

# Capture no reason for gloating

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do we have or ever had any evidence that Saddam is connected with Al Qaeda?"

Rangel said that the answers to each of these questions "no." "Therefore, what we have here is an international villain who violated the mandates of the United Nations and that he mistreated his own people," he stated.

According to Rangel, the U.S. took it upon itself, without support of its regular European allies and the United Nations, to attack Iraq and kill its people, as

well as cause suffering and the loss of Americans lives, just to "capture one bum."

Therefore, Rangel continued, the real question is, "Don't we have a bigger villain in North Korea who suppresses his own people, violates international law, and who we know has weapons of mass destruction?" Rangel went on to ask why the U.S. hasn't also liberated North Korea from its ruling tyrant.

The Harlem lawmaker also said the United States shouldn't have gone to war against Iraq in the first

place. "I think the international community could have gotten rid of Saddam without the loss of lives," he stated. "We have paid a heavy price to capture Saddam Hussein, and I don't know where this is going to take President Bush in terms of another so-called victory."

Should the Iraqi dictator receive the death penalty?

"I am vigorously opposed to the death penalty," Rangel declared. "We don't have the right to take a life." Rangel also said he was vehemently opposed to the assassination by the U.S. of Saddam's two

sons.

"I thought it was uncivilized to kill these two men and wash and shave their bodies before putting them on public display for the world to see how barbaric we are," Rangel declared.

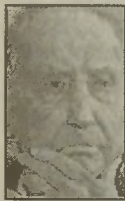
Rep. Major R. Owens (D-Brooklyn) hailed Saddam's capture but said that the victory does not justify the war in Iraq.

"We must now demand that they bring our troops home," he stated. "We must also stop spending a billion dollars a week in Iraq and bring our dollars home."

# Activists: Thurmond affair should be placed in context of American sexual and racial relations

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there's not enough troops in the Army to force the Southern people to break down segregation and admit the nigger race into our theatres, into our swimming pools, into our homes and



Thurmond

into our churches." In 1957 - three years after the U.S. Supreme Court outlawed segregated public schools in its famous "Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kan." - Thurmond filibustered a civil rights bill for a record 24 hours and 18 minutes. The bill, which eventually passed, was the first civil rights legislation passed since 1875. It provided the authority for establishing a civil rights office at the Department of Justice to enforce federal anti-bias laws and to investigate complaints of civil rights violations. It also provided for voting rights enforcement and established criminal civil rights violations.

NAACP Board Chairman Julian Bond notes the contradiction between a White Southerner who considered Blacks inferior while sexually exploiting an African-American teenager in private.

"It is a story, most of all, of great personal hypocrisy,"

says Bond. "How a man can preach racial separatism and practice interracial sex, in defiance of the then-current laws of his state and defiance of his entire public life. You wonder if Strom Thurmond and others like



Bond

reminders of the slave owners who took advantage of Black women.

"We are like a rainbow," says Hare. "And we're still suffering from that because we bought into those light-skinned, dark-skinned issues. ...It took us into good hair, bad hair and can you pass the paper bag test, these types of things."

Rep. James E. Clyburn (D-S.C.) says the CBC is an example of that rainbow.

"You look at the Congressional Black Caucus," he says. "Do you think Harold Ford [D-Tenn.] is a hundred percent African-American?"

Psychiatrist Frances Cress Welsing of Washington, D.C. agrees that Thurmond was involved in more than an interracial affair.

"I think that the first thing that black people should think about is the context in

which this occurred," she says. "And that this woman, this teenager, did not have a choice. If she wanted to protest and say, 'He was forcing me,' who would have listened to her?"

Roger Wilkins, professor of history and American culture at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va., agrees.

"People have said to me, 'Can you believe this? I say, 'How can anybody my color not believe this?'" chuckles a light-complexioned Wilkins. "This should open up a much more honest conversation about who we are. There are really two things to be said about this, that we're all a part of the same species and there are no innate differences."

Hypocrisy - the failure to match private behavior with public utterances - also dogged Thomas Jefferson, the nation's third president.

As author of the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson extolled the virtues of liberty. Yet he owned almost 200 slaves, none of whom he freed on his deathbed. DNA tests confirm that Jefferson fathered at least one of the six children of one of his slaves, Sally Hemings.

"Jefferson was a very complicated human being. He was inconsistent on a lot of things," says Wilkins, author of "Jefferson's Pillow: The Founding Fathers and the Dilemma of Black Patriotism." He explains, "I

believe he was the father of Sally Hemings' children and I think that it was sexual hypocrisy of the highest order because he at times in his life talked about the dangers of race-mixing. And yet, it's fairly clear that he was continuously involved with this woman."

Thurmond's dalliances were also well known in his home state.

"Everybody knew," recalls Clyburn. "I knew it...very explicitly. It's just about as widespread as anybody I know of. More people know that than know who's running for president."

When asked why he had not discussed Thurmond's behavior, Clyburn replied, "Why should I? This is like asking me why I didn't announce the rooster crowing."

Another South Carolina native, conservative talk show host and columnist Armstrong Williams of Marion is a long-time defender of Thurmond, for whom he once worked.

"Senator Thurmond in Ms. Essie Mae Williams' life has always provided for her," he said on a recent "Hardball with Chris Matthews" television show. "When she lost her husband in 1964, he stepped in not only for her, but her children, making sure that they received an education beyond high school. And whatever she asked for, he was there."

Not completely.

Says Hare, the psychologist: "He could say that he paid, but he still primarily was deadbeat psychologically because this is a person who couldn't say publicly who my father is."

# Seniors perplexed by Medicare laws

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for House Republicans.

"There is a curiosity which could lead to confusion unless we act," Crist said.

In Georgia, Republican Rep. Phil Gingrey, a physician who voted for the overhaul, said he has made some headway among older constituents who have attended his public meetings about Medicare.

"They have heard a lot of Medi-ware rhetoric about being forced out of Medicare and losing prescription drug benefits they already have," Gingrey said. "It has been an educational task of mine to make sure they understand the truth as opposed to the rhetoric."

The competing meetings and public relations efforts serve almost as a continuation of the partisan debate in Congress on the legislation.

President Bush and his allies tell people the drug benefit is voluntary. "If you don't want to change your current coverage, you don't have to change," Bush said when he signed the bill this month.

But Cardin argued strenuously that it is not voluntary, stressing that the Congressional Budget Office predicts that 2.7 million people will lose the more generous drug benefits they have from former employers.

"Public opinion, the jury is still out," Cardin told the dozen or so older people at the Resurrection Catholic

Church in Laurel.

Cardin said he wants them to understand what the law says so they can make informed decisions. But he offered a critical presentation that appeared to reinforce doubts about it.

"It's got a lot of flaws in it," said LaVonne Hanlon, 65, of

nearby Maryland City.

At AARP, which endorsed the legislation as it progressed through Congress, representatives have received a steady stream of questions - 45,000 phone calls and 40,000 e-mails - from some of the group's 35 million members.

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