

A reign of terror

America should intervene in Kosovo before it's too late



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When death and human suffering are wrought out on America's watch, the nation must act and the offenders must pay.

Such is the case in the Balkan republics where fringe leaders, like Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic, continue their reigns of terror in the Albanian province of Kosovo.

It's time for America, as the world's policeman, to take deliberate action.

America has served admirably in the policeman capacity, sometimes at extreme cost to the nation. But lately, the point where the United States draws the line has become increasingly ambiguous.

With that indeterminate standard as to when and where America takes the authority as the world's strong arm, the United States has allowed numer-

ous fringe factors to spring up worldwide—not the least of which is Milosevic.

Last week, for the fourth time, Richard Holbrooke, the U.S. diplomatic leader in the Balkan crisis, met with Milosevic.

Holbrooke will be returning to the United States on Wednesday.

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said it would be the final chance for Milosevic to discontinue Serbian military action in Kosovo and move troops out of the province.

"We are not going to stop this conflict by constantly evaluating the situation, not simply waiting to see what happens," Albright said.

Without compliance, she said, a NATO airstrike would be in the works for Serbian camps within the next few days.

Yet Albright still maintains that the United States can reach a diplomatic solution to the problem.

Some kind of peace needs to come soon.

The United States must make concessions for a problem that involves the massacre of innocent men, women and children. There are also more than 250,000 displaced people in Kosovo.

In the whirlwind of tumult that is the Balkans, it is time for the United States, the United Nations and NATO to put up or shut up.

People's lives have been at stake in Bosnia, Serbia, Croatia and now Kosovo for nearly nine years as NATO, the United Nations and the United States continue to fall victim to the lies of Milosevic and other Balkan radicals.

Most recently, Milosevic claimed to have moved the bulk of his army out of Kosovo, when in reality that demobilization still leaves a number of troops in the province.

In light of Milosevic's "actions" in demobilizing his army, the United Nations would like to again review his compliance and, once again, back off from the Yugoslav president.

The United Nations is being duped by this sociopathic, habitual liar.

Although Russia continues to waver on proposed strikes, the United States needs to take a firm stand and make its move on the world stage.

Albright has made it clear that the United States does not support independence for Kosovo, the very reason Milosevic has taken military action there.

America cannot continue to threaten and then appease such men as Milosevic.

One would think the world had learned a lesson with Great Britain's accommodating policies toward Adolf Hitler in the 1930s.

NATO, the United Nations and the

United States have reached the point where feasible diplomacy is no longer possible.

And although it's a clean practice, a NATO cruise missile and air strike is not the answer.

The line of action must be redrawn, and the United States can no longer allow insolent violators to step over it and retreat. A trip wire should be installed.

Both President Clinton and Albright have said that U.S. ground troops will not be used in a police action in Yugoslavia, but an infantry attack may be the one thing to gain Milosevic's scattered attention.

A war on this baseless man would uproot him and eradicate the weed-like stranglehold he has on the people he leads.

Thousands of people in Kosovo cannot wait for the United Nations to again review Milosevic's actions. By then, it will be too late, much as it has been too late in other former Yugoslav republics.

At all cost, America must do everything or nothing to quell the discord in Kosovo.

If the United States cannot foresee itself involved in a conflict at this point, then by all means, we should withdraw the 7,500 ground troops deployed as part of U.N. peacekeeping forces in neighboring Bosnia.

Cease-fires have not worked. Diplomacy has fizzled. Milosevic continues to spit in the face of the United Nations and antagonize the United States while the world hands him a pardon and turns a blind eye.

Fifty-seven years ago, Roosevelt said the United States should be the world's "good neighbor."

At one point before the United States entered World War II, President Franklin D. Roosevelt said that in the scope of world affairs, he would commit America to the position of the world's watchdog.

In its current situation, America's disregard for military action must be re-addressed. The world's good Samaritan should again take up the policy.

In 1998, how can America continue its watchful charge by standing on its tiptoes, peeking over the fence into Milosevic's backyard while he savagely beats his dog?

No nation wants war. But in times of extended crisis and suffering, the nation who least wants it, the United States, must come to the forefront and to the rescue.

It is expected of America. Let the United States not leave despondent those who have needed it most through nearly a decade.

Enough of Milosevic. Enough slaughter. Enough unrest.

The 'Natural' choice

Baseball movies will help ease the World Series blues



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Call me a cynic, but the remainder of the baseball season should be canceled.

Right now, if gimmish Bud Selig knew what was best for baseball, he would cancel the destined to be ho-hum World Series before the atrocity even starts.

The decision to do so would be perfectly logical even to Mr. Spock.

