## The Baily Star

Founder-Editor: Late S. M. Ali

Dhaka Thursday, March 12, 1998

#### Rape of Conscience

What happened inside the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court building on Tuesday last was not only a barbaric assault on a six year old minor but also a violation of our conscience as a nation. We don't know how to condemn this bestiality at the court premises — the place of justice — of all places. Slowly but with an alarming surety we seem to be going back to the margins of our animal necessities that our ancestors had crossed thousands of years ago. Nothing, no place at all, it seems, will escape this degeneracy. It was the police control room 'abandoned' or whatever, that became the Golgotha of humanity. Is this the notion of a free man in an independent sovereign country ? Is it what our women deserved having paid so much for our liberation? It is time we all took a time out from our material rat race and did a bit of soul-searching.

We are alarmed because the beastly paranoid assault on Maria is not a sporadic case of paedophiliac perversion. There seems to be a pattern. More and more young girls, a great many of them minor, are becoming victims of men's carnal monstrosity. More important, rape as a disturbing presence has entered our social consciousness in a big way.

It is true more complaints are being lodged these days but few wrong doers have actually been punished so far. That is because our society suffers from a heavy male bias and also because so little sensitivity actually percolates from the top. We want the ruling and the opposition parties to include this incident on their parliamentary agenda and express their outrage in the most eloquent and emotive language they are capable of. How come our leaders who are so full of invective against each other and so sensitive about issues that have very little to do with common man's agony and worry are so insensitive about malaise like this? What stifles them? Don't they have young daughters like little Maria? Or do they feel their Marias will never come to this. If you have minimum respect for ideas like human rights and humanity then address issues like rape as a frightening disease of the society. We demand Home Minister's personal initiative in ferreting out the criminal and meting him out exemplary punishment, so that the rapists get the signal.

#### Slum-dwellers' Fading Smile

We thought the government would go hammer and tong with this project materialising it in record short time. Alas, the exact opposite has been happening almost since the day one! Flurry of high-level coordination meetings notwithstanding! The crucially important Urban Poverty Reduction Project (UPRP), the first ever contemplated in a chaotic sea of plethoric rural poverty eradication programmes, remains a non-starter. More than a year has elapsed since its conceptualisation. Its implementation can put a smile on one million slum-dwellers and breathe fresh air into the choking urban living conditions. But this has tragically hit a snag: the government's failure to give the ADB, financial backer of the project, a 10-year land guarantee. The ADB might have second thoughts if the governmental indecision contin-

The slums are occupying land anyway and most of it is undoubtedly khas land, too. Here is a plan designed to give them a new life in earmarked project areas developed with improved sanitary conditions, living quarters and vocational training centres.

The truth is much of the government's khas land remains under illegal occupation of vested interests. The DCC's campaign for demolition of unauthorised structures stumbled against a wall of opposition a year or so ago. It was revealed at that time that the ministries and departments to which those lands belonged dragged their feet on the question of authorising the DCC for the demolition work. There has to be a designated lead agency in complete charge of the land recovery drive, so that all kinds of reclamation projects can be undertaken smoothly. It seems the ministries are apparently short of land for the purposes of the urban poverty reduction project because they have lost quite a bit to the thugs. And don't quite know what to do about it.

We would urge the government nonetheless to make some of its unutilised land in the city readily available for the ADB project.

### There it Goes Again

Fresh from the GSP scam, country's garment export industry has again gone under a cloud: 13 garment factories have reportedly made huge profit illegally through the export of manufactured garments to the US. The paperwork for this monumental fraud was engineered by some corrupt Export Promotion Bureau employees.

This latest unearthing makes us square up to a very pertinent question: did we learn the lessons of the last GSP furore which threatened the future of the RMG export sector? There are two possibilities. Either we did not learn any or we have forgotten them too quickly. It should be remembered we are flaunting international business norms rather too frequently. And breach of trust is not repaired quickly.

We feel it is time our business community had drawn a line between unscrupulous means of onetime windfall and long-term business based on mutual trust. Our exporters had better remembered that just because of the corrupt inclination of a few of them, the whole RMG sector industry was brought to a standstill. It is in their interest that the BGMEA spot these goodwill wreckers among them and help the government put them through their paces. Clannish attitude would prove disastrous in this case.

While we hope that the indicted EPB employees would get their deserts, we urge the government and the BGMEA to make sure the faltering garment factory owners too pay for what they did for quick bucks. A timely step to set the house in order is an eminently better option than genuflecting late before international community and humiliating the whole nation for a bunch of crooks.

