Syria are punished for actively supporting the insurgency in Iraq, thus threatening the centerpiece of his plan to deny America’s enemies a safe haven in the Middle East from which they can plot and carry out attacks against the United States.

Two events that occurred last week strongly reinforced my confidence in these predictions. The first was when President Bush chose Condoleezza Rice to be his new Secretary of State, thus sending the unmistakable messages that the State Department is going to be a hot spot in the coming years and that he wants someone in charge there whom he can trust absolutely; who will give him unwavering support before the American public when the heat becomes intense, be absolutely resolute when dealing with friends and foes alike internationally, and whose geopolitical views are close enough to his own that no

time will be wasted with unnecessary debates over first principles.

I am usually not much for lines from movies, but my view as to why President Bush dismissed Powell, even though he likes and respects him, can be summed up by Michael Corleone’s words to his father’s long-time friend and adviser Tom Hagen in the first “Godfather” flick, delivered just before Michael launches a full-scale war against rival mobsters, “You’re not a wartime consigliere, Tom. Things may get tough with the move we’re trying.”

The second event last week that convinced me that “things may get tough” in the days ahead occurred at the CIA, where one by one the senior officials there were shown the door by the new director Porter Goss and his chief aide Patrick Murray.

Steve discusses this housecleaning at some length in the following article, so I won’t dwell on it here except to offer my belief that the primary consideration behind this move was that Bush wants to be able to have complete and total trust in the spy agency when global tensions mount in his last term, and he was convinced he would not get this from the agency as it was then constituted. As Steve notes, Goss reinforced this view in a memo he circulated to CIA employees, which he said was designed to “clarify beyond doubt the rules of the road,” namely “We support the administration and its policies in our work.”

Now it is possible that I will be wrong about all of this, that Bush has been chastened by the events in Iraq, as some observers claim; that he will seek warmer relations with the Europeans, as others predict; that he will rely more heavily on the United Nations and other multilateral organizations for guidance in his actions, as the Democrats would like; and that he will send olive branches to the terrorist leadership, as John Kerry indicated he would do.

But frankly, I doubt it. In any case, I don’t think we will have to wait long to find out. If my forecast is correct, I expect to see the following events begin to transpire during the next several months.

I expect the White House and conservatives on Capitol Hill to launch an all-out assault on the United Nations and its leadership with the goal of significantly diminishing that organization's standing with the American public, and therefore its ability to obstruct and discredit the Bush administration's future initiatives in the "war on terror."

Charges will center on the United Nation's disgraceful conduct in the handling of the ostensibly humanitarian Oil-For-Food Program in Iraq, which went far beyond its customary corruption and became a full-fledged effort to directly undermine U.S. foreign policy. Indeed, it is fair to say, and I expect the Bush administration to begin to say it, that the on-going war in Iraq might not have been necessary had the United Nations acted honorably. And making matters worse, there is little doubt that the corruption went all the way to the top, involving not just a few of the U.N.'s senior officials, but Secretary-General Kofi Annan himself, who is currently doing all he can to keep the nature and the full extent of the fraud from becoming known.

My guess is that the heavy lifting in this campaign will be done within several committees on Capitol Hill, where I expect some conservative Republican, most likely Minnesota Senator Norm Coleman, the Chairman of the Permanent Subcommittee on investigations, to pick up where one-time U.N. critic extraordinaire Jesse Helms left off by assertively questioning why the United States continues to support an organization that is not only rife with corruption but routinely acts in direct opposition to American interests.

Not only would this help to diminish the impact of any U.N. objections to future foreign policy initiatives by the Bush White House, but it would be good domestic politics as well since it would force the Democrats to defend an organization that is not only deeply corrupt but arguably anti-American and unarguably anti-Semitic.

Second, I think President Bush will let the Europeans know in no uncertain terms that the deal they recently cut with Iran is not adequate; that if they really want to

be helpful then they need to go back to the negotiating table and work out a new deal that absolutely assures that the Mullahs do not get nuclear weapons.

As I said two weeks ago, I think this discussion with the Europeans will be pursued initially with a great show of public respect. But behind the scenes, I have no doubt that President Bush will tell the Europeans that they need to understand that the United States is deadly serious about denying Iran a nuclear weapons capability and that it will act unilaterally to achieve this end if necessary.

If I am correct about all of this, liberals are going to hate it. Some conservatives will too. And some will applaud. It may work out well. It may be a colossal failure, endangering not just the peace and security of the United States, but that of the entire world. I have not attempted to auger the outcome in this article, or to get involved in discussing the benefits and risks. There will be time for that as events unfold. What I wanted to do this week is to warn everyone once again that highly dangerous and tumultuous times lie ahead.

