

OpinionJournal

from THE WALL STREET JOURNAL *Editorial Page*

OUTSIDE THE BOX

It Was a Very Good Year

America and democrats of the world can be proud of 2004.

BY PETE DU PONT

Monday, December 27, 2004 12:01 a.m. EST

Boston Red Sox fans celebrated a World Series victory for the first time in 86 years. Weekly Reader grade school students can celebrate being better pollsters than Zogby, Fox and CBS: in October, as in 11 of the previous 12 elections, they correctly picked the winner of the presidential campaign. And SpaceShipOne became the first private craft ever to reach space--71 miles above the earth. So 2004 was a very good year in America.

It was a good year too in Afghanistan, Ukraine, and Iraq. On the other hand, it was a very bad year for the United Nations, Russia, establishment American media and the liberal Democratic Party.

In October 10 million Afghans participated in the first election in the history of their nation. America made it possible by defeating al Qaeda and destroying the Taliban. Freedom and democracy came

to a brutally victimized Afghan people.

Next month, Iraq will hold a similarly defining election. Despite the Baathist and Islamist terrorists who car bomb American troops and assassinate Iraqi civilians in hopes of re-establishing a totalitarian government, freedom and individualism and markets are returning to the Iraqi communities where Saddam Hussein once killed, corrupted and terrorized. In both countries America has made a difference, exporting the values that our Constitution brought to Americans and the world two centuries ago.

Freedom seems to be coming to the Ukraine as well. A corrupt initial presidential election and the probable Russian poisoning of reform candidate Yushchenko brought thousands of young, orange-scarfed and pro-democracy people into the streets of Kiev for weeks of protest. That a genuine democratic revolution is underway is clear from Mr. Yushchenko's approximate 16

point margin in Sunday's re-election, an enormous victory for freedom that may encourage Belarus, Moldova and other Russian subsidiary states to end their totalitarianism too.

In America the 2004 election saw President George Bush and "architect" Karl Rove win an astonishing election victory. Mr. Bush received 20% more votes in 2004 than he did in 2000, gaining among blacks, women and Hispanics, ending up with the votes of 3.6 million people who had voted for Al Gore in 2000. He was the first president in 68 years--since FDR in 1936--to gain seats in both houses of Congress while increasing his own voting majority.

The tax cuts of 2003 helped add two million new jobs to the economy and GDP will likely be up almost 4.5% compared to a year ago. The child tax credit and the marriage penalty adjustment were extended, and both health care savings accounts (HSAs) and prescription drug

cards became available to Americans.

In sum, the past three years have seen President Bush re-institute the successful supply-side economic policies of Ronald Reagan and the strong foreign policies of Harry Truman. Truman saw the threat of the Soviet Union and sought to stop its expansion and defend against its threat; George Bush sees the threat of Islamist terrorism and seeks to halt its expansion and end its threat to America.



In the United Nations, 2004 has been a very bad year. The corruption of the U.N. Oil for Food scandal should be the end of Kofi Annan. When the CEO of an organization has colluded in or been blind to a \$21 billion theft by its management, and refuses to make available U.N. audits of his program, any ethical standard demands his dismissal. If it is not forthcoming, the U.S. Congress should withhold some of its U.N. financial support until Mr. Annan is gone and a full understanding of the Oil for Food's corruption is public knowledge.

It's been a bad year in Russia too. President and former secret police officer Vladimir Putin's handling of the Ukrainian election has been a disaster for his foreign policy. At home he is returning the country to the statism of

Stalin. Private companies are being governmentally expropriated. Television stations and newspapers are state controlled. Elected governorships of Russia's 89 regions have been abolished, to be replaced by Putin appointed bureaucrats, and a law is before the Duma to allow Russia's constitution to be suspended by the national police. All roads lead to the Kremlin now, and a 2004 look into Putin's soul would reveal only three massive, crimson letters: K-G-B.

In America the 2004 bad news included CBS's Dan Rather broadcasting false and forged information about President Bush in an effort to defeat him. After it was clear that the information was not accurate, CBS compounded mistake by insisting that the debate over the document's authenticity was a distraction from the content of the story--or as a New York Times headline explained, the information was "Fake but Accurate." The Old Media evidently believes the truth of published information is less important than the argument its authors wish to make.

But the most important domestic happening of 2004 was the eclipse of traditional Democratic Party liberalism by the vicious left of Michael Moore and MoveOn.org. The best understanding of the eclipse is Peter Beinart's article in the current issue of The New Republic, explaining that the fundamental problem is the character of the party's

far left base. "There is no terrorist threat," Michael Moore says, and Americans are possibly "the dumbest people on the planet," bringing "sadness and misery to places around the globe." Never mind the liberation of Afghanistan from the Taliban and American soldiers walking Afghan girls to school, or the new houses, cars and opportunities that are appearing daily in Iraq. So when Mr. Moore was seated next to former president Jimmy Carter at the Democratic National Convention, middle class Americans decided that the Democratic Party was not their party.

Mr. Beinart reminds us that 60 years ago liberal Democrats fought to expel supporters of communism from their party and reject totalitarianism, or as the reform Americans for Democratic Action put it, America should support "democratic and freedom-loving peoples the world over." Today that would be Afghans, Iraqis and soon Iranians. But the leftist core of the Democratic Party supports none of the above, and until it does the American people will not support its candidates.



Next year will hopefully see freedom in Ukraine, successful elections in Iraq, making permanent the tax cuts in America to further grow the economy, and an ownership

It Was a Very Good Year
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
December 27, 2004
(Continued)

society Social Security reform in which young people can invest in the financial markets for a better retirement.

If those things come to pass-- some or all of them-- America's 2005 will be a very good year. We will be achieving what former

president Ronald Reagan, whose death this year was a sad reminder of his extraordinary vision, told us two decades ago: "no arsenal, or no weapon in the arsenals of the world, is so formidable as the will and moral courage of free men and women."

On Friday evening Red Sox fans and all Americans can raise a glass to a very good year. Our vision of liberty and independence is clear and the strategies necessary to make it come to pass are in place. And that is a very good thing upon which to begin the New Year.

Mr. du Pont, a former governor of Delaware, is chairman of the Dallas-based [National Center for Policy Analysis](#). His column appears once a month.