

LYLE STUART

# THE LESSER EVIL

The  
Democratic Party  
Lenni Brenner

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**Lenni Brenner**

Thomas Jefferson inaugurated the modern age with his revolutionary doctrine that "all men are created equal." Yet his Democratic successors are counter-revolutionary to the bone. They invaded Cuba and the Dominican Republic. They slaughtered hundreds of thousands in Vietnam. They propped up the Shah's torture regime. Today they eagerly vote arms to the Zionist police state and Afghan Islamic fanatics.

Roosevelt is their modern patron saint as they pretend to be the party of the 'working man.' But they get their campaign funds from real estate sharks, investment bankers, business PACs, Zionists and bureaucratic labor leaders. Democratic leaders in the House of Representatives conspire with crooked Texas S&L hustlers. Parades of Democrats from Washington, Chicago, Philadelphia, New York City and State, march off to their local penitentiaries.

America's liberals are familiar with their party's record. But come election day they will still vote for the Democrats as the lesser evil. The right-wing of the party always makes fools out of them. Wool sellers know wool-buyers. They know that as long as Democratic office-seekers are perceived as one inch to the left of the Republican candidates, liberals will shamelessly vote for the Democrats.

Indeed, why should the party establishment give the liberals anything? Professional politicians ask the question: "If we don't give the beggars what they want, what will they do to hurt us?" And what will the liberals do to hurt their rightest party colleagues?

If the Democrats win in 1988 it will be

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Lenni Brenner

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## Preface

Why title a book on the Democratic Party *The Lesser Evil*? Because in 36 years of deep involvement with progressive causes, I have yet to meet one educated Democrat who believed in the party. Invariably I am solicited to vote for it as the lesser evil.

To be sure, the party does not officially describe itself as such. No party does. And Thomas 'Tip' O'Neill, the ex-Speaker of the House, once said that in any other country the Democrats would be five parties. So, perhaps in some conservative milieus, there are those who believe in America's oldest party. But not among liberals or peace activists. And not among academics and other intellectuals. Not in my experience.

Let's give the cynics their due. They're at least half right. A preliminary peek at the record shows the party to be steeped in evil. I was born during the Roosevelt administration. He put all the Japanese-Americans on the West Coast in concentration camps. Today no one defends that. Harry Truman dropped the atom bomb twice on civilians. Later he slaughtered tens of thousands in defense of the Korean despot Syngman Rhee. Jack Kennedy invaded Cuba. Lyndon Johnson covered himself with the blood of the Vietnam War. Jimmy Carter backed the sleazy Marcos, armed the Saudis, the world's last absolute monarchy, conspired with the Shah's torture regime, and continued to recognize the genocidal Pol Pot of Cambodia, even in exile and disgrace.

"OK," it will be said, "but liberals weren't for these crimes. Often they weren't 'for' these Democrats. They were voting against their Republican opponents. And weren't they indeed lesser evils to the likes of Goldwater or Nixon or Reagan? So

there, brother Brenner. A little charity toward thy neighbor. Realistically, in this world an honest to God lesser evil is about as close to a saint as politics produces.”

But should Japanese-Americans have voted for their jailer because the Republicans were to the right of Roosevelt? And are the Democrats always the lesser evil? It was the Dixiecrats, not the GOP, who dominated the South, almost without exception, for the entire post-reconstruction Jim Crow epoch. Should Blacks have voted for them? Or their northern colleagues, who tolerated the racists within the party? And today? Isn't it the liberals who howl loudest for increased aid to Israel, despite the fact that it finally admitted that it arms South Africa and intends to continue to do so?

Certainly there are times, as in Poland in 1944, when even a Josef Stalin in his paranoia is Mr. Nice Guy next to an Adolf Hitler. People thinking otherwise were rightly executed. But desperate choices in a world war don't excuse decades of voting for corrupt and murderous politicians in a civilian society. Any genuine liberal would have abandoned the rats aboard the Good Ship Democrat for anything resembling another party, even if it held its convention on a raft in an ocean storm.

Congenital lesser evilism in a democracy is simply “crackpot realism.” It mocks Jefferson and Madison, the party's revolutionary founders, whose genuine democratic republicanism provided the minimum program underlying two subsequent centuries of world wide progressive politics. The gap between the liberals' private and political morality—or lack thereof—is obvious. If they saw some slob kill his wife—or some wife kill her slob—they would yell for the judge to put him or her in the penitentiary. But the liberals saw the Democrats murder a million Indochinese “slopes,” their wives and children—and still howled for voters to put Humphrey into the White House. They backed McGovern, a double-gaited “anti-war” candidate, who voted for military appropriations so that he wouldn't look unpatriotic. In the end Nixon got out, not because of anything McGovern said or did, but because 2,000 officers in Vietnam were “fragged,” i.e., blown up by their men, and hundreds of thousands of civilians marched again and again until Nixon had no choice but to get out. More recently, liberals voted for Mondale and Ferraro, wasting millions on them, money that could have gone toward building principled issue movements. Did they seriously think

Mondale was going to win? So much for either the morality or efficacy of dead-end lesser evilism.

An old Jewish proverb makes us wary of predictions: "After the destruction of the second temple, prophesy was left to fools." But we can say Dopey the Democrat stands a chance to beat the Republican after Irangate and the October 1987 Wall Street "meltdown." He will try to convince us he is a friend of the working stiff by talking about Roosevelt and Kennedy and "the dreams they left in our hearts." This is with knowledge of his heroes' aforementioned felonies. Those familiar with party history have learned that the only thing its candidates learn is the fine art of pandering to the prejudices and ignorance of the average voter.

Many readers will admit that the Democratic Party is a crooked crap game. But they think it is the only game in town. They say the worst Democrat would be better than any Republican. But is that sufficient to mandate a Democratic vote? The party's Congressional leaders deliberately evade fights with Ronald Reagan, whenever possible. They want to win back those who left them to vote for Reagan. They see that Reagan is losing popularity. But Rambo isn't. They want to appear as Reaganism with a human face.

Woolsellers know woolbuyers. They know their strategy won't lose them liberal votes. They understand liberals will vote for them no matter how far to the right they go, so long as they stay one step to the left of Reagan. Voting for them is nothing better than hay running after the horse. It justifies the pros in their contempt for liberalism.

For all of Thomas Jefferson writing that men "were endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights," at least James Madison among the party's founders understood that purely secular property relations are what politics are basically about. Madison explained this in the celebrated No. 10 of the *Federalist Papers*:

The diversity in the faculties of men, from which the rights of property originate, is not less an insuperable obstacle to a uniformity of interests. The protection of these faculties is the first object of government. From the protection of different and unequal faculties of acquiring property, the possession of different degrees and kinds of property immediately results . . . the most common and durable source of factions has been the various and



unequal distribution of property. Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society.

In the *Journal of the Federal Convention*, he summarized a speech of his, gloomily anticipating our present America. "In future times, a great majority of the people will not only be without landed, but any sort of property." In their 1986 *Economic Justice for All*, the country's Catholic bishops emphasized that

Our economy is marked by a very uneven distribution of wealth and income . . . it is estimated that 28% of the total net wealth is held by the richest two percent of the families in the United States. The top 10% holds 57% of the net wealth. If homes and other real estate are excluded, the concentration of ownership of "financial wealth" is even more glaring. In 1983, 54% of the total net financial assets were held by two percent of all families, those whose annual income is over \$125,000. Eighty-six percent of these assets were held by the top 10% of all families . . . more than 33 million Americans are poor; by any reasonable standard another 20 to 30 million are needy. Poverty is increasing in the United States . . . about two-thirds of the poor are white.

Some workers rise out of their class. But the vast majority will not. Madison presumed those without property would

either combine, under the influence of their common situation—in which case the rights of property and the public liberty will not be secure in their hands—or, what is more probable, they will become the tools of opulence and ambition; in which case, there will be equal danger on another side.

However, as Jefferson said, "all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed." They rise up, if at all, only in response to profound changes in conditions. Another 1929, once dismissed by conventional pundits as Marxist wishful thinking, is now discussed by mainstream economists as a distinct possibility after the 508 point drop in the Dow Jones industrial average. Surely another such catastrophe would put paid to capitalism. But, whatever the future brings, for us now, the Bishops' numbers are absolutely irreconcilable with the doctrine of human equality. We can no more



tolerate them and be politically healthy than an individual could ignore a stick in his eye and remain physically healthy.

We must look at the 1988 election with this overarching truth ever in mind. Assume the Democrats win, and win again in 1992. We can expect some of their traditional social programs to be restored after being gutted by Reagan. But the Democrats are talking constantly about the deficit and we can not expect another Rooseveltian era of social reform. No one pretends the percentages of the national wealth held by workers or capitalists would substantially change.

As 1988 is an election year I will deal with the campaign. It is one of the oddest in our history. It evokes dismay among the journalists who must cover it. The February 1, 1988 *Newsweek* declared, in an article blazing with outrage, that "In 1988, we seem to be picking our candidates by banishing them to a fun-house version of America and seeing who can make the trek back to reality." But commonly our media cannot theoretically analyze what it sees before its eyes. The typical reporter usually does not progress beyond the profession's traditional cynicism. However, cynicism is itself a symptom of crisis. By definition it is never a challenge to the social reality it condemns. The political hacks will stagger on, increasingly scorned by the knowing, until they are confronted by those resolute enough to go beyond alienation to scientific principles and action.

For that to happen, people must be able to put the wretched campaign into perspective. They must see it as the logical end product of the party's evolution. It has a traditional image of itself, a pantheon of heroes. In many areas it still holds Jefferson-Jackson Day dinners. Then, at least for party ideologues, it seems to have fallen into an historical black hole, only to emerge a century later as "the party of Roosevelt and Kennedy and compassion." In fact, the speech-writers' descriptions of their idols have no more reality than an image in a fun-house mirror.

This being so, I start at the beginning, with Jefferson, demythologizing the heroes and laying out the factual history of the two-century-old party. Then I describe the constant aspects of the present party, its Congressional contingent, its finances, its local presences, its popular base. Only after I examine the matrix of history and structure—for want of a better word to describe so amorphous an entity—do I take up the present campaign. This is the only way to go past the journalists' cynicism to solutions.

This book is written in a revolutionary spirit. I do not care if paltry reforms are dangled before us to lure us into voting for them—the Democrats. If we are to be hung, let it be for a ram instead of a lamb. This shall be a truthful account of a party of lies and corruption and injustice. Since its Republican and left-wing opponents are necessarily in the story, they are also critically described.

A word on style. Most political books are boring. Like the telephone white pages. Every word in the directory is true. But it's nobody's favorite reading on the way to work. Now if I must bad-mouth the political system here in the U.S. of A., there is one thing, at least, that is our glory. Our slang, our irreverence, our humor, have made the spoken American language into the most vibrant in the world. Early on I realized more people watch old Groucho Marx movies than read Karl Marx's books. Since I want folks to read mine, every so often I write like us A-murican guys and gals talk. And I toss in some comedy. Which ain't hard when writing about our politicians. Contemplate, if you will, Jimmy Carter, President of these United States, bowing his born-again nuclear physicist head in prayer, along side the Rev. Jim Bakker. Now you know that the first requirement for the job of God is a terrific sense of humor, to put up with the bullshit that comes along with the position.

So, hopefully you know here I'm at—and what the book is about. There's nothing more for me to say except that you will learn from it, even if you hate it. And—heaven forefend!—you just might like it.

This book is dedicated to my companion, Barri Boone, whose revolutionary zeal and gentleness are the delights of my life.

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PART I

From Jefferson to  
Mondale: From the  
Sublime to the  
Murderous

CHAPTER 1

The Democratic Party's  
Golden Age:  
The Great Virginians

It is impossible to overstate the impact of Thomas Jefferson, the first figure of one of the world's oldest political parties. On June 24, 1826, ten days before his death, his crippled hand penned his last political testament. As he hoped, his Declaration of Independence has been

to the world, what I believe it will be (to some parts sooner, to others later, but finally to all), the signal of arousing men to burst the chains under which monkish ignorance and superstition had

persuaded themselves to bind themselves . . . All eyes are opened, or opening, to the rights of man. The general spread of light of science, has already laid open to every view the palpable truth, that the mass of mankind has not been born with saddles on their backs, nor a favored few booted and spurred, ready to ride them legitimately, by the grace of God.<sup>1</sup>

Jefferson had been savagely attacked during his life, but in his last years he was a venerated monument. Later, our scientific century demystified the Founding Fathers, setting them in economic matrix. Dialectic contradictions between Jefferson's soaring egalitarian rhetoric and the Founding Fathers' work day roles—slaveholders and merchants with lawyers—were exposed and variously explained. Sometimes they were falsely judged by our standards, giving a caricature as distorted as past Fourth of July oratory.

On the 200th anniversary of the Constitution, Reagan's writers called its Framers "giants, men whose words and deeds put wind in the sails of freedom." Thurgood Marshall, the first black supreme Court Justice, took exception. Jefferson was Minister to France during the Convention, thus not technically a Framer. But he upheld their work. Marshall surely extends his critique to touch him:

the government they devised was defective from the start, requiring several amendments, a civil war and momentous social transformation to attain the . . . respect for individual freedoms and human rights, we hold as fundamental today . . . They could not have imagined, nor would they have accepted, that the document they were drafting would one day be construed by a Supreme Court to which had been appointed a woman and the descendant of an African slave. "We the people" no longer enslave, but the credit does not belong to the Framers. It belongs to those who refused to acquiesce in outdated notions of "liberty," "justice" and "equality."<sup>2</sup>

As the made-to-perfection modern Justice presumes to judge, so may he be judged: he is beating up history. Shame on it for not being today! Although he certainly would not deny that calls for extending human rights frequently must follow economic changes, in this case he is egregiously ahistorical. Women's rights was not a topic for the immense majority of 18th century

thinkers. The founding mothers did not ask for judgeships. The first woman in America to give a public lecture on political questions was Frances Wright, Lafayette's youthful mistress, who came in the 1820s. It wasn't until 1848, after the first American colleges had admitted women, and they began to become school teachers, that Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton organized the first women's rights convention. Can anyone be faulted for not being a soothsayer?

### **"Providence Punishes National Sins by National Calamities"**

The economics of the 18th century were not advantageous for the southern colonies. The major crops, tobacco and rice, were not suited for slavery, the most inefficient form of labor. Until Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin in 1793, it seemed that slavery was outmoded. This optimistic long-term vista, in tandem with conservative resistance to emancipation from most planters, the press of war, then tasks of nation building, made slavery into a problem to be dealt with by compromises in the interest of crucial national unity. But, if the Constitution was "defective" regarding bondage, the thinking which led to the necessary compromises surely was not.

James Madison's rendering of the debate over Article I, Section 9 of the Constitution is the dramatic highpoint of his *Journal of the Federal Convention*. The clause presented the Framers originally forbade any tax on "the importation of such persons as the several states shall think proper to admit." South Carolina and Georgia were not willing to consider joining a union if they were not permitted to import slaves for the rice swamps. With an eye to the past, the delegates debated what was yet to pass:

*Col. (George) Mason:* Slavery discourages arts and manufactures. The poor despise labor when performed by slaves . . . Every master of slaves is born a petty tyrant. They bring the judgement of Heaven on a country. As nations cannot be rewarded or punished in the next world, they must be in this. By an inevitable chain of causes and effects, Providence punishes national sins by national calamities . . . He held it essential in every point of view, that the General Government should have the power to prevent the increase of slavery.

*Mr. (Oliver) Ellsworth:* Let us not intermeddle. As population



increases, poor laborers will be so plentiful as to render slaves useless. Slavery, in time, will not be a speck in our country.

*Mr. (Charles) Pinckney:* If slavery be wrong, it is justified by the example of all the world. He cited the case of Greece, Rome and other ancient states, the sanction given by France, England, Holland and other modern states. In all ages, one half of mankind have been slaves.

*Mr. (Gouverneur) Morris:* wished the whole subject to be committed, including the clauses related to taxes on exports and to a navigation act. These things may form a bargain among the northern and southern states.

*Mr. (Edmund) Randolph:* dwelt on the dilemma to which the convention was exposed. By agreeing to the clause, it would revolt the Quakers, the Methodists, and many others in states having no slaves. On the other hand, two states might be lost to the Union. Let us then, try the chance of a commitment.<sup>3</sup>

Clearly their dilemma was real. In the end, their compromise allowed the importing of slaves until 1808. We only speculate on what would have happened if slavery's opponents pressed for an immediate import ban. Certainly they could not have abolished southern slavery. If the South left the Union, it probably would have ended up as a client of Britain, with slavery intact.

Lincoln made a close study of the Founders' compromises as to slavery. There is no doubt they did what they could to restrict slavery, hoping that restricting its spread, combined with its inefficiency, and the growth of enlightenment, would ultimately extinguish it.

In 1794, they prohibited . . . the taking of slaves from the United States to sell. In 1798, they prohibited the bringing of slaves from Africa into the Mississippi Territory . . . 10 years before they had authority to do the same . . . to . . . states existing at the adoption of the Constitution. In 1800, they prohibited American citizens from trading in slaves between foreign countries, as, for instance, from Africa to Brazil. In 1803, they passed a law in aid of one or two slave-state laws, in restraint of the internal slave trade. In 1807, in apparent haste, they passed the law, nearly a year in advance—to take effect the first day of 1808 . . . prohibiting the African slave trade . . . In 1820 . . . they declared the slave trade piracy, and annexed to it the extreme penalty of death . . . Thus we see that the plain, unmistakable spirit of that age toward



slavery was hostility to the principle and toleration only by necessity.<sup>4</sup>

In our times, the proverb holds: "May we live for the oppressed. May we die with the oppressed. May we rise from the dead with the oppressed!" Not because we are more moral than the Founders, but because it is at least possible for the exploited and oppressed to win. We can not condemn Jefferson, then, for not waging a Quixotic struggle for immediate emancipation. Lincoln was correct:

to the extent that a necessity is imposed upon a man, he must submit to it. I think that was the condition in which we found ourselves when we established this government. We had slaves among us; we could not get our Constitution unless we permitted them to remain in slavery; we could not secure the good we did secure if we grasped for more; but having by necessity submitted to that much, it does not destroy the principle that is the charter of our liberties. Let that charter stand as our standard.<sup>5</sup>

Jefferson and his generation can not be faulted for not knowing Mason's foreboding would prove literally true, that the national sin had to be paid for by national calamity. Given what Jefferson saw before him, he must be allowed his optimistic illusion that the younger generation, raised "after the flame of liberty . . . had become the vital spirit of every American," would free the slaves. "The hour of emancipation is advancing," he thought, "in the march of time."<sup>6</sup>

### **"Cruel War Against Human Nature Itself"**

Jefferson apparently was quite shy, rarely gave public speeches and never an exciting one. But his writings were sincere, often moving, sometimes sublime. He nobly and tiredly awaited death at magnificent, isolated Monticello, rereading Greek and Latin works. His last letter is classic. Nevertheless Jefferson, once ahead of his time, died in his time. He adapted to slavery personally and, inexorably, politically.

Modern democracy, like its ancient models, was created top-down, by some of the privileged. Jefferson's ideas evolved in a slavocracy. He was a product of it. If we look at his writings on slavery, we find the noblest sentiments, as well as prejudices no

sane person still believes today. His *Autobiography* related how, "In 1769," at 26, "I became a member of the legislature . . . I made one effort . . . for the permission of the emancipation of slaves which was rejected."<sup>7</sup> The defeat caused him to turn to other projects. But he returned to the slave question in the original version of the Declaration. King George III had

waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere . . . Determined to keep open a market where men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or restrain this execrable commerce.<sup>8</sup>

Ever before Jefferson was the November 7, 1775 proclamation of Earl Dunmore, Virginia's Governor, declaring "all indented servants, Negroes, or others, (appertaining to Rebels) free."<sup>9</sup> Jefferson added that slaves were being organized to kill their masters. The passages were struck. Many in the room were slaveholders. South Carolina and Georgia wanted African slaves. Northern merchants supplied them. The signers could see what Jefferson didn't want to see. What he said was true. Except there was no way they could denounce Britain for American slavery without playing the hypocrite.

Jefferson gave his emancipation plan in his 1781 *Notes on the State of Virginia*: Black children born after passage would be freeborn. Educated, they would be colonized to a place under U.S. protection, where they would become a full sovereign power. He knew, "It will be asked, why not retain them and incorporate the blacks into the state?" He lists

deep-rooted prejudices entertained by the whites; ten thousand recollections, by the blacks, of the injuries they have sustained . . . the real distinctions which nature has made . . . will . . . produce convulsions, which will probably never end but in the extermination of the one or the other race. To these objections . . . may be added others, which are physical and moral . . . (blacks') own judgement in favor of the whites, declared by their preference of them, as uniformly as is the preference of the Oran-utan for the black woman over those of his own species.<sup>10</sup>

There is more in this line. Blacks sweat more, they stank. They are not intelligent. They love to sleep. And

The improvement of the blacks in body and mind, in the first instance of their mixture with the whites . . . proves that their inferiority is not the effect merely of their conditions of life.<sup>11</sup>

Jefferson was no crude redneck. Science was still primitive, with grotesque errors and new discoveries jostling within learned minds. Among other things, the *Notes* refute the theory of George Louis Buffon that new world animals are degenerate compared to old world equivalents. Jefferson noted the absence of a single naturalist report on blacks or Indians. Therefore the cautious scientist takes over:

The opinion that they are inferior in the faculties of reason and imagination, must be hazarded with great diffidence. To justify a general conclusion, requires many observations . . . I advance it, therefore, as a suspicion only, that the blacks . . . are inferior.<sup>12</sup>

### **“The Fate of Millions Unborn Hanging on the Tongue of One Man”**

In 1784, while a member of Congress, he proposed that slavery be prohibited in the western territories after 1800. These included what is now Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee and Kentucky, as well as the land north of the Ohio River. However, under the rules of the then Articles of Confederation, seven state delegations had to vote for it. Because one of its delegates was ill, New Jersey couldn't vote, and the bill failed by one state. Jefferson's disappointment was naturally profound:

The voice of a single individual . . . would have prevented this abominable crime from spreading . . . Thus we see the fate of millions unborn hanging on the tongue of one man, and Heaven is silent in that awful moment!<sup>13</sup>

Shortly after, in 1787, Congress did pass a Northwest Ordinance, covering the lands above the Ohio River, in which slavery was barred. With that and the Convention's tacit arrangement to ban the slave trade in 20 years, the slavery question went into political limbo. In this period, in the late 1780s, Jefferson was



Minister to France. Fawn Brodie, in her celebrated *Thomas Jefferson: An Intimate Portrait*, has sought to prove that, while in Paris, he established a decades-long liaison with Sally Heming, a slave. Evidence is circumstantial but seems sufficient. She, 14 when in France with the widowed Jefferson's daughter, had seven children, all born nine months after known periods when they shared residential intimacy, while she conceived no children when he was not there.<sup>14</sup>

Brodie correctly points out the significance of the fact that the beginning of the connection coincided with Jefferson's first political retreat on the slave question, when he refused to lend his name to a French call outlawing the slave trade. At that same time a slaveholder in Paris was concerned about the status of one of his slaves, given that France was free soil. Surely, Jefferson had himself in mind when he wrote the visitor that,

I have know an instance where a person bringing in a slave, and saying nothing about it, has not been disturbed in his possession. I think it will be easier . . . to pursue the same plan, as the boy is so young that it is not probable he will think of claiming freedom.<sup>15</sup>

Parisians lionized the new republic's Minister. They plotted revolution at his table. He was history on the hoof, meeting the leader of the Garde Bourgeoise immediately after they stormed the Bastille. But, in keeping with his growing moderation on slavery, the republican was a constitutional monarchist for France. Nevertheless, neither his moderate politics nor his new sexual involvement led to any deterioration of his conceptions of blacks. To the contrary, the linkage must have made them more human to him. Certainly when, in 1791, Benjamin Banneker, an autodidact free black inventor, sent a letter correcting his racism, enclosing his *Almanac*, Jefferson truthfully replied: "nobody wishes more than I do to see such proofs . . . that nature has given to our black brethren, talents equal to those of the other colors."

He sent the almanac to the head of the Academy of Sciences in Paris as "a document to which your color had a right for their justification against the doubts which have been entertained of them." The contradiction, the great liberal slaveholder, deliberately closed with a courtly, "I am, with great esteem, Sir, your



most obedient humble servant."<sup>16</sup>

### **"Like a Firebell in the Night"**

As President, Jefferson saw to it that Congress had its bill in place in 1808. But he did not propose a ban on slavery in the new Louisiana Territory. By 1820 he was ready to make a further capitulation to slavery.

Missouri had been carved out of the Louisiana Territory and sought statehood. A northern congressman introduced a resolution banning the importation of further slaves and the emancipation of all black children born after admission into the Union. The famous Missouri Compromise was worked out. Missouri was admitted as a slave state, but the institution was barred from the rest of the Louisiana Territory, north of 36° 30'—the new state's southern boundary.

Jefferson had gone into retirement, and generally ignored the politics of the day.

But this momentous question, like a fireball in the night, awakened and filled me with terror. I considered it at once as the knell of the union. It is hushed, indeed, for the moment. But this is a reprieve only . . . there is not a man on earth who would sacrifice more than I would to relieve us from this heavy reproach, in any *practicable* way . . . But as it is, we have the wolf by the ears, and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go . . . Of one thing I am certain, that as the passage of slaves from one state to another, would not make a slave of a single human being . . . so their diffusion over a greater surface would . . . proportionately facilitate the accomplishment of their emancipation.<sup>17</sup>

Jefferson, in his late 70s, had lost his feel for contemporary affairs. He saw the new attacks on slavery as little more than a scheme by the former Federalists to use the issue "with the real view of producing a geographical division of parties, which might insure them the next President."<sup>18</sup>

Monticello was deep in debt when he died, on July 4, 1826, and he did not free his slaves, except for five members of Sally Heming's family. She was formally freed two years later by his white daughter. That he had a slave mistress had been exposed two decades earlier and Professor Brodie is doubtlessly correct in believing that Jefferson had Sally freed in this obscure way to

avoid the publicity which certainly would have arisen if "dusky Sally," as his enemies had called her, had been freed upon his death.

Other liberal Virginians were more advanced regarding racism than Jefferson. His law mentor, George Wythe, left his property to his mulatto housekeeper and her son, and even asked that Jefferson, then nothing less than the President of the United States, be responsible for the youngster's education. James Madison's secretary took his slaves to Illinois and freed them. Americans have a right to know this hidden side of Jefferson and it is the duty of historians to expose it. Nevertheless we must apply an historical statute of limitations to him. Pointing a moralizing finger at a transitional figure like Jefferson does not advance awareness of how social evolution actually matures.

We automatically think of a revolutionary as a fighter. Jefferson never was. It was unthinkable for him to alienate his entire society in a hopeless cause. At the dawn of modern politics, he could not yet understand what we must—that the modern educated mind cannot stand still. If you are in politics and do not, sooner or later, fight evil, inexorably you will adapt to it and your mind will perforce think up rationalizations to justify your accommodation. Jefferson had enough understanding to know the world was changing, but not enough to understand the mechanisms of social evolution.

This gave him a Pollyanna-ish aspect. If his early efforts towards emancipation failed, things would still word out "in the march of time." American democracy, limited as he knew it to be, was still the beacon of liberty to the Old World. He feared the dissolution of the Union over slavery. Therefore, he rationalized that not only would extension of slavery preserve the Union, but that allowing its spread would hasten emancipation, which was the last thing the southern expansionists intended. For years Jefferson had hoped, without any real basis, to pull Monticello out of debt, which would have allowed him to leave something to his white children and free some or all of his slaves. This artless quality explains how he could write his beautiful last letter against oppression when, by then, he knew he was not going to free most of his slaves. Religion, Karl Marx was later to say, was the opium of the people. The inevitable march of progress had already become the liberal narcotic of preference.



**"Men . . . Are Naturally Divided into Two Parties"**

The Constitution made no mention of parties, indeed the Fathers hoped to avoid "faction." Jefferson himself wrote, in 1789, that "If I could not go to heaven but with a party, I would not go there at all."<sup>19</sup> But, like it or not, by 1791-2, Jefferson and Madison and their co-thinkers felt compelled to establish their "Republican" Party against the "monarchist" Alexander Hamilton and his "stock-jobbing herd" of Federalists.<sup>20</sup> These thought to insult their foes by calling them Democratic-Republicans. However "Democratic" faded out of the language almost immediately and the party was called Republican until the Jackson era.

Jefferson had returned to the United States from France in 1789, to become Secretary of State in Washington's first cabinet. He was shocked, he later wrote, to discover that "a preference of kingly over republican government was evidently the favorite sentiment" of the elite dinner parties he attended in New York, then the nation's capital.<sup>21</sup> Hamilton was Secretary of the Treasury and hatched several schemes. The revolutionary government had issued certificates of debt to its creditors. Poverty forced many to sell these at enormous discounts to speculators who convinced them they would never be redeemed. Hamilton determined to fund the certificates, making no distinction between those held by original creditors and speculators. "Immense sums were thus filched from the poor and ignorant."<sup>22</sup>

Hamilton was not himself a speculator, but he believed money was the only thing that would bind the rich to the new government. The financial wizard also got the federal government to assume the states' wartime debt as well, thus bringing more creditors to back the government. The capstone of his efforts on behalf of the rich was the Bank of the United States, actually a private bank with the government owning only 25% of the stock.

Several congressmen were speculators and directors of the bank. Jefferson fully understood that Hamilton had created a "machine for the corruption of the legislature."<sup>23</sup> Jefferson always insisted that these schemes were part of a larger plan. Attesting "the God who made me," he later wrote that "Hamilton was not only a monarchist, but for a monarchy bottomed on corruption." Once at dinner, Vice President John Adams had said that if you could purge the House of Commons of its corruption, and give it more power, the British constitution would be the best ever



devised. Hamilton carefully reflected and remarked:

purge it of its corruption, and give its popular branch equality of representation, and it would become an *impracticable* government: as it stands at present, with all its supposed defects, it was the most perfect government which ever existed.<sup>24</sup>

Jefferson, in France, was willing to tolerate a weak monarchy that would obey the popular will. This, he felt, was better than social upheaval with its toll. But he'd be damned if he would let Hamilton and the Federalists set up a monarchy here, on the bones of his republic.

The Republicans were pro-French; the Federalists pro-British. But this was simply another aspect of the same struggle. To the end Jefferson believed that

Men . . . are naturally divided into two parties: 1. Those who fear and distrust the people, and wish to draw all powers from them into the hands of the better classes. 2. Those who identify with the people . . . In every country these two parties exist . . . Call them . . . Jacobins and Ultras . . . Republicans and Federalists . . . they are the same parties still.<sup>25</sup>

Washington had been elected unanimously in 1789, with John Adams as his Vice President. Washington wanted to quit after one term but both Jefferson and Hamilton understood that the country was too weak to afford a fight for the presidency. They convinced him to stay on. The Republicans did not feel similarly restrained towards Adams and they gave George Clinton 50 votes, but Adams won with 77. With Washington's retirement at the end of his second term, the two factions had no choice but to vie for his office in 1796. The Federalists ran Adams with Thomas Pinckney as his running mate. The Republicans ran Jefferson and Aaron Burr. Adams got 71 votes in the Electoral College, Jefferson 68, Pinckney 59 and Burr 30. Jefferson became Adams' Vice President.

### **"Excluded, Like Helots"**

These early parties bore little resemblance to ours. Candidates were chosen by congressional caucuses. Jefferson and Adams did no campaigning. Each state had its own laws governing selection

of electors. In some cases they were picked by the legislature, in others by public vote. Not even in the Republican states did the franchise extend to all white males. In an 1816 letter, Jefferson condemned the fact that "one-half of our brethren who fight and pay taxes, are excluded, like Helots, from the rights of representation."<sup>26</sup> But at no time did he ever make an issue of the suffrage.

For several decades after Charles Beard's 1913 *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution*, it was believed that the anti-Federalist opponents of the constitution were a mass movement, primarily of farmers, especially debtors. Later research demonstrated that his thesis was overdrawn. The elite and the masses were found on both sides, depending on local considerations. Nor did the anti-Federalists make universal white male suffrage one of their demands.

For all the ideology around them, poor whites were rarely political. Over 90% of Americans were farmers. Only four percent of the people lived in cities of over 8,000 in 1800. The urban poor were either unskilled brawn workers, isolated craftsmen or shop clerks. There were few large workshops, let alone factories. In the absence of a technological base, the ordinary American did not see education as a necessity.

Vermont had universal manhood suffrage when it became the 14th state in 1791. But it was only in 1802 when Ohio came in with a liberal suffrage. Only later, in 1807, did one of the original 13 states, New Jersey, give all white males the vote. Universal male suffrage, or at least white male suffrage, begins to become an important factor in the next decade, when several new states were admitted. Popular voting rights in the east came only on a state by state basis, starting in 1810. It wasn't until the 1830s that white male suffrage was universal or nearly so in most states.

### **"Learned Academies . . . Are Incompatible with Social Order"**

Britain and France were at war during Adams' administration, with both sides seizing American ships. By June 1797, 300 American ships had been taken by France, and in the next year, American privateers destroyed the French West Indian traffic. Adams utilized the war hysteria to push through the Alien and Sedition Acts in 1798. The Alien Acts extended the residence requirement

for citizenship from five to 14 years and allowed the President to jail or deport any alien he thought threatened national security. The Sedition Act forbade anyone to "utter . . . false, scandalous, and malicious . . . writings against the Government . . . Congress . . . or the President . . . with intent to defame . . . or to bring them into contempt or disrepute."<sup>27</sup> No one was legally deported, but only because several boatloads of Frenchmen left the country in fear of expulsion. At least 14 journalists were indicted and several sent to prison.

The Republicans' opposition to the Federalists' program was effective in stopping the march toward despotism. But some of their ideological rationales were later to prove reactionary. They fought the activism of the Federalists with a heavy emphasis on the system of checks and balances. They had the Virginia and Kentucky legislatures declare that states could nullify federal laws like the Alien and Sedition Acts. Their strict constructionism led them to see the federal government as having very limited implied powers. They frequently opposed activities that are perfectly sensible to us, as the federal subsidization of roads and canals. As the persecutions were unpopular, they assured Federalist defeat in 1800. The nullification doctrine did not cause any ideological contradictions for liberals in the next decades of Republican power. But states rights, enshrined as they were in the party founders' writings, became the basic rationale of the slavocracy in the run up to the Civil War.

The Republican candidates, Jefferson and Burr, had no trouble defeating the Federalists in 1800. But none of their electors thought to vote only for Jefferson, and they tied, 73-73. The election went to the House of Representatives, controlled by lame-duck Federalists. Several of these tried to elect Burr, who did nothing to stop them. It was only after Hamilton decided that anyone would be preferable to the "Catiline of America," that, after six days and 39 votes, Jefferson was elected, with Burr as his Vice President.

Jefferson saw his victory as a second revolution. It was, but only in a narrow sense. Washington and Adams had been driven to their inaugurals in a coach and four. Jefferson walked so as to establish a regime of Republican modesty. There would be an end to Alien and Sedition laws. The United States would be the world's freest country as far as speech and press were concerned. But no effort was made to extend suffrage. Jefferson was able to



purchase the enormous Louisiana Territory from France, setting the country on the march to the Pacific. The purchase, though, did nothing to the internal structure of the society.

The primary significance of Jefferson's victory was that it was the beginning of the end for Federalism. Jefferson, not Adams, put his stamp on America. The difference for the future development of the country may be summed up in a comparison of their attitudes toward intellectual freedom. The slaveholder's famous statement was, "I have sworn upon the alter of God, eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man."<sup>28</sup> Adams, from Massachusetts, did not have slaves. But he believed that

We have had too many French philosophers already and I really begin to think, or rather to suspect, that learned academies, not under the immediate inspection and control of government, have disorganized the world, and are incompatible with social order.<sup>29</sup>

Jefferson wrote the manifesto of the American Revolution, the opening event of the modern epoch. The Revolution was historically progressive in that it won independence, separated church and state and paved the way for the development of American capitalism. It was the prime inspiration for the French and subsequent revolutions in all corners of the globe. Later, through Lincoln, who saw himself Jefferson's disciple, he became the inspirational demiurge of emancipation. Few historic figures have had that kind of impact in their lifetime and afterwards. Today we are more aware of his contradictions than many of his historic admirers. So what if he did not spring forth, like Athena from the brow of Zeus, fully armored in the ideology and morals of modern liberalism?

The French revolution triggered revolts in Haiti, Ireland and South America. But France ended up with an upstart Emperor, and then a Bourbon restoration. Haiti saw the freeing of the slaves, but then the despotisms of Jean Jacques Dessalines—Emperor Jacques I—and Henri Christophe—King Henry I. Theobald Wolf Tone failed heroically in Ireland. Most of Spain's American colonies won independence but were, despite being republics, for the most part backward and dominated by landed oligarchies. When Jefferson died, his America was the one lasting significant success of the half century of social convulsions, the

beacon of hope in the age of the Holy Alliance.

In many parts of the country, the Democratic Party still has Jefferson-Jackson Day dinners. It is of no small importance for the party to have the public identify them with Jefferson. Readers may be certain party orators do not tell their listeners about Sally Heming, or about his compromises with slavery. For all that, he towers over his later day pseudo-champions. In his day and for decades after, his fame rightly rested on his words, from the Declaration to the sublime testament. But we, in our age, demand scientific understanding of politics, which we cannot find in him. Thus for us his rhetoric has become little more than generalities about democracy and aristocracy. But from the Democratic Party of our time we do not get—and never will get again—either scientific understanding or profound ideals.

### James Madison

It is rare that so many historians should be of one opinion as to the historic importances of an individual, as they are of James Madison. To the public he is not much more than a name, but the historians, not the public, are correct. With Jefferson, he disestablished the Episcopalian church in Virginia in 1785. The "Father of the Constitution" was the prime initiator of the conferences leading to the Convention. His "Virginia plan" formed the basis of its deliberations. He was co-author of *The Federalist Papers*, the major propaganda to convince a skeptical public to accept the instrument. If that were not enough, he then became the mover of the Bill of Rights in the first Congress.

Like Jefferson, with whom he always collaborated, he was extremely diffident. Nevertheless he was effective in councils because of his obvious logical powers. What distinguished him from Jefferson was his methodical activism. Jefferson may have provided the rhetoric for the early Republican Party, but Madison organized it.

When we read him today we are immediately impressed with his high-mindedness. However that did not permit him to overcome realities. After he succeeded Jefferson as President, in 1809, his administration became, and could only have become, the vehicle for the dominant interest in his America. The major cause of Federalism's defeat had been the weakness of its capitalist supporters in the still overwhelmingly rural country. Agrarian

expansionism, and with it land speculation, was the distinctive characteristic of the period.

### **“A Union Among All the Fires”**

In the last colonial years, London had tried to keep the colonies weak by restricting western expansion. With independence the forward march began in earnest, putting the Indians' possession of their lands in dire jeopardy. Madison grew up on a frontier plantation and knew American injustices to Indians. But he also saw them as savages whose usual war method was massacre. He was reconciled to a future in which land would either be bought from the Indians or they would be forcibly removed across the Mississippi.

An inevitable yet singular figure, Tecumseh, a Shawnee, arose to resist the inexorable expulsion. His foe, General William Henry Harrison, immediately declared him to be

one of those uncommon geniuses, which spring up occasionally to produce revolutions and overturn the established order of things. If it were not for the vicinity of the United States, he would perhaps be the founder of an Empire that would rival in glory that of Mexico or Peru.<sup>30</sup>

Born in Ohio in 1768, Tecumesh as a youth took part in many raids against the expansionist white man. But in the late 1790s, while visiting a sister who had settled amidst the whites, he met a Quaker, Rebecca Galloway. It sounds like a movie romance, but she was beautiful and the warrior fell in love. His English was awkward, and she soon was reading the Bible and Shakespeare and history to him. He asked to marry her. She agreed, but on condition he settle down to be a farmer in white society. After much agonizing, he told her he couldn't forsake his people, and never saw her again.

Now the Indians had a leader who had Alexander the Great as his hero, a leader with modern political aims, a federation of all the tribes. Independently of his own development, his brother, a notorious drunkard, had a mystic experience. Soon known as “the Prophet,” he evolved a native religion, emphasizing total abstinence from the white man's firewater and the rest of his material culture.



The two zealots set up a town in Ohio for their followers, in which they worked the land in common. Their movement gained strength and Harrison thought to discredit them, mocking the Prophet to prove his pretensions. Someone, possibly a British agent, told the Prophet of a forthcoming eclipse. On June 16, 1806, before a crowd, the Indian called on the sun to darken and then come back.

Word of the miracle spread like wildfire and tribe after tribe, some as far away as the upper Missouri and central Canada, began to pour into the movement. Hundreds of Christian Indians were massacred before Tecumseh stopped the slaughter. He sought to avoid immediate war with the whites by moving the Prophet's town to Indiana. Then the two rode off to recruit tribes from Florida to Canada. Alarmed, Harrison decided to parley with the dangerous new foe. On August 11, 1810, Tecumseh and the General met: "The states have set the example of forming a union among all the fires. Why should they censure the Indians for following it?"<sup>31</sup>

Officials could never acknowledge, even to themselves, that the movement was indigenous, something that had to happen after almost two centuries of contact with white culture. The government thought the British in Canada were behind the two Indians. Years later, documentary proof was uncovered that the British actually discouraged them out of concern for relations with the U.S. and fear the fur trade would be curtailed. But the Americans didn't know that then. All they knew was that Britain had been impressing American sailors in the Atlantic, and that war was likely. An Indian confederation allied to the British would be a threat to every settlement north of the Ohio River.

In July 1811, Harrison used the slaying of some whites in Illinois as his excuse to march on the Prophet's town on the Tippecanoe River. There was another council. It settled nothing and Tecumseh headed south to rally support for the inevitable war. While he was away, Harrison returned to the Tippecanoe on November 7. The Indians attacked his camp and Harrison actually lost more men than did the Prophet, but after two days the Indians abandoned the town and Harrison reported a great triumph. When Tecumseh returned, he broke with his brother for going to war prematurely. As he feared, some of the tribes sought revenge and both sides went on permanent war footing.

Throughout the Napoleonic wars, Britain and France systematically violated the rights of neutral shipping. The British not only

seized American vessels, but removed British deserters who had become American citizens, as well as born Americans. Jefferson knew the U.S. was no match for Britain and sought to avoid war by implementing an embargo on shipping to and from Europe. Except for leading to a rapid growth of domestic industry, the embargo hadn't worked. New England shipping interests were growing rich supplying the British, and saw the gross violations of American rights as little more than the occupational hazard of wartime shipping. Pressure from them and from wheat farmers and others supplying Wellington on the Iberian Peninsula compelled Madison to abandon the embargo. In a turnabout, he decided that if either power abandoned harassment, he would go to war with the other. France announced harassment at an end, and did cut it down in practice, and Congress declared war on Britain in 1812.

Four days after the declaration, the British, unaware of it and still thinking they could head off war, actually decided to call off the most glaring commercial aspects of its harassment policies. Later, some American politicians were to say they still would have gone to war, given impressment. But historians are unanimous in holding that the desire of the congressional "warhawks" for the conquest of Canada and Florida (nominally Spanish but really a British operational base) was at least as important a reason for the declaration of war.

Certainly America was not seriously prepared for the war that could only happen when it chose to start it. Militarily, it was pretty much of a draw. Both sides won and lost major battles on the Canadian border. The British had not the slightest trouble taking Washington and burning the White House. Then, actually a few days after a peace treaty had been signed, the British suffered a devastating defeat at New Orleans, making the victor, Andrew Jackson, into a national hero.

Tecumseh realized that his only chance of success lay in a British victory, and full scale war broke out on the frontier. The U.S. invaded Canada from Detroit. Primarily due to Tecumseh's military audacity, the Americans soon fled back to Detroit and ignominiously surrendered it to the British. Tecumseh entered the fort with the British, dressed as a staff officer, making sure his braves did not harm captives. It was this which guaranteed his subsequent fame as the towering figure in Indian history.

The victory brought additional tribes into the war. But the

British general who had encouraged Tecumseh died in battle and his successor was a remarkable incompetent. He usually tried to evade battle. Whenever he did fight, and Tecumseh was not present, he would do nothing to prevent Indians from butchering prisoners. After the Americans won a naval battle on Lake Erie, the British army retreated into Canada. When they got to the Thames River in Ontario, Tecumseh threatened to kill the British general if the troops fell back any further. Tecumseh organized the British and Indians for the subsequent battle. He knew he was going to die, and he did, fighting nobly.

Tecumseh's dream of an Indian confederation died with him. Subsequent to the war, the British Foreign Ministry concluded that American expansionism had to be diverted away from Canada toward the West. In 1818, the boundary between the two countries was extended to the Rockies and warships were banned from the Great Lakes. With Tecumseh dead and Britain no longer a potential supplier of weapons, the historic fate of all the tribes to the Pacific was irrevocably sealed.

The war wrought other effects upon America. In 1811, the charter of Hamilton's Bank of the United States had expired and Congress had let it die. However, the war had greatly increased the national debt and, in 1816, Madison, who had insisted the first bank was unconstitutional, chartered a second national bank, with the U.S. government a minority shareholder in it, to fund the debt.

If agrarianism had been the motor force of the war, the net effect of the embargo and the war had been the rapid rise of manufactures. Now the manufacturers called for protective tariffs, which the agrarians were willing to grant, in their need for revenue to pay off the debt. The remnants of Federalism had self-destructed during the war by near treasonable opposition to it. But by 1823 Jefferson was lamenting that it "has changed its name and hidden itself among us . . . as strong as it has ever been since 1800."<sup>32</sup>

### **James Monroe**

When James Monroe, the last of Virginia's revolutionary era Presidents, was elected in 1816, his Federalist opponent correctly said Monroe "had the zealous support of nobody, and he was exempt from the hostility of everybody."<sup>33</sup> The Federalist won



only 34 electoral votes to Monroe's 149. The party totally collapsed in the ensuing four years and, in 1820, didn't even put up a candidate. Monroe won 231 of 232 votes. The legend is that one elector voted against him so that Washington would be the only unanimously elected President, but the story isn't factual.

His administrations were known as "the era of good feeling," although this really wasn't quite true. The Missouri Compromise battle was fought out in Congress. There was also a nasty depression in 1819, largely a result of irresponsible policies of hundreds of new state banks that had sprung up since the first Bank of the United States lost its charter in 1811. To protect itself, the second national bank insisted state banks pay their debts to it in gold or silver, and the long period of economic expansion collapsed. As was to become universal in such depressions, western politicians began crying against the eastern "money power."

Monroe's years could be an era of good feeling because the conflicts within the society could be compromised or solved with minimal reforms. Neither the North or the South was strong enough at that time to impose its will on the other. The agrarians could be mollified by lowering the amount of acreage that had to be purchased at one time from public lands from 160 acres to 80 acres, and lowering the price per acre from \$2.00 to \$1.25.

Although Monroe had been associated with both Jefferson and Madison he was far from their intellectual equal. While Madison though is virtually forgotten, Americans remember from high school history courses the Monroe Doctrine, which is identified with American domination of Latin America in the 20th century. Actually the Doctrine, in its day, was an anti-imperialist proclamation. Most of Spain's colonies had revolted and Spain's liberals had imposed a constitution on the Bourbon king. Suddenly, in 1823, France invaded to drive out the liberals. It was feared that France, backed by the Holy Alliance, would help the king recover his ex-colonies. Britain had no love of revolution or republics, but it was the trade gainer from Latin American independence, and London proposed that Washington join it in opposing any attempt at reconquest. Monroe was reluctant to entangle himself with Britain with a joint statement, hence the unilateral declaration that any such effort at subduing the colonies would be seen by the U.S. as an unfriendly act.

At the time, none of the South American countries thought of the Doctrine as an imperialist statement. If anything, they were

more grateful for Britain's opposition to Spain's designs because the British had a real fleet to put between them and their former rulers. But Prince Klemens von Metternich, the guiding force behind the Holy Alliance, understood the Doctrine as a revolutionary challenge to the old order:

These United States . . . have astonished Europe by a new act of revolt . . . in fostering revolutions wherever they show themselves, in regretting those which have failed, in extending a helping hand to those which seem to prosper, they lend new strength to the apostles of sedition, and reanimate the courage of every conspirator.<sup>34</sup>

It is historically ironic that the last official American action with revolutionary implications is now almost universally misunderstood as an imperialist manifesto. But this is only natural. The revolution was decades past. Wealth was accumulating, North and South. The revolutionary impetus was spent. Monroe would certainly have been pleased to know his paper had been taken so seriously by the principle power broker in Europe. But he probably would have been some what taken aback at America being seen as a worldwide fomenter of sedition.

## Notes

1. Adrienne Koch & William Peden (editors), *The Life and Selected Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, pp. 729-30.
2. Stuart Taylor Jr., "Marshall Sounds Critical Note on Bicentennial," *New York Times*, May 7, 1987, pp. 1, 14.
3. James Madison, *Journal of the Federal Convention*, pp. 578-83.
4. Philip Van Doren Stern, *The Life and Writings of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 374.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 450.
6. Koch & Peden, p. 642.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
9. Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution*, p. 19.
10. Koch & Peden, p. 256.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 259.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 261-2.
13. Fawn Brodie, *Thomas Jefferson*, p. 183
14. *Ibid.*, p. 296.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 234.
16. Koch & Peden, pp. 508-9.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 698.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 712.

19. Ibid., p. 460.
20. Ibid., p. 124.
21. Ibid., p. 121.
22. Ibid., p. 122.
23. Ibid., p. 121.
24. Ibid., p. 126.
25. Ibid., p. 715.
26. Koch & Peden, p. 671.
27. James Smith, "Enforcement of the Alien and Sedition Acts," in (Thomas Frazier, ed.), *The Underside of American History*, p. 105.
28. Koch & Peden, p. 558.
29. Smith, p. 117.
30. Alvin Josephy Jr., "Tecumseh, the Greatest Indian," (in Frazier), p. 133.
31. Josephy, p. 148.
32. Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition*, p. 42.
33. Paul Boller Jr., *Presidential Campaigns*, p. 30.
34. Hofstadter, *The Progressive Historians*, p. 284.



## CHAPTER 2

# The Spoilsmen and the Slavocracy Take Over

John Quincy Adams, the son of Jefferson's old enemy, abandoned the Federalists when they opposed the embargo, and had risen to become Monroe's Secretary of State. Adams, John Calhoun, the Secretary of War, and William Crawford, the Secretary of Treasury, all sought to succeed Monroe, along with Henry Clay, the Speaker of the House, and Andrew Jackson. Calhoun settled for the vice presidency. Of the other candidates, Jackson received 99 electoral votes, Adams 84, Crawford 41 and Clay 37. With none having a majority, the election went to the House, which could only consider the three leading vote-getters. Throwing his support behind Adams, who won, Clay was made Secretary of State. Jefferson had been Washington's Secretary of State, Madison his, Monroe Madison's, Adams Monroe's, and Clay's appointment made it look to Jackson as if he had been jobbed out of the Presidency then and into the future by "bargain and corruption." When Jackson denounced the deal, the classic Republican Party, with its orderly succession to office, was well and truly dead.

Jackson started mobilizing against Adams from the beginning of his administration. Adams was nationally minded, favoring the "American system," i.e., federally-built national roads, a national university, a larger navy and increased tariffs to protect growing manufacturing industries. But he simply was not a politician in

the partisan sense. He was cold, even austere. He tolerated open foes in his cabinet and did nothing to build popular support for his policies. It was soon obvious to everyone that Jackson would defeat him next time around.

## **Andrew Jackson**

The modern Democratic Party really begins with Andrew Jackson, although he would have insisted he was merely a disciple of Jefferson. If the classic Republicans talked in favor of the common man, they were all quite patrician. Jackson was anything but. The son of Ulster Irish Protestant immigrants, tenant farmers, he started out as a teenaged school teacher, then entered law and politics. But it was as General Jackson—Old Hickory—that he really became a national figure.

To be sure, Washington was the first general to become President. But it was really the patriot, not Washington the winner of battles, which he rarely won, who became the unanimous candidate. Jackson was to be the first of a long list of Presidents who were elected because of their military record, not because of their politics. The American people of that day were raised on an intellectual diet of Fourth of July oratory and the ordinary white genuinely believed his country to be the greatest country in the world. The victory at New Orleans had helped make that into a certainty in their minds.

Jackson the soldier was simply an extension of Jackson the fighter. He fought at least three duels, once killing an opponent. This was part of his attraction for the common people of his day. They certainly couldn't have described his politics when he first ran for the Presidency as his advisors had told him to say as little as possible. What they liked from the start was his frontier ferocity and openness. Adams had lost the popular vote in 1824 and as President he had nothing to make typical voters see him as their champion. The 1828 election between the hero and the New Englander without a single intimate friend was simply no contest.

By 1835 and Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, seven states eliminated property qualifications for voting. In seven more, paying taxes or serving in the militia was the only qualification. Jackson was really the first popularly-elected President. Later day liberals, as with Franklin D. Roosevelt—or his ghosts—have hailed Jackson for "his unending contribution to

the vitality of our democracy," and have tried to see his two administrations as a revolution.<sup>1</sup> In fact, in Tennessee politics, he had always been found on the side of the slaveholders, of whom he was one, and the land speculators against the po' white trash. His triumph was indeed the end of patrician politics, but a revolution it was not.

Jackson's biggest battle was against the second Bank of the United States. Beyond all doubt it was economically undemocratic for the government to be a partner—and a distinctly subordinate one at that—with private bankers. But Jackson was little more than a primitive as an economic theorist. In 1798, he had sold 6,000 acres to a wealthy merchant for some personal notes, and then used the notes to buy some goods for resale. The merchant promptly went bankrupt in the middle of an economic crisis, and Jackson had to spend years making good the notes. This turned him into a lifelong fanatic on the question of paper credit and paper money. The voters in 1828 had no idea he was so determined to put the Bank out of business, and still less did they know about his monetary theories, or agree with them.

It was the Bank that actually started the fight by applying early, in 1832, for rechartering. Congress voted for it and Jackson vetoed the bill. The average American wasn't—and isn't—a radical. But if a sitting President makes a move against the rich, or some of the rich, and appeals to the people for support, they know they ain't rich. Many will back him, even if they do not gain a thing themselves. And the rich almost invariably tend to see any attack on any part of the establishment as "Jacobinism" then (Communism now). This is exactly what happened then, but Jackson and his Democratic-Republicans, or Democrats, as they were now beginning to be called, had no difficulty beating Clay and his National Republicans, and a weird Anti-Masonic Party, in 1832.

Jackson withdrew the government's funds from the Bank before it expired, and put them in state banks. These institutions, suddenly glutted with money, started increasing their loans and an inflationary prosperity developed. By 1836, Jackson became convinced the country was heading towards another paper money financial crisis and he insisted that public lands be paid for in gold and silver. By 1837, after he left office, the country was plunged into the depression he sought to avoid.

It is the bank battle that makes modern liberals see Jackson as



one of them. But if the broader educated public thinks of him anymore, it is as the initiator of the patronage system. Actually Jefferson had replaced many Federalists—particularly in the treasury and customs houses—whom Hamilton had used as his machine. But in the long years of Republicanism, government offices were usually left untouched. By the end of his second administration, Jackson had replaced about 20% of federal employees with his supporters. Naturally enough he justified this as a democratic shakeup. But we can hardly doubt that he really agreed with the notorious statement of his party leader in New York, William Marcy, that “to the victor belongs the spoils.” At any rate, the party patronage system he developed was within a few decades to convert a government whose founders had been singular in their disinterested devotion to their principles into one of the most corrupt political systems ever to appear.

### **“John Marshall Has Made His Decision, Now Let Him Enforce It”**

Most other issues of that day are of no interest to moderns. But the Georgia Cherokee affair must be dealt with as it establishes that the party had irrevocably lost the progressive dimension it had in Jefferson’s day.

Armed Cherokee resistance to the oncoming whites had ceased by 1794, and after 1800, they rapidly assimilated to the white man’s ways. They became favorites of the New England missionaries. Several of them were sent to schools there so that they could more effectively convert their brethren. In 1820, Sequoyah invented an alphabet ideally suited to their language and an intellectual explosion took place within the tribe. By the end of the decade, Cherokee scholars had translated the Bible directly from Greek. A large majority became literate. They had their own newspaper. A republic was set up, with a constitution modeled on America’s.

It is important that the tiny republic not be romanticized. There were at least 1,277 black slaves. They were fully aware that they were surrounded by wolves looking for any excuse to grab their land, and excluded anyone of partial black blood from citizenship.

We must see in this a sort of replication of the situation vis-a-vis the Constitutional Convention and slavery. Freedom has been defined in many ways. But one thing it surely must be: the

recognition of necessity. There was not the slightest possibility of their republic being tolerated if it did not allow slavery and ban part-blacks from citizenship. Here again we are forbidden to apply our political morality to their time and place. What was subsequently to befall this beleaguered Cherokee nation was to be one of the more monstrous crimes in American history.

In 1828, gold was discovered on their land. The Georgia state house gang started agitating for the Indians' removal to Oklahoma, and passed laws nullifying their republic. The Cherokees pleaded with Jackson to protect them under treaties between them and the U.S. government. They may as well have prayed to the devil. He was an old Indian fighter and was determined to deport them and the Creeks, Choctaws and Chickasaws as well. In 1830, he asked Congress

What good man would prefer a country covered with forests and ranged by a few thousand savages to our extensive Republic . . . embellished with all the improvements which art can devise?<sup>2</sup>

After a legal case, *Worcester vs. Georgia*, won the Cherokees a decision from Chief Justice Marshall that Georgia had no right to impose its laws on such "domestic dependent nations," Jackson is supposed to have said, "John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it."<sup>3</sup>

In December 1835, a band of Cherokee traitors, a small minority of the nation, made a deal with the government, forfeiting their land to Washington, for \$5 million. The bogus treaty of New Echota was never accepted by the vast majority of the people. But let us leave these unfortunates for now, returning in 1838 for the tragic denouement of this disgraceful episode. Let us finish with Old Hickory. He left office in 1837. His irascibility increased, his old intimates were driven away. He died in 1845. FDR's hero's last cause was an increasingly fanatic defense of slavery.

### **Martin Van Buren**

"The little magician," Martin Van Buren, leader of the "Albany Regency" which dominated New York State, "grand sachem" of the corrupt Society of St. Tammany, was the first national machine politician. He organized Jackson's 1828 victory. He was rewarded with the vice-presidency in 1832 and Jackson

made sure he was elected President in 1836. The National Republicans, Adam's supporters, had collapsed after Jackson's second win in 1832 and were replaced in 1834 by the Whigs. The new party was not strong enough to run a national candidate against Van Buren. Instead the Whigs ran three regional candidates, vainly hoping each would beat Van Buren in his region, forcing the election into the House.

The axis of Van Buren's alliance with the southerners around Jackson had been complete capitulation to the slaveholders who were facing increasing attacks. In 1836, he supported subjecting abolitionist mail to censure in the southern states. He denied the right of Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia without the consent of the slave states.

In 1838, he sent the army to Georgia to enforce the bogus Cherokee Treaty. In the winter of 1838-9, about 18,000 Indians were driven out of their homes to march to Oklahoma. Approximately 1,000 escaped deportation and hid in the Smokey Mountains in North Carolina. About 4,000 died on the "trail of tears." We can designate this atrocity as the first Democratic Party war crime.

Jefferson and his colleagues accepted slavery as an evil which they couldn't eliminate in their time. Even Madison's policy vis-a-vis Tecumseh can be rationalized as part of the clearing of the country of native-born savages and British pawns. No such semi-demi-hemi excuse can be found for this crime. The Cherokees were civilized in every sense of the term. There was an outcry throughout the entire anti-Cherokee campaign, primarily from religious groups in the North, who almost won in Congress. It was this new reality, that it was becoming possible to fight ethnic oppression with at least the chance of winning, that demarcates this battle as the end of America's Arcadian innocence and the beginning of the modern era.

By 1840, the Whigs had learned the new techniques of mass appeal pioneered by the Democrats with Jackson. They found their own hero, William Henry Harrison, the victor at Tippecanoe. They ran John Tyler, a disgruntled Virginia Democrat, for Vice President—hence the euphonious cry of "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too," which has stuck in the historical memory of Americans long after anyone other than buffs remembers the battle or Tyler.

Jackson's hard money fiscal policy had caused a depression in



1837 which was still effecting the country, but Van Buren still won unanimous renomination for the 1840 race. The Whigs portrayed the wealthy Harrison as living in a log cabin and drinkin' hard cider, and described Van Buren as living high in the White House while the people were suffering. The popular vote jumped 60%. In a campaign that was virtually an unending torch light parade of log cabin floats and free flowing cider, Harrison won, 1,275,612 to 1,130,033, and took 19 of 26 states.

### **Texas and the Mexican War**

Harrison died one month after taking office. The Whig ticket had been an unprincipled bloc and now they were to pay the consequences. Tyler was a slaveholding extremist, with a rigid states rights ideology. He had only broken with the Democrats because of an obscure difference with Jackson, whom he came to see as "King Andrew," a budding federal tyrant. On all other points he was completely opposed to Whig national activism. When they passed a bill reconstituting the bank, Harrison vetoed it, as he did bills for road construction. The Whigs read him out of the party. The humiliating disaster demoralized them and the Democrats won in 1844.

James Knox Polk was an ex-Tennessee governor who came into the 1844 Democratic convention as a possible candidate for the vice presidency. The convention operated under a two-thirds rule which meant any significant faction could block a candidate, and the obscure Polk emerged as the first "dark horse" compromise candidate to win a nomination, and then an election, beating Henry Clay.

It was the Whigs' lack of core convictions that defeated them. American slaveholder immigrants into Texas had won independence from Mexico. Annexation into the Union immediately became a sectional question, the South in favor, the North opposed. Clay originally opposed annexation. But he started playing up to the South, saying he would not stand in the way if it could be done with "common consent of the Union." This infuriated enough New York voters to give their vote to the Liberty Party, an anti-slavery grouping, that the state went Democrat. Polk had no such problem. The Democrats were quite clever and linked the call for annexation with the demand that the U.S. get all of "Oregon," which it jointly occupied with Britain. Polk

won, 1,337,243 to 1,299,062, with the Liberty Party's James Birney getting 62,000 votes.

Polk's election was sufficient for Tyler, the lame duck President, to move for annexation in December 1844. Mexico had already announced that U.S. annexation of Texas, whose independence it had never recognized, would be tantamount to a declaration of war. The Mexicans knew they were no match for the U.S. But they knew sooner or later America would try to take California from them. With the U.S. getting stronger by the day, delaying the war could only work to Mexico's disadvantage.

After taking office in 1845, Polk sent an emissary to Mexico to press Texas' claim to all the land north of the Rio Grande, and tried to get Mexico to cede yet more land. Naturally, Mexico wouldn't even receive the diplomat. Polk sent the army into the disputed territory. Abraham Lincoln, an opponent of the venture, clearly pointed out in Congress that Texas had never exercised sovereignty in the region, whereas Mexico did. On April 24, 1846, Mexican and U.S. forces met, with several Americans being killed and the rest captured. Polk and Congress declared war. At least 11,300 Americans were killed in the subsequent war, which Polk's letters clearly show was really primarily about the conquest of California.

In August 1846, David Wilmot, a Pennsylvania Democrat and a member of an anti-slavery faction of the party, added his celebrated Proviso to an appropriation, excluding slavery from all territory taken during the conquest. The motion failed, but the slavery question became the burning issue of the day, ultimately resolvable only by civil war. But Wilmot spoke for a distinct minority of his party. Polk declared, "The agitation of the slavery question is mischievous and wicked," the product of "demagogues and ambitious politicians."<sup>4</sup>

### **The Northern Democracy in the Service of Southern Slavery**

Polk was too physically exhausted to run again in 1848 (he died the next year). The Democratic candidate was Lewis Cass, a Senator from Michigan, who was a consistent panderer to the slavocracy. As a diplomat, he had opposed an international treaty for the suppression of the slave trade, and of course he opposed the Wilmot Proviso. He was one of the first to enunciate the doctrine of "squatter sovereignty," saying the settlers in any new

territory had the right to determine if it would become a slave or free state. An anti-slavery faction, the "barnburners," favored a federal ban on slavery, as with the Northwest Ordinance, and refused to back Cass in the election.

The Whigs nominated a Mexican war 'hero,' Zackary Taylor, "Old Rough and Ready." No one knew his politics, including Taylor, who had never voted. That did not stop him from beating the divided Democrats, 1,360,099 to 1,220,544. A sign of the future was the entry into the race of the Free Soil Party, running Martin Van Buren of all people, who got 291,263 votes, or 10% of the poll.

Taylor died in 1850 and Millard Fillmore finished out his term. The Whigs' most important contribution to the history of the country was Clay's Compromise of 1850. California was admitted as a free state, New Mexico and Utah were to be allowed in with or without slavery as they decided. The slave trade, but not slavery, was abolished in the District of Columbia; a severe fugitive-slave act was passed.