DON'T MESS WITH (THE MAN FROM) TEXAS.

We, like a great many other conservatives, spent much of the last four years complaining about an apparent and frustrating contradiction in President Bush's personality and political deportment. Though he was unflinching and uncompromising in his dealings with those foreign elements that would harm Americans, he was surprisingly accommodating of those who would, intentionally or unintentionally, harm his administration.

Of course, we understood the need to play the proverbial game to a certain degree, but we were nevertheless astonished that the President and his otherwise clear-thinking advisors, couldn't, for all the world, see that their willingness to play nice with a number of their opponents actually made their job of fighting and winning the war against America's enemies much more difficult.

Naturally, the left caricatured President Bush as an iron-fisted, hyper-partisan tyrant. But those of us in the “reality-based community” fretted that he was, in actuality, too bipartisan and too willing to make deals with his political opponents. We worried that the President who never backed down from a fight with America’s enemies and who never wavered in the face of tremendous personal and political danger, also never fired anyone, despite ample justification; never vetoed a bill, again despite ample justification; and appeared far too willing simply to “go along to get along” with a number of people and organizations whose express intention was to delay, if not derail entirely, Bush’s “war on terror.”

We don’t worry about that so much anymore. Indeed, if there is one lesson that we, and others, have learned in the three weeks since the President won re-election, it is that he, like the state he calls home, can be downright contrary when the mood strikes.

In the past few weeks, President Bush has replaced the long-past-ripe Director of Central Intelligence and begun a long-overdue house-cleaning effort at the CIA, under new leadership. He has also replaced (or will soon replace) less-than-enthusiastic supporters in the top two jobs at the State Department, where another housecleaning is presumably in the offing.

Previously, the White House also engineered the defeat of Tom Daschle, the Senate Minority Leader, the leader of the opposition in Congress, the ostensible architect of the Senate’s strategy of obstructionism, and the first sitting member of the Senate leadership to be defeated in over half a century. Additionally, the mildly anti-American yet increasingly antagonistic Secretary General of the United Nations is now in serious hot water, both with his own employees and with legal and Congressional investigators, and he may well lose his job. Finally, the overtly and aggressively anti-American director of the U.N.’s International Atomic Energy Agency is in even hotter water and will, almost certainly, lose his job.

All things considered, then, President Bush’s “enemies list” has been pretty nicely whittled away. This is, of course, helpful to the President, and not just for the obvious reason that it removes potential obstacles from his path. There is, in my estimation, a second, overriding reason why this settling of old scores is vitally important, namely that it sends a message to prospective opponents, both here and abroad, that the man means business and is, contrary to earlier misimpressions, willing to throw a few folks under the train if that’s what it takes to make it run smoothly.

Now I understand that this story can be interpreted at least two ways. The President’s decision to help show his opponents the door may, for example, be taken as a sign that he is, as a great many liberals in the Democratic Party and the mainstream media would claim, a petty, vindictive man who values power for power’s sake and is willing, now that the election is behind him, to take retribution against any and all who crossed him. Given the propensity of the previous Democratic administration for taking just such malevolent action against its opponents (think spurious tax audits), it is not difficult to see why these folks would be inclined to assume such a motive for this President as well.

But there is, I think, a much more likely explanation. To say that Bush has an “enemies list” is not to imply that he is huffing around the White House in a Nixonian fit of paranoia, trying desperately to figure out who slighted him here or who’s working against him there and planning the details of his revenge. It is simply to note that the President understands that there are those both within the federal government and outside of it, who are trying very hard, for a variety of reasons, both noble and ignoble, to ensure his failure.

Indeed, with the notable exception of Tom Daschle, all of the scalps currently being collected by the President and his operatives are of individuals or groups who share three common characteristics: they all oppose President Bush’s aggressive foreign policy; they all have taken action, passive or proactive, to undermine that policy or to undermine the President

himself; and all have, in some way sown the seeds of their own destruction, breaking codes, oaths, unwritten rules, or, in some cases, laws, that make their downfall not only valuable to the President, but perfectly just as well. Consider the following.

In the case of the CIA, the President's opponents and their allies in the mainstream media have largely decided that the purge underway is politically motivated and reflects the President's shortsighted and dimwitted desire to be told only information that comports with his view of the world. As author David Wise declared on the op-ed page of *The Los Angeles Times* yesterday, the President is loading the Agency with "Sycophant Spies," whom he'd rather would "shut up and salute" than provide "unsullied intelligence." As evidence of the President's intention to politicize the Agency, his critics all cite a memo authored by President Bush's surrogate, new Director Porter Goss, and "slipped to the press" last week, which directs all employees to "support the administration and its policies in our work."

