elements of white fear in schools, neighborhoods and voting booths.

The politics of white minority status, however, have been the blind spot in liberal Democratic California, where mostly white political consultants have yet to figure out how to reconcile Latino ascendance with white (and, increasingly, elderly black) fear to create the grand coalition that will eventually replace the black-white coalitions that elected liberal Governors Pat and Jerry Brown as well as Mayor Tom Bradley of Los Angeles. If mainstream Democrats want to build the electoral coalitions that will deter the Republican onslaught, they will have to bring Latinos out of the clerk's office and into more substantive positions at multimillion-dollar liberal political consulting firms.

And yet even if they rise to this electoral challenge, the rest of us will still be swimming against a strong cultural tide. That blockbuster civilizational war epics like Troy and Oliver Stone's Alexander the Great are hitting the box office in a time of political, military and cultural war is not mere coincidence. Movies and political narratives about civilizational clashes sell (except in the case of the the recent—and already forgotten—Alamo), and they will continue to find financing and audiences in the absence of an effective response to the promoters of white fear in California and beyond. Perhaps it is time to consider renting a copy of one of the more than thirteen Alamo movies and "Remember": How fear of the nonwhite other gets deployed domestically in times of global war and conquest.

CULTURAL CHANGES AND LUCRATIVE ENDORSEMENTS MAY EXPLAIN A DROP IN ACTIVISM.

Where Are the Jocks for Justice?

KELLY CANDAEL AND PETER DREIER

A donal Foyle, 29, is a 6-foot, 10-inch center for the NBA's Golden State Warriors. Like most pro athletes, he spent his youth perfecting his game, hoping for a shot at big-time sports. But off the court he's an outspoken critic of America's political system. "This mother of all democracies," Foyle insists, "is one of the most corrupt systems, where a small minority make the decisions for everybody else."

Three years ago Foyle started a grassroots group called Democracy Matters (www.democracy-matters.org). Its goal is to educate young people about politics, mobilize them to vote and bring pressure on elected officials to reform the nation's campaign finance laws. When he's not playing basketball, Foyle is frequently speaking at high schools, colleges and conferences about the corrupting role of big money in politics. "I have lots of support [from fellow players] and I explain to them a lot what I'm doing," says Foyle. "The players understand that I want people to be excited about the political system."

Foyle's activism is rare in the world of professional sports. Many athletes visit kids in hospitals, start foundations that fix inner-city playgrounds, create scholarship funds to help poor students attend college and make commercials urging kids to stay in school and say no to drugs. But when it comes to political dissent, few speak out on big issues like war, sweatshop labor, environmental concerns or the increasing gap between rich and poor. While Hollywood celebrities frequently lend their fame and fortune to candidates and causes, athletes are expected to perform, not pontificate. On the few occasions when they do express themselves, they are often met with derision and contempt.

Last year, for example, just before the United States invaded Iraq, Dallas Mavericks guard Steve Nash wore a T-shirt to media day during the NBA's All-Star weekend that said NO WAR. SHOOT FOR PEACE. Numerous sports columnists criticized Nash for speaking his mind. (One wrote that he should "just shut up and play.")

David Robinson, an Annapolis graduate and former naval officer, and then center for the San Antonio Spurs, said that Nash's attire was inappropriate. Flip Saunders, coach of the NBA's Minnesota Timberwolves, told the Minneapolis Star-Tribune: "What opinions you have, it's important to keep them to yourselves." Since then, no other major pro athlete has publicly expressed antiwar sentiments.

Although political activism has never been widespread among pro athletes, Foyle is following in the footsteps of some courageous jocks. After breaking baseball's color line in 1947, Jackie Robinson was outspoken against racial segregation during and after his playing career, despite being considered too angry and vocal by many sportswriters, owners and fellow players. During the 1960s and '70s some prominent athletes used their celebrity status to speak out on key issues, particularly civil rights and Vietnam. The most well-known example, boxing champion Muhammad Ali, publicly opposed the war and refused induction into the Army in 1967, for which he was stripped of his heavyweight title and sentenced to five years in prison (he eventually won an appeal in the Supreme Court and didn't serve any time). Today he is among the world's most admired people, but at the time sportswriters and politicians relentlessly attacked him.