#### Commonwealth in the Third Millennium: Prospects and Challenges HERE have been times the Commonwealth is aptly

when people wondered about and seriously questioned the very raison deter and further usefulness of the existence of the Commonwealth as such. It was alleged that the Commonwealth, as a body, had no teeth to bite the wicked and no resources to help the needy. Many argued it has outlived its existence as an institution to provide a forum, commonly rated initially as a club for tea parties, among leaders of the erstwhile master and colonies of the British empire. As a matter of fact, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Kualalumpur set up a body of its own to appraise this issue. They came out with the conclusion to positively endorse its relevance and usefulness. Commonwealth as an institution, according to their findings, was able to render beneficial services to the world community and consequently was worthy of retention. The conclusion was objec-

of unattainable expectations. The Commonwealth is neither a regional body nor it is merely an association of some limited ethnic and linguistic groups. It is a global organisation, stretching over all comers of the globe, and have diverse characters, culture, language and way of life. The diversity of the Commonwealth is not confined merely to differences between member states, but within the states themselves. Most of the recent conflicts in the world today stemmed from the root of ethnicity and are intra-state in character. The ability to manage diversity, which the Commonwealth Secretary General Chief Emeka Anyaoku has termed as "divisive pluralism" is a growing challenge that

tive, down to earth, and devoid

We, the people, the governments, the professionals and all others who are concerned, have good reasons to take pride in this institution. Together we will work and successfully we will face the challenges of the coming millennium.

is destined to continue in the next millennium. The diversity of the Commonwealth, in fact, represents its underlying strength. With the pursuit of unity in diversity being the heart of the association's ethos. the Commonwealth, in the words of Nelson Mandela, can help to make the world safe for diversity.

In spite of apparent lack of homogeneity, the Commonwealth is bound by a strong set of shared values and ideals that are being generally practised by its members. The most notable of these fundamental political values, which had been originally set at the founding of the Commonwealth in 1949 and subsequently reiterated at CHOGMs in Singapore and Harare, are democracy, fundamental human rights, the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary, equality for women. and good governance.

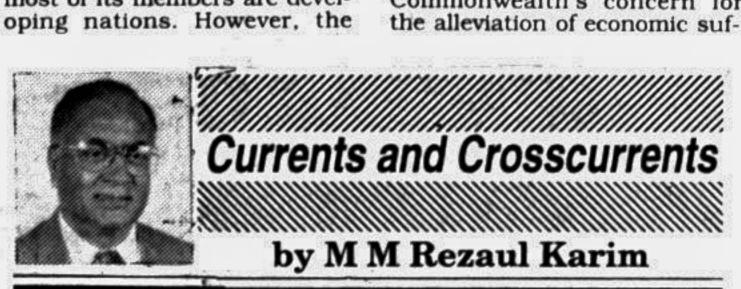
All of the 54 members of the Commonwealth, except one, are practising democracy. The prodigal member, Nigeria, has to pay for it by having its membership suspended. Commonwealth has consistently and unequivocally condemned all policies and actions which violated the values it upholds and policies it nurtures, be it the principles of democracy, the fight against racism, the most hated form of apartheid, or human rights and welfare. The expulsion of South Africa and its return to the fold of the Commonwealth in 1994 as well as Pakistan's voluntary withdrawal from the organisation in 1992 and return to the forum

later, and recently Fiji's short bout of adventurism, manifest aptly both the strength and the resilience of this august body. The prolonged and successful sanctions imposed on Southern Rhodesia's rebel regime bears glowing testimony to Commonwealth's resolve not to bow down on matters of ideals.

The Commonwealth does not itself command a huge fund of its own for the purpose of providing economic aid to its deserving members, though most of its members are devel-

CARICOM, OAU and the South Pacific Forum, all of whom using the same language and having the same wavelength. The effectual role of the Commonwealth as a consensus builder in the international community is, therefore, enormous and beyond dispute.