While I understand why those naturally inclined to see the worst in the President's actions might view the Goss memo as an important and shocking development at a government agency that is supposed to be "independent," I can't help but feel that they are missing the point. In my estimation, the most important component of the story was the very fact that Goss felt compelled to declare in a memo that, as the staff of a "support" organization, agency employees should provide support. That Goss actually had to tell his staff of ostensible professionals that "we do not identify with, support or champion opposition to the administration or its policies" or that "we provide the intelligence as we see it — and let the facts alone speak to the policymaker" is frankly astounding. But there can be little argument that that is precisely what Goss had to do.

The track record of many at the CIA over the course of the War on Terror has been abysmal, and that's not even taking into consideration actual job performance. In fact, it has been apparent for a long time to anyone paying attention that large swaths of the Agency

have been actively engaged in conducting covert and overt activities against the President and his policies, beginning with the Joseph Wilson-Valerie Plame debacle, whereby an unqualified former diplomat (Wilson) was sent to Africa to do the CIA's dirty work on the recommendation of his CIA-analyst wife (Plame) and, upon his return, immediately began undermining the President's position on Iraq with misleading public declarations about what he did and did not find.

As if that were not bad enough, over the past week-and-a-half or so, there have been literally dozens of stories and op-eds detailing the depth of treachery at the CIA, all very good pieces and many covering much of the same ground. One of the best is Stephen Hayes's article, published in *The Weekly Standard* over the weekend, in which he wrote:

For months leading up to the election, elements within the CIA had leaked information damaging to the reelection prospects of George W. Bush. Some of the leaks were authorized, some were not. Michael Scheuer, head of the CIA's bin Laden unit from 1996 to 1999 who recently quit the agency in order to be free to criticize the intelligence community, said that CIA higher-ups had given him permission to speak to the media anonymously to "bash the president." Authorized or not, the result of the steady flow of leaks was the same. Bush was portrayed as incompetent and his policies disastrous. CIA-friendly reporters, eager to keep their sources happy, stuck to the agency line.

One significant leak landed on the front page of the *New York Times* on September 16, 2004. Prospects for success in Iraq, the CIA assessed, ranged from bleak to grim. The story and its timing coincided nicely with the Kerry campaign's effort to paint postwar Iraq as Vietnam-in-the-desert. Then in October, less than two weeks after Goss was confirmed, "past and

current agency officials” sabotaged Goss’s pick to be CIA executive director, in what Bush administration figures considered a brushback pitch. Those agency officials revealed to *Washington Post* reporter Walter Pincus that Michael Kostiw, a respected former CIA official and immediate past staff director of the House terrorism subcommittee, had been arrested for shoplifting in 1981 and subsequently resigned from the CIA. “He is one of the brightest minds in the intelligence community,” a senior Bush administration national security official told me months before Goss was nominated. Kostiw withdrew from consideration for the CIA job one day after the leak.

Hayes doesn’t go into it, but the story of Michael Scheuer is even worse than it would appear at first blush. In addition to the reasons cited by Hayes, Scheuer also left the Agency because he wanted to be able more freely and openly to promote his new book. For those who don’t know, Scheuer is the erstwhile “Anonymous” author of the Bush-bashing book *Imperial Hubris*, which he not only wrote and had published while still employed by the CIA, but which his superiors at the Agency apparently felt was the perfect tool with which to attack the President. As Scheuer told *The Washington Post*, “as long as the book was being used to bash the president, they gave me carte blanche to talk to the media.”

The problems over at state have been neither as severe nor as well publicized as those at the CIA. The outgoing Secretary, Colin Powell, is a longtime friend of the Bush family and will almost certainly remain so. But that doesn’t mean that he was completely comfortable with his role or with the policies he was expected to defend in that role. Powell, perhaps the closest thing to a Realist in this administration, clashed repeatedly with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and his aides and mostly lost those battles. Though Powell’s unhappiness with the course of foreign policy and his expressions of that unhappiness are generally incomparable to that which took place at the CIA, he

nonetheless caused considerable consternation for the Bush team, as *Slate*’s Frank Kaplan noted last week:

In recent months, he [Powell] has been hammering his own coffin, making little effort to hide his displeasure while serving a president who famously demands loyalty. On the record, Powell has told reporters that the insurgency in Iraq has grown stronger and that he might not have supported the war if he’d known Saddam had no weapons of mass destruction. On background, he and his closest aides have vented their frustrations and criticisms more harshly, most notably (but by no means exclusively) in his old friend Bob Woodward’s latest book.