Many others were also unafraid to wear their values on their uniforms—and sometimes paid the price. Coaches and team executives told Dave Meggyses, an All-Pro linebacker for the

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St. Louis Cardinals in the late 1960s, that his antirwar views were detrimental to his team and his career. As he recounts in his memoir *Out of Their League*, Meggyesy refused to back down, was consequently benched, and retired at age 28 while still in his athletic prime. Tennis great Arthur Ashe campaigned against apartheid well before the movement gained widespread support. Bill Russell led his teammates on boycotts of segregated facilities while starring for the Boston Celtics. Olympic track medalists John Carlos and Tommie Smith created an international furor with their Black Power salute at the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City, which hurt their subsequent professional careers. When St. Louis Cardinals catcher Ted Simmons came to the majors from the University of Michigan in 1967, some teammates were taken aback by his shaggy hair and the peace symbols on his bat, but they couldn’t argue with his All-Star play. In 1972, almost a year before the Supreme Court’s landmark *Roe v. Wade* ruling, tennis star Billie Jean King was one of fifty-three women to sign an ad in the first issue of *Ms.* magazine boldly proclaiming, “We Have Had Abortions.” Washington Redskins linemen Ray Schoenke organized 400 athletes to support George McGovern’s 1972 antirwar presidential campaign despite the fact that his coach, George Allen, was a close friend of McGovern’s opponent, Richard Nixon.

Contemporary activism hasn’t infiltrated the locker rooms as it did in the past, in large measure because of dramatic improvements in athletes’ economic situation. A half-century ago, big-time sports—boxing and baseball in particular—was a melting pot of urban working-class ethnics and rural farm boys. Back then, many professional athletes earned little more than ordinary workers. Many lived in the same neighborhoods as their fans and had to work in the off-season to supplement their salaries.

Today’s athletes are a more diverse group. A growing number come from suburban upbringings and attended college. At the same time, the number of pro athletes from impoverished inner-city backgrounds in the United States and Latin America has increased. Regardless of their backgrounds, however, all pro athletes have much greater earning power than their predecessors. Since the 1970s, television contracts have brought new revenues that have dramatically increased salaries. The growing influence of players’ unions—particularly in baseball, since the end of the reserve clause in 1976—has also raised the salaries of stars and journeyman jocks alike. For example, the minimum salary among major league baseball players increased from $16,000 in 1975 to $100,000 in 1990 to $300,000 last year, while the average salary during those years grew from $44,676 to $578,930 to $2.3 million. Even ordinary players are now able to supplement their incomes with commercial endorsements. At the upper echelons of every sport, revenue from product endorsements far exceeds the salaries paid by the teams superstars play for or the prize money for the tournaments they win.

Thanks to their unions, pro athletes now have more protection than ever before to speak out without jeopardizing their careers. But, at the same time, they have much more at stake economical-ly. “Athletes now have too much to lose in endorsement potential,” explains Marc Pollick, founder and president of the Giving Back Fund, which works with pro athletes to set up charitable foundations. “That has neutralized their views on controversial issues. Companies don’t want to be associated with controversy.”

A few years ago labor activists tried and failed to enlist basketball superstar Michael Jordan in their crusade to improve conditions in Nike’s factories. But with a multimillion-dollar Nike contract, he was unwilling to speak out against sweatshop conditions in overseas plants. In 1990 Jordan had refused to endorse his fellow black North Carolina standout Harvey Gantt, then running for the US Senate against right-winger Jesse Helms, on the grounds, Jordan explained at the time, that “Republicans buy sneakers, too.” (The criticism must have stung. Six years later he contributed $2,000 to Gantt’s second unsuccessful effort to unseat Helms. And in 2000, like many NBA players, he publicly supported former New York Knicks star Bill Bradley’s campaign for President. In March he contributed $10,000 to Illinois State Senator Barack Obama, who recently won the Democratic Party’s nomination for an open US Senate seat.)