In the present day world, which is marked by increasing inter-state as well as intra-state disparity of wealth and income and where many poor nations are becoming poorer still. Commonwealth's concern for



Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation has been established to aid its members. in the most cost effective way. in many fields of their prime need. Yet, the Commonwealth can and has been able to amass huge resources for development and benefit of its members. The influences and co-operation of its members, specially of the strong and the affluent, have contributed most in this direction. Which organisation can one find whose members also enjoy membership of the G-7 and the G-77, the Security Council and the Non-aligned

Movement, of ASEAN, SAARC,

ferings of a overwhelming majority of its member states is most perceptible. The last CHOGM held at Edinburgh justifiably marked its special theme with focus on trade, investment and development as the road to Commonwealth prosperity. In addition to the CFTC setting up an excellent example of both North-South and South-South co-operation, recent years have witnessed growing Commonwealth initiatives on debt trade and private capital flows.

Of late, increasing number of delegations are being exchanged among Commonwealth mem-

bers and business forums being held in order to promote investment and trade. To start up small and medium type enterprises, some venture capitaltype funds have been envisaged. The first such fund, the Commonwealth Africa Investment Fund, was launched last year. Regional funds have also been planned for the Pacific, Caribbean and South Asia. A \$200 million fund has been contemplated for South Asia on which preliminary actions have been undertaken. As for trade, Commonwealth has already reached 20 per cent mark of the global trade and the figure is rising. The Commonwealth Trade Advisory services are being provided in Geneva to assist member countries on post-Uruguay Round issues, including Lome IV, and in the

It has also been reported that no less than thirteen of the fast growing economies of the world lie in the Commonwealth. Though the very recent currency debacles, specially in Asia, has slowed down the pace of development, we hope this would be a passing phase. To cite an example of growing prosperity, one can derive satisfaction to note the per-capita income of Singapore having risen to a fifth higher than that of Britain. Malaysia is fast catching up. Again, the Commonwealth is a haven for small states. Over half of its members are small states and almost 70 per cent of all multilateral Commonwealth assistance is channelled to them.

The continuing relevance of

manifest by the fact that, with the passage of time and change of outlook, this organisation is growing from an association of governments to that of peoples. The "peoples" Commonwealth is fast becoming its distinctive feature that may have hitherto been ignored and overlooked. Growing interactions in the fields of art, culture, immigration and high-tech mass communication among member states are providing great fillip towards its realisation. Notwithstanding the shortcomings of the Commonwealth

which being a product of the

unlikely prospect of falling short of people's realistic expectations, no one can underrate or undermine the value of this organisation. After all, almost one-third of world's population live in the Commonwealth. The twenty-first century is a vast expanse of time. Even a few decades can transform the world substantially, beyond recognition. It has happened so. The future, therefore, is stored with uncertainty and surprises. But the Commonwealth, with its diversity, shared understanding, common language and willing co-operation of its members, has come to stay. The interest manifest by an ever increasing number of applications for its membership also substantiates this postulate. We, the people, the governments, the professionals and all others who are concerned, have good reasons to take pride in this institution. Together we will work and successfully we will face the challenges of the coming millennium.

Based on the key-note speech delivered by the writer on the Commonwealth Day meeting held at the British Council in Dhaka on the 9th March, 1998.

#### LETTER FROM AMERICA

### Time Magazine Celebrates Seventy-five Years

Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed writes from Princeton

Time's philosophy was not to merely summarise the previous week's news. It was to go behind the scene and report on the driving forces behind the events, and present the readers insights into diverse field such as politics, art, religion and technology.

letter from an American Southerner: "Is the glorification of the negro now an accepted policy of your magazine? I had hoped that after the protest of one Southerner you might show some consideration for the sensibilities of our people by the discontinuance of your practice of referring to the colored man as

N September 28, 1925,

Time magazine published

"mister." Time itself wrote some racist pieces. On Feb. 18, 1929 it put Albert Einstein on its cover and said: "Dr. Einstein, like so many other Jews and scholars. takes no physical exercise at all." Commenting on Mussolini's impending attack on Ethiopia (Abissinia), it wrote on Feb. 25, 1935: "That a negroid nation should be menaced by Spectacular Dictator Benito Mussolini highly excited the world's Negroes last week. Not only Harlem but every other dark town was on the quivive at news from Rome that for three nights running Il Duce had sat secretly with His Grand Council, contriving who knew what against the African Majesty of cocoa-butter-colored Haile Selassie I." Another hateful piece was published on Dec. 22, 1941, entitled, "How to Your Friends from the Japs." Oh, how Time and the times have changed! In the 75year commemorative issue,

Time apologised for these pieces. On Tuesday, March 3, 1998, Time magazine threw a 75-year birthday bash at New York's Radio Čity Music Hall. Except for Pope John Paul II, and Queen Elizabeth, both of whom declined invitations, just about everyone who matters, was