To think that the World Series could add any more excitement to a season that featured the Sosa-McGwire home run race and the Cubs, Indians and Red Sox making the playoffs would be an exercise in futility.

The regular season's excitement brought scores of fans back who once were considered lost forever. With the headline-makers gone till next spring, let's cancel the World Series before these rejuvenated fans grow bored and take up a new sporting interest such as the Professional Boggle Tour.

Unfortunately, my telephone psychic says that Wile E. Coyote will be feasting on Road Runner before the Series is canceled again.

However, there is hope. For those of you who aren't Braves or Yankee fans (my psychic better not be lying and still have the baseball jones), I've compiled a list of the top nine baseball films of all time, each one guaranteed to be more exciting than the entire World Series. With more than 100 baseball films in American cinema, deciding on just nine wasn't easy, but it was a lot of fun.

No. 9 - "Taking Care of Business":

This film, starring Jim Belushi, may seem to be an obscure choice but could serve as a lesson in what it means to be a fan of the Cubs.

Belushi plays a convict who, in the last 48 hours of his sentence, wins a

pair of tickets to see the Cubs play in the World Series the next afternoon. With the help of his fellow inmates, he escapes from prison.

In the rising action leading up to the game, he assumes a new identity and non-stop hilarity ensues. Actually, it isn't all that funny, but it's definitely worth watching just to see Mark Grace do well in the playoffs.

No. 8 - "The Naked Gun":

OK, it's not exclusively a baseball movie, but any reason to see Leslie Nielsen at his finest is a good reason to watch. The baseball moments included are worth the wait. Reggie Jackson gives an excellent portrayal of himself as he tries to assassinate Queen Elizabeth II. Look! It's Enrico Palatzo!

No. 7 - "Major League":

Make sure you watch the first installment, not its terrible sequels. The launching pad for Wesley Snipes' career, "Major League" could be considered a sacred work for fans of the Cleveland Indians.

Essentially "The Bad News Bears" as adults, "Major League" is the story of a bunch of misfits assembled in hopes of losing enough games to move the Indians out of Cleveland.

Instead, they rally together and make a run for the playoffs.

Chock full of great one-liners by Bob Uecker and Randy Quaid, "Major League" is Charlie Sheen's best effort since "Navy Seals."

No. 6 - "Rookie of the Year":

Excuse me, but I'm partial to baseball movies that show the Cubs winning. This film is every boy's baseball fantasy brought to life.

Henry Rowengartner is your average 12-year-old until he breaks his arm and develops a superhuman fastball.

He is signed by the Cubs and becomes an overnight sensation, leading the Cubbies to victory, unlike Rod Beck. John Candy is great as a Harry Carrayish announcer, and Gary Busey gives a charming performance between rehab stints.

No. 5 - "The Bad News Bears":

Again, make sure you watch the original and not the sequels or, God forbid, the TV series. This is Little League at its finest and is a good example of how far morals had fallen since the 1959 Disney picture "Moochie of the Little League."

Walter Matthau gives a great performance as Morris Buttermaker, a drunken ex-minor leaguer who agrees to coach a team of misfits, only after being paid. Foul-mouthed and perverted, the kids are a riot.

Along with showing how far morals have fallen, "The Bad News Bears" is a good time capsule for a less politically correct time. The kids spout racial epithets at anyone and everyone

Set within the minor league confines of the South, this film could be the holy gospel of all that is baseball. The comic moments are perhaps the smartest among the baseball genre.

If your girlfriend is attached to your hip, the relationship between Costner, Sarandon and Tim Robbins will allow the fact that it's really a baseball movie go unnoticed.

No. 3 - "A League of Their Own":

Women can too play baseball. This film is an excellent period piece about the formation of the All American Girls Professional Baseball League.

and "The Sandlot" could quite possibly have been lifted from somebody's memory.