Early in his professional career, golfer Tiger Woods stirred some political controversy with one of his first commercials for Nike after signing a $40 million endorsement contract. It displayed images of Woods golfing as these words scrolled down the screen: “There are still courses in the United States I am not allowed to play because of the color of my skin. I’ve heard I’m not ready for you. Are you ready for me?” At the time Woods told *Sports Illustrated* that it was “important...for this country to talk about this subject [racism]...You can’t say something like that in a polite way. Golf has shied away from this for too long. Some clubs have brought in tokens, but nothing has really changed. I hope what I’m doing can change that.”

According to Richard Lapchick, executive director of the National Consortium for Academics and Sports at the University of Central Florida, and a longtime activist against racism in sports, Woods was “crucified” by some sportswriters for the commercial and his comments. Nike quickly realized that confrontational politics wasn’t the best way to sell shoes. “Tiger seemed to learn a lesson,” Lapchick says. “It is one that I wish he and other athletes had not learned: no more political issues. He has been silent since then because of what happened early in his career.” Woods remained on the sidelines during the 2002 controversy over the intransigence of the Augusta National Golf Club, host of the annual Masters tournament, on permitting women to join.

Like Lapchick, former New York Yankees pitching ace Jim Bouton, whose 1970 tell-all book *Ball Four* scandalized the baseball establishment, bemoans the cautiousness of today’s highly paid athletes. “I’m always disappointed when I see a guy like Michael Jordan, who is set up for life, not speaking out on controversial issues,” said Bouton. Today’s athletes, he observed, “seem to have an entourage around them that they have to consult before making a statement or getting involved in something. Ali was willing to go to jail and relinquish his boxing title for what he
believed in. He was a hero. It's a scared generation today." And it may be no coincidence that some of today's more outspoken athletes grew up outside the United States. Foyle, now a US citizen, is from the Grenadines, and the Mavericks' Nash is a Canadian.

American sports—from the Olympics to pro boxing to baseball—have long been linked, by politicians, business leaders and sports entrepreneurs, to conservative versions of nationalism and patriotism. At all professional sports events, fans and players are expected to stand while the national anthem is played before the game can begin. No similar expressions of patriotism are required, for example, at symphony concerts or Broadway shows.

Over the past century Presidents have routinely invited championship teams to the White House for photo ops. A few weeks after 9/11 President Bush attended a World Series game at Yankee Stadium. His press secretary explained that Bush (who once owned the Texas Rangers) was there "because of baseball's important role in our culture." In January, just before the Super Bowl, Bush invited New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady to sit in the gallery during his State of the Union address. Of the more than 900 Americans who have died in Afghanistan and Iraq, none were single out for as much attention—by the media or politicians—as Arizona Cardinals safety Pat Tillman, who was killed in Afghanistan in April. Sometimes politicians' efforts to align themselves with sports figures can backfire. In 1991, for example, when President George H.W. Bush invited the Chicago Bulls to the White House to celebrate their NBA championship, Bulls guard Craig Hodges handed Bush a letter expressing outrage about the condition of urban America.

While most pro athletes are silent on political issues, many team owners regard political involvement as essential to doing business. Owners like Jerry Colangelo of the Phoenix Suns and Arizona Diamondbacks, Art Modell of the Baltimore Ravens, Charles Monfort of the Colorado Rockies and George Steinbrenner of the New York Yankees make large campaign contributions to both Republicans and Democrats; invite elected officials to sit next to them at games; and lobby city, state and federal officeholders on legislation and tax breaks for new stadiums.

