

The New Criterion

The Media

December 2007

Clooney tunes

by [James Bowman](#)

On the on-going celebrification of politics.

Consider, if you will, the gem-like object that I hold in my hand. I retrieved it, like a tumbling nugget of gold snatched from a shallow but swift-flowing creek, out of the stream of media babble in which, as is my custom, I happened to be wading one day last month. It is a quotation from President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan, explaining to the people of that turbulent country his reasons for declaring a state of emergency there on November 3. “This was the most difficult decision I have ever taken,” he was quoted as saying. “I had to take a drastic measure to save the democratic process ... I stand by it because I think it was in the nation’s interest.” Briefly I toyed with the notion that these memorable words were a sign that celebrity politics had come even to Pakistan, otherwise known as a seething cauldron of religious, tribal, and other kinds of hatreds where politics and murder are never far apart. But it was ...

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This article originally appeared in The New Criterion, Volume 26 December 2007, on page 56

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