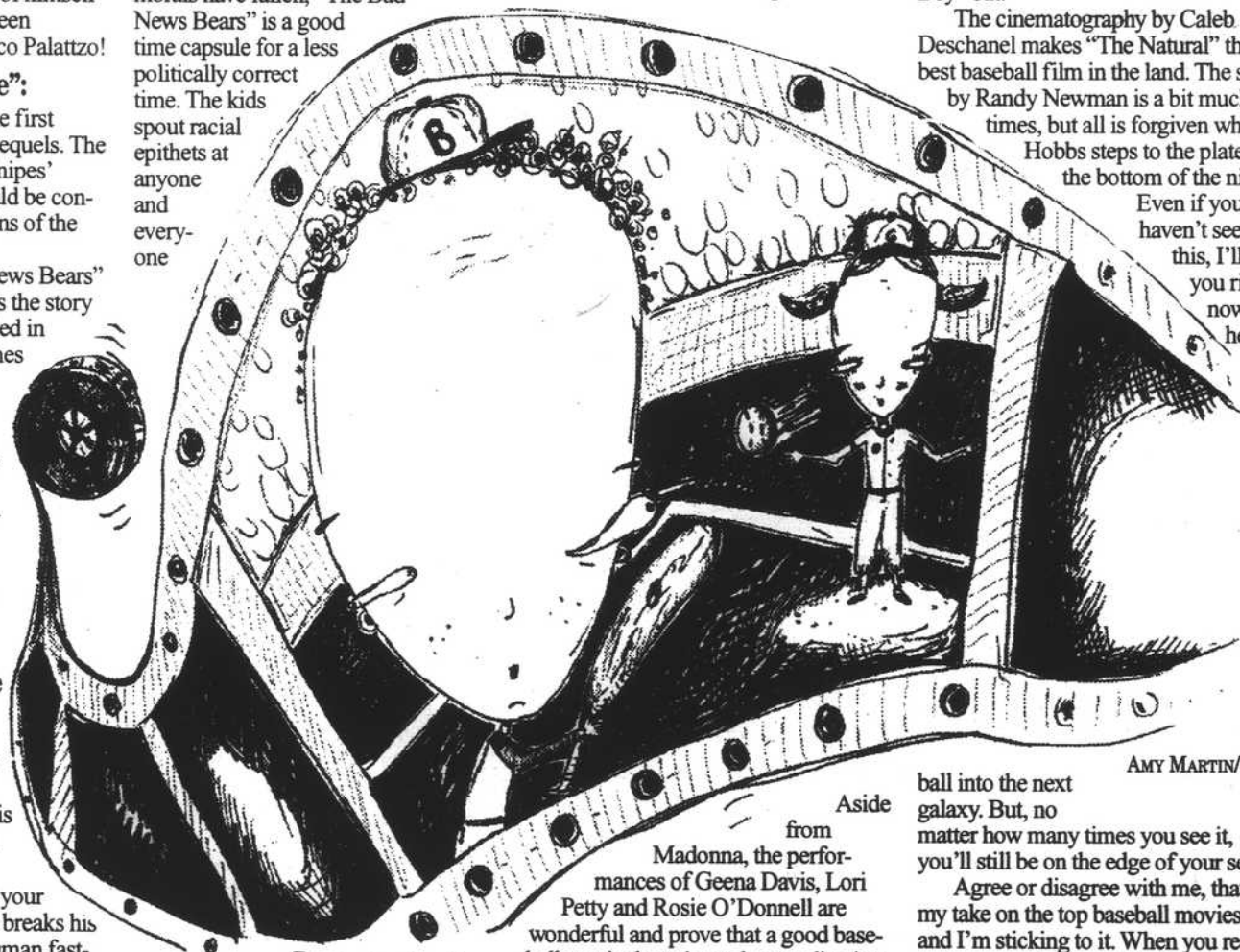
Way over the top in all the right places, this film is a coming-of-age story focused on a diverse group of kids that are brought together by the game of baseball. The end is a nice surprise, but the nicest of all is the surprise Squints, the goofy kid with glasses, lays on the voluptuous lifeguard.

No. 1 - "The Natural":

No surprise here. Quite possibly the greatest baseball movie of all time, this is the story of fictitious slugger Roy Hobbs and his electrified "Wonder Boy" bat.

The cinematography by Caleb Deschanel makes "The Natural" the best baseball film in the land. The score by Randy Newman is a bit much at times, but all is forgiven when Hobbs steps to the plate in the bottom of the ninth.

Even if you haven't seen this, I'll tell you right now—he hits the



AMY MARTIN/DN

ball into the next galaxy. But, no matter how many times you see it, you'll still be on the edge of your seat.

Agree or disagree with me, that's my take on the top baseball movies, and I'm sticking to it. When you realize by the second pitch of the Series that the postseason is pretty lame without the regular season's heroes, go down to Blockbuster and give one of these films a try.

And, when you're there, tell the clerk you'd like to make a contribution to my exorbitant amount of late charges.

and, after the climactic last game, Buttermaker treats the kids to a round of Schlitz.

No. 4 - "Bull Durham":

Much better than Kevin Costner's other teary-eyed baseball flick, this film taught many fine lessons (e.g. Susan Sarandon is excruciatingly hot).

Aside from Madonna, the performances of Geena Davis, Lori Petty and Rosie O'Donnell are wonderful and prove that a good baseball movie doesn't need men adjusting themselves. Much like his guest spot on "Family Ties," Tom Hanks plays a good hush before becoming the right-wing poster child "Forrest Gump."

No. 2 - "The Sandlot":

How dare I put this at No. 2? In my mind, baseball is a childhood game,