The Democratic convention in 1852 again chose a dark horse, Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire. The Whigs bypassed Fillmore to pick yet another General, Winfield Scott. Both parties supported the Compromise. But Scott was known as the candidate of the "Conscience Whigs," who opposed it. The country wanted peace and chose Pierce, whose support for the pact was unequivocal, by a vote of 1,601,474 to 1,386,580.

Having ridden the desire for peace to power, Pierce helped pave the road to war. In 1854, he helped Stephen Douglas push his Kansas-Nebraska Bill through to success. It declared that the Missouri Compromise's ban on slavery in the Louisiana Territory north of 36°30' had been superceded by the 1850 Compromise, and that Kansas and Nebraska could determine whether to tolerate slavery, on the basis of squatter sovereignty. The consequences are well known. "Bleeding Kansas" became the ground of a mini-civil war between the Missouri "border ruffians" and the enraged abolitionist movement. The ruffians committed the "sack of Lawrence," burning and pillaging the free-soil stronghold in 1856. Abolitionist John Brown, "God's angry man," slew five slavers in retaliation. Pierce sent in troops to protect the slavers from the growing abolitionist settlement. His pro-slavery line was too much for many northern Democrats and the 1856 convention had to choose another candidate.



## **The Republican Party**

A party like the Whigs, without a core philosophy, could not survive in the teeth of a profound national crisis, and the 1852 Scott debacle was its last national effort. In 1854, some Conscience Whigs, Barnburners and Free-Soilers established the Republican Party, which declared slavery "the great moral, social and political evil" of the time. The founding platform called for repeal of the Fugitive Slave Act and the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and demanded the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. Its program was essentially to stop the spread of the "peculiar institution" into new territory, thus putting slavery on the road to ultimate extinction.

The party was an alliance between two class forces. Free state farmers wanted no competition with slaveholders in the new territories. Eastern businessmen saw the South as bitterly opposed to protective tariffs which they needed. To be sure, in neither class was support for the new party unanimous. In Illinois and other midwest states there were significant areas which had been settled by poor whites from slave states. Many were intense racists, even if they opposed slavery, and tended to stay loyal to the Democrats. Many eastern capitalists did business with the South, which owed them at least \$300 million in 1860. Many others saw abolitionism as disruptive, hence potentially bad for business. There is no doubt the new party started as a minority on Wall Street.

The Republicans were far from united in respect to ultimate goals. Some, farmers as well as capitalists, were bitter end abolitionists, who fully supported Brown, in Kansas, and later. Others wanted no more than the stopping of slavery's forward march, deferring its destruction into the far future. But what was impressive was that, at that time at least, the party's founders were motivated by principles. Previously, abolitionist movements were high minded but isolated, while mass politics had a droll Currier & Ives quality, a carnival of ignorant war heroes, stump oratory and gigantic torchlight parades. Suddenly a solemn mood gripped the nation. The anti-slavery forces had broken out of isolation. *They* now had parades. Off in Illinois, a defeated Whig ex-congressman found a new cause. The Age of Lincoln had begun. Blood, much blood, would soon be in the offing. The fate of democracy, of government "of the people, by the people, and for

the people," on this continent and on this whole earth, would be decided in the fire of civil war.

The Republican candidate in 1856 was John C. Fremont, then famous as an explorer of the country's new territories. The party's slogan has remained the most mellifluous in our history: "Free Soil, Free Speech, Free Men and Fremont."

The Democrats chose two "moderates," Pennsylvania's James Buchanan and John Breckenridge, his southern counterpart. Buchanan had been Polk's Secretary of State during the Mexican War. He fully shared the Pierce administration's politics but had been abroad diplomatically during the Kansas controversy and did not get blamed for it as Pierce did.

Millard Fillmore ran as the candidate of the American Party, the "Know-Nothings," on a program of anti-Catholicism and anti-immigration. The party was not to survive until the next election. The Anti-Masons, the Know-Nothings, Prohibitionists and other such parties come and go. But their periodic emergence serves to remind us of a great truth: at any given time a significant proportion of the "A-murican peephole" are loons.

Buchanan received 1,838,169 votes. He took the South, except Maryland. But he also carried Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Indiana, Illinois and California. Fremont did quite well, getting 1,341,264 votes, 30% of the tally. The I-talian Pope got his just comeup-pance from 874,534 good folk, 25% of the national poll.

### What? Me Worry?

"The night is departing and the roseate and propitious morn now breaking upon us promises a long day of peace and prosperity for our country."<sup>5</sup> Thus Buchanan after his election. His administration was more of the same. He tried to stuff a slavery constitution down the throats of Kansans. He failed, but the attempt helped to split the party sectionally. Douglas denounced him for violating squatter sovereignty.

In 1857, the Supreme Court handed down its Dred Scott decision. A slave had been taken to a free state, then back to Missouri. He sued for freedom. The Chief Justice, Roger Taney, had been Attorney General, then Secretary of the Treasury, under Jackson. According to him, not only was Scott not entitled to freedom, but blacks could not be citizens. Congress had no right to ban slavery from any territory because slaveholders had been

among the Framers and their property enjoyed federal protection. Therefore the Missouri Compromise had really been unconstitutional.

Most American judges have come from the upper classes and their zeal for the rights of the humble typically has been less than noticeable. Additionally, the federal judiciary is the least democratic element within our system. Many judges have been nominated to office by politicians who we now all agree were less than virtuous. They hold office for life. People rise when they enter or leave the court. They sit raised above us mere mortals. Lawyers their seniors rise to address them. Some of these guys get to takin' themselves a mite too seriously. Everything becomes subordinated to the law, i.e., themselves. They forget that laws were made for people, not people for laws. In this case, any modern reader comes away from Taney's decision certain that he is an obsessive compulsive. In our mind's eye, we see him writing, writing, writing, with a lunatic glint in his eye.

Dred Scott meant that the only way to stop the spread of slavery was by a constitutional amendment. These need the vote of three fourths of the states, which was impossible in the case of slavery. In practical terms, the decision absolutely assured civil war. Buchanan, blind to the world, hailed it as "the final settlement" of the slavery question.<sup>6</sup>

The rest is well known. After Lincoln was elected in November 1860, the southern states started seceding. Perhaps the dumbest thing in the Constitution is the fact that a newly elected President doesn't take office until months after victory. In those days, the new President didn't get into the White House until March. Buchanan believed secession was illegal, but didn't believe he had the constitutional right to stop it. By the time this genius left Washington, Lincoln was faced with an existing Confederacy, in possession of federal forts and arsenals, excepting Fort Sumter, in Charleston.

### **"The Democrats Deny His Manhood"**

Why did Stephen Douglas reopen the slavery controversy by pushing the Kansas-Nebraska Act, certainly one of the most disastrous laws ever to pass Congress? He speculated in Illinois real estate. Transcontinental railroad building was the name of the game then. If such a line was to terminate in Chicago, it was



extremely desirous that it run through organized territories. The southern congressmen had blocked organization for those areas because, under the Missouri Compromise, they would have automatically become free states. Douglas really thought that they were unsuited for slavery and that squatter sovereignty would lead to free states. Of course, the southerners thought exactly the opposite, certainly for Kansas, and thousands of Missourians rushed in to make it safe for bondage.

When Buchanan came into office in 1857, he pledged that he would be impartial between the contending forces in Kansas. A pro-slavery dominated constitutional convention passed a document guaranteeing protection for all slave property then in the state. A special proviso denied the future state the right to emancipate slaves without owner consent, or the power to ban further entry to slaves. But only the clauses regarding the future were to be voted on by the people. Free soilers refused to pass on a constitution which guaranteed present slavery without even a vote. Buchanan backed this Lecompton constitution, insisting that congressional Democrats vote for admission under it. Douglas denounced him, correctly maintaining the Lecompton procedure was a travesty of squatter sovereignty. Admission actually passed the Senate but the House refused to go along and Kansas remained a territory until 1861. The net effect was an irreparable practical split in the Democratic Party.

Lincoln did not actually join the Republicans until 1856. But he was quite popular and was their choice for the Illinois Senate race in 1858 against Douglas. In their famous debates, Lincoln challenged his opponent to explain how the people of a territory under squatter sovereignty could exclude slavery after the Dred Scott decision declared that no territory could do so. Douglas insisted that without supportative local legislation slavery couldn't exist. The answer pleased many voters in Illinois, but it exposed his double-gaited hustle to the South, foredooming his chance of becoming the candidate of a united party in 1860.

Lincoln made it clear in the debates that he did not believe in political or social equality between the races. But he insisted slavery was evil and that blacks had as much right to the fruit of their labor as he did. If he was not for abolishing slavery in the South it was because he felt it was constitutionally protected there. But Douglas had absolutely no hostility towards slavery.

He once declared that "I care not whether it is voted down or voted up."<sup>7</sup> Lincoln spoke of him when he said

The Republicans inculcate, with whatever of ability they can, that the negro is a man, that his bondage is cruelly wrong, and that the field of his oppression ought not to be enlarged. The Democrats deny his manhood; deny, or dwarf to insignificance, the wrong of his bondage; so far as possible, crush all sympathy for him, and cultivate and excite hatred and disgust against him; complement themselves as union-savers for doing so; and call the indefinite outspreading of his bondage "a sacred right of self-government."<sup>8</sup>

The 1860 Democratic convention met in Charleston in April and promptly split. The southerners insisted the platform declare slavery legitimate, that it should be extended and federally protected. When the northerners refused, the slavers walked out. The rump convention could not get a two-thirds vote for anyone and adjourned. Both factions convened, separately, in Baltimore in June. The northerners nominated Douglas. The "Constitutional Democrats," the southerners, picked Vice President John Breckenridge of Kentucky. Buchanan backed Breckenridge. A group of ex-Whigs set up the Constitutional Union Party and ran John Bell of Tennessee on a mindless program of preserving the Union at all costs. Lincoln ran on a platform opposing the extension of slavery, and favoring a homestead act to give free land in the territories to farmers, and protective tariffs.

Lincoln got approximately 40% of the vote; Douglas 29%, Breckenridge 18%, and Bell 13%. The Breckenridge camp immediately began organizing for secession. Douglas, however, for all of his faults, was devoted to the Union. He offered his services to Lincoln in whatever capacity the latter thought best, and toured tirelessly, calling on Democrats to support the government. At the inauguration, Lincoln looked around for someplace to put his hat. Douglas took it out of his hands and held it while his rival took the oath. Lincoln's speech was written in consultation with the Democrat. Douglas died three months later, while again touring, passionately urging his followers to back Lincoln.

Breckenridge became a Confederate general and ultimately became the South's last secretary of war. At the end of the war, he fled to Cuba, then Europe. He returned in 1868.

### **“Immediate Efforts Be Made for a Cessation of Hostilities”**

The Civil War divided the Democratic Party into three elements. The vast bulk of the southern party supported the Confederacy. A minority of the northern party rallied behind the Union and Lincoln. He understood that the Republican Party was a minority nationally and took great care to promote “war Democrats” into the highest ranks of the military. Grant, for one, had voted for Buchanan. In 1864, Lincoln actually ran on a coalition National Union Party ticket with Andrew Johnson, a Tennessee Democrat, as his running mate. The platform called for the “utter and complete extirpation of slavery.”<sup>9</sup>

The dominant personality on the platform committee of the “peace Democrats” was Clement Vallandigham, a “copperhead”—a snake—whom Lincoln had jailed, in May 1863, without the right of habeas corpus, for openly defying military regulations outlawing treasonous statements. For them, the war was “a failure.”<sup>10</sup> They insisted “humanity, liberty, and the public welfare demand that immediate efforts be made for a cessation of hostilities.”<sup>11</sup> They called for a negotiated peace, with a restoration of the Union *status quo ante*, i.e., with slavery intact. They nominated George McClellan, a general dismissed by Lincoln for “the slows” in pursuing Lee. McClellan denounced the National Unionists for proclaiming emancipation as a precondition for ending the war, although he insisted that he was not for peace at any price.

The campaign was what was to be expected in such conditions. At Democratic rallies, there were signs against black equality, and Democratic propaganda ranted against miscegenation. The Republicans denounced their foes as defeatists and traitors. For a time, Lincoln thought he would actually lose due to war weariness. But by election time, General William Tecumseh Sherman had taken Atlanta and Admiral David Farragut had seized Mobile Bay. Copperhead morale collapsed. Lincoln received 55% of the vote.

### **“The Greatest Character Since Christ”**

On April 9, 1865, Lee surrendered. As Lincoln said, “every drop of blood drawn with the lash” had been “paid by another drawn with the sword.” More men fought in the civil war than in any war in history. No less than 618,000 men died. But now the



North exploded in joy. Every city, every hamlet was festooned in red, white and blue bunting.

Then, five days later—Good Friday—Abraham Lincoln was assassinated. The greatest paroxysm of communal grief seen to that time began. All the patriotic bunting went down. The North was shrouded in mourning black for 30 days. Springfield, Illinois, insisted on burying him. His body was embalmed so that it might lie in state for two weeks in cities along the east coast and then westward. Crowds were at every rural crossing along the railroad route. Every village for 1600 miles was jammed. Twenty thousand packed into Trenton, New Jersey, just to see the mournful train slowly go by. In the cities where the body rested, the largest crowds in history paid their last respects.

By 1865, the majority of northerners had come to see Lincoln's remarkable personal qualities. Many intellectuals began to realize his greatness after his magnificent second inaugural address, perhaps the most letter perfect political speech ever given. And then he was murdered on Good Friday. The vast majority of the people were poorly educated churchgoers. They inevitably interpreted his death within the framework of their belief system. The common people of the North, and black people in the South, became convinced he was put on earth by God to do His work—to free the slaves. Then He, for His mysterious reasons, chose to call him home, as He had done once before, with His son. But far more worldly people agreed with his secretary, John Hay, that he was "the greatest character since Christ."<sup>12</sup>

Eventually more books were to be written about him than probably any figure in history. To be sure, scholars are not given to seeing the hand of God in American politics. But the secular view of the great emancipator really does not sharply differ from the naive view of the common people of his time.

Anyone reading Lincoln will speedily disregard Justice Marshall's caveats about the Founding Fathers. When he talked of how "our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal," he was quoting the Declaration. He may or may not have known of Jefferson's letter on the Missouri Compromise. But his position on slavery and blacks was Jefferson's during his public career. Lincoln differs only in that when he tried to uphold Jefferson he was forced to go beyond him. What should interest us is how did it come to pass that an

ex-Whig came to vindicate the Declaration of the founder of the Democratic Party? And why did the party of Jefferson become the multitude shouting for Barabbas in America's great passion play? For that is how thinking people came to see the Copperheads who howled for McClellan against Lincoln.

In 1859, Lincoln tried to answer this paradox, but his amusing explanation only begs the question:

I remember . . . seeing two partially intoxicated men engaged in a fight with their great-coats on, which fight, after a long and rather harmless contest, ended in each having fought himself out of his own coat and into that of the other. If the two leading parties of this day are really identical with the two in the days of Jefferson and Adams, they have performed the same feat as the two drunken men.<sup>13</sup>

What made Lincoln a Whig was their emphasis on internal improvements in the interest of both farmers and capitalists. He was never for the "exclusive silk-stocking Whiggery."<sup>14</sup> People had a right to try to get rich. But he emphasized that "a large majority" of Americans "neither work for others nor have others working for them."<sup>15</sup> And he believed that "there is not, of necessity, any such thing as the free hired laborer being fixed to that condition for life."<sup>16</sup>

Lincoln knew that by freeing the slaves he would be remembered "to the latest generation." But he never forgot his origins. He indeed had been born in a log cabin. He read Shakespeare "perhaps as frequently as any unprofessional reader," but he had no more than one year of country schoolin'. Illinois was a frontier society and he could study law in an attorney's office and he rose from poverty. But the President of the United States warned Congress against

the effort to place capital on an equal footing with, if not above, labor, in the structure of government. It is assumed that labor is available only in connection with capital; that nobody labors unless somebody else, owning capital, somehow by the use of it induces him to labor . . . Capital is only the fruit of labor . . . Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration.<sup>17</sup>

It was not Lincoln's plebian tenets, but the continued rise of capitalism that inevitably destroyed slavery. The small farmers

loathed slavery but they alone could never have beaten it. If they could, they migrated away from its effects, as with the Lincoln family, which was from Kentucky. It was the North's massive industry and railroads, with the larger population they supported, that battered the South into submission. Capitalism was a more modern form of exploitation and it generated a higher morality which sanctioned the "terrible sublime" heroism of the Union Army. Without Lincoln, with his total commitment "that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth," the North would not have won. But we know that the reign of "capital . . . above labor," began the minute he died. He said, "The almighty has His own purposes." So does the objective state of the forces of production.

It is not difficult to understand the decay of Jefferson's party. Slavery became much more profitable with the cotton gin, thus silencing enlightened southerners who had argued against the system on grounds of its economic inefficiency. That same economic upturn meant many northern businessmen were now lucratively involved with the South as merchants, manufacturers or bankers. The spoils system party hacks saw the South as the bastion of Democratic national power. Many areas north of the Ohio River had been settled by diehard southern racists. The diehard hierarchy of the Catholic church tended to be unwaveringly opposed to emancipation. They rested on a base of Irish immigrants and feared emancipation would mean black migration northward and competition with their illiterate and unskilled flock.

Political transformations can take place because underlying economic developments become critical for substantial elements in a society. These can be a majority or a minority. Thus the fact that so many northerners were Democrats opposed to the war, or indifferent to the existence of slavery, should no more surprise us than the fact that about one-third of the colonists were Tories during the Revolution, and another third were effectively neutral.

## Notes

1. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., *The Age of Jackson*, forward.
2. Mary Young, "Indian Removal and Land Allotment: The Civilized Tribes and Jacksonian Justice," in (Thomas Frazier, ed.), *The Underside of American History*, p. 162.
3. Harold Faulkner, *American Political and Social History*, p. 193.
4. Schlesinger, p. 452.



5. Paul Boller, Jr., *Presidential Campaigns*. p. 99.
6. Ibid.
7. Faulkner, p. 326.
8. Philip Van Doren Stern, *The Life and Writings of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 427.
9. Boller, p. 115.
10. "Democratic Party," *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1911 edition), vol. 8, p. 3.
11. Faulkner, p. 354.
12. Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition*, p. 93.
13. Stern, p. 539.
14. Ibid., p. 536.
15. Ibid., p. 689.
16. Ibid., p. 690.
17. Ibid., p. 688.

### CHAPTER 3

## The Copperheads and the Bosses Carry On

Lincoln's policy towards the South was one of extreme leniency. He called for the readmittance of states if 10% of the white voters rejected slavery and set up a loyal regime. He had originally favored Jefferson's notion of colonizing the blacks, but soon realized that would never happen. He then favored granting the vote to veterans of the Union Army and "intelligent" blacks.

His death brought Andrew Johnson to power and it wasn't long before the Tennessee war Democrat and the "radical Republicans" had a ferocious falling out. Although, Johnson hated the slaveholders, he was anti-black. The radicals were determined to completely break the power of the planter class and demanded full black male suffrage. Eventually they tried to impeach the President, and failed by only one vote of the two-thirds needed in the Senate.

The question of whether such a conflict would have developed if Lincoln had not been shot can not be answered except by speculation. As it is hardly crucial in a history of the Democratic Party, it only calls for a few words here. Lincoln was temperamentally a conservative and a political realist. He went into the war with a program of safeguarding slavery where it already existed. Emancipation only became a serious proposition to him as a war measure, and it originally applied only to rebel states. Black recruitment into the military likewise was originally an expediency. In

both cases they developed into matters of principle with him. It is reasonable to think he would have moved to the left on reconstruction when confronted with the unwillingness of the southern Democrats to grant rights to the blacks and even reduce them to a sort of serfdom. The pressure of the radicals would have similarly moved the politician in Lincoln.

In the event, the 1868 Republican platform denounced Johnson and they picked Ulysses S. Grant as the party standard bearer. He really had no politics. He had voted for Buchanan, mainly because he didn't like Fremont, whom he knew from the pre-war army. Now as a candidate he said absolutely nothing and did no campaigning.

The Democrats chose Horatio Seymour of New York, one of the wealthiest men in the country. The former governor had been a Copperhead, opposed to emancipation. The party platform denounced radical reconstruction as "unconstitutional, revolutionary, and void" and insisted on "the regulation of the elective franchise in the states by their citizens," i.e., they favored disenfranchisement of the freedmen.<sup>1</sup>

Seymour was intimately connected with New York City's Tammany Hall machine run by Boss Tweed. In the early 1870s, Tweed was sent to prison for running perhaps the most corrupt city administration in history. Even the Brooklyn Bridge was built with faulty cables (fortunately it was prudently designed to bear a load six times greater than actually required). The party "reformers" who got rid of Tweed were also cronies of the cynical Seymour. These worthies were capitalists who believed in giving the people a fair shake. They favored ol' fashioned, over-the-counter exploitation of the poor, rather than under-the-table bribery, which they saw as an out-of-hand operating expense. The elegant Seymour wrote another party leader that "Our people want men in office who will not steal, but who will not interfere with those who do."<sup>2</sup>

In March, a northern "carpetbagger" in Mississippi was flogged 75 times by the new Ku Klux Klan and ordered to leave the state. An army officer brought the whipped man's blood-soaked nightshirt to Congress. A radical proposed a bill authorizing the use of the army to carry out federal policy in the ex-Confederate states and he punctuated his remarks by "waving the bloody shirt." Then, and for years after, the Republicans successfully waved the bloody shirt in the faces of their political foes. Grant



beat Seymour 3,012,833 to 2,703,249. His popular majority was due to the over 400,000 black votes in the South.

As long as the slaveholders' party ran Washington, tariffs were held down. Now the Republicans gave the northern capitalists their hearts' desire—the Morrill Tariff with protective duties of up to 47% ad valorem by the end of the war. They had a partisan interest in black suffrage in the South as that meant sure votes for the party. But genuine devotion to the most despised sector of a capitalist-dominated nation could never be expected of a party of the rich. They turned to making money on railroad rights of way and the like. If any one is almost the unanimous selection of historians as the worst American President, it surely was the party's first post-Lincoln choice. By the end of Grant's scandal ridden administrations, few contemporaries would have differed with the dejected exclamation of Republican Senator Grimes of Iowa that his party "is today the (most) corrupt and debauched political party that has ever existed."<sup>3</sup>

Again we can ask what would have happened if Lincoln had lived? We know he was disgusted at the endless stream of office seekers who importuned him in the White House. And we know he was impeccably honest. When he said, "In times like the present, men should utter nothing for which they would not be willingly responsible through time and in eternity," he meant every word.<sup>4</sup> Had he lived, we probably would have gotten civil service earlier on. Instead grafting became an integral aspect of our politics.

### **The Candidate Ends Up in the Madhouse**

The party of Tammany Hall was in no position to capitalize on the revulsion against the Republicans' pécadilloes. Instead the GOP split, with the reformers calling themselves the Liberal Republican Party. Although they had in their ranks some of the leading figures of the day, including the Chief Justice, their incredible choice for 1872 was Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune*, the country's first mass circulation paper.

There is a saying that when history repeats itself, it is always as farce. Greeley's early life sounds like a rerun of Ben Franklin's story. Like Franklin, the poor printer ends up a fabulous business success. But that is where the similarity ends. Franklin comes down to us as a sort of plumpish tinkerer, a cracker barrel sage.

In fact, he was worldly, realistic and, because of his origins, the most democratic minded of the Fathers. Greeley, on the other hand, was a run-on crackpot. At various times he was enthusiastic about prohibition, 'utopian socialist colonies, spiritualist "rappings," and, of course, abolition. Except that after the war it was this odd man who put up the bond to get Jefferson Davis out of jail.

The new party demanded civil service reforms. While it called for equal justice for blacks, it combined this with the demand that the military be pulled out of the South. This doubtlessly was a prime reason why the Democrats decided to back Greeley. His campaign turned into a pure disaster. While many Republicans were disgusted with their party's decay, they were repelled at the notion of an alliance with the party of the KKK and Tammany. Grant pulverized him, 3,597,070 to 2,834,079. Greeley carried only six states, all southern.

His end was sad. It was bad enough being dismissed by most intellectuals as a crank and a joke, but his wife took fatally sick during the campaign. He himself had always suffered from insomnia and the bedside ordeal made it worse. He developed an inflammation of the upper membrane of the brain and with it delirium. He died in a private madhouse three weeks after the election.

### **A Bird in Hand Is Worth Losing the White House**

Republican policy towards the South was based on two considerations. There were some who genuinely wanted to protect the rights of the freedmen. Others were concerned to use them to break up the Democrats' national power base. With the end of slavery, the South actually got a political bonus. A slave had only counted as three-fifths of a person for the purpose of apportioning Representatives by population. As freemen they were full persons and the number of Dixie congressmen rose. If they stayed all white and Democrat, the chances were they would vote against protective tariffs. Thus northern capital had a material basis for waving the bloody shirt.

During Sherman's Georgia campaign the War Department issued Special Order #15, giving 40 acres per freedman out of confiscated Confederate property along the coast, but they withheld giving title until Congress could act. Over 40,000 blacks

moved in, and ex-slaves and their abolitionist sympathizers hoped for a general policy on those lines. But Johnson pardoned all but the wealthiest rebels, thus restoring the property of most ex-Confederates. The Special Order was revoked in June 1865.

For the planters to have been overthrown, the government would have had to expropriate them, divide the land between the ex-slaves and the po' white trash, provide them with working capital and guns to protect their gains. Instead, everything done to protect the Blacks was from above, by the military or bureaucrats. The Marxist dictum that any government is the executive committee of the economic ruling class is not only true, it is a truism. Sooner or later, the local governmental superstructure had to correspond to the property relations. The few thousand troops in the postwar army could not indefinitely protect the blacks without a Jacobin land reform. By the 1876 election, racist Democrats had power in all but Louisiana, South Carolina and Florida.

"The devil is sick. The devil a monk would be." If the Republicans hoped to get the public's mind off their corruption, they had no choice but to run a pro-civil service candidate. Not to be outdone, the Democrats ran Samuel Tilden. Another Copperhead, he had collaborated with Tammany. He finally broke with them after it became obvious they were going to get caught. The railroad's millionaire lawyer was another "goo-goo," an educated gent whose notion of social change went no further than good government, i.e., power would stay with the rich, but the party bosses would keep their fingers out of the till.

When the results were in, Tilden clearly had won the popular vote, 4,300,000 to 4,036,000. He was ahead in electoral votes, 184 to 165, one vote shy of victory. But 20 votes were in dispute, one from Oregon, the rest from the three southern Republican states.

It is impossible to say who really won in these three states. Where they could, the Republicans brought out the black vote, as often as possible, as it were; and the KKK tried to drive them away from the polls. As soon as the election was over, both parties rushed down country to try to bribe the local officials to certify their tiger as the winner. It seems the Democrats were just a mite too tight-fisted in this contest. At any rate, a federal electoral commission was set up to decide between the bogus figures sent to Washington by the local officials.

There was talk by northern Democrats of violence if they were



jobbed or, more accurately, out-jobbed of their due. But Tilden was too much of a conservative businessman to sanction any sort of popular upheaval. More importantly, the southern Bourbons were more interested in getting rid of the troops than in pushing a Wall Street lawyer into power. A deal was struck. Hayes took the presidency, and the troops were withdrawn. The age of the "carpetbagger" was over. The blacks were disenfranchised, either legally or by terror or both, by the Democratic Party in those states, with the tacit approval of the quondam party of Abraham Lincoln.

### **How Many Civil War Generals Did It Take to Blow Out a Candle?**

In 1880, after the southern Democrats won their war against the blacks, the national party nominated a war Democrat, General Winfield Scott Hancock, a genuine hero who had been severely wounded at Gettysburg. The Republicans ran James Garfield, an Ohio congressman.

The campaign was extremely boring. Both platforms talked above civil service and denounced aiding parochial schools. Both parties opposed further immigration of Chinese heathens who were taking away the jobs of "A-murican" laundrymen. To say nothing of putting too much starch in collars. Hancock was not bright, to say the least. Thomas Nast, the great cartoonist of the age, who had almost singlehandedly destroyed Boss Tweed, did a picture of a perplexed Hancock asking an adviser, "Who is tariff, and why is he for revenue only?"<sup>5</sup> The Republican won, 4,454,416 to 4,444,952.

### **"Rum, Romanism and Rebellion"**

Upper class reform found its perfect expression in the Democratic Presidential candidate in 1884. Stephen Grover Cleveland was a poor clergyman's son who had drifted into Buffalo, New York, in his late teens, studied law in an office there and had risen to become a reform Governor of the state. His career is characterized throughout by his extreme conscientiousness and efficiency.

His opponent, James Blaine, was a typical Republican of the day, mouthing the usual pieties against the South, and in favor of civil service, all the while on the take from various railroad

moguls. The campaign was extremely scandal ridden. Turns out that young Grover had carnal knowledge of a lady not his wife, and had a child, little Oscar. But Blaine got into trouble just a few days before the election when he listened to a Protestant preacher endorse him and denounce the Democrats as the party of "rum, Romanism and rebellion."

One of the ways to keep your sanity during an American election is by not listening to speeches, and Blaine missed the remark. The Democrats played it to the hilt in Irish neighborhoods in New York and elsewhere. In fact, Blaine was Irish Catholic on his mother's side. But there wasn't enough time for this to get out. He made matters worse that same night, October 29, by showing up at a fund raising bash at Delmonico's, the restaurant of choice of the millionaires, and *The New York World* raged at him, with a story headlined "The Royal Feast of Belshazzar Blaine and the money kings." Cleveland's majority was small, 4,874,986 to 4,851,981, but enough to end the 24 year Democratic exile from national power.

Cleveland was an extremely conservative "goldbug." Believe it or not, time was when, in 1887, the U.S. had a treasury surplus, and Cleveland saw a way of reducing the surplus by cutting tariffs, which brought in about two-thirds of government revenue. Naturally this aroused capitalist elements who were being protected, and they poured money into the 1888 campaign of his rival, Benjamin Harrison. Cleveland was of the old school. He refused to make election speeches, and Harrison won in the electoral college, 233 to 168, although Cleveland's popular vote, 5,540,329, was over 100,000 more than Harrison's 5,439,853. Moderns shouldn't feel sorry for him, however, when we recall that his southern friends were ensuring his popular victory by keeping down the black Republican vote.

The two fought it out again in 1892. Ever since the days of the second bank there had been a running battle between fiscal conservatives and proponents of what has come to be called "funny money." Western farmers and small merchants, in debt to banks and big business, liked "greenbacks"—fiat money issued without metallic backing during the Civil War—or silver dollars, nominally overvalued vis-a-vis gold coins, because both were inflationary. This meant debts were contracted when, say, a bushel of wheat sold for \$1.00, and paid back when the bushel was worth \$1.10. This reasoning became widespread in the 1890s, leading to the

rise of the People's Party, which ran James Weaver in 1892. But bimetallism permeated both major parties as well, and in 1890, Congress had authorized increased purchases of silver bullion. Cleveland's goldbugism made him more popular than Harrison with Wall Street, and he ended up with more campaign funds than his Republican rival.

Cleveland won, 5,556,543 to Harrison's 5,175,582 and Weaver's 1,040,886. The Populists were really the moral victors, though, winning in five western states. To many, friend and foe, it looked like they were the coming party.

In 1893, the country plunged into a deep depression. There were a number of causes, foreign and domestic, but big business attributed it primarily to fear that the country would go off the gold standard. At any rate, more than 600 banks failed that year, and over 30,000 miles of railroads went into receivership. Cleveland forced Congress to repeal the silver purchase law authorizing future coinage. Then, when holders of existing silver dollars turned them in and caused a run of the gold reserve, Cleveland sold bonds to Wall Street, at huge premiums, in return for gold obtained abroad. The scheme, which netted millions for J. Pierpont Morgan, August Belmont and the Rothschilds, infuriated the party's farmer base in the South and West.

As the depression developed, many companies cut wages and labor fought back. The most important struggle was the Pullman strike in 1894. Despite the protests of Illinois Governor John Altgeld, Cleveland used the Sherman Anti-Trust Act to send troops to break the strike by clearing the way for mail trains. At the end of his second term, the 1896 convention repudiated virtually everything he had done in regard to silver and the strike. In the election, Cleveland supported a goldbug "National Democratic" slate, largely subsidized by the Republicans to split the Democratic vote, against the regular nominee. The party was now to be turned upside down. The goldbug would be superceded by the free silver fanatic.

## Notes

1. Paul Boller Jr., *Presidential Campaigns*, p. 124.
2. Matthew Josephson, *The Politicos*, p. 153.
3. Boller, p. 127.
4. Philip Van Doren Stern, *The Life and Writings of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 743.
5. Boller, p. 143.



## CHAPTER 4

# The Democrats as the Party of Reform

Any intelligent American knows Grover Cleveland was President of the United States. Yet few would try to tell you anything about his politics. But every literate American knows what William Jennings Bryan believed. They know him for two things: He made one of the world's most famous speeches, and he made a monkey of himself denying that humans evolved from the apes.

The Depression of 1893 and the rise of the Populists assured that the silver forces would take over the 1896 convention. But Bryan for President? That was a joke even on the morning of his famous speech. He was the favorite-son candidate of Nebraska and he had a few votes from the Indian Territory, or Oklahoma. That was it. But the rest of the story is well known. This shrewd country lawyer knew he indeed had a silver voice and an extraordinary ability to articulate the rage of the farmer being plowed under by the banks, the railroads and the politicians. If he ever got the floor for any length of time, the nomination would be his. He got the time, at the very end of the debate on bimetallism, and he used it to place himself in the history books forever.

It really was a great speech—from a rhetorical standpoint, and if you totally ignore its economics, which were both single minded and simple minded. At any rate, his closing lines are permanently part of our history:

If they dare to come out in the open field and defend the gold standard as a good thing, we will fight them to the uttermost. Having behind us the producing masses of this nation and the world, supported by the commercial interests, the laboring interests, and the toilers everywhere, we will answer their demand for a gold standard by saying to them: You shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns, you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold.<sup>1</sup>

The convention demonstrated for an hour. It took five ballots for him to get the nomination, but it really never was in doubt. The Populists took a little longer to get on the bandwagon. They had a real program. They wanted regulation of the trusts and railroads, a graduated income tax which would take something out of the pockets of the rich, tariff reduction, no more court injunctions against strikers, popular election of Senators. Silver was just one plank in their platform. Besides, there were all those machine hacks and millionaires in the Democratic Party.

For all this, the Populists went along. Educating people to your principles and solidly organizing those people take time. But the occupational sickness of democracy is opportunism. Most folks want to win something here and now, not somewhere down the line. The Populists thought they could win. At least they would get bimetallism. And they didn't want to be blamed if they didn't endorse Bryan, and he lost because they didn't back him. They couldn't accept his running mate, Arthur Sewall, a big shipbuilder from Maine. They ran one of their leaders for Vice President. Bryan insisted they had to take Sewall. The party swallowed him—and disappeared off the face of the earth. Of course they didn't get Bryan elected, and they didn't get their joint bimetal plank enacted. One of those amongst them who understood what was happening, Henry Demarest Lloyd, a well-known muck-racker, sadly wrote

The People's Party is a fortuitous collection of the dissatisfied. If it had been organized around a clear-cut *principle*, of which its practical proposals were merely external expressions, it could never have been seduced into fusion, nor induced even to consider the nomination of a man like Bryan who rejects its bottom doctrine. Such a party will have to be built up by conscious effort or evolved by the sharp pressure of events.

Free silver is the cow-bird of the Reform movement. It waited

until the nest had been built by the sacrifices and labor of others, and then it laid its eggs in it, pushing out the others which lie smashed on the ground. It is now flying around while we are expected to do the incubating.<sup>2</sup>

### **“I’m Not So Very Dangerous After All”**

The Republicans picked William McKinley, a solid gold servant of Wall Street if there ever was one. The rich were terrified. Bryan barnstormed the country, giving 600 speeches, reaching an incredible five million people. He did talk about other things, but he really was a fanatic and tied everything to the free coinage of silver. With a line like that, he couldn’t get a pin in the way of campaign donations from business. The Republicans had \$7 million in their kitty to his \$300,000. Money can’t buy happiness—or so it is said. But it sure buys American elections. McKinley won with 7,111,617 votes, Bryan received 6,509,052, with John Palmer, the gold National Democrat, taking 135,000 votes. Most Democratic goldbugs didn’t waste time with Palmer and voted for McKinley.

Bryan and McKinley were nominated again in 1900. With more gold fields being worked in the Yukon and South Africa, the money supply expanded and the silver issue faded away for most people—except Bryan, of course. He insisted the party reaffirm unlimited silver coinage at 16:1 as a sacred principle.

The real issue, more or less, was imperialism. When the Spanish American war broke out, Bryan volunteered for it. If we were to take seriously all his talk about the politicians crucifying mankind, he might be compared to an early Christian volunteering for the Roman army. However, the imperialist nature of the war became inescapable with the taking of the Philippines by the U.S. Americans had no problem justifying the exploitation of Indians, their lands were “empty” you see, and segregation of blacks was justified by their “inferiority.” But taking a whole country at one gulp was a little much for many people. Anti-imperialist leagues sprang up, with many prominent people involved, the most famous, for us, being Mark Twain.

Bryan was in over his head on this issue. He actually favored the peace treaty, which gave the “appropriated” country to the U.S. and only afterwards called for Filipino independence, which was sort of like closing the barn door after the neighbor’s horse



was already inside. The public had lost interest. There had been very few American casualties in the brief war and it had no negative impact on most people. People voted along traditional lines, and McKinley trounced Bryan, 7,219,525 to 6,358,737. Eugene Victor Debs, who had organized the Pullman strike and been jailed for six months by Cleveland, also ran, on the Socialist Party ticket, receiving 97,730 votes.

An anarchist assassinated McKinley in 1901 and Teddy Roosevelt became President. After two defeats behind the silver-mad Bryan, the Democrats turned to a goldbug, Alton Parker, as their 1904 candidate. Many defeated Presidential candidates are obscure to us today. But Parker was just as obscure when he ran. Chief Justices of the New York State Court of Appeals do not make national news every day. While no one today really knows why Teddy should have his face on Mount Rushmore, nevertheless that strange combination of imperialist and reformer emerged as one of the most vibrant men of his day. Parker stood no chance. Roosevelt took 6,623,486 votes. Parker got 5,077,971, and Debs received 402,321.

Parker's total defeat gave Bryan one last chance to get the brass ring. By 1908, public feeling against the trusts was nearly universal and the platforms of both major parties made pious sounds against them. But Bryan was hardly the Robespierre of the day. He visited Roosevelt in the White House and told him that "Some people think I'm a terrible radical, but I'm not so very dangerous after all." He wrote to a newspaper that "It is time to call a halt on Socialism in the United States. The movement is going too far."<sup>3</sup> The farthest he would go was government ownership of railroads, which he saw as being in the interest of farmers, and which he thought was immunization against full scale socialism. When it was obvious that government ownership wasn't popular, he backtracked even on that. In a totally boring contest, the Republican, William Howart Taft, beat him, 7,677,788 to 6,407,982. Debs' vote total went up very slightly, to 420,820.

Bryan went on to become Woodrow Wilson's Secretary of State in 1913, but with his 1908 defeat, grassroots populism was dead. Its defeat was well explained in Bryan's day by Walter Lippmann, later one of the country's most prominent bourgeois journalists, but at the time a young socialist:

Bryan . . . thought he was fighting plutocracy: as a matter of fact,

he was fighting something much deeper than that; he was fighting the larger scale of human life . . . which had . . . introduced specialization and science, had destroyed village loyalties, frustrated private ambitions, and created the impersonal relationships of the modern world . . . That is why he is so irresistibly funny to sophisticated newspapermen . . . He is the true Don Quixote of our politics, for he moves in a world that has ceased to exist. He is a more genuine conservative than some propertied bigot. Bryan stands for the popular tradition of America, whereas most of his enemies stand merely for the power that is destroying that tradition.<sup>4</sup>

### The "Presbyterian Priest"

It is hard to think of a more grating American President than Stephen Woodrow Wilson. Of southern Presbyterians of Ulster Irish descent, he gave an initial impression of intellectual sanctity which often turned into disgust as his meanness and hypocrisy inevitably emerged. He was the President of Princeton University and his entree into practical politics came in 1910 when the New Jersey Democratic machine needed a "goo-goo" to front for it. Almost immediately he turned on them, but not before Boss Jim Smith pegged him as a "Presbyterian priest."<sup>5</sup> Later, Teddy Roosevelt called him a "Byzantine logothete," meanin' a high-falutin' doubletalker, and that was also the man whom no one ever called Woody.

Wilson only became President because of a split in the Republican Party in 1912. The reality of domination of the country by the rich had become so glaring that it was simply impossible for intelligent people to evade. Roosevelt had thought his successor, Taft, was in favor of reform. But, in spite of a few anti-trust cases brought by Taft's Attorney General, it became obvious he was fronting for the monopolies. Roosevelt tried to get the Republican nomination but the hacks and corporation lawyers jobbed him out of it. The "bull moose" was not the one to sit quietly in anyone's corral and he walked out and set up his Progressive Party.

Taft realized early on that he couldn't win. But he saw Roosevelt as an unmitigated demagogue and did what he could to make sure Teddy didn't win. The difference between Roosevelt and Wilson boiled down to this: Roosevelt thought huge corporations and monopolies were here to stay and were progressive in

that they made for efficiency. His idea was to control them via regulatory commissions. Wilson prattled about breaking the large corporations, so that the small businessman had a chance. The fallacy of both concepts is clear: what difference does it make to an employee if he or she works for one giant corporation with 50,000 coolies, or if he or she works for one of five corporations, each one with 10,000 wage slaves? In either case the worker gets no more cheese than a mouse in the walls of one of their factories. The advanced sector of labor backed Debs.

Wilson took 41.9% of the vote. Roosevelt got 27.4%, Taft received only 23.4%. Debs' vote jumped from 420,000 to 897,011, six per cent, which we now know was to be the largest vote for an anti-capitalist Presidential candidate in our history.

Perhaps the best example of Wilson's malice was his policy towards blacks. In 1913, some cracker Congressmen introduced legislation banning intermarriage in the District of Columbia. Government workers would have been segregated. Public transportation would also be Jim-Crowed. The bills didn't make it. But Wilson, on his own, segregated government shops, offices, restrooms and lunchrooms.<sup>6</sup>

Later, in his second administration, delegations of Irish-American Catholics came to him, asking for his intervention on behalf of the Irish Republican movement, then revolting against British oppression. He smiled on them, and said he would look into it. When they left he told his intimates how much he, the descendant of Ulster Protestants, loathed them.

Even though he was a Democrat, he had said that Bryan was "foolish and dangerous in his theoretical beliefs."<sup>7</sup> But that was before "the boy orator of the Platte" used his influence to get Wilson the nomination. Wilson repaid Bryan by making him Secretary of State. Except that by 1913 everyone knew that the river was "six inches deep and six miles wide at the mouth."<sup>8</sup> At any rate, the yahoo promptly put the marines into Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Mexico.

Bryan spoke truthfully when he said he wasn't a dangerous radical. He never had a principled quarrel with capitalism, only with how the pie was being sliced. He didn't give a damn about the Filipinos when he mouthed off about imperialism in 1900. His concern was with the effect of the U.S. occupation on domestic politics. Now that he and his party were in power, he forgot about all his past talk about Filipino independence. His racism



was artless. When a banker told him rich Haitians sent their children to Paris for schooling, he exclaimed, "Dear me. Think of it! Niggers speaking French."<sup>9</sup>

### **"The World Must Be Made Safe for Democracy"**

World War I put Wilson to the test and he failed. He talked loftily about being "impartial in thought as well as action."<sup>10</sup> But this was from a man whose favorite vacation was bicycling around the English lake country. At first he would not let bankers make loans to belligerents. But America had entered a recession in 1913. Allied war purchases pulled the country out. The original orders drew on existing British wealth in the U.S. Then, after Bryan left the cabinet in 1915, his successor convinced Wilson to lift the loan ban. By 1917, the U.S. sold over \$2 billion in supplies to the Allies, a huge sum then.

The war dominated the 1916 election. The Republicans ran Charles Evans Hughes, ex-Governor of New York, who attacked Wilson from the right, denouncing him for not standing up to German U-boat warfare. In fact, Germany stopped unrestricted sub warfare after Wilson's protests. The Democrats were delighted at the Republican war talk. Their slogan was "He kept us out of war."

Wilson won handily, with 9,129,606 votes to Hughes' 8,538,221. Allen Benson, the Socialist candidate, got only 581,113 ballots. Many radicals voted for Wilson because of his anti-war line. However, the Germans renewed unrestricted submarine warfare on January 31, 1917, figuring that existing U.S. trade with Britain hopelessly tilted the war against them. The Germans hoped the U-boats would starve the British out before America could fully mobilize the war. Forty-eight lives were lost on eight U.S. vessels in February and March. Wilson called for war in April: "The world must be made safe for democracy."<sup>11</sup>

Of course! Democracy without women's sufferage, to be sure. Wilson privately detested the sufferagettes and did not support their cause until 1918, after the House had passed the Nineteenth Amendment. And democracy for whites only. The military was entirely segregated.

On September 5, 1917, meeting halls of the Industrial Workers of the World, a radical union, were raided by Department of Justice agents. Days later the headquarters of the Socialist Party

were stormed. Dozens of leftist newspapers were suppressed, frequently by being barred from the mails. In February 1918, the entire executive committee of the IWW was arrested. By March, 2,000 "wobblies" were under arrest. After several mass trials, most were sentenced to 10 to 20 years for opposing the imperial carnage. The national committee of the Socialist Party was indicted. On June 20, 1918, Debs was arrested for sedition. He was given 10 years.

The "red scare" did not end with the war, on November 11, 1918. Lenin had come to power in Russia. In the real world, the American workers were far more interested in baseball than Bolshevism. But the government saw a red under every bed, and the persecution increased. The army was used against the 1919 steel strikers in Gary, Indiana. On January 2, 1920, over 10,000 people, citizens and aliens alike, were hauled out of bed by agents of the Justice Department. Later, 6,500 were released without any charge. Most of the others were held on innumerable charges but eventually were released. These "Palmer raids," named so after A. Mitchell Palmer, Wilson's Attorney General, and other aspects of this infamous witch hunt, have been dealt with in detail elsewhere. But, as there are still liberal professorial windbags who call Wilson a liberal, it must be pointed out that it was Warren Harding, for whom none of the liberals have any respect, who granted executive clemency to Debs, and had him as a White House guest.

### **"Is There Any Child Here, Who Does Not Know"**

All good things must end—even wars to make the world safe for democracy. As usual, Wilson's mouth was full of piety. He called for a "peace between equals." But no country had gotten into the slaughter for nothing. As we know, the Versailles Treaty which ended the war was every bit as imperialist as the winners could make it. After the carnage was over, Wilson finally admitted the economic motivations behind the war. In St. Louis, on September 5, 1919, he casually declared,

Why, my fellow citizens, is there any man or any woman, let me say is there any child here, who does not know that the seed of war in the modern world is industrial and commercial rivalry? The real reason that the war we have just finished took place was

that Germany was afraid her commercial rivals were going to get the better of her, and the reason why some nations went into the war against Germany was that they thought Germany would get the commercial advantage of them. . . . This war, in its inception was a commercial and industrial war. It was not a political war.<sup>12</sup>

Translated into English: what Debs and the left had claimed was true, and that was known to Wilson when he jailed them. In 1918, he privately told a friend that:

The world is going to change radically, and I am satisfied that . . . the government will have to take over all the great natural resources . . . If I should say that outside, people would call me a socialist, but I am not a socialist. And it is because I am not a socialist that . . . I think the only way we can prevent communism is by some action as that.<sup>13</sup>

The historian Richard Hofstadter once remarked that "The last part of his career seems like the work of a somnambulist who repeats unerringly his appointed workday rounds while his mind moves in an insulated shadow world."<sup>14</sup> This is apt. He knew better than to do what he was doing, and did it anyway. This might be said to be the paradigm for most 20th century liberals. They are not stupid. They see the world is divided into exploiters and exploited. They know this system does not and cannot ever work in the interest of the masses. Yet they go along with it, even run it, as with Wilson. Because, above all, they are 'realists.'

Wilson gloomily assessed his life's work: "What I seem to see—with all my heart I hope that I am wrong—is a tragedy of disappointment."<sup>15</sup> Except that in classic Greek dramatic theory tragedy can only happen to the great. There wasn't a dot of greatness in this Philistine.

### **Back to Dull Normalcy**

It is a sad commentary on our history that virtually all contemporary scholars agree that not only did the candidate most obviously dedicated to the well being of the average worker lose the 1920 election, but that he was in the Federal penitentiary in Atlanta. The Democrat, James Cox, was governor of Ohio. The Republican, Warren Harding, was its Senator. Cox toured the country speaking for Wilson's League of Nations, but now that



the rush of naive patriotism had run its course, no one could really see what the ordinary American had gotten out of the war, or would get out of the League. Ohio's Senator defeated its Governor, 16,152,200 to 9,147,353, with Debs getting 919,800. However, with all women over 21 now having the vote, Debs' tally represented an actual decline in the Socialist Party's strength. The hard left, the Communists, had been expelled from the party after the Bolshevik revolution, effectively killing the party as an electoral force.

The 1924 convention was one of the most extraordinary in Democratic history. The two biggest elements in the party were the solid South and the big city machines of the North. A new KKK had been organized in 1915. Unlike the first Klan, the new movement rapidly developed into a national power, capable of putting 100,000 hooded members on parade in front of the White House in 1925. The upsurge created immense problems for the party because the organization raged against Catholics, and Irish and other Catholics were the mainstay of the northern party.

An anti-Klan resolution was presented to the platform committee. It fought over the plan for four days but the most the party could come up with was a meaningless position against any attempt to curtail constitutional liberties. The committee's report triggered a riot. Hundreds of police had to break up the fight on the floor of, appropriately enough, New York's Madison Square Garden. The motion against the Klan was presented to the main body. After hours of furious debate, it was narrowly voted down, 542.15 to 541.15. (The Democrats allowed state parties to fractionalize their votes.) The most the party would do was abstractly condemn "any effort to arouse religious or racial dissension."<sup>16</sup>

The Kluxers backed William McAdoo, Wilson's son-in-law, against the Catholics' Al Smith. After nine days and 103 ballots, the exhausted convention chose John W. Davis, a conservative Wall Street lawyer.

Harding had died in office and had been succeeded by Calvin Coolidge, who had no trouble getting the Republican nomination. The choice between Coolidge and Davis was so dismal that a new Progressive Party was set up, with Wisconsin Senator Robert La Follette as its nominee. For the first time, the American Federation of Labor endorsed a candidate, motivated by La Follette's clear support for labor on every issue, in contrast to the dead-end toryism of the two major party candidates. The Socialist Party

also backed him.

The election never was in doubt. Coolidge received 15,725,003 votes, (54%), Davis, 8,385,586 (28.8%). La Follette got only 4,826,471 votes (16.5%), but he outpolled the Democrat in 11 western states, including California.

It is remarkable that the party which battled so fiercely and at such great length about religion in 1924 should nominate Smith on the first ballot in 1928, in a convention in Houston. At any rate, he is known to anyone literate about American politics as the first Catholic Presidential candidate. But few people can tell anything about him except for a vague notion that he was for repeal of prohibition. Everyone knows his theme song was "Side-walks of New York" and the assumption is that he was a populist liberal. In fact, he was always identified with Tammany Hall. His campaign manager in the 1928 election was John Raskob, a millionaire connected with General Motors and Du Pont. Later, he was to oppose Roosevelt from the right, joking that his advisers "caught the Socialists in swimming and they ran away with their clothes."<sup>17</sup>

The Republicans chose Herbert Hoover. If he had not run for President his later obituary would have described him as a great engineer and humanitarian. Smith was later to insist that he lost because of religion. That explains only the massiveness of Hoover's triumph. But people were working, and a lot of middle class folks were making money on the stock exchange. Any Democrat would have lost that year.

Smith's Catholicism helped him in the North. He won in Boston, Cleveland, New York City, St. Louis and San Francisco, all having gone Republican in 1924. Where he got blasted was in the South. Five states there went Republican for the first time since Reconstruction. The popular vote was overwhelming, 21,392,190 to 15,016,443.

### **Franklin D. Roosevelt:**

#### **The Man Who Put the Light Bulb in the Outhouse**

The Democrats used to have numerous Jefferson/Jackson Day banquets. For the most part, these have gone by the board. Today the party's patron saint is Franklin Delano Roosevelt. It is easy to understand why. Millions of common folk lived through his three-plus administrations. During the first, he gave them

unemployment insurance, rural electrification and other programs in their hour of need. Most have since retired on Social Security. The Republicans never did anything as remotely beneficial.

Whenever we discuss politics, past or present, it is important to put it into its popular perspective: what were the American people like in those days? We know that in 1942, only 40% of Americans could locate India or China on an outline world map.<sup>18</sup> Even fewer could have identified them in 1933. Millions were illiterate. Many more could barely read a newspaper. Of those who could read, far more could recognize Dick Tracy, a cartoon character, than the President of the United States. Most people were deeply religious, and when the Depression hit, they thought it was punishment for the nation's sins, to say nothing of their own. Then Roosevelt came along and, out of the goodness of his heart, for all they knew, gave them jobs, money and hope. He did not give them their share of the nation's wealth, which we, educated philosophers, know was their due. But they were not philosophers and of course supported him. Truly, poor people have poor ways.

No one in 1932 saw Roosevelt as any kind of serious social reformer. Bankers and stock brokers gave roughly 25% of the campaign contributions of \$1,000 received by the party that year. There were only vague references to relief of the unfortunate and public works, i.e., support for government development of electric power and aid to farmers in the platform, surrounded by verbiage about cutting government expenditures and balancing the budget. He made no specific labor speech nor did he make any appeal to blacks.

Norman Thomas ran as the Socialist candidate and William Z. Foster was the Communist nominee. Both received some support from intellectuals who could not bring themselves to vote for "Herbert Roosevelt." Roosevelt did not "win" the election. Hoover lost it. He had tied himself into a laissez faire straitjacket and had no more contact with reality than a lunatic in an asylum. People would have voted for any Democrat that year, including Smith, or even the Pope. Roosevelt won, 22,821,857 to 15,761,841. Thomas got roughly 882,000 votes, Foster about 103,000.

### **Hey! You Forgot My Hat!**

It is not necessary to list the entire "alphabet soup" of Rooseveltian programs. The new President was the first to admit



he did not have a fully thought out battle plan. He had two concerns. Business had to be revived, which meant the government had to prime the pump, restoring financial confidence by guaranteeing farm mortgages, bank deposits and the like. And the masses had to get relief before there was a social explosion.

An anarchist once told me a story which gives an example of the kind of thing Roosevelt feared. The anarchist couldn't find work and was living on a friend's farm near Bakersfield in the early months of 1933. There was a nearby klan of Kluxers, who had come out there to grow cotton. Of course, there was no market for it and they were in a bad way indeed. The anarchist got to talkin' to them. They all had guns, he said. Why then didn't they behave like men and go into the city and raid some warehouses so they could feed their families? They thought about it. They came back and told him they were going to telegraph the new President. If they did not get emergency relief—immediately—they would attack the warehouses. Their wire no sooner got to the White House than a plane got out to California; one of them thar politician fellas showed up, with chits for supplies. And all the gals got free permanents, courtesy of the government of the United States of America.

"The belly has no ears." These folks weren't reds. But they listened to one. Either the millions got something or there would be bloodshed and, eventually, revolution. The perms? The politicians know the poor, even if the poor don't know them. Women need perms about as much as a moose needs a hatrack. But in those days, uneducated people tried to look like the rich. Poor women loved perms. Roosevelt got more votes with that bit of trickiness than he would have if he had given them a school house for their kids.

Roosevelt's reforms either got the wheels of business turning again or headed off discontent and made for social stability. He talked about "driving the money changers from the temple," which of course is out of the Bible, and about "economic royalists." But, if the standard of living of the poor went up, from nothing to next to nothing, the capitalists' share of the ownership of America did not go down appreciably. At the beginning of the Depression the richest one percent of the population owned 36% of the country's wealth. In 1983, the top one percent held 34%, exclusive of pensions.<sup>19</sup>

"A true conservative," he always insisted, "corrects injustices

to preserve social peace.’’<sup>20</sup> That never prevented most capitalists from hating him. He compared them to the old fool who was saved from drowning but who denounced his rescuer for not saving his hat.<sup>21</sup>

### **“A Plague on Both Your Houses”**

Many leftists embraced Roosevelt precisely because of the reforms the Tories abhorred. Liberalism is a difficult ideology to define. But however defined, until then there was no automatic link between liberalism and the Democrats. Many people considering themselves liberals voted for Teddy Roosevelt and La Follette. After 1936, the vast majority of people describing themselves as liberals have voted Democrat.

Until Roosevelt, a portion of the union leadership and intelligentsia were enrolled in the Socialist Party. Upton Sinclair, one of the day’s most famous authors, was among the first to enter the Democratic Party with a socialist perspective. He ran for Governor of California in 1934 on the Democratic line, with his EPIC program, standing for End Poverty in California. The state would take over idle land and factories and run them as an example to the rest of the society. He received 37% of the poll, far more than he would have obtained running on the Socialist Party line. The EPIC clubs dominated the party for the next few years, but as left liberals, without any reference to socialism.

The dominant element in the bureaucracy of New York’s needle trades unions, then predominantly Jewish, left the Socialist Party for Roosevelt. They had grave reservations, however, about direct entry into the New York Democratic Party. In 1932, Jimmy Walker, the dapper “night Mayor of New York,” was forced to resign and flee abroad in the wake of a corruption scandal. When Roosevelt took office, he had no choice but to cut off all patronage to the thieves in Tammany Hall. Accordingly, the bureaucrats set up the American Labor Party, nominally independent, but in reality another ballot line for Roosevelt, designed to catch left votes. In Minnesota, the Farmer-Labor Party, already in existence, controlled by the American Federation of Labor and a power in local politics, came under increasing pressure to merge with the Democrats, which it later did, during the war. The Congress of Industrial Organizations, which set up shop in 1935,

was committed to the Democratic Party from inception, save for its leader, John L. Lewis, who broke with Roosevelt in 1940. The Communist Party ran its own candidate for President in 1936 but entered the Democratic Party in full force after the election and remained inside until the Hitler-Stalin pact in 1939.

There were still a few Republicans then who were certainly liberals, as with Mayor Fiorello La Guardia in New York, but it is this pre-war period when liberalism became firmly identified with the Democratic Party, via Roosevelt, at least on a national level. While their support for him was deep, even emotional, their attitude toward the party per se was necessarily more critical, given the Dixiecrat racists and other rightists and crooks in it. Indeed it is in these years that the notion of the Democrats as the obligatory lesser evil became a cardinal dogma of modern day liberalism.

Workers thought Roosevelt was pro-union because of Section 7(a) of the National Industrial Recovery Act, which guaranteed collective bargaining. But it did not simultaneously ban bogus "company unions." However, the AFL's leaders were willing enough to use the illusions of the masses. Their slogan was "the President wants you to join." But many NIRA administrators were anti-union. By February 1935, *The New York Times* reported labor's leaders despaired of further large scale recruiting "in the face of powerful industrial interests and an unsympathetic administration."<sup>22</sup>

When it was feared the Supreme Court would strike down the NIRA, Senator Robert Wagner pushed through the "Wagner Act," hailed by labor as its "magna carta," which continued the principle of 7(a). While it was the high point of New Deal pro-unionism, the fact is that Roosevelt did not support it while it was before the Senate, and only backed it when it was obvious that it would pass the House.

That the President was not genuinely pro-labor was demonstrated on May 30, 1937. The Steel Workers Organizing Committee demonstrated at the South Chicago Republic Steel plant, protesting police restrictions on picketing. Workers marched behind the flag to the plant gate. Newsreels clearly showed police firing point blank into the pickets, continuing to shoot as they fled, and then beating the fallen wounded. Ten strikers were killed, but no police were prosecuted. Roosevelt was asked to comment. He



quoted *Romeo and Juliet*: "A plague on both your houses."<sup>23</sup> The answer came from John L. Lewis. At his best, the self-taught mine worker leader was more than a match for Roosevelt and his ghosts:

Labor, like Israel, has many sorrows. Its women weep for their fallen and they lament for the future of the children of the race. It ill behooves one who has supped at labor's table and who has been sheltered in labor's house to curse with equal fervor and fine impartiality both labor and its adversaries when they become locked in deadly embrace.<sup>24</sup>

### **"Political Realities"**

Certain proof that FDR was not some kind of upper-class liberator of the downtrodden was his constant capitulation of the Dixiecrats on black rights. The Tennessee Valley Authority, one of the showpieces of his administrations, never hired skilled blacks. Work crews were segregated. The TVA set up a whites-only "model village." The Justice Department never prosecuted interstate lynchers under the federal law against kidnapping. The excuse given was that victims were not taken across state lines for ransom. In 1937, two Mississippi blacks were set on fire with a blow torch. The House passed an anti-lynching bill but it was filibustered into oblivion in the Senate. Roosevelt did not protest. Nor did he ever push for an end to southern poll tax laws. According to his wife, Eleanor, "Franklin frequently refrained from supporting causes in which he believed, because of political realities."<sup>25</sup>

### **Making the World Safe for Louisiana Sugarcane Growers**

Roosevelt's "good neighbor" policy is much beloved of liberal commentators. He did withdraw American troops from Nicaragua in 1934. But it had to agree to an American customs collector and a U.S. dominated commission controlling finances and protecting foreign bondholders. The Dominican Republic had to acquiesce to the sanctity of bonds issued in 1918 and 1922, as well as another American controlling customs. Haiti likewise had to agree to foreign control of finances until certain bonds matured in 1943. The Cubans were allowed to abrogate the Platt Amendment to

their constitution, allowing the U.S. to intervene in the internal affairs of the country. But the Guantanamo Naval Base exists there to this day. The Philippines were given a date 10 years into the future for their independence, not because of any anti-imperialist sentiments on Roosevelt's part but because American agricultural interests wanted to set up tariff barriers against Filipino sugar and tobacco. The Filipinos got to elect their own executive, but U.S. bases were maintained, and Filipino immigrants were practically barred from entry. Washington continued to appoint the governor of Puerto Rico. And English remained the language of school instruction, a policy which in effect turned generations of poor Puerto Ricans into bi-lingual illiterates.

### **"Outside Intercession Has Rarely Produced the Results Desired"**

The *machtergrieffung*, Hitler's coming to power on January 30, 1933, was the devastating result of the Great Depression and opened the most profound crisis of modern civilization. In a study on American politics, Hitler is a chapter in the Roosevelt story. In the history of our century, it is of course the other way around.

Sixty million were to die in World War II. Yet the tragedy was not so much that Hitler came to power as that all the major contending non-Nazi ideologies in Germany, from the Christians to the far left, did not know how to keep his initially insignificant band out of power. In the 1928 election, the Nazis received a piddling 2.6% of the vote. Had not these same currents again failed to unite politically to isolate and defeat Hitler politically in the repeated crises between 1933 and 1939, when he was still beatable, politically, economically and militarily, the subsequent war would not have happened. If, as the great military theorist Karl von Clausewitz said, war is the continuation of politics by other means, then WWII becomes a sort of mock *Iliad*. All the nations, all the ideologies line up, and slaughter each other, all frantically trying to escape pits largely of their own digging. In that sense, Roosevelt must be seen as but one amongst many who could not fathom the cruel times. But his importance in the world parallelogram of forces was weighty from the first. The U.S. was already the world's foremost industrial power in 1933, a heavy factor in the European and Asian power equations.

From the day Roosevelt took the oath, in March 1933, there

were pressures on him to denounce the Reich. Many Americans, not merely Jews or leftists, were alarmed at the Nazis' remorseless despotism. But Cordell Hull, the Secretary of State, expressed the administration line when he wrote, "I am of the opinion that outside intercession has rarely produced the results desired and has frequently aggravated the situation."<sup>26</sup> This remained Washington's position throughout most of the pre-war period.

Far from a haven for Jews and Gentiles fleeing the Nazis, the U.S. was virtually sealed off for them by reactionary immigration laws and by even more reactionary interpretation of them by Roosevelt's bureaucrats. More Germans left the U.S. than entered between 1933 and 1936. Under Section 7(c) of the 1924 Immigration Act, prospective immigrants had to file police certificates of good character. State Department hacks insisted on this even under Hitler.

In 1930, Hoover had tightened the proviso in the law barring immigrants who were "likely to become a public charge" so that consuls had to refuse visas to anyone who they thought might become charges at some remote time in the future. This was deliberately designed to cut immigration down to below the national quotas established by law, and was defended as necessary during a time of severe unemployment. James McDonald, League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Jewish and Other) coming from Germany, pleaded in 1933 that

Just as President Hoover, by administrative interpretation, in effect instructed the consuls to block immigration, so now President Roosevelt could, by relaxing further the requirements in the case of refugees, make easier the admission of a few thousand additional Germans a year.<sup>27</sup>

Nothing was done to modify the deliberately excessively strict interpretation of the proviso until 1937. But even in 1938, German-Austrian immigration was only 17,868. The combined quota was 27,370.