The emergence of professional players' unions should have been a voice for athletes on political and social issues. According to Ed Garvey, who ran the NFL Players Association from 1971 until 1983, racial turmoil was critical to the union's early development. The union "was driven by the African-American players, who knew there was an unwritten quota on most teams where there would not be more than a third blacks on any one team," says Garvey, who now practices law in Wisconsin. "And they knew they wouldn't have a job with the team when their playing days were over." The players also understood that team owners were "the most powerful monopoly in the country," he says.

Garvey brought the association into the AFL-CIO—the only professional sports union to do so—to give the players a sense that they were part of the broader labor movement. In the early 1970s several NFL players walked the picket lines with striking Farah clothing workers, joined bank employees in Seattle to boost their organizing drive and took other public stands. But "now they're making enough money, so they want to keep their heads down," he says. When Marvin Miller, a former Steelworkers Union staffer, became the first executive director of the Major League Baseball Players Association (MLBPA) in 1966, he sought to raise players' political awareness. "We didn't just explain the labor laws," he recalls. "We had to get players to understand that they were a union. We did a lot of internal education to talk to players about broader issues."

But those days are long gone. Bouton believes that athletes' unions now consider themselves partners in the sports business. They are "part of the same club," Bouton says, negotiating mainly to give players a greater share of proceeds from ticket sales, television contracts and the marketing of player names and team logos. Donald Fehr, the MLBPA's executive director, argues that players' unions should stick to the issues that directly affect them. "It is not our role to go around taking positions on things for the sake of taking positions," he insists. "Only if it's a matter involving baseball or the players do we look at an issue and determine what to do."

Like its counterparts in other sports, the MLBPA occasionally goes beyond the narrow confines of business unionism. For example, Fehr sent letters asking ballplayers to honor the recent United Food and Commercial Workers picket lines in Southern California and gave verbal support to the striking workers of the New Era Cap Company, who make major league baseball's caps in a Derby, New York, facility.

The players associations could usefully go beyond such symbolic gestures. After the 234-day 1994–95 strike ended, catcher Mike Piazza, then with the Los Angeles Dodgers, donated $100 for every home run he hit to the union that represented the concessionaires, who lost considerable pay while 921 games were canceled. It was an individual gesture of empathy with Dodger Stadium's working class—ushers, ticket takers, parking-lot attendants and food vendors—that generated tremendous good will among the Dodgers' fan base. As an organization, the MLBPA could have followed Piazza's example and set aside a small part of its large strike fund to help stadium employees who were temporarily out of work.

A glaring example of the MLBPA's shortsightedness is its reaction to a recent exposé by the National Labor Committee (NLC, www.nlclnet.org/campaigns), reported in the New York Times, revealing that Costa Rican workers who stitch Rawlings baseballs for the major leagues are paid 30 cents for each ball, which is then sold for $15 in US sporting-goods stores. According to a local doctor who worked at the Rawlings plant in the 1990s, a third of the workers developed carpal-tunnel syndrome, an often-debilitating pain and numbness of the hands and wrists. When the Times asked Fehr about the situation, he said he didn't know about it, despite the fact that the Rawlings plant had been the subject of news stories for several years. (Another recent NLC report documented that NBA sweatshirts are made in Burmese sweatshops.)

Echoing growing concern about corporate responsibility and
runaway jobs, professional players associations could demand that teams purchase their uniforms, bats, helmets and balls solely from companies—in the United States and abroad—that provide workers with decent wages, working conditions and benefits. The associations could send fact-finding delegations of athletes to inspect the working conditions at factories where their uniforms and equipment are made. The associations could demand that teams provide a living wage for all stadium employees, encourage politically conscious athletes to express their views and endorse candidates for office, support organizations like Adonal Foyle's Democracy Matters and even walk picket lines and do commercials for labor causes. As Foyle understands, taking stands on such issues could help the players forge better relations with the community whose support is critical to their continued economic success.