Time magazine is the brain child of two upstart Americans, Yale University graduates Briton Hadden and Henry Luce. On the date the first issue of Time hit the news stands, March 3, 1923, Hadden was only 25, and Luce 24! Their idea was as simple as it was gorgeously original. There were newspapers and there were magazines; but Hadden and Luce were the first to dream of a combination: newsmagazine. Like the Wright brothers before them, and Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak's personal computer fifty years after them, this was

an original American idea that revolutionised the world. And made Time the premier newsmagazine in the world. Time's philosophy was not

to merely summarise the previous week's news. It was to go behind the scene and report on the driving forces behind the events, and present the readers insights into diverse field such as politics, art, religion and technology. As the world enters a new millennium and the digital age, with the concomitant explosion of news on the web. Time has maintained the loyalty of its readers because of the trust earned over decades. "In a world of thousand voices. people will gravitate to those who they trust." Time has not always acted in its best interest disgruntled employee left Time and founded its nemesis. Newsweek in 1933. Time countered that by having progenies of its own: Fortune (1930) and Life (1936).

In his famous 1941 essay. "The American Century", Henry Luce, a Republican, laid out the foundation of Time's brand of journalism. He urged America to "engage in a global struggle on behalf of its values. most notably a love of freedom, a feeling for the equality of opportunities, a tradition of selfreliance and independence and also of cooperation."

Time introduced three novelties in journalism. Before Brit Hadden died in 1931, he formulated Time's policy on brevity; for instance, "in time's nick", in place of "in the nick of time." Time was the first magazine to take advantage of the richness of the English language - it was not bashful in using every word in the dictionary. Finally, Time elevated captions to an art form - its ingenious captions tell half the

Time has been a good predictor of future events. On March 21, 1983, it wrote about Compact Discs (CDs): "There is a consensus that this is perhaps the most exciting of the breakthroughs in the (music)

field, including LP and stereo." Words that Time coined in-"socialite", "male chauvinist", "guesstimate", "World War II" and "televangelist" Words that Time popularised include: "tycoon", "pundit", "kudos" and "smog". These days, the world looks to Time for the final word.

Time magazine's "Man of the Year" is awaited eagerly by the world. To be somebody, one has to make the cover of Time. Look at the people who did: inventor Thomas Edison. aviator Charles Lindbergh (Man of the Year 1928), Sigmund Freud, Albert Einstein, Mohandas K. Gandhi, gangster Al Capone, Adolf Hitler (Man of the Year 1938), Benito Mussolini, Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, Piccaso, Vivian Leigh Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley, Madonna, The Beatles and Bill Gates, to name only a very few. Each US Presidents made the cover several times — 55 times by Richard Nixon is a Time record. Princess Diana made it 8 times — highest by a woman. Pakistan's (General) Ayub Khan made it after his putsch in 1958. Among Bangladeshis, only Shaikh Mujibur Rahman made it to the cover of the Time magazine.

Times ten best selling issues were Princess Diana "Commemorative (1997)", (1.18 million), followed by Death of Princess Diana (1997) (0.8 million), Nixon's resignation (1974). Death of Beatles' John Lennon (1980), Michael Jackson (1984), Herpes (1982), Challenger explosion (1986), War in the Gulf (1991), Babies "What do they know (1983)" and Mount St. Helens (1980) (0.41 million).

It's ten worst featured. Black Cultural Heritage (1994) (100, 827 copies), Baseball Strike (1994), Anguish Over Bosnia (1993), Nuclear Safety (1996), Benjamin Netanyahu (1996), Boris Yeltsin (1993), Somalia: Restoring Hope (1992), Advocates for Children (1996), GOP Front Runner Bob Dole (1995), and America's Economy (1994) (113,041 copies).