Roosevelt's position on the Spanish Civil War was one of the most egregious aspects of his pre-war foreign policy. There was a wholly justified desire by millions of Americans to stay out of another European war. Gerald Nye, Republican Senator from North Dakota, had organized an investigation in 1934-35 that laid



bare the details of the private bank loans that had drawn the U.S. into the first world slaughter. This led to the Neutrality Act of 1935. If the President announced that a war existed, it was illegal to ship arms to the belligerents. Roosevelt was opposed to the mandatory embargo, but signed the law nevertheless.

Technically, the Act did not apply in a civil war. But Roosevelt tried to establish an unofficial embargo. Two exporters maintained they had every right to sell weapons to the lawful Republican government. Whereupon Roosevelt, the opponent of mandatory embargoes, insisted that Congress amend the law to cover civil wars. The desperate Spanish government was excluded from purchasing weapons here. In 1941, when he edited his public papers, he brazenly declared that it was "useless to argue" that Spain was the place to have stopped the Axis.<sup>28</sup> Today no one doubts that was exactly the time and place. The Loyalist regime was identified with Communism in the minds of the right wing, including the right wing of Roosevelt's party, and, as with the race question, he pandered to them.

### **"Your Boys Are Not Going to Be Sent into Any Foreign Wars"**

If it is easy for us today to see Roosevelt's cloven hooves, the masses of his day most emphatically did not. To the contrary. Three quarters of all black voters had voted for Hoover in 1932. In 1936, three quarters voted for Roosevelt. The vast majority of Jews voted for him. Labor, particularly the CIO, mobilized its members for him, contributing huge sums to his campaign. Whatever criticisms the labor bureaucracy had of Roosevelt, they saw him as preferable to another Hoover. From the start, Alf Landon, the Republican governor of Kansas, knew he had no chance. Roosevelt's landslide was colossal, 27,752,597 to 16,679,583.

Norman Thomas' vote declined to 187,720. The Communist Party's Earl Browder got only 80,150 tallies. William Lemke, a Republican Congressman from North Dakota, received 882,479 votes as the candidate of the Union Party, which represented the populist tradition in the age of the fascist dictators. Its program had all sorts of talk about old age pensions and aid to farmers and workers. But behind Lemke, who had roots in the farm movement, were two fascists, Father Charles Coughlin and Reverend Gerald L.K. Smith.

The 1940 race was a little closer, that is to say Roosevelt only buried Wendell Wilkie by 27,243,466 to 22,304,755. Both parties supported building up the military, but Wilkie kept taunting his opponent, saying a Roosevelt victory would mean the inevitable entry of the U.S. into the European war. Roosevelt was forced to respond: "I have said this before, but I shall say it again and again and again: Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars."<sup>29</sup> Roosevelt's vote falloff was largely among those of German and Italian descent.

Did Roosevelt "send" American boys to their deaths in a foreign war? The question may seem strange to typical readers. After all, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. However, after the war, Charles Beard, one of the world's most eminent historians, in his *President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War, 1941*, definitely showed the U.S. long before had broken the Japanese diplomatic code. Washington anticipated a Japanese attack, somewhere in the Pacific, some time after November 27, 1941. In the event, Pearl Harbor was only one American base attacked, and in every case the American military was unprepared. What is more, it is indisputable that Roosevelt knowingly violated neutrality in the Atlantic. American destroyers would maintain radio silence—until they discovered a German U-boat. Whereupon they would start announcing their location. British ships understood what this meant, and would come after the German sub. Finally, in September 1941, one of the subs attacked an American ship, the *Reuben James*, so that it could get away from the constant radioing of its location.

There is no doubt that Roosevelt thought that war was inevitable, that every minute that the U.S. stayed out meant lives unnecessarily lost via inaction. He knew most Americans didn't want war, but he also knew that if it appeared that the U.S. was attacked, people would support war. He knew his policies would force the Axis to attack, giving cause for war. However, the "revisionist" historians were raising the wrong charge against Roosevelt. What they proved was true enough. But by 1941, the Axis had won so many victories that it was inevitable either Germany or Japan would miscalculate and decide to take on the U.S. The real charge, easily documented, is that at no time was Roosevelt fighting for anything we moderns would call democracy.

## **The Day That Should Live in Infamy**

Anyone looking with a critical eye at film footage of America's role in the epic struggle quickly realizes that it was a white man's war. When the draft started, blacks could not even enlist in the marines. The navy would have them only as messmen. The army was totally segregated. When war first broke out, the army tried to limit black units to logistics, insisting that they were inferior soldiers. Eventually, need for manpower forced certain changes. Sometimes black units would see battle, but wherever possible the military tried to avoid it.

When in 1940 the country started gearing up for war, most contractors, unions, and the government tried to keep the new job opportunities for whites only. Congress did say that military training funds could not be used discriminatorily, but this was simply ignored. However, in January 1941, A. Philip Randolph, President of the all-black Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, called for a black "March on Washington Movement" to converge on the Capital on July 1st. The demands were for abolition of segregation in the military, the withholding of contracts from firms that discriminated, and an end to segregation in federal agencies. The movement grew rapidly, with at least 100,000 blacks pledging to march.

The last thing on this planet that Roosevelt wanted was 100,000 blacks confronting him. He had no choice but to compromise. On June 25, 1941, he released Executive Order 8802, establishing a Committee on Fair Employment. He did not even promise to end segregation in the military, but Randolph called off the demonstration. That he should have marched is obvious today. But for us, the key point is that the only thing that blacks got out of the war they got against the will of Roosevelt, and they got it by the threat of mass action.

FDR dubbed December 7, 1941, "a day that will live in infamy." But a historian once said that the day that *should* live in infamy is February 19, 1942. That is the day Roosevelt signed another Executive Order empowering the army to designate "military areas" from which "any or all persons may be excluded." Such persons were to be given "food, shelter and other accommodations as may be necessary . . . until other arrangements are made." This was the criminal order which authorized the rounding up of all people of Japanese ancestry on the West Coast and



their imprisonment, without charge or trial, in concentration camps. Roosevelt further favored similar treatment for the Japanese of Hawaii, but the military wouldn't go for it.<sup>30</sup>

Roosevelt had been Assistant Secretary of the Navy under Wilson and had always been a "big navy" man. For decades, these characters had been pushing a racist "yellow peril" line as part of their propaganda for larger naval appropriations, and Roosevelt fully shared these notions. He was fighting a race war, and interning Japanese here, including American-born citizens, was part of that mad conception.

### **"A Nasty Scandal"**

While an outrage like interning approximately 135,000 innocent people is naturally shocking to moderns, nevertheless most people would still say they would have politically supported Roosevelt then because America and its allies were saving the world from even worse criminals. The six million Jews slaughtered by Hitler immediately leap to mind. But here again Roosevelt betrayed human decency.

That Hitler was systematically slaughtering Jews became known in 1942. By the end of the year, details of the Nazi gassing program were publically announced by the Allies. But the government confined itself to purely verbal protests, and not many of these at that. Eventually an Emergency Committee to Save the Jewish People of Europe was set up to get Washington to establish a War Refugee Board to try to rescue Hitler's prey. The Committee grew rapidly, gaining significant strength in Congress and amongst the public. In October 1943, the Committee mobilized 450 Orthodox rabbis for a march to the White House, to plead for action to save their kin in Europe. Roosevelt would not see them, using the excuse that he had to rush off to dedicate four bombers for the Yugoslav air force in exile.

The Committee's Congressional friends put in a bill for a rescue commission. Hearings in the Senate were favorable to the cause but, incredible as this sounds, when the House Foreign Relations Committee held its hearings, chairman Sol Bloom, a Jewish Democrat from Brooklyn, bitterly attacked the proposition and the hearings went against the Emergency Committee. This episode certainly tells us something of the worthless nature of the Brooklyn Democratic Party in that period, but the rebuff did not

stop the rescue campaign. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau Jr. handed Roosevelt a report on a plot by a group of State Department officials to suppress information on the massacres. Breckenridge Long, formerly Roosevelt's Ambassador to Italy, an open admirer of Mussolini in the pre-war period, had been assigned refugee problems by the Department. The report proved that he had altered a vital document to prevent exposure. Long had been the administration's key witness against the rescue commission. Now Roosevelt was warned that the affair could "explode into a nasty scandal."<sup>31</sup>

Roosevelt knew he was beaten. On January 22, 1944, he finally announced the creation of the War Refugee Board. But even then he really had no interest in rescuing Jews. The board received no government funds and was dependent on grants from Jewish organizations. Naturally, this severely limited its ability to operate. Roosevelt was certainly against Hitler killing Jews, but rescuing them meant that some would later try to emigrate here. He had not even tried to get an anti-lynch law because that would put him in conflict with the southern wing of the party, and he knew that any effort that increased Jewish immigration would be unpopular with the same element and others.

### **More From da Friend of da Woikin' Man**

"Labor's friend," as the bureaucrats called him, had no hesitation in crushing workers when they got out of line. Dan Tobin, head of the Teamsters Union, was chairman of the National Labor Committee of the Democratic Party. Until the mid-'30s, the Teamsters had been little more than a loose connection of weak locals, milk deliverers and the like. But in 1934, a group of Trotskyists took over Local 544 in Minneapolis and won a huge general strike involving the city's entire labor movement. The union went on from there to finally organize the over-the-road drivers that are the basis of its strength today. Tobin always hated them but their success had made them too popular to crush. In 1941, however, they were extremely isolated within the larger labor movement because of their opposition to Roosevelt's war preparations. Tobin appointed a receiver over the local with absolute powers. The ranks voted on June 9, 1941, to leave the Teamsters and the AFL to join the CIO. Tobin appealed to the White House for help in crushing them. According to Roosevelt's

secretary, the President "asked me to immediately have the government departments and agencies interested in the matter notified."<sup>32</sup>

An indictment came down against the leaders of the local and their Socialist Workers Party. They were charged under the Smith Act, passed in 1940, accused of conspiracy to advocate the overthrow of the government by force. The evidence consisted of nothing more than quotations from their public press and the standard Marxist classics, available in any reputable book store. However, the middle class suburban jury found them guilty. On the day after Pearl Harbor they were sentenced to prison for five years. The local's democracy was completely destroyed and the Teamsters have remained in the hands of bureaucrats and crooks to this day.

Most unions agreed to a no-strike pledge during the war. But John L. Lewis had the peculiar notion that simply because there was a war on was no excuse for anyone to exploit coal miners. In 1943, the United Mine Workers struck. Roosevelt publically announced that if they didn't return to work he would have legislation passed drafting them into the army. Lewis was a distinctive figure within the labor movement, running his union with an iron hand. But when he was militant he was unstoppable. With his famous bushy eyebrows and incredible gift for oratory, he was like a prophet of old. Besides, he knew there was no one available in the middle of the war to mine coal. And his men were totally loyal to him whenever he fought the mine bosses. Lewis won and humiliated the President in doing so.

### **Even This Wretch Has His Devotees**

Clearly there is something quite amiss with the notion of Roosevelt as the friend of the people. But the last ones to know it at the time were the people. The Republicans ran Thomas E. Dewey, the Governor of New York, in 1944. Dewey was a little unreal. As a wag said, he looked "like the groom on the wedding cake." People laughed at his standard exclamations, "Oh Lord," and "good gracious."<sup>33</sup> Roosevelt pounded him, 25,602,504 to 22,006,285. The only unusual thing about this election was that Roosevelt dropped his Vice President, Henry Wallace, who had gotten into trouble with party conservatives with his populism. He was replaced with Harry S. Truman, Missouri's Senator, who had



a bit of a national reputation for investigating waste in the war industries.

Roosevelt's death on April 12, 1945, was one of those events you remember for the rest of your life. In many parts of the country, people would hear about it and burst into tears, tell the next person, who would also start crying. To be sure, it was not the earth-shattering grief that occurred when Lincoln was murdered. It was more like the death of a beloved relative. Life had to go on. The war was still raging. But not everyone wept. Certainly Japanese-Americans had every reason to cheer. But the majority of Americans felt a loss.

It tells us how much has changed since then, that today the judgment of the scholars is so uniformly contemptuous of the Roosevelt myth. A few rightwingers denounce him for sneaking the country into war. Some more complain that he wasn't "tough enough" with Stalin at Yalta. But the bulk of his critics condemn him for his racism toward the Japanese and, to a lesser extent, blacks, and his do-nothing policy towards European Jewry.

With his party's hacks, it is very different. To be sure, even they condemn the imprisonment of people for their ethnicity. And they will acknowledge that he did nothing to save Jews. But they hermetically seal off that Roosevelt from the Roosevelt who gave the people social security. To this day, when a Democrat wants people to believe he is a friend of labor, he starts in by identifying himself with "the tradition of Roosevelt." The better educated of the younger generation have learned of his anti-Japanese actions and don't see him as anyone to identify with. But most older voters either don't recall the episode, or didn't disagree with his policy. But let's simply say that several of the candidates for the 1988 nomination claim to be his political heirs. That is a blinking red warning sign that, if one of them is to be elected, he will betray the cause of democracy. Not maybe. Absolutely for sure.

## Notes

1. David Potter and Howard Lamar, *Party Politics and Public Action, 1877-1917*, pp. 31-32.
2. Ibid., p. 35.
3. Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition*, p. 197.
4. Potter and Lamar, p. 74.
5. Hofstadter, p. 253.

6. *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders*, p. 217.
7. Hofstadter, p. 251.
8. Paul Boller, Jr., *Presidential Campaigns*, p. 174.
9. Walter La Feber and Richard Polenberg, *The American Century*, p. 84.
10. Hofstadter, p. 261.
11. Harold Faulkner, *American Political and Social History*, p. 614.
12. Hofstadter, p. 76.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 278.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*, p. 279.
16. Boller, p. 219.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 240.
18. Saul Friedman, "The Power and/or Powerlessness of American Jews, 1939-1945," in (Seymour Finger, Ed.), *American Jewry During the Holocaust*, unpaged.
19. L.J. Davis, "The Next Panic," *Harpers*, May 1987, p. 36.
20. Boller, p. 242.
21. Hofstadter, p. 335.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 336.
23. David Milton, *The Politics of U.S. Labor*, p. 110.
24. Charles Rehmus and Doris McLaughlin, *Labor and American Politics*, p. 167.
25. Arthur Morse, *While 6 million died*, p. 208.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 124.
28. Hofstadter, p. 334.
29. Boller, p. 254.
30. Roger Daniels, *Concentration Camps: North American Japanese in the U.S. and Canada during WWII*, p. 72.
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32. James Cannon, *Socialism on Trial*, p. 9.
33. Boller, p. 260.

## CHAPTER 5

# Savin' Democracy—and the Rich—From Godless Commie Dictatorship

If anyone had to guess which American politician would be the one to get himself into the history books forever as the initiator of the atomic age, Harry S. Truman would have been the last person picked. He had toyed with the idea of running for office, but it took the failure of his men's clothing store during the recession of 1920–21 to really get him to do it. In 1922, he ran for judge (actually an administrative post) of Jackson County, Missouri. He soon tied in with Boss Tom Pendergast of Kansas City and got himself elected, and rewarded the Democratic machine by putting only its supporters on the county payroll. That got him defeated the next time around, the only time in his life he lost an election. He was re-elected next time out, and gave out more patronage to his cronies. The last thing on his mind then was foreign policy. He had enough foreign policy as a captain in World War I to last 10 lifetimes.

Today, when people think of the corruption of the old time machines, they blame it on the Irish and other immigrants. But Pendergast's gang rested on native A-muricans, yet was as grafting as any in the country. Truman never personally was on the take. He was the good guy on the ticket who got the whole gang elected. Then he handed out the patronage to them. He simply



rationalized his way into being a machine hack. Here is Truman on himself in the ol' days in the '20s:

I am obliged to the Big Boss . . . I am only a small duck in a very large puddle, but I am interested very deeply in local or municipal government. Who is to blame for present conditions but sniveling church members who weep on Sunday, play with whores on Monday, drink on Tuesday, sell out to the Boss on Wednesday, repent about Friday, and start over on Sunday. I think maybe the Boss is nearer heaven than the snivelers.<sup>1</sup>

In 1934, he was Pendergast's candidate for U.S. Senator in the primary battle against the St. Louis machine's tiger. St. Louis gave his rival 104,265 votes to our Harry's 3,742 honest ballots. Kansas City, in turn, gave Harry 137,529 to 1,525 for the bad guy. Truman won state-wide by about 5,000 votes. A few years later, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* quoted Pendergast as boasting that he sent his office boy to Washington.

The St. Louis crowd soon got revenge on its enemies. The brother of the fellow Truman beat was appointed federal district attorney for Kansas City. In two years, 259 Pendergast flunkies were convicted of padding the vote, usually by votin' tombstones. This was too much for freedom lovin' Harry, who got up to give his most celebrated speech before he became President of this great republic:

I say to this Senate, a Jackson County Missouri Democrat has as much chance of a fair trial in the Federal District Court of Western Missouri as a Jew would have in a Hitler court or a Trotsky follower before Stalin.<sup>2</sup>

Eventually the investigations got to Pendergast, who pled guilty of evading over \$1 million in taxes. He was sentenced to a big whole 15 months in jail and five years probation. When a reporter called the man who later was to bomb Hiroshima, he proudly announced, "I'm not a rat who deserts a sinking ship."<sup>3</sup>

During the war, Truman got himself a bit of a reputation as head of a committee investigating waste in war plants, of which there was not a little. When the Dixiecrats made it clear they did not want Wallace for Vice President again, Roosevelt turned to James Byrnes of South Carolina. But labor wouldn't have him

and Truman got the nod.

### **"A Share in the Occupation of Japan"**

Why did Truman drop the atom bomb—twice—on civilian targets? The standard defense of his actions is that, although Japan had no offensive capacity to do damage to Americans, it still controlled huge areas of China. It would fight to the last man if the home islands were invaded.

That the Japanese military was fanaticized is absolutely true. Kamakazi pilots without parachutes had deliberately crashed their planes into American ships. Few soldiers surrendered. Many preferred to blow themselves up, or they had to be burned out of pillboxes with flamethrowers. But the Emperor and his advisors knew the war was hopeless. In the end, after the two bombs, the Japanese surrendered on condition that the Emperor remain as a figurehead. Few today doubt that a surrender could have been arranged without the bomb if the U.S. had guaranteed his continued rule. Truman's daughter Margaret later wrote a defensive biography of him, and all but conceded that it was American fanaticism that prevented proposing such obvious terms to the well-defeated enemy:

A great many members of Congress were bitterly hostile to the Emperor. So was a large section of the American public . . . His use by the military clique had made him a loathsome figure . . . My father and Secretary of State Byrnes . . . were keenly aware of this domestic problem.<sup>4</sup>

Scientists at the University of Chicago, who developed the world's first controlled nuclear chain reaction in 1942, proposed dropping the bomb on a desert island in a well publicized demonstration that would frighten the Japanese. Others proposed dropping it on a more or less uninhabited area of Japan. According to daughter Margaret, there were only three bombs in the arsenal. They couldn't be wasted because

if they failed the American invasion of Kyushu would probably begin as scheduled, Russia would come into the war on August 8 . . . thousands of Americans would die, and the Russians would demand a share in the occupation of Japan.<sup>5</sup>

The bomb was to impress two enemies. The Japanese and the Soviets. According to Margaret Truman,

My father had stalled on a date for the (Potsdam) Conference because he wanted to put it off until the atomic bomb was tested. If the bomb was a success, there would probably be no need for Russia to enter the war against Japan—and no need to make any further concessions to the Soviets in Europe.<sup>6</sup>

In any event, the successful test came on July 16, 1945, while the conference was in session. Margaret Truman tell us

Now, it was obvious that we no longer needed Russia to end the Pacific war (by helping to fight Japanese troops in China). This freed my father to negotiate with far more boldness and bluntness.<sup>7</sup>

Let us put together the evidence and the inferences that can be legitimately drawn from it. Two concerns worked to push the government to drop the bomb. The U.S. had not made the one peace offer the Emperor's fanatic supporters could accept, i.e., his continuance on the throne. The reason given was American public opinion. But we know that when the Japanese were willing to surrender, after the bombs, providing the Emperor stayed on, there was no opposition to accepting the condition from any sector of U.S. opinion. We can certainly say that if the U.S. had started secret negotiations with Tokyo, and assured the Japanese the Emperor could stay on, opinion here would have been positive. Ordinary people wanted the killing of American soldiers to stop. They didn't give a damn who ruled Japan.

We also know Truman & Co. knew the bomb changed the parallelogram of forces between the U.S. and Russia. Margaret Truman told how elated Harry was to be able to talk bluntly to Stalin about Eastern Europe. We also know he wanted to end the war before the Soviets were needed for an invasion of the home islands in the Pacific. Isn't it absolutely reasonable to presume that Truman thought he could kill three birds with two bombs? The bombs would make the Japanese surrender, ultimately on whatever terms he would give them. The war would end before the Soviets were needed for an invasion. And, finally, Stalin would be more prudent towards an America that dropped the bomb twice on humans than he would have been towards some



sort of namby-pamby capitalist softies who carefully demonstrated the weapon on some empty Pacific atoll.

Ya pays yer money an' ya get yer choice. Whether tens of thousands of civilians were slaughtered because of the chauvinism of America's *politicians*, who, it will be recalled, put all the Japanese on the West Coast into concentration camps because of their irrational fears and racism, or because of the anti-Communist concerns of those same politicians, the plain truth is those innocents did not have to die.

### **"We Are Going to Have to Deal in Straight Power Concepts"**

Thus the Cold War began even before WWII was over, and has continued down in varying degrees through all succeeding administrations. To understand their reactions to it, we must first understand the nature of Stalinism.

Communism evolved out of the world-wide Socialist and Labor International in WWI, when most of the Socialist Parties supported their governments during the imperialist carnage. The special conditions of Tsarism had generated a revolutionary movement in Russia at a time when less repressive capitalist parliamentary regimes elsewhere weakened the radical fervor of much of the socialist movement. Backward Russia took a pounding during the war and Tsarism fell in, with power ultimately going to Lenin's Communists. Lenin's triumph irrevocably split the workers' movement throughout the world. Everywhere those elements in the Socialist Parties who had not supported the war, or who had come to oppose it, joined the Communist International.

The entire capitalist world sought to crush the new regime. No less than 17 countries invaded the new Soviet Union between 1917 and 1921, during the Russian Civil War. The U.S. sent troops to Archangel, east of Finland, and Vladivostok in Siberia. Tsarist Russia had a very weak industrial base and three years of world war followed by four years of civil war devastated the society. Progressive ideas can not thrive in a nation wracked by famine and pestilence. With Lenin's paralysis in 1923 and death in 1924, a bureaucratic degeneration set in under Stalin.

There was nothing strange in this. In fact, the great European revolutions likewise degenerated. In Britain, Oliver Cromwell established the Puritan republic, and then became "Lord Protector" of the State. The French Jacobins were overthrown by the

conservative Directorate and it, in turn, by the upstart Emperor Napoleon. With Stalin, power went to a managerial bureaucracy. Under Lenin, no Communist could earn more than a skilled worker. Government officials, factory managers, earned no more than a printer. Under Stalin this was repudiated. Managers and intellectuals became a privileged caste amidst general poverty. Stalin had to crush those who remained loyal to Lenin's values, hence the murderous purges of Trotsky and other "old Bolsheviks." He tried to force march the society into the industrial age. The arbitrary collectivization of agriculture caused a famine that killed millions in the Ukraine.

In the postwar period, American propagandists, particularly liberal Democrats, developed a bizarre series of images of the Cold War. Not only was the U.S. the leader of the "free world" or "Western civilization" or the protector of the "Judeo-Christian heritage." We were supposedly of a long line of such beleaguered societies, locked in Manichean strife with hordes of totalitarians. In this potted historiography, the good ol' U.S. of A. was "Athens" (no less!). The Soviet Union was "Persia." Then the U.S. stayed Athens but the Soviets became "Sparta."

These crackpot analogies misconstrued the nature of both the Soviet Union and the U.S. The Soviets did not go into Eastern Europe to conquer it. The Red Army came in to fight Hitler. In fact, Dwight Eisenhower made a deliberate decision not to try to get to Berlin before the Soviets because he did not want to take the casualties. Of course, once the Red Army controlled the region, it was scarcely about to restore the pre-war anti-Communist ruling classes to power. In every case, land holdings had been feudal or semi-feudal. Every regime had been oppressive of national minorities and repressed their workers.

Wherever they could, partisans of the old order tried to restore their dead world. About 80,000 Jews survived the Holocaust in Poland, and another 175,000 returned from the Soviet Union, where they had fled in 1939. The new Communist regime was strictly the creation of the Red Army, far too isolated from the masses to defend the Jews from the rightists. These murdered 351 Jews between November 1944 and October 1945. Pogroms continued into 1946, with 41 Jews massacred in Kielce on July 4. The regimes the Soviets set up were dictatorships, and they soon began murdering even loyal Communists. But the U.S. had nothing but the dregs of the old order to counterpose to them. With



their power base gone, that was the equivalent of nothing.

American propaganda to the contrary, the Soviets were not trying to expand into Western Europe. The French and Italian Communist Parties had grown enormously as a result of their leading roles in the resistance. But they did not try to overthrow capitalism. They entered coalition governments dominated by reactionaries, De Gaulle in France and the Christian Democrats in Italy. The French Communist Party adapted the slogan of "produce, always produce," and backed piece-work and speed ups. It was only when America instituted the Marshall Plan and encouraged Western European rearmament that the local Communist Parties ended their cooperation with their ruling classes.

Before the war, Greece was still paying off debts contracted with British banks after winning independence in the 1820s. At Yalta, Churchill made a deal with Stalin. London recognized Moscow's sphere of influence in Eastern Europe in return for which the Soviets' acknowledge British hegemony in Greece. In December 1944, the local Communist Party welcomed the British army into Athens. It proceeded to attack the left wing resistance on behalf of the royalists, who had done next to nothing to fight Hitler.

In Asia, the Stalinist line was so subordinate to the French Communist Party's collaboration with its regime that Ho Chi Minh let the French army back into Vietnam, only to have it turn around and drive him out of the cities for his pains.

The U.S.—excuse me!—"Athens" simply utilized the dictatorial nature of Stalinism for its own imperialist designs. The reality behind Washington's propaganda was coldly laid out in an internal State Department memo by George Kennan, head of the Policy Planning Staff:

We have about 50% of the world's wealth, but only 6.3% of its population. In this situation, we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real test in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity. We need not deceive ourselves that we can afford today the luxury of altruism and world benefaction . . . unreal objectives such as human rights, the raising of living standards and democratization. The day is not far off when we are going to have to deal in straight power concepts. The less we are hampered by idealistic slogans, the better.<sup>8</sup>



The U.S. countered nothing to Stalinism except the vicious past. The French had lost Indochina to the Japanese. Then Ho Chi Minh took control after the war. It was Truman who provided the troopships for the French to reconquer their colony. In Greece, the American-backed right-wing instituted a white terror against their defeated Communist foes.

Truman poured \$2 billion down the drain in China, trying to prop up Chiang Kai-shek. In the end, he had to write that

It turned out that the Nationalist Chinese Government was one of the most corrupt and inefficient that ever made an attempt to govern a country and when I found that out, we stopped furnishing them with material. Most of the Communists' material was material which was surrendered by the Chinese Nationalist Government for a consideration.<sup>9</sup>

### **“Pointing Out How Many Jews Were Major Contributors”**

One of the more difficult foreign policy problems facing Truman in the postwar period was Palestine. With the Cold War going full tilt, he had no desire to create problems in his relations with Britain, then the colonial occupier, and his crucial ally against the Soviets. Additionally, the State Department warned the U.S. would alienate the Arab world forever if it supported an Israeli state.

A United Nations special committee called for partition, but it needed a two-thirds Assembly vote. The State Department decided to pull a fast one. It would call for partition, but it didn't think the measure would get the necessary two-thirds. Then State would sit down with the British and cook up “some compromise plan” as one bureaucrat put it.<sup>10</sup>

The Zionists did an end run around State. They went out and used every friend they had in the world to pressure the crucial states in the UN, Haiti, Liberia, the Philippines, into voting for partition. Soon it became apparent that partition meant war and the diplomats saw their chance. They tried to get Truman to say that the U.S. only supported carving up the country as a way of avoiding war and that if it meant war, America would have to reconsider its position. But, the State Department had to reckon with the party hacks. Margaret Truman relates that

On October 6, 1947, Bob Hannegan (the Democratic National Chairman) almost made a speech, pointing out how many Jews were major contributors to the Democratic Party's campaign fund and were expecting the United States to support the Zionists' position on Palestine.<sup>11</sup>

Truman vacillated between imperial considerations and good ol' vote-gettin' demagoguery. In the end he opted for the one thing really sacred in this life: getting Harry Truman elected. He told his ambassadors to the Arab princelings, "I'm sorry, gentlemen, but I have to answer to hundreds of thousands who are anxious for the success of Zionism; I do not have hundreds of thousands of Arabs among my constituents."<sup>12</sup>

### **The Democrats' Own Li'l Purge**

With the end of the war, many people felt it was time for a change, especially so as Truman cut a stiff figure after the facile Roosevelt. The Republicans won a stunning victory in 1946, taking both houses of Congress for the first time since 1928. Among the new Senators was Joe McCarthy of Wisconsin. A spy ring had just been uncovered in Canada and the new rightists tried to generate a witchhunt here as well. Truman naturally fought their excesses, i.e., the notion that his administration was crawling with spies, or that the successes of Stalin abroad were due to them. But he also capitulated to the onslaught by establishing an executive loyalty program for government workers.

For the first time in American history, government employees were fired or had to resign as disloyal for their ideas and organizational affiliations. A "subversive list" was set up, including right wing groups such as the KKK, pre-war pro-Japanese veterans associations, and many dozens of "Communist dominated" groups, as well as their Trotskyist enemies and historic mummies like the near defunct IWW. Many of the so-called Communist fronts were perfectly legitimate organizations with goals such as equal rights for blacks that the Communist Party set up in its pro-Roosevelt phases in the '30s and '40s. Beyond doubt most members had no idea they were Communist fronts. Certainly membership in them, all open organizations, perfectly legal at the time people joined them, scarcely made anyone a potential spy. But the Democratic Party leadership was running sacred, and

it had absolutely no regard for civil liberties, as demonstrated by their previous incarceration of Japanese-Americans. By the end of his second term, Truman had dozens of Communist Party leaders indicted on Smith Act charges. Needless to say, Truman's purge did not slow down McCarthyite attacks on the Democratic Party. To the contrary. It only reinforced the near-paranoid hysteria of the public.

The Wilsonian witch-hunt had damaged the left, but hardly destroyed it. Many who did not share its views rallied to defend its civil liberties. But Stalinism could not defend itself. Vicious dictatorships were being set up in its name. And when the Socialist Workers Party had been imprisoned under the Smith Act, the Communist Party had hailed Roosevelt. When the Japanese-Americans were sent away, the Communist Party had expelled all Japanese. Civil libertarians were naturally reluctant to defend supporters of despotism who obviously didn't give a damn about anyone's rights except their own. Nevertheless that was a profound mistake. All popular movements suffered as a result of the climate engendered by the witch-hunt. Years later, the legal apparatus of the purges, the Smith Act, the subversive list, were either struck down or turned into dead letters by the courts. Today, there can be no doubt that Truman's assault on civil liberties was criminal.

### **"Dewey Defeats Truman"**

By 1948, the pollsters were unanimous that it was impossible for Truman to win re-election. Henry Wallace broke with the party over the Cold War and joined with the Communist Party to set up their Progressive Party. In February 1948, Truman had proposed the first civil rights legislation since reconstruction, continuing the FEPC and making lynching a federal crime. When the Democratic convention voted to uphold Truman's line, 35 southern delegates walked out and eventually set up the States Rights Party with J. Strom Thurmond for President. The Republicans renominated Dewey.

The situation looked so dismal that Truman had difficulty raising funds. He would occasionally get cut off the radio in mid-sentence because stations insisted on seeing cash before they would let him buy extra time. He fell back on an old fashioned whistle-stop railway tour of the country, speaking from the back of his



special rail car. Almost by accident he realized that he did better if he spoke extemporaneously than if he read prepared speeches. Whatever else he was, Harry was no stuffed shirt like the boring Dewey. And he lit into the "do-nothing 80th Congress," asking, "Is the government of the United States going to run in the interest of the people as a whole or in the interest of a small group of privileged big businessmen?"<sup>13</sup>

In fact, his program was a dab of public housing, opposition to anti-labor legislation, a soupcon of civil rights for blacks, coupled with intense anti-Communism in foreign affairs, and pro-Israel demagoguery. But his verbal hostility towards "Wall Street" had touched a nerve among workers and farmers who well remembered the Depression. They were offered nothing by the overconfident Dewey, who actually took time out just before the election to plan his inauguration. Truman, however, who could see and could understand the significance of the fact that his rallies were big and enthusiastic, felt positive of his own chances.<sup>13</sup>

One of the most famous photos of its time is that of the jubilant Truman waving a copy of the morning-after *Chicago Tribune* with a banner headline, "DEWEY DEFEATS TRUMAN." In reality, Truman got 24,105,812 votes to Dewey's 21,970,065. Thurmond carried South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana, but got only 1,760,125 votes. Wallace got even less, 1,157,326. About three-fourths of his vote came from blacks and Jews. Many of both blocs had idolized Roosevelt, in total disregard to his studied indifference to their problems, and saw Wallace as the true heir to FDR. Additionally, the Communist Party had become pro-Israel for the duration and denounced Truman for his vacillations over partition. A significant portion of the black intelligentsia recognized that the Wallace-ites were genuinely integrationist. However, although the Progressive Party kept itself alive for another election, the bulk of its black and Jewish supporters returned to the Democratic Party. Wallace himself later supported the Korean War.

### **Saviors Fit Quite Nicely into Hairshirts**

Korean War veterans call theirs the forgotten war. It has dropped down the memory hole for two reasons. Syngman Rhee, whom the U.S. protected in 1950, was overthrown by a popular revolution in 1960, making it impossible for our politicians to

continue to pretend the war had been over democracy. On the other hand, the Communist Party was the dominant element in the left in 1950. It was reeling from the McCarthy witch-hunt and was in no position to organize anti-war demonstrations. With neither the government nor its critics having anything worth recalling about the conflict, they have allowed the war to pass into oblivion.

Korea had been part of the Japanese empire but FDR had not been for its immediate independence. The author of the "Four Freedoms" and other democratic rhetoric favored an international trusteeship. Stalin agreed at Yalta. The two "freedom-loving" allies sent in their troops to take over from the Japanese and de facto partition of the country was established at the 38th parallel. Rhee was the most conservative of the nationalists, and he soon became the Americans' man. While considerable numbers left the North in the first months of Soviet occupation, however, the seizure of Japanese assets and land reform gave considerable popularity to the regime of Kim Il-Sung, a die-hard Communist and former guerrilla.

The Communists did not confine their activities to the North. In 1946, they took on the police in the South Korean city of Taegu. The cops had worked for the hated Japanese, and the Communists had no difficulty mobilizing the people against them. Fifty-nine police were killed. The U.S. military regime sent in police reinforcements from Seoul and the revolt was crushed. The Labor Party, as the Communists called themselves, was driven underground.

In 1947, the Soviets proposed that both governments withdraw their troops. America opposed this because anything resembling a government that had popular support had not yet been set up. After 8,000 arrests in February 1948, an election was held that was boycotted by all but the right. Strong-arm tactics by Rhee's followers put him into power in the South. On August 15, 1948, the American flag came down and Rhee's Republic of Korea was established. On September 10, Kim Il Sung's Democratic People's Republic took over from the Soviets. Both regimes claimed to be the legitimate government of the entire country. But with the Soviet withdrawal from the country, Kim's government looked like a national government while Rhee appeared to everyone as an American puppet.

Rhee's regime was totally corrupt. Nor was there even a



pretense of land reform until 1950. While Kim had gotten the Soviets to withdraw their troops, Rhee called for continued U.S. troops. Eventually, on June 29, 1949, the Americans left, except for a 500 man training mission. But that only confirmed Rhee as a stooge in the eyes of all nationalists. By the time the war broke out between North and South on June 25, 1950, all but the most reactionary elements looked upon the Communists as liberators.

It is safe to say that in 1950 most Americans had no idea where remote Korea was, much less had any knowledge about its internal affairs. (We can say this because, during the Irangate hearings, *The New York Times* discovered that 48% of Americans could not tell them where Nicaragua is, even after years of TV and newspaper discussion of U.S. involvement with the Central American country.) The line from Washington was that the "North Koreans" invaded "South Korea." In fact, both regimes had claimed to be the sole legitimate government of the whole country. Given that there was not a single Russian or Chinese soldier in the North, there can be no doubt that the conflict was a civil war, quite regardless of who started it.

The question of who actually started the war was later dealt with by I.F. Stone, the noted liberal journalist, in his *Hidden History of the Korean War*. There is no doubt that Rhee constantly talked of liberating the North. All historians agree on that. But it is another matter to say that he did in fact start the war, either to conquer the North or, alternatively, to provoke the North into marching South, thus compelling America to come to his assistance, thereby assuring the continued existence of the shaky regime. That Rhee was a head case is beyond dispute. Years later, General Matthew Ridgeway, who later replaced Douglas MacArthur as commander-in-chief of the U.S. forces, described Rhee as his "hairshirt." But Rhee would have had to be raving mad to have started the war. His troops got crushed in every battle they ever fought alone against the North.

It is to be stressed, however, that the key question is not who started the war. What is crucial is whether it was a civil war and on that there can be no doubt. Nor is there any evidence that Kim started the war on Stalin's orders. In fact, the only reason the U.S. was able to reenter the country as head of a UN "police" force was that the Soviets were then boycotting the UN because of its refusal to seat Red China. If the Soviets had voted, they had an automatic veto on such actions. If the U.S. had to go into the



country in its own name, or even as part of an alliance of pro-capitalist states, acting on their own, it would have been gravely isolated in the battle for public opinion, particularly in the then-huge colonial world. Is it reasonable to believe that Stalin ordered Kim to go to war, and then foolishly continued to stay out of the UN sessions? He could have used the American request for UN sanction for reentry as his own perfect excuse to return and deal the U.S. a severe diplomatic defeat.

In the end, Rhee was driven from power in April 1960 after a wave of nationwide demonstrations in which enraged students and others battered the police. That should objectively answer whether democracy was ever at stake in Korea. And if we look inward at the America and the Democratic Party of the Truman Administration, we see how ludicrous it is to think Truman moved for any noble motive. We have Kennan's memo which in effect says "stop kidding ourselves, we are imperialists, lets get on with being good at it." But in fact the Truman Administration was not only imperialist. It was corrupt.

### **Honesty Is the Best Policy. Yeah, Honesty**

Truman has come into folk history as a tough little man of the people. However, while he never went to college, he was extremely well-read historically. Once he read an editorial comparing Wallace to Alcibiades, the Athenian who went over to the Spartans. Harry disagreed. "Aeschines is the person Henry most resembles."<sup>14</sup> He was an Athenian who opposed resisting Philip of Macedon and his name would be recondite to all but the most precise scholars. But, for all his love of history, Truman was himself straight out of history, an antediluvian machine hack to the bitter end.

No one ever presented evidence of his being personally corrupt, but just as he had been a front man for crooks in Missouri, he willingly let himself be their front man again in Washington. There were repeated scandals during his administrations, constant newspaper stories of "five percenters" around him, grafters who arranged government contracts. One episode, which occurred during the Korean War, tells us exactly what kind of government the U.S. really had while it was prattling about protecting the "free world."

In 1950, Truman appointed New York's Mayor William

O'Dwyer Ambassador to Mexico, as a gambling scandal was breaking in Manhattan. The next year, the Senate Crime Investigating Committee held hearings in New York. The president of the Uniformed Fireman's Association testified that he had given O'Dwyer a bribe. On May 1, 1951, the Committee issued its detailed report on Mafia influence in New York. *The New York Times* wrote that

At great length, the report traced the former Mayor's association, as an individual and through connections with Frank Costello, tagged as an "underworld emperor" whose "sinister influence is still strong in the councils of the Democratic Party organization of New York County."<sup>15</sup>

What was Truman's response? Exactly what you would expect of Tom Pendergast's office boy: "President Truman said today he still had confidence in William O'Dwyer . . . and had no intention of recalling him."<sup>16</sup>

O'Dwyer was only the most prominent Democrat exposed by the Committee. The worst situations were New York and Chicago. However corruption was wide spread throughout the party. Naturally not every Democratic official was a crook. Estes Kefauver, the head of the Committee, was himself a Democrat. Nevertheless, it could be said without exaggeration that the party reeked like a sewer. That was the party that slaughtered 54,246 Americans and hundreds of thousands of Koreans and Chinese in the "police action."

### **Adlai Stevenson: The Weakling Between Two Strong Men**

It is difficult to think that there was a time when liberals were "madly for Adlai" Stevenson, the Democratic nominee in 1952 and 1956. But he was literate, which was more than could be said for Dwight Eisenhower, his opponent. He was quite bald and the Republicans started making fun of his "egghead," so he quickly made himself the champion of all eggheads, i.e., intellectuals.

His grandfather had run once as Bryan's running mate and our Adlai grew up as part of Illinois' Democratic Party old families. After years of posts in Roosevelt's Washington bureaucracy, he was "discovered" by Col. Jacob Arvey, Chairman of the Cook County Democratic Committee. Beyond dispute, the Chicago

Democratic machine was one of the most crooked in the country. It was always in need of front men to head their statewide slate, so that the pigs at the bottom of the list might have some help getting their snouts into the trough. Stevenson ran for Governor in 1948, beating his opponent by 572,000 votes, while Truman won by only 34,000 votes statewide.

For all the other eggheads' enthusiasm for his wit, his speeches were platitudinous, with the by then obligatory monkeychatter about the "free world" and "Soviet Communist imperialism." In fact he was nothing more than an elegant Truman. He had grown up in a family so Democratic that crooked machines were an axiomatic part of life. His choice for the cabinet post of State Director of Revenue was none less than honest Richard Daley.

The Republicans ran General Eisenhower in 1952 on a program of little more than charges of "corruption, Communism and Korea." The Truman Administration was riddled with grafters and the Kefauver Committee hearings only reinforced the public's concern. The only thing the Democrats had going for them was the revelation that Ike's running mate, Richard Nixon, had taken \$18,000 from some businessmen while he was Senator.

Nixon went before the biggest television audience in history to that time to tell us that the money went towards political rather than personal expenses. And then he went off on a sad story about how someone had given his daughter a little dog, Checkers. People could burn him at the stake, but "the kids . . . loved the dog, and I just want to say this . . . regardless of what they say about it, we are going to keep it."<sup>17</sup> Everyone is aware that P.T. Barnum said "there's a sucker born every minute." And most live between Canada and Mexico. At any rate, following the now famous "Checkers speech," thousands of telegrams poured in to a startled Eisenhower, who had seriously thought of repudiating Nixon. Not only was the issue forgotten, but the focus remained on the quite real Democratic sleaze.

The Democrats had dug themselves into a pit on the Communism question, promoting the notion that with a Red supposedly under every rock, it was an insidious domestic concern. Now in Stevenson they had a candidate who had worked with Alger Hiss in 1933, and then in the mid-40s. Hiss' attorney had asked for an affidavit that his client was considered a person of good character by his associates. Stevenson, also an attorney, felt duty bound to give it. There was no doubt Hiss was a well-known government



official and of course his colleagues thought he was a good character. But such subtle notions were lost on the poorly educated and hysterical masses.

Korea had proved an unmitigated political and military disaster for Truman. The Stalinist Koreans pushed the ROK army and the Americans into a corner of the peninsula. Then General MacArthur boldly landed his troops behind their lines. He was looking for war with Red China and marched his troops toward the Yalu River between Korea and China. When the Japanese ran Korea and Manchuria, they frequently built factories in China with the power stations on the Korean side of the river. China could never tolerate these stations falling into anti-Communist hands, and they entered the war.

MacArthur's move up the peninsula with the North Asian winter approaching was suicide. America's planes were useless and the Chinese artillery devastated the U.S. military. Eventually, the war restabilized around the 38th parallel, with a constant death toll to agitate the public. The general rattled on about the need to fight Communism in Asia and Truman finally had to dismiss him for making statements in contradiction with official policy.

The public was overwhelmingly for MacArthur. Unpolitical masses have little notion of the complexities of politics or war. They have an in or out attitude towards war. I well remember young friends talking about dropping the bomb not only on China but also on Moscow. Except that they didn't have the bomb and it was all hot air. The State Department, which did have the bomb, also had the smarts to realize that the Soviets would retaliate with their bombs, which they had since 1949.

The public vented its frustration on the Democrats. Then, when Eisenhower announced that he would go to Korea to end the war, the election was irrevocably lost for Stevenson. As far as the voters were concerned, Stevenson would neither fish nor cut bait. In fact, he had considered saying he would go to Korea, but decided against it, presumably not wanting to embarrass Truman.

Eisenhower's victory was substantial. He took 55.4% of the vote, winning 33,824,351 to 27,314,987. He broke into the solid South, carrying Florida, Texas, Tennessee and Virginia. Stevenson was shut out everywhere except in the other Dixie states.

Stevenson had been a reluctant candidate in 1952. He hadn't seen much sense in running against a war hero virtually certain to

win. But he actively sought the nomination in 1956, and he had no scruples about how he got it. He announced, in 1955 that "If it were my ambition to seek the Democratic presidential nomination next year, I would welcome the support of Carmine De Sapio and Tammany Hall."<sup>18</sup>

To put this in context, recall the 1951 Kefauver Committee report. Discussing Frank Costello, then the most notorious Mafioso in the country, the Committee remarked that "Costello is now friendly with many Democratic district leaders . . . He stated that he knows the leader of Tammany, Carmine De Sapio, very well."<sup>19</sup> But why should we be surprised? Why should he have strained at swallowing De Sapio when he had gulped down Richard Daley and the Chicago machine?

The campaign was droning along when the Soviets crushed the Hungarian Revolution, at the same time as the Israelis invaded the Sinai, immediately followed by a British and French paratrooper raid on the Suez Canal, allegedly to get between the Israelis and Egypt's Gamel Nasser. In fact, it was part of a now-conceded conspiracy between the Zionists and the two imperial powers, who had until recently shared ownership of the canal under British control.

Eisenhower wasn't going for the scheme. The State Department had the good sense to realize that the entire ex-colonial world was furious at the raid, and would rush into the arms of the Soviets if something wasn't done about it. Accordingly, the U.S. and the Soviets demanded the invaders withdraw, which they all did. This infuriated Stevenson:

we have lost the confidence of beleaguered Israel . . . thanks to our bewildering appeasements and provocations, the Russian Communists have attained the foothold in the Middle East the czars could not get . . . the United States found itself arrayed in the United Nations with Soviet Russia and the dictator of Egypt against the democracies of Britain, France and Israel.<sup>20</sup>

One expects pandering to Zionism from a Democrat, schooled in domestic demagoguery. But the Suez invasion was a turning point in world history, a desperate attempt of the old imperial order to ward off its decline. Yet here was the darling of the liberals, about 50,000 miles to the right of the Republicans.

Stevenson's crackpot statement didn't help. Nothing could have



that year. Eisenhower won, 35,581,003 to 26,031,322. Again, the only states the great liberal won were seven racist southern states.

Stevenson remained a power in the party even after his second defeat. He became Kennedy's Ambassador to the United Nations in 1961, just in time for the most ignominious episode in his political life. He was put on the spot by the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba. Kennedy hadn't even informed him it was going to happen. He got up and simply denied that the U.S. had anything to do with it. After the ordeal he discussed it with a friend:

You heard my speech today? Well, I did not tell the whole truth; I did not know the whole truth. I took this job at the President's request on the understanding that I would be consulted and kept fully informed on everything. I spoke in the United Nations in good faith on that understanding. Now my credibility has been compromised, and therefore my usefulness. I've got to resign—there is nothing I can do but resign. But I can't resign—can't—the young President and the country are in enough trouble.<sup>21</sup>

Few get to address the whole world. Stevenson did. Every political person on the planet who could get near a radio that day heard him brazenly deny the obvious. One African diplomat asked him point blank: if you don't believe the U.S. had anything to do with the invasion, who do you think was behind it? And the whole Security Council burst out laughing at this pathetic man who was denying what everybody knew. Do you think he resigned? Of course not.

### **Kennedy: A Whited Sepulcher, Beautiful Outward, but Full of All Uncleaness**

The most distinctive sign that American politics are primitive is the repeated emergence of political dynasties. FDR was a cousin of Teddy Roosevelt. Stevenson was the son of an obscure failed Vice President candidate. But of all the modern dynasties, the most important is the current one, the Kennedys, having given the party an ambassador, a war hero, a President, two presidential candidates, three Senators, and now a Representative. As politics is about collective human relationships, primarily economic, and their ideological reflections, cults around rich individuals are naturally suspect to prudent researchers. By definition, they are



the antithesis of democratic egalitarianism. And no personality cult demonstrates the lightweight quality of modern liberalism than the continuing respect given to the name of John F. Kennedy.

The Kennedy of the late '40s scarcely qualified as a liberal. Although he generally went along with Truman's domestic line, Massachusetts Representative Kennedy criticized him for losing China. Even as late as 1961, he would still proclaim that

there still is, of course, room for argument as to whether any United States actions would have changed the course of events there. I think a greater effort would have been wiser. I said it in '49, so it isn't total hindsight.<sup>22</sup>

He was ill when McCarthy was censured by the Senate, and could not vote. But he prepared an undelivered speech, which discussed "long-past misconduct of Senator McCarthy to which I registered no public objection at the time."<sup>23</sup> In 1956, he defended backing Ngo Dinh Diem's murderous dictatorship in South Vietnam.<sup>24</sup>

He was a Catholic running for the Democratic nomination in 1960. He had to prove the times had changed, that his religion would not lose southern votes for the party. The West Virginia primary against Hubert Humphrey, Senator from Minnesota, was going to be decisive. So he did what any red-blooded A-murican politician would do if his daddy was one of the richest people on the planet. He bought the state.

West Virginia politics in the good ol' days was very simple. It's beautiful and poor. Many people routinely sold their votes. Later, Humphrey was to describe the situation:

Our campaign had, in fact, already given in to the system . . . Hoping to get consideration from the party, it had raised money and given it to the party for slating in various counties . . . Obviously, our highest possible contribution was peanuts compared to what they received from the Kennedy organization.<sup>25</sup>

Virtue triumphed on the first ballot at the Democratic convention. The race against Nixon was a curious one. Kennedy scored points with the liberals when Martin Luther King was arrested in October, trying to desegregate an Atlanta restaurant, and sentenced to four months. John called Coretta King and brother

Bobby contacted the judge and got him out on bail. Nixon was Vice President and the Attorney General told him it would be improper for him to intervene. However, this was just typical northern Democratic politics. And in every other respect Kennedy was a typical northern Democrat. That is to say he was determined that Nixon would never be able to get away again with the red-baiting for which he was so famous. Accordingly, we had the morbid spectacle of the Republicans being baited about a non-existent "missile gap."

The election was one of the closest in history. Kennedy took it with 34,227,096 votes, 49.7%, to Nixon's 34,107,646 or 49.5%, a margin of only 119,450 votes.

### **A Bad Case of "Plausible Denial"**

Once in office, Kennedy got right down to the fundamental business of his administration which was, first, last and always, anti-Communism. Eisenhower had prepared an invasion of Cuba. Kennedy knew about the plan even before he came to power and went right along with it when he took over. As is known, the April 1961 invasion was an utter fiasco, which exposed the U.S. as a classic counter-revolutionary power, the George III of modern times. Castro had been in power now for several decades. We can say how history will record him: he came to power in a country virtually owned by foreigners, over one-third illiterate, its capital city famous as one of the world's centers of prostitution. Today, Cubans run Cuba, nearly everyone is literate, indeed it exports doctors, and prostitution is unheard of. To be sure, there are many things wrong with Castro's regime. Nevertheless it can be said with finality that Kennedy's invasion was murder, in the interest of American investors.

Kennedy's hatred for Castro only increased with America's humiliating defeat. In 1975, the Church Committee, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Agencies, issued its report on CIA attempts to assassinate foreign leaders, Fidel Castro among them. It is absolutely beyond dispute that the CIA hired Mafia figures to kill him. The only question left open was whether Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson approved of the schemes. During the Irangate hearings, F.A.O. Schwarz, counsel for the Committee in 1975-6, discussed their findings, especially in the light of Irangate:



The Committee was unable to tell whether Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy had authorized the plots. The Church Committee received pretty much the same responses from those in authority that the Iran-contra Committee has . . . Most witnesses . . . said . . . they had decided that the President involved should not be told directly or explicitly because, pursuant to the doctrine of "plausible denial," the Presidents were better off not knowing. Some said the Presidents were "told," but only by circumlocution or euphemism . . . the committee concluded that both the highest authorities and their operatives found ambiguity and confusion useful.<sup>26</sup>

In spite of the Committee's statement that none of the operatives discussed assassinating Castro with Kennedy, we know he talked it over with his intimates. In November 1961, Tad Szulc, a *New York Times* correspondent for Latin America, was interviewed by Kennedy for an administration job. Kennedy asked him, "What would you think if I ordered Castro to be assassinated?" According to Szulc's notes, made immediately after their talk:

JFK said he raised question because he was under terrific pressure from advisors (think he said intelligence people, but not positive) to ok a Castro murder.<sup>27</sup>

Szulc says that Kennedy felt that the U.S. should not engage in such actions. Indeed, in a speech that month, he declared, "We cannot, as a free nation, compete with our adversaries in tactics of terror and assassination."<sup>28</sup> However, we are discussing the mad world hidden away from the world of plausible deniability. The fact that the President of the United States said he was against assassinations means nothing in such a milieu. But the speech and Szulc's notes, taken together, definitely mean that the Committee was too cautious in its report. Kennedy at least debated assassination of a head of state.

What conclusions can we draw from this and other evidence? Let's put it this way: the majority of the American people simply do not believe that Ronald Reagan did not know of the diversion of funds to the Contras from the sale of weapons to Iran. In no small measure this is because of Admiral John Poindexter's testimony about not telling Reagan so as to maintain "plausible deniability." Now it is plain where he got that concept. The whole



nether world of "anti-Communist" covert operations, domestic and foreign, which produced Poindexter, started under Truman, who created the CIA, continued under Eisenhower, and went into high under JFK. If people are skeptical of Reagan, and they have every right to be so, then it is necessary to remind them that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. If healthy skepticism makes them think Reagan knew, that same cynicism fully applies with equal force to Kennedy.

The Church Committee's investigation into the CIA-Mafia connection turned up yet another hidden aspect of Kennedy's life behind the scenes. Its report had a singular section in it:

all living CIA officials . . . testified that they never discussed the assassination plot with the President. By May 1961, however, the Attorney General (Robert Kennedy) and (FBI Director) Hoover were aware that the CIA had earlier used (Sam) Giancana in an operation against Cuba and FBI files contained two memoranda which, if simultaneously reviewed, would have led one to conclude that the CIA operation had involved assassination . . . Evidence . . . indicates that a close friend of President had frequent contact with the President from the end of 1960 through mid-1962. FBI reports . . . indicates that the President's friend was a close friend of John Roselli and Sam Giancana . . . White House telephone logs show 70 instances of phone contacts between the White House and the President's friend.<sup>29</sup>

On November 16, 1975, the *Washington Post* revealed the "close friend" to be Judith Campbell. She subsequently wrote an "as told to" book describing herself as the mistress of the mock-pious Catholic President as well as a Mafia moll. Her story is now virtually universally accepted. Kennedy met her through Frank Sinatra, who had raised funds for him.

### **"That Includes the White House"**

If there is a little room for doubt that Kennedy knew of the Castro assassination plots, there is no doubt that his brother Bobby sanctioned the wiretapping of Martin Luther King. On October 21, 1963, Bobby authorized taps on King's home phone and the New York and Atlanta offices of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Eventually the FBI ended up bugging his hotel rooms.<sup>30</sup> Bobby allowed the tapping because J. Edgar Hoover

was obsessed that King was under the influence of an alleged Communist. Nothing was found linking King with the Communist Party, but his sexual escapades became known within the administration. Theodore White, author of the *Making of the President* series, reported that "John F. Kennedy, whom I cherished, read the FBI wiretapes on Martin Luther King with relish."<sup>31</sup>

In 1967, *Ramparts* magazine exposed systematic CIA secret subsidies of the National Student Association, then the umbrella group for the student governments of the nation's universities. The bribery had gone on since the Truman administration, and was motivated by a desire to keep the country's students from going over to any form of left ideology. The *Ramparts* revelations led immediately to further investigations by *The New York Times*, which led to exposure of similar bribes to numerous organizations, including several AFL-CIO unions, and *Encounter* magazine, among others. Bobby Kennedy acknowledged presidential complicity in these scandals on February 21, 1967:

Robert F. Kennedy said today it was unfair to let the Central Intelligence Agency "take the rap" for secretly financing private groups. Basic decisions for the secret subsidies, he said, were made by "the executive branch in the Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson Administrations" . . . Senator Kennedy said today that "all relevant Government agencies" were approached for approval of the basic decision on C.I.A. subsidies. "That includes the White House."<sup>32</sup>

### **"70 Percent—To Avoid a Humiliating U.S. Defeat"**

On the day Kennedy became President, there were 685 military "advisers" in Vietnam. When he died, there were 16,732 troops. Seventy-three Americans were killed there in the Kennedy years. The war was not going well in 1963, and the dictator of the moment, Ngo Dinh Diem, was facing a military coup, patronized by the American ambassador. Yet, on October 2, Kennedy announced that 1,000 men could be withdrawn by the end of the year and that military intervention could be largely over by 1965. But on November 14, he still talked of "an increased effort in the war."<sup>33</sup>

No 'South' Vietnam government could have ever won the war.



It was nothing but the old French puppet government. Some liberal advisers hoped it could be imposed upon to make the necessary land reforms to give it some popular backing. But history's Benedict Arnolds can't turn into Washingtons. Kennedy always understood this at least with one lobe. Senator Mike Mansfield had come to realize that the game was up and he tried to convince Kennedy to get out. Later, JFK said that he "got angry with Mike for disagreeing with our policy so completely, and I got angry with myself because I found myself agreeing with him."<sup>34</sup> Yet he subsequently told Mansfield that the latter had been right about total withdrawal. "But I can't do it until 1965—after I'm reelected."<sup>35</sup> He was afraid that he would be baited for having lost Vietnam in the same way that Truman had been accused of losing China.

Americans see democracy as their country's strongest suit. In fact elections bring out the worst in our politicians. Think of what Kennedy was actually doing. He wanted to fight on, but it was difficult to see victory. So soldier on, but send a few troops home so that the peace camp would be pleased that at least the U.S. wasn't getting more involved. That a few more Americans would die, and a lot more Vietnamese? Well, what of it if it meant getting reelected? Some things are more important than others and that's just the way it is.

Numerous examples of this kind of shameless opportunism turned Daniel Ellsberg against the war when he helped compile the Pentagon Papers, the government's secret history of the war. Anti-Communism got the U.S. into the war, even though observers could see that without reforms victory was impossible. And downright electoral opportunism kept America in. After JFK's assassination, John McNaughton, an Assistant Secretary of Defense, wrote something which applied with full force to Kennedy's thinking in his last days. The goal had become "70 percent—To avoid a humiliating U.S. defeat . . . 20 percent—to keep SVN territory from Chinese hands . . . 10 percent—To permit the people of SVN to enjoy a better, freer way of life."<sup>36</sup>

### **"Not One Single Witness"**

Every thinking American can tell you where he or she was when they heard that Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, 1963. The rest of the story is well known. Lee Harvey Oswald



guns down officer J.D. Tippett, is arrested. Then, after denying that he killed the President, he is himself murdered by Jack Ruby, before stunned millions of television-watching Americans. The assassination season was beginning, beyond doubt one of the most unnerving eras of our history.

The killing is one of the more curious parts of the Kennedy story. The strange circumstances of the assassin's death, which meant no trial, inevitably triggered off the wildest anxieties on the part of the public that it might have been the result of a conspiracy. When it was discovered that Oswald had visited the Soviet Union and then returned with a Soviet wife, and had been active in supporting Castro, the natural concern of ordinary Americans, who had been propagandized for decades with tales of domestic Communist conspiracies, mounted to a crescendo. It was then that Kennedy's successor, Lyndon Johnson, called in Chief Justice Earl Warren to ask that he head a panel to investigate the assassination. Years later, Warren wrote about the meeting in his *Memoirs*:

He then told me how serious were the rumors floating around the world. The gravity of the situation was such that it might lead us into war, he said, and if so, it might be nuclear war.<sup>37</sup>

On September 21, 1964, the so-called Warren Commission filed its 888 page report, with 26 accompanying volumes of testimony. Oswald had acted alone, as had Ruby. One might think that a report of a commission chaired by the Chief Justice of the United States would have laid the case to rest. Instead, whole Canadian forests were chopped down for paper for articles and books telling us that the author's favorite enemy, left to right, really did it. Intellectuals who never hunted a duck were busy telling each other about the ballistics of rifles. In his *Memoirs*, Warren later wrote that "In my summer travels around the world, I found a conspiracy theory to prevail almost everywhere I went."<sup>38</sup> Warren almost always avoided discussion of the assassination after the report. With excellent reason. As he later wrote,

I wish to say that not one single witness, one document or one artifact has been produced to provably discredit it. To our best knowledge, the facts remain precisely as reported, and, that being true, the conclusion must remain the same.<sup>39</sup>

Warren had one of the most unusual careers of any modern American politicians. As Attorney General of California, he had been one of those who had crammed the Japanese into the concentration camps. But even then he believed in what he did. Later he became a liberal. As Chief Justice, he had put himself into the history books forever as the author of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954), the decision that outlawed segregated schools. To think that a man of his integrity, and experienced as a district attorney for many years, could blow one of the most elaborate investigations of all time, and let a conspiracy slip past him, is absurd. As he wrote

To say . . . the Commission, suppressed, neglected to unearth, or overlooked evidence of a conspiracy would be an indictment of the entire government . . . It would mean the whole structure was absolutely corrupt from top to bottom, with not one person of high or low rank willing to come forward to expose the villainy, in spite of the fact that the entire country bitterly mourned the death of its young President and such a praiseworthy deed could make one a national hero.<sup>40</sup>

Warren felt that the fact that there was no trial was the prime reason for the mushroom growth of conspiracy theories. But that was only the precondition. The average American, including the typical intellectual, is a political lightweight. He or she did not begin to take into consideration the enormous problems any conspiracy would have to overcome in killing the President and getting away with it.

Any serious political plotters would have to realize that neither the government nor the people would take kindly toward them. And the Attorney General was none less than the murdered man's brother. The Dallas cops, the Texas Rangers, the Texas Governor who also was shot—these would also be looking into the matter. In this case, given Oswald's Soviet wife, there was a 'Warrenski Commission,' which eagerly cooperated with the U.S. since the last thing in the world the USSR wanted was suspicion that it had killed the popular American President.

### **The Times They Were a-Changin'**

The conspiracy buffs, as others jocularly have called them, sailed right on, exposing plots that had somehow eluded all those

police agencies. They didn't understand themselves. But we can see that they were a bizarre reflection of the popular illusions about Kennedy when he died. He was all the American image-heroes rolled into one. He was the youngest President in our history, he was handsome, he was rich and he was cultured. The liberals loved him beyond all measure. Here was a President that had Robert Frost reading poetry in the White House and Pablo Casals playing the cello for his guests.

The Bay of Pigs came at a time when the people were still deep into primordial anti-Communism. They saw it as unfortunate rather than as a violation of Cuban sovereignty. Only 73 Americans had been killed in Vietnam. The anti-war movement was still small with only a few hundred marching whereas within a few years it would be organizing demonstrations of hundreds of thousands. We know Kennedy bugged King. Blacks didn't know it then. The civil rights movement thought he didn't do much for them except talk. And he tried to get the movement to call off the 1963 March on Washington, now famous for King's celebrated "I have a dream" speech. But most blacks still did not see JFK as an enemy, certainly not in the way they saw most southern Democratic politicians. No, they all saw him as the ruler of "Camelot." We know he was tapping King, debating—or worse—whether to murder Castro, sleeping with a Mafia floozy, propping up a despot in South Vietnam. The conspiracy buffs and the common people, alike, worried about who killed Kennedy? But the times they were a-changin'. Nowadays folks ask who did Kennedy kill?

### **"Hey, Hey LBJ. How Many Boys Did You Kill Today?"**

Lyndon Johnson's 1964 victory over Barry Goldwater was one of the most one-sided in history. All liberals hailed him then. Soon Johnson, who started out as a classic southern racist, campaigning with comedians in blackface, was singing "We Shall Overcome" on TV news broadcasts. But by then no one cared. In 1968, he had to announce that he would not seek reelection. He didn't dare. His appearance in any major city was the signal for giant demonstrations. He will always be "Hey, hey, LBJ. How many boys did you kill today?"