Of course, the real problems at State took place down the chain of command. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, Powell’s old friend and handpicked Number Two (who will also be leaving), was notably less aggressive than the rest of the administration in pursuing the second spoke in the Axis of Evil. Many Iran-watchers contend that Armitage’s insistence on referring publicly to Iran’s Mullahcracy as a “Democracy” both undermined the President’s tough talk on Iran and, consequently, dispirited the indigenous Iranian opposition.

As for the career bureaucrats at State, investigative journalist Joel Mowbray contends that they comprise President Bush’s “most disloyal agency,” a reputation earned in part because “anyone who opens a newspaper knows that ‘anonymous’ State Department officials routinely trash the president and his foreign policy, particularly in the Middle East.” As with the long-timers at the CIA, a large portion of the 47,000-plus career diplomats at State have been entrenched too long and believe that they should be responsible for directing policy, not merely implementing it. And, again as with the CIA, a housecleaning is therefore long overdue and likely underway even as you read this.

In any case, as desperately needed as the housecleaning of domestic bureaucracies in Washington is, it is nowhere near as important as the housecleaning of the international bureaucracies at Turtle Bay.

As outgoing Secretary of State Powell told reporters last week, it is now reasonably clear that the Mad Mullahs in Iran are working to fit existing medium range ballistic missiles with potential nuclear weapons. Additionally, there are more than preliminary indications that Iran has a second, secret nuclear enrichment facility and, despite a new agreement with Great Britain, France, and Germany, has been playing fast and loose with the terms of previous agreements reached with U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Yet IAEA head Mohammed ElBaradei still apparently feels that it is President Bush who is the greater threat to global stability.

In the four weeks since the story broke, the missing explosives of Al Qaeda have largely been forgotten. But it is important to remember that the story that so excited the Kerry crowd (and, in my opinion, ultimately sealed their candidate's fate) was tied directly to Elbaradei, who is finishing up his second term as head of the IAEA and who would like a third term. Elbaradei's letter on Al Qaeda to the Security Council reportedly formed the foundation of the *New York Times*/CBS story timed specifically to hurt President Bush in the immediate run-up to the election, and many analysts and commentators have argued that Elbaradei's involvement was tantamount to foreign meddling in an American election.

Needless to say, when the fight over Elbaradei's prospective third term begins in earnest next month, Undersecretary of State for nonproliferation John Bolton, who is reportedly in line to replace Richard Armitage as Deputy Secretary of State, will be leading an aggressive contingent from the Bush administration determined to ensure that their alleged would-be saboteur at IAEA is not around much longer to undermine administration efforts.

As for Elbaradei's ultimate boss at the U.N., Kofi Annan, there is reason right now to believe that when Elbaradei hits the bricks, Kofi will be joining him, and for good reason. Mark and I both have detailed the U.N. record of disgrace in various pieces over the last year, so I won't bore you with more details of general corruption and inefficiency. But the details of Annan's personal corruption and moral confusion are coming more and more to light and are becoming a greater and greater part of the general U.N. story of debauchery.

We all know that in the run-up to the election, Annan, like Elbaradei, did his best to paint President Bush's policies in Iraq and on the broader war on terror in the worst possible light, even going so far as to call the invasion of Iraq an "illegal" war. Lately, he's compounded his moral equivalence nonsense by arguing that the effort to liberate the people of Fallujah from their oppressors (which is precisely what happened) was merely perpetuating the cycle of violence in Iraq, as if there were no difference between American Marines and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

By far and away, though, Annan's worst and most damning failings revolve around his participation in and neglect of the Oil for Food Program. I couldn't relay the new details of this ongoing and mushrooming scandal any better than Claudia Rosett (who, by the way, almost certainly deserves a Pulitzer for her work on this story), so I won't even try. Here is how she began and concluded her latest piece on Kofi's corruption last week:

With estimates soaring of graft and fraud under the United Nations Oil for Food program in Iraq, we are hearing a lot about the need to "get to the bottom" of this scandal, the biggest ever to hit the U.N. To get to that bottom will need a much harder look at the top--where Secretary-General Kofi Annan himself resides.

That violates all sorts of taboos. But so, one might suppose, does a United Nations that allowed Saddam Hussein to embezzle at least \$21.3 billion in oil money during 12 years, with the great bulk of that sum--a staggering \$17.3 billion--pilfered between 1997-2003, on Mr. Annan's watch . . .