Not all the covers were popular with the readers. Ten that most angry letters from readers, the first four being responsible for most subscription cancellations, are: Last Tango in Paris (1973) (12,191 Tetters). Ayatullah Khomeini, Man of the Year (1980), (5,180 letters), Is God Dead? (1966), Sex in the US (1964), Death by Gun (1989), Newt Gingrich, Man of the Year 1996), Monica Lewinsky and Bill Clinton (1998), Assassination of J.F.K/New President L.B.J (1963), Who was Jesus? (1988) and Ellen Degeneres

(1997) (2,085 letters). Even a letter published in the *Time* magazine is an achievement. In its 75-year commemorative issue. Time reprinted letters, that were previously published in Time. written by the following celebrities: Publisher William Randolph Hearst, comedian Harpo Marx, Literature Nobelist Pearl. S. Buck, painter Salvador Dali, actor Orson Welles, actor Humphrey Bogart, novelist William Faulkner, actor/dancer Fred Astaire, playwright Norman Mailer (one time husband of Marilyn Monroe), Saigon's Madame Ngo Dinh Nhu, Cambodia's Sihanouk, Norodom (Governor) Ronald Reagan, actress Zsa Zsa Gabor, Mrs. Martin Luther King, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Clare Boothe Luce (founder's wife), Nancy Reagan, Frank Sinatra, Bob Dole, pianist Victor Borge, columnist Ann Landers and Second Lady Tipper Gore. Four of yours truly's letters have been published in Time so far.

According to the New York Times, during Time's 75th birthday celebration Christian right activist Rev. Jerry Falwell was seen whispering into Muhammad Ali's ears. Former Chrysler Chairman Lee Iacocca posed for photographs with O. J Simpson-Patty Hearst attorney F. Lee Bailey. Actress Sharon Stone, just married, posed in a zebra-striped dress, not far from Louis Farrakhan, a recent

visitor to Bangladesh. Assisted suicide practitioner, Dr. Jack Kevorkian, or Death", was seen cavorting with Raquel Welch. Former Bosnia diplomat Richard Holbrooke came and inquired, "who is not here?" Recent celebs, such as Monica Lewinsky's lawyer, William Ginsburg also attended, along with his heroes, General William Westmoreland of Vietnam war fame, and actor Sean Connery, "Bond, James Bond". Microsoft CEO

Bill Gates made time for TIME, as did Mikhail S. Gorbachev and President Clinton, who met for the first time. Many of the 1190 guests were on Time's cover. There were several tributes on the agenda, including one from literature Nobel Prize winner, Princeton University Professor Toni Morrison to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; one from Mr. Gorbachev to Vladimir Lenin

and Mahatma Gandhi, and one from William H. Gates, who was appropriately invited via Email, to the Wright Brothers. "They transformed life itself", Bill Gates said of the Wright Brothers, adding that the creation of flight was "the first World Wide Web. Muhammad Ali, the heavy-

weight boxing legend, who was on Time's cover three times, in 1963, 1971 and 1978, was a star attraction. Praising Ali's, "float like a butterfly sting like a bee" boxing mantra, actor Tom Cruise suggested that Ali

descended from the same tradition as Mark Twain. "Like they say, if you can do it, it ain't bragging", Tom Cruise added as he lifted his glass to toast his sports hero. Steven Spielberg toasted John Ford.

Floating throughout the party like a social butterfly. Jerry Falwell introduced himself to Ali and baseball legend Joe DiMaggio. Mr. DiMaggio. one-time husband of Marilyn Monroe, sat serenely letting the party come to him. "I know Muhammad Ali, and it will be nice to see him and say hello", said the Yankee Clipper. He said he was also looking forward to seeing Henry Kissinger and his wife Nancy. Lauren Becall was besides herself after receiving kiss from Muhammad

The guests dined on a main course of braised gratin of lamb chop prepared at the Plaza hotel. The table setting reflected the eclectic guest list. Mr. Gorbachev sat next to actress Sophia Loren. Raisa Gorbachev sat next to actor Kevin Kostner. President Clinton sat between Barbara Levin, wife of Time-Warner Chairman, Gerald, and Toni Morrison. Time spent 3 million dollars hosting

the party.

President Clinton, who toasted his hero, President Franklin Roosevelt, marked the occasion appropriately by saying, "Tonight, Time magazine has paid tribute to the time it not only observed, but helped to shape, the 100 stunning years your founder Henry Luce so unforgettably called the American century." And Time and President Clinton hoped, it will continue to shine as brightly for the next "American Century."

"SC verdict on detention of Ershad...."

Sir, I was surprised to notice that some comments have been published in your esteemed newspaper on 6th March issue on the first page in the news item "SC Verdict on Detention of Ershad: Review Petition Likely" involving my professional integrity. In page twelve (last page) it is published that :

"Nabi said he and Dr Kamal Hossain are examining whether Barrister Rafiq-ul Haque can 'ethically as well as legally' conduct the case because he (Rafiq-ul Haque) was the attorney general till December 17, 1990 while, the order of detention of Ershad was issued on December 12, 1990."