Johnson always claimed he was continuing Kennedy's anti-Communist line in staying on in Vietnam. Certainly none of Kennedy's advisers broke with his successor when he drove



deeper into the quagmire, which probably would have happened had Johnson repudiated any kind of clear disengagement position on Kennedy's part. At any rate, all but two congressmen supported Johnson after he organized what is now universally agreed was a provocation, a concocted North Vietnamese PT boat "attack" on a vastly superior U.S. ship in the Gulf of Tonkin in August 1964.

With the primary exception of the Trotskyists and Maoists, most of the then still small anti-war movement critically supported Johnson in November 1964 against Barry Goldwater. They did so of course because they thought Johnson the lesser evil. Goldwater was a full court press reactionary. Also stupid. "You know," he confessed, "I haven't really got a first class brain."<sup>41</sup> Amen. He talked about possibly using "low-yield nuclear bombs" in Vietnam.<sup>42</sup> He was a dead-end opponent of the onrushing civil rights movement. And even the typical working-class hawk was alarmed when he proposed that Social Security be made voluntary. By the end of his campaign, he tried to take back some of these neanderthal statements, but by then he couldn't get funding from Wall Street, which was convinced he was a loon.

Come election time, Goldwater won only his home state of Arizona and five southern states. Johnson's vote was 43,126,218 to 27,174,898. Johnson's 61.1% was greater than Roosevelt's 60.8% against Landon.

The civil rights struggle had already gone into the streets in the '50s. It was still growing when Johnson bombed North Vietnam in 1965 and generated a mass anti-war movement. But the two efforts never fully merged. While the black leadership would speak at anti-war rallies, and many thousands of blacks attended these, the bulk of black civil rights demonstrators did not. And if white speakers at anti-war rallies talked about civil rights, again the dire necessities of the blacks were not an absolute priority with the bulk of whites who attended. Nevertheless the two movements together are seen quite correctly as "the '60s," and as a major turning point in our history.

The politics of the two parallel struggles were somewhat different. For the most part, the leadership of the black struggle remained in the hands of preachers and other reformist elements with greater or lesser ties to the Democratic Party. The important exceptions were Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael and, in their initial years, the Black Panthers. On the other hand, the

anti-war movement was led by radicals from the beginning. With the exception of one national demonstration in 1969, in which the young Gary Hart played a major role, I do not recall any instance in which Democrats played a crucial role in organizing the struggle. However, the radicals could never have attracted hundreds of thousands on their own. Whenever they could, they used liberal speakers as attractions to bring people to the rallies.

With both movements, the large majority of demonstrators were Democrats. This meant that in many states, northern and southern, the civil rights movement was a struggle of Democrats against Democratic governors and mayors and their cops. And from 1961, with Kennedy, through January 1969, when Johnson left office, the anti-war movement pitted hundreds of thousands of rank and file Democrats against Democratic national administrations. This generated immense internal conflicts within the party establishment, culminating in intense primary contests and finally desperate physical battles at the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago.

### **The Anti-War Candidates—Almost**

Bobby Kennedy soon became the leading voice of Democratic Party elements friendly to the street movements. As a Kennedy, he was heir to the illusions of the masses regarding his brother. The ordinary black had no idea he was wiretapping King. He was seen as the Attorney General who intervened on behalf of victims of Dixiecrat justice. As the anti-war cause progressed, it made its biggest inroads on the campuses, first among students, then among professors. This pressure reflected itself amongst Kennedy academic hangers-on like Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and Bobby began to criticize the war. He had relocated to New York to run for the Senate in 1964, and anti-war speeches were immensely popular among the huge liberal population there. But he still would not commit himself to running for the Democratic nomination in 1968. Two-party politics is extremely personality oriented. Every politician who does not have a hare-lip is surrounded by intellectual groupies who dream that their tiger will become President. Many of these, however, were convinced that it was impossible for anyone to take the nomination away from an incumbent President and advised their hero to wait until 1972.

In 1967, more resolute activists would wait no longer and



sought another candidate to "dump Johnson." Eugene McCarthy, a Senator from Minnesota, decided to give it a go and he entered the February 1968 New Hampshire primary. McCarthy had to buck the impression that he was a stalking horse for Kennedy, who would run if he did well. And he was always a bit of a dabbler and was not campaigning very hard. But then the Viet Cong's Tet Offensive erupted. The U.S. Embassy in Saigon was stormed and the citadel in Hue was taken. It became obvious that the war could only end up as an American disaster. Suddenly, McCarthy became the man of the hour. He swept the New Hampshire primary. Kennedy had no choice. If he stayed out any longer, he would never catch McCarthy that year and liberals would think him an irresolute Hamlet and not even remember him in 1972. He jumped in. Whereupon Johnson announced he would not run for reelection. His Vice President, Hubert Horatio Humphrey, ran as the hawk, defending his "politics of joy."<sup>43</sup>

The nomination contest settled down to a fight between the "anti-war" candidates. The term is in quotes because neither called for immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Vietnam.<sup>44</sup> Kennedy wrote privately that "I'd get out of there in six months."<sup>45</sup> Meaning six months after taking office in January 1969. His appeal was primarily to the poor, blacks and Hispanics. McCarthy had a good portion of the college youth because he had moved before the calculating Kennedy, and he appealed to what we today call the yuppies. He went over like the proverbial lead dirigible with the poor and blacks. In Oregon, he actually told a crowd that polls showed Kennedy doing well

among the less intelligent and less educated people in America. And I don't mean to fault them for voting for him, but I think that you ought to bear that in mind as you go the polls.<sup>46</sup>

America's poor and its intellectuals, alike, had been fools, as witness their idolization of JFK and their initial support for the war. But the war taught them many a lesson, as had the civil rights struggle. Here was one of history's great chances to enlighten millions upon millions of ordinary folks. But that was not for the supercilious McCarthy. Author Norman Mailer accurately described the "disinfected idealism" of his followers, "which gave the impression when among them of living in a lobotomized ward of Upper Utopia."<sup>47</sup>



## Chicago. City of Sweetness and Light

In Los Angeles on June 6, Kennedy was shot by Sirhan Sirhan, a free-lance Palestinian crackpot who he had apparently antagonized by his demagoguery on behalf of Israel, something not exactly unheard of in New York State. With Bobby's death the shrewdies who had gathered behind someone they thought might win, rushed towards Humphrey rather than McCarthy. The latter was a dismal candidate but he wasn't a murderer, which Humphrey surely was. However, he had no important money bags behind him and that was decisive for most of the Kennedy camp, who thought idealism was for college students and other *kinder* of all ages.

Humphrey won the nomination on the first ballot. But the real battle took place in the streets of Chicago outside the convention hall. Those elements of the street anti-war movement with illusions about the Democrats organized a week of demonstrations in hope of pressuring the convention on McCarthy's behalf. Mayor Daley was waiting for them with a combined force of cops, National Guard and private guards larger than George Washington's army at its height. There was night after night of what a later investigating commission termed "police riots." Millions saw the "pigs," as protesters then called the cops, storming peaceful demonstrations. No less than 63 reporters were beaten up before journalists grasped that the pigs were actually looking for people with press badges to attack. Finally, Connecticut Senator Abe Ribicoff got the convention podium to denounce "the Gestapo in the streets of Chicago." Daley sweetly replied, "Fuck you, you Jew son of a bitch, you lousy motherfucker, go home." Later, he tried to deny it, but a Chicago alderman, a Jew who was an Illinois delegate, said that he couldn't "hear what Daley said, but others were yelling things like 'go home you dirty kike, you dirty agitator, Communist.'"<sup>48</sup>

Humphrey had once been an outspoken liberal. But he had come to terms with the system. In 1954, as Senator from Minnesota, he introduced a "Communist control act" which in effect outlawed the Communist Party:

I am tired of reading headlines about being 'soft' toward Communism . . . I want the Senators to stand up and to answer whether

they are for the Communist Party, or against it.<sup>49</sup>

By the late '60s he was defining himself as only "very moderately left of center."<sup>50</sup> But even he understood that the police brutality profoundly hurt his candidacy. Later, he confessed that "My wife and I went home heartbroken, battered and beaten. I told her I felt just like we had been in a shipwreck."<sup>51</sup> At first, young anti-war elements wouldn't help the campaign, even though the Republican was Richard Nixon, already a hated figure for liberals, and George Wallace was running as an open racist on the American Independent line. Hecklers followed Humphrey everywhere. Later, he began to say that he would stop bombing Hanoi, while reserving the right to resume the raids if Ho did not make a gesture of good faith, i.e., give in on some point of the ever-on-going negotiations. That was enough for most liberals, who are always ready to vote for a murderer, as long as they can excuse it as voting for a lesser evil. Even McCarthy endorsed him. On October 31, Johnson halted the bombings, though of course not the war. But the gesture came too late. Nixon won with a 510,314 vote margin over Humphrey, 31,785,480 to 31,275,166. Wallace polled 9,906,473 votes.

### **McGovern and Eagleton:**

#### **An Idiot and a Madman is Better Than People Deserve**

With Bobby gone, Kennedy charisma fell to heir Teddy. Everyone assumed he would be the 1972 candidate. Until July 19, 1969. Charming and very married, he drove off the bridge at Chappaquidick, with Mary Jo Kopechne, not his wife. He got out, swam to shore, left, didn't contact police. She drowned. He made 17 calls to advisers before calling the cops. He was fined for leaving the scene of an accident. He continued on, re-electable in Massachusetts, unelectable anywhere else, charisma and sin wrapped together forever.

Neither McCarthy's defeat nor Teddy's disgrace slowed the rising pressure from "the movement" within the party. Even while the 1968 convention picked Humphrey, it passed a resolution calling for "broader citizen participation in the delegate selection process."<sup>52</sup> Foreign readers in particular must understand that the two major parties pick their convention delegates 50 different ways in 50 different states. In some they are chosen by primaries,

in others by conventions, in still others by local caucuses. In those days, there were even two states in which incumbent Democratic governors were allowed to pick the delegates. In others they were picked years in advance, by machine bosses, before there were even any declared candidates for clearly defined issues. The rules in many states favored sitting politicians. Everywhere blacks, women and youth were under-represented.

A commission was set up. Members came from left and right wing factions. Many conservatives ignored it, but under Senator George McGovern of South Dakota, it tried to transform the party. It required state parties to take

affirmative steps to encourage . . . representation of minority groups on the national convention delegation in reasonable relationship to the group's presence in the population in the states.

A footnote carefully stated that "It is the understanding of the Commission that this is not to be accomplished by the mandatory imposition of quotas."<sup>53</sup>

McGovern ultimately quit the Commission to try for the nomination. In the end, the existence of the quotas did not really affect who won the various state contests, and there was only one important challenge of a delegation at the 1972 Miami convention. But McGovern's forces reflected the guidelines. When he won nomination that summer it looked as if the peace, black, student and women's movements had made it past the machine bosses and union piecards and had a chance to come to power.

McGovern was no radical. Before McCarthy, he had been asked if he would run in 1968 and he declined. Finally, he entered, three weeks before the convention, as a rallying focus for Kennedyites, in the off chance the two front runners blew out. In January 1971, Daniel Ellsberg approached him to use his congressional immunity from arrest to present the Pentagon Papers, documenting the subterranean scheming of Kennedy & Johnson & Co. on Vietnam. McGovern says he pointed out it would appear partisan if he exposed them. He advised Ellsberg to go to a newspaper. After *The New York Times* ran the Papers and Ellsberg was arrested, McGovern admitted that if some Congress people had been bolder, the public would have had the story of the politicians' schemes sooner, in fuller form and without the legal harassment of the world's most famous whistleblower. But he still insisted he hadn't been remiss, that he really didn't know



what Ellsberg had. When he ran, Ellsberg, by then world famous, denounced McGovern's hesitations, characteristic of even the best liberals, who put personal political careers far above the peace struggle.

The nomination race was crowded. Senator Edmund Muskie, front-runner and empty machine mind, blinked out in a weeping fit over an insult to his wife in an obscure New Hampshire daily. Humphrey was tainted with crimes. There was a bit of mad quality about him. He could wind up his mouth, walk away, come back months later, sure it would still be going. Henry "Scoop" Jackson of Washington, the "Senator from Boeing," appealed to few beyond defense industry union tops and Zionists. John Lindsay, New York's handsome picture-framed Mayor, was small threat on the left, with his liberal banalities and petty machine hustles, both useless before social cataclysm.

Wallace reentered the party and made huge inroads into northern blue-collar voters. But on May 15, 1972, he was shot by mad Arthur Bremer. The convention fight was between an "Anybody But McGovern" coalition and the party's reigning pragmatic populist. "My one unique position," he said,

is to be to the left of them all, but to make clear to the . . . organization Democrats that they are not going to find me leading a forth party or my candidacy producing pickets outside the convention hall . . . I am also the most reconciling candidate.<sup>54</sup>

Thus we were to see him in alliances holy and unholy. The reformer was happy to have the support of Matthew Troy, head of New York City's Queens County machine, already a sinkhole of corruption.

Nixon had several advantages. He could withdraw troops at will, winding down casualties. He recognized Beijing, something the Democrats were too stupid and cowardly to propose. He was the huge winner on his right, thanks to the fortuitous crippling of Wallace. But this was the husbanding of weak conservative options, slowly withdrawing in a losing war, recognizing earthshattering destruction of capitalism in China. The now secure racist vote was a reflection of the perpetual pressure of the socially and politically exploding black ghettos. However, an upper-class party must perch on a popular base or it can not maintain itself in power. By ancient instinct they side up to the

most educationally backward of the exploited. In 1968, Nixon focused on southern white votes. 1972 saw the invention of television's lovable Archie Bunker, aka the blue-collar Catholic ethnic. The day before invading Laos, Nixon told a Cardinal he opposed abortion. He sought out the white natives of the ethnic Balkans of the industrial states. But every conservative vote gained among the foolish and fanatic groundlings was one lost among the growing numbers of educated and emancipated youth. Nixon had immense amounts of money. However, no amount of money could have preserved his power if his opponents succeeded in keeping the spotlight on him and the deadly but defeatable old order.

### **"A Dead Fish Always Goes With the Tide"**

McGovern's basic constituencies were the young and other rebellious millions who wanted an end to war and justice at home, but who rarely had much political experience, still less understanding. He never was able to attract first-rate minds due to his own lack in this regard. Gene McCarthy was cruelly correct when he said, "Talking with George McGovern is like eating a Chinese meal. An hour after it's over, you wonder whether you really ate anything."<sup>55</sup>

In 1967, he called himself a "moderate liberal" and that is all he ever was. There is a proverb, "a dead fish always goes with the tide." That was McGovern with whom opportunism was a way of life. Years before he had written a doctoral thesis, *The Colorado Coal Strike 1913-1914*. It had talked of the Rockefeller Company's bloody war with the miners as an example of "unrestrained class struggle." That got edited out in a suddenly revised version, which only ended up with his getting exposed in the July 9, 1972, *New York Times Review of Books*. McGovern was for abortion, but tried to placate the right by saying it should be up to each state to decide its legality. He opposed legalization of marijuana. He was only for decriminalization, i.e., the expensive permanent bootleg society we suffer from today. He was not for immediate withdrawal from Vietnam. He would end the war within 90 days after his triumphal entry into the White House. Until that grand and glorious day, he would continue voting for money for the war, so that he couldn't be accused of letting down the boys in Vietnam.



Although he had always voted money to Israel, he was enough of a Great Plains Christian to start out with some vague concern for Arab-Israeli peace. That was too much for many Zionists, who were crucial financially and vote-wise for any Democratic victory. But the peace candidate hastened to put ads in Jewish community papers calling for more ships for the U.S. Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean. The supporter of feminism went to meet ancient and fanatic rabbis in synagogues that wouldn't even permit women on the same floor with men. In the end, the one great political joke to come out of his pathetic campaign was one told on him by an unnamed adviser: "You've got to admit George McGovern's got courage. He says the same thing to the rabbis in Los Angeles as he says to the rabbis of New York."<sup>56</sup>

### **Which One Was Mad, Which One Was the Idiot?**

McGovern's populism and anti-war sentiment, coupled with time-honored liberal wheeling and dealing, seemed at first to be the ultimate in *realpolitik*. Not only did he get the nomination, but the entire Daley machine delegation was disqualified for ethnic and sexual imbalance. However, in the very moment of liberal triumph, the built-in hypocrisy of the two party system went into high gear.

It was 4:53 AM when Daley got his comeuppance, after hours of Florida summer heat. Everyone rushed to leave. Suddenly the chair cried out. "Wait!" Silence. Father Z\*\*\*\*\*ski, coal-mining parish priest, first had to drone on about God blessing the gathering. TV panned on bored worldlings, bowed heads all, yawning, praying he'd finish so they could get out of their sweaty underwear and commit some sins.

The mad button stayed on, but the party didn't know it. The convention nominated McGovern on the first ballot. It picked Missouri Senator Tom Eagleton as his running mate. The platform was factual, earnest, a catchall of needed reforms. It called for peace, cutting of arms, outlawing pistols, abolition of capital punishment, great income distribution and welfare rights and reform, pension transferability, closing of tax loopholes, doing away with Congressional seniority and the Electoral College.

All who could went on needed vacations. Then stories started coming to campaign officials. Eagleton had a little health problem. He had been hospitalized three times and electro-shocked



twice while the press was told he had stomach trouble. The last time was six years before, but he still took "tranks."

Reaction was fast and overwhelming. Truman and Johnson were promoted Vice Presidents. We were not in need of an electric-shock case at the atomic button. But McGovern was for reform. Ex-mental patients can be cured. His press conference response was that "Eagleton is fully qualified in mind, body and spirit." The next day, he was "1,000% for Tom Eagleton and I have no intention of dropping him."<sup>57</sup>

Of course he was replaced with Sargent Shriver. The "1,000%" was one of history's most incredible political stupidities. The public never forgot it. Millions voted for Nixon or for neither candidate, rather than vote for an idiot who had vouched for a madman.

All that organization and platform blown away. Why did it happen? Eagleton was sixth on McGovern's list of running mates. He was to McGovern's right so they had met only once previously, for 45 minutes in the Senatorial sauna, three years before. They discussed the nomination by phone. Eagleton knew he was to be asked. The press was there. He replied immediately, "before you change your mind, I accept." McGovern's manager took over and asked if there were any skeletons. Eagleton said no, answered more questions and turned the phone over to his aide. Why didn't he tell of the shock treatment? "My health just wasn't on my mind, it wasn't on my mind, it was like a broken leg that healed."<sup>58</sup>

Here again the always-on button of the Yankee Doodle *realpolitiker* machine did in the party's in-house savior. The post of Vice President is a curious one, boring but rich in potential. It has become the afterthought of U.S. conventions, usually only seriously thought about after nomination victory and its immediate strategic needs. The Presidential nominee's staff had to wait until five preferred candidates declined to go on the ticket before they could take themselves seriously in investigating Eagleton. Naturally, by that time they were rushed to complete their queries. The Eagleton choice was a mistake just waiting to happen. It happened to McGovern. His "reconciling" conception of his candidacy, his concern for not appearing to abandon the unfortunate Eagleton, conspired to make him initially loyal to him.

Watergate erupted in the early hours of June 17, 1972. But the

first polls showed 62% of Americans thought it was “just politics.” The fuller implications only came out in 1973. It was to cap the explosive era, destroying the faith of millions in their government. But it was a near non-issue in 1972.

The election landslide was staggering. Nixon got 47,165,234 votes. McGovern 29,170,774. Nixon won by almost 18,000,000 votes, getting 60.7% to his opponent's 37.6%. That the vote was not really for Nixon as it was against McGovern is shown in an anomaly. Normally presidential candidates get more votes than statewide office seekers of their party. In 19 states, the ticket outpolled McGovern.

McGovern was not pushed off a political cliff for his debacle. He was still a Senator. Watergate had the side effect of making him the retrospective lesser evil even if Eagleton had stayed on. Like Teddy, he remained in permanent disgrace—but famous, sometimes worth listening to, usually not. In 1975, he trekked to the Middle East. He met Arafat. He then went to Jerusalem to tell the folks there that peace was possible if they negotiated with the PLO. A journalist asked if that meant that he repudiated his signing a Congressional statement in 1974 opposing the PLO getting observer status at the UN? It's good to see some Jews still know how to crucify a guy. But our South Dakota savior jumped off that cross. Jeezus, don't you Hebrew chillun know anything yet?: “Please don't hold those of us in Congress to statements signed for domestic consumption.”<sup>59</sup>

Out of his own mouth, his contempt for all Americans. In this case it was McGovern and Jews, but it could be almost any liberal on almost any issue. The rules of American capitalist politics are simple: 1. You must be for capitalism. 2. You can define that anyway you want. 3. You can be for anything else. 4. You say whatever you think will get you votes or money for votes.

Arabs and Jews are as entitled to peace as Americans. McGovern's statement was shameless. But that was him, before, during and after his debacle. “He did not care whose house was on fire, just so long as he could warm his hands by the coals.”

### **Jimmy Carter: The Politics of Love— and the Trilateral Commission**

Nixon ended American troop involvement in Indochina in January 1973. The efforts of many thousands of Kennedyites,



McCarthyites and McGovernites ultimately affected little except by way of the fear Johnson and Nixon had of their potential. Bobby Kennedy's assassination, Teddy Kennedy's scandalous auto accident, McGovern's stupidity over Eagleton, brought all to nullity. The war ended because the Indochinese revolutionaries made American victory impossible and constant turmoil at home made the war too costly for Nixon to continue direct U.S. involvement. In fact, the war continued on with American-armed South Vietnam killing tens of thousands before total defeat in 1975. The bulk of the anti-war movement lacked the staying power, the internationalism, to continue demonstrating after the bodybags stopped coming home. But soon Nixon would join McGovern in political oblivion. The entire ideological spectrum began to cool down after the overheating of the years from *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Watergate forced Nixon out on August 9, 1974. His successor, Gerald Ford, who had been chosen Vice President on December 6, 1973, after Spiro Agnew's enforced resignation, pardoned Nixon. Naturally this made him widely unpopular, even if no one hated him. He knew he had to be exceedingly cautious, an administrator of a political system that for almost a decade had been tossed around like a rat by a terrier.

Ford's years were stagnant but not merely for the Republicans. The left and blacks had marched off the historical stage. The Democratic Party began to ooze back to the "good ol' days," before the numbing McGovern experience. The party rules were changed again. The December 1974 mini-convention gave states the right to select one-quarter of their delegates via the party structure. Meaning the leaders were assured of convention seats. They would not have to gamble on backing the right candidate or end up sitting in the 1976 convention balcony. There were numerous potential presidential candidates, all non-entities. One of these had to ultimately win and the one who did was a peanut farmer from Georgia.

There are men of affairs named James and ordinary guys named Jimmy. Carter was a Jimmy. There was nothing political in that but it made him into the folksiest prez since Lincoln. Jimmy wasn't born po'. But what place in this gawd a-mighty worl' is as down homey as Plains, Georgia? Where else would they have a good ol' boy like brother Billy? What other country could have produced a born-again Christian who studied nuclear



physics at night so he could captain a nuclear sub, who became a politician, and got himself elected President? And then, of his own free will, prayed, head bowed, with Jim Bakker, in Air Force One. While we are at it, let's ask if anyone knows how many American Presidents it takes to unscrew a light bulb?

Carter had been in the Navy for 11 years when decided he had to take over the family farm business. He got into Georgia politics and ended up governor. His aides, like other administrative groupies, decided they had a contender, as they say in the fights. He was soon battling a mob of mediocrites.

Carter's religiosity is genuine, if intellectually absurd. Like nine out of 10 Americans, he makes up his religion as he goes along, with little concern for the historic verities of his faith. He was a member of a white Baptist church. It voted to stay that way with Jimmy voting in favor of admitting blacks. Some Christian doctrines are obscure. Not Paul's internationalism. Him in an all white church? Not even with all the good will in the world. Nevertheless, Jimmy was of the new school. He officially buried segregation. He had a black glee club sing nothing less than "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" at his inauguration.

A southern-born naval officer and governor is a patriot like they don't make elsewhere. As governor, he had declared April 5, 1971, "American Fighting Man's Day," in protest against the conviction of Lt. William Calley for the mass murder of over 400 villagers at My Lai in Vietnam.<sup>60</sup> As late as April 2, 1975, weeks before the defeat of the Saigon regime, he insisted military aid should continue and that South Vietnam would last at least a year.<sup>61</sup> But he could be fast on his feet. Once the war was history, his first presidential act was to pardon most draft resisters.

Only good luck prevented him from making an ass of himself in public at the beginning of his presidential run. He had introduced a resolution at a governors' meeting, declaring Watergate didn't touch Nixon. That day, Nixon fired Haldeman and Ehrlichman and the motion was withdrawn.

It didn't matter that he was often wrong, indeed stupid. His advisers understood people were gun shy of politicians after Watergate. But he looked them in the eye and said "I wouldn't tell a lie."<sup>62</sup> Throw in some early Christian agape, and yer typical A-murican is happy. His gush makes embarrassing reading today:

I want a government that is as good, and honest, and decent, and

truthful, and fair, and competent, and idealistic, and compassionate, and as filled with love as are the American people.<sup>63</sup>

Carter's reformism was trivial even when measured by the abysmal levels of previous practitioners of the populist's art. But this is America, with most of the citizenry still wallowing in primeval ideological ignorance. For them it is enough to sound like you are some kind of outsider, that you will represent them if you win the political lottery big and get a four year all expenses paid stay in the White House. He once told 50 Hollywood stars that

If we make a mistake, the chances are we won't actually go to prison, and if we don't like the public-school system, we put our kids in private schools. When the tax structure is modified . . . you can rest assured that powerful people who are well organized . . . they don't get cheated. But there are millions of people in this country who do get cheated . . . So, I say, public servants like me have a special responsibility to bypass the big shots, *including you and people like you*, and make a concerted effort to understand people who are poor, black, speak a foreign language, who are not well educated . . . and at the same time to run the government in a competent way . . . so that those services that are so badly needed can be delivered.<sup>64</sup>

Not exactly foaming-at-the-mouth radicalism. But enough to make voters think he knew which way everyone's bread was buttered. In fact, Carter was as inside the establishment as you can get on this planet in a way that is quite remarkable for a Plains boy. In 1971, he had given *Time* magazine an interview on "The New South." That impressed Hedley Donovan, head of *Time*, who introduced him to George Franklin, a friend of David Rockefeller, chairman of Chase Manhattan. Franklin soon brought him into the Trilateral Commission, easily one of the most influential groupings in the world, made up of businessmen and politicians from the U.S., Western Europe and Japan. Zbigniew Brzezinski, its first director, was to end up as Carter's national security adviser. But he was only one of the Commission insiders to have the outsider's presidential ear. Other members were Cyrus Vance, Harold Brown, Michael Blumenthal, Walter Mondale, the president of Exxon, and a host of other millionaires and their hangers-on, all jus' a-lookin' for to do right by Joe Six-pack.



From the beginning, Ford was thought of as a joke. He had "played too much football without his helmet." He was "the man who couldn't walk and chew gum at the same time." Incredibly, he was the only President to ever get into an auto accident, with a car smashing into his limousine in Hartford. The idea of presidential candidates debating is certainly a good one. But the 1976 debates between Ford and Carter were an absurdity. Johnny Carson summed up the election perfectly: "It boils down to fear of the unknown versus fear of the known."<sup>65</sup> Carter won, 40,828,929 (50.1 %) to 39,148,940 (48 %).

### **A Dog That Walks on His Hind Legs Doesn't Have to Do It Well**

Carter's administration started at its highest point, although no one knew it at the time. After taking office, Carter walked to the White House, the first time anyone did that since Jefferson. It looked as if the country had finally gotten a President who wasn't a stuffed shirt. But his years were devoid of positive accomplishments. For a while, the newspapers thought the Camp David accord between Egypt and Israel would be his major historic distinction. But Carter had no understanding of the Middle East and in the end the accord turned out to be just another step toward the 1982 Lebanon war.

On November 9, 1977, Egypt's Anwar el-Sadat announced that he was willing to go to Israel in pursuit of peace. His visit to Jerusalem naturally was the center of world attention. In September 1978, he and Israeli Prime Minister Begin met at Camp David, with Carter trying to work out a peace treaty between them. The defects in the ultimate pact are apparent on every line. The Palestinians, the aggrieved party, had no say in it, or vote on it. There was nothing in it that gave them the tiniest aspect of national self-determination. The Israelis only agreed not to claim sovereignty over the West Bank and Gaza for five years. Jerusalem was not even covered by the pact. The Israeli army would be permitted to stay on at places negotiated by the Egyptians, Jordanians and Israelis. Existing settlements would remain. Palestinian refugees would be readmitted on the basis of economic feasibility, as determined by the Israelis and the two Arab states, rather than of right.



Such an absurdity could never begin to establish peace between Arab and Jew. All that had happened was that Sadat decided that he was only going to get the Sinai back if he did a deal at the Palestinians' expense. He had already broken with the Soviets. He figured that America was the only country that could make Israel give up any territory, and the only way he could get the U.S. to muscle Israel was to show Washington that he was firmly on its side in the Cold War. His reward was the Sinai and a largesse of weaponry. But of course Camp David meant that Israel didn't have to worry about Egypt at its back in the next war, which now was inevitable. It came about in 1982. But the seed for that eruption of the ongoing Arab-Israeli dispute was surely sown by Carter at Camp David. As we know, Begin and Sadat were given Nobel peace prizes. Later, the despotic Sadat, his chest covered with ridiculous medals, was assassinated. Begin became infamous for his bloodthirsty invasion of Lebanon, and the Sabra-Shatila massacre, committed by his allies, in Israeli-occupied Beirut.

Few now think of Camp David. Except Carter. That was his big moment. Since then he has taken an interest in the Palestine question. It suits him. It's all about a fella's Christian Holy Lan'. Gives him the sacred right to make statements about the place. In 1985, the former President published *The Blood of Abraham*. He knows the Palestinians do not yet have their rights. But he is still the imperialist, looking at the situation from the top down. He'd like another deal, this time between King Hussein of Jordan, as undemocratic a chap as you'd ever like to meet, and the Israelis, or even a deal between the PLO and the Zionists. But, of course, the Palestinians would have to recognize Israel, i.e., a state set up on their national territory, which denies Palestinians equal rights, and never will grant them.

There isn't an original word or thought in the book. Its impact on either Israelis or Palestinians is completely zero. But the thought of a former Democratic President writing such a book is singular in its way. Given the Party's decades of pandering after Zionist campaign contributions, even a boring book from a mediocre President that at least says that something is still not right is more than we have a right to expect. It is like the dog that walks on his hind legs. It is enough that he does it. Never mind that he does not do it well.

### **“Human Rights”—Except in (Fill in the Blanks)**

Iran was to be Carter's debacle. But every American President starting with Eisenhower was criminally involved with the Shah's torture regime, via the CIA and arms sales to his army. In 1978, the CIA established that the Shah was good for another 10 years of power. He had about 50,000 enemies locked up so why worry? By February 1, 1979, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini had returned to Teheran. On November 4, Islamic militants seized the U.S. Embassy after the exiled Shah was allowed to come to New York for cancer treatments. They originally took 69 diplomats and marines hostage. Later 16 women and blacks were released. In April 1980, Carter authorized a rescue raid. It is hard to imagine anything resembling a rational mind thought it could succeed. Of course, the rescuers never got near the Embassy. Two helicopters crashed into a transport in the desert, hundreds of miles away. Eight military were killed and the plan aborted.

If the guilt for Washington's collusion with the Shah is not Carter's alone, nevertheless his personal villainy was deep. He supported the Shah, not only to the end, but beyond it. We know why he brought the Shah here. If you are running an empire, you must guarantee the native satraps you will take them in if they are overthrown by their people. You can not make exceptions. If you don't help one, the rest become fearful the same fate will befall them.

Normally when a dictator flees into exile, his former subjects swear revenge, and then eventually forget about him if he doesn't try to regain power. But the militant Shia were not ordinary revolutionaries. Sophisticated moderns, left or right, don't take diplomats hostage. But the militants were medievalists, into chopping off thieves' hands and flogging drunkards. To such minds niceties like diplomatic immunity have no meaning. Guilty though the revolutionaries were under international law, the ultimate cause of the Embassy crisis was Carter's active support for the Shah, while in power and after. Carter's criminality was not lessened by even a flyspeck by their action.

His Camp David pact and his pro-Shah stance were only aspects of his uniformly baneful policy of supporting vicious and evil Middle Eastern regimes, all in the name of anti-Communism. In one “triple deal,” in May 1978, the U.S. sold 62 F-15 jets to Saudi Arabia, 50 F-5Es to Egypt, 75 F-16s to Israel. Nor did the

Carter policy of support for despotic regimes end there. In the last days of the Marcos regime in the Philippines, *The New York Times* matter of factly talked of the implications of his then forthcoming defeat: "Democratic and Republican administrations alike have supported him for almost 20 years."<sup>66</sup>

For a time, and in a few regions, particularly in Central America, Carter toyed with a human rights program, i.e., cutting off aid to governments that had excruciatingly bad records. The most important was the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua. U.S. aid was stopped in Somoza's last months in 1979, when it was clear his dictatorship would fall under any circumstances. But, before it vanished, he turned around and sought the support of the Organization of American States for the discredited regime. Again, in El Salvador, Carter cut off aid after the 1980 murder of four nuns. And again he reversed himself and provided the government with aid in his last month in office in 1981.

"Human rights" never extended to South Korea. Nor to Indonesia, one of history's greatest concentration camp regimes, then additionally conquering Timor. Diplomatic recognition of Pol Pot continued even when the genocidal Cambodian regime was driven into exile. Until the Soviets went into Afghanistan, Carter was concerned with Pakistani efforts to make an atomic bomb. Then that became strictly secondary to the Zia ul-Haq regime's usefulness as a supply base and staging area for the Afghani Mujahedin.

### **Afghanistan and Allah's Dope Peddlers**

The choice in Afghanistan is a Cold War classic. The country was one of the most backward on earth. Only nine percent of adults were literate. In 1973, the King was overthrown by his cousin, Daud Khan, who ruled as a republican for the next five years. In April 1978, a Communist faction, led by Nur Taraki, overthrew the increasingly rightward-moving Khan. Generations of Afghani intellectuals have looked to the neighboring Soviets not only as the symbol of Communism, but as the provider of modern conceptions. The Communist Party therefore has deep roots and the coup was completely indigenous. The Soviets had nothing to do with it.

Taraki's faction was extremely sectarian. Rigid, its land reform was too abrupt for the vast bulk of the country folk, with their



clan and tribal loyalties. The regime became identified as the atheists who sought to destroy their traditional way of life. Indeed it was brutal, not merely to Islamic reactionaries, but to rival Communists, many of whom it imprisoned. Taraki was killed by one of his own faction, Hafizullah Amin, in late 1979. Far from strengthening the Kabul regime, the slaying only emboldened the Islamic forces. Whereupon the Soviets invaded, executed Amin as a CIA agent, which was completely untrue, and replaced him with Babrak Karmal.

Moscow went in for one reason. The regime, which it did not set up, was visibly faltering due to Taraki and Amin's fanaticism. The Soviets could not risk a victorious counter-revolutionary state on its borders, subsidized by the U.S. and China. The invasion led to the freeing of thousands of prisoners, respect for Islam and traditional property rights. Nor did the Soviets invade to exploit the country's raw materials. The only one that is important is natural gas, which the USSR already has in vast abundance.

You would not know any of this if you only read the newspapers. As soon as the invasion started, the Cold War propaganda began spewing out. Like Diogenes with his lamp in daylight, looking for an honest man, the Soviets were allegedly looking for a warm water seaport. Afghanistan is landlocked. But no mind. First Afghanistan, next a quickie takeover of Teheran, and there you are. A Slavonic Miami Beach on the Gulf.

That was for the American peasants. The Afghan yokels were told all they needed to know. Their country was invaded by foreigners, atheists who wanted to send girls to school. Carter backed the Islamic fanatics at the same time he was in deep trouble with their Iranian neighbors. Most Afghans are Sunni, not Shia as in Iran. But Teheran does support many of the guerrillas against atheism. The rest are backed by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and other fanatic Sunni client states of the pious Christians in Washington.

Rural religion in backward countries is frequently fanatic to the extreme. This writer has yet to see *one* progressive word from any Afghan Islamic faction, progressive being here defined as a statement that would have pleased the ear of Jefferson and the American revolutionaries of two centuries ago. Shooting teachers is s.o.p. The following is from *The New York Times* in 1986, but things were much the same in 1981 when Carter left office:

The rebels . . . admitted they are involved in poppy cultivation. The war, the rebels said, created its own economic and moral imperatives; they said the opium harvest was crucial to their survival and their continued efforts to oust the Communists.<sup>67</sup>

So, there you are bro Brenner. They are fightin' Godless atheistic Communism. Is nothing sacred? Give 'em guys a break.

No. Nothing is sacred. We, with our education and industries, haven't come within a 100 million miles of solving our social problems. Backward Afghanistan can not solve its problems on its own, certainly not in a democratic fashion. It had only two choices—to ultimately have copied the USSR, or become a Sunni Islamic state, not essentially different from fanatic Shia Iran.

There were no other choices because Afghans were not facing elections. In a democracy, lesser evilism is usually an excuse for adapting to one faction; no serious observer believed the Islamic forces could have beaten the Soviet and Afghan armies in the field. The Soviets intend to withdrew in 1988, not because of any new found zeal for liberty, but rather the opposite. They are prepared to sacrifice the regime they propped up in the interest of a deal with the U.S. They will disengage from support of Kabul, and lessen their support of Managua, in return for access to western capital and technology, needed to modernize their own society. The rights of the women of Afghanistan mean nothing to them. And if the puppet Najibullah regime falls, and those rights are violated, readers will wait forever before they hear one bleepin' word about it from either Republicans or Democrats, who never stopped howling about Afghani freedom as long as the Soviets were in that country.

There are many historical analogies to Carter's patronage of the Islamic fanatics. Throughout history, kings and empires have utilized benighted religious fanatics and other illiterate rural folk as cannon fodder against more or less progressive elements in revolt. George III's utilization of the Hessians, Indians, even slaves against the Colonists, immediately comes to mind. We know Washington & Co. were slaveholders. That doesn't change our scientific opinion that they represented progress. This is despite the fact that there were no slaves in Britain. Similarly, the U.S. has many more democratic forms than the USSR. No matter. Just as George III was not fighting Washington to free the slaves, so Carter was not fighting Brezhnev for democracy.



America is the counter-revolutionary power of its time, and cannot be otherwise under capitalism.

### **Losin' to an Ayatollah Can Be Bad for Your Macho Image**

The 1980 election was not even close. The Iran situation was a no-win situation for Carter. He did not dare explain to the naive voters why the Iranian masses hated America. Yet he could hardly use American troops in a sustained toe-to-toe with the enraged Iranians. As long as the Democrats do not go to war, they can expect the liberal vote as the lesser evil. If they were to get into a sustained conflict, it would generate another anti-war movement in their own ranks. There is no telling how such a scenario might end. The last thing the Democrats ever want is a mass-based split off. Once the crackbrained rescue mission in Iran failed, Carter was between the determined Shia and the outraged voters.

Politicians know an anti-war movement would be a minority of the population. But since most people are politically inert, such an active minority could devastate a government. However, the passive layers can vote. There is a sociological law that the dominant ideas in any given society are those of its ruling class, until a social catastrophe compels masses of people to break with the system. Another such law is that the unread are extremely likely to accept this false ideology uncritically because they are unaware of anything to counter it. Thus it was in 1979-80. The typical American knew nothing of the Shah's infamies or of American involvement in them. They only knew what they were told on the boob tube, that Americans were being held in violation of international law, certainly a fact. They were also repelled by the obvious medievalism and fanaticism of the Iranian government and demonstrators. Inevitably they saw Carter as right and weak, rather than wrong and evil.

Domestically, inflation and the interest rate had reached double digit figures due to the high price of oil and the perpetual rise of the national debt under the weight of military spending. Carter had no answers except to try cutting social programs to make up for increased military appropriations. Eventually this allowed Ted Kennedy to try to make a run for the nomination. But it was always difficult to take him seriously as a candidate. The facts of Chappaquidick hadn't changed. Everyone knew it to be the reason that he hadn't run before. Why would anyone think the voters



would suddenly pick a President whose election would make the place one of the most notorious tourist spots on the planet? Carter was nominated on the first ballot.

Kennedy attacked Carter for cutting social services and increasing the military budget. But the most significant thing he did as a candidate was try to explain the background of the Iranian crisis. He called the Shah's despotism "one of the most violent regimes in the history of mankind."<sup>68</sup> But since he was a patrician liberal, issues were subordinate to his candidacy. Once he lost the nomination, the public heard little about this from him.

Although Kennedy was easily beaten, it was obvious many people were not exactly thrilled at the thought of a Carter-Reagan contest. John Anderson, a liberal Republican, decided to run on a third "National Unity" line. He correctly called Carter an obviously failed President and laughed at Ronald Reagan as an "Eighteenth Century Fox" star.<sup>69</sup> Carter was afraid to debate him. But no one really ever thought of Anderson as a potential winner. He had no party behind him, not much money and no firm sociological base beyond that kind of upper utopian that Mailer described among Gene McCarthy's similar following.

Reagan received 43,899,248 votes (51%) to Carter's 35,481,435 votes (41%). Anderson did amazingly well for someone with so little organization, receiving 5,719,437 votes, 7% of the total. But, as with La Follette and Henry Wallace, Anderson was an establishment maverick. They were all essentially personalists, their programs little more than patchworks of limited if legitimate gripes and equally limited reforms. They instantly impress both practical machine regulars and knowing radicals as bubbles. It was depressing to see idealistic young people campaigning for Anderson when you knew he would vanish after the election, leaving nothing behind.

### **Walter Mondale and the "Most Conservative Platform in the Last 50 Years"**

There has never been as much uniformity of opinion among working journalists as in 1984, when Walter Mondale, Carter's Vice President, ran against Reagan. There was no rapport between the candidate and the journalists who flew with him around the country. No friendly poker games, nothing. Occasionally someone would write something uncomplimentary,

comparing him to a cigar store wooden Indian. Privately they simply dismissed him as intellectually brain dead.

Mondale had been around too long. He came to the Senate in 1964 and was a Vietnam hawk until 1969. "The biggest mistake of my life," is how he now refers to his madness. He has a song and dance about how he then opposed the "Cambodian war," meaning he opposed the extension of the obviously failing effort. But a dove he was and is not. He sat in on policy confabs while Carter schemed to keep the Shah in power and then bring him here. Of course, Mondale supported the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the subsequent sending of marines there.

He was the candidate of the party's old guard, mouthing the usual cant about the Democrats being for the people while Reagan was for the rich. In fact, the ultimate party platform called for increasing the military budget and opposed promising that the U.S. would not be the first to use nukes. It retreated on previous calls for national health insurance, and it opposed affirmative action quotas. The politician watchers over at the *Congressional Quarterly* called it the party's "most conservative platform in the last 50 years."<sup>70</sup>

At first, Mondale had some right wing competition from former astronaut John Glenn, now Senator from Ohio. He was well financed by a gaggle of defense industry figures. However Glenn suffered from two problems: being too identifiably right wing even for the southern white males with whom he was thought to be popular, and being a crushing bore.

Mondale's major rival for the nomination was Gary Hart. He had a brief run at being an anti-war activist before entry into electoral politics. He had been campaign coordinator for the ill-fated McGovern effort in 1972, then became Senator from Colorado. Like Mondale, he had supported the sending of the marines to Lebanon. And when they were competing in the New York primary, both he and Mondale called for the moving of the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Under the terms of the 1948 UN partition to Palestine, Jerusalem was supposed to be an international city and the U.S. has never recognized it as Israel's capital. To do so would probably see the burning down of American Embassies in almost every Muslim country. But Jews are a crucial proportion of New York's Democratic electorate and most Democrats are not adverse to a bit of ethnic pandering when all else fails. In this case, both candidates were too clever by half.

Their demagoguery was blatant. Even the *Village Voice*, a bred-to-the-harness Democratic sheet, had to candidly say that "both vie without dignity or restraint to please the most intractable supporters of a belligerent Israel."<sup>71</sup>

Hart started out saying he would pull all U.S. troops out of Central America. Mondale denounced this as "pulling the plug on Central America."<sup>72</sup> Whereupon Hart retreated, saying "We must have a clear definition of when U.S. military action is required and justifiable in Central America."<sup>73</sup> However, Mondale's denunciation of Hart alienated liberals and he also had to retreat, at least a bit. Mondale was soon for leaving only 200 "non-military soldiers" in Honduras. And he would negotiate with Nicaragua before he decided to "quarantine" the country if it decided to export revolution. But when asked if he would use force to invade Grenada, the eternal hawk replied, "I would have used it to go in there and protect American lives."<sup>74</sup>

### **The Labor Bureaucrats vs. the Yuppie**

The domestic differences were considerable. Hart was the ultimate yuppie. He wrote one of those campaign books, *A New Democracy*, which simply didn't discuss the plight of the poorest blacks and Hispanics. He listed labor as among the "special interests." He went further declaring that "The Democratic Party that was once the party of workers on the assembly line is in danger of becoming the party of organized labor leaders in Washington."<sup>75</sup>

To be sure, the AFL-CIO leaders are parasites. Additionally, many are longtime CIA collaborators, as will be documented in a later chapter. But labor is more than its wretched misleaders. They must con their ranks into believing they fight for them while doing nothing more than begging their Democratic friends to occasionally throw the masses some scrapes from the table of the mighty.

America's share of world trade had dropped from 20% in 1950 to 11% in 1980. From 1965 to 1980, the average rate of profit for U.S. companies declined. The capitalists naturally decided the workers should shoulder the burden of the chronic recession. Unemployment averaged 3.8% between 1965 and 1969, but hovered around seven percent in later years. In real terms, median family income fell off six percent between 1973 and 1980



and has remained down ever since.

In 1981 the AFL-CIO organized "Solidarity Day" in Washington with 400,000 workers coming there to protest Reagan's cutbacks of social services. But the piecards dared not mobilize the ranks on a sustained basis in face of the capitalist onslaught. The bureaucracy dreads an active membership that might then challenge its privileges. Therefore the unions have been taking a severe beating, losing strikes or being forced to grant huge "give backs" to the multi-nationals, who always threaten to move away to states or foreign countries with cheap non-union labor. As the unions lost ground, membership nosedived. Between 1980 and 1984 they lost 2.7 million dues payers, becoming only 15.6% of employees. The bureaucrats simply could not afford to finally be seen as losing their influence in their party.

After years of "give backs," the AFL-CIO hacks finally mobilized—against Hart. Without them, Mondale might have lost the nomination. All else he had going for him were some Zionists, some real estate moguls (often one and the same) and very few other capitalists, and the tired old city machines. There were very few Mondale volunteers outside the labor movement during the primaries. He had almost no student following.

It took time for the bureaucrats to get the right formula for beating Hart. But eventually they focused on his support for insisting the unemployed should take available minimum wage jobs or get cut off the dole, his support for sub-minimum wages as a means of cutting youth unemployment, and his opposition to extending the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA). The vote for the two ended up largely as class votes. Mondale won the union vote, more particularly the white union vote. Hart did better among non-union Democrats.

### **Jesse Jackson: The Black in Populist-Face**

On November 3, 1983, Jesse Jackson entered the nomination race. He talked about building a "rainbow coalition" of all races, nationalities and religions, in alliance with labor, women, gays and the peace movement. But in reality, his campaign was clearly centered in the black community. He was not the first black, though, to run for President. Eldridge Cleaver had run in 1968 for the Peace & Freedom Party. However, Cleaver's candidacy

hadn't caused more than a ripple in the black community. But the black masses immediately rallied to Jackson, even if the majority of black office holders were always for Mondale. It was a strange experience for Americans. No serious person ever thought Jackson could win the ticket post. But everyone could see that if blacks were mobilized they were a powerful base for a left candidate. At the same time his effort demonstrated the classic limitations of Democratic Party populism:

1. His program was reformist, leaving the system of exploitation intact.
2. The fate of his movement was dependent on the fate of himself, an individual, instead of his rise or fall being determined by the state of the movement.
3. Before the end of the campaign, he made his deal with the party powers-that-be.
4. After he failed, his followers were no better organized than the day he started.

While campaigning in New Hampshire, Jackson put a representative of the FDR-FMLN, the leftist guerrillas in El Salvador, on the platform with him. No other Democrat has ever dared do that. Yet the same Jackson only talked of cutting the defense budget 20 or 25%. Has the reader walked through a black or Puerto Rican ghetto in New York City? There are over 25,000 bricked up buildings there, and innumerable vacant lots. The buildings that stood on them were burned down, sometimes accidentally by junkies or winos. But very frequently they were torched by landlords for the insurance. The South Bronx looks like London after a luftwaffe raid. Except that no foreigner is the enemy of the hapless people living there. How does a yearly Pentagon budget of hundreds of billions, which would have been the cost of Jackson's military budget, defend them? Their enemies are American landlords and employers—many Democrats—who rip them off.

Jackson, a black in populist-face, a lesser evil liberal, was trying to show he was "sensible." Cutting defense 25% sounds more realistic than calling for the whole hog elimination of the Pentagon. Is it? A state operates in the interest of the dominant element in its society. The defense budget protects the system that exploits the tenants of the Bronx. As long as there are slumlords, the Pentagon defends them, not their victims.

For all his having a guerrilla speak with him, Jackson was still just another on-the-reservation Democratic Party populist savior, with only a meeching solution to the militarism which grips our land, utterly lacking the grim resolve to fight the system to the bitter end.

Jackson had a typical populist shopping list of reforms. And like his white counterparts, he made not one proposal to change the nation's property relations. He did not propose the nationalization of even a single industry. Even if he had won the nomination and election, and we now had President Jesse Jackson in the Black House, the bishops' statistics on property distribution cited in the preface would have remained exactly the same. The vast majority of Americans would still be working to keep someone else rich.

### **Meet My Good Friend Hymie**

Jackson was attracting significant attention, particularly after a trip to Syria which resulted in the release of a black U.S. pilot shot down in Lebanon. Then an article appeared on February 13 in the *Washington Post*. It was all about his conflict with the Jewish Establishment over affirmative action, which it opposes, and Palestine. Jackson had met Arafat and had called for a two-state solution, a disarmed Palestinian ministate on the West Bank and Gaza, next to an armed Israel, which he would continue to arm. This is hardly a daring position, but the Establishment represents the right wing of the richest ethno/religious group in the country, and it wants every morsel of the Palestinians' pound of flesh. Jackson insisted he had "not taken an anti-Israel's right to exist policy. Never did." In the 37th paragraph in the otherwise not very exciting *Post* article came the first scandal of the campaign season:

In private conversations with reporters, Jackson had referred to Jews as "Hymie" and to New York as "Hymietown." "I'm not familiar with that," Jackson said Thursday. "That's not accurate."<sup>76</sup>

He had said this to Milton Coleman, a black. Hymie is for Hyman, a common Jewish name of a generation ago. Jackson had said this in the context of an informal "let's talk black" chat. He



could have gotten away clean if he had emphasized that "talkin' black" means using slang. Instead he outright lied, and on *Face the Nation*, no less, on February 19: "It simply is not true, and I think the accuser should come forth." By February 26, he admitted the charge, in an apology in a synagogue.

After that his campaign began to unravel, at least as far as whites were concerned. He had embraced the support of Louis Farrakhan, outspoken leader of the Black Muslims. When the Hymie incident broke, Farrakhan went into high gear, denouncing Judaism as a "gutter religion" as part of an attack on the Zionist lobby for its never-ending defense of Israel's crimes. Jackson had to repudiate him. But the whole discussion had shifted from Israel's dead-end racism against Palestinians to whether or not Jackson was an anti-Semite.

The issue did not really hurt him among blacks. If anything, they rallied around him. Which is understandable. They are the most discriminated against group in the country and they have a tendency to empathize with other oppressed groups, which the Palestinians undoubtedly are. That is certainly more important than whether Jackson used a slang phrase in a bull session. But then lying about it alienated not only Jews but many white liberals who had begun to look in Jackson's direction. Jackson never expected to win. But he did think he could gain an important minority of whites to his side. In the end he swept the black vote and received a substantial minority of Hispanic votes, but got only about five percent of the white Democratic primary vote.

Jackson's forces made a bit of a fight at the convention over platform planks, but got next to nothing. Nevertheless, Jackson campaigned for Mondale. In 1986, I encountered Jack O'Dell at a West Coast radical conference. He is the man in the engine room of the Rainbow, while Jackson does the orating from the poop-deck. I asked what Jackson, or the Rainbow, or the blacks, or anyone else, had gained by the Rainbow's backing of Mondale? He said that they understood that they were going to gain nothing by their endorsement. They knew Reagan was going to beat Mondale. But they thought the election would be much closer than it turned out to be. They decided they didn't want to be blamed for Mondale's defeat.

Did they ever tell this to their followers? If so I never saw it. Instead, Jackson carried on about how poor blacks couldn't afford another four years of Reagan. We see, for the umpteenth time, the

ease with which populists capitulate to their enemies within the party. Jackson had little in common with Mondale programatically. No matter. Liberals go into such contests fully prepared, in advance, to surrender and then hustle for their vanquishers. A liberal would no more go out of the house without a lesser evil in his political kit than a plumber would dream of leaving his wrench back in the shop.

Jackson has continued on and will be discussed in detail later in dealing with the 1988 nomination race. For now we will simply mention a few things about the Rainbow Coalition's evolution after 1984, so as to put its 1984 effort into pererspective. Sheila Collins, its national coordinator, later wrote *The Rainbow Challenge* about the movement. She confessed that

the interracial cooperation . . . had been fragile . . . Without an immediate political focus . . . the hope and energy generated . . . dissipated rapidly . . . The resurgence of anti-apartheid activity in November 1984 helped to keep some of the movement energy and focus alive, but it did little to consolidate the necessary organization building at the base.<sup>77</sup>

A formal Rainbow Coalition was set up. But it was stillborn. The fault lies with Jackson. Again Collins:

Jackson seemed incapable of lending himself to the kind of careful, patient, systematic work involved in organization-building. As soon as colleagues pinned him down on commitments, he sabotaged their plans with others of his own . . . Jackson was finally compelled to birth the organization when it appeared that Ron Dellums and John Conyers were moving to fill the vacuum by bringing the coalition together.<sup>78</sup>

### **Geraldine Ferraro: Honesty Is the Best Policy**

As per usual, the successful Presidential nominee got to choose his running mate. After publically rummaging through a bin of symbolic potentials, including two black mayors, Mondale settled on Geraldine Ferraro, member of the House for New York's Ninth Congressional District in Queens. She was not the first woman to run for national office. Linda Jenness of the Social Worker's Party ran for President in 1972. Representative Shirley Chisholm had run in some Democratic primaries. But Ferraro

was the first chosen by a major party. Initially, the selection seemed extremely good from every perspective. Women have made strong moves into decision-making sectors of the society since the '60s. Most men, particularly young ones, accept this. On the other hand, the Republicans have moved into intense opposition to feminism on several key questions, abortion being the most prominent. As Mondale later said, with women psychologically looking at her candidacy with at least warm initial interest, "we came out of the convention even or ahead."<sup>79</sup>

The uncritical assumption almost everyone made was that the party's first woman candidate for national office would automatically be a liberal. In fact, she turned out to be a hypocrite and demagogue of the worst sort. Archie Bunker, the lovable but bigoted jerk of *All in the Family*, was supposed to live in her district. Most of its inhabitants were, in truth, among the most right-wing and bigoted in the country. Only three percent black, the district is mostly Catholic, blue-collar Italian and Irish. As a Representative, she had supported tuition tax credits for parents with children in parochial schools. She was for the death penalty, in contrast to Mondale. In 1979, she was one of only three New York State Representatives who voted for a constitutional amendment prohibiting the forcing of students to go to a school other than the one nearest their homes for the purpose of achieving racial integration.

Not a few out-of-towners, as New Yorkers call the rest of the world, think of the city as a sin center and think its denizens worldly cynics. Indeed such have been known to live within its borders. And, in reality, Ferraro would have to be numbered among these. How then did she end up voting for an anti-busing amendment. Foreign readers will please understand that busing has both merits and demerits. Not only banning it but making that ban part of the fundamental constitutional fabric of the country is understood by all serious observers to be more than an anti-busing statement. It is gross racism. Were such an insult to pass, it would undoubtedly provoke black riots of unimaginable intensity. The powers-that-be in America know this and hence stay a country mile away from the constitutional proposition. A worldling like Geraldine Ferraro also knows this. But she is "voting my district," which is the excuse politicians give when asked why they support such stupidities. "Give us a break, we gotta get elected. Sometimes the folks back home are none too smart."



They have no shame voting for such infamies as long as they think they aren't going to pass.

The same is true of parochaid, which the Supreme Court routinely strikes down as an obvious violation of the separation of church and state. But many of the older voters in Ferraro's district went to parochial schools. That kind of working-class student's best subject was stickball, and they came away from their unfortunate schooling having learned little more than the sectarian rigidities of the starch-habited nuns of that generation. The notion of separation of church and state is higher mathematics to them. But again, Ferraro could demagogically prattle on about such an absurdity because she knew it would be struck down by the courts.

As Mondale's running mate, she had to get out from behind some of her previous positions. She could be quite athletic in her twisting out of those ideological straitjackets. Thus, she explained that as a member of Congress she had supported tuition tax breaks. But now, however, "there is no way you can justify giving a tuition tax credit at this time when we are facing \$200 billion deficits."<sup>80</sup>

Americans are accustomed to politicians putting on or taking off their politics like a stripper. Her demagogic past caused little comment. But the convention was barely over when the vote-getter metamorphosed into Geraldine the disaster. There had been some questions in Congress. On 10 occasions between 1978 and 1983, she had improperly used a clause in the Ethics in Government Act, omitting disclosure of her husband's financial assets. Representatives are allowed to withhold data if the politicians doesn't control or benefit from the wealth. But she was an official and half owner of one of her husband's companies. Additionally, she had illegally borrowed \$130,000 from her family for her campaign. By law, they were only allowed to loan her \$1,000 per family member. However her constituents hadn't cared. Nor did Congress, unwaveringly protective of its own. But then husband John Zaccaro, a realtor, decided he didn't want to produce his tax statements. After all, in the new feminist age, husband and wife have separate careers. Oh? Yes, of course. Mondale ruefully admits, "There was a feeling across the nation of something to hide. We lost a month and 15 points and we never got it back."<sup>81</sup>

Later, Mondale said that "when the tax returns came out, they had nothing to hide."<sup>82</sup> We wonder if he reads the papers? The

couple was required to pay \$53,000 in back taxes. In August 1984, a judge removed Zaccaro as overseer of an old woman's estate for improperly borrowing \$175,000 from it, paying a low interest on his debt. That cost him \$20,000. In January 1985, Zaccaro pled guilty to fraudulently obtaining a bank loan for the hustle. He served 150 hours community service. In 1987, he beat an attempted extortion charge. This will be discussed in a later chapter. But for now this can be said. Savvy New Yorkers think Ferraro knew everything hubby did. They think of her as a lady barracuda with the munchies.

The actual election returns were anti-climatic after the Zaccaro episode. Reagan received 54,281,858 votes, Mondale a piddling 37,457,215. Mondale got only 13 electoral votes, from the District of Columbia, with its black majority, and his home state of Minnesota.

### Woolsellers Know Woolbuyers

It was the scandal which devastated the campaign. But the debacle distracted attention from the party's right-wing turn. Mondale blamed the 1980 defeat on high inflation and interest rates, which he felt were due ultimately to ever increasing budget deficits. He was convinced that the party could not win until it overcame its reputation for irresponsible spending. Accordingly, he announced he would raise taxes to cut the deficit. When he further said he intended to hold down spending on domestic programs while increasing military spending by three to four percent per year, Leslie Gelb of *The New York Times* explained the thinking of the candidate and his advisers:

The assessment is that Mr. Mondale already has a solid base among Democratic peace activists and that he must now try to bring back to the fold those conservative Democrats who left the party in 1980 over foreign policy.<sup>83</sup>

Woolsellers know woolbuyers. And a political pro like Mondale knows his liberals. It didn't matter what he said or did, short of publically deflowering underaged sheep. Liberals would vote for him as the lesser of the two evils. Here is *The Nation* endorsing the spavined hack:

Mondale enthusiasts should remember that the present political direction was prefigured by the sharp turn toward Cold War making and social retrenchment taken by the Carter-Mondale Administration midway in its term . . . But a ringing Reagan triumph would surely make matters worse . . . we urge *Nation* readers and the larger liberal community to vote against Reaganism.<sup>84</sup>

Now it is possible to understand why Democratic Party liberalism is corpse dead. By now it would be a very dumb hack indeed who did not understand the first principle of politics: If I do not give the beggar what he wants, what will he do to hurt me? It is possible for the Democrats to win in 1988, or later. But it is impossible for the liberals to win, even if their party does. Not in 1988 or 2088. The pros know that they are motivated by fear, that they are always voting *against* someone rather than voting *for* anything. The hacks know them better than they know themselves. The regulars know they don't have to give them a god-damned thing. For 364 days of the year, their mouths never stop about liberty and justice and equality for all. But on the only day of the year when they count the votes, they vote for evil. And feel quite righteous in doing so.

Years ago, the great sociologist, C. Wright Mills, remarked that whenever he talked to his fellow professors their buzz word was "realism." For them, only power was real. The result was that it was always students who organized civil rights and anti-war demonstrations in the '60s. The academics only involved themselves in substantial numbers after the students had built the movement. Then these pedants could be certain they were backing the winner. Mills called these impotents and opportunists "crackpot realists."

Liberal crackpot realists were out in full force in 1984. You did not have to tell them Mondale was moving to the right. They expected it—indeed, in their heart of hearts, they wouldn't have had it any other way. For, after all, says the crackpot realist, isn't politics all about winning? Isn't it "hard ball"? The end result of their cleverness? These hard ball enthusiasts voted for a sure loser, who they could see was going to lose by a bazillion votes.

The belief that a solution to the ongoing crisis of our society can come from within the Democratic Party, indeed can *only* come from within it, is an illusion, an imitation of realism in the name of realism. If the Democrats win in 1988, it will be because



people are disgusted with the Republicans after Irangate and/or because of the state of the economy. Not because of a single Democratic virtue. In any case, whether their party wins or loses, the liberals will lose. No Democrat will implement anything like the policies the Rainbow Coalition or *The Nation* believe necessary and in the people's interest. Will they then break with the Democrats? Are you kidding? Pure Food and Drug Administration certified realists don't do such things. And realists they surely are. Realists of the crackpot 'suation.

### **From the Age of Gold to the Age of ????**

The history of a party nearly two centuries old can only be summarized by dividing it into parts. Clearly, the classic age from Jefferson through John Quincy Adams must be approached with respect. We cannot ignore slavery or the despoliation of the Indians. But if we grasp that we have no right to demand of the past more than it was capable, we can say the government of the United States under the "Republicans" was progressive. For all his personal contradictions, Jefferson honestly believed in the ongoing enlightenment of humanity. And, in fact, the economic development of the country, so greatly assisted by the constitutional regime established by Madison, was the essential precondition for the further extension of human rights as well. We see this first in the abolition of slavery in the North, in the wake of the Revolution, and then in the Civil War, which could never have come about except for the immense expansion of capitalism in the North.

Then, under Jackson, the party completely ceases to be a sort of club for philosophical gentlemen. The slaveholder critics of slavery vanish. In their place are dead-end supporters of the evil. The northern party is inundated by the masses. But the outcome is an orgy of patronage and grafting on a par with the baksheesh regimes of the traditionality despotic Orient.

It is not difficult to understand how a party which tolerated slavery changed over time into its champion. Nor how in the North a patrician party with liberal pretensions was transformed into a plebian but infinitely corrupt institution. But with those crucial transitions the party lost all progressive character. We may safely say no modern identifies with the party from the time of Jackson and Van Buren and the Cherokee expulsion through

Cleveland.

At the same time, the progressive character of the classic party is vindicated precisely in the degeneration of the party. In a profound sense, all moderns are Marxists. Everyone understands the Civil War came about because of the economic transformation of the country. But this had its ideological reflection in the absolutely sincere utterances of Lincoln, who insisted that he was but the disciple of Jefferson.

With Bryan, we come into the modern world because of his denunciations of the powerful of his day, surely an eternal theme if any is. Yet his limitations are so obvious that he rapidly becomes contemptable in our sophisticated eyes. We take an initial interest in Wilson because he is so much of a scholar. We automatically think of him as a serious reformer in contrast to the yokelish Bryan. But here too he becomes loathsome, with his Caribbean gunboat diplomacy, his racism in Washington and, finally, his cant about making the world safe for democracy, while dragging the country into a bloodbath in the sole interest of a clique of Wall Street bankers.

