

# NEW YORK

## Bumpy Times

his is something we're recep- We're still in the preliminary I wouldn't venture to guess ular deadline. Certainly, the uld like us to finish this by the year and we're certainly not hat process, but the process

e any plan in the works to : more token booths in the : automate the system in

is? no long-term plan to close ooths in the system. But we ry good things from our cus- ey like these vending ma- ey're efficient. They don't and on line at the token y can get what they need and subway as quickly as possi- it's a win-win situation.

A is depending upon signif- cal funding for major con- jects, including the Sec- e subway, which some see e-sky. Is the construction late next year still firm?

venue subway is a project ear capital plan and we are through the environmental eses as scheduled so every- g according to pace.

ceeding both with Second way and with East Side Ac- e're also working very dili- e no. 7 train extension.

ironmental Impact State- ost completed for the Sec- subway and we'll make the at are necessary in terms of ject is funded over the next : to eight months.

a contingency plan if the federal funding falls short?

Right now, East Side Access is much further along than Second Avenue subway. So, we've been spending a lot of time down in Washington making people aware of the importance of that project. Thanks to the support of the governor the president recom- mended it for a full-fund- ing grant agreement. We're not finished yet.

Does it present any particular challenge to be the first female execu-



## Of Daniel Pearl, Propaganda, and Criticism

At the Overseas Press Club, colum- nist Ron Rosenbaum interviewed French intellectual Bernard-Henri Lévy, who began his career as a re- porter for Combat, the underground newspaper founded by Albert Camus. Mr. Lévy's recent book is "Who Killed Daniel Pearl?" (Melville House).

In the audience were photographer Richard Avedon and Nation magazine nabob Victor Navasky, among others.

Mr. Lévy praised Pearl as a great journalist, which he defined as one who works "on stories which others are not." A great journalist continues to report under difficulty, he said, adding metaphorically: "When the plane is crashing, he continues to film."

In a discussion of revolutionary ideas, Mr. Lévy said Cambodia was as important an example as was the fall of the Berlin Wall. "During all the previous decades, we always concluded the revolution failed because we did not finish it." But Pol Pot — "who read our best thinkers," like Lacan and Freud, and knew the roots of slavery were embedded in the or- ganization of language, desire, and space — completely revolutionized Cambodian society. "And the result was one of the worst and most terrible genocides of the 20th century," he said.

John R. ("Rick") MacArthur, president of Harper's, asked Mr. Lévy if anyone in Washington put pressure on him, since the story line of his book about Pearl "doesn't work for the Bush administration."

"It is not so easy," Mr. Lévy responded, to audi- ence laughter, to pressure "a free, French writer."

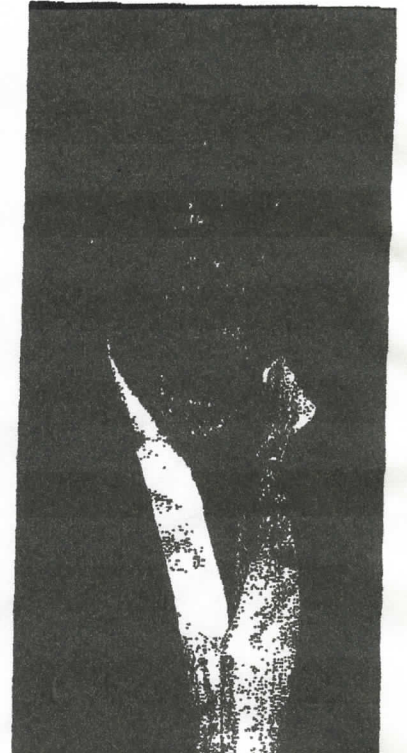
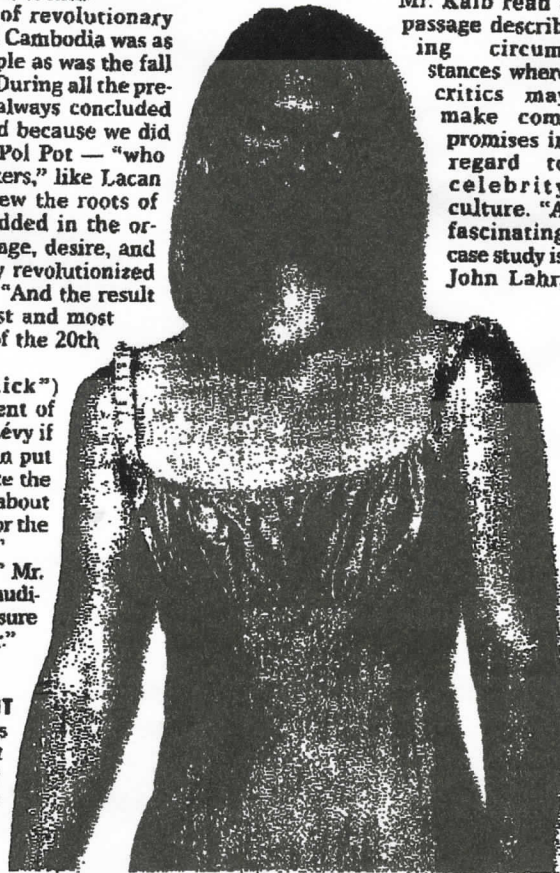
### CONASON COMMENT

Wearing a sling on his right arm — the result of a bicycle accident — Joe Conason spoke at Barnes & No- ble about his book "Big Lies: The Right-

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**PUFF PIECES?** John Lahr, the senior theater critic for the New Yorker, will converse with Mike Nichols Sep- tember 20 as part of the New Yorker Festival. The subject of Mr. Lahr came up the other night, as Professor Jonathan Kalb of Hunter College read from his book, "Play by Play: Theater Essays & Reviews, 1993-2002" (Lime- light Editions) at Barnes & Noble.

Among those in the audience were the New Republic critic Stanley Kauffmann and Tamara Green, who is completing a book on disability in an- tiquity.

Mr. Kalb read a passage describ- ing circum- stances where critics may make com- promises in regard to celebrity culture. "A fascinating case study is John Lahr,



IN PURSUIT OF PEARL Lévy.

who frequently writes long, flattering celebrity profiles in the same magazine where he is the chief the- ater critic. Is this inappropriate or dishonest? It certainly deepens the public's confusion over the differ- ence between criticism and promo- tion. The area is gray, however."

Asked later about this, Mr. Kalb called Mr. Lahr a first-rate critic. "I even like his profiles," he said, "but he should do them in a different maga- zine."

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**AT THE CENTER** Commissioner Henry Stern sat next to Mayor Koch Friday following an advance screening of Ric Burns' "The Center of the World," examining the rise and fall of the World Trade Center. Other in the