Gephardt and Howard Dean dream of at night? Smoldering steel mills and dairy farmers. Honorable work, surely, but not the future for the kids racing up and down those soccer fields.

Historically, the Democratic party has somehow managed to mix the water of the administrative state with the oil of private-sector energy. Europe's social democrats did too, until the ever-rising sea of public needs drowned the continent's competitive people.

For decades, the Democrats kept their party's ideological seesaw balanced at one end with socialists and the other with Wall Street admirers of government's promise, such as Felix Rohatyn, Robert Rubin and Cyrus Vance. Of late, however, the party has increasingly sounded as if it's become psychologically alienated from the private sector.

The Medicare fight was revealing. The federal prescription drug benefit for the elderly has for years been the great white whale of the party's Ahabs. But then the Republicans put the blood of competition in the water, proposing that private insurers' plans be allowed to "compete" with Medicare. Compete? Eeeek!

The Democrats tried to blow up the bill, including the drug benefit, to avoid exposing Medicare to the softest breeze of "competition." Even the traditional Democratic motif of competition with regulatory restraints was unacceptable. When the private-sector clause passed, Sen. Hillary Clinton said, "The needs of people are trumped in this town time and time again by interests who have money."

Any given issue can toss up dire rhetoric like that, but the Democrats' impulse to fence off their—and our—world from competitive forces has become reflexive.

The public schools are now shrines to the new non-compete doctrine. Neither the schools, their teachers, their unions nor custodians may ever be exposed to competitors, even those who have virtually no money, such as the nation's financially strapped Catholic schools. The party and teachers unions have spent millions ("interests who have money"?) to thwart even pilot alternatives. The Democratic mayor of Washington, D.C., broke ranks to support a choice plan for the District's collapsed, *non compos mentis* school system, and has been vilified for it by the no-compete crowd. (Mayor Anthony Williams' support for a voucher system along with that of many black D.C. parents suggest there are Democratic outliers who do want the chance to compete.)

The simple explanation here is that elections are expensive, and Democratic candidates will do what they must to sustain contribution flows from unions representing 19th-century industries, health-care workers or teachers who live in an alternative, non-competitive universe. Again, any of these in isolation could be viewed as business as usual. But over time these combined pressures have become like silt, filling in the Democrats' normal harbors to reality and closing them off from the real economy or a negotiable politics.

Thus, the anti-globalization rioters of the 1990s in Seattle and elsewhere, seeking an eternal non-compete clause, got President Clinton to ratchet down his strong support for free trade; now all the party's presidential candidates have made trade negotiations contingent on environmental and labor restrictions.

And what might that mean? In Seattle at the time of the riots, Gerald McEntee, head of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees told a rally: "We refuse

David Klein

confronts directly the two questions (the status of Jerusalem, and the right of return) on which the first plan stumbled. Plus, it demonstrates that it is possible to compromise on these two questions, and to come to an agreement.

From the Israelis it obtains the painful sacrifice that the Temple Mount will become the "Esplanade of the Mosques." It extracts from the Palestinians their renunciation, equally painful, of the right of return: exception is made for those "refugees" whom a sovereign Israel will decide whether or not to welcome; the text stipulates that this right will be exercised inside the future Palestinian state. In providing a clear response to these two questions, in putting these two responses within the actual text of the plan, Geneva succeeds where Camp David and Taba failed—it is a great lesson that shows us that failure, at Camp David and at Taba, was neither fatal nor necessary.

• The Accord states its grand intentions clearly. It reaffirms core tenets of the previous plans. It shares, along with all the plans since the Rogers plan of 1967 up until the "road map" of today, the assertion of the simultaneous existence of a viable Palestinian state and of an Israel with legitimate, secure borders. But it goes into detail. It traces, village to village, almost olive tree to olive tree, the line of partition.

This is not, in other words, a plan of dreamers. It is not the Utopia denounced by its enemies in the two camps. It is a concrete plan, precisely negotiated, almost maniacally meticulous. For instance, it is a plan which carefully distinguishes between the settlements that must be dismantled, and those which, being near either the green line or Jerusalem, must be kept for an exchange of an equal amount of territory. It is a lesson in political pragmatism, handed out by the two civil societies to their leaders. It is the first plan to understand that the devil is in the details, and that nothing will come of an accord resting on principles that leave for tomorrow, or the day after, or for better days, the most delicate questions.

• Because the Accord avoids no obstacles, be-

liminary this famous twin recognition coming from the heart (of which the Oslo negotiators continued to dream); because it is the first that says, "Let us make peace, not love," or, "Let's sign, love will follow," or, "Let us have a 'dry' peace, without romance or pathos, between people who understand that, for the time being, we are still not brothers"; because of all this, yes, this plan is the first where one cannot say that it is a gamble, a leap into the unknown, an adventure. It is the first plan in 30 years which gives the friends of Israel, all of whom, like myself, know that Israel cannot afford a mistake and is too fragile to allow itself a leap into the unknown, no longer any real reason to say: "Yes, OK, we will sign—but what about later?"

So one could of course refuse to sign. One could, if one is Palestinian, continue to want to flood Israel with refugees. One could, if one is Israeli, decide that sacred stones and sites are worth continuing bloodshed. And one could, if one were American or European, refuse to join in, on the grounds that the plan is signed by men and women who are no longer in official capacities—they may again return, but for now, they are not in power. But things, then, will be clear and it is the final merit of this plan that it obliges each to discover and determine for themselves: Who wants peace and who does not want it? Who pretend to want it, but in reality, consider it just a word? Who wants the word, but, when the moment comes to sit at the table and tell us a little more, and in detail, about the peace they want, say they have no plan at all? An operation for truth. A plan as a revealer, as a detector of hypocrisy, as a ruthless analyzer.

It is not perfect, this plan. And there is no doubt that properly mandated negotiators will have to refine this or that provision. But at least it has the virtue of making everyone confront—and be responsible for—the truth. And in this sense, yes, there will be a "before" and an "after" Geneva.

Mr. Lévy is author of "Who Killed Daniel Pearl?" (Melville House, 2003), and a European "ambassador" of the Geneva Peace Accord.

Victory

By Don Evans

Yesterday President Bush announced his decision to remove the temporary safeguard measures on steel imports that he put in place in March of 2002. This decision was made after an exhaustive study by the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC), intensive consultations with the steel industry and steel consumers, and a careful examination of the state of the global economy in which the steel industry operates. As he did in 2002, the president has made a sound decision for the American economy, its companies, and workers.

Prior to March 2002, the U.S. steel industry was faced with surging imports of foreign made steel, high costs, inefficient excess steelmaking capacity at home and abroad, and the lack of demand for steel in foreign markets. Decades of government ownership and subsidization of foreign steel mills had greatly distorted this market, leading to an unlevel playing field that cost American jobs. After years of neglect, President Bush responded forcefully by announcing a three part plan that, in addition to launching negotiations to establish

est level in a decade, and U.S. steel exports are at historic levels.

Given the positive changes in the global economy in the last 21 months and the significant adjustments undertaken by the U.S. steel industry, it became possible to lift the safeguard measures. President Bush recognized that the safeguard has given the industry the time it needed to regain its international competitiveness, while, as demonstrated by a recent ITC report, having a minimal negative impact on the overall U.S. economy.

This president and his administration remain committed to America's steel industry and its workers. The successful efforts the industry has made in regaining its international competitiveness need to continue. To that end, the administration is taking several important actions to promote the health and viability of this critical industry:

• We will continue to collect data on steel imports through our steel import licensing and monitoring program in order to respond quickly to import surges that could cause damage to the industry.

• We will focus on the root causes of the ineffi-