Roosevelt is an integral part of our world. Some of his reforms irrevocably effect our age. But soon enough we are confronted with his hideous racism, his refusal to support an anti-lynching bill, his incarceration of all those innocent Japanese-Americans. With Jefferson, we are obligated to be indulgent to his limitations, of his accommodation to an institution he could not possibly bring down. We cannot similarly indulge Roosevelt. He could have backed that bill. Even if it then lost with his support, no one can really think that he would have been defeated for re-election. Given his craven accommodation to the Dixiecrats, and then his Japanese policy, we must ask this: Did he make reforms? Did he, for example, electrify rural America? So what? Even if he came out and personally screwed in a light bulb into every outhouse in the country. How can any or all of his reforms make us forget or forgive his racism?

Even in Truman's day, the idea of an unrepentent Pendergast hack initiating the atomic age was more than a little jarring to intellectual minds. But that was only the beginning. Soon, under Democrats first and then Republicans, the United States, which Metternich had once seen as inspiring revolution everywhere, became the George III of our epoch. Inexorably Truman, Kennedy and then Johnson dragged us into war after war to make the world

safe for the rich.

Was major civil rights legislation passed during Johnson's administration? Well, who does not know these long overdue reforms were forced upon him by a gigantic mass upsurge? The standard of living rose, not because of Democratic zeal for working people, but as an indirect benefit of a criminally wasteful permanent war economy. The Carter-Mondale Administration closed out this phase of Democratic misdirection of the nation's destinies. They inherited the "post-Vietnam syndrome," popular fear of another war. They could not utilize the direct military might of the U.S., except in the abortive Iranian raid. But they amply demonstrated their wolfish hatred of peace by pouring out many billions in weaponry to numerous gangsters abroad.

This is not yet the place to summarize the history of the party. We have not even begun to describe the incurable grafting of contemporary Democrats, or their other crimes. But for now let us close with a quick question: If we can call the era of the Virginia dynasty the party's age of gold, what should we call the era of Judith Campbell, Chappaquidick, Eagleton, Hymietown and Ferraro-Zaccaro?

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## PART II

# About the Rich Man, Poor Man, Beggarman and Democratic Thief

## CHAPTER 6

### The Best Congress That Money Can Buy

The first House of Representatives consisted of 38% lawyers, 36% planters, 17% merchants, 5% preachers and 5% office holders. The Senate was made up of 48% planters and landowners, 38% lawyers and 14% merchants. In 1987, the 100th House had 42% lawyers, 33% businessmen and bankers, 22% ex-officials, 9% educators, 5% journalists, 5% were in agriculture, and others made up another 6%. The Senate was 62% lawyers, 28% business and banking, 12% were in education, 8% were journalists, ex-officials were 20%, 5% were in farming and others were 7%. The first Congress was paid \$6 each for each day it was in session. The salary in 1988 is \$89,500 per member. The first Congress was all white and male. The 100th House was 92% white, 5% Black, 3% Hispanic. Females made up 5%. The 100th Senate was 100% white and 2% women. The first House was 48% college graduates, with 3% more having some higher



education. The first Senate was 56% university graduates with 3% having some college. A few, lawyers and some others, had apprenticed rather than gone to college. The 100th House had 61% with a masters degree or higher, 28% at least graduated college and only 11% had no degree. The Senate had 79% with a graduate degree, 15% had college diplomas and only 6% hadn't finished college.<sup>1</sup>

Today's Congress doesn't want you to know too much about its members. Therefore, its income and asset disclosure forms allow members to state their wealth in imprecise ranges. But it is clear that, except when drunk, few Congressional Democrats sleep in the streets. Thus, in 1987, Senator Dennis DeConcini of Arizona listed his assets at between \$6.5 million and more than \$8.9 million. Bob Graham of Florida listed his worth at between \$3.3 million and \$6.3 million. John Rockefeller of West Virginia listed \$3.7 million. But he is also the beneficiary of two trusts worth \$150 million. Bill Bradley of New Jersey weighed in at \$753,000 to \$1.5 million. Daniel Moynihan of New York ranged between \$406,000 and \$970,000.<sup>2</sup> Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey was worth \$3,132,000 in 1984. Edward Kennedy is of course a member of a family worth \$600 million in 1987. Alan Cranston is worth between \$756,861 and \$1.2 million. Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island, listing just under \$6.1 million, is one of the richest politicians in the U.S. of A.<sup>3</sup> Ohio's John Glenn was worth \$4,061,000 in 1984. Russell Long of Louisiana was worth \$2,551,000. Ernest Hollings of South Carolina listed \$1,516,000. Lawton Chiles of Florida made do with \$1,290,000. Lloyd Bentsen of Texas did not suffer too greatly at \$1,116,000. And Howard Metzenbaum of Ohio made the millionaires' club even if with a paltry \$1,033,000.

Representative Tommy Robinson of Arkansas is certainly not poor, spending \$441,167 of his own in the 1984 race. In 1984, Sid Yates of Illinois listed \$6,990,000 in assets. Fortney Stark of California, a liberal, was worth \$3,478,000. Norman Sisisky of Virginia listed \$2,052,000. Jack Brooks, certainly one of the most critical members during the Olligate hearings, was worth \$1,963,000. Fellow Texan Ralph Hall was worth \$1,953,000. Bill Nelson of Florida came in at \$1,793,000. Texas's Marvin Leath was listed at \$1,732,000. Berkeley Bedell of Iowa recorded \$1,615,000. John Spratt of South Carolina did not starve at \$1,332,000. Nor did Richard Shelby of Alabama at \$1,066,000.

Obviously Congress has always been an upper class body, with the few plebeians present of little sociological or political significance. Today's Democratic contingent contains its classic cast: Those who are rich and who are obviously for the rich. Those who are rich and claim to be for the poor. And those who are not rich, who claim they are for the poor. But those who are out for themselves are by far the largest grouping and contain elements from all of the above. Some Democrats are so rich they don't have to raid the treasury for themselves. But so many, rich and middle class, liberal and conservative, are greedheads—and obviously so—that the situation agitates informed public concern.

### **The Democrats Were Left Holding the Swag**

Whether one gets into God's good books by faith alone or by deeds has been disputed by many a learned theologian. But there is little doubt on this among Congressional Democrats. The vast majority believe that God only helps them that help themselves. Especially when it comes to raising their pay. Their problem is that the public is of another mind entirely.

Under the law, a Presidential Commission on Executive, Legislative and Judicial Salaries makes suggestions as to pay raises for these oppressed folk. Then the President decides how much of their proposed increase he wants to pass along to Congress for approval. Whatever he requests passes automatically, after 30 days, unless congressmen vote, by joint resolution, to reject the raise, and then override any veto by two-thirds vote.

Reagan proposed that Congressional salaries go from \$77,400 to \$89,500. Both Democratic-controlled houses were planning to do nothing for the 30 days, thus getting their raises without having to vote for them. But some Senatorial opponents of the increase pulled a trick. They had before them a bill on the homeless. Under the Senate's rules, unrelated riders can be attached to any bill. So they put in a resolution opposing the raise. Only six Senators dared defy public opinion and voted for the increase.

The bill then went to the House, which had sworn that it would send a homeless measure to the White House by a certain date, so there was a limit to how long they could evade a vote on the bill. But House Speaker Jim Wright and majority whip Tony Coelho of California thought they could get away with a fast one. The 30 days expired at midnight on a Tuesday. They called for a vote on

Wednesday morning. Naturally, the House voted against raising its pay. But, alas, sometimes you want the cherries and you get the pits. Other times you want the pits and you are stuck with a whole lot of damned cherries.

The problem was—and is—that the press reported the scam, and the informed public is well aware of the Democrats' conniving. *The New York Times* described the debacle. It was

a window into the soul of an institution made up of people who almost all believe themselves to be underpaid but who are afraid to take their case directly to the voters. The scenario, in which both houses went through the motions of blocking the raises and ended up with what is widely viewed as a backdoor pay increase, appeared to be a public relations disaster.<sup>4</sup>

It is impossible to overstate the importance of this stunt. What is involved in the question of the pay of Congress is the relationship between the rulers and the ruled. Who works for whom? That \$89,500 is a whole lot more money than the vast majority of Americans get, and that includes some very skilled workers. Why should their representatives get more than them?

Those who would defend the raise do so on several grounds. The first is that they deserve it because the work is hard and important. The obvious answer is that many of these politicians are fools, others villains. Then it is said that they have to have two homes. That is more real. Except that they don't need to own two homes. They can rent in Washington. In fact, there is no reason why Congress can't just build itself its own housing complex and rent to its members, just as it provides them with office space.

But let us go further. There can be legitimate differences on what the pay of politicians should be. But there was nothing legitimate about what these swindlers did. They voted against a raise that most of them wanted. That is fraud. And they did so knowing that their vote didn't count, that they were going to get what they voted against and secretly wanted. That is fraud with whipped cream and a cherry on top. And that wasn't just some obscure hustle done in the dark. They were tricking—or trying to trick—each and every American.

Some of these politicians voted to increase their pay. We can agree or disagree. But they voted for what they believed. They



are not doubletalkers. Others voted against and then refused to take the pay increase they opposed. That is honorable. But those who voted against and then took the increase have no honor. Whatever the pay of Congress should be, they shouldn't even be in it. And that includes the majority of the Democratic contingent in both houses.

What then should they be paid? They should get the wage of a skilled worker. What does a reporter on the *Washington Post* make? Whatever the newspaper guild gets for them, that is what Congress should get. It is legitimate that they get travel pay as they must stay in contact with the folks back home. They have a subsidized cafeteria, a gym, etc. Fine. And something of an egalitarian housing arrangement of the sort proposed is necessary. Others will think of a few other perks that should go with the job. But that is it. Honorariums should be outlawed. If some group wants to hear them speak and comes up with the travel expenses, picks up the meals tab and hotel bill, fine and dandy. But John Oakes, the former senior editor of the *Times*, was absolutely correct in saying that "The 'honorarium' . . . should be called the 'dishonorarium.'"<sup>5</sup>

### **Give 'Em a Break. Not Every Democrat Is a Crook**

"The United States does not have a hereditary criminal class," Mark Twain wrote, "except for Congress." And Will Rogers used to say of the Senate that "it opens with prayer and closes with an investigation." Nor has Congress' reputation for honesty improved with time. To the contrary. There are many things wrong with today's major newspapers. But being blind to the deep-rooted corruption of Congress, and its cover up of that corruption, is not one of them. The August 2, 1984 *Times* wrote of the true feelings of the House while it was reprimanding George Hansen, an Idaho Republican, who was later imprisoned for falsifying his Ethics in Government forms:

In public the lawmakers were condemning . . . Hansen . . . But in private they were voicing deep reservations about the course they were taking. . . . Speaker . . . O'Neill said that "the common talk in the cloakrooms" . . . was edgy and uneasy . . . "The general discussion out there" . . . "was that it was wrong." . . . Hansen . . . drew an apprehensive laugh when he told the members

that if the law was strictly applied to all of them, Congress might be able to raise a quorum in a Federal grand jury room.<sup>6</sup>

Similarly, the August 10, 1987, *Wall Street Journal* candidly editorialized about the "bipartisan approach to Congressional ethics: See no evil, speak no evil, hear no evil."<sup>7</sup>

One of the most important press targets is the Federal Election Commission, established after Watergate. The *Times* exposed it in a May 25, 1987 article headlined "Election Agency Assailed As Weak."<sup>8</sup> The *Journal* savaged it in an October 19, 1987 piece entitled "Election Commission, Set Up as a Watchdog, Has Become a Pussycat."<sup>9</sup> The six commissioners are appointed by the President, but confirmed by the Senate. And the *Times* insists that Congress "structured it to emphasize negotiation rather than prosecution."<sup>10</sup> Which isn't strange since Representatives and Senators would be among those prosecuted if it ever got serious.

The *Journal* says that it is the Republican commissioners who are the worst obstructionists. The GOP gets the most money from business and it is hostile to "regulating money in politics," obviously the heart of grafting. But the paper correctly pointed out that "both parties are benefitting from the "free-and-easy atmosphere."<sup>11</sup> There are Democrats who complain about the Commission. However, the party leadership eagerly takes advantage of the opportunities available to it. They know the worst that is going to happen, if they get caught, is a fine. So Mondale's campaign paid the largest fine—\$368,500—in the FEC's history. The Mondale people went around the donation and spending restrictions "through supposed grass-roots 'delegate committees' in 1984." They had to pay another \$94,000 for other infractions. But so what? That came to less than two percent of Mondale's campaign budget.<sup>12</sup>

By October 1987, the Democrats had already received \$900,000 from various corporations. But they refused to identify the donors, because under the FEC's lax rules they don't have to.<sup>13</sup> Of course they would rather take the money, quietly, and go on denouncing the Republicans for being the party of big business.

### **The Good Ol' Boy Is a Bad Ol' Boy**

Fourteen members of Congress have been convicted since 1977. Why then don't we ever hear of special prosecutors being

appointed in cases of suspected Congressional grafting? The answer is that when Congress passed the 1978 Ethics in Government Act, it exempted itself from the Act's operations. In 1987, a Republican Representative tried to amend it to extend the special prosecutor law to Congress. But, of course, on October 21, 1987, his proposal died in the Democratic-controlled House in a overwhelmingly partisan vote.

How corrupt are the Congressional Democrats? Given the reality that Congress is not policing itself, it is not possible to give an exact answer. But there is overwhelming evidence that many have ethical standards well below what they should be, to say the least. Let's start by examining the record of the highest ranking Congressional Democrat, Speaker Jim Wright.

On June 23, 1987, the *Times* reported that he "intervened in a recent Federal enforcement case to help a major Democratic fund-raiser . . . who ran a savings and loan institution in Texas."<sup>14</sup> Thomas Gaubert, a real estate developer and former finance chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, had been investigated by the Federal Home Loans Bank Board in connection with his Independent American Savings Association. The deputy director of the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation, denounced Wright's intervention:

we are seeing recurrent attempts to use political influence to prevent F.S.L.I.C. from taking effective enforcement action against hopelessly insolvent thrifts.<sup>14</sup>

Federal regulators found that IASA had a deficit of over \$300 million. It had "dissipated its assets through violations of regulations and unsafe and unsound practices." Gaubert agreed to leave the outfit in return for a halt to the investigation of his dealings. Wright intervened to get the Board to reexamine the deal so as to lift the cloud over Gaubert's name. The Board was forced to hire an independent counsel to examine its inquiry. "It was an absolutely unprecedented step, really incredible," complained the F.S.L.I.C. official. "What a precedent it established for folks who have the political muscle to get an investigation started."<sup>14</sup>

The *Times* wrote an editorial exposing Wright. The drop in oil prices had revealed that "hustlers" had lost "tens of billions" of savings and loan cash in real estate speculations. Eighty of 261



Texas savings and loan institutions were insolvent. A Dallas grand jury has subpoenaed records from over 400 owners, managers and borrowers. In some cases, the S&Ls granted loans with no down payments or interest. According to the *Journal*,

By selling some parcels of undeveloped land several times in one day among a small group of investors and thrift institutions, weak S&Ls were able to artificially inflate prices and obtain badly needed infusions of cash.<sup>15</sup>

The F.S.L.I.C. had to ask Congress for the right to borrow no less than \$15 billion to cover insured liabilities. Congress—meaning Wright—stalled. The *Times* editorialized that

The calculation seemed to be that the longer the regulators were prevented from borrowing, the longer the hustlers could live like Louis XIV at the insurers' expense . . . The House would authorize just \$5 billion, and create a "forbearance" process allowing hustlers to stay in business for years.<sup>16</sup>

It soon came out that Wright and majority whip Coelho had been flying around in airplanes owned by Vernon Savings and Loan, and held fundraisers on owner Don Dixon's yacht. All this while he, too, was under investigation. The F.H.L.B.B. claims Vernon obtained California beach homes, Rolls Royces and airplanes by booking bogus interest on loans as profits, then paying millions in dividends and bonuses to management and stockholders. On February 8, 1988, John Smith, a former senior Vernon vice president, agreed to plead guilty to falsifying documents. Of course, Wright had intervened for Vernon. Other S&L execs and real estaters have pled guilty, and dozens of indictments will be filed in the multibillion dollar scandal.<sup>17</sup>

Unreimbursed services to politicians are forbidden by law. Coelho conceded he had used the Dixon yacht seven times in 1985 and 1986 while he was running for reelection. He hastily paid the S&L \$25,168. At the time, he was also the chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. They suddenly paid up \$23,232.

We must presume that the chair of the DCCC knew the law. The yacht was a 112 footer, which normally was rented out for \$4,000 per day, plus costs. It is hard to think that Coelho didn't ask for receipts for the money the DCCC was paying *if* it thought

it was paying for the boat's use.

While this was going on, Wright was also enriching himself through his partnership with real estate hustler George Mallick. According to the *Journal*, "Wright's finances improved markedly after he became majority leader in 1977. His once-skimpy net worth soared to as much as \$899,997 in 1981."<sup>18</sup> The *Journal* reported the partnership to be the basis of Wright's sudden wealth. The Fort Worth *Star-Telegram* discovered that Wright had been using a two-bedroom garden apartment owned by Mallick as his Texas home, without paying rent. Allegedly his wife had done some research for a partnership between the two men and their wives, and this was part of her compensation.

Meanwhile, Mallick was connected with "Stockyards 85." Wright had gotten the ever generous U.S. of A. to set aside \$11.8 million to help develop the 102 acres owned by the company. The operation fell through when the Economic Development Administration realized the grant would have been 20 times larger than the average one and omitted the usual requirement that the city involved put up some matching cash. The *Journal* editorialized that "if the prosecutor searched the U.S. code, he might even find a law that might arguably have been broken—'conspiracy to defraud the United States' perhaps."<sup>19</sup>

This bad ol' boy had no end of scams. Turns out he was receiving a 55% royalty for a book he had written. The *Times* estimated this to be about eight times the rate for typical paperbacks. Would ya believe that the publisher had just received \$265,000 for work done for Wright's 1986 campaign?

Seek ye and ye shall find. Once the papers started looking, the *Journal* found that in 1977 Wright had used "a loophole in the House rules" to pay personal debts with \$98,000 in political donations. And, in 1979, the then majority leader lobbied the U.S. and Egypt on behalf of an oilman who let him buy into two Texas wells at roughly that same time.

Eventually it got to the point where checkin' out Wright became the national sport of America's reporters. So Wright put his assets into a blind trust. Except that it's run by Tom Law, a friend and campaign donor. And Law's daughter, Debra, works for Wright. But there is nothing to worry about. The House Ethics Committee says this is OK. Which would be good news except that the Committee members are appointed by Wright.



### **“All of the Same People Will Contribute Again”**

There is a saying: do not buy a Democrat or a duck unless you need a Democrat or a duck. Very prudent. But how much does it cost if you do need a Democrat? For \$5,000—pennies—you could have bought membership in Tip O’Neill’s Speaker’s Club. Or you could have gone to one of Ernest Wittenberg’s public relations seminars for corporate execs and political hacks.

Why do frugal businessmen throw away cash listening to these windbags? The *Times* wrote that the sessions offered a chance to meet “policy makers over a private lunch away from the ubiquitous hounds of the press.” And why would our great statesmen attend? Two thousand bucks for one day’s work is a lot of why. Among the Democrats who “taught” at these “seminars” were Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia, now majority leader, Senator Alan Cranston of California, Pete Domenici of New Mexico, and honest Jim Wright. Can these seminars be justified to the folks back in Buncombe County? All we know is that “a number of the senators and congressmen who have participated in the Wittenberg seminars were asked to comment on the program but declined to do so.”<sup>20</sup>

Sometimes the obviousness of these sleazebugs becomes so great there is an outcry. In February 1987, the press revealed that Senator Lloyd Bentsen of Texas, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, sent letters to prospective campaign donors and/or lobbyists, telling them he would be willing to meet with them once a month for a strategy session. The cost to them?: \$10,000.

By the time the press got done with the story, Bentsen was calling this “a doozy” of a mistake. He had to refund the bucks. But what the heck. A guy can make a mistake. So his spokesman could say “I would expect that all of the same people will contribute again . . . It was purely a question of appearances.”

In the first six months of 1987, Bentsen took in \$3.7 million in contributions, more than any of the other 32 Senators up for reelection in 1988. Maybe that’s because, as the *Times* put it, “he is also considered responsive to the needs of business on tax, trade and other issues.”<sup>21</sup>

### **The Awesome Weight of the Law**

Wright and Bentsen are only some of the Democratic congressional sleaze. There are numerous others. Thus there is Tommy



Robinson of Arkansas. In 1984, his bank "loaned" him \$50,000. The staff of the FEC found that it was really an illegal corporate contribution to his campaign. But, of course, the FEC decided, in 1986, not to take any action on the matter.<sup>22</sup>

In September 1985, the *Wall Street Journal* denounced Banking Committee chairman Fernand St. Germain of Rhode Island for lobbying to allow a Florida S&L to issue stock and then purchasing \$15,000 worth for himself. He also received loans from two banks, with no-money-down financing, so he could buy some restaurants. The *Journal* also said that the IRS was challenging what it called "abusive tax shelters" in which he invested \$120,000 for promised tax deductions of \$405,000.<sup>23</sup> There also have been allegations that the saintly fellow used the credit card of a S&L lobbyist for his entertainment expenses. The Justice Department has begun preliminary investigations into the matter.<sup>24</sup> In April 1987, the Ethics Committee finally declared that he had violated a rule against accepting transportation from a S&L. Having slapped him on the wrist, it decided there was "no pattern of improper acceptance," and took no disciplinary action.<sup>25</sup>

Also in 1985, Bill Bonor of Tennessee was accused of using \$300,000 in campaign funds for his own use, and taking a \$50,000 bribe. The House Ethics Committee suspended its investigation in 1986 because the Justice Department was also checking into the matter. Justice ended its inquiry in 1987, but the Committee let the matter drop. The *Journal* editorialized that they saw that Bonor was running for Mayor of Nashville and that they hoped he would leave the House, which he did, thus letting them evade the problem.<sup>26</sup> Eventually the Committee announced it would look into his activities, but that was obviously only after realizing the *Journal* would get on the Committee's case if it didn't.

Representative James Weaver of Oregon was also accused, in 1986, of using campaign funds for personal investments, and failing to detail several commodity transactions on his financial disclosure forms. He was allowed to remedy the violations and no action was taken against him.<sup>27</sup>

In June 1987, the Ethics Committee announced that Mary Rose Oaker of Ohio violated federal law in keeping an aide on her payroll for almost two years after the aide moved to New York. She was allowed to reimburse the Treasury for the \$45,000 and the matter was dropped.<sup>28</sup>

In September 1987, the Committee started investigating Richard Stallings of Idaho for borrowing \$4,800 from his campaign. The following month, Charles Rose of North Carolina was charged by the Committee with borrowing \$63,995 from his, thus violating rules against using such funds for personal purposes. He also pledged \$75,000 in campaign-held certificates of deposit as collateral for a personal loan.<sup>29</sup>

In December 1987, the House reprimanded Austin Murphy of Pennsylvania for diverting U.S. property from his district office to his law firm and retaining an aide on a subcommittee staff, knowing the dude was being paid for work not done. A reprimand is the least severe penalty the House can impose. Murphy couldn't have cared less. "Many of the members were telling me, 'It's a slap on the wrist and it's nothing you have to worry about.'"<sup>30</sup>

On April 24, 1987, Representative Harold Ford of Memphis was indicted on federal mail, bank and tax fraud charges. The first black congressman from the state in modern times is said to have conspired with two bankers already convicted of fraud. They used elaborate financial transactions to conceal payments to Ford including one of \$350,000. One of the bankers is cooperating with the investigation.

Ford is the fourth in his family to have held office. Indeed, he speculates that there is a vendetta against him by the U.S. Attorney in Memphis who, in 1982 had successfully prosecuted his brother Emmitt, a former state representative. And, of course, Ford is claiming the indictment is racially motivated. He has gotten the Black Congressional Caucus to go along with this. As individuals, they will raise \$250,000 for his defense.

He will have his day in court. The notion that he is the victim of a conspiracy is gross. Congress' morals are virtually nonexistent. They look out for themselves, and most of them have something to hide. As individuals they rally around all but the worst crooks in their ranks. If they became convinced that the Attorney General was persecuting one of their own, there would be mucho hell paid for many times over. Doesn't matter if the dude involved is black, or even if he wore a spiked Mohawk. In 1979, during the Abscam bribery affair, Congress repeatedly forced the Attorney General to explain why he was investigating its members. But, truth to tell, most of the Black Caucus are

nothing but dead-end hacks. If Ford is found guilty, their collective reputation will sink to the level of their actual integrity, i.e., to nothing.

Back in the 1970s, South Korean lobbyists strolled through the nation's capital handing out bribes to Congressmen. After "Koreagate," we saw Abscam, in the early 1980s, when an FBI man, pretending to be an Arab Sheikh, bribed six representatives and a senator. There has not been any one scandal since as big as these. But when we add up these individual cases, along with that of Representative Mario Biaggi, which will be discussed in dealing with New York's Democratic pond slime, they show a substantial proportion of the sitting Congressional Democrats have no morality worthy of the name, and we have no reason to think they are the only ones. But even more important is the fact that, unless a prosecutor moves on a Congressional Democrat, his colleagues will do nothing more than slap him on the wrist, if and when they stumble on a case they can not evade. As Common Cause says, "the message this sends to the public, and to the members of the House, is that the ethics rules may be violated with impunity."<sup>31</sup>

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## CHAPTER 7

# Who Pays the Piper, Calls the Tune

In 1857, Ralph Waldo Emerson described the Democratic Party as "the party of the poor marshalled against the rich . . . but they are always officered by a few self-seeking deserters from the rich or Whig Party." Today, we would say rich or Republican Party. Otherwise, things haven't really changed. Naturally the party percentages among the fat cats varies with exigencies. Irangate, and then the October 1987 stock market crash, certainly weakened the GOP. But an opportunist shift by some businessmen to what they see as a winner does not really make Democrats out of them. They are fully capable of simultaneously backing Republicans for other offices while backing a Democrat for President. There can be no doubt that there has been a steady erosion of Democratic strength among the rich. And it is also true that many of those who are still loyal to the party have lost confidence in it.

At any given moment, any individual can change parties. But politics is not basically about the soul searchings of individuals. It is the shiftings of significant groups that interests the social scientist. To be sure, individuals went into the polling booth, but it was the blacks who swung to the Democrats in 1936, the German-Americans as a group who voted for Wendell Wilkie in 1940 or, more recently, white unionists who fell for Ronald Reagan in 1984.

Both major parties claim to appeal to the entire people. But

they know that whole is a choir with many distinctive parts. Their pollsters are into "micro-targeting." That means one mailing to Ms. Pro Abortion, and another, very different mailing to her Irish Catholic mother, Mrs. Agnes O'Anti. Their pollsters tell their candidates exactly how much they can pander to the believers in Papal bull and still retain credibility with people who can think. Democrats don't waste time talking about Belfast when they show up at a synagogue. The first thing a wee New York City Democrat learns is how to balance a ticket. One black, one Jew, one Italian. They hunt blue-collar white evangelical voters like them folks were fine, fat pheasants in their season. Such demagoguery is usually thought of as rabble-rousing. However, the pols see the rich in pretty much the same way—branded asses. Only they have gold in their saddle bags.

Modern political science utilizes a rigorous discipline—choroplethics, from the Greek *choro*—part—*pleth*—filling. This is the art of graph-mapping the variables between differing social groups—classes, genders, languages, nationalities, political affiliations, races and religions & co. Do you want to see where the working-class Church of Ireland outnumber the Presbyterians on Belfast's Shankill Road? If you do, you look at a detailed census atlas. That's choroplethics. Another modern conception is cliometrics. Now, with computers, you can type in "Vietnam War" and get a detailed breakdown, group by group, as to how they saw it, what happened to them economically during the war, what happened to their religion, their crime rate, whatever. Such overlays were always present in the past, only now we can integrate them far faster than ever before.

Now it is proposed that yet another such objective specialization be recognized, which can be dubbed chrematology, from the Greek *chremata*, or wealth. Everyone knows that "who pays the piper calls the tune." Let chrematology be the systematic study of the cash nexuses linking all elites of all social strata to all political ideologies, parties and states. Truthfully, isn't this central to any serious understanding of the times? Yes, chrematology is a necessary science. Admittedly not very romantic, even if it is quite intimate, if not down right prying. A sort of obligatory proctological probing of the modern human soul.

For some readers this is all obvious. In New York City, ethno-religious vote chasing is openly done. Reporters write endearing articles about how many different ethnic foods a candidate eats in



the course of a campaign. But most liberal publications never discuss the ethnic or religious affiliation of the capitalist candidates they support. Similarly, leftists would say that it makes no difference to a class-conscious worker that Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis is a Greek. Except that he is scooping up contributions from Greek businessmen who normally are overwhelmingly Republican. Perhaps in the grand scheme of things, this isn't central. But to Dukakis' campaign manager, this is one of the most important things in the universe. And it is important to anyone describing the internal life of the party, rather than simply pointing a moralistic finger at it.

If for leftists an ethno-religious breakdown of the party's patrons is not worthy of note, for some Jewish organizations it is too dangerous to discuss. When writing my last book, *Jews in America Today*, I was told by a member of the *Forbes* magazine staff that the American Jewish Committee asked it not to discuss ethnicity or religion in its annual issue on the 400 richest Americans. Similarly not a few liberals dread a discussion of the role of Jewish campaign contributions in the life of their party. Some fear anti-Semitism. Others are really more afraid the public might put two and two together and figure out that the party is so zealous in Israel's cause because it wants American Jewish campaign contributions.

These arguments must be summarily rejected. First off, the American people are not anti-Semitic and are not about to become such. When Ivan Boesky was exposed as the biggest crook in American history, the Jewish community papers ran articles about how "leaders" were worried about an anti-Semitic backlash. Nothing happened. As to dealing with the relationship between Jewish campaign contributions and Democratic support for Israel, all I can say is that there is yet another old adage: why deny what everyone knows? We know Dixiecrats thrived for well over a century on pandering to white racism. We saw Geraldine Ferraro babble about aid to parochial schools to get the votes of the most backward Catholics. What earthly reason is there to think that all of a sudden a party with a track record like the Democrats should—or even could—develop a disinterested concern for a Jewish state in the Middle East?

Therefore this book is written for two audiences. It is for the general public, with its multitudinous illusions, which can only be destroyed, if at all, by irrefutable facts. And it is for us

choroplethics buffs and chrematologists. When *American Demographics* readers stop discussing Greek and Jewish campaign contributions, I'll stop. Not before. Until then, its time, indeed past time, to get down to cases.

### "The Difference in the Two Parties"

Once upon a time, there was the white Protestant "solid South," the party's stable base. However, with the civil rights movement, supported, even if reluctantly, by Democratic administrations, many southern right-wingers jumped over to the Republicans. A majority of southern whites voted for Reagan. Nevertheless, while it is not uncommon for a Republican to win a senatorial or gubernatorial election in a southern state, for the most part the Democrats are still dominant at the state level, particularly in the legislatures, and also in House races. Therefore, a minority of the southern rich are loyal to the party because of these local considerations. But a reasonable estimate now would be that most southern businessmen are switch-hitting Republicans. That is to say they are Republican nationally, while remaining crucial contributors to conservative Democrats in local campaigns.

One important group of southern and western oil men had been largely Democratic until recently. These "wildcat" domestic producers had different interests than the "seven sisters," the oil majors, with vital holdings in the Middle East, whose execs were and are overwhelmingly Republican. However, with rising oil prices in the '70s, at the height of OPEC's strength, the domestics demanded deregulation of their industry, i.e., higher prices, which Carter dared not give them for fear of alienating the party's lower-class base. The bulk of these quondam Democrats promptly jumped ship.

The classic study of the party's finances is sociologist G. William Domhoff's 1972 *Fat Cats and Democrats*. Naturally, there have been substantial changes since then. But his major conclusions still hold, especially for northern capitalists of Christian religion or background. Most of the Catholic immigrant groups were primarily of peasant origins. When they got here, they became either farmers or laborers. There are few Catholic multi-millionaires, more millionaires. But the vast majority of capitalists are of Protestant background, meaning WASPs and Germans,

with Jews being the largest minority. Politically, the only really important Catholic grouping in the party is the Irish Mafia around the Kennedys who financially dominate the Boston party.<sup>1</sup>

If we simply look at the names of some of the northern Gentile businessmen in the party, the list looks impressive. But only if we ignore the fact that Democrats are an insignificant minority of northern Protestant rich. There is no doubt of this. Domhoff is categorical:

Since the Gentile financial community is almost exclusively Republican, it is the Jewish financiers who by default provide the Democrats with their handful of essential money raisers among the super-wealthy of Wall Street . . . The difference in the two parties is that there are so few Democrats among rich northern Protestants.<sup>2</sup>

Domhoff found the most important northern Protestant Democrats to be descendants of a very few families like the Roosevelts and Biddles, who have been with the party from its earliest days. Some others are descendents of mugwumps who abandoned the GOP in the wake of Grant's scandals. A very few more are recent renegades from the Republicans, like John D. Rockefeller, IV, the first ever Democratic Rockefeller.

These and others, as strays, are nowhere as important as either the Jews or the southerners. This is especially so as they are not of one mind on any issue in the way the party's Jews are concerning Israel, or the cracker capitalists are about winning back the party's former white base in their region. Nevertheless, as Domhoff says, they

remain essential beyond their numbers and contributions because of the respectability and legitimacy they lend the party in the eyes of other members of the upper class.<sup>3</sup>

With this caveat as to their real importance, a list of such figures would include such very diverse figures as Lee Iococca on the right; Stewart Mott, a General Motors heir and major fund raiser for liberal causes; Cyrus Vance, on the boards of IBM and *The New York Times*; Charles Manett, a California banker who became party chair; Robert McNamara, now of Shell; William Norris of Control Data; Richard Lyman, president of the Rockefeller Foundation, and C. Peter McCollough of Xerox.



Although Donald Trump is a registered Republican, the real estate magnate contributed to Mondale's campaign, as did Aetna Life's John Filer, IBM's Tom Watson, Jr., and Dwayne Andreas, the grain dealer. Alan Cranston took in funds from Ernest Gallo and Robert Noyce of Intel for his abortive campaign. John Glenn, the space windbag, had impressive support for his 1984 effort from such as oilman Clint Murchison, Jr., C.H. Murphy of Murphy Oil, Ann Cox Chambers of the Cox papers, and a string of military contractors and other high tech PACs. Gary Hart was backed in 1984 by Michael Johnson of Paine Webber, Delta Air Line's David Garrett, and Steve Wozniac of Apple Computers, among others. But again, it can not be too strongly emphasized that these elements were nothing compared to Reagan's Christian business support.

### **Liars Figure but Figures Don't Lie**

All scholarly observers agree that Jewish capitalists play a crucial role in the financing of the party. The reasons are traditional. The Jews have been history's classic migrants. By the 1920s, over one-third of all the Jews in the world were living in the U.S., and many more would have come here but for the Republicans cutting off open immigration in 1921. While there was a substantial sector of "48ers," German Jews who had come here in the middle of the last century and who were traditional Republicans, most Jews had come here from Eastern Europe between 1881 and 1921 and they bitterly resented the imposition of national quotas, which had among their purposes the curtailing of Jewish immigration. The feeling that the Republicans were anti-Semitic was powerfully reinforced by the strength of isolationist sentiment in the GOP during the '30s. By Roosevelt's last campaign in 1944, about 90% of all Jews supported him, and the percentage among the Jewish rich was not much, if at all, different.

With time, these considerations have faded. Certainly the present day Republicans are not anti-Semites. Inevitably, many rich Jews have gone over to the Republicans so that a reasonable estimate would be that no more than about 50% of today's Jewish rich are still with the Democrats. However, while we Jews are only about 2.54% of the people, Jews are circa 24% of the *Forbes* magazine list of the 400 richest Americans. That means that about 12% of the rich are Jewish Democrats, 12%

Republicans. If we reasonably assume that only about 10% of businessmen of Christian background are Democrats, they come to only 7.6% of the total capitalist class. In short, if my estimates are correct, rich Jews outnumber rich Christians among committed party fat cats. To be sure, these are necessarily only estimates, given that there are no official breakdowns of donors by race, ethnicity or religion. But even if we presume that 20% of the Christian rich are confirmed Democrats—a figure I maintain to be excessive—they would only be 15.2% of the 400. And even if we insisted that only 40% of rich Jews are Democrats—a number that I think is too low—they would still make up 9.6% of the very rich. In other words, even if we took the lowest reasonable Jewish figure and the highest Gentile possibility, Jews would still be vastly disproportionately represented among the Democratic moneybags.

Naturally the number of Christian and Jewish capitalists who contribute to the party varies with circumstances. In 1985, the Republican Party's committees took in \$7.5 for every \$1 for the Democrats. By August 1987, after Irangate broke, GOP donations fell off 40%. Yet, the republicans were still getting \$4 to every \$1 taken in by the Democrats. However, if the economy sours, we can presume an even further reduction of the ratio. The absolute number of Christian businessmen among Democratic contributors will rise. Still, anything causing Christians to bail out of the GOP would also operate on Jews as well. But, for now, we will go with the statistics given by two pro-Democratic writers from *The New Republic*. Robert Kuttner, in his 1987 book, *The Life of the Party*, declared that "insiders place the Jewish fraction of Democratic campaign finance at about one-third." Morton Kondracke, writing of "pro-Israel money," said that "Mondale received up to half of his 1984 campaign money from such sources. . . . Such contributions are distinct from New York-Hollywood 'liberal money which happens to be Jewish.'"<sup>4</sup>

At any rate, these rich Jewish Democrats are further subdivided into three somewhat overlapping groupings. Some are primarily motivated by liberal ideology. With others, their material interests lie with the Democrats. With yet others, concern for Israel is overriding. All will be discussed later when we take up the entire Jewish Democratic contingent, which includes many who are by no means rich. They will also be discussed in specific relationship to the parties in California and New York, those



being the two states with the largest Jewish populations.

For now, we can dismiss the Jewish liberal donors with a few words. In as much as Jews are disproportionately represented in the professions, and many of these lawyers, professors, etc., are liberals, they form a substantial element among the fair to middlin' donors. But the real heavy hitters are in and around Hollywood, which has always been heavily Jewish. These movie moguls, and some stars, are crucial to the liberals among Democratic candidates, who have limited possibilities to attract mainstream Christian capitalist bucks. That explains the liberals' near total silence in the face of obvious Israeli crimes, as with its continued arming of South Africa. But these liberal politicians, for all their noise about a nuclear freeze, opposition to Contra aid, and support for abortion and gay rights, are strictly the water boys of the national party.

### **"Almost Indistinguishable from the Local Political Machines"**

Real estate speculation and development are crucially affected by local governments, which grant zoning variances and the like. In as much as the party controls most of the major cities, realtors in those cities are usually Democratic. When the Eastern European Jewish immigrants arrived here between 1881 and 1924, their businessmen of modest means found real estate to be an easy field to enter, and some struck it rich. Hence it is not surprising that the Jewish proportion among realtors in many of the country's largest cities is extensive and in some cities impressively so.

Given the overwhelmingly pro-Democratic sentiment in the Jewish communities of their youth, and their material interests, it is natural enough that they should be Democrats. But those interests also philosophically predispose them towards the historic party of Roosevelt. While many industrial capitalists can contemplate moving their factories to open-shop states, or even to some "free world" dictatorship abroad, where unionists are treated with proper respect, i.e., jailed, the owner of a mid-Manhattan office building can not similarly move his property. He can not be totally indifferent to the standard of living of the urban poor. In the end, the poor are the base of the city's consumer economy. They are the customers for many of the stores in his buildings. While it would be ludicrous to think of these sharks as having any



real compassion for the poor, nevertheless their material interests make them much more sympathetic to a later-day New Deal program, which would stress urban renewal, than the run of industrial capitalists, Gentile or Jewish.

There is one other Jewish capitalist sector that is closely identified with the party. What is called commercial banking is largely of Protestant and Yankee origin. But many of the leading investment banking houses in Wall Street are of German-Jewish origin. These houses are heavy underwriters for government bond paper. Again, liberals they are not, but because of this "cash nexus" with the state, they do not share the Republicans' traditional hostility to "big government."

Two liberals, Thomas Ferguson and Joel Rogers, show, in *The Decline of the Democrats and the Future of American Politics*, that a substantial proportion of the top 150 corporations supported Roosevelt. But, "More recently, however, most have abandoned the Democratic Party." At best

. . . it seems likely that within the multinational bloc itself there remains vestiges of the old tie to the Democrats, at least in the sense that the probability of supporting a Democrat still appears to increase with capital intensity and orientation to an open world economy.<sup>5</sup>

These authors confirm that, beyond a few individuals among the top 30 corporations, industrial capital is almost solidly Republican. On the other hand, they verify the centrality of the real estate sharks and bankers for the party: "In many parts of the Northeast, real estate interests are almost indistinguishable from the local political machines."<sup>6</sup> In dealing with the 1984 primaries, they remark about how "damaging to Hart was his inability to crack Mondale's hold on the real-estate interests."<sup>7</sup> They say Mondale's

economic advisers consisted almost wholly of investment bankers, such as Robert Hormats of Goldman Sachs, or economists with close ties to finance . . . two investment bankers . . . later publicly identified as sources of Mondale's new "thinking on the need to reduce budget deficits"—Robert Rubin of Goldman Sachs and Roger Altman of Lehman Brothers—traveled to his Minnesota home to discuss the tax plan. At the convention, Mondale announced he would raise taxes, if elected.<sup>8</sup>

Ferguson and Rogers are totally committed to the party. Indeed, their book is little better than a pathetic lament for its shift to the right, wrapped around a far more valuable discussion of the economics of that evolution. They insist on a clinical study of the new turn,

as one might, examine, say, the extent of Walter Mondale's support among leading American investment bankers, or the number of real-estate magnates on the *Forbes* 400 list who contributed money to his campaign.<sup>9</sup>

They go to great lengths to be scientific and they succeed. Their conclusions are categorical. Speaking of political "investors," i.e., donors they say that

Outside of a handful of sectors—notably investment bankers, real estate, insurance, and some multinationals—comparative few major investors contributed anything to the Democratic Party. Often the numbers of those who did are too small even to permit statistical tests . . . In other words . . . real estate developers and investment bankers are disproportionately Democratic compared to all investors, and disproportionately willing to support liberal Democrats.<sup>10</sup>

### Going with the Flow

It must be stressed that the party leaders do not want to be a perpetual minority among the wealthy. In fact, the desire to extend the Democratic Party's ruling class base is one of the major causes of its turn to the right, or more precisely its turn even further to the right, since Reagan's 1980 triumph. This has led the party chairman, Paul Kirk, to focus on "major donor" fund-raising, by building up the National Finance Council, under C. Victor Raiser, a Buffalo businessman, and the Democratic Business Council under W. Michael Blumenthal, chief exec of the giant Unisys, a merger of the Burroughs and Sperry business machine empires. Additionally, there are a number of right wing groupings within the party who strive to get it to abandon its populist pretensions in hope of wooing more of the wealthy to the party's side. Chief among these are the Democratic Leadership Council and Impac '88. The DLC is primarily southern and western and emphasizes making the party more palatable to

southern white males, who now vote majority GOP on the national level. Impac '88 is largely but not exclusively Jewish. However, they differ more sociologically than politically. Thus the dominant figure in Impac '88 is Nathan Landow, a Washington area real estate hustler, and a supporter of Senator Albert Gore, Jr., of Tennessee, a Dixiecrat hawk in the nomination contest.

There is one factor that significantly helps the party get money from Republican-oriented businessmen. In 1986, 390 incumbent representatives sought reelection. Of these, 98.5% won. Only one sitting Democrat lost. Because they are so certain to win, incumbents received 83% of Political Action Committee contributions.<sup>11</sup> Many PACs are run by Republicans, but they feel they have no choice but to go with the flow and fork over cash to incumbent Democrats. Incumbent senators are by no means as certain to win. There are simply too many interest groups on a statewide level with axes ground to exacting precision for a sitting senator not to get cut sometimes. Therefore, many business PACs hedge their bets. In 1986, Common Cause studied nine contests and found that almost 500 PACs simultaneously gave to candidates of both parties.<sup>12</sup>

The net result in 1986 was that House Democratic candidates outspent their opponents by \$15 million. But Senate Republican candidates outspent Democrats three to two.<sup>13</sup> As a consequence, the two houses have differing attitudes towards PACs. In 1987, the overwhelming majority of Democratic Senators supported a partial public financing system, but it failed because of a Republican filibuster. Sixty votes are required to cut off debate in that chamber and the Democrats couldn't come up with them. They might have been able to compel the Republicans to accept cloture if they were prepared to keep the bill on the floor to the exclusion of all others, thus preventing Reagan from getting what he wanted on other issues. Instead they let the bill die. Among the unstated reasons was that they knew that even if the bill were to pass in the Senate, it was really unlikely that it would get by the House even though Democrats are the majority there and cloture is by majority. The *Times* has correctly explained that PAC reform must do the near impossible: "It must somehow win approval from a House consisting entirely of incumbents, many of them anxious to retain this built in financial advantage."<sup>14</sup> The Congressional Democrats are notoriously undisciplined. There



will always be a substantial minority who will vote with the Republicans on an issue so vital to their individual careers.

### Hear No Evil, See No Evil, Speak No Truth

Israel has received more U.S. aid than any other country on earth. Its addiction to U.S. weaponry drives it into an alliance with the most military-minded sectors of American political life, most notably the Reagan Administration. However two realities compel it to simultaneously orient towards the Democrats. Although William Rubenstein, a Zionist sociologist, estimated that 75% of Zionism's organizational leaders backed Reagan in 1980, nearly 70% of American Jewry votes Democratic. And with the Democrats controlling one or both houses for decades, they always have more incumbents than the Republicans. Given that incumbents usually win, especially so in the House, the Republican-minded Zionist leaders must, of necessity, back these sure things. Hence, challenging Republicans get little more than handouts. On the other hand, *The New Republic* reports

Incumbent conservative Republicans have discovered a cynical formula. They have only to demonstrate sufficient loyalty to Israel, and they can all but lock out their Democratic challengers from a substantial fraction of Jewish support.<sup>15</sup>

Frequently this means that viable Democrats don't bother to run. They know they can't count on these funds, crucial to Democratic success: "Pro-Israel money has moved well to the right of most Jewish voters."<sup>15</sup>

Thus, although we Jews are the only white ethnics to give a majority of our votes to the Democrats, and pro-Zionists are central to the party's finances, the Zionist movement does not put all of its golden eggs in the Democratic basket. Nevertheless, in 1984 pro-Israel PACs gave out over \$4.25 million, with about 75% going to Democrats.<sup>16</sup> Most were members of committees dealing with foreign policy and military spending. However, it was Governor James Hunt, who ran against North Carolina's Republican Senator, Jesse Helms, who received the largest contribution, \$146,700. And, as with other PACs, Zionist PACs gave to competing candidates.

In one profound respect, these PACs differ from, say, the shoe

industry. Most PACs tell you who they represent. But Zionists represent a foreign government, even if their PAC members are citizens. Therefore, they are not eager to have attention drawn to their influence in our politics. Accordingly, they set up dozens of PACs with nondescript names—Desert Caucus or Hudson Valley PAC—to hide their money's origins. We Jews have a reputation for being smart. But they are dumb. Anyone using computer print outs at the FEC can figure out who the Desert Caucus & Co. really are.<sup>17</sup>

The duplicitous nature of the multiple mini-PACs has naturally drawn the attention of the press. On June 24, 1987, the *Wall Street Journal* declared that

80 pro-Israel PACs spent more than \$6.9 million during the 1986 campaigns, making them the nation's biggest-giving narrow issue interest group.<sup>18</sup>

The Zionist PACs' \$6,931,728 in expenditures far exceeded the realtors' PAC's \$6,290,108, the AMA's \$5,702,133 and the National Rifle Association's piddling \$4,763,984.<sup>18</sup> The Zionists deny that the 80 groups are coordinated. But the *Journal* did "a computer-aided analysis of 1986 Federal Election Commission reports." It found that despite the American Israel Public Affairs Committee's denial that it acted as a central command post,

no fewer than 51 pro-Israel PACs . . . are operated by AIPAC officials or people who hold seats on AIPAC's two major policy-making bodies.<sup>18</sup>

While the PACs were "supposedly bipartisan," in fact "their spending patterns are remarkably similar." Of \$3.9 million to candidates, they concentrated on three Senate contests. They spent \$642,000 on Democrats Alan Cranston in California, John Evans in Idaho and Thomas Daschle in South Dakota. "In these races, only one \$5,000 donation went to a Republican."<sup>18</sup>

Honorable people differ over Zionism and Palestinian nationalism. However, it is impossible to believe that most Democrats are for Israel because they see hidden virtues in Zionism. To the contrary. Indeed, it must be said that 99 out of 100 white Democrats and 98 out of 100 black Democrats would swim across an ocean of snot to get a campaign contribution from a rich Jew. And there

can be no better proof of the dishonorable nature of the Democrats' attitude towards Israel than their handling of the Israeli aspects of the Irangate scandal.

Everyone knows exactly what Irangate is: a criminal conspiracy between Reagan and Israel to arm Khomenei and divert the funds to the murderous Contras in Nicaragua. But you would never know this from the Democrats. Their investigation of the Israeli aspects of the affair was as scandalous as Reagan's own activities in the matter. Before the televised hearings ever began, though, Senator Daniel Inouye, who chaired that farce, declared Israel innocent of all charges. He showed up in Israel in December 1986 to pledge his loyalty to the other end of the Irangate conspiracy:

Speaking for myself, I don't believe the facts as I see them could justify any conclusion that American-Israeli relations will be weakened or damaged.<sup>19</sup>

The *Wall Street Journal* laid it on the line in its April 24, 1987 issue:

unwilling to buck strong pro-Israeli sentiment on Capitol Hill, House and Senate investigating committees don't intend to delve deeply into Israel's role in the Iran-Contra scandal.<sup>20</sup>

The *Journal* returned to the scandal within the scandal in its August 3rd issue:

The issue is especially sensitive because some of the lawmakers pushing hardest to uncover details of the covert operations also are strong supporters of Israel and recipients of campaign money from pro-Israel groups . . . Senator Inouye received \$48,500 in campaign contributions from pro-Israel political action committees during 1985 and 1986, and is the leading recipient among members of the two committees of such contributions. Overall, 16 of the 26 legislators on the panels received a total of \$121,275 in pro-Israel PAC money during the past two years.<sup>21</sup>

In 1951, Inouye worked as a professional Israel Bonds salesman. By now his identification with things Jewish borders on mania. In December 1987, every major paper in the country ran



editorials deploring how he twisted Congressional arms to get \$8 million appropriated to the Ozar Hatorah, a New York Orthodox Jewish organization funded in large part by the United Jewish Appeal, a Zionist controlled charity. The money was to go to a parochial school for North African Jews living in Paris. This was a favor to Zev Wolfson, New York realtor, owner of Peter Minuit Plaza, Standard & Poor's Broadway headquarters, and partner in development rights over the Staten Island Ferry terminal. On February 1, 1988, Inouye had to humiliate himself, declaring to the Senate that he would have the appropriation rescinded.

Here we have one of the most anomalous aspects of contemporary American life. The *Journal*, an up front capitalist organ, casually described the Democrats' cover-up. Then we have the equally imperialist *Times* getting on Inouye's case about what may be the most absurd misuse of tax money in U.S. history. Yet the liberals were so silent regarding the cover up and the grotesque grant. How came it to pass that the *Wall Street Journal* is infinitely to the left of our liberals in respect to Israel?

The answers are simple. The days are dead when some reactionary editor killed stories for political reasons on a paper whose shtick is facts and analysis for the classes rather than propaganda for the masses. As serious journalists, they will go to any lengths to dig up the truth about illegal Irangate activities by America's rulers. Why would they avoid digging up dirt on the involvement of a foreign government? And why, if they are exposing Republicans, should they be silent about the Democrats' cover up? To them, the Israeli government and the Democrats are just two gangs of sleaze in a wall-to-wall sewer of a political world. And, of course, they don't live on and for campaign contributions and honorariums. The Democrats do.

### **The Party and the Liberal-Secular Educated**

The Democrats aren't fools enough not to have any middle class base. McGovern took in millions from a list of 600,000 donors and 10,000 sustainers at \$10 per month. With so much cash flowing into the semi-paralysed campaign, McGovern ended up with a surplus. However, the defeat was blamed on his populist mentality and following. National chairman Robert Strauss, then and now friend to business and party crooks, turned from direct mail to the middle class and intellectuals toward big biz.

Into the Reagan era, the party had less than a half million on its solicitation lists, leaning on rich zips in Manhattan, Cambridge and Beverly Hills. Direct mail became important again in the mid-1980s. Nevertheless, the party is now more reliant on the rich than ever before. The February 22, 1988, *Journal* reported that

Democratic committees took in \$19.3 million last year. But there was a 4% decline in gifts from people giving less than \$200 . . . Gifts from large donors soared 61% . . . Democrats got 45% of their money from small givers, down sharply from 56%.

### The Fat and Stately Asses of Labor

It is the poorest one-third of the people who are most loyal to the party, but as individuals they give virtually nothing to it. Their only contribution is through their union, if they are members. On the presidential level, every important union has been pro-Democratic except the Teamsters. With the Reagan administration trying to jail their president, Jackie Presser, and establish a trusteeship over the nationally corrupt outfit, it is expected that they will now move into the Democratic camp, presidentially. On the congressional level and in state and local politics, they are already usually pro-Democratic.

In fact, the Teamsters are amassing between \$8 and \$10 million for the 1988 campaign, which will make their PAC the largest in the country.<sup>22</sup> The National Education Association, which is not affiliated to the AFL-CIO, was the third largest PAC giver in 1986.<sup>23</sup> Union PACs donated over \$11.5 million to candidates, most of them Democrats, in 1983-84. This went up to \$15 million in 1985-86. However, impressive as all this sounds, the reality is as the *Wall Street Journal* reported in 1986: "Money raised by labor PACs . . . runs far behind that raised by Republican, corporate and conservative groups."<sup>24</sup>

In terms of the Democratic Party alone, however, the unions are not so very far behind the capitalist PACs. *The New York Times* of November 6, 1984 broke down the PAC givers for the period January 1, 1983 through October 29, 1984. There is reason to believe labor's share of party funds declined since. The party made strenuous efforts to obtain bucks from the rich, while



union membership declined. At any rate, amounts then were Boss PACs, \$20.7 million; Labor, \$14.7; conservative others—mostly Zionist—\$1.6 million. Labor gave \$1 million to all Republicans.<sup>25</sup>

Labor's present politics are rooted in movement history. Most especially, the results of the Truman-McCarthy purge of Marxism from labor's house. In October 1947, John L. Lewis broke with the rest of the bureaucracy over anti-Communist oaths under Taft-Hartley. Lewis was another Lincoln, a poor boy who educated himself into one of the great popular orators of his day, although still an autocrat within the Miners Union. Labor was a biblical army of "lions led by asses." Yes, he said to the bureaucrats assembled before him at the AFL convention, labor is an mighty host of eight million. But they are "marching across the plains of America and having their thinking done for them by fat and stately asses."<sup>26</sup>

Lewis's asses remain the classic description of labor misleaders, then and now. But ranks and leaders evolved. No one, friend or foe, describes today's typical unionist as a lion. Many unionists of the '30s and '40s were. They were combative in defense of their rights. Today, most unions accept give-back contracts with no more fight than a house cat. Now a lion is no smarter than a house cat. But no one sneers "stupid animal" in a lion's face. However, you say anything you want to and about your pet, including the truth.

Thomas Jefferson and the other founders of the party, for all their limitations, always assumed that if you could wash the great unwashed, they would clean up their act. Today, nearly all Americans learn how to read. Nevertheless, all empirical evidence before our eyes, and the conclusions of in-depth polls, constantly testify to the continued folly of the majority of American working people, the "mob," as the Federalists contemptuously called them. The ranks of labor include many educated people. There is also an additional leavening agent, the minority of militants and some conscious socialists. But the bureaucracy rests upon the apathy of the typical union member, who is neither educated nor militant. He is the numerical backbone of the party's support. Think of him and quickly free associate. What are the first words that pop into your mind? Archie Bunker? Or Joe Sixpack? Or couch potato?

On July 18, 1987, at the height of the "Olliemania" during the Iran-Contra hearings, the *Times* conducted a poll, asking where



Nicaragua was. Thirty-two percent said it was in Central America or Latin America, whatever the latter meant. Twenty-one percent thought it was in South America. "Another third admitted that they did not know."<sup>27</sup> The other 15% put it any old place, near Vietnam, in the Middle East or Africa.

If we reasonably presume that college students, business people and professionals were the most likely to know where Nicaragua is, we must conclude that the percentage of blue collar union members, who did not know where that country is, was higher than the 48% of the entire population who goofed on that question. Two things must be emphasized. The poll was taken after years of American involvement with the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. And the government in Washington is not hiding Nicaragua's location from anyone.

### The AFL-CIA

The bureaucrats of Lewis' crack did not understand the implications of their signing anti-Communist oaths. But we do know what happened to them. We can still find their equals in the animal kingdom. Let us say of the majority of the national leadership of the AFL-CIO that they are Judas goats, and let us think of the dissenters among the tops as so many mindless, bleating sheep.

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland and Tom Kahn, head of the International Affairs Department, are decades-long CIA collaborators. Tom Braden, now a well-known talk show figure, was the CIA's link to the labor fakers in the late '40s. In 1967, he related how he organized them into resisting the Communists in France at the height of their strength. "Into this crisis stepped (Jay) Lovestone and his assistant, Irving Brown. With funds from Dubinsky's union," the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, "they organized the Force Ouvrière, a non-Communist union. When they ran out of money, they appealed to the CIA."<sup>28</sup> Kirkland was a loyal collaborator with the national headquarters CIA clique under George Meany, his predecessor as head man at the AFL-CIO.

Kahn came to cooperation with "the company" via the "Schachtmanites," a sect of revisionist Trotskyists who entered into the moribund Socialist Party of Norman Thomas in 1957. Kahn was one of its leading figures on February 22, 1967, when

the *Times* exposed Thomas' CIA connection. His Institute for International Labor Research took \$1,048,940 from the secret donors. Later, Thomas' biographers documented yet more CIA connections through the Socialist Party. After that organization's disintegration in the early 1970s, Kahn surfaced as Meany's ghost.

The sheep are the approximately one-third of the Presidents who are subjectively opponents of the CIA headquarters clique, particularly regarding Central America. They flock together in something called the National Labor Committee for Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador. In spite of their boast that it contains the presidents of five of the six largest unions in the AFL-CIO, including William Winpisinger of the Machinists, Kenneth Blaylock of the American Federation of Government Employees, and Owen Bieber of the United Auto Workers, most readers—and most of their ranks—will not have heard of the NLC. And no wonder, as their dissent from the CIA collaborators is of the most lamblike meekness.

They got the 1987 AFL-CIO convention to change its Central America statement from a call “for a withdrawal of U.S. military assistance to the Contras *linked to the simultaneous* withdrawal of Soviet/Cuban military assistance,” to “for a withdrawal of U.S. military assistance to the Contras *as well as the* withdrawal of Soviet/Cuban military assistance to the Sandinistas.” Their change gives both sides a chance to claim the resolution backs their line, but it had little practical effect as it was clear by then, in the midst of the Arias accords, that none of their opinions would have the slightest effect on whether Congress would vote more military aid to the Contras. Beyond that, the NLC does nothing much more for the insurgency in El Salvador than give minimal support to a once a year demonstration against U.S. intervention in Central America.

The mendacity of the national headquarters gang, and the mediocrity of the NLC were both revealed at a September 19, 1987, meeting in Oakland, California. Daniel Cantor, a leading representative of the NLC, and David Jessup of the American Institute for Free Labor Development, the foreign arm of the AFL-CIO headquarters clique, were speaking on “What Should American Labor Be Doing and Saying in Latin America.” I publicly questioned Jessup on the AFL-CIO's CIA connections, reading directly from the above quoted sources. Jessup's reply

was simple. My charges were "McCarthyism." As Cantor was silent on the issue, I brought it up with him after the meeting. His group knew about the links, but never discussed them publicly. "His (Jessup's) people are much more zealous in their politics than mine." Truly sheep in sheep's clothing.

In practice both factions usually support the same candidates at election time. Naturally both camps are treated with the same deserved contempt by the pols, who know these suckers well. By now, the hacks can recite their labor fund-raising dinner speech in their sleep. They know that as long as they mouth the ritual pieties on behalf of Social Security and a few other entitlements popular with the not very demanding ranks, they are assured that both the sheep and the goats will continue to hand over their political treasuries.

It is no accident that their party roles are so similar, despite their differences over foreign policy. What they have in common is that they are in fact bureaucrats. No less than 19 AFL-CIO international presidents pull down over \$100,000 per year. Dozens more do almost as well. This bureaucratic and parasitic relationship to their ranks must be seen in two ways. In the end, they rest on the workers. They must have the workers' support, or at least be tolerated by them. Their ranks are not demanding. To the contrary. By now they are happy if they are allowed to hang onto what they already have. Seen from this basically conservative standpoint, the Democrats are the lesser evil. The entitlements are more secure under them than under the GOP. If the Democrats win, then the bureaucrats can turn to their followers and say, "We won, the Democrats couldn't have done it without our help." We, our, Democrats, union leaders, ranks, the words all roll together and everyone is happy.

On the other hand, it is getting harder to say that the Democrats are going to let the workers keep their past gains. Ted Kennedy and other liberals voted for the Gramm-Rudman mandatory budget cuts. But to go beyond the Democratic Party, to set up a new labor party, as the unions have done in every other industrialized country, is impossible for these bureaucrats. Indeed, the so-called peace bureaucrats can not even build a serious peace movement. Because the construction of either a new party or an effective street movement requires the mobilization of the ranks, their education on political realities. But what would happen if many thousands of unionists dedicated themselves to sustained



work on labor's behalf? If you do not know, the bureaucrats do. It would not be long before those thousands would turn around to them and say, "Hey buddy, how come if you and me are both working just as hard as we can for the same noble cause, how come you get paid \$100,000 and I get only a thank you?" As long as labor is run by guys in it for the bucks, the Democratic Party is not just the best of all possible worlds, it is the only possible world.

### **Fools and Their Money Are Soon Parted**

Four of the 1988 Democratic primary candidates for President announced early on that they would not take PAC money. Which is fine, except that in 1984, PACs contributed no more than a tad over one percent of the combined take of all primary candidates of both parties. Presidential primaries are simply too speculative for most PACs, who like sure things, like incumbent representatives. Primaries are the last major game preserve of the big individual donors. When we look at these, candidate by candidate, we can clearly confirm the constants and see the variables of the party's finances.

In February 1987, Gary Hart flew into New York in the private jet of his Colorado buddy, Myron Miller, whom the *Times* described as "a Denver real estate developer." He was in the Apple for what the paper called "two days of intensive courting of contributors." It talked of

meetings with financiers, real estate developers . . . executives of the Prudential Insurance Company . . . and with officials of such financial concerns as Goldman, Sachs & Company, Salomon Brothers, Morgan Stanley & Company, and Rothschild Inc.<sup>29</sup>

Later the paper listed Sydney Grusen, former vice-chairman of the *Times*, now a senior advisor over at Rothschild Inc., as one of his leading bankrollers.<sup>30</sup> Bill Broadhurst, jolly captain of the *Monkey Business*, was a major link to other big donors.

Next day's *Times* carried "Stalking the 1988 Money Hunters." It discussed candidates chasing donors. Again the key words were "real estate." There was "Calvin Guest," a Texas "real estate and banking executive . . . Nathan Landow, a real estate developer . . . Thomas B. Rosenberg, a Chicago real estate executive . . .

Stephen D. Moses, a Los Angeles real estate developer." Only two non-realtor names were mentioned: E. William Crotty, a Daytona Beach lawyer, and Nancy Kuhn, occupation not listed.<sup>31</sup>

Paul Simon, the Lutheran saint in bow-tie, blew into Gotham in May 1987. The *Times* had Kuhn as a key fund finder. Simon met Donald Trump, Republican who finances Democrats on an equal opportunity basis, and Arthur Krim, chairman of Orion Pictures. The self-proclaimed unreconstructed Roosevelt Democrat and friend of the worker met Edgar Bronfman, owner of Seagrams, and, with the family, larger stockholders than the Du Ponts in Du Pont, worth \$1.8 billion. He is also President of the World Jewish Congress.<sup>32</sup> In 1984, Simon was the beneficiary of the "independent" campaign spending of one Michael Goland, a Southern California real estate developer and Zionist, who laid out \$419,573 on advertisements against Simon's then opponent in the Illinois senatorial race. Goland spent more money in that race than any individual in America in any election that year except perhaps for candidates spending on themselves.<sup>33</sup>

Michael Dukakis eventually became the Democratic front runner, including financially. *The New York Times* of June 21, 1987, reported that, as of that date, 80% of his bucks came from within Massachusetts, of which he is governor. However, he does not rely on big donors alone. For years, he has had his supporters, often unions, organize small local fund-raisers where he meets his base. By 1987, he had 40,000 donors, two percent of Massachusetts' voters. Subsequently, the *Times* described his big in-state "investors" as "including top real estate executives who do business with the state."<sup>34</sup> According to *The New Republic*, aside from Hart and Biden, "only Dukakis" of the field "has won over many of the Hollywood money barons."<sup>35</sup> The writer was here referring to the liberals rather than to Los Angeles' Zionist contingent. But it must also be presumed that some Zionist mezuma also went to him, especially after Joe Biden's withdrawal from the race. The Greek governor has a Jewish wife, which actually is a negative for these Zionists, who always tend to see Americans as far more anti-Semitic than they are, and would fear that she might lose him some crucial votes. On the other hand, they are suckers for a demagogue. And Dukakis is either one of the greats of demagoguery or the stupidest fellow who has ever lived. In an interview that appeared in the December 1987 *Mother Jones*, only days before the Palestinian uprising on the West Bank and in



Gaza, this heavy thinker solemnly insisted that "Yeah, I think there can be peace in the Middle East without a homeland for the Palestinians."<sup>36</sup>

The Massachusetts donors are easy to explain. Some might even have thought he was the best candidate. But all of them knew he was governor of the state. If he won eventually, they would be with the winner. If he lost, that would be OK too. He would still be governor and could possibly reward them.