This comment about me is baseless and malicious. Mr Nabi may not know but Dr Kamal Hossain knew very well that I never acted as Attorney General under the then Acting President. Dr Kamal Hossain and others were advising the Acting President at the relevant time. The actual fact is that I tendered my resignation to the President of Bangladesh on 4th

December, 1990 which was accepted by him on 6th December. 1990 before he resigned himself from that office. My resignation was accepted with immediate effect. So I acted as Attorney General upto 6th December, 1990 and not thereafter.

Incidentally, it may be mentioned here that on the same day the then President signed two other very important documents, one repealing the Special Powers Act, 1974 namely "Special Powers (Repeal) Ordinance, 1990" which was signed before forenoon on the same date and the other was the acceptance of resignation of Mr Moudud Ahmed, the then Vice President of Bangladesh. You may verify the records, if neces-

So, the observations-/comments of Mr Nabi and Dr Kamal Hossain are baseless and malicious and made with malafide motive. Mr Nabi may not be aware because he was not actively involved at the relevant time but Dr Kamal Hossain was one of the unofficial advisers to the then Acting President and as such he knew very well that I was never the Attorney General under the then Acting President. I never

accepted any such position under him nor he ever consulted me whether Mr H M Ershad should be detained or not. I don't want to disclose further

information at this stage. I hope Mr Nabi and Dr Kamal Hossain will take note of this and, if necessary, they may make further enquiry before making any such comments against a colleague in profes-

Rafique-ul Huq Senior Advocate Supreme Court of Bangladesh

#### Genocide in Algeria

Sir, The dual standard of morality by the western rulers in supporting the military junta in Algeria is being increasingly questioned by the peace loving people who want to see the truth being unveiled. The recent disclosure in London-based The Observer, by three Algerian police officers seeking asylum in Britain that massacres on the helpless population are being done systematically by the ruling military junta in the guise of the banned Islamists. This they are doing to demean the Islamists and at the same time create terror

among the opposition political parties so that nobody dares to question the brutal juntas. This strategy of the military junta was also informed by Mr Abdul Hamid Boai, an opposition leader of Algeria now living in London.

In an interview with the

London-based The Observer, he said that the military government, in order to crush any opposition, has adopted this technique. For long the western democracies and different human right organisations were in chorus to blame the Islamists for all these inhuman acts. To verify the recent revelations, the initiatives to probe into such allegations, by different western human right groups and the EU were faced with denials by the military junta in Algeria. Since, the brutality needs to be condemned and stopped at any costs, it is time to leave aside the double standard — the western democracies and different human right organisations, including the UN should arrange probes into the massacres happening in Algeria to unearth the truth.

I M Masud 2/8/1-1, Tolarbag Mirpur-1, Dhaka-1212.

# Buchwald's COLUMNI Blowing Tax Smoke

NE of the ways the president hopes to have a balanced budget is by putting a \$1.50 tax on cigarettes — as well as levying fines on tobacco companies to get the United

If Clinton has his way, Americans will have to smoke one trillion, three hundred billion cigarettes just to break even. The question arises as to how many Americans must continue smoking - or, worse still, go back to smoking - to balance

the budget. It has been the policy of this administration, as well as pre-

vious ones, to discourage the use of tobacco, particularly among teenagers. But now the economic salvation of the country may need to

take priority over poor health and misdemeanors. In order to raise revenue from taxes, the government will have to kill all the 'no-smoking' regulations in regards to public

places. The Marlboro Man might appear on dollar bills and 32-cent postage stamps. Joe Camel could show up on White House bill-

If the president hopes to accomplish his goal, he might get Chelsea to start smoking, and when he is seen publicly with Hillary he could light two cigarettes and hand one to her.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright might light up a cigar during the State of the Union address, and sample packs of cigarettes would be handed out to our armed forces on land, sea and in the air. Clinton does not necessarily have to come out for smoking.

But he will send a message to the nation that the more they puff the larger the budget surplus will be. It's obvious the tobacco companies are in a dither that their product was selected to give the United State financial security.

but a government official said, "We had to tax either nicotine or arsenic." The president of one of the largest tobacco companies said. What is good for R J Reynolds is good for America. And this tax is no good.

But the budget office was elated. "It is a social thing," an OMB spokesman said. "For several years now people have looked on smokers as pariahs. Now when you see someone smoking on the sidewalk, you know he is doing it to pay for his mother's Social Security.'

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