Who at the U.N. took illicit money from Saddam--if, indeed, anyone did--is an important question, and worth pursuing. But so is the matter of who covered up for Saddam; who pushed to continue and expand a program so derelict that it failed to nab more than \$17 billion in illicit deals, and so secretive that investigators have spent much of the past year trying simply to get their hands on information the U.N. should have made public at the time. It is worth asking whose welfare was enhanced, whose domain was expanded, whose coffers filled with \$1.4 billion delivered as a percentage cut of Saddam's oil revenues--and who has failed to this day to take on board the thumping lessons about the need for transparency at the U.N.

That would be Mr. Annan. He is not protecting the U.N. At great cost to whatever noble aspirations the U.N. once had, and to all societies that value integrity over Potemkin institutions, he is protecting himself.

Given that Annan's own bureaucrats at the U.N. are now near full rebellion against him for matters unrelated to Iraq or Oil for Food, one has to wonder how long exactly he will be able to hold onto his job. And if he is, indeed, soon looking for new employment, he will almost certainly have the Bush administration and its allies on Capitol Hill, most notably Minnesota Senator Norm Coleman, the Chairman of the Permanent Subcommittee on investigations, to thank for his predicament. While former Fed Chairman Paul Volker continues to struggle to find anyone who will cooperate with

his internal U.N. investigation, Coleman is pushing ahead full steam, almost certainly enjoying the full cooperation of those who are now in possession of Saddam's records on the matter, i.e. American military personnel.

So from Langley to Foggy Bottom to Turtle Bay, those who would obstruct and sabotage the Bush foreign policy are finding themselves on the run. But where does that leave us?

The answer is that it leaves us with a world that has been put on notice that such obstruction will not be dealt with lightly. For a variety of reasons, some personal and some political, President Bush has been nowhere near as aggressive in his foreign policy and dealing with its potential saboteurs as many of us would have liked. Now freed from the constraints of electoral politics, the President is ratcheting up the pressure on those whom he believes would, either by their actions or by their interference, put Americans at risk.

As Mark notes in his piece, we suspect that one of the inevitable consequences of the President's newfound assertiveness will be the long-overdue and essential confrontation with Iran. As noted above, the Mad Mullahs continue to drive toward their ultimate goal of nuclear weapons, and there is ample evidence of their active involvement in the so-called Iraqi "insurgency." If ever there were an entity attempting to sabotage the war on terror, it is the ruling regime in Tehran. And if the President's current pattern holds, then these saboteurs too will find themselves on the receiving end of Bush retribution.

To complete Mark's "Godfather" analogy, I can't say whether the Iranian mullahs will get hit with a shotgun while getting off the elevator, or on the steps of the courthouse, or with one well-placed shot in the eye while getting a massage, but I do expect that they will get hit. The only question is whether the other potential adversaries will learn the lesson, or whether they will return for the sequel, finishing that one off by heading out into Lake Tahoe to do a little "fishing" with Pete Clemenza.

A NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHER: WES POLK UPDATE.

One year ago, I told readers about my friend Wesley Polk, who lost his hand and forearm in an accident with a wood splitter several years ago. I said that insurance had taken care of most of the medical bills at the time, but would pay for only the most rudimentary prosthesis, i.e., one that features what I would describe as a large, metal, pinching device in place of a hand and held on by a large, unwieldy harness.

I pointed out that Wes, who is about 30 years old and has a wife and two children, drives a dump truck for a living, and while he makes enough money to take care of his family, there is not much of a chance that he will ever be able to save the \$32,743 that a decent prosthesis would cost. I said that a friend and I decided that together we could find 328 people who would pay \$100 each to provide Wes with a state-of-art arm and hand. And I said that any readers of this newsletter who would like to make a \$100 non-tax-deductible contribution could send a check made out to the Wes Polk Fund to me at The Political Forum, 8563 Senedo Road, Mt. Jackson, Va. 22842.

The response was far beyond my expectations. The \$100 checks rolled in, along with several contributions that were considerably larger. In addition, we have

been raising money locally for the past year, via direct contributions, church functions, dances, and raffles. Today, I can say that while we underestimated the difficulty we would have raising \$32,000 in a small, rural community like Mt. Jackson (population 1,583), we did not underestimate the kindness and generosity of the people in this little town or of the readers of this newsletter. We now have almost \$24,000 in the bank, and we have plans for more fund raising activities that we think will put us over the top sometime this coming summer.

I mention this to provide an update to those wonderful people who gave last year, and to ask those who intended to send a check at that time but didn't get around to it, to do so this year. If you have already given, please don't consider this another solicitation, but just accept my thanks once again for your generosity and kindness. In closing, I would repeat what I said last year, namely that I am aware that clients don't pay Steve and me to be asked for donations to a personal cause, and if I have offended anyone by this note, please accept my apology. Mark

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