Additionally, Greeks "provided 20 percent of his money," at least until March 1988.<sup>37</sup> Most Greek-American businessmen were for good ol' Spiro Agnew, now they are for Dukakis. The only thing the two candidates had in common with them is their all being Greek. To grasp how naive they are, it must be appreciated that Jews would burst out laughing if anyone tried to get a political donation from them solely on the basis of being Jewish.

The August 21, 1987 *Wall Street Journal* reported Richard Gephardt claiming he raised 40% of his contributions from the South, definitely more than from any other region.<sup>38</sup> Tom Gaubert, Jim Wright's buddy, was one of his fund-raisers.<sup>39</sup> And Walter Shorenstein, one of the biggest of the California pro-Zionist real estate fund-raisers, was in Gephardt's camp. Bruce Babbitt's top fund-raiser was Richard Dennis, a Chicago commodity trader. But the *Times* still reported on September 1, 1987 that "about 90%" of his funds came "from Arizona or from people . . . who had done business with the state or previously given to Mr. Babbitt."<sup>40</sup> However, Joe Biden of Delaware received only nine percent of his donations from that state, compared to 37% from New York and 22% from California. I have no explanation as to why he did so poorly back in the land of corporate charters. But there is no problem as to why he was so big in New York and California: he is Israel uber alles.<sup>41</sup>

The *Times* of November 17, 1987 told us that Albert Gore of Tennessee received "nearly half" his bucks from his home state, with the South also being financial hunting grounds.<sup>42</sup> Nathan Landau, worth \$60 million, was his money-bag-in-chief. Landow was Mondale's biggest fund-raiser in 1984, getting him over \$2 million, and providing a jet.<sup>43</sup>

Jesse Jackson was the poorest of the magnificent seven. But even he had a few capitalist patrons, black cosmetics manufacturers whom he befriended when Revlon moved into the black cosmetics field. Jackson had his Operation PUSH declare a



boycott of Revlon until they hired more black managers. But basically Jackson put together his funds by getting individual donations, as from show biz folks like Margot Kidder, Kris Kristofferson, Quincy Jones, and retired baseball players. Bill Cosby helped out with two New York and Chicago theater fund-raisers, and Gladys Knight put on a concert in Los Angeles.

Pat Schroeder, formerly a Hart partisan from his home state of Colorado, announced that she would run, after his withdrawal, if she could raise the necessary funds. Eventually she decided that she couldn't come up with the bucks and pulled out. What little money she took in came almost exclusively from women, particularly from members of the National Organization of Women.

Could a woman ever win the Democratic nomination? And the Presidency? I think so. But Schroeder had several things going against her. She only decided to run after Hart's debacle, so people couldn't take her seriously as a candidate in her own right. By that time, most women activists in the party had already lined up behind some candidate and saw no reason to suddenly line up behind some Jenny-come-lately feminist candidate. But, of course, that was the only possible reason why anyone might have backed her, so her appeal to the liberals was minimal.

While the party might not be "of" the rich, the October 1987 stock market crash made it quite clear that it sure is "by" the rich and "for" the rich. Brian Sullam, a journalist for the *Baltimore Sun*, declares that "Although plump cat contributors to all campaigns number less than 50,000, they are responsible for about two-thirds of the total dollars Democrats raised."<sup>44</sup> The stock market crash of October 1987 put this into perspective. It sharply curtailed the amount of disposal income available to the upper middle class. But that didn't worry San Francisco broker Phil Schaefer, a Bear Stearns director and Dukakis fundraiser: "I'll go to the very rich—they still have money."<sup>45</sup>

Not only do they still have money, they also have two parties. Two more than the people of America have. At this writing, it was impossible to speculate, if you will excuse the word, as to the ultimate effect of the crash on party fund-raising. But some things were certain. For the most part, the regionalists would not fund the party when their local tiger lost the nomination. When Jackson lost, that was the end of black contributions. In the end, the crucial party money will come, as per usual, from the real estate folks, "the brokerage community," companies doing business

with Democratic controlled administrations at different levels, the Zionists and the PACs. Legally, we have public funding of presidential campaigns. But that is largely in the way of a joke. "Soft money" not required to be disclosed to the feds comes into both parties through a clause in the 1979 Fair Election Campaign Act changes. "Maxed out" donors to individual federal campaigns could give more money for "party building" or "non-federal accounts." The informed consensus is that Mondale took in more soft money than Reagan. Most came from rich contributors. Additional money is allowed into the parties for voter registration. If it looks like Dopey the Democrat will win in 1988, we will see registration tables on the corner in every slum in the land. Paid for by real estate men and brokers. Where else but in Amurica?

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## CHAPTER 8

# California, the Democrats' Golden State

A California Democratic politician may have a specific ideology, or he may espouse one popular with his constituents: Fattening their wallets are the prime considerations for most Democratic officeholders. And many indeed do quite well in their legislative years. In December 1986, *The California Journal* did a "sampling of long-time officeholders." It compared their 1975 and 1985 assets. The state's Fair Political Practices Commission requires them to list their wealth, but only in categories—\$1,000 to \$10,000, \$10,000 to \$100,000, over \$100,000, etc.

<i>Assembly</i>	<i>1975</i>	<i>1985</i>
Art Agnos	\$11,000 to \$110,000	\$310,000 to \$400,000
Tom Bane	\$11,000 to \$110,000	\$321,000 to \$510,000
Willie Brown	\$13,000 to \$130,000	\$343,000 to \$730,000
Peter Chacon	\$000	\$20,000 to \$200,000
Teresa Hughes	\$30,000 to \$3,000,000	\$102,000 to \$1,020,000
Alan Robbins	\$132,000 to \$420,000	Over \$800,000
David Roberti	\$000	\$10,000 to \$100,000
Hershal Rosenthal	\$51,000 to \$410,000	\$122,000 to \$320,000
John Vasconcellos	\$14,000 to \$140,000	\$3,000 to \$30,000
Frank Vicencia	\$1,000 to \$10,000	\$420,000 to \$600,000
Maxine Waters	\$40,000 to \$400,000	\$271,000 to \$910,000
Norman Waters	\$136,000 to \$460,000	\$307,000 to \$370,000

*Senate*

Ruben Ayala	\$11,000 to \$110,000	\$21,000 to \$210,000
Dan Boatwright	\$232,000 to \$520,000	\$301,000 to \$1,210,000
Paul Carpenter	\$2,000 to \$20,000	\$102,000 to \$1,020,000
Wadie Deddeh	\$36,000 to \$360,000	\$844,000 to \$1,240,000
Ralph Dills	\$122,000 to \$320,000	\$143,000 to \$530,000
John Garamendi	\$141,000 to \$510,000	\$240,000 to \$600,000
Bill Greene	\$12,000 to \$120,000	\$20,000 to \$200,000
Leroy Greene	\$20,000 to \$200,000	\$101,000 to 110,000
Gary Hart	\$10,000 to \$100,000	\$233,000 to \$530,000
Henry Mello	\$185,000 to \$950,000	\$1,025,000 to \$1,250,000
Joseph Montoya	\$2,000 to \$20,000	\$161,000 to \$710,000
Nicholas Petris	\$17,000 to \$370,000	\$658,000 to \$1,180,000
Robert Presley	\$21,000 to \$210,000	\$240,000 to \$600,000
Rose Ann Vuich	\$47,000 to \$470,000	\$250,000 to \$700,000

"Yet," reported the *Journal*, "without exception, they all say there would have been even more money to make had they not been saddled with the distractions of holding public office."<sup>1</sup> If you believe that, especially of *all* of them, you are an idiot. The *Journal*, which carefully follows state politics, bluntly says that "there might very well be financial opportunities for a lawmaker on the lookout."<sup>1</sup> A number of these fellows and gals, who all claim to be *sacrificing* themselves to the ungrateful herd, get gifts, as with Assembly Speaker Willie Brown, who received \$642 worth of wine in 1985, and over \$2,000 in theater tickets, at least; as with Louis Papan, who got free trips to China and Saudi Arabia from those governments; as with John Foran, who went on junkets to France, Germany, Switzerland, Australia and Iran.<sup>1</sup>

A lot of these folks are not only saintly, but are gifted speakers. The leading orator, or at least the best paid, was Willie Brown, with \$90,250 in 1986. Joe Montoya, chairman of the Senate Business and Professional Committee, pulled down \$47,000, more than his legislative salary, as did David Roberti with \$45,100. Others also found organizations eager to hear them below. But certainly not for favors, of course.

It is to be understood that these monies are over and above their \$37,105 salaries and their \$82.00 per diem allowances, state-owned cars, pensions, and other perks of their *part-time* legislative jobs. (They will get raises, in 1988 and 1989, to \$40,816, with an \$87.00 per diem.) We shall discuss some of the other ways some of the pols line their pockets, when we later deal

directly with corruption.

In order to enjoy the legislative good life, a deserving Democrat must first get elected, and then reelected. Some of them have discovered the magic pot of gold: get on a committee that generates campaign contributions from lobbyists who know a saint when they see one, and naturally enough want to help him. Assembly Finance and Insurance Committee members averaged \$346,942 in 1985–86, compared to a piddling \$193,756 for Veterans Committee members. Some Democrats got considerably more than the average. Former Assemblyman Papan got a tidy \$1,084,994. Tom Bane did not do badly at \$700,208.

Making money out of a legislative career need not stop after a politician leaves office. That's when he or she can become a member in good standing of "the third house." Lobbyists usually make more money than legislators, frequently more than \$100,000 per year. Former assemblyman John Knox continues to lobby, as did Bruce Young, about whom more below. George Zenovich, an ex-senator, teams up with a Republican ex. In 1986, they pulled down \$921,000 representing Exxon, Miller Brewing and others.

One of the more curious lobbyists is the legislature's own Washington lobbyist, Roscoe Dellums. Oops! Excuse me! "She is not supposed to do any lobbying whatsoever," said Willie's press secretary. The *San Francisco Chronicle* suggests that "eagerness to emphasize that she is not a lobbyist may stem conflict of interest suggestions." She is Representative Ron Dellums' wife. She would be lobbying him if—heaven forbid!—she were a lobbyist.

Whatever it is she does for a living, she gets paid rather nicely for it, at \$50,000 per year. But what in fact does she do for all that moola? The *Chronicle* wrote that

Having established what Dellums does not do, [Willie] Brown's staff has been hard-pressed to make her job sound like much more than a glorified and expensive clipping service.

Well then, why can't we just up and ask her exactly what it is she does to earn her 50 thou? But that would not be easy. Larry Liebert of the *Chronicle* reported that

Some California representatives in Washington privately say that



Dellums is all but invisible when it comes to important meetings and legislative hearings. She did not return repeated messages on her telephone answering machine requesting comments on her work.<sup>2</sup>

In writing this book, I called Dellums' office to find out what on earth his lobbyist wife does. And also to get his comments on the paper's badmouthing of her. I was told, by an aide, that he had no comment because, after all, in this modern feminist age, her relationship to the Assembly was her business, not his. All due respect to the celebrated liberal but, if my editor will let me say it, this is bullshit. Dellums is a voter in the State of California. He, just like everyone else, is supposed to be indignant if someone is sucking up \$50,000 in taxes and no one can explain what it is that person does to earn it. And, of course, there is the little reality that absolutely no one believes Willie Brown picked this incompetent for the job by sticking a pin in the white pages.

### **Just Tryin' to Do Good by Ol' Joe Sixpack**

A sign that the party is an increasingly dwindling minority within the ruling class is the fact that the 1984 nomination contenders raised more money in California than in New York.<sup>3</sup> The state party has several things going for it financially. It controls the legislature. Many businesses run by Republicans perforce must contribute to Democratic candidates in the pursuit of favorable legislation. Control of the legislature also means the power to gerrymander the state's congressional districts in their favor after each census. This compels these businesses to therefore invest in congressional Democrats as well. And the party controls the city halls of Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland and other cities.

California, particularly the Bay Area, has the largest anti-war movement of any state. Certainly most of those who attend such demonstrations are Democrats. The middle class among those who attend its rallies contribute funds, both nationally and locally. And, as we shall see, there are the ever present real estate givers. But, as far as the liberal wing of the party is concerned, Los Angeles is the Mecca to which they pray, not five but fifty times a day. Ronald Brownstein, writing in the Democratic *New Republic*, claims that "probably about two-thirds of the state's liberal

money comes out of the Los Angeles sprawl." He means "the affluent and fashionable Westside, from Hollywood to Beverly Hills to Santa Monica, the home of the city's entertainment and Jewish communities."<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, there are approximately 775,000 Jews in the state, 3.2% of the population, the second largest state-wide number in the country, with about 500,000 in the Los Angeles area and 75,000 in San Francisco, where they are circa 10% of the population.

It is to be understood that not all these Jews are Democrats, and not all Jewish Democrats are liberals, nor are all liberals Jews. Joan Kroc, of La Jolla, the widow of McDonald's founder, worth \$640 million, gave the party \$1 million in 1987, because of her opposition to Reagan's militarism. But all observers agree that it is primarily the Jews amongst the liberals who are the biggest contributors.

Two of California's black representatives, Dellums and Mervyn Dymally of Los Angeles, have reservations regarding Israel. Dellums never votes for arms to any middle eastern country. And Dymally has occasionally spoken out on behalf of the Palestinians. We will deal with this later, when we discuss the role of the black Democrats in general. But for now we will say this. As I write, the newspapers are full of stories and photos of Israeli soldiers breaking the hands of rioters on orders from their government. Yet I have not heard of *even one* elected white liberal Democrat calling for a reduction of U.S. aid to Israel, even by one penny.

### **"We the People"—Powerless in the Party of the People**

Blacks vote Democratic about 9 to 1, but they give virtually nothing to the party, not even to most black Democrats, with the exception of Jesse Jackson. Los Angeles Congressman Augustus Hawkins, the nation's senior black legislator, received 92% of his campaign contributions from PACs in 1986, getting only \$6,715 from non-PAC sources. Naturally, he claims that he can't get individual contributions from his high poverty area. The fact is he certainly could get much more than he does—if he did anything for his constituents. But of course, as with almost all of the Black Congressional Caucus, he is a do-nothing.

Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley ran for Governor in 1982,

losing a close contest. In April of 1986, when he ran again, the *Los Angeles Times* did a study of his contributors. In his years as mayor, he had built a network of minority contributors to his campaigns. But blacks still came to only nine percent of his donors in a state where they are seven percent of the population. And in fact the only reason why the black percentage was so high was that so few whites contributed to Bradley's losing campaign. Asians make up five percent of California's population, yet are nine percent of Democratic donors. Latinos are 21.6% of voting age Californians, but were only three percent of givers.

Bradley's opponent, George Deukmejian, the incumbent Republican, had already raised seven times as much as the hapless mayor. Under the circumstances, Bradley was reduced to his party's hardcore donors. Thus Jewish contributors were 34% of cash backers by religion, over ten times their percentage of the population of the state, with Catholics being 14% of donors and Protestants, black and white, 43%.<sup>4</sup> The *Times* described Frances Savitch, a lobbyist, as having been part of Bradley's "inner circle," as well as "liaison with downtown business interests and parts of the Jewish community."<sup>5</sup>

The paper means real estate vultures of course. Bradley's Community Redevelopment Agency "pushed through the building of downtown's high rises."<sup>6</sup> Real estate interests accounted for 24% of Bradley's donors. Financial concerns, bank and investment firms marketing government bonds, were 16%. Contributors who did business with Los Angeles or the state, or people who represented them, were 46% of Bradley's funders. Lawyers were nine percent. No less than 68% of his patrons made more than \$100,000 per year.<sup>7</sup>

It is not an accident that Bradley is financially so dependent on these rich elements outside the black community. There is absolutely no sane reason for an ordinary black to give him money. He emphasizes that he is a politician who happens to be black, rather than a black politician. In fact, on the national level, he is identified with the Democratic Leadership Council, mostly southern white hacks, whose stock in trade is an ill concealed belief that the party spends too much time courting black votes.

Bradley is so far to the right that he let himself be photographed by the *South African Digest*, in their January 7, 1983, issue, presenting the key to the city of Los Angeles to the South African Consul General. But hey, give a guy a break,



I presented the key and in the course of the conversation . . . I raised the objection that I have always had to the policy of apartheid. To receive an official with whom I disagree doesn't mean I embrace or endorse the policies of the government<sup>8</sup>

Or take a bribe to have his picture taken with an arch racist? Of course not! Except that Brownstein describes the morality of the Los Angeles Democratic Party perfectly: "Money defines Los Angeles' political culture; no one here can play a significant role in national politics without either raising it or giving it."<sup>9</sup> Even the real estate sleaze would likely privately call a black who posed with the South African consul a dark traitor, whether he did it for bucks or free, gratis and for nothin'. But if they had their druthers, they'd rather believe that at least he did it for money. Otherwise, they would have to live down giving their own bread to an idiot who didn't have the street smarts to pick up some odd change for his treachery. Surely they would tell him, even now, to go to the consul and get what's rightfully his.

As we see, Chicano influence in the California party is next to nil. If they are over a fifth of the population, they add up to only about 10% of the registered voters. It is possible to speculate that the party probably spends more money trying to get the vote of Latinos than it receives from all their communities.

Lesbian/gay Democrats, in San Francisco and West Hollywood, get funds from within their community, at least for local elections. But when Harry Britt, a gay member of the Frisco Board of Supervisors, the local city council, ran in a 1986 primary contest for a congressional seat, he had to go outside the community. Even though he had been one of two supervisors who had opposed harbor berthing rights for Israel's Zim Line on the grounds it directly merged with South Africa's Unicorn Line on the run to that country, he suddenly felt called upon to put an ad in the local Jewish community paper, defending Israel "against scapegoating in the international arena."<sup>10</sup> Us Democrat-watchers are a hardened lot. But even we get embarrassed as someone loses all self-respect in the insane pursuit of campaign funds.

### **Cranston: To the Incumbent Belongs the Spoils**

Tom Bradley and Alan Cranston represent opposite ends of the Democratic spectrum in respect to funds. Cranston was an

incumbent candidate for Senate in 1986. Just before the election, he released a list of 130 business people who supported him. Among them were Marvin Davis, a Jewish oil billionaire, who had fulfilled every A-murican boy's dream and used some of his change to buy 20th Century-Fox so he could throw wild parties; Mrs. Kroc; Peter and Walter Haas of Levi Strauss Co., the world's largest apparel manufacturers, worth \$900 million; winemaker Ernest Gallo, worth \$350 million; his competitors, Louis Martini and Robert Mondavi, Barron Hilton, chairman of Hilton Hotels, and Michael Eisner, chairman of Walt Disney Productions. In the end, his campaign, the most expensive in Senate history, cost an incredible \$13 million.

Over 15 years, 1972 through June 1987, he had received \$2,606,585 from Political Action Committees. This was the second largest amount of PAC money received by any member of Congress in that period. As a Democrat, he got some of that from union PACs. But this friend o' da woikin' man also did right well in terms of donations from business. He is a member of the Senate's Banking Committee. In 1985-86, he received \$240,150 from banking PACs, more than any other candidate in the country.<sup>11</sup>

Even an incumbent Democrat has to do something for big business before they fork over their cash. Cranston is a standard kit liberal. His mouth never stops about the need for a nuclear freeze. It is a vague proposal that would still leave the U.S. and the USSR with thousands of warheads. This is scarcely radical, but it is sufficient to get votes out of gullible peaceniks. But California has by far the biggest defense sector of any state, 17% of the national industry, and they got something specific from the great liberal: his vote for the B-1 bomber. Additionally, according to *The New York Times*, the distinguished champion of the people "won the support of many business leaders by advocating tax laws and other measures they liked."<sup>12</sup>

It is obvious that Cranston is by no means dependent on pro-Zionist money. But that hardly means that he doesn't get it. He is "the Senator from Israel." The only time this writer has ever seen him criticize Israel was immediately after the 1982 Sabra and Shatilla massacre. But even that was only for an instant, and the Zionists understood he had to join the then universal outcry. In 1986, he ran against Ed Zschau, who had occasionally criticized

Israel as a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. In classic demagogic style, Zschau tried to make the lobby forgive and forget by taking pro-Zionist stands during the campaign itself. But they were not about to abandon Cranston. According to the *Jerusalem Post*

Much Jewish money, therefore, went to Cranston, a down-the-line supporter who had often led the fight in the Senate against administration-backed arms sales to "moderate" Arab states . . . Republican and Democratic politicians across the country have come to really respect—even fear—the fund-raising and managerial clout of the American Jewish community.<sup>13</sup>

Cranston took in \$182,982 from pro-Israel PACs in 1985–86, the second largest recipient in the country.<sup>14</sup> One Zionist, Michael Goland, a Los Angeles real estate mogul, did more than just give money. A right-wing crackpot, Edward Vallens, was also running for the Senate seat on the American Independent Party ticket. The party has barely staggered on since Wallace abandoned it to go back into the Democratic Party. But suddenly, in October 1986, Vallens got a call saying that some very conservative Republicans were dissatisfied with Zschau and were putting up \$120,000 for ads for Vallens. Vallens ended up making commercials that ran 60 times in right-wing areas.

Of course the *Los Angeles Times* found out that conservative Republicans had nothing to do with the ads. It discovered that two donors worked for firms dominated by Goland, another lived in a house owned by him. One donor was a treasurer of a pro-Israel PAC with Goland as his assistant. There is no proof that Cranston had anything to do with the deception. Goland operates as an independent so as to beat the campaign contribution limitation laws, which allow unlimited expenditures if they are not under the control of a candidate's campaign. On the other hand, there is no doubt the stunt was part of a systematic Zionist conspiracy to help him in an underhanded way.

Breck McKinley, the Libertarian Party candidate in that election, says he was also approached by three members of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee staff. They offered to get him a campaign manager and finance a direct mail campaign in right-wing Orange County. Eventually he decided to turn down



the offer. When the *Wall Street Journal* tried to talk to the three staffers for a 1987 article, they never responded to the paper's phone calls.<sup>15</sup>

### Liberalism—Such As It Is These Days

"The last machine," indeed "the most powerful Democratic machine in the country," at least according to Fred Barnes, writing in *The New Republic*, is the Waxman-Berman Beverly Hills grouping. Money pours in to Congressmen Henry Waxman and Howard Berman "from the well-heeled, heavily Jewish electorate in the middle-to-upper-class bagel boroughs." The machine pushes two things: "liberal causes" and "support for Israel."<sup>16</sup> "Prodigious amounts are raised," then circulated around the state and elsewhere, including to members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, who then in gratitude gave Waxman the chairmanship of its health subcommittee. "Much of it" comes "from honchoes in the entertainment industry."<sup>16</sup>

The key show biz money man, according to the *Los Angeles Times*, is Stanley Sheinbaum, who is married to Betty Warner, daughter of Harry Warner of Warner Bros. How important is he? One day, he was in an airport with a congressman. Jesse Jackson saw the politician, came over and got down on one knee before him. Then he recognized Sheinbaum. "Both knees for you, Stanley."<sup>17</sup> He is a regent of the giant University of California complex, nominally an economist. But his real job is fund-raising for Democratic politicians and liberal causes. He is the prime link between "the fervent issues activists" like the American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Southern California, for which he was chief fund-raiser until 1982, "and the establishment politicians he hosted at elegant fund-raisers."<sup>17</sup>

Sheinbaum sees himself on the left wing of the party, as opposed to "the Lew Wassermans of this world," a reference to the chairman of the Music Corporation of America, worth \$325 million, one of the 400 richest Americans, and an establishment party fund-raiser. In May 1986, Sheinbaum refused to go to a fund-raising bash organized by Representative Tony Coelho of the state's 15th Congressional district and chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee:

I consider Tony Coelho to be symbolic of the worst kind of

activities that have the Democratic Party in a terrible place these days. There is no doubt that all Democrats—especially office holders—think the name of the game is campaign dollars. Tony Coelho . . . in so doing, is clearly making Democratic office holders increasingly dependent on money that comes from conservative sources.<sup>17</sup>

He tells another story about a fund raiser he attended in New York, a movie premiere with a dinner afterwards, in a tent in the theater parking lot. Sure enough there was a 10-foot wide red carpet for the guests to walk on from the show to the tent.

The problem was that hundreds, possibly a thousand, stood on the outside of this pathway, and I literally was reminded of the French Revolution.<sup>17</sup>

For all his lamentations about how the party is moving right, there are no small limitations on Sheinbaum's own liberalism. According to Ronald Brownstein in the *Los Angeles Times*:

Sheinbaum's independence is bounded by his need to belong. His relationship with Los Angeles' powerful Jewish community is instructive: Because of his outspoken belief that Israel must cede territory to the Arab states as part of a peace agreement, Sheinbaum has frequently been at odds with organized Jewish groups . . . But he will only go so far afield. When asked which of the current Democratic leaders most closely reflects his thinking, Sheinbaum says quickly, "Jesse Jackson" . . . Yet Sheinbaum has not endorsed Jackson . . . "The Jewish community," he says, "would not understand that. They would consider me a traitor to the Jewish people. And that would bother me."<sup>17</sup>

We know from Margaret Truman's book on her father how eager the party hacks have always been to pander to the Zionist prejudices of their rich Jewish contributors. If we know this, Sheinbaum, with his intimate knowledge of the party mores, knows it better. Yet, although he opposes the policies of his party, which arms Israel to the teeth, still he raises money for it, not least from those pro-Zionist Jews who abhor his scruples on the Middle East. We can only say that there is a proverb: If you run with the pack, you need not bark. But wag your tail you must.

Others in the liberal "Malibu Mafia" are Norman Lear and

Max Palevsky. Lear, who got the nut of his \$225 million writing TV comedy, likes to have "elite dinners for presidential candidates and westside donors . . . at his home."<sup>17</sup> But increasingly he is putting his efforts into his People for the American Way. Max Palevsky made his \$200 million in computers. He was heavy into McGovern but now is more mainstream than Sheinbaum. He supported Carter in 1980 while Sheinbaum broke ranks and backed the hopeless Anderson effort.

Brownstein wrote of disillusionment setting in amongst these liberal Diveses. They were always on-the-reservation liberals, but they are now confronted with the fact that their party is openly abandoning its populist pretensions as Coelho and his ilk stalk mainstream capitalist money. What is more, their rich Jewish sources like it that way. They were still politically liberal, all for abortion, a nuclear freeze and a cut off of aid to the Contras. But they are increasingly right-wing economically. Sheinbaum remarks that "My Beverly Hills liberal friends think the Republican tax reform plan is too left-wing."<sup>18</sup>

As these quondam progressives meld into the mainstream of their class, Israel becomes more important to them than domestic reform. Palevsky declares

That intense instinct that Jews have about what is good for them used to mean that Jews backed liberal candidates intuitively; what was good for the Jews meant civil rights and a society without intense social warfare. In Southern California today, a lot of the money that used to be normal Jewish do-gooder money has a string.<sup>18</sup>

Chief among the more Zionist oriented Los Angeles fund-raisers is Rosalind Wyman, a movie industry executive, and chairwoman of the party's 1984 national convention planning committee. But there are others who raise funds from establishment elements, Jewish and non-Jewish, and who combine both the turn towards a more intensive Jewish mentality with the more general turn towards the right. Irvin Kipnes, chairman of a Downey, California, aluminum company, is a leading member of Impac '88. As Fred Werthheimer, president of Common Cause, says, "they appear to be interested in restoring the fat-cat rich contributors to a disproportionate influence in the Democratic Party."<sup>19</sup> That is certainly Kipnes' intention. He was head of the



national party's Business Council and recalls a 1984 meeting with Mondale:

Several of us said, "Fritz, quit knocking the rich; they're financing your campaign." Mondale replied, "Oh my goodness, I'm so sorry. There's nothing wrong with wanting to be rich. I want to be rich."<sup>20</sup>

Kipnes and his Council were crucial in getting the party to call for an increase in defense spending in the 1984 election.

For the first time in 20 years, the Democrats were not beaten over the head on the defense issue. I take some pride in that. The defense contractor members of our Business Council worked very hard on that. So we had some real insider knowledge and input on the defense issue.<sup>21</sup>

There is even a Coelho creation called the Council for a Secure America, which even the rabidly pro-Zionist and Democratic *New Republic* called

a grotesque alliance between Jewish supporters of Israel and Texas oil wildcatters, based on the dubious premise that more tax breaks for domestic oil drillers will punish the Arabs.<sup>22</sup>

There is no Zionist party line in America. The Zionists differ as to what they think is good for Israel. But the candidate most preferred by Southern California's Zionist moneybags was Senator Joseph Biden, Jr., of Delaware. Jonathan Kessler, student director for AIPAC, became his youth director. S. Harrison Dogole, a Philadelphia fund-raiser for Biden, is on AIPAC's national advisory council. Before Biden was exposed in September 1987 as America's premier plagiarist, he led the "seven dwarfs" in California fund-raising. According to the *San Francisco Examiner*, "contributors, primarily in the Hollywood entertainment industry, have contributed \$700,000 to his campaign, the most of any Democratic candidate."<sup>23</sup>

### **The Biggest of the Big**

By far, the most important San Francisco Democrat is Walter Shorenstein, chairman of the 1988 state campaign committee.

According to the 1987 *Forbes* magazine listing of the 400 richest Americans, he is worth \$350 million. Nationally, his Milton Mayer & Co. owns approximately four million square feet of office space and manages another 10 million, worth between \$2.5 and \$3 billion. He controls about 30% of San Francisco's prime office space. When he bought that city's Bank of America complex in 1985 for \$660 million, it was history's greatest real estate deal.

Shorenstein was raised in a Long Island suburb of New York City. His uncle was a power in the Brooklyn Democratic machine. Although he came from a well to do family of clothing store owners, he made his fortune after World War II as a salesman for Mayer, then already a heavy hitter in Frisco's realty world, and eventually ended up dominating the firm after Mayer's death. Then he went into the development end of real estate, with Ben Swig, another multi-millionaire Jewish Democrat.

By 1852, there were 10,000 Jews in gold rush San Francisco. Some of their descendants are among the elite families of the city. These Jews tend not to be very religious, but their Jewishness is an "old boy" network for them, which they brought into the party and realty business. With his eastern party connections, Shorenstein fit right in, even though he didn't arrive until 1946, in his early 30s.

In June 1987, the party honored him with a dinner. *The New York Times* candidly described the affair:

Few events in recent months have more effectively conveyed the dependency of political candidates on major campaign fund-raisers than Mr. Shorenstein's party . . . party members were open, if a trifle defensive about this fundamental fact of life . . . "The candidates are all here on bended knee, that's what it's all about" . . . (ex-Governor Bruce) Babbitt (of Arizona) said . . . "If he wants you to come, you should come," (Representative Richard) Gephardt said.<sup>2</sup>

Shorenstein is not exactly modest in his evaluation of his power in the party. "I don't like to use the word 'force' . . . But it was in everyone's interest that they appear here." Time once was when he would just whip out his check book for Humphrey and give him \$100,000. Nowadays, the spoil sports restrict individual contributors to a candidate's campaign to \$1,000. But, related the *Times*,

One of the . . . consequences of the campaign finance laws . . . is that they have made fund-raisers like . . . Shorenstein more important . . . than ever . . . the party depends on men and women who can use their business contacts to get others to put up \$500 or \$1,000, even when the contributors may not even have much interest in politics.<sup>24</sup>

This is easy to understand, isn't it? When Mr. Downtown San Francisco asks a businessman for a piddling thou, the latter would have to be an idiot—or else have some serious ideological objection to the party—not to hand it over in the expectation that the favor might be reciprocated in the future. The paper went on:

Some Democrats have expressed uneasiness about a party that lays a special claim to the allegiance of the downtrodden while it is dependent on the generosity of wealthy friends. Critics . . . argue that the party has become too financially dependent on certain wealthy groups, notably real estate developers.<sup>24</sup>

The *San Francisco Examiner* also discussed the party bash. It asked the most powerful individual in the Democratic city why he remained in a party that claims to be the party of the common people.

I grew up in the atmosphere of the Depression and the advent of Hitler. FDR had a real message, whereas the Republicans belonged to the country clubs. Jews knew there was no place for them in the Republican Party. To me, the Republicans were always anti: anti-Jewish, anti-social reform, anti-civil rights. It's awfully easy for me to be a Democrat, and I've always felt business did better under Democratic administration.<sup>25</sup>

In spite of his rhetoric about social reform and civil rights, Shorenstein is no liberal. He was a crucial fund-raiser for the murderous Humphrey but didn't lift a finger for McGovern because he thought the latter too left on defense. A gung ho attitude towards Israel is a plus in his eyes. It makes it easier for him to hustle bucks from his rich Jewish friends. In 1974, he was interviewed by Stephen Isaacs for his book, *Jews and American Politics*:

They want to know whether he's a good man, one that they can



relate to, and the fact that he's been good to Israel, has a strong record on Israel, is indictative to the person that he is one that they should really support and be considerate of.<sup>26</sup>

It isn't difficult to understand Shorenstein. He starts with a strong familial tie to the party. He grew up at a time when the vast majority of Jews, including businessmen, were unquestioning Democrats. Does he now finally grasp that Roosevelt did nothing to lift the immigration barriers that kept out German-Jewish refugees in the 1930s? Or that FDR did nothing to help rescue Jews during the Holocaust? It scarcely matters. For two reasons. First, like any Democrat in good standing, he would quickly tell you that, even if this is true, the Republicans would have been just as bad or worse. Secondly, his emotional ties to the party were set in that past, when he wasn't thinking about such questions.

Shorenstein is not for Israel because of any positive actions of that government. For him, as with many Jews of his generation, it is sufficient that it is Jewish. However, he would no more think of living there, as Zionist ideology would require, than on the moon. He simply grew up in a period when Jews were victims of anti-Semitism, not for anything they did, but simply because they were Jews. Hence his Jewish identity is defensive and uncritical. Jews live in a world of wolves, he would say. They are allowed to be—indeed must be—likewise wolves. Besides, given his zeal for such American wolves as Johnson and Humphrey and Mondale, why would anyone expect him to take umbrage at Zionism's crimes?

It is because he thinks "business did better under Democratic administrations" that he stays with the party. He has seen many rich friends go over to the Republicans. But certainly Democratic administrations haven't stopped him from getting rich, and staying so. Indeed, many Democratic programs kept up the standard of living in cities like San Francisco and, ultimately, kept up the value of his property.

The larger significance of Shorenstein's comments about a candidate's attitude on Israel being a litmus test for him and his pals—people like Frisco's Mel Swig, also an active Democrat (with his brother and brother-in-law worth about half a billion in real estate), lies in the reality of the party's financial dependence on them. One non-Jewish Democrat told Isaacs, "You can't hope

to go anywhere in national politics, if you're a Democrat, without Jewish money."<sup>27</sup> Similarly, sociologist G. William Domhoff, in his 1972 *Fat Cats and Democrats*, wrote that "a Democratic presidential hopeful must be acceptable to the Jews and the Cowboys (Texas oil men) or forget about winning."<sup>28</sup>

These donors don't have a distinctly Jewish domestic agenda. Their Jewish veto goes no further than on the Middle East. Yet their patronage does have indirect domestic implications. The party is dependent on these rich Jews because its candidates are incapable of generating funds from the common people they profess to defend from the Republicans. "What you put into your kettle comes back afterwards into your spoon." In the end they are a whole nickel better for the working people. And that's what they get back from them, if that. However, it must be stressed that the party's systematic pandering to Jewish chauvinism and wealth is a symptom of its class character and its concomitant weaknesses, not its cause. Far from being dominated by any kind of Jewish conspiracy, the party is wide open. To be sure, varying interests scheme. But they are in general agreement as to the public image they wish for it. The Democratic Party is the nice cop of American capitalism. Now there is no room for such a party and it has entered into terminal crisis, quite regardless of whether it wins in 1988.

### **The "Little Black Kid Who Learned How to Count" and His Friends**

California now has the nation's—if not the world's—most expensive elections. Given the Democrats' inability to match the Republicans' business contributions, and their total incapacity to raise sufficient money from the ordinary people they do little for, it was inevitable they would slide backwards into corruption.

Historically, California politics were notoriously corrupt. The Southern Pacific railroad dominated the legislature. San Francisco was in the hands of "paint eaters," men so greedy it was said they would eat paint off the walls. But in recent decades, the state developed a reputation for relatively honest politics. That day is irrevocably over.

The center of the most important contemporary scandal was W. Patrick Moriarty, an Orange County businessman who pled guilty in 1985 to charges of corrupting politicians. He is serving time

and has turned state's evidence. He owned a firecracker company, and one of his goals was to get a state law prohibiting cities from outlawing "safe" crackers, leaving that option to the state government. But he was also into poker parlors, legal in some California cities, cable franchises and, of course, real estate. Governmental decisions effected his interests. To make a long story short, he and confederates bribed politicians, provided \$750,000 in whores, cars and vacation homes, made business deals with them, hired relatives, and contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to campaigns, much of it laundered.

Moriarty contributed \$75,000 to Mayor Bradley and 10 Los Angeles council members. About \$32,000 was laundered cash given by Moriarty fronts. The pols say they had no idea anything was wrong. But Moriarty's operations were too blatant to think they didn't know what was going on. He hired Phil Krakover, described by the *Los Angeles Times* as "considered to be one of city hall's most powerful lobbyists."<sup>29</sup> Krakover independently contributed over \$260,000 to Los Angeles politicians in a five year period. Unless you think he has a mad passion for providing L.A. with the best politicians money can buy, you have to think he was doing it for others. Moriarty hired Harvey Englander, campaign manager for Councilman Howard Finn. He provided honest toil for Peter Lynch, another donor to council members, and Jack McGrath, former campaign manager for Councilman Zev Yaroslavsky.

Finn first told reporters he never met Moriarty. Then he admitted Englander put them together. The meeting "slipped his mind."<sup>29</sup> They discussed a dump Moriarty wanted to build in Finn's district. The *Times* reported that "one week before Moriarty applied for a permit . . . he gave a \$4,000 contribution" to honest Howie "at Englander's suggestion."<sup>29</sup> Eventually Finn opposed the landfill and returned some Moriarty cash. But only after what Finn admits was "negative publicity" became public about Moriarty.

Moriarty's partner, Richard Keith, says they provided prostitutes for Councilman David Cunningham and gave him \$11,500 in laundered funds. Cunningham denies this, but he can't deny his wife's \$30,000 job at a Moriarty condo project.

Moriarty didn't stop at city councilmen. In 1987, his protege, ex-Assemblyman Bruce Young, was convicted under a federal mail fraud statute for concealing income from Moriarty and a



cable outfit. By this time Moriarty was in the slammer. Hoping for an early out, he testified against Young. He explained how he made "2 for 1" offers to politicians, taking \$50,000 from each, "investing" it, returning \$100,000 later. Moriarty testified he helped then Assembly Democratic Majority Leader Mike Roos get a \$50,000 bank loan secured by campaign funds. Moriarty invested the \$50,000.

Moriarty wasn't happy testifying against Young and his political friends. But the July 11, 1985, *Los Angeles Times* reported he

was shown a letter on the stationery of then-Assemblyman Young, saying that Assembly Speaker Willie Brown wanted contributions given to a number of political figures. Moriarty said the document jogged his memory and acknowledged contributions had been made to those named.<sup>30</sup>

When Brown was asked about the confessed briber's testimony, he said he didn't "recall" telling Young to hit up Moriarty.

I wouldn't request that funneled money . . . I do not under any circumstances (seek) funneled money as such. I do not ask individual members to solicit funds from people they're carrying bills for. If I want to solicit from the people, I do. I did solicit contributions from Pat Moriarty. I received contributions from Pat Moriarty. And, I reported them.<sup>31</sup>

Young is appealing. Shortly after his conviction, the US Supreme Court limited the use of the mail fraud statute and the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported that lawyers thought the case would have to be dismissed on appeal

state legislators whose names were linked to Young's during the . . . probe of Moriarty are expressing relief over the ruling, several Sacramento observers noted.<sup>32</sup>

The statute had been upheld in previous political corruption cases. But the court finally ruled that Congress meant it to only apply where real loss of money occurred, not the loss of "intangible rights" as the people's right "to have public officials perform their duties honestly." This will surely make no sense to foreign readers. But Americans are used to their government sending racketeers to jail for opening a cigarette pack at the wrong end

and not breaking the tax stamp. Of course, we have no legitimate right to complain if the court finally decided that these kinds of prosecutions are improper. But every American with a speck of brains knows that if these laws are stricken, that does not mean that the accused are innocents. The fact still remains that the *Los Angeles Times* reported that "according to associates," Moriarty and Young had a "father-and-son" relationship.<sup>33</sup> Nor is there doubt that Roos, now speaker pro-tem, used campaign funds as collateral for a loan which he gave to Moriarty, getting double back in 14 months. Nor is there doubt Roos' father invested \$100,000 in a Moriarty poker club.

Nor is there any doubt that Brown used all of his power in 1987 to get a bill passed keeping the files of the state's Fair Political Practices Commission closed. One of his henchmen, Assemblyman Frank Vicencia, had failed to report that he had sold insurance to a Moriarty owned poker club. The FPPC had whitewashed the whole affair and the San Jose *Mercury-News* wanted access to its files. Brown cynically said the bill was

designed to keep you (reporters) at bay when irresponsible accusers lodge unfounded charges at people whose careers could be damaged by virtue of irresponsible reporting.<sup>34</sup>

We would agree except there is no doubt Vicencia sold insurance to Moriarty and didn't report it. The FPPC allowed William Cavala, a Brown aide, to sit in on discussions with Vicencia. A Cavala memo conceded Vicencia failed to disclose no less than 15 income sources. But the FPPC decided these were innocent errors. Except that Moriarty's employee, John Murphy, told of Vicencia and Moriarty meeting before SB 999, the bill banning local firecracker prohibition, got to the Assembly floor. Moriarty told Murphy to insure the club without bids from other agencies. Murphy is certain their meetings "had to do with political maneuvering . . . on Bill 999. I'm sure that was the reason he was there . . . They weren't fishing buddies."<sup>35</sup>

Despite this, the FPPC decided Vicencia hadn't listed 15 income sources because he listened to bad legal advice from his staff. It issued a warning to him. The *Mercury-News* wouldn't go for the deal. It took two years of court action, but it finally got into those files.

Willie Brown, ringleader of the latter-day paint eaters, was a

young civil rights lawyer back in the early 1960s when I met him. He believes people should have rights, as befits a worldling. For him the world is an equal opportunity fleshpot. This "little black kid who learned how to count" was interviewed in 1984 by *The New York Times*. How many \$1,000 to \$1,800 Italian Brioni suits did he own? "I'm embarrassed. I suppose less than 50 and more than 30."<sup>36</sup> He's fond of fast women, fast cars and raises horses. People know what he likes. He got \$40,378 in gifts in 1986. Things like limo service, trips to London and Vienna, liquor, food and tickets to everything.<sup>37</sup> He really is a funny speaker. But the Assembly Speaker getting \$90,250 for amusing the California Retailers Association and other business outfits is no laughing matter. Most American journalists agree with John Oakes on dishonorariums.<sup>38</sup> The burden of proof is on takers to show they are not taking bribes.

Willie is the biggest fund-raiser for California's Democratic legislators. "Transferring" millions to other legislators, he is the most powerful Democrat in the state. That brings law business from the Southern Pacific, the biggest landowner in the state, Neiman Marcus' San Francisco department store, Gerald Hines the developer, Resorts International gambling casinos, and others dealing with politicians in California and elsewhere.

But not to worry. He has retained his political purity. In the best Democratic Party style, he is foursquare for public campaign financing. No way will Willie kid ya and defend the present system. It's 'em nasty Republicans that vote against public financing and the governor who vetoes reform. Yeah. Except that the state also has popular initiatives on the ballot. Most of the major papers are for electoral reform. If the party mobilized the public for reform, it would win. But, while with one brain lobe they see themselves as perpetual losers in the cash race, with the other they hunt contributions in the here and now. Realistically, their incumbents do too well under the present system to ever seriously fight it.

Meanwhile A. Alan Post, for 30 years the prestigious chief legislative analyst for the state, who even Brown says has impeccable credentials, feels legislative influence buying is "worse than I've ever seen it" since the 1930s. "It's effecting everybody. It permeates the entire system."<sup>39</sup>



### **"I Certainly Don't Want to Cheat the Government or Anybody Else"**

San Francisco is so much of a Democratic town that some of the leading Republicans in the city abandoned their party as a non-starter in local affairs. "Frisco" is not as corrupt as Los Angeles, at least not in the sense that there is any one person handing out dough on the scale of a Moriarty. But money always talks in the gold rush city.

There were three main candidates, all Democrats, in the 1987 Mayoralty race. The leading fund-raiser was Supervisor John Molinari, a former Republican. The *Chronicle* wrote that he had "scooped up cash from real estate brokers, builders, lobbyists, lawyers and recipients of city contracts and franchise holders."<sup>40</sup>

Frequently, they tried to hide their role. Molinari received \$7,500 from 15 individuals and subsidiaries of Grosvenor Properties, a real estate outfit which runs the Gray Line bus tours and which wants the school bus contract.<sup>41</sup> Shorenstein money was also funneled through eight different family members or businesses.

Molinari's family was in garbage, one of the best ways to get rich. And, would you believe that he received contributions from 28 trash collectors? In fact, the state opened up an investigation of Westencon Corp., an Oregon firm that did nothing but make contributions to politicians. It gave \$100,000 in six years to Frisco politicians, including three of the mayoral candidates, with Molinari being the company's favorite. Under California law, setting up an intermediary to disguise a money source is illegal. Candidates have a duty to investigate contributions to make sure they are legal.

But surely you see that this was all honest. Sunset Scavenger's ex-president said Sunset and Golden Gate Disposal set up the out-of-state outfit because Oregon tax laws allow a higher deduction of such donations as business expenses than California. Except that Westencon didn't disclose the source of its contributions. But, not to worry. "There was no question in my mind," said the former head of Sunset, "that the candidates knew the donations were coming from Sunset, Golden Gate and their subsidiaries."<sup>42</sup>

There can be little doubt the candidates knew who was forking over the payola. But, of course, the point of the law was to make

that clear to the public. At any rate, we find that in 1985 Molinari's aide, Dennis Collins, lobbied for Browning Ferris Industries on behalf of a dump site plan while it was before Molinari and the supervisors. That same year, Molinari opposed a proposal to build a Redwood City garbage-fueled power plant that was bitterly opposed by Sunset and Golden Gate. The compliant city attorney ruled there was no conflict in any of this for Molinari or Collins. In 1986, Molinari received over \$3,000 from Westencon while the supervisors were discussing landfills. So it is hardly surprising that in six months of 1987, election year, honest John picked up 99 contributions from trash firms.

Another candidate, Roger Boas, the former city chief administrative officer, took in bucks from a list of 1,350 contributors that the *Chronicle* said "reads like an insider's guide to San Francisco business and social life."<sup>43</sup> The usual suspects were all there. Steven Bechtel, the construction multi-millionaire; the Pacific Stock Exchange; Paine Webber; Wells Fargo Bank; and discount stock broker Charles Schwab.

But the ultimate winner was liberal Assemblyman Art Agnos, crony of the estimable Speaker. Now, if that should make you a mite suspicious, you might jus' be right. Because—would you believe?—right after the *Chronicle* raised a few pointed questions about his income, Agnos announced a little oversight. He hadn't paid taxes on \$65,000 in 1983–84.

It was a mistake. When I found out about it, I said, "How in the hell could we do such a thing?" But the important thing is we found it, and it is corrected now. I certainly don't want to cheat the government or anybody else.<sup>44</sup>

Why are you laughing? The \$65,000 involved a deal with Sacramento developer Angelo Tsakopolous, Agnos' best friend. The FPPC is suing former Sacramento County Supervisor William Bryan for \$3 million. Agnos' best friend was named as the "true source" of \$250,000 in loans to Bryan. The charge is that Bryan voted to rezone some of the developer's land to make it more profitable. Bryan resigned after the suit. Later, a Sacramento businessman was indicted for perjury regarding his part in the money-laundering aspects of the affair. Tsakopolous was subpoenaed by a grand jury in the perjury matter. However, they did not ask for his testimony after he announced he would

take the Fifth Amendment against self-incrimination.<sup>45</sup>

Tsakopolous and Agnos' scam was to buy cheap land zoned for open space or farmland, but near growing urban areas. Tsakopolous would then contribute to politicians in the region. Then he would ask for zoning changes that would allow him to build condos. That's how Bryan got into the act.

The \$65,000 was from the sale of land in the rezoned acreage. Agnos bought the land for \$4,500 borrowed from Tsakopolous. He sold it five years later to George Tsakopolous. Agnos netted \$171,000 in Tsakopolous hustles, which gave him \$80,371 in tax write-offs. He received \$185,000 in loans over 10 years from his fellow Greek. By the end of the 1987 campaign, Tsakopolous was Agnos's biggest contributor. The *Chronicle* traced \$32,666 to the developer, his relatives and companies and individuals doing work with him.

Things were so clear that the most eminent of lesser evilists among the local journalists, Tim Redmond of the *Bay Guardian*, had to rush to his rescue:

Which leaves us with a choice . . . Would we rather have a mayor who has a long, consistent record of taking tough stands against the landlord, big business and developer lobbies at home but has made some questionable deals of his own in Sacramento—or a mayor who we know damn well will continue down the path of ruin Dianne Feinstein (the sitting mayor) has trod over the past nine years? It's not the cleanest choice. But . . . at least it's a real one.<sup>46</sup>

Redmond was at least half right. Agnos was no clean choice. But neither was he a real one. He had to go into a second round run off against Molinari and, of course, the first thing that he did was move to the right, openly courting the business element, winning the endorsement of Maurice Mann, president of the Pacific Stock Exchange. By the end of the electoral process, Agnos received \$100,000 from what the *Chronicle* called "development interests," i.e., architects, construction companies, real estate firms. These gave 18.2% of the largest contributions to this self-styled friend of the tenant.<sup>47</sup>

Redmond is simply another crackpot realist. The liberals don't really have a program for fundamental social change, for all their rhetoric against the Republicans. Rent control is important. But even if there was wall-to-wall rent control in the U.S., from



Maine to California, the rich would still be the rich, the poor the poor. Once again, for the umpteenth bazillionth time, the liberals' lesser evilism has led them into tolerating evil, even when it stares them in the face.

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## CHAPTER 9

# New York City and State and the “Culture of Corruption”

New York Democratic Party corruption goes back to the earliest years of the Society of St. Tammany. William Mooney established it on May 12, 1789, within days of Washington's first inauguration. After the Revolution, the city's rich supported the Society of the Cincinnati, a new hereditary order of ex-military officers with Hamiltonian, even monarchist, tendencies. Mooney wanted a native and democratic movement, so he named his organization after a legendary Delaware chief, Tammanend, noted for his wisdom and love of liberty.

Many Americans attribute the origins of their country's notorious urban corruption to the waves of 19th century immigrants. In fact, it was deeply rooted by the time they first made their presence felt. With Aaron Burr at its head until he killed Alexander Hamilton in 1804, the Society rapidly degenerated. By 1806, the city's Controller, the Superintendent of the Almshouse and the Bread Inspector were removed from office for their chicaneries. But Tammany Hall was still the power in the city when hundreds of Irish had to storm it on April 24, 1817, to force it to incorporate them into the party.

The basis of early plebian American grafting seems to be the absence of the entrenched aristocratic foes facing the lower orders in Europe at that time. The struggles there kept the tribunes of the people honest, or relatively so, in comparison to here after the



easy defeat of the Federalists. These last were certainly dead-end 18th century Tories. But they were absolutely right in their distrust of the ignorant masses of their day. New York's granting of virtually universal white male franchise (blacks had to be freeholders), in 1821, was inevitable. But it did nothing to genuinely reform civil life during the early industrial revolution in America.

Certainly the greatest of the classic corrupt machine bosses was William Tweed, whose plunderers stole between \$45 million and \$200 million. That's not chicken feed today, but those were staggering sums in the 1860s. Tweed actually died in prison but most of the ring kept their booty. Thereafter, particularly juicy scandals produced eruptions of "goo-goo" reform and even civil service, but Tammany was never very far from power in the decades up to the New Deal. Nor was civic corruption ever really out of style. Jimmy Walker, the "night Mayor of New York," had to resign and flee the country before an investigation in 1932.

Fiorello La Guardia, a liberal Republican, took over City Hall on a Fusion Party ticket in 1933 and held it for the duration of the New Deal. Roosevelt tried to isolate the Hall, especially since La Guardia supported the New Deal enough to change his registration to the union dominated American Labor Party. Without national patronage, Tammany proper, i.e., the Manhattan Democratic machine, was at its weakest in this interlude. But equivalents in other boroughs thrived. With William O'Dwyer, city politics became as corrupt as ever. In the '50s, a movement commonly known as the "reform Democratic clubs," largely liberal lawyers coming out of the city's massive Jewish minority, challenged the machines. But in the ensuing decades the clubs became integrated into the system. Instead of them reforming the party, the party reformed them as it were, and now the Democratic Party of New York City is, beyond dispute, one of the most obviously criminal organizations on the face of the planet.

It must not be thought that corruption in New York State is confined to the city. As we've previously seen, Carmine De Sapio was the head of Tammany during the Kefauver investigation and was accused of being a friend of Frank Costello, then the leading mafioso in the country. That did nothing to hinder Carmine's career. He became the most powerful Democrat in the city and when W. Averell Harriman became Governor in 1955, he made De Sapio his Secretary of State. Success only made him greedier. In 1957, a taxi driver found a brown paper bag in his cab with

\$11,200 in it. Doubtlessly fearing that its owner was a criminal and that his fare would remember him from his licence picture, the cabbie turned it into the police with a description. It was impossible to mistake De Sapio, who always wore dark glasses because of an eye problem. But, of course, he had to deny the cash was his. Eventually, in 1969, he was found guilty of conspiracy to commit bribery and extortion along with Antonio (Tony Ducks) Corallo, a Mafia capo.<sup>1</sup>

That scandal did no more to clean up New York's Democrats than the zillions of previous convictions. Indeed, on June 28, 1971, I attended what must surely be the most bizarre demonstration ever to have taken place in "the land of the freak, home of the knave." The FBI had been getting on the case of one Joe Columbo. His lawyer, Barry Slotnick, decided the best defense is an offense, and they set up the Italian-American Civil Rights Association to protest the vile lie that all Italians were mafiosi. Whereupon thousands of Italian-Americans started picketing the FBI. On that day, they had their biggest rally. About 35,000 people, overwhelmingly of Italian descent, showed up in Manhattan's Columbus Circle. Almost as soon as the crowd gathered, a black shot Columbo and was killed by his bodyguards.<sup>2</sup> We now know the hit man was sent by Joey Gallo, another hood, who was later killed himself.

At any rate, the demonstration went on, just as if nothing had happened. There was entertainment and fiery speeches, denouncing the canard that all Italians were part of the Cosa Nostra. Among those to denounce this most foul of slanders were comptroller Abe Beame, later Mayor; Paul O'Dwyer, Williams' brother, later President of the City Council; Frank Rossetti, then head of Tammany; Stanley Steingut, state legislative leader of the party; Congressman Mario Biaggi and Meade Esposito, head of the Brooklyn party. As we shall see anon, these last two were later convicted, in 1987, for giving and taking an unlawful gratuity.<sup>3</sup>

When De Sapio got out of the joint in 1972, the *New York Daily News* reported that "he was feted . . . by several leading Democrats including chairman Frank Rossetti, New York, Pat Cunningham, Bronx, Meade Esposito, Brooklyn, and Matthew Troy, Queens."<sup>4</sup> In 1974, Cunningham became chairman of the New York State Democratic Party. In 1983, he was sentenced to three and a half years for tax evasion.<sup>5</sup> In 1976, Troy pled guilty



to filing a fraudulent income tax return. In 1980, he pled guilty to grand larceny.<sup>6</sup>

Thus came Gotham's Democratic Party to the present, defined as years after Mayor Edward I. Koch ran for reelection in 1981 with the support of the county machines. In those years, Mario Cuomo beat Koch, in 1982, for the gubernatorial nomination, and Koch won 78% of the vote in the 1985 Mayoralty. The two wielders of the gravy ladles of executive power, with Senator Daniel Moynihan, were knowing in their party's history. Could they have been surprised at the sewer of corruption uncovered after January 10, 1986, when police found Queens Borough President Donald Manes bleeding from his wrists in a car? Their city and state parties were sloughs so full of sleaze and slime they would tax the combined descriptive powers of Dante, Brueghel and Shakespeare. Only the most important cases can be dealt with herein. If I tried to even list all the Democrats indicted, this book would be as thick as the Manhattan white pages.

### **Hizzonor's Friend**

Manes told the cops he'd been kidnapped but the real story fell into place immediately. On January 15, Geoffrey Lindenauer, Manes's closest friend and deputy director of the Parking Violations Bureau, was indicted for extorting from an outfit hired to catch scofflaws. A \$22.7 million deal with Citisource Inc., for a bogus ticket issuing gizmo, was cancelled for company misrepresentations. The largest stockholder was Bronx Democratic leader Stanley Friedman.

On the 21st, Manes admitted slashing himself. Whereupon a Citisource partner revealed Manes insisted on kickbacks for Lindenauer. Transportation Commissioner Anthony Ameruso resigned. On Mary 10, Lindenauer pled guilty to racketeering and mail fraud. Then, on March 13, as the investigation stepped up, Manes killed himself with a kitchen knife while on the phone to his wife.

If Reagan with Irangate is the Grant of contemporary governmental crime, the Koch ring is the equal of Boss Tweed's City Hall. The dantesque character of some of the personalities in this baksheesh Constantinople-on-the-Hudson heightened public interest in the scandals. Manes and Lindenauer were out of some textbook on morbid cases. They had become friends because both



their fathers had been suicides. Lindenauer père was a lawyer who hanged himself after a bribery conviction. And what happened nationally, with both the grave weakening of Reagan and the utter lack of resolution of his opponents, was replicated locally. Ed Koch, who previously crowed like Chanticleer, telling one and all of his superior wisdom, moaned like a Thanksgiving turkey with a neck wound. Yet he lingers on in the cynical atmosphere of the city's "culture of corruption," as the *Daily News* calls it.

Eventually Friedman, realtor and former city councilman Michael Lazar and other city bureaucrats and collection agency officials were federally tried for racketeering, with Citisource's ex-president pleading guilty. A jury found Friedman & Co. guilty. He was sentenced to 15 years and is appealing.

In March 1987, Bronx Borough President Stanley Simon resigned while indicted for taking kickbacks from an assistant, obstruction of justice, perjury, tax evasion and extorting \$50,000 and a job for his brother-in-law from Wedtech, a fraudulent minorities military contractor, which received more than \$250 million in U.S. contracts without competitive building. According to *The New York Times*, Simon's lawyer claimed that the bulk of the \$50,00 consisted of payments by the former Wedtech chairman, John Mariotta, a Puerto Rican Catholic, to "worthy and desperate" Jewish charities.<sup>7</sup> As we shall see, Mariotta loveth all religions. At any rate, ultimately about 20 politicians, Democrat and Republican, were implicated in the Wedtech scandal, including two of the three Bronx Congressional Representatives, Mario Biaggi and Robert Garcia.

At this writing, Garcia hasn't been indicted. However, Mario Moreno, the former vice-chairman of Wedtech, testified that the company paid \$70,000 to Garcia's wife.<sup>8</sup> And, since America truly is the land of the freak, home of the knave, it is becoming difficult to keep our multitudinous scandals apart. Therefore, in October 1987, Jessica Hahn, the pious sexpot who had carnal knowledge of evangelist Jim Bakker, was called before a Bronx grand jury. She was questioned about \$10,000 she received from Rev. Aimee Garcia Cortese, the Representative's sister. Aimee is also a former member of the board of Bakker's P.T.L. In the *Times* account, the grand jury was seeking "to determine if Mrs. Cortese obtained the funds traced to Ms. Hahn as part of a Wedtech bribe of Mrs. Cortese's brother." The feds have "traced

payments from the Bronx military contractor to her (Hahn's) bank account."<sup>9</sup> St. John Mariotta gave \$80,000 to Cortese's Cross Road Tabernacle.<sup>10</sup>

The Bronx once had a radical movement. A pro-Communist Party union built Coop City, a large housing unit, in the 1930s. A Jewish, Puerto Rican and black working class district elected an American Labor Party congressman in 1948. But now the Bronx is the city's intellectual great dismal swamp. There is an attractive middle class Jewish neighborhood, Riverdale, on the Hudson. But the borough is notorious for the "South Bronx" or "Fort Apache," as it's lovingly called. People live in isolated slum tenements, interspersed among square miles of buildings with bricked-over windows and empty lots where similar buildings once stood before being burned down by junkies and alcoholics, or landlords torching them for insurance. The demoralized Puerto Ricans, 33% of the county's population, and blacks, about 29%, living in the blitzed zone, are among the poorest and least educated in the country and are extremely passive politically.

Throughout the borough are enclaves of Italians, Irish and Jews, who are much more "respectable." Indeed, their politics is usually little more than fear that the slums will engulf their neighborhoods. Many Italians are that kind at the IARCA's rallies. They are embarrassed by their Mafia image, but are at best defensive about it. Certainly, they never fight the mafia when encountering it in their unions. At the same time, fear of the slum poor make these ethnics into prey of the law and order demagogues. The end results is Biaggi. Once the most decorated cop in the country, he even rescued a girl on a runaway horse. However, he took the Fifth in 1973 before a grand jury investigating his role in Abe Beame's mayoralty campaign finances. He had been investigated numerous times in the interval between the grand jury affair and his present conviction.

Most historians have focused on Coughlanism and right-wing Catholic politics within the borough's Irish. But Mike Quill's working class ex-IRA vets of the losing radical side of the 1921-23 Irish Civil War, made a far stronger social impact than Coughlanism via the Transport Workers Union of the 1930s and its subway strikes. Even after Quill's capitulation to the McCarthyite witch hunt, a streak of right-wing Catholic IRAism remains deeply rooted in the Irish immigrant community. However, because the American followers of the Provisional IRA



were so rightist, they sought out the super patriot cop Biaggi. He was politician enough to see the vote potential for anyone defending the Catholics of Britain's Ulster police state. He was their leading congressional supporter and actually did significant work to bring attention to their plight. But working with him caused these single-minded nationalists to turn a blind eye towards their ally's sores, so obvious to everyone else. Their friend's conviction only calls attention to their naive American politics. This is hardly surprising. Cults of the gun never study politics. At any rate, although they offered no opposition to Biaggi's corruption, they, of course, were never involved in any of his crooked schemes. They are mentioned here because they are part of the bizarre mosaic of intellectually barren ethno-religious politics that substitutes itself for class consciousness among the masses, and provides a clear field for the worldly crooks and servitors of the rich.

What we see here is a devastating commentary on modern urban life, certainly for New York City. A scandal like the present one will drive the rats back into their holes for a while. But unless a new politics, based on a strong sociological base, emerges, the rodents will be back again. Barring a deep economic crisis that would force a substantial minority of the masses out of their present torpor, there is no element in the city capable of permanently driving the rats out of the cupboard.

### **The Brooklyn Knavery Yard**

"Boss" for the head of a machine comes into the language from the boss laborer at the Brooklyn Navy Yard in mid 19th century, when Brooklyn was still a separate city unbridged to America. Its Democrats' venality, as Tweed's accomplices in building the marvelous Brooklyn Bridge, included collusion in supplying substituted inferior steel wire for the suspension cables sustaining the roadway. Fortunately, John Roebling built for weights six times greater than the strains the cables were to actually endure.

The corrupt boss of a pre-civil service government installation had immense power because of his ability to bestow jobs on some of the poor in the surrounding neighborhood. But modern grafting differs from its earlier form in that it now largely takes place away from the eyes of the people. It primarily affects



governmental relations with business. Today, many a capitalist pirate waxes fat on political booty, contracts granted by bribed New York Democrats. There are zoning law changes allowed by compliant building authorities, insider information, crony consultantships, nominations to bankruptcy receiverships, estate managements and other legal plumbs, etc. This bossism within the New York City party continued full throttle until it produced the ultimate in turpitude, the base years of Mayor Ed Kochroach and the 40 bazillion bribe takin' *gonifs*, the thieves in and around his pestilent city hall.