Foyle has refused to be intimidated by those sportswriters and fans who object to his beliefs. "How can we say we are creating a society in Iraq based on democracy and freedom and tell people here who have the audacity to speak out to keep quiet?" he says. "If people shut down because they are afraid the media is going to spank them or fans are going to boo them, then the terrorists have won." A history major at Colgate University, Foyle says, "The 1960s generation was against the war, people coming home in body bags, dogs gnawing at black people's feet. Today issues are more complicated, and you have to read between the lines. When you talk about campaign finance reform, you are talking about all of the issues—war, civil rights, environment, gender, globalization—because they are all connected." He adds: "If people want us to be role models, it's not just saying what people want you to say. It's pushing the boundaries a bit, saying things that you may not want to think about. That's good for a society. Morality is much bigger than athletics."

Letter From Cambodia

by Noy Thrupkaew

The hotel receptionists were hunched over a small, battered radio that was squawking in rapid-fire Khmer. "Another shooting. A singer this time," S. said, his face smudged with worry. "Maybe you can write about it?"

Each time they handed me my room key, the young staff at the hotel dispensed expert synopses of the day's events—which sadly and reliably seemed to feature government corruption, electoral mischief, suspected political assassinations or all three. Even though I've left Cambodia, my friends have kept up with the bulletins. One appeared in my e-mail inbox earlier this year, bearing the subject title The Sad News.

"Dear Ms. Noy," wrote 20-year-old P. "Now, in Phnom Penh has many problems. Mr. Chea Vichea was shot dead Thursday in front a newspaper stall about 500m in the east of [our] hotel. He is a union leader and...also an opposition party supporter."

It was no way to celebrate an anniversary. A quarter-century ago the Vietnamese Army rolled into Cambodia and ended the rule of the Khmer Rouge—the movement that had tried to transform Cambodia into a utopian agrarian collective, and turned it instead into a hell salted with landmines and the bones of the approximately 1.7 million who died in the regime's nearly four-year rule. The mass graves and the explosives are just a few of the remnants of a past that has left Cambodia one of the poorest countries in the region, even after a massive UN nation-building effort in the 1990s. The other reminders are former Khmer Rouge leaders, the vast majority of whom live freely in Cambodia.

But with the twenty-fifth anniversary comes heightened pressure to bring those leaders to justice. Some of them are feeling the heat—in December former Khmer Rouge head of state Khieu Samphan made the first high-level admission that genocide had indeed happened during the regime's rule, though he pleaded ignorance of the details at the time. Building on the momentum, this January the president of the current ruling party spoke out in support of international tribunals for Khmer Rouge senior leaders.

"We can surely bring a complete closure to this darkest chapter through a successful implementation of...a tribunal for prosecuting crimes," Cambodian People's Party (CPP) president Chea Sim said at the twenty-fifth-anniversary celebration at party headquarters.

Easier said than done, Cambodians point out, especially when the darkness isn't confined to the Khmer Rouge period. At least 10,000 people would come together again only a few weeks later, this time to mourn Chea Vichea. His killing was the latest in a series of high-profile attacks that erupted after contested elections last year—the CPP won a large number of parliamentary seats but failed to get the two-thirds majority required to govern alone. In response, the two runner-up parties charged Prime Minister Hun Sen and the CPP with voter intimidation and election fraud, formed an alliance with each other, demanded Hun Sen's resignation and pulled out of negotiations. The result was a disastrous deadlock that left Cambodia with a spate of unsolved murders of opposition-alliance supporters and no functioning government—a situation that only now seems to be approaching resolution. In early June Hun Sen and one of the alliance partners agreed on a political platform after months of failed negotiations. But even if talks are finally holding together, there's no quick escape from Cambodia's political quagmire: Now the arduous, time-consuming and contentious tasks of forming a government and dealing with postelection violence and backlogged legislation lie ahead.

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