



• April has passed, but not the opportunity to do something unusual in this column. For years it has been based in part on the scraps of idiocy and grotesquerie sent to us by a reader of uncommon wit, sagacity, and confidence, Mr. Jack Burns. He is the perfect gentleman and patriot. His health has been wretched, but what the hell!—he has gone on enjoying the blessings of God, family, and country, while elbowing misfortune aside. This month he has sent us a mother lode and a splendid new idea, to wit, reports on executed criminals who got what they deserve after a risible last meal. Sadly, he also reports that the cancer that he has been suffering is now terminal—a matter of weeks, a matter of months. This he reports with a dignity that is wholly out of cadence with the cheapness of our time. “The doctors told me I can smoke my beloved Honduran and Nicaraguan cigars,” he writes, “and drink my port wine as long as I can tolerate them.” So we found a dust-laden bottle of Croft 1963, and this wholly fitting place to praise Jack Burns’s manliness and charm while he can still hear us.

• On April 5, a week before the official terminus of their First Hundred Days, the House Republicans passed the “crown jewel” of their Contract with America, a \$189-billion corporate and personal income tax cut. Naturally Former President Bill Clinton was discomfited, calling it “a fantasy [that] we can’t afford.” The House passed all but one item in the Contract, that being term limits. It also passed \$17.3 billion in budget cuts, though more can be done. The Citizens Commission on Human Rights points to such federally funded preposterousities as a study assessing the reasons that some transsexuals do not complete their sex change surgery. Then, too, there is the federally funded study of horse masturbation (apparently begun before anyone had ever heard of Dr. Joycelyn Elders), a study of the sexual preferences

of the prairie vole, a four-year study of the nasal cavities of male hamsters during intercourse, and a 17-year-old study of the slang resorted to by Puerto Ricans as they endure escalating stress in New York City. Mr. Clinton became Former President Clinton on April 18 at a stupefacent press conference during which he insisted that he remains “relevant.” He alluded to the Constitution. Three janitors in Ceres, California, caused an explosion that injured nineteen people. They were using solvent to freeze a gopher to death when one lunkhead lit a cigarette. The gopher survived.



• At Harvard University, controversy has been ignited by Mr. George F. Will and Miss Gina Grant. Miss Grant’s early admission to the university was rescinded when university officials discovered that she had lied about her mother’s death. Miss Grant had told officials at the prestigious university that her mother had expired five years earlier in an automobile accident. Now it turns out that Mrs. Grant died at the end of a crystal candlestick. Miss Grant’s hand was at the other end of the thing, and she kept bashing it on her mother’s head after becoming alarmed that her mother was ruining her health with drink. Students and

concerned faculty in substantial numbers have forsaken their Nintendo games and skateboards to demonstrate on Miss Grant’s behalf. They are equally alarmed over the Harvard government department’s decision to invite the conservative columnist and author Mr. George F. Will to teach in the fall. Will’s columns, many faculty members feel, have been responsible for starvation in Africa, death squads in Central America, the melting of the polar cap, and the spread of some shocking misconceptions about the condom and its proper use. Finally, the *Boston Globe* reports that Harvard Medical School is investigating a tenured psychiatry professor, Dr. John Mack. He has written a book, *Abduction*, in which he argues that occasionally earthlings really are abducted to outer space. You can imagine where Dr. Mack lines up in the Grant and Will controversies.

• In sports news, baseball players and team owners ended the longest work stoppage in professional sports history after 234 days. Mr. Mike Tyson was released from an Indiana hoosegow after serving three years for directing unwanted attentions toward Miss Black America contestant Desiree Washington when she entered his hotel bedroom at 2 a.m., perhaps to peruse the Gideon Bible at his bedside. In Las Vegas, former heavyweight champion Mr. Larry Holmes ended his comeback after losing a close but unanimous decision to Mr. Oliver McCall.

• The problems of Former President Bill Clinton mount. At mid-month Rep. Nathan Deal of Georgia quit the Democratic minority to give the Republicans one more vote in the House. Rep. Robert S. Walker, a Republican from Pennsylvania, called for an investigation into “recent drug use” by White House staff members. And when CNN White House correspondent Mr.