Biaggi and 80-year-old Meade Esposito, for 14 years head of Brooklyn's party, until 1984, were tried in 1987 on federal charges of unlawful gratuities. These were given by Esposito to Biaggi on behalf of Coastal Drydock, a Navy Yard repair outfit that bought its insurance from Esposito's agency. Despite the testimony as to Esposito's character of none less than Robert Strauss, former national chairman of the party, there was never any doubt as to their guilt. Biaggi got 30 months and a \$500,000 fine. The older Esposito received a suspended sentence and a similar fine.

Esposito is a throwback to the fast fading era of classic Brooklyn corruption prior to the introduction of legalized off-track betting. The cops were on the take from the bookies and the borough's docks were run by the Mafia. The party reflected this. William O'Dwyer was the county district attorney when "Kid Twist," a mob canary, got tossed out a hotel window while supposedly under police guard in 1941. The port was—and is—a source of corruption, with the International Longshoreman's Association, Teamsters and other unions, well known for Mafia infiltration. Esposito's era lingers on in the reduced Italian Red Hook enclave, with its longshore union hall named after slain mobster Albert Anastasia, its superb bakeries, its old world gardens. That political culture is vanishing before the oncoming black and Puerto Rican slums and the simultaneous spread of gentrification.

Brooklyn had a substantial radical movement well into the late '40s. Brownsville, the biggest and poorest Jewish neighborhood in the city, teemed with leftist garment workers. The Irish were represented by supporters of Mike Quill, who was unabashedly pro-Communist in the 1930s. In those years, Peter Cacchione, one of the only two Communist Party members ever elected in

the U.S., served Brooklyn in the city council, via proportional representation. But the working class radical movement was smashed between the hammer of McCarthyism, which forced Quill to choose between union power or being driven out of the subways for his affiliations, and the anvil of the Khrushchev revelations of Stalin's murders. Labor opposition to Brooklyn's present corruption is nil. In fact, Mafia infiltration of its unions is substantial, especially in the building trades.

The narcissistic yuppies are too busy hanging flowers in the stately, barred windows of their downtown Brooklyn Georgians and brownstones to bother trying to change the society that generates the wolflike crime outside their fortress apartments.

Hispanics, mostly Puerto Ricans, accounted for 1,406,389 out of 7,071,639, citywide, but their participation in the city's politics, outside their neighborhoods, is appallingly low, a flyspeck on the historic record. Most Puerto Rican voters have never transcended the crudest ethnic identity. They have repeatedly voted for Herman Badillo for Mayor, in spite of the fact that the notorious dirigible head is an open opponent of independence for Puerto Rico. It is enough, for most of these voters, that he is Puerto Rican.

Brooklyn has produced a strong chapter of the National Black United Front that combines store-front black nationalism with mass demonstrations, notably the December 21, 1987, subway and bridge sit-down, on the anniversary of the death of a black in Howard Beach in Queens. Unfortunately, the Brooklyn militants combine this with unrequited loyalty to the party. NBUF has potential—but only potential—of transcending both nationalism and reformism, and becoming a base for a serious multi-ethnic mass movement. But for now ethnic tunnel vision blinkers their perception of reality. If they don't see the nigger in the woodpile they don't see the woodpile. Excepting Al Vann, an utter reformist who orients towards Badillo as the head *chingon* of New York's Puerto Rican Democrats, the immense majority of black Democrats have no Puerto Rican allies worthy of the name.

Combined, the two minorities would be unstoppable, especially so in tandem with other liberal forces. The result of the mediocrity of black and Puerto Rican Democratic politics was the humiliation of Dennis Farrell, the black leader of the present Manhattan Tammany, in the 1985 mayoralty race, when he got pounded by Koch, in spite of the mayor's multitudes of enemies

in all communities.

Brooklyn is the Belfast of Orthodox Jewry, with their 128,000 being 27% of the borough's Jews. These are a Republican base. While they effectively resist crime through street patrols, at best they offer no resistance to the corrupters in the larger society. At worst, the most important of the Orthodox sub cults, the Lubavicher Rebbe's movement, involved itself in community politics as the ally of convicted black Democrat grafter, Vander Beatty. Many of the children of the secular Jewish left moved from the borough. As a whole, the children of the borough's hyper-reading Jews also are into yuppy hedonism or ossified bourgeois culture to ever dirty themselves fighting corruptionists.

Thus the borough is politically crucial in that the Black United Front has the potential to become a rallying point for a fight against the party machinery. But for now, there is nothing above the horizon, in or out of the party, in the way of an effective electoral force against the hacks.

### **"Bess Myerson Was, Is, a Friend of Mine"**

Ed Koch is thought of by many, in all strata of the city, as sitting on a throne perched on a dung heap. There are no legal charges of corruption directly touching him. But he is seen as a sort of housekeeper who somehow got friendly with the rats eating the cheese in the pantry. He repeatedly endorsed none less than Donald Manes to succeed himself as mayor.<sup>11</sup> The other borough bosses were his allies. Many of his appointees, even commissioners, were crooks.

The best example of Koch's real attitude to the city's corruption is his relationship to the Venus flytrap of graft, Bess Myerson, Miss America 1945. During the 1977 campaign, she appeared with him so as to quash rumors of his being gay. She gave out sweet little hints that they were to be married after the election. Of course, they did not marry, but she remained his crony and, in 1983, was appointed Commissioner for Cultural Affairs, an important post in the intellectual capital of the country.

Then, in 1986, she took the Fifth Amendment during a grand jury investigation of her companion, contractor Carl Capasso. A few weeks later, in January 1987, he pled guilty to evading \$774,600 in taxes by falsifying company records regarding work for the city. The questions involving Myerson included whether



she had gotten some of Capasso's juicy contracts for him, and whether she had improperly given a \$21,000 per year consultant's job to a daughter of the judge who handled Capasso's divorce, during which the latter's wife charged Myerson with breaking up her marriage. Capasso's alimony payments were cut in half by the judge after her daughter was hired by Myerson.

When the press started questioning Koch about the case, his response was to accuse them of "McCarthyism."<sup>12</sup> He still insisted he had confidence in her integrity. When asked why he was still friends with Myerson after her appearance before the grand jury and Capasso's plea, he testily said that "it all depends on whether you know the meaning of friendship."<sup>13</sup> At that time, Koch already had a report that she lied to him, in a 1983 letter about the circumstances of the hiring of the woman; that she had not disclosed gifts from Capasso, as legally required; that she had her driver, a municipal employee, do personal chores for her. Even after the report was leaked, in June 1987, Koch insisted that "Bess Myerson was, is, a friend of mine. I said it then and I say it now."<sup>14</sup> Eventually, he did his duty, at least according to Koch himself, by removing her from office and condemning her actions. But even then he "also invited a friend of 20 years who was alone and in great turmoil to my Passover seder."<sup>15</sup>

Now the Mayor of New York's absolutely bogus purported fiancée of 1977 stands federally indicted for fraud, bribery and obstruction of justice.

### **Koch Was Once a Charming Baby. But So Was Hitler.**

Koch is indeed the servitor of the rich. They gave him about nine times more money in the 1985 primaries than his white liberal rival, Council President Carol Bellamy, and about 50 times more than Assemblyman Herman Farrell, the black head of Tammany Hall. In 1985, Koch and the others on the economically crucial Board of Estimate pulled down about \$9 million in campaign contributions, with Koch getting most of that. At least half of the \$9 million came from only 175 sources. These were real estate developers, brokers selling municipal bonds, or other looking for contracts with city agencies. Among the Mayor's fat cats were Peter Kalikow, a real estate mogul worth over \$450 billion, later to be owner of the *New York Post*; Glick Development Associates; the Real Estate PAC; and Shearson Lehman Brothers, Bear

Stearns & Company, and Kidder, Peabody & Company, all brokers.<sup>16</sup>

That the Mayor of New York is, by definition, a leech is a settled point. Koch pulls down \$110,000 per year. He had been the highest paid mayor in the country until 1985, when Coleman Young of Detroit started taking home \$115,000. Now a commission, appointed by Koch, wants once again to make him the highest paid mayor. Nevertheless, Koch isn't in politics for the bucks. When he became mayor in 1978, he listed a personal worth of only about \$100,000, pennies for a lawyer and politician in today's world. He didn't even own a car. Even after he took office, he preferred his modest Greenwich Village pad to Gracie Mansion, New York's official mayoral residence.

Koch is publically sexless, which led to many of his right-wing opponents in the 1977 election chanting "vote for Cuomo, not the homo." In its issue of October 20, 1987, the *Village Voice*, devoid of honor in the midst of the new age of personal-political journalism in the wake of the Gary Hart scandal, revealed the name of one of Koch's alleged lovers. In fact, it is unimportant if he is gay. What is crucial about Koch is that he is out of a Freudian monograph on regression to the oral stage of infancy.

He is a non-stop motormouth, always on the prowl for an audience. Once, for a while, his yap was subdued. Serious New Yorkers wear sackcloth and ashes for their Nineveh's sins. The very word Democrat is coming to mean grafter. So the friend and ally of corruption must likewise wear a hairshirt and pretend to weep with the multitude. But he held up to seven press conferences a day before the bird shit hit the windmill. Even yet he has one a day and goes to self promoting ribbon cuttings.

### "Let Them Eat Bagels"

New York City is—or thinks it is—the intellectual capital of the country. Inevitably, many, truthfully, many manys of many, New Yorkers are devotees of their city's favorite sport. "Knowing It All" is played indoors and out, in all weather and seasons, by children of all ages, races and gender. Koch thought being elected mayor was the same as being elected *mavin*. The city's resident expert, as they say in Yiddish. He has an imbecile opinion on everyone and everything.

He started as a leader in the Village Independent Democrats, a

'50s "reform Democratic club," mostly liberal Jewish lawyers and hangers-on. By the early '60s, Koch beat De Sapio for Democratic district leader on the crook's own turf as the oceanic wave of gentrification flooded the old Italian Village, amidst whose proletarian, Mafia culture the bohemians, beats and hipsters hid and played.

The reformers could not possibly accept the party with the Mafia gorillas in complete charge. They were too cultured for that. But they eventually "realistically" accepted sharing the party with their erstwhile enemies. Each grouping operated in the same way, pandering to various constituencies. An Italian politician was supposed to be against abortion. Jews were expected to be for arms to Israel. Koch became a Congressional Representative with a 100% ADA vote record. Like all the other elected liberals he was 99% hype.

In August 1969, I organized a U.S. tour for Bernadette Devlin, the great Irish revolutionary, in the wake of fanatic right-wing Protestant attacks on Catholic neighborhoods in Belfast and Derry in Ulster. Equal rights for Catholics is completely accepted here, and there are millions of voters of Irish descent. Politicians from left to right were rushing to invite her to speak at their meetings. We were able to charge them hundreds of dollars just to meet privately with her, and thousands for public engagements.

Koch phoned us: "I will appear on a platform with Bernadette." "Thanks Ed. You mean, of course, before an audience you build for her." "I mean I will appear on a platform with her." I explained that other politicians, including the Governor of New Jersey, were raising money for the cause. How much was he going to contribute? The conversation went nowhere. He was the only politician out of many contacting us who wasn't even prepared to think of doing something for her.

Koch understood that an elected Democratic official on a platform was supposed to be a sort of kosher seal of approval for a demonstration. It was supposed to mean that the rally wasn't just a bunch of Commies or nuts. In return, the supporters of the particular cause were supposed to think him a nice guy and vote for him. You really didn't do anything for him and he, to be fair in turn, did nothing for you. He couldn't understand that she was a heroine to hundreds of thousands of Irish-born in the U.S. and was not in need of a tall wooden pole to legitimize her.

In retrospect, that incident was about halfway between his early



liberalism and his present rightist lunacy. He had been elected as an anti-Vietnam War candidate. But he was coming to realize that as a liberal he could only go so far. Talk about black rights in Mississippi sold well to blacks, and to intellectuals on Manhattan's Upper West Side. But it went over like a lead zeppelin in the boroughs, where the white ethnics dreaded the encroaching *svartzers* or *melanzani*. He ran for mayor in 1973, and lost, insisting that street crime was the most important issue facing the city.

Once Koch went to the right, he went all the way over. He not only was for Israel, he ended up the pal of Ariel Sharon, the wickedest Jew since Herod. He started routinely denouncing blacks as anti-Semites. Of course, he is for the death penalty. He opposed low income housing in middle class neighborhoods. For which read no blacks in white neighborhoods. He began denouncing municipal workers' unions for what he called excessive demands. Ultimately, he even got to the point of proposing wolves be put into subway train yards to keep kids from sneaking in and graffitiing the cars. The press lifted a collective brow. "Wolves howl. That—and the screams of their victims—will keep people up all night." They thought he was kidding. Oh, no, responded Koch. Wolves don't eat people. Yes indeed. The Mayor of New York was serious. Unfortunately, no one could quite believe it, and not even his political cronies thought to have a shrink look in on their "liberal with sanity."

He was no political virgin. He knew of the convictions of De Sapio, Troy and Cunningham. But once he lost his liberal vote base, he had no choice but to politically marry the gorillas. Now he is learning the full meaning of the proverb: The son-in-law of a monkey eats what a monkey eats.

The *Daily News* backed Koch in his three last election efforts. But now it is his vigorous opponent. Its editorial summation of the Myerson affair tells it all:

Koch has sung often and loudly about honesty in government. But . . . Myerson and others were hearing a different tune: "Anything goes." How come? Maybe they saw a contradiction between Koch's political oratory and his private conduct. A double standard. Like Koch raising huge campaign warchests from people who do business with the city. Like his coziness with political bosses—Manes, Friedman, Esposito—and his giving them free run

of selected agencies . . . it has become harder and harder to believe that he cares enough to do anything about it. Harder and harder to trust him.<sup>17</sup>

### **Mirror, Mirror on the Wall. Who's the Dumbest Editorial Writer of Them All?**

Literate New Yorkers are disgusted with the endless scandals. But all observers say that the net effect of the exposés has been to produce a cynical paralysis amongst intellectuals as heavy as the down side of a snort of cocaine. The vast majority of them are Democrats and they can't vote Republican, especially since the Republicans endorsed Koch in 1981. However, as dead-end lesser evilists, they will be sure to pick some Democrat to beat him in 1989, if he dares to run after all the scandals. Except who in the sewer that is the Democratic Party of the City of New York is any better?

The *Village Voice* is the nearest thing to an official organ of the city's lesser evilists. In the September 1977 primaries they supported the candidates for district leaders of the VID, Koch's old club, against the mayor's present groupies, the Village Reform Democratic Club. It must be emphasized that what follows is an endorsement. It wanted people to vote for these characters:

The VID remains a progressive, pluralistic organization, whose worst blind spot is its adulation of the Democratic county leader, Herman D. Farrell. In the years since we endorsed Denny Farrell, we have come to view him as a fraud—a professed "reformer" who is actually an old-style political boss . . . Farrell, chairman of the Assembly Banking Committee, has turned the county Democratic Party into a money laundry for contributions from banks, which he uses for his lavish meals and car expenses. As the most powerful club in Manhattan, the VID ought to have called its pal Farrell to account years ago. Instead, its top members have enjoyed his help in obtaining state patronage jobs.<sup>18</sup>

Let's ask *Voice* editor David Schneiderman a question: Is this what democracy in the U.S. of A. boils down to? Voting for one pack of rogues against another? Thus we see why the intelligentsia of the city is so depressed. The *Voice* has been identified with the "reform" Democratic movement since the 50s. This is what they have to show for their efforts.

Many readers, especially “out-of-towners,” i.e., non-New Yorkers, will doubtlessly think the above to be one of the oddest editorials they have ever read. But that is because they do not know the rules of the great game of Knowing It All. The first rule is that it is played with a “hard ball.” None of that soft, mushy idealism for anyone playing New York Democratic politics. Still, the *Village Voice* rubbish is not the weirdest editorial ever written. That title unmistakably goes to *The New York Times* for its efforts in its April 14, 1987, issue:

A blue-ribbon mayoral commission rightly concludes that most of New York’s elected officials deserve a pay raise . . . The commission . . . would raise Mayor Koch’s salary by \$20,000 to \$130,000. New York being New York, that would justifiably make him the highest paid mayor in the nation. Moreover, the mayor’s salary acts as a lid on municipal pay down the line; raising it will allow the city to offer competitive salaries for key managerial and technical jobs.<sup>19</sup>

Why are you laughing at the thought of raising Koch’s pay? Stop that! Have you no respect for the most prestigious paper in the U.S. of A.? Seriously, it is important to understand that they are not for corruption, although it looks that way. No. It is simply that the *Times* has one sacred principle: its editors absolutely believe in the God-given right of intelligent people, like themselves, like all those everywhere who have the education “for key managerial and technical jobs,” to get rich. When someone comes along and says, sort of like God on the first day, “lo, let there be money for intellectuals,” all other considerations flee from their minds.

I know what readers are thinking. These incredible editorials appeared in two of the most important papers in the city and nation. If this is all they can come up with to solve the problem of corruption, then the city and the nation are in deep trouble. And ya know somethin’? Deep trouble is a polite term for what they are deep in.

### **“I Felt Mr. Zaccaro was Speaking About an Unlawful Payment”**

Local bribery is rarely of sustained interest to people outside the jurisdiction involved. However, the Wedtech affair, with its



tentacles into the Republican White House, is a national matter. And Myerson is an ex-Miss America. Her escapades also focus national attention on the New York sewer. But for most Americans, the New York scandal season started in 1984, with those questions about Geraldine Ferraro and hubby John Zaccaro.

Queens is the right wing's favorite borough, the residence of tens of thousands of cops. During the Vietnam War, Matt Troy scored *beaucoup* points with the folks there by raising the city hall flag, lowered to half mast by anti-war Mayor John Lindsay. James Delaney, Ferraro's predecessor from the Ninth Congressional District, came to Washington in 1944 as a liberal friend of labor. When his constituents moved right, he ended up backing James Buckley, successful Conservative Party candidate for Senator in 1970. Many in Geraldine's district are working class Catholic moralists, even Jansenist heretics in their narrowmindedness. They are overly concerned with the sinfulness of tens of millions of their neighbors who have had abortions. And above all, the sinfulness of the blacks who they dread will encroach on their turf.

This puritanized Catholicism makes the Ferraro-Zaccaro story so jarring. The district's voters are in no small part products of old-fashioned parochial schools where priests and nuns were satisfied to convert the little monsters into cops and firemen and other useful workers. Life would be eternally violent, requiring cops and soldiers. Sports were central to education and life. They learned to read, but not usually very well. Some Catholic schools turned out priests, lawyers and political bureaucrats. But these were primarily for their middle class. Worker Catholics came out physical, often mechanical and practical. But culturally they were yokels midst one of the most sophisticated cities on the planet.

They come from folks with a sad Depression era story. They are populists because they are the people. But "what the peasant doesn't know the peasant doesn't eat." The older generation is suspicious of anything challenging the religious verities they grew up with. And they are white in a society that rewarded white skin, even if marginally in the case of workers. Like most modern Americans, they wish they were rich. Like most Americans, they cheat in little ways. They know the rich and poor cheat in worse ways. Their church has always been indulgent on popular sins. Drinking and gambling? A blind eye in another's corner. American women don't like to marry men with no pre-marital

experience. Sins go in and out of fashion and season. Graft and privileges of wealth are common in our society. The consensus is you are allowed, even commanded, to look out for numero uno. So, the 9th CD Rep must be anti-communist, fair but firm to blacks, against abortion. But not a saint. Streetwise. If some corners could be cut, Geraldine Ferraro was allowed to do what her betters did before her. So was John.

Educated plebeians like Geraldine and John think themselves realists. In fact, they are cynics. Once they learn to say what people want to hear, there is no Great Wall of China keeping them from the land of the plundered and the plunderers. Mark well: She was an assistant DA. She was an officer and partner in his realty firm. She must be presumed to have had knowledge of her husband's character in politics and business.

In many senses they are no worse or better than other apple-town Democratic insiders, except that their public humiliation comes from a *folie a deux* out of Dante. Lyin' & stealin' were endemic in their circle, nothing to notice. They lost the fear of getting caught, natural to non-criminals. Then came her rendezvous with power and fame, the Boardwalk & Baltic of her profession. She lost her head? Nothing strange. Cynics frequently are deluded themselves. But that he should also let her march them into disaster without instantly insisting she not run still boggles the mind. By the time he refused to show his tax records, he only insured exposé. But not even that could cure him of his blindness. In August 1984, at the height of the campaign, he was removed as overseer of an old woman's estate after he was found to have improperly borrowed \$175,000 from it. Later, he pled guilty to scheming to fraudulently obtain bank loans as part of the same scam. Yet, during the 1984 campaign, he told *Redbook* magazine that he was going to sit in on Cabinet meetings if his wife was elected. After all, "she always made me a part of whatever she was doing."<sup>20</sup>

She still inhabits a planet different from the rest of us. When he was charged in 1986 with attempted extortion and bribery, she sailed right on, doing everything but admitting the truth. "Poor John Santucci," she said, assailing her ex-chief, "has been left behind." She charged *him* with "politics," obtaining the indictment to catch up with other DAs who had made names nailing some of the sleaze.

The indictment charged Zaccaro with "instilling in the



executives" of Cablevision Systems "a fear" that unless Manes was paid off, he would "would use his position . . . to disapprove" their franchise bid.<sup>21</sup> Zaccaro, acting for Manes, sought a bribe from Richard Flynn, the lawyer for the company, now head of the supposedly non-partisan New York Power Authority.

According to the *Times*, "it was the usual practice of cable television companies to seek out influential people to make their cases before Borough Presidents."<sup>22</sup> Joseph Carlino, an attorney for Cablevision—and former Democratic Speaker of the State Assembly—contacted a friend, Judge Francis X. Smith, then the administrative judge of the New York Civil Court. Smith (who has been found guilty of perjury on the Cablevision matter) is a family friend of Ferraro and Zaccaro. He suggested she be invited to dinner by company execs. But it was Zaccaro who showed up. Later, on October 27, 1981, Zaccaro, a crony of Manes, contacted Flynn. At the time, Flynn was involved in a real estate deal with Zaccaro. Flynn's brother was Zaccaro's business partner.

When the case came to trial, in 1987, Flynn was called as a prosecution witness but turned out to be what is legally known as a "hostile witness." Yes, he conceded, Zaccaro had called him, and told him "the franchise can be obtained"; that "I know somebody who can do it"; that "I know how to do it." And, of course, "its going to cost you money."<sup>23</sup> But no, he declared, he didn't believe Zaccaro was asking for a payoff. He simply phoned to tell him "about a process that was corrupt."<sup>23</sup>

The two then arranged to continue this lesson in Queens style Democratic politics out on the street:

Zaccaro said at the (sic) particular point that the franchise could be obtained for a substantial amount of money, and that's all he really said . . . I felt Mr. Zaccaro was speaking about an unlawful payment.<sup>24</sup>

The jury found Zaccaro not guilty. "We did feel there was something there," said a jury member, "but it wasn't deep enough to convict."<sup>25</sup> "There might have been an initial feeler, but there was no concrete evidence that says Zaccaro was trying to solicit a bribe."<sup>26</sup> The *Times* reported that "several jurors said they had become confused" by Flynn's testimony.<sup>26</sup>

Did Zaccaro try to solicit a bribe? Later the prosecutor said



that the case had been well prepared but that it hadn't been anticipated that the judge would allow the defense to ask Flynn to give his opinion as to the meaning of Zaccaro's words. "That was a question of fact for the jury." At any rate, "We have no apologies for bringing this case. We'd much rather be explaining why we brought it and lost than why we never brought it at all."<sup>27</sup>

It is hard not to agree. Zaccaro has been found not guilty and cannot be tried again for the same crime. And that is exactly how it should be. But there is nothing in either law or morality or common sense that obligates us to personally accept the jury's finding. Do I believe Geraldine's husband solicited a bribe? Let me answer my own question with another question: Does a bear shit in the woods?

### **"The Devil Is Sick. The Devil a Monk Would Be"**

Given the non-existent ethics of the city party, it was inevitable that the city should spew its muck into the state legislature and governor's mansion in Albany.

In 1987, Richard Rubin, executive secretary of the Queens party, was convicted of getting two Assembly members to put two of his law firm's secretaries on their payroll. The two members were granted immunity to allow testimony against him.

Rubin's story is a classic illustration of politics how she is played in New York. He was a part-time special counsel to the Speaker. That got him \$46,220 per year. Add \$65,000 in guardianship fees, the Queens Surrogate Court being subsequently investigated for such appointments, plus \$102,000 as lobbyist for a water company and \$75,000 from a horse breeders' association. Total \$304,000 through connections.

Does anyone have to be told that Rubin's crime provoked no outrage from the state's party leaders? After Assemblywoman Gerdi Lipschutz admitted signing fraudulent pay vouchers, Speaker Mel Miller reappointed her to head the Assembly Majority Steering Committee, a post paid \$11,000 over base pay of \$43,000. Eventually she resigned, but only after constant press articles.

Miller started in the law firm of Paul O'Dwyer, the impeccably honorable liberal brother of the disgraced mayor. But Mel is no O'Dwyer. As soon as he realized he could be elected Speaker he became "an instant moderate . . . The old targets—being anti-rich

and anti-business—that's not a policy."<sup>28</sup> Now that he's the party wheel-horse, brazenness knows no bounds. Press attention led to months of egg-dancing between legislators and Governor Mario Cuomo, who understood something had to be done to call off the news hounds. Miller got the *Times* to Op-ed his clean up:

Since it was established in 1777, the legislature has been based on the model of the citizen-legislator . . . Our Senators and members of the Assembly are still part-time legislators . . . Many of my colleagues in the Senate, and some in the Assembly . . . resist disclosure and conflict-of-interest rules not because they are corrupt but because these rules represent a move toward a full-time legislature . . . I support strict disclosure and conflict-of-interest rules, but I also believe we will never pass a law . . . if we characterize its opponents as evil and corrupt. Serious philosophical differences underlie this debate.<sup>29</sup>

Yeah. Citizen-legislators. Except that Manfred Ohrenstein, the Senate minority leader, was later charged with 564 counts of conspiracy and grand larceny involving hundreds of thousands of dollars in state funds used to finance Democratic campaigns. People were put on staffs of legislative commissions but did nothing but work on campaigns. They were instructed to avoid the press to evade detection. Some used fictitious names. Some were no-shows, like the printer's daughter hired so daddy would do work for free.

Staffs of legislatures doing political work for their tigers is not news. But these did nothing but campaign, except for the no-shows. Will Ohrenstein be convicted? Some cases are clear bogus names and no-shows. However, a 1970 judge cut loose two pols. Indicting them for payroll padding was discriminatory: "No-show jobs were a way of life on the hill."<sup>30</sup>

Though the legislature came up with an ethics code, it was a hustle to kid people into thinking they had reformed. The *Times* reported "colleagues from both parties have closed ranks behind Mr. Ohrenstein . . . 'There is a question of separation of powers here' . . . Miller said."<sup>31</sup>

### **"Why Do Clients Hire Andrew Cuomo?"**

As the city press started looking upstate in the wake of the Rubin case, they began to look at Governor Mario Cuomo.

Inevitably, they found questionable ethics tainting him and his entourage. He had no choice but to decide not to run for the presidential nomination.

In 1981, when Cuomo was Lieutenant Governor, his chief of staff, William Cabin, pled guilty to putting ghost employees on Cuomo's books and taking home the cash.<sup>32</sup> In 1986, Cuomo refused to release an Inspector General's report on a close advisor, Ilene Margolin, accused of helping the hubby get \$4.7 million in contracts building housing for mental patients.<sup>33</sup>

The most blatant bit of political Americana that came to notice was the startling success of 28-year-old Andrew Cuomo. Fresh out of law school, he worked for two years as his father's aide. Then he worked as an Assistant DA in New York. He left to enter a small Manhattan legal outfit. "Suddenly," the *Times* editorialized in disgust, the firm "prospered mightly as top real estate developers and other clients who deal extensively with state agencies have flocked in." Andrew became, amongst other things, lawyer for the milk industry, of immense importance in the state. He finally declared he would not represent new clients before state agencies. "But," the *Times* complained,

this policy also misses a larger point, just as the Governor does when he attributes Andrew's precocious legal success to sheer ability. . . . What about important clients who give Andrew Cuomo's firm routine and lucrative legal business that has nothing at all to do with the state? Why do they do so? . . . It's hard to see why clients would seek him out other than because they believe that, in the event issues with the state one day arise, it can't hurt to have engaged the good will of someone so close to the Governor.

The paper's editors are well brought up. Always polite to those in power. However "appearances are undeniable." If Andrew were a more experienced lawyer, or if he was with a well-established firm, or if he practiced in federal court in Jersey, then it "might be tolerable." But

as father and son acknowledge with pride, their relationship remains much closer than that of high official and staff member. That may, to father and lawyer son, feel good. It looks terrible.<sup>34</sup>



Devastating editorial criticism in the world's most influential daily makes any rational person abandon hope of success as a national candidate. But even after Cuomo came a-cropper because of the editorial, a *Times* journalist wrote about how he still

was concerned about the harsh scrutiny his family would come under if he ran for President. He repeated a complaint that his son, Andrew, has been unfairly criticized.<sup>35</sup>

Once Cuomo un-Presidential candidated, strict accounting of his administration's ethics declined. Most people don't recall the outcry over Andrew. Mario has come to be seen as the last of the good Samaritans, who stayed honest dealing with Tammany off-scourings. Of course, Mr. Nice Guy is also allowed to be Mr. Not Always Mr. Nice Guy, and sometimes just another joick at woick, because non-threatening regular guy A-murican politicians are human. Nevertheless, the oncoming waves of historic shame pounded ever higher and closer to him.

In 1987, Vito Castellano, former commander of the state National Guard, pled guilty to taking a Wedtech bribe.<sup>36</sup> Two of Cuomo's New York Thruway Authority bureaucrats ran into problems. Chairman Henry Bersani pled guilty to bribery and cooperated with the prosecutor in "a scandal of New York City proportions" centered around Lee Alexander, ex-Mayor of Syracuse and former chairman of the National Conference of Democratic Mayors. In January 1988, Alexander pled guilty to 16 years of extorting kickbacks from contractors.<sup>37</sup> Executive Director Alex Levine, paid \$170,000 per year, did a little moonlighting. He set up Betasoft, a computer-software firm that solicited business from Thruway Authority contractors. In 1986, almost 30% of TA payments for outside consultant engineers went to four companies which purchased Betasoft equipment. Levine had to resign and Cuomo's State Inspector General sent a report on him to the prosecutors for possible action.<sup>38</sup>

As the graft operations dropped out of the sack, Cuomo's advisors understood that he could be destroyed if he was linked to them. He had to cover his assets. He is paid a princely \$130,000 per year, so he politely declined an additional \$30,000 raise. He became the fearless champion of reform. Cuomo and Koch had jointly appointed a 1986 commission to investigate corruption, but without subpoena powers. In 1987, he announced one with

powers, to be led by Joe Califano, ex-HEW Secretary for Carter.

"Is there no limit to the legislature's contempt for New Yorkers?," the *Times* asked on April 11, 1987.<sup>39</sup> They would only allow a commission if Califano wasn't on it. Cuomo capitulated. They then came up with a reform bill full of loopholes. The press wouldn't go for it and Cuomo had to veto the unethics bill. Cuomo continued mock-fighting the legislative Democrats and Republicans, who are corrupt themselves, especially so on Long Island. By July, the *Times* started complaining at Albany's inaction.

How does a "culture of corruption" reform from above? 'Tis simple. It rewards the crooks by raising their pay, so they won't need to go on putting knick-knacks in their pockets. The legislature was already the highest paid in the country at \$43,000, but Cuomo signed a bill giving them a 33% increase, plus per-diems and stipends, putting them at \$65,000.<sup>40</sup> The increase takes effect in 1989. But as incumbents usually win reelection, he was rewarding the present sleaze and the press said so.

In the fullness of time, Cuomo and the legislature came up with a "strict" code. The *Times* rejoiced: "Albany, home of ethics reform: It sounds like sarcasm but today it becomes truth." But, alas, "some ominous loopholes remain, and a great deal will depend on enforcement." The conflict of interest forms for these solons would not all be public. We might learn that an official had stock in a company, but not the value. Legislators could request that "private" information not be released. An ethics commission would make the decision. They and their aides would have to list business clients if they were partners in law firms, but not individual clients. If they were not partners, they wouldn't even have to list corporate clients. The *Times* had to stop rejoicing to admit that "the forms open to the public won't even indicate whether material has been allowed to be deleted." And of course "no violation . . . may be prosecuted unless the matter is first referred by a committee composed entirely of legislators. That . . . hardly reassures the public."<sup>41</sup> Their law partners could continue to practice before state agencies. And if state legislators couldn't appear before state agencies, the *Times* noted they have "sizable clout in city affairs" yet could continue to appear before them. And there was "nothing to bar the scandalous practice of allowing former top legislative aides to go directly to work lobbying the



legislature."<sup>42</sup> Nothing was done about reforming the laws on campaign contributions.

### Why Steal When You Can Pander?

The four horsemen of Democratic financing back Cuomo. Union pie cards, realty sharks and brokers selling state bonds made up almost half the big donors to his coffers over a four year period. Twenty-five unions gave \$10,000 or more. Fifteen developers and an equal number of financial houses also gave big bucks. Other heavy players were law firms and hotel and motel PACs. Bear Stearns, the brokers, were the biggest givers, \$169,000. They underwrite state bonds. Merrill Lynch, Paine Webber, and Salomon Brothers, also brokers, chipped in. Cuomo has his own PAC to pay for his trips outside the state. The initial State Treasurer was Robert Schiffer, head of the Real Estate Advisory Board. Several bankers are involved, as are the chairman of Starrett Housing, realtor Robert Tishman, and two L.F. Rothschild partners.<sup>43</sup>

New York has by far the largest Jewish population of any state, 10.6% of the people. They are between 16% and 20% of voters. In party primaries, they make up about 30% of the voters. Cuomo is a past master at pandering to Jewish prejudices. He is surely the only politician in the U.S. who was a *shabbas goy* as a youth. The Orthodox Jewish religion is the ultimate in ritualistic ordinances. One is the absolute prohibition on doing work on the sabbath. It is against God's commandments for a Jew to flick a light switch off after sundown Friday. But God doesn't give a damn if a Gentile does. Enter Mario Cuomo, who performed such a service for a Queens synagogue. In worldly circles, having been a *shabbas goy* is looked upon as a quaint bit of the good old days, along with having been an altar boy in Father Baloney's church. But Cuomo is still on call. Even after the September 1982 Beirut massacre of hundreds of Palestinian civilians, when hundreds of thousands of Israelis were demonstrating in the streets against Menachem Begin, Cuomo's campaign distributed flyers in Jewish sections of Brooklyn with a photo of them embracing.<sup>44</sup>

They can't arrest you for ethnic pandering. But add it to his attitude toward Andrew, and it is plain that one word best describes Cuomo's politics: venal. If Cuomo were some slob on



the street, we would believe he is really pro-Zionist ideologically. But he is a high panjundrum of the New York Democratic Party, not famous for honesty. We must presume it occurs to Mario that if he defends Israel, especially after a grisly slaughter, a shekel or two might be tossed his way. After all, Bear Stearns was not only the biggest contributor to Cuomo, it is the largest per capita donor in the U.S. to the United Jewish Appeal, the leading Zionist fund-raising organization. The UJA took in \$3.8 million from 130 of Bear Stearn's Jewish staffers in 1985.<sup>45</sup>

If we look at the New York party from the boroughs to the state capital, it is clearly a plunderbund. Not every elected Democrat is a crook. Here and there we find a liberal. Add in a few more conservative mavericks. But they don't set the tone for the party. The grafters do.

The Democratic legislators don't want to reform a damned thing. Only fear of the press made them do anything. They are mostly in politics for what they can carry home. If there were no way they could make money out of it, they wouldn't be bothered. And clearly Cuomo's defensiveness at Andrew's a-mazin' success at lawyerin' demonstrates he also has a boodler's conception of politics.

Nothing is perfect. Jefferson would not recognize his party, were he to rise from the dead. But William Mooney would feel right at home. At least its nice to know that *some* things never change.

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## CHAPTER 10

# North, South, East, West, In All Directions Thieves

Intelligent Americans know that New York is the real capital of the U.S. It is the center of finance and publishing. With Los Angeles, it is the heart of show biz. Washington is totally atypical of the U.S. In what other country are the majority of inhabitants of the capital of a different race than the rest of the population? Culturally, virtually nothing cometh forth from Washington but laws and politics. The result is that, for many Americans, their capital, aside from its official architecture, might as well be on the moon. Politically literate Americans know Ed Koch is Mayor of New York. But even most of these sophisticates couldn't, even with a gun to their head, tell who the Mayor of Washington is.

Marion Barry, Jr., is the fella's name. Now that you know it, you'll wish you never heard of this splendid example of urban blight. Barry, from Itta Bena, Mississippi, was one of the first leaders of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, the most militant of the '60s rights movements. He came to Washington in 1965, and shifted from SNCC to the movement for "home rule." When the city got elementary democracy in 1974, Barry became a councilor. He became mayor in 1978, beating the black incumbent. Washington has a huge black middle class, but Barry was an upstart to them. He didn't get a majority of the black vote until 1982. He represented the militants who came out of the rights struggles and many hoped he would fulfill some of

the movement's dreams.

Instead, the first scandal broke less than a year after he came into office. A banker competing for the right to develop some city land gave him a low interest mortgage. His second wife was put on the bank's board. He started buyin' fancy duds, eatin' fine, making trips at city expense. He showed up at a Las Vegas championship fight and pretended he was there to get such fights for his city.

The story got heavier in 1983 when Mary Treadwell, his first wife until 1976, was convicted of diverting funds from their anti-poverty hustle, Pride Inc. Barry claimed he suspected nothing. Then, when she got out, after finishing her time, he found her a job with the local parole board.<sup>1</sup>

Barry's present wife is notorious for a shopping spree when she bought \$1,150 in clothes. Gee, is it her fault, she argues, that the lobbyist who paid for the rags didn't tell her he dealt with the city?<sup>2</sup>

In 1984, a cocaine dealer, Karen Johnson, was taped telling her boy friend that she had sold some to Barry—who acknowledged a “personal relationship” but denied the drugs. He was saved only when she refused to testify before an investigating grand jury. Then, in August 1984, Joanne Medina, a publishing exec, died after partying with top city officials, who tried to get the medical examiner to change the autopsy report. But the narcs were unable to prove Barry had used with her.

A black mayor in a black city has a minority set-aside program for black contractors. In 1984, the city auditor announced he couldn't justify approximately \$200,000 in contracts given ex-Barry aides after they went into business. The *Washington Post* editorialized that “making millionaires of a few well-connected lawyers is a perversion of minority participation.”<sup>3</sup> Black whistle blowers would be fired. But eventually, Barry was forced to get rid of Deputy Mayor Alphonse Hill after the latter confessed to taking \$3,000 plus gifts from a contractor. In 1987, Hill pled guilty to conspiracy to defraud the city and tax evasion. Another Deputy Mayor, Ivanhoe Donaldson, is doing seven big ones for stealing \$190,000. As of December 1987, no less than 11 city officials have been convicted. Over a dozen more have resigned or been dismissed in the wake of charges of improper activities.

In 1985, the city bought a piece of land valued at \$6.7 million for \$11 million from Jeffrey Cohen, the godfather of Barry's son.

In 1985, the President of the University of the District of Columbia, a Barry henchman, resigned after charges he used school funds for himself. In 1986, the administration repeatedly refused to turn over its records on a renovated housing project to a grand jury. Eventually, three functionaries of the firm doing the work admitted tax evasion.

In August 1987, two contractors admitted giving money to Karen Johnson after she spent nearly a year in jail for refusing to testify against Barry and others on the drug charges.

The following month, it was revealed that records of nearly two years of expenditures from the capital's ceremonial fund had been destroyed. Anita Bond, whom the *Washington Post* described as "the mayor's principal political operative," had received a loan in 1984 from the fund.

So it goes in the capital of the land of the freak, home of the knave. Will Barry be arrested? Who knows? But the reality is obvious. He's surrounded on all four sides by crooks. But guess who says the local prosecutor is harassing Barry "with the intent of keeping blacks politically impotent?"<sup>4</sup> In July 1987, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators, the National Conference of Black Mayors, the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials, and individual members of the Congressional Black Caucus, filed an amicus curiae on his behalf. His lawyer's argument is that the racists used the corruption of black politicians during the Reconstruction period to disenfranchise blacks. If Barry is forced out, it will similarly mean the return of white rule in the city.

Any politician saying that, even of the Reagan administration, is morally bankrupt or worse. These pols know the corruption is real. The crooks have either pled guilty or were convicted by D.C. juries with black majorities. But their defense of Barry is not unique to blacks. Since the early 19th century, corrupt Democratic city machines have rested on such ethnic bases. Nor is cocaine the cause of the city's corruption. Similar contemporary grafting takes place in other Democratic controlled municipalities without drugs playing a role.

In most of the country's major cities, the core of the party is a machine, the "regulars," devoid of ideology, held together by greed. The extent of corruption varies due to local conditions. The key factors are the strength of the liberals and unions in the party meld; whether the Republican Party is a satellite or truly



independent, which it rarely is in the central cities, and whether the Republicans control the state house and the federal prosecutor's office. But, regardless of the degree of sleaze, municipal politics is played before a usually passive audience of politically ignorant working class couch potatoes and a cynical intelligentsia. These last don't like the grafters, but as dead-end lesser evilists they don't think of starting a liberal party, still less joining a socialist group. The miracle is that there isn't more stealing than there is.

### The "Sepia Daley" of the American Gomorrah

Probably the best known of America's black mayors was Chicago's Harold Washington. His city is notorious for its racism, and his administration had to battle for years against the retreating white ethnic politicians on the city council, also Democrats, before he could be said to have really taken control of the city. Inevitably, liberal opinion nationally sided with Washington and, equally inevitably, illusions grew up about him, that he was some kind of liberal reformer. He was not, and at least it was to his credit that he never really pretended to be one.

The city's world fame for corruption goes back to the days of Al Capone. Therefore, it was hardly surprising that one of the standards that informed observers used in judging Washington's administration was whether or not it continued the criminal traditions of its white predecessors. Because the racists were able to keep him from full power for so long, a clear image of what a full scale Washington reign would have looked like never really emerged. But there was sufficient evidence available to allow an assumption that he would have carried on the good ol' Chicago way in so far as he could have.

If anyone were to have sent to Central Casting for an actor to play a black politician starting up his own city hall gang, the one sent would have been Washington. His father was a precinct captain for the machine. Harold was brought up in its morality. In 1972, he served 30 days in the Cook County jail for failing to file income tax returns.<sup>5</sup> He once openly called himself the "Sepia Daley." Then he tried to pretend he said it "in a fit of humor." But *The New York Times* wrote that

many who follow local politics suspect it was not entirely a jest.

After all, they noted, Mr. Washington retrieved Daley's desk from the basement of City Hall and installed it in his office.

He did say he is "flattered" by being compared to the infamous Daley. And, as Paul Green, co-author of *The Mayors*, remarked, "very few reformers say, as Harold Washington does, 'To the victor go the spoils.'"<sup>6</sup>

That many of his black supporters were corrupt is certain. Like Washington, they started as Daley henchmen. In 1985, two aldermen, Perry Hutchinson and Wallace Davis, were taped with Michael Raymond, an informer. He worked for Systematic Recovery Inc., an outfit specializing in collecting delinquent tickets, at the center of New York City's corruption scandals. They did what black hacks do when caught. Davis announced Raymond "was sent . . . to try and embarrass this administration. You mean to tell me that if the government is corrupt, its only black folks who are corrupt?"<sup>7</sup>

Both admitted being wined and dined and offered free trips. Davis admitted taking \$1,500 but insisted it was a campaign contribution. Later, two other aldermen admitted takings. After all, Clifford Kelley's lawyer said, his client was collecting money for the United Nations Children's Fund.<sup>8</sup> The Administration rushed to their defense. The *Times* related that "Alton Miller, the mayor's press secretary, suggested in an interview that the investigation might be aimed at black supporters of Mr. Washington."

Later, in an eastern federal trial, an ex-corporation counsel for Washington came up. A tape had Raymond complaining a rival had gotten him. "See what Datacom did in Chicago was a classic move. They bought Montgomery, who is the corporation counsel." But not to worry. "Montgomery can be controlled and is being controlled. Because he is vulnerable." Raymond went on. "I had a guy by the name of McClain, who had the mayor's ear." The *Times* described "former top aide Clarence McClain" as "a convicted procurer and friend of the mayor."<sup>9</sup>

Washington investigated. Chicago style. A special assistant corporation counsel was appointed to report. But the City Council refused him subpoena powers. The report, alas, was secret, to protect his rights. Washington fought legally to keep it secret, but when it was released, it showed his chief of staff, his former corporation counsel, and two others failed to inform authorities of allegations a deputy revenue director received \$10,000 from a

collection agency. When bureaucrat Ernest Barefield was told John Adams took \$10,000, he allowed the latter to work on for months until finding another job. The report said this was done with Washington's "concurrence or acquiescence." He acted to "avoid or minimize publicity . . . at the expense of compromising the integrity of the revenue department."<sup>10</sup>

The Illinois and Cook County Democratic Parties are, arguably, the most corrupt political bodies west of Gomorrah. Otto Kerner, governor from 1961 to 1968, did two years, in the mid-1970s. In 1987, Daniel Walker, governor from 1973 to 1977, pled guilty to bank fraud. The April 1987 Chicago election for Alderman saw Davis campaigning from a jail pay phone. He was in for pistol whipping an ex-secretary. He once was let out of jail for a Council vote. Kelley was on bail. Myriads of Chicago Democrats have run—some have even won—while on indictment. Ten ran at one time in 1973. Nine judges were convicted of bribery in 1987. Another killed himself. Five wait trial. More indictments will come. One lawyer bribed 24 traffic judges before himself becoming a judge.

Andrew Malcolm of the *Times* well explained Chicago politics as revolving

around the Democratic Party, which is actually a shifting coalition of conservative factions arranged around neighborhoods, ethnic groups and clan leaders.<sup>11</sup>

Malcolm wrote this well before Washington's sudden death in 1987, which verified his description of things. The city's demographics had shifted. Blacks, 41% of the population, became numerically dominant over the "bohunks," the Eastern European tribes, and Washington, a machine hack among hacks, was the beneficiary of that arithmetic. But he hadn't even tried to do away with machine politics and when he died the underlying realities emerged.

There had to be a black successor. Or else there would have been riots. But what kind of black? The fight was between Timothy Evans, Washington's Aldermanic leader, also a machine grad, but thought of as a late blooming reformer, and Eugene Sawyer, the winner. Sawyer's brother was dismissed as Revenue Director in 1986 after he admitted taking \$2,500 from Raymond. It ended up in Eugene's campaign fund. Subsequently, it was



revealed that, in 1979, Sawyer received \$30,000 from a lawyer for a company seeking a zoning change. At first, Sawyer insisted he couldn't remember why he took the money. Then he claimed it was a "finder's fee" for helping in obtaining financing from a bank. Later it became a gesture of "gratitude" for helping get funds for an Arizona land deal, and a South Side store.<sup>12</sup> The only thing saving Sawyer's assets is the fact that the statute of limitations has run out.

Sawyer won, 29 to 19. But only five of his votes were black. The other 24 came from white council members, most of them dead-end opponents of Washington, and seen by the black masses as their bitter enemies. The scene of Sawyer's election can only be described as a near riot as 5,000 blacks stormed the city council, protesting his election. He nearly withdrew out of fear that his election would trigger off ghetto riots.

Two things are clear in this. First, Sawyer was the first black alderman to endorse Washington. If he and Washington had any differences, they were not enough to make Washington see him as his enemy. The second important fact is that, given his machine's involvement with Raymond, and his utter dependence on the white aldermen, themselves Daleyites, we can expect them all to try and push their snouts into the trough. The only things that will slow them down, or even stop them, is the knowledge that the federal prosecutor is a Republican, just a lookin' for to put some Democrats into the slammer. And the fact that thousands of blacks hate them and are just as eager as the district attorney to get Sawyer out of office, maybe more so.

At this writing, it is too early to tell just how important this intervention of these thousands will prove to be. Jesse Jackson is from Chicago, and he rushed back for the Washington funeral and then intervened to urge a "cooling of tempers. We must judge a new mayor by his appointments, jobs, legislation, contracts. And time becomes the great healer of things."<sup>13</sup> Yeah, great healer. Maybe the fact that Sawyer was shrewd enough to know that Jackson is always friendly to anyone who endorses him had a little something to do with it. At any rate, if the black activists see Sawyer as capitulating to the racists, Jackson can say anything he wants, 10 times a day, and they will go right by him. But we can say this for sure. Normally, even the activist minority within the black community is largely indifferent to corruption on the part of black politicians. Too many blacks see such graft as just blacks

ripping off the society that rips them off. But if—and this is a big if—those thousands stay in the field, and ignore Jackson's self-serving moderation, we may see the beginnings of a serious black movement, at least in Chicago, against graft.

If so, then we are at the beginning of a new, long overdue upturn in the black movement. But for now, the prime lesson is that those progressives who supported Washington within the Democratic Party as the champion of a new politics were just kidding themselves. Washington was no opponent of machines as such. And now they must endure the further humiliation of having to listen to their other great black hope tell them to cool it with Sawyer, the creature of their bitterest enemies.

### Life Among the "Fly Overs"

Corruption, particularly local grafting, is so taken for granted in the land of the freak, home of the knave, that it is usually not extensively covered by the country's premier dailies, *The New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Washington Post* and the *Wall Street Journal*. This is not to say they do not report such crimes amongst the "fly overs," as the coastal worldings depreciatingly refer to hundreds of millions of people between New York, Washington and Los Angeles. To the contrary. But some times we are told only of indictments, or a case is casually mentioned in an article on the city or state involved, etc. And it is not easy to obtain copies of many local papers outside of their region, or they are not indexed. Therefore, I will be forgiven if my own reportage is incomplete. Nevertheless, a pattern emerges: The Democratic mascot is not the cartoonists' mule, but the pig at the trough.

### Baltimore

In November 1987, two members of Baltimore's most prominent black political family were convicted of trying to obstruct a congressional investigation into Wedtech. Congressman Parren Mitchell, chairman of the Small Business Committee, had called for an investigation, in 1984, in connection with charges of White House intervention on Wedtech's behalf. Then \$60,000 was paid to Clarence Mitchell, an ex-state senator, and Michael Mitchell, a sitting state senator, and that was that.

As the law firm is headed by yet another political Mitchell, a city councilman, it might be thought they own Baltimore. In fact, they are co-owners. Another prominent political family was also having some trouble with the law. In February 1985, Jerry Cardin was given 15 long ones for swiping \$385,000 from his Old Court Savings and Loan. In his 1972 *Fat Cats and Democrats*, sociologist G. William Domhoff named Cardin as among the national party's "leading fund raisers."<sup>14</sup> His cousin and ex-law partner is Benjamin Cardin, U.S. Representative from Maryland.<sup>15</sup>

## Philadelphia

W.C. Fields used to talk about winning a contest where the first prize was one week in Philadelphia and the second was two weeks. Perhaps because reporters dread going to a city they consider the most boring place on the planet, the town's sleazy politics are not well known elsewhere. However, in December 1986, the *Times* ran a story about the conviction of two local Republicans for bribery and threw in a quickie paragraph about how a

prosecution witness . . . who worked closely with State Senator Eugene F. Scanlan, at the time the Democratic minority whip, testified under a plea agreement that he had discussed the conspiracy with the Democratic minority leader, Jim Mandrino.<sup>16</sup>

In February 1987, the paper printed a story about how 15 Philly judges had been suspended for taking \$300 each from two Mafia union locals. For good measure, a grand jury was also reported as declaring that "Employees have taken over the . . . Traffic Court and turned them into a private money-making business."<sup>17</sup> Councilman Leland Beloff was found guilty of involving himself in a \$1 million Mafia shakedown of a developer. But, not to worry. The Democratic Party stayed loyal. Just before his trial, it endorsed him for reelection. "I was in Councilman Beloff's shoes once and nobody deserted me," said Ray Lederer, an ex-congressman convicted during the earlier Abscam scandal.<sup>18</sup>

## The Cajun King

It would be difficult to say for certain which is the most corrupt state Democratic Party. But Louisiana could never be overlooked



in such an inquiry. Too many officials have been convicted there to think otherwise.

Louisiana state politics don't get into the national papers very often. But when they do, it is for an indictment or conviction. The number of Louisiana Democratic pols to go to the joint has really been incredible. In recent years, the attorney general, an agriculture commissioner, and two aides, a congressman, the former State Senate President, and the governor's chief administrator, among others, have done time.

Ex-Governor Edwin Edwards, "the Cajun king," was investigated 13 times and indicted twice, for the same crimes, beating them before juries. But that didn't mean he wasn't a crook. It just meant there was always somebody on the juries who liked him.

The August 14, 1985 *Los Angeles Times* ran a story on him. Naturally, he denied being a thief. But he joked that "lying is a big part of my job." Bella Stumbo, who did the story, wrote that "he openly admits that he sometimes draws a very fine line between what's legally right and wrong." He said of charges that he sold state jobs for contributions that

I didn't put prices on offices—they (contributors) did. They'd make overtures about some job or another, and I'd simply say "Well, that sounds good to me," or "I'll look into it." Then later I'd just say it didn't work out. People hear what they want to hear.

In 1971, he received illegal contributions from big business: "Well, maybe it was illegal for them to give, but not for me to receive." They could go on investigating and indicting him until doomsday cometh. Edwards didn't care. "On any jury in Louisiana, at least eight of the 12 are gonna be Edwards' voters. And *they* gotta convince all 12. *I* only have to convince one."

Huey Long, the ultimate populist, assassinated in 1935 while governor, is still the state's folk hero. He used to lay it on the line:

People say I steal. Well, all politicians steal. I steal. But a lot of what I stole has spilled over in no-toll bridges, hospitals . . . and . . . this university.<sup>19</sup>

Edwards was in this robbin' hood populist tradition. He was the first Louisiana governor to appoint any blacks to important

positions and by the end of his reign there were dozens of blacks in high office. Almost half of his cabinet were women. He ultimately lost, in the October 1987 primaries, because of a sharp fall off of white support. But the state's black legislators loved him until he was defeated. In his mind, the state's blacks were not only a crucial political base, but he was obviously counting on them to keep him out of the penitentiary by their presence on juries. Accordingly, he suddenly became a Jesse Jackson supporter.

Jackson had carried the state in the 1984 primaries, against Mondale, whom Edwards backed. But, in May 1987, Jackson showed up to win a few votes, populist style. Jesse called for a \$10 per barrel oil import tax, popular in an oil producing state suddenly seeing its economy disintegrate in the wake of the collapse of OPEC's attempt to regulate world-wide prices. After congratulating Jackson on this ingenious proposal, which would have raised the price every American would have had to pay for an essential commodity, Edwards all but endorsed him, only not doing it explicitly so as not to hurt his campaign "since I have problems of my own." But an endorsement it was, as clearly understood by Jackson:

"A sitting governor's endorsement has many assets. And the upside is significantly greater than the downside," he said. "It broadens our base because he represents a coalition of people and interests who will go along with him."<sup>20</sup>

The black pols were not the only ones to swallow Edwards whole. At the height of the prosecutions, in 1985, Victor Bussie, head of the state AFL-CIO, categorically declared: "He's *not* dishonest—this is a *witch hunt*, pure and simple!"

Yeah. Except that there was brother Marion, Edwin's chief fund-raiser. He was also a lobbyist for a big oil-sulfur outfit that did lots of state business. His office was just a quick stroll from the governor's. Listen to him condemn himself and, by implication, his brother:

is favoritism wrong? . . . Take pencils. The state's gotta buy 'em. Now the legal way of doing it is to give it to a person with the low bid. But every time you need a pencil, you can't advertise 30

days and wait 10 and then have a bill put in. So, what they do is—let's say one of your good friends and supporters is a pencil supplier, and one person that doesn't like you is a pencil supplier, and they both have the same price. They choose a friend, and then the outside world wants to call that corruption! So it is favoritism! Is favoritism wrong?<sup>21</sup>

So there it was, the perfect populist hustle. Give a few dozens of blacks, women, maybe a few deserving union piecards, a chance to get their maws into the mush, and your brother could openly work for the oil industry, the power in the state. You didn't have to worry about gettin' caught with a few extra cookies. There were lots of blacks, women, unionists on juries. You never did anything for them. But you did something for someone like them. When the snooty papers and the prosecutor came up with evidence, it only took one jerk on the jury to tell them to go fuck themselves.

But, alas, all good things end. Well, not all good things. Edwards is gone. But not the Louisiana Democratic Party. He was beaten by Buddy Roemer, a conservative much beloved of the respectable newspapers. As a Representative, Roemer was a "boll weevil." In 1985, he tied for first place among Democrats voting for Reagan's proposals and against his own party. Incredibly, this ultra-rightist ran as a "revolutionary," a reformer who turned down PAC dough. However, *The New York Times* was more than a bit sceptical:

Mr. Roemer may seem as odd a reformer as he is a revolutionary. His background is in old school Louisiana politics. His father, Charles Roemer, was once Mr. Edward's Commissioner of Administration and was convicted on corruption charges and sent to prison.<sup>22</sup>

Roemer's administration will have less blacks, women, less union input than Edwards'. That these elements were able to come together, even to back Edwards, shows they can be the real power in the land, even in what was once the benighted southland. But their defeat was inevitable, given their tie-in with Edwards, whose corruption provided a rallying point for the right. As a result, the image of populist control in Louisiana is now no better than it was 50 years ago under Long: a caricature of social change.



## **As It Was in the Beginning, So It Is Now, So the Party Ever Shall Be**

This chapter, and the four preceding, paint an ugly picture of the Democratic Party. To be sure, not every Democratic mayor is as sleazy as Barry. Not every one has a motor mouth like Koch. Only Bradley is known to be so degraded as to have given a key to a South African. Only Sawyer is a certified Uncle Tom. But these are the four most important cities in the country, all run by Democrats and all infested with grafters.

California and New York are the two most populous states. Neither state party shows any sign of voluntarily reforming. The wish of an enormous percentage of Democratic voters for Cuomo to enter the 1988 race had nothing to do with reality. They were discontented with the other candidates. Given the invincible naivety of these unpolitical folks, they think he would stand up to a system they are not part of, and which they do not begin to understand. Cuomo talks vague populist politics, about the party of Roosevelt, Kennedy and compassion. They project their equally airy notions onto him. But we know Mario means Andrew and influence peddling.

Not every Democratic representative took a pay increase. But most did and were part of a conspiracy to deceive the public. Again, not every representative is a grafter. But it is obvious that the Democratic leaders are in cahoots with a gang of Texas S&L hustlers. And it is equally obvious the House will do nothing to clean itself up unless the press puts their feet to the fire. And although we hear occasional noises from the Democrats in the Senate about campaign reform, no one is expecting the PACs to go out of business shortly. Nor can we forget that every penny the party takes from the Zionists has blood all over it.

And go it goes. Is there any possibility of internal reform? We see the resistance of the New York State legislative Democrats. Don't wait for Mario to say anything critical of Andrew. Bradley shows no sign of even acknowledging that he did anything wrong in giving that key to the South African. There were two campaign reform propositions on the June California ballot. One was put on by three legislators, a Democrat, a Republican and an independent. It would regulate any election in the state. Individuals would be limited to \$1,000 contributions, PACs to \$2,500, and broad

PACs with 100 donors (with no limit as to how much each could give *to the PAC*) could give \$5,000 to candidates. But the catch is that the limits are for each fiscal year. State Senators serve for four years. Each one could receive \$4,000 per individual. There would be no cap on campaign spending. Common Cause and some Democratic strategists have a proposition that only effects legislative races (the party totally dominates the state's major cities). Its donation limits, \$1,000 per individual, \$2,500 per PAC, and \$5,000 per small-contributor PAC (\$50 top), are for each election, i.e., Senators could only get \$1,000 per individual. There would be campaign spending limits. There would be additional public financing, coming from a taxpayer's checkoff. Clearly this will only limit the influence of rich individuals and PACs, but will not abolish it. And of course, Willie and the others can go right on lawyerin' for the powers-that-be, and taking honorariums from whomsoever they can.

In short, whether the party wins or loses in 1988, it is not going to fundamentally change. In 1987, Robert Kuttner, economics correspondent for *The New Republic*, came out with a book, *The Life of the Party* which called for the Democrats to return to its good ol' progressive traditions. Yes. The party is going to do that. Any minute now. Except that the real traditions are Southern racism, cold-war anti-Communism, Tammany Hall and all the other grafters. Kuttner, like all party liberals, lives in an unreal past. Just as the party of Roosevelt was both the party of Social Security and the concentration camps for the Japanese Americans, so the party of Kennedy was also the party of the Chicago machine. And just as the liberals deceive themselves and exclude Roosevelt's racism for their idealized conception of him, so too they just don't want to think about the grafters in the present party. For both good and bad reasons, they desperately want to defeat the Republicans in 1988. The liberals want an end of war in Central America and an end to budget cuts of programs for the poor. And they sense that their party is dying. Defeat in 1988 will push it that much closer towards its grave.

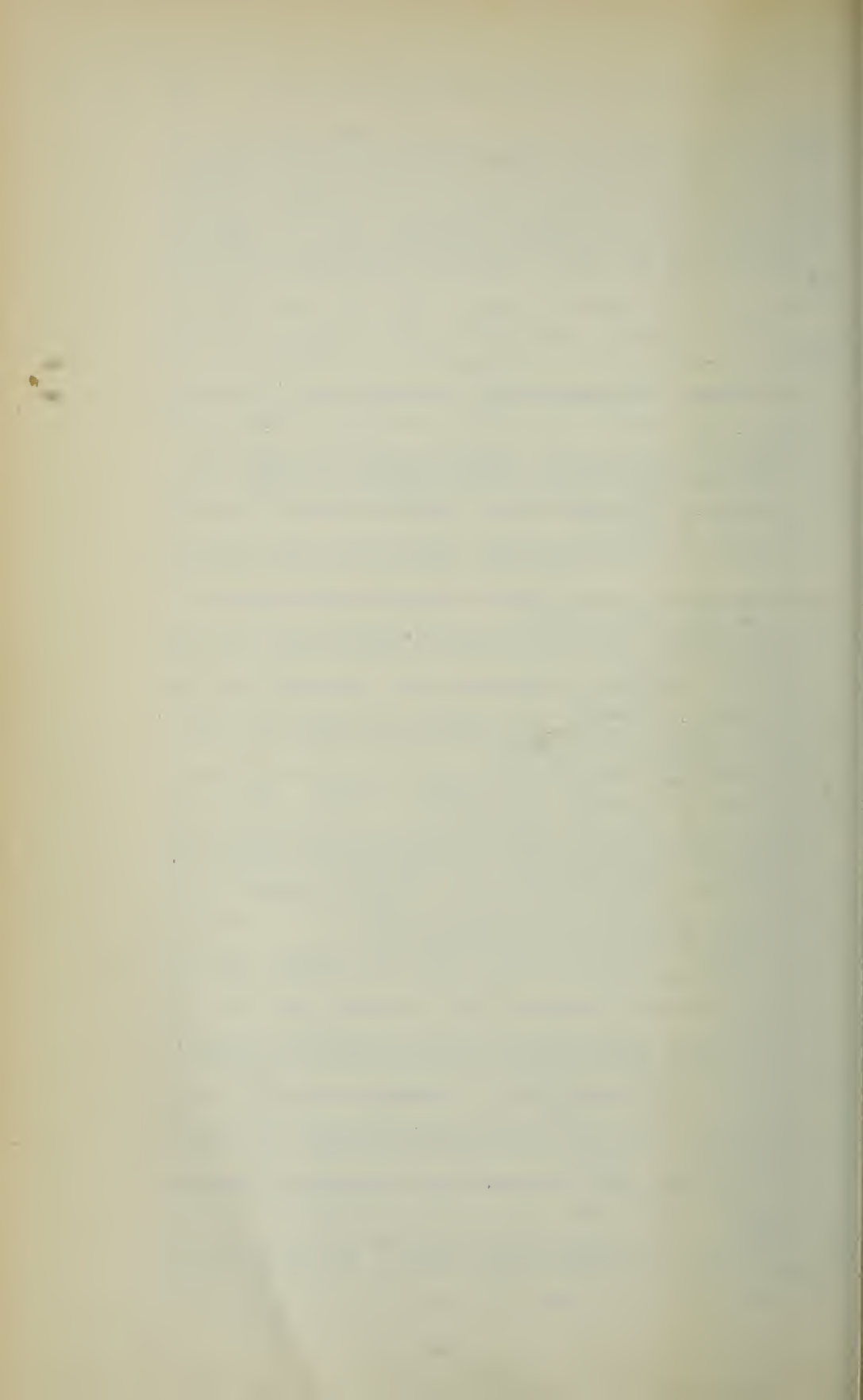
How then can anyone expect any Democratic candidate to denounce the corruption within the party? Does anyone think any candidate for President will turn down Barry's endorsement, or Sawyer's, or Koch's? Does anyone expect a party hungry for power to turn down the PAC money that Kuttner knows drives it to the right? Of course not. Why should it cry out against the

crooks? Why should it refuse to take legal bribes from the rich? The liberals will not walk out if it conducts business as usual. They too will conduct business as usual. Their mouths will never stop running about the problems of the poor. And then come election Tuesday they will vote for Dopey the Democrat, as the lesser evil.

