

Gen. Franks retired in mid-2003 with perfect timing. Baghdad had fallen, and he left the mess from that "fundamental misunderstanding" for someone else to clean up.

The Army is supposed to publish unclassified reports as soon as it can review them, to be sure that they don't contain sensitive material. More than 2½ years later, the Army hasn't published the report and has done little to circulate the classified version to Pentagon leaders. Asked why, an Army

the White House and Pentagon was evident both before and after the 2005 Rand report — evident to everybody but the White House and Pentagon, apparently. Rather than censor the report, the administration could have acted on it two years before political and public pressure forced a change in strategy. Now, as Defense Secretary Robert Gates acknowledged this week with his comments on troop levels, the next president will be responsible for ending what Mr. Bush secretly and recklessly started. Plan on it.

The Clintons. Many on the Rush Limbaugh, Ann Coulter, Jan others, have declared vote for Hillary not vote at all — for Sen. McCain. pointed spokesmen insist that Clinton is a matter. Better to go down one's convictions than compromised place.

To be sure, politics makes for interesting conversation, but the world starves to death.

It isn't necessarily thing Sen. McCain for him should he. But it isn't possible there's no difference McCain and Sen. Clinton (Obama), as some Republicans.

A form of irrationality has taken hold where oneself or to the party more important than over the country to pay to raise taxes and improve health care.

Principles shouldn't be able that strict adherence worse alternative.

Exactly which core facilitates the garnishee to pay for insurance Sen. Clinton has proposed interview with ABC's George Nopoulos. Sen. Clinton's government-ordered insurance program would require an enforcement mechanism that might know, going after people.

Where are those core when a Democratic president pointing justices to the Court? Given that five justices will be 70 or older vember, it's a near certainty.

Spare us the outrage

Lawyers for accused sex predator sound foolish.

An 11-month police investigation led to an indictment on one felony charge of solicitation of prostitution. That was in July 2006, and part-time Palm Beacher Jeffrey Epstein still has faced no repercussions for allegedly preying on underage girls.

So maybe Mr. Epstein is satisfied that he's getting his money's worth from his large legal team, which includes Harvard Law School Professor Alan Dershowitz (remember O.J. Simpson?) and Kenneth Starr (remember Monica Lewinsky?). Jack Goldberger of West Palm Beach, who's also on the team, told *Post* columnist Jose Lambiet in November: "This case is absolutely going to end without a trial within the next two months."

He was wrong, but Mr. Goldberger remains on Mr. Epstein's payroll, feigning moral outrage at two lawsuits filed this year against the Manhattan money manager. The lawsuits allege sexual exploitation of teenaged girls, one of them as young as 14. Said Mr. Goldberger after the first lawsuit, seeking more

than \$50 million, was filed on Jan. 24: "We think this shows what this case is all about: money." Yes, it is — Mr. Epstein's effort to buy his way out of prosecution.

According to the lawyer of a 17-year-old whose parents are suing him, Mr. Epstein masturbated in front of her (she was 14 at the time) and used a vibrator on her at his home in February 2005. Another Epstein attorney, Lilly Ann Sanchez dismissed it: "Jeffrey Epstein did not have sex with this woman."

For those girls who claim that he did, Mr. Epstein's lawyers maintain that he did not know their ages, despite a police search of his home and garbage that found phone messages about the girls' school schedules and even a high school transcript. For all of his money, Mr. Epstein's best defense remains "I didn't know that I was a criminal pervert?"