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### PART III

# The Rank and File of the Party

## CHAPTER 11

### Meet the Folks

Foreigners have difficulty in even beginning to understand the American political parties. To be sure, there are varying kinds of parties abroad, but a typical party has local clubs with dues. And there is no other democratic government that intervenes so directly into the internal affairs of parties as do our states, which establish what might best be called public voting qualifications for primaries and caucuses. Anyone can register as Democrat in, say, Illinois. The party can not put up any minimum dues requirement or demand adherence to any principle. Thus we have seen the spectacle of followers of the notorious crackpot Lyndon LaRouche winning primaries for obscure positions on the state-wide slate, forcing the party's gubernatorial candidate to nominally set up a new party so as not to be forced to run with the loons. In some states, registered members of rival parties can cross over and vote in so called open primaries. The result is that the only way to get a profile of the nebulous ranks is via polls.

America is fortunate. True, for several decades, its leaders, Democrat and Republican, alike have been criminals, even murderers. True, its liberals have repeatedly voted for them. But it does have many serious journalists and its pollsters are excellent.

Everyone knows of the pollsters' Truman-Dewey fiasco. But that was decades ago, and they have refined their craft since. They know the American people and they are honest, unlike the politicians.

In 1984, *The New York Times*/CBS Poll compared the delegates to the Democratic and Republican conventions to the ranks of their supporters.

	<i>Democratic delegates</i>	<i>All Democrats</i>	<i>Republican delegates</i>	<i>All Republicans</i>
Liberals	50%	25%	1%	12%
Moderates	42%	45%	35%	44%
Conservatives	5%	24%	60%	40%
Male	50%	43%	56%	50%
Female	50%	57%	44%	50%
<i>Family income</i>				
Less than \$12,500	3%	22%	2%	11%
\$12,500-\$24,999	12%	35%	8%	34%
\$25,000-\$34,999	18%	24%	12%	25%
\$35,000-\$50,000	25%	14%	21%	18%
\$50,000 +	42%	5%	57%	11%
<i>Education</i>				
High School or less	11%	72%	12%	60%
Some college	18%	16%	25%	19%
College graduates	20%	12% *	28%	21% *
More than college	51%		35%	
<i>Religion</i>				
Protestant	53%	60%	71%	70%
Catholic	32%	35%	22%	24%
Jewish	9%	3%	2%	1%
<i>Ethnicity</i>				
Black	18%	21%	4%	4%
Hispanic	7%	7%	4%	5%
<i>Age</i>				
18-29	8%	26%	4%	32%
30-44	45%	26%	27%	26%
45-60	38%	31%	60%	24%
65 +	6%	17%	9%	18% <sup>1</sup>

\* Figures include college graduates and those with graduate study or degrees.

In his book, *The Jesse Jackson Phenomenon*, Adolph Reed, Jr., gave us an even more detailed breakdown of the economic and educational levels of the delegates, based on further information



from a June 1984 CBS News survey.

<u>Income</u>	<u>Mondale</u>	<u>Hart</u>	<u>Jackson</u>
Less than \$12,500	2%	4%	5%
\$12,500-\$24,999	12%	15%	16%
\$25,000-\$34,999	19%	19%	17%
\$35,000-\$49,999	24%	21%	24%
\$50,000-\$79,999	16%	14%	18%
\$75,000-\$100,000	7%	6%	3%
\$100,000 +	8%	9%	5%
Unspecified over \$35,000	8%	6%	8%
Declined to state	5%	5%	4%

<u>Education</u>	<u>Mondale</u>	<u>Hart</u>	<u>Jackson</u>
Less than high school	2%	0%	1%
High School	17%	4%	3%
Some College	20%	16%	15%
College Graduate	19%	27%	25%
Lawyer	12%	21%	13%
MD or dentist	0%	1%	1%
Ph.D.	3%	4%	6%
M.A.	20%	19%	27%
Some post-graduate	5%	7%	7%
Refused to specify	2%	1%	1% <sup>2</sup>

There is no reason to believe that the statistics for either party's 1988 convention will be substantially different from the 1984 figures. Again, the Republican delegates will be disproportionately rich, white, male and substantially older than their followers. A classic sociology for a conservative party. The Democrats are unmistakably ethnically different. If 90% of voting blacks are Democrats, blacks are still only 12.1% of the population. Thus the party has a disproportion of blacks. But the 3% differential between their percentage of the voters and the delegates is not really important. Jackson complained that the primary rules in many states, requiring a candidate to get a 20% vote minimum to get any of the delegates, worked against him, which they certainly did. But those rules had been in place before the contest and were not racially motivated: The Hispanics are likewise a greater percentage in the party than among the people, and their delegate share was on target.

As Jews are only 2.54% of Americans, and as only roughly 66% of them are Democrats, the 9% for their portion of the delegates is further evidence that Jews are disproportionately influential and active within the party. However, they are not any

kind of monolith on any question other than on Israel, so that not too much stress should be placed on their delegate numbers. They were in fact in all the rival camps, with even a few among the Jackson contingent. Whether as liberals, or as lawyers on the make, as befits our government by lawyer, most Jews were strictly foot soldiers. It is only the real estate men, the investment bankers and the AIPAC hacks who have real power, and that lies in their money, not their numbers.

The slightly lower delegate count than population toll for Protestants and Catholics was not too significant. The lower percentages should probably be explained by the fact that most of these Christian Democratic supporters are workers and are basically non-political, in comparison to the much better educated Jews.

The disproportion between the percentage for delegates pulling down over \$50,000, 42%, as against only 5% for the party's following, as well as the figures at the other end of the class spectrum, 3% for delegates making less than \$12,500 in contrast to a huge 22% among supporters, tells it all as to the class nature of the party. Essentially, it is a party of the rich and middle class, 42% and 25%, claiming to speak in the name of the 57% of its partisans who make less than \$24,999. To be sure, the tilt toward the rich is not quite as glaring as with the Republicans. But the figures are there. It is no party of the workers, by the workers and for the workers.

### **The Patriotic Populists**

After the 1984 election, the *Times*/CBS Poll did a breakdown of the Presidential vote. As we know, Mondale and Ferraro were plastered in that race, so the votes for them represented the low point of party strength. And many who voted for Reagan supported a Democrat in local contests. Later, in 1986, substantial numbers of Democrats who went for Reagan voted for Democrats. Nevertheless, the 1984 vote clearly demonstrated the near across the board minority status of the party.

Ninety percent of blacks voted for Mondale, and 65% of Hispanics. But only 34% of whites. Only 26% of white Protestants voted Democrat, as compared to 44% of Catholics and 66% of Jews. Only 46% of blue collar workers backed Mondale, and only 40% of white collars supported him. But 53% of union households voted for Mondale, and 68% of the unemployed.

Eighteen percent of Carter's 1980 voters preferred Reagan in 1984 (as did 29% of Anderson's partisans). Twenty-six percent of all Democrats voted for him. Thirty-one percent of white Democrats supported him. Of those for Mondale in the primaries, only 4% voted for Reagan, only 6% of Jackson's backers, but 34% of Hart's voters jumped to the Republican.<sup>3</sup>

In 1980, polls showed that Democrats were 46% of the people compared to 24% for the Republicans. By 1986, the Democrats dropped to 39% but have been gaining in the wake of Irangate. A September 1987 Gallup poll showed nominal Democrats outnumbered Republicans by 42% to 30%. However, it is quite clear things haven't gotten that much better for the Democrats. A *Times*/CBS poll immediately after the October 1987 stock market crash showed that 38% of Democrats felt that the Republicans were fielding a better group of potential presidential candidates.<sup>4</sup> Another such poll, in November 1987, reported that Bob Dole had a higher rating among Democrats, 29% favorable, than any Democrat.<sup>5</sup> A December 1987 Gallup poll of California voters showed that although Democrats were 35% of the registered voters as opposed to only 26% for the GOP, when asked if they considered themselves Republicans or Democrats, 36% said they were Republicans and only 31% said Democrats.<sup>6</sup>

We can best appreciate why there are so many Reagan Democrats if we look at one of the most important polls ever taken. In September 1987, the Gallup Organization reported the results of an immense in-depth survey of the American people. The poll of no less than 4,244 interviews showed that the traditional categories—Republican, Democrat, liberal, conservative—had largely lost their meaning. Instead, Gallup found that the public was divided into 11 groupings. Each major party had the support of four such elements, and two of the remaining independent groups leaned toward each party, with one contingent being unpolitical. While I propose to discuss the Democrats and the Democratic leaning in greater depth, all the categories will be of interest to the reader.

The first Republican factor are the "Enterprisers." They are 10% of the population, but 16% of potential voters. They are affluent, 99% white, mostly of Northern European background. They are suburban and educated, usually enjoying classical music. They voted 96% for Reagan in 1984 and 89% Republican in 1986. These are the Scrooge McDucks of America. They



oppose spending on public health care or aiding the homeless and are against projects to help the elderly. They support Star Wars and Contra aid. But they oppose abortion restrictions and don't want to quarantine AIDS victims. Their information level is "very high."

Equally crucial for the Republicans are the "Moralists." They make up 11% of the people, 14% of possible voters. They are middle income, with a large proportion in the South. They are 94% white, and are regular church goers, many being "born-again." They are almost the flip side of the Enterprisers. They are intensely against abortion, very pro-praying in the schools, want to isolate AIDS patients, and favor the death penalty. They are gung-ho anti-Communists, strongly pro-defense. But they favor governmental spending on social programs, unless they are targeted for blacks. They voted 97% for Reagan and 95% Republican in 1986. Their informational level is "average."

Nine percent of the folks are "Upbeats," and they are also 9% of perspective voters. They are under 40, middle income, with little or no college, and are 94% white. Very patriotic and quite optimistic. But they differ from the other GOP groups in that they are not opposed to government intervention in the economy. They give "moderate" support to Star Wars. But they are against Contra aid as they fear it will lead to military intervention in Central America. They voted 84% for Reagan but only 64% Republican in 1986. Their information level is average. Culturally, they are rock 'n roll fans, and have the "highest readership of romance novels."

A very alienated group are the "Disaffecteds." Nine percent of the populace, they are only 7% of potential voters. They are middle-aged, frequently mid-westerners, and middle income, although they say they are feeling personal financial pressure. Unemployment and the deficit are their top political concerns. They are "strongly anti-government and anti-business." But they support government social spending unless it is for blacks. They divide on abortion. However, they are hot for the death penalty and violently against gun control. Which makes sense in as much as they are the stratum with the highest percentage of hunters, and they are pro-military. They voted 81% for Reagan, but only 57% Republican in 1986. Their favorite music is country and western and their information level is average. What is distinctive about them is that they have no political heroes, unlike every

other element in the poll.

By all odds, the most morbid component of the American people are the "Bystanders." They are 11% of all Americans, one out of nine. They never vote. They are usually under 30, 82% white, 13% black, often unmarried. They are poorly educated and frequently their pastime is "going to clubs and discos." They are distinguished by an "almost total lack of interest in current affairs" and most of them don't care who is President. In so far as they can be said to have a politics, they are concerned about unemployment, poverty and the bomb. They are vaguely pro-Democratic, 34% to 29%. Readers will be thrilled to know these narcissists will become an ever greater proportion of the people as older members of other groupings die off.

Seven percent of the folks are "Followers." But they are only 5% of would-be vote fodder in as much as they have "a very limited interest" in politics. They are also young, again meaning they will be an increasing proportion of the people. They are poorly educated, blue collars, mostly in the East and South. They are indifferent to religion, and while mostly white, 18% of them are Hispanic and 25% are black. They are basically unpolitical, and have "little faith in America" while they are "surprisingly uncritical of both government and business." They lean Democratic, oppose Star Wars and favor spending to cut unemployment. On every other question they divide down the middle. They voted 54% for Reagan, but 65% Democrat in 1986. Their information level is low. They "are the least likely to exercise regularly or read for pleasure." And they are "very persuadable and unpredictable."

"Seculars" are 8% of the population, 9% of the electorate. They are well educated, white, 11% Jewish, middle-aged professionals mostly found on the East and West Coasts. They are committed to personal freedom, opposing school prayers and any anti-abortion legislation or weakening environmental regulation. They want to spend less money on the military and are opposed to Star Wars. They are very concerned about the deficit. They have a definite middle class aspect however in that they are opposed to increased aid to farmers or blacks and they prefer such self-serving programs as financial aid to college students. Although they voted 66% for Mondale and 74% Democrat in 1986, "only a minority of Seculars think of themselves as Democrats." Their information level is very high and nearly half are



regular theater, ballet and classic music buffs.

Only one of the Gallup groups is majority female. The "'60s Democrats," 8% of the people, 11% of voters, and 60% women. They are well educated, married with children, and are 16% black. The group favors social spending, including spending money on blacks. They feel the U.S. is overly suspicious of the Soviets. They identify with the '60s movements. They differ from the Seculars in that they are churchgoers. But they are very tolerant of Gays and opinions they disagree with. Their information level is very high and in fact they are heavy readers. Seventy-five percent of them voted for Mondale and 85% voted Democrat in 1986.

Eleven percent of adult Americans and 15% of voters are "New Dealers." Of these, 66% are over 50, 29% are Catholics, not too many live out West. They are blue collar, unionists, living on moderate incomes but not under financial pressure. They are religious, want restrictions on abortion, believe in school prayer and are "intolerant on questions of personal freedom." They don't care much about environmental questions, but favor social layouts except when aimed at blacks. They are trade protectionists and favor Star Wars. They made a substantial move toward Reagan in 1984, with 30% voting for him. But they went back to the Democrats in 1986, with 92% voting for the party's candidates. Although the poll defines their information level as average, it will tell us what average in America really means when we realize that they are "heavy television viewers, especially game shows, nighttime soaps and religious shows. Prefer country and western music."

The "Passive Poor" are 7% of the population, only 6% likely voters. They are older, poorly educated, largely southern, 31% black, poor but feel "only moderate financial pressure." They favor every kind of social spending, and tax increases. They support Star Wars and are against cutting the military budget. They would relax environmental regulations to provide jobs. They are "moderately" anti-abortion. Thirty-one percent voted for Reagan, but only 17% voted Republican in 1986. They are heavy television watchers. Their information level is low. And they are "uncritical" of America's "institutions and leadership."

The "Partisan Poor" are the most Democratic elements in the country. They are 9% of both the population and voters. They are 37% black, have low incomes and very much feel the pinch.



They "have a strong faith that the Democratic Party can achieve the social changes they want to see." They support all social spending, but oppose raising taxes. Unemployment is their most important issue. They want military spending cut. They are backward on individual rights. They are divided on abortion, but favor school prayers. They favor the death penalty. Eighty-one percent for Mondale in 1984, they were 95% for the Democrats in 1986. Their information level is low, they are light readers and heavy TV viewers.<sup>7</sup>

It is possible to see several patterns among Democrats in this excellent survey. The Seculars and the '60s Democrats are the best off economically and educationally. They stand together in their classical liberalism regarding individual rights, and they share a peace-oriented foreign policy agenda. Their differences as to minority entitlements are often primarily due to gender. The women have seen an immense transformation of their work status. Many have been the beneficiaries of affirmative action for women. But, aside from these two up-scale elements, the rest of the Democrats' mass constituencies are characterized by ignorance, folk religious fanaticism and mindless patriotism.

Nothing is more beautiful to behold than the poor standing up for their rights. And nothing is more depressing than watching them wallow in the mire of their ignorance. The New Dealers, eyes glued to the boob tube; ditto the Passive Poor, and the Partisan Poor, along with the Followers, who rarely read. The New Dealers and the Passive Poor are against legal abortion. The New Dealers and Partisan Poor for prayers in the schools. Does anyone doubt that their reactionary position on prayer, opposed to nearly unanimous Supreme Court decisions against it, is a direct result of their lack of education. Or that this was due to their low economic status in their youth?

Thus we see, it is primarily uneducated white worker Democrats who combine Star Wars boxing-fan nationalism with vague populist wishes. A *Times*/CBS poll shows 83% of Democrats believe Washington should "guarantee medical care for all people." Seventy-seven percent believe government should "see to it that everyone who wants a job has a job." Sixty-eight percent want politicians to "see to it that day care and after-school care for children are available."<sup>8</sup> But 99% of the 83% never lift finger one to get national health insurance. Certainly, the Democrats never tried to mobilize millions for it.

In any society, it is the ideology of the dominant class which is the ideology of the people. When they reject it, the polity is in a socio-political revolutionary crisis. But the last mass national white worker militancy was the strike wave immediately after WWII. Hence, no union experience within decades has brought most of them into conflict with the system. Not individually educated enough to read on their own and therefore to become aware of the realities behind patriotism without the impetus of a mass movement in the society mobilizing folks like them for workerist demands, they intellectually and politically fester in their jingoist cul-de-sac.

The Democrats lost Democratic votes to Reagan for several reasons, not least the soaring inflation during Carter's administration, and then, in 1984, the Ferraro-Zaccaro affair. But Reagan also played on their primordial anti-Communism. Naturally Mondale, a practiced political panderer, bowed to the same wooden-headed idol of national security in an atomic age. Economically, he came on as a goldbug Democrat, instead of countering Ronnie Rambo with national health insurance, which would have attracted voters with its profound gains for millions.

The answer as to which way the Democrats' loose cannons will shoot in 1988 is best left to prophets. But certain factors are always true. As even fools love money, the Republicans can win if the economy holds up. Especially as the Democrats' rout before Olliemania revealed their impotence in utilizing the Irangate investigations' exposé of Reagan's secret government against him, much less the Republican Party. With or without an economic downturn, the Democrats will once again try to capitalize on whatever level of economic discontent exists against the GOP. But, except for Jackson, they made little sustained effort to identify with workers in strike battles. And, in practice, even Jackson's efforts reduced down to talks at picket lines, at least as much for the purpose of getting votes as to help them get needed publicity. A recession or depression would automatically push votes towards them. And the Republicans without Reagan leading the charge will not have the appeal he had in 1984. But if there is a shift, it will really be a move away from the right, discredited by Irangate and the PTL scandal, rather than any sudden feeling on the voters' part that the Democrats are some kind of progressive alternative.



## **What You Put into Your Kettle Comes Back in Your Spoon**

Extraordinary qualities in American culture operated to prevent mass development of factual social awareness. The immense relative wealth and power of America after WWII produced a society capable of satisfying mass markets for pleasure. Fun, entertainment, travel, vacations, became industries on a par with iron and steel for number of employees and economic importance. Within the infinite world of pleasure is a cluster of what the Freudians call oral gratifications, common to rich and poor, and notorious for producing excess and even morbid symptoms in countless people.

The U.S. went from a customary pattern of lower class make-do-without to a new culture of near universal phones, radio, TV. America became a fabled land of Cockaigne, where you sniffed cocaine, went to a concert, stopped off at an all-night supermarket to pick up some munchies, came home, threw a tape into the VCR, and Charlie Chaplin rose from the dead to come all the way to your pad to entertain you and your girl friend after you smoked some weed and had sex.

As the pleasure bug bit into the younger and younger, whole industries arose to pander to the ultimate in puerile interests. Working class kids, coming from homes with thin culture in the first place, found themselves in a society full of arcade games, freaky barbershops and clothing stores, all eager to take their money. All play and no work made Jack into another dull boy. Now the Democrats, the party of the common people, must suffer the ultimate ignominy for any political party. They do so little to attract working class youth that they are losing millions of them to nothing more challenging than mindless punk rock.

Regression of orally fixated people towards apolitical narcissism is pandemic worldwide. Therefore, our Democrats bear guilt for no more than their fair share of the blame for the creation of the surreal psycho-pathologies rampant in modern A-murica. But their perpetual pandering to the low ideological level of the masses, their utter failure to advance the factual political consciousness of the lower stratum, was indisputably one of the prime factors that ultimately produced the alienation of tens of millions of Americans from the political world. Only 53.1% of adults voted in 1984. In the 1960s, the college over high school voting variable was +13% for 25-44 year old males. In the



1980s, it is +57%.<sup>9</sup> Manual laborers have increasingly stopped voting for a party which does little to nothing on their behalf.

This is not to say non-voters are in any large percentage more critical or realistic about the system than voters. To the contrary. Polls show non-voters have the same ideologies as voters, and would have voted in the same proportions for Reagan and the Democrats as others in their socio-economic niche, had they voted. Their not voting must be seen primarily as the most obvious symptom of the lack of magnetic power of the two antiquated capitalist parties.

### **When the Bland Lead the Bland, the People End Up in the Ditch**

Twentieth century America has seen few progressive mass eruptions onto the social stage. The CIO involved millions and it won significant gains for its members. But the fighting days of those unions are in the scrapbooks of some old timers. Those battles have become part of the country's folklore, but in today's what-have-you-done-for-me-lately world, they have suffered defeat after defeat, giveback after giveback. The lamb-like National Labor Committee is largely based on the bureaucratic leaders of some of the old CIO internationals. They supported an April 25, 1987, demonstration in Washington against U.S. intervention in Central America and for the blacks in South Africa. About 125,000 were there. Some estimates were that about 30,000 marched in union contingents. But the unions that endorsed the rally numbered about five million. If we further realize that many of those unionists came down from New York from a very few unions, like Union 1199 of the Hospital Workers and District Council 37 of the Municipal, State and County Workers, who habitually support such events, then it is all too plain that any kind of support for such protests is very thin in the national labor movement. In a sister demonstration, the same day, in San Francisco, 50,000 showed up. But the union contingent was no more than 1,500. Surely there were more unionists in the crowd, but they did not march with their unions because they identify more with some cause, which acts, and shows signs of life, rather than the stultified unions.

The civil rights struggle dramatically altered America. The gains were real and irreversible. But everyone knows the masses

went off the streets after segregation was destroyed. The hope behind the 1984 Jackson campaign, and then the anti-apartheid campaign, was to bring the people out of their tents and back to the field of battle. We will have much more to say anon about Jackson and his Rainbow Coalition, but for now it can simply be said that black mass involvement in determining the shape of their society is, at best, episodic, as with the demonstrations protesting Sawyer's election and the December 1987 disruption of the New York subways, as a protest against several racist incidents.

If the civil rights movement triggered off the immense social upheaval now known as "the '60s," it was the Vietnamese anti-war movement which ultimately had the most crippling effect on the system. The movement's fundamental base was the universities, but that scarcely made it into an elitist phenomenon. After WWII, the upper strata of the working class began to send their kids to college. And by the end of the war, the civilian movement impacted on the thinking of the ordinary grunt in Vietnam. Since then, anti-war activists have been a part of the nation's political discourse, to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the issue. Certainly there has been more opposition to U.S. involvement in Central America than in the Middle East. But even on the issue of Contra aid, which polls show is opposed by most Americans, the peace movement has not been able to produce anywhere near the numbers for demonstrations that it routinely generated in the '60s.

On June 12, 1982, the nuclear freeze movement put 700,000 demonstrators onto the streets of New York City. That was actually more people than in even the biggest Vietnam anti-war demonstration. But the rally led nowhere, due to lack of tenacity on the part of the freeze's leaders, virtually all Democrats. They have never again attempted to build another such massive national event. Similarly, there have been only a few significant feminist street mobilizations on behalf of the Equal Rights Amendment or in defense against attacks on abortion rights. Here, too, we see the dead hand of liberalism at the throttle.

What distinguishes all of these movements is that their most important successes were extra-electoral. The CIO organized sit-in strikes in some of the country's biggest factories and it was these triumphs which forced some concessions from the political structure. Certainly this was true of the civil rights movement, which won through illegal demonstrations and enormous riots. Again it was the giant street rallies which were the hallmark of

the anti-war movement.

With all of these movements, at all times the majority of their ranks were Democrats. But, as we have seen, Roosevelt turned his back on the CIO in its hour of need during the Republic Steel strike. Democrats jailed Democrats during the civil rights movement. The anti-war movement started as a protest against Kennedy's and then Johnson's escalations in Vietnam. And when these movements stopped being militant, it was always Democrats who counseled passivity and retreat. Lewis' asses were all Democrats, as are the Kirkland-Kahn gang today. Except for Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael, most of the '60s black leadership was Democratic. It was they who insisted the way to further black power lay through getting blacks, often themselves, elected as Democrats. Now, 20 year later, we see black Democrats in office in most of the major cities. Yet ordinary blacks are still nowhere near empowerment.

During the Vietnam anti-war movement, it was always Democrats who argued against organizing demonstrations during election campaigns. Better, they said, elect good liberals, who would then end the war. They ran and lost and, in the end, it was the combination of the military efforts of the Indochinese and the demonstrations here, which ended the war. The movement kept marching, against the wishes of the politicians, because its key organizers were radicals. Today, the peace movement is dominated by Jacksonites, more mainstream liberals, union picards and some failed leftists who have adapted to these Democrats. And, as must happen when the bland lead the bland, the movement is impotent.

### **Can We Make Wine Out of Water? If So, What Kind of Wine? And Can We Bottle It?**

In December 1987, Garry Trudeau had Zonker Harris inherit a seat in the British Lords. His maiden speech was a take off on a speech by Neil Kinnock, leader of the Labour Party, familiar to Americans because of Joe Biden's campaign plagiarisms. Kinnock had said

Why am I the first Kinnock in a thousand generations to be able to get to university? . . . Was it because our predecessors were thick? . . . Was it because they were weak, those people who



could work eight hours underground and then come up and play football, weak? . . . It was because there was no platform upon which they could stand.

Our fresh-minted peer, who only a few panels back had been drying his socks in his friend's toaster, gives the speech slightly differently

Why am I the first St. Austell-in-the-moor in a thousand generations to go to college? Was it because all my predecessors were weak? Weak? Those people who would work on their stamp collections eight hours a day, and then shoot quail for another four? Is that why they didn't go to college?

Whereupon a lord shouts out, "No! It was because they had no platform on which to stand!" And the American aristocrat candidly says "No! It was because they were airheads."<sup>10</sup> A comic genius like Trudeau realizes that if he is smart enough to expose the politics and life styles of the rich and famous, he is also smart enough to candidly comment on the life styles of the poor and stupid. But, when the people can vote, it is the height of bad politics to say the masses are asses. That's why it was left to our greatest cartoonist to say it. But there is a proverb: "Why deny what everyone knows?" So it is legitimate for us to ask *the* \$64,000 question: Given what we know of the history of mass political intervention, which routinely ends up with a return to passivity, can we hope a progressive movement can develop a serious base among Gallup's New Dealers and Followers and Passive and Partisan Poor—Trudeau's airheads?

It is ironic that we must ask such a question in the context of a discussion of the failings of the Democratic Party. Its very name presumes common people can intelligently run their government. Indeed, in traditional American political thought those who disparaged the masses were the Hamiltonians, those who championed their capacity to learn were the Jeffersonians. Prior to Jefferson, no important thinkers put faith in the unlettered. Shakespeare spoke for most of history's previous commentators in 2 Henry IV: "An habitation giddy and unsure hath he that buildeth on the vulgar heart." And certainly even today, at least here in America, no sensible person is going to challenge the old proverb when it says that "if you listen to most people, you will hunt rabbits in the sea."

As we have seen, Jefferson believed in votes for the masses, but never worked to get it. When universal white male suffrage came, it scarcely improved the quality of government. If anything, the emergence of corrupt city machines before the Civil War, and then the orgy of grafting after it, discredited both democracy and America.

Ultimately it became Marx, not Jefferson, who most of the world now identifies with the development of the notion of popular rule. It was because of Marx's materialist conception of history as an evolving process, ultimately based on the technological development of the forces of production, that he put his faith in the growing wage-earning class, rather than in the inexorably diminishing farmers as the repository of "republican virtue." Yet we must ask of Marx another Hamiltonian question: Where are your tigers? We see the lowest strata of the society in motion in Korea, Palestine, the Philippines and most graphically in South Africa. But they are being goaded by severe oppression. There is nothing here at present to provoke such deep-rooted mobilizations. Are we confronted with a tragedy? Is oppression the necessary precondition for popular liberation? And, in its absence, must we resign ourselves to perpetual American proletarian 'giddiness'?

### No to "Controlled Retreat"

There are several crucial differences between intellectuals and uneducated and politically inexperienced workers. Educated people can read the handwriting on the wall. They can understand that an event like the 508 point stock market drop in October 1987 is a sign that the chronic boom and bust cycles of the past have not finally been done away with.

Intellectuals also have the potential to generalize. Thus, the immense Palestinian general strike of December 1987 came as a surprise to the mainstream editorial pundits, who had solemnly buried the PLO. But it did not exactly startle anyone who realized that in this day and age no nationality will long endure the complete absence of civil rights.

By definition, this capacity for generalization of experience is lacking in the uneducated. Since they lack knowledge, they can not anticipate. With them it is as with the ancient maxim of Heraclitus: "Every beast is driven to the pasture with blows." And,

since they can not anticipate, the blows have to fall on their head, or someone they identify with, before they are ready to fight the system.

The ancient Roman ruling class understood that as long as the plebs had their bread and circuses, their domination was assured. TV has turned about half the people into year-round sports fans—fanatics—to call a shovel a shovel. But the marvels of the electronic computer age have wiped out job security for millions of Americans who are not trained for it. And even when jobs are available for uneducated workers, the capitalists have been systematically pressuring their workers to “give back” benefits, out of fear that their plant will close. It is this inability to guarantee “bread” that provides the possibility, but only the possibility, of pushing the “circus” fanatics into serious politics.

In 1985–86, a strike took place in Austin, a small Minnesota town near the Iowa line. Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers resisted a decrease in hourly wages from \$10.69 to \$8.75, with numerous other cuts in benefits and rights. The reductions came after Hormel, the meat-packing company, had suckered them, in 1978, into putting their incentive pay into escrow to provide the company with a loan to help it pay for a new plant in the town.

A new leadership had taken over the local after the 1978 give-backs, and it was determined to resist the new slashes. But William Wynn, the \$162,000 per year president of the UFCW, is a believer in what he calls “controlled retreat.”<sup>11</sup> From the beginning, the UFCW opposed the militants who led P-9. However, they fought on and brought in Ray Rogers and his Corporate Campaign, a New York outfit which digs up the financial backers behind such union busting companies’ decisions and mobilizes public pressure against those interests. Special editions of the local’s paper were distributed door-to-door in Austin to drum up hometown support. P-9 sent delegations to other packing house plants and to the broader union movement to get solidarity. They got the backing of farm organizations in the region, and they picketed the First Bank, which had close ties with Hormel.

In January 1986, Hormel started using scabs. But P-9 was successful in organizing picket lines that kept most of them out. This was too much for Wynn, who insisted the local call off the strike. And then, on January 20, Democratic Governor Rudy Perpich brought in the National Guard to escort the scabs across the



picket lines.

P-9 fought back by mobilizing unionists, in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area and nationally. Thousands of unionists went to Austin for solidarity rallies. Hundreds of thousands of dollars were donated by friendly locals. Where the bureaucrats were successful in keeping the unions from formally supporting the strike, rank and file workers raised money on the shop floor. The small local brought in representatives of other movements to show the broadness of its popular support. Leaders of the American Indian Movement, the National Organization of Women and farmer organizations became regular speakers at their rallies. This small-town, white local brought in Jesse Jackson as a speaker, began going to black churches in the South for support, and dedicated a giant new mural on the wall of its hall to Nelson Mandela, the leader of the African National Congress in South Africa.

Eventually the combined weight of the company, the UFCW bureaucracy and the Democrats' National Guard defeated the strikers. But only after they demonstrated that tens of thousands of ordinary folks all over the country were willing to donate money and rally on their behalf. Before the wage cuts, they had enjoyed a substantially higher income than typical American workers. A better-than-average number owned their own homes. Austin has a decent school system and they were more articulate than many other workers. But for all this, they were still very typical A-muricans. A photo in a pamphlet on the strike showed them marching, and every so often there is an American flag, a certain sign these folks were not worldly Seculars with season's tickets to the ballet.

To be sure, their new levels of consciousness vary from individual to individual. But there is no doubt they are no longer the same people they were before the strike. Many of them traveled around the country, speaking before union meetings, farmers, women, students, blacks, anti-war rallies, wherever they could get a hearing. Some of them surely waste their time watching the Super Bowl, but by now many of them have a far greater interest and—more important—knowledge of politics than many—nay, most—of those balletomanes. To be sure, most are still far from revolutionaries. Many will go no further than voting for Jackson in the Democratic primaries out of gratitude for his support. But that only tells us they have further to go. The key thing is they

have taken the first giant steps into serious politics.

The cutbacks that finally got them to stop "collecting stamps and hunting quail" are a razor at the throats of all unionists. Others are following in P-9's path. United Paperworkers International Union Local 14 and Firemen and Oilers Local 246 struck International Paper Company in Jay, Maine, on June 16, 1987. They also hired Rogers to help them wage militant struggles. The resistance to cut backs will be an uneven process, with setbacks along the way. Not all workers involved in forthcoming battles will generalize and go beyond bread-and-butter activism. And there is a qualitative leap from union militancy to electorally breaking with the employer parties. But they are aided by the sarcasm of the press towards the "seven dwarfs." And the party will lose more appeal as strikers run up against Democratic officials, their police and National Guard.

### **Flies Fear a Boiling Pot**

If the inevitability of economic crisis and increased class struggle is easy to foretell, no amount of future-music should divert us from present realities: the mass base of the Democratic Party is an apathetic and ignorant working class. It does not challenge the control by the rich of either the Democratic Party or the greater society. The Jackson campaign may appear to contradict this, but as shall be shown below, this is an illusion—indeed an illusion that confirms the somber reality. At any rate, the titular leaders of that working class, the fat and stately asses of labor, outdid their usual selves in mindless adherence to the party in the 1988 campaign.

After the 1984 Mondale debacle, the party apparatus decided to stop the nonsense, if it could, of pretending to be a party of the poor and exploited. They determined to move the party to the right, and they started by explaining away the defeat by blaming it on a most peculiar collection of "special interests." Until recent years, the term meant the rich. But for Paul Kirk, the new chairman of the party, it came to mean the AFL-CIO, NOW, blacks and gays. In short, all forces unpopular with the New Dealers and other white party constituencies in the Midwest and South. According to Kirk and his co-thinkers, these A-muricans had decided that the party was more interested in these special interests than in them, and voted for Ronnie. Therefore, he asked

the AFL-CIO not to endorse any candidate in advance of the 1988 primaries, so that he would not be identified as beholden to labor.

Lane Kirkland and his fellow asses will go for a great deal. But not that. In reality, everyone knows they will take whomsoever the party nominates, unless he publically deflowers underage, unconsenting sheep. But they could never accept being told to shut up and do exactly what they always do. However, a problem emerged. They had no trouble picking Mondale as their man. He was an old "friend of labor" whom they had been dealing with as a national party leader ever since the '60s. None of the 1988 field of would-be nominees got that kind of automatic allegiance.

They summoned the contenders down to their Winter 1986 Florida convention. Richard Gephardt had his fans. The asses are dead-end nationalists and their answer to the problems of multinationals picking up and setting up shop in South Korea, and foreign imports in general, is a never ending "buy American" campaign. Since this gets them nowhere, they support the Missouri Representative's bill to put surcharges and other restrictions on countries with large trade surpluses with the U.S. that don't end so-called unfair trade practices. But even with his bill, Gephardt couldn't really turn them on. The asses are easily pleased with a demagogue who knows how to really come on as a friend of labor, and the most gifted at saying what pleased them was honest Joe Biden, to whom they gave a standing ovation.<sup>12</sup> But not even he could get the two-thirds needed for endorsement.

They finally decided that there was no chance for anyone to get that two-thirds, at least while there were so many candidates in the field, so they declared for a new labor strategy. They would encourage unions to try to get as many of their members elected delegates on as many of the rivals' slates as they could. Then, Kirkland calculated, when none of the contenders wins on the first ballot, the labor delegates would caucus and pick the most acceptable tiger. In 1984, there were 600 laborite delegates out of 3,900, and if they were to so unite, they would in fact be a weighty force.

But will they ever unite in this fashion? It was understood by all commentators that, unless he were to do something absolutely stupid, Jackson was certain to come into the convention with the largest or second largest contingent. However, even if Kirkland denies it, when he said they should pick one candidate to unite



behind on the second ballot, he most definitely does not want Jackson as the party candidate in November. Kirkland doubtlessly believes it is impossible at this time to elect a black. And he desperately wants a Democratic victory. In effect, Kirkland wants the black unionists present to dump Jackson for a white. That they will never do as long as Jackson doesn't make a deal on his own.

There are other reasons why Kirkland doesn't want Jackson, even though Jackson is at least as pro-union as any Democratic candidate has ever been. Kirkland represents the virtually all-white, all-male international union presidents, at a time when blacks are about 30% of union membership and when women are an increasing proportion of the ranks. If Jesse won the nomination, to say nothing of the presidency, it would absolutely encourage black middle rank union leaders to run against their own white top bureaucrats. Additionally, Kirkland is absolutely committed to a dead-end policy of fighting the Soviets throughout the world labor movement. And he is body and soul with Zionism. As we shall see, Jackson moved to the right between 1984 and 1988. But not so far that he could be counted on to carry out such a rightist line, on the off-chance he would win in November.

Readers might ask why hasn't it occurred to the AFL-CIO to run a union leader for the nomination? We have seen Jackson get enormous support from blacks just by running in the party. Certainly, most feminists backed Ferraro in 1984. Why doesn't the AFL-CIO run, say, Kirkland? After all, he was elected to head the labor movement, which is by far the largest non-religious organization in the country.

The answer is that these other elements rallied behind their candidates because they were frustrated and wanted to win, or at least put pressure on the system for their cause. Kirkland, on the other hand, fully shares Wynn's strategy of "controlled retreat." A union candidate running might stir up the ranks to make demands within the unions for a more active policy. And bureaucrats, like flies, fear a boiling pot.

This is not a pretty picture. I suspect that many people will be more emotionally willing to accept my description of the upper strata of the party than this stark analysis of its ranks. The democratic illusions we all acquired in the schools seem to serve deep psychological needs within most people. It is bad enough to know that we the people have no more say in the running of our

government than the mice in the walls of the White House. But to think realistically about most Americans as political airheads means to shed the fantasy that there can be any kind of quick fix of the situation. You can believe that if the Democrats return to power that the people will be better off—even if only a nickel a head better off. But I defy anyone to get up and say that if the Democrats were to win in 1988, the average American will be any smarter.

### **The Party Abandons the People. And the People Abandon the Party**

The notion of the likes of Walter Shorenstein and Fanny Lou Jones, who lives in a public housing project in Anytown, USA, being in the same party defies common sense. Indeed, there are numerous proverbs, from all corners of the globe, to the effect that “the chicken can not profit from the company of the fox.” Therefore, it should not really surprise anyone that the ranks of such a party are ignorant. If this isn’t said by liberals, it is because they are in that self same party. Surely, the Seculars know far more about many issues than the uneducated. But just how much smarter are those worldlings than the untaught workers if they vote along side those masses for a party as corrupt and murderous as the Democratic Party unmistakably is? Hence, if it is true that poor people have poor ways—what Cicero said, two millenia ago, about the educated, is likewise so: “There is nothing so ridiculous but that some learned man has said it.” And, of course, as Miguel de Cervantes said, “In this world, the follies of the rich pass for wise savings.”

Thus, the poor are scarcely alone in their muddleheadedness. But in a history of the Democratic Party it is necessary to emphasize their ignorance. Otherwise, you can not begin to understand its history or its present. Does anyone doubt that its ranks were comprised of simpletons when they either cheered or remained silent as stones after Roosevelt packed up the Japanese-Americans and stuffed them into concentration camps? And were those plebian members one wit smarter in 1980 when they voted for Carter after he brought the Shah, the torturer, to our shores?

In fact, the ongoing crisis of the party can only be understood if the shallowness of its lower-class supporters is treated as a given. We see that they are patriotic-populists. Except that their

party operates in the interest of its rich patrons. But because they are not sophisticated, they really don't grasp why it is that their party can't hold them. Still less do they do anything about it. So they stop voting. Or else the patriotic quotient in their thin ideology proves stronger than their primitive class feelings, and they end up voting for Rambo-Reagan. It may be said that the party's white working class vote is a populist variable while dropouts and attrition to the openly chauvinist Republicans are the inexorable constants inherent in having an ignorant base.

If the economy were to fail before November 1988, or some similarly weighty crisis occurs, then the attrition will temporarily stop and some of the lost sheep will return to the fold, and the party will win. But even with that scenario, the centrifugal forces will soon continue to act on that base. The party leaders around Kirk think they can staunch the leakage to the right by becoming a clone of the GOP. That may happen. But that will only increase the dropout rate. When the party abandons its populism, the populists will abandon the party.

## Notes

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2. Adolph Reed, Jr., *The Jesse Jackson Phenomenon*, p. 15.
3. "Portrait of the Electorate," *New York Times*, Nov. 8, 1984, p. 11.
4. Maureen Dowd, "Scars of Plunge Not as Deep as Feared," *New York Times*, Oct. 28, 1987, p. 34.
5. E.J. Dionne, Jr., "Poll Finds Reagan Support Down But Democrats Still Lacking Fire," *New York Times*, Dec. 1, 1987, p. 10.
6. "Poll Suggests State Is Really GOP Territory," *San Francisco Chronicle*, Dec. 16, 1987, p. 1.
7. *The People Press & Politics*, pp. 1-23, passim.
8. "Campaign Issues: Where Voters Stand," *New York Times*, Dec. 1, 1987.
9. David Rogers, "Similarities Exist in 1988 and 1960 Elections, But Big Contrasts Lie, in Voters, Political Process," *Wall Street Journal*, Dec. 21, 1987, p. 46.
10. Garry Trudeau, "Doonesbury," *San Francisco Chronicle*, Dec. 24, 1987, p. B2.
11. Fred Halstead, *The 1985-86 Hormel Meat-Packers Strike*, p. 14.
12. Kenneth Noble, "Hart Moves to Mend Fences With Labor Leaders," *New York Times*, Feb. 14, 1987, p. 7.



## CHAPTER 12

# The Black Democrats and Jesse Jackson

Given the personal scandals that wracked the party since Chappaquiddick, no one had any right to be surprised when Gary Hart bowed out of the nomination race in May 1987. But he had been the overwhelming front runner in the polls, so the surviving contenders were universally seen as also-rans who undeservedly became possible candidates. Therefore, it was inevitable that someone would dub them "the seven dwarfs." Only one had any national name recognition and everyone, including many, if not most, of his supporters, knew from the beginning that Jesse Jackson would not be the next nominee, much less the next President of these United States. In spite of this, Jackson was soon seen as the biggest of these diminished candidates. Although everyone discounted his chances, his name kept coming up first in the polls. To be sure, 60% of his supporters were black. And since being first in the polls meant he was getting a grand 17%, he was still receiving only a sliver of the white vote pie. There were simply too many po' white trash Democratic racists who would never vote for a black.

Nevertheless, his very weakness, his being black, was, in a certain sense, the basis of a perceived strength vis-a-vis the others. Let's say this: if some wacko were to have assassinated one of the other tigers, Americans would have said, 'Oh m' Gawd, its startin' again,' but life would have gone on as if nothing had

happened. If a white had ever blown Jackson away, however, everyone knows there would have been an explosion. Jackson might be said to have had a sociological base with a vengeance, whereas the others were essentially egotists with no assured vote beyond their political bailiwicks.

It was not an accident that Jackson, who had never run for office, was the Great Black Hope, rather than one of the dozens of black mayors and representatives. To be blunt: None of the elected black Democrats could have emerged as the popular idol of the ghettos because none of them had accomplished anything for the masses, and some of them are little more than latter day Uncle Toms. Most important, with both the incompetents and the betrayers, their behavior is a direct reflection of their being Democrats. History has been writ. Under capitalism, the black masses have been, are, and always will be the horse others ride. Objectively, a black politician either fights that system or capitulates to it or joins it. In as much as their party is an open, proud part of that system, it would indeed be amazing if even one black Democrat could be a consistent and effective opponent of the economically racist social order.

Although the civil rights struggle was a mass movement, which brought even the lowest stratum of the people into motion via fiery ghetto riots, the overwhelming majority of the black leadership were Democrats. Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, and the Black Panthers early on, were hostile to capitalism. In his last years, King raised questions about the justness of capitalism, but for the most part, the leaders' political ambitions went no further than getting formal legal equality, integration of the corporate and government bureaucracies, and more blacks elected. Rather than constantly mobilizing the bottom of black society for its demands, the leaders began to concentrate increasingly on getting themselves and/or other professionals into office. The masses gained a certain amount from this electoral activity. Police brutality definitely declined with the election of black mayors and a small number of working-class blacks received jobs via patronage. But at the end of the day, it was the more educated stratum of the community who gained the most from these campaigns.

Just as the white liberals put 1000 times more effort into their campaign than they ever did into the anti-war demonstrations, so most black Democrats did little to keep their people marching in the streets. It was enough that they came out on election day to

vote for the party. But what these politicians didn't understand was that it was only because ordinary blacks had poured into the streets that the system was forced to make concessions. Once the street demonstrations stopped, the reforms dried up, even though the number of elected black officials increased over the years.

### **"We'll Take Whatever We Can"**

It is difficult to say who is the worst black mayor. Even though the overwhelming majority of Philadelphia's blacks voted for Wilson Goode in 1987 against the dead-end racist Frank Rizzo, *The New York Times* reported that many of the most sophisticated did so holding their noses. Goode will go into the history books as the mayor who bombed in Philadelphia, to use the old show biz term. Few Americans ever thought twice about him before he literally bombed the crackpot Move group's headquarters, killed innocent children and set fire to a row of houses. But he had been a dismal do-nothing long before that incredible incident. Still, there are those who would argue that all this makes him no more than a conservative and incompetent. He didn't intend to kill innocents. But Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley knew just what he was doing when he handed over the key to the South African enslavers. And there is Washington's ever-honest Barry. Not to speak of Chicago's Sawyer.

Unfortunately, it is equally hard to say who is the best black Democratic mayor, not because there are too many pretenders to that title, but the opposite. Washington was obviously popular. However, it was because of his enemies rather than any significant achievements. Now that he is gone, perhaps the most respected might be Detroit's Coleman Young, who at least is seen as working very hard. Nevertheless, Salim Muwakkil, one of the editors of *In These Times*, titled an article on him "Young tries to restore order to a city sliding out of control." And the piece, which was favorable, or at least apologetic, had to admit that "The mayor averted financial disaster during the recession of 1982 by raising the taxes of residents and commuters while gaining wage concessions from city employees."<sup>1</sup>

The truth is that there isn't a single black mayor with an ounce of fight in him. In 1985, the National Conference of Black Mayors came up with their solution to the problem of black youth unemployment. They supported Reagan's proposal for a sub-



minimum teen wage. According to Johnny Ford of Tuskegee, Alabama, "If \$2.50 an hour is all we can go with at this time, we'll take whatever we can."<sup>2</sup> Short of calling for the reintroduction of slavery, it is difficult to think of a more backward solution to the unemployment problem. Or futile. Kirkland and the asses are fools. But the AFL-CIO is not about to ever let that get on the lawbooks. In other words, these mayors haven't even the glimmer of a solution to the chronic problems of the lower stratum of the black community.

Nor do the black members of the House. According to Mervyn Dymally, chair of the Black Congressional Caucus, nobody in Congress pays the slightest attention to the alternative budget the Caucus lays out each year. He sadly admits his time in Congress has been "the most unproductive years of my life."<sup>3</sup> The Caucus is a mixed bag. Six of the 22 denounced the 1985 bombing raid on Libya, the only Representatives to do so. However, most are worthless hacks, indistinguishable from most of their white colleagues, except for skin color. But what the best share with the worst of the Caucus is an utter lack of a warrior mentality. The sharp decline in the anti-apartheid movement in this country since early 1987, is striking evidence of the total incompetence of the black Democrats. When the situation exploded in South Africa, the black leadership, in the good company of their white liberal friends, plus the most pious of clergymen, showed up at the South African Embassy to get themselves photographed being arrested for marching within 500 feet of an embassy. They were so happy. Surely, they thought, this is a clear cut issue of race. The black masses will automatically be eager to march. And so will their liberal friends. It will be the '60s all over again. And we will take our rightful place at the head of the parade. Without doing anything more strenuous than getting ceremonially arrested.

The appropriate proverb is "a fool lives in a fine world." In October 1985, the *Times* wrote of an anti-apartheid march organized in Atlanta by the "greying leaders of the American civil rights movement." Mayor Andrew Young, Julian Bond, John Lewis, ex-head of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, and Benjamin Hooks, head of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, were all in attendance. Lewis expressed their utter lack of strategy: "I do think we have an obligation, but what can you do from so many thousands of miles away?" Having abandoned the streets, and done nothing for

the people except talk, they were totally isolated.

“You’ve got to have a large coalition, particularly of students in the colleges” Mr. Hooks said. But like the civil rights leaders themselves, most of the 700 to 800 marchers were middle-aged.<sup>4</sup>

### **“A Compromise to Which our Constituents Won’t Be Very Receptive”**

As nothing stands still, “moderate” incompetence passed over to dishonor and treachery. In 1986, one of the last of the liberal Republican Senators, Maryland’s Charles Mathias, since retired, added an amendment, Section 508, to the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act. The President was required to submit a report to Congress, on April 1, 1987, listing the governments arming Pretoria. The amendment created panic among Democratic anti-apartheid poseurs. Everyone knew Israel would be implicated in such a survey.

While it was still in committee, a motion was made to strike the proviso. It failed, 5–11, as some liberal hypocrites voted for it, expecting there were enough right-wing votes to kill it. Whereupon Senators Biden, Dodd, Pell and Zorinsky switched votes and the amendment lost, 9–8. Then Biden and Dodd realized they could never publically explain votes against the section. They reversed themselves again, and Mathias’ language was restored, 10–7. The Zionist lobby expected it could delete the report requirement on the Senate floor. But debate was cut off to prevent filibustering on the bill as a whole, and the section slipped through.

Jerusalem knew Reagan hates sanctions against apartheid and expected him to cover for them in his unwilling report. Then Irangate intervened and they realized he didn’t dare get caught in another lie. A debate broke out in the Israeli cabinet. Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres wanted to go on with weapons sales to Pretoria, only on a less public level. But some bureaucrats insisted a gesture had to be made to American public opinion. The cabinet settled on a trick. The Israeli daily *Ha aretz* reported on March 20, 1987, that Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin had signed new contracts in Pretoria, lasting until past the year 2,000.<sup>5</sup> Then, just before the American report was scheduled, they announced that they would not sign

any new contracts, but would honor "existing" agreement.

It was Ron Dellums, certainly one of the few Caucus members with a national reputation, who had presented the original bill for the 1986 anti-apartheid act. On February 19, 1987, he presented H.R. 1153, a bill to toughen up the law. In anticipation of the forthcoming April report, Dellums' bill contained Section 8 (a), which declared that "No military assistance may be provided to any country which violates the international embargo on the sale and exports of arms and military technology to South Africa."<sup>6</sup> The bill was cosponsored by dozens of representatives.

Later, when researching this book, I was informed by one of Dellums' aides that when the Zionist lobby read the clause, they went to the cosponsors to get them to insist Dellums delete the section, on the threat of withdrawing their names if he didn't. I was told that Dellums decided that if any substantial number of sponsors took their names off the measure, it was doomed from the start. He discussed the matter with Trans Africa, a leading American anti-apartheid organization. Of course, they wanted such a ban on aid to any country arming their foe. And they were on record as denouncing Israel for so doing. But they and Dellums decided that they could not jeopardize the entire bill for the sake of Section 8(a). Accordingly the bill was resubmitted on March 12, as H.R. 1580, with the offending phrase totally omitted.

As America long ago ceased being an open society, there were two reports. One for the eyes of the congressional intelligence committees, and one for us rabble. We the people were only told that "companies in France, Italy, and Israel have continued to be involved in the maintenance and upgrade of major systems provided before the 1977 embargo," and "companies in Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Switzerland have . . . exported articles . . . without government permission." Although only someone whose IQ is no higher than room temperature believes Maggie Thatcher didn't know her arms industry was supplying the white regime, only Jerusalem was cited as governmentally implicated in violating the Security Council's 1977 arms embargo, binding on all member states:

Prior to the Israeli government's decision on March 18 not to sign new military contracts and to let existing contracts expire, Israel appears to have sold military systems and sub-systems and



provided technical assistance on a regular basis. Although Israel does not require end-use certificates and some cut-outs may have been used, we believe that the Israeli government was fully aware of most or all of the trade.<sup>7</sup>

A meeting was hastily arranged among the Caucus and Tom Dine of AIPAC, Hyman Bookbinder of the American Jewish Committee, Henry Siegman of the American Jewish Congress, and Jewish Representatives Barney Frank of Massachusetts, Sander Levin of Michigan, Martin Frost of Texas, Howard Berman of California, and others. The Caucus walked into the meeting already defeated in their own minds. Black Representative Mickey Leland of Texas declared that the Caucus knew it "just wasn't a realistic proposal" to think Congress would cut aid to Israel.<sup>8</sup> So they decided not to get into a confrontation with their Jewish colleagues.

They worked out an agreement. The Caucus agreed not to single out Israel for criticism. Instead, Jewish Democrats Mel Levine and Howard Berman of Los Angeles and Howard Wolpe of Michigan, and Tony Coelho, who is not Jewish, joined Leland and Charles Rangel, Harlem's Representative, in a press conference in which they complained of all the offending states mentioned in the report.

Rangel is one of the most backward members of the Caucus. In 1985, he openly boasted of his lack of militancy:

Instead of demanding publically that Jewish leadership in the U.S. denounce Israel's foreign minister for his justification of Israel's continued close relationship with South Africa, I have been working with Jewish leadership to convince the government of Israel of the moral imperative of its extrication from South Africa's apartheid regime.<sup>9</sup>

Bookbinder told the Caucus that the Jewish Establishment here had asked Israel to break its ties with South Africa. Dymally stressed that aid to Black Africa had declined 37% since 1985, in the face of famine, while aid to Israel was one-third of the entire 1986 foreign aid budget. The assembled Jews agreed to support an amendment to the next aid bill, by Wolpe, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa, which would increase such aid by \$115 million. Dymally admitted the Caucus "reached a compromise to which our constituents won't be very receptive."<sup>10</sup>

Of course, anti-apartheid militants in the black community were not pleased. The "compromise" did nothing to stop the Israeli arms traffic. The April 9 weekly edition of *Ha aretz* reported that

Senior governmental officials estimate that as a result of the relatively mild response in the United States to the report on the issue of arms trade between Israel and South Africa, at this time the government will refrain from any meaningful steps whatsoever against the apartheid regime and satisfy itself with decisions of declarative meaning only.<sup>11</sup>

The deal was a swindle. Some of the Establishment are opposed to Israeli involvement with apartheid. And they know Israel's collusion with Pretoria brings hostility here. But they also know the authorities in Jerusalem ignore such bleatings from their in-house critics, as well as similar elements in Zionist circles in Israel. In the end, Jerusalem knows that these are dead-end loyalists who will never break with their holy land over this or any other crime. Nor do they care about public opinion here as long as Congress stays loyal and keeps the bullets coming.

The Establishment's pledge of support for aid to Black Africa is equally meaningless. Increased aid costs them nothing and Israel nothing. But what does their pledge even commit them to? They will send letters to Congress, and mention such aid once in a while in conversations with the pols. But their influence on Congress does not go any further than on Middle East issues. The hacks know their Jewish constituents and donors don't give a damn about the amount of aid to Black Africa, certainly not enough to vote against them if it isn't forthcoming.

All the lobby has to do is go through the motions. They know the Caucus will not hold them responsible if aid isn't increased. And if it is, so what? The U.S. gives a certain amount of aid to countries like Ethiopia to maintain a humanitarian image. It gives aid to other black countries for one reason and one reason only: to keep them from moving towards the Soviets. Now, if the Democratic leadership tries to save their black colleagues' face by increasing the aid, it will still be only a flyspeck compared to what Israel gets, or what Africa, affected by both famine and a raging AIDS epidemic, really needs. And how does aid to Black Africa in any way stop that arms traffic from Israel to South

Africa? And how does the Establishment talking to Congress about such aid in any way excuse the lobby's constantly seeking more money for Israel in spite of that trade?

The declarations by both blacks and Jews that it would be wrong to single out Israel for reproach is similarly spurious. Certainly, the other countries should be denounced. It is no secret that the entire capitalist world—here, in Europe, and in Japan—is deeply involved in South Africa. British firms are the largest foreign investors. But no one hears of any great outcry on the part of either these blacks or Jews against Thatcher, still less demonstrations at the British Embassy.

In fact, Israel should be singled out. Of all the countries cited, it is the only one crucially dependent on Congress' largesse. The leverage of the American public on Israeli policy is therefore infinitely greater than on the others. The prattle on the part of the Jewish Democrats about not singling out Israel was nothing more than a criminal scheme to protect that state. And the blacks' acquiescence in that design was a degraded surrender to their colleagues in the interest of party unity.

The Jewish Democrats did not bribe the Caucus. To be sure, all of them are well aware of their party's addiction to Jewish campaign contributions. Certainly, all know their party would collapse in a heap if the black community were ever to be up in arms against the Israel-South Africa alliance, and pro-Zionist Jewish voters and campaign contributors were to pull out of the party as a consequence. Party unity was a prime consideration in their betrayal. Nevertheless, even if there were not a single Jew in the U.S., the Caucus would have done nothing against Israel, exactly as it does nothing against Britain. Their betrayal was rooted in their utter lack of anything remotely resembling a desire to mobilize their masses for their rights in this country.

Their lack of strategic sense is well illustrated regarding Delums' bills. We may be certain he had Israel in mind when he wrote his initial measure. Yet, when confronted by his party's unwillingness to break with Israel on the issue, he capitulated. Naturally enough, a strong argument can be made that it would have been wrong to sacrifice all hope of strengthening sanctions over Israel. But readers must know that the overwhelming majority, at least, of his constituents and anti-apartheid activists around the country have no idea that he ever made the proposal to cut off aid to countries arming Pretoria, or that he deleted the section



under pressure of his fellow Democrats. It was only by fortuitous accident that I happened to be in Washington when the report came out, and read of his deletion in an article in the *Washington Times*, a Moonie paper that has no hesitation to run material that embarrasses their liberal enemies.

The Jewish Democrats who pulled this sordid maneuver were not defending apartheid. To the contrary, they vote for sanctions. And the Caucus wants an anti-apartheid campaign. But both groups were wishing for the impossible. For any such movement to have social weight, it must rest on the black community. But it is impossible for there to be a mass-based black movement that will remain silent about Israel, to please Jews or Democrats. Without fully realizing the implications of what they did, the blacks and Jews in effect walked out of the struggle.

It is plain from his statement that Dymally knew the Caucus was selling out the struggle for a mess of pottage. However, he was wrong in that there was no outcry from the black community against their shamelessness. We have seen that the plebian base of the party is informationally ignorant. This fully applies to the black masses, virtually all Democrats, who, because of racism, have an even lower educational level than the white poor. Thus, in 1985, a Gallup poll asked, "Do you happen to know whether or not black South Africans have the right to vote?" The results were

	<u>Yes, do</u>	<u>No, do not</u>	<u>Not sure</u>
Blacks	26%	39%	35%
Whites	19%	49%	32% <sup>12</sup>

There is a stratum of conscious militants in the anti-apartheid movement, and other struggles, on the basis of thought out ideology. In some cases they are Marxists of different persuasions. Others are black nationalists, whether in or out of the Democratic Party. But on the few occasions when broader strata have rallied against apartheid, it has been because they heard the events were sponsored by politicians they voted for and/or their unions. While better informed than most of the black working class, they are not part of the inner workings of the movement. They would not be likely to have heard of the deal or, if they read something, more likely than not they would not fully comprehend the enormity of the agreement.

The militants could always be distinguished from this broader element by their hostility to Israel, largely fueled by its Pretoria alliance. But they cannot, as of yet, mobilize the forces brought out by the unions. While many black union bureaucrats are more likely than their white counterparts to be willing to mobilize their ranks for progressive demonstrations, they are rarely willing to denounce the black Democrats for their incompetence, or their abject surrender to the Zionists. With the politicians surrendering, and the militants still isolated, rather than seeing any significant outcry, we see a general decline in anti-apartheid activity.

The do-nothings could not have gotten away with the sellout if Jackson had spoken out. However, after the Hymie slurs, he realized he had to cool it with the Zionist lobby if he was ever going to get anywhere in the party. On November 19, 1985, Jackson turned up in Geneva during a summit meeting. He had been sent by anti-war groups to present some petitions for a nuclear test ban. He met Mikhail Gorbachev. Those were the good ol' days, when Gorby was still head of the evil empire, instead of finishing eighth on the 1987 Gallup list of the 10 men Americans admired most. After some idle chit-chat about tests, South Africa and similar trivia, Jackson brought up

the plight of the Jews in the Soviet Union. This last subject had to be mentioned, Mr. Jackson said, because "There is a great anxiety among the American people about the plight of Soviet Jews."<sup>13</sup>

Yeah. Great Anxiety. Aside from the lobby, the politicians, the AFL-CIA clique and Jerry Falwell, the Soviet Jewry issue is of no more interest to Americans than raising the Titanic. But baiting Gorby got the Jewish Establishment off his back. Eventually, he would speak on a Queens College platform, in New York City, in March 1987, with lobby honcho Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum. He said blacks have complaints against Jews, and he mentioned the arms traffic, but he said those should not be the centerpiece of their relations. He gave an interview to the *Jerusalem Post*:

Jackson said black leaders as a whole have urged Jewish leaders to persuade Israel to end its economic and military trade with South Africa . . . However, "We have also challenged the U.S., Japan, West Germany and other countries to stop trading with South Africa, and not just Israel. Our stand has been consistent . . . The Congressional Black Caucus has a solid record of voting for



Israel. Our fundamental relationship is intact.”<sup>14</sup>

Jackson doesn't usually talk about the arms traffic. But every so often, he is still baited by Zionist hard heads. Then he will defend himself by bringing up the weapons. However, he has done nothing to mobilize the masses on the issue. He is no more 'challenging' Israel than he is West Germany.

As with many blacks who went through the civil rights struggle, Jackson started out with an initial identification with the Palestinians as a colonized people resisting similar oppression. But he was never against the Israeli state. Even during the 1984 nomination contest, when he was under constant attack from the lobby, he was for no more than a Palestinian homeland on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, with the proviso that it be weaponless.<sup>15</sup> The problem with that proposal is not that it is anti-Israeli, still less anti-Jewish, but that it is unreal. The right to an army is integral to sovereignty. The Palestinians are not fighting for some sort of Bantustan and will never accept such a sheep pen statelet.

In the 1988 nomination campaign, Jackson made his position even more explicit regarding Israel. A campaign issue brief declares that

Establishing and maintaining friendly relations with the Arab states need not require the U.S. to tilt away from Israel or abandon the special relationship it now has . . . with Israel which must be preserved. America helped to found Israel, and American aid helps keep Israel strong.<sup>16</sup>

The New York primary saw the ultimate absurdity of the campaign when Jackson announced that he would not, as president, meet Yasser Arafat. He babbled about understanding "the pain of the occupier." His pandering probably didn't get him a single Jewish vote he didn't already have. It only exposed him as the most crackpot of realists.

### **The Populist-Patriots**

Jackson's moderation on the question of Zionism was in keeping with the classic evolution of populists from left to right. In 1984, he had come on strong about building a rainbow coalition of all the discontented. As we have previously seen, he did



nothing after the 1984 campaign to give the notion some organizational flesh until forced to do so by the insistence of Dellums and Representative John Conyers of Detroit. But when the coalition finally had its first convention in April 1986, it was apparent that it would be nothing more than a collection of Jackson groupies, a personality cult with no life of its own, hence with no possibility of interfering with his turn to the right.

From the beginning, the formal Rainbow Coalition was carefully crafted to keep control in Jackson's hands. A report in the *Guardian*, a leftist paper which completely supports the movement, described how

Jackson and his aides chose most members of the (national) board . . . The board must approve each state group seeking to be chartered, and Jackson must approve each state chairperson.<sup>17</sup>

The paper candidly admitted that "some delegates were taken aback by this level of centralism." But Jackson had his ready answer to his democratic critics. He started talking about how the FBI's Cointelpro program tried to destroy black and radical organizations in the 1960s.

It was quite obvious from the composition of the convention that the Rainbow had little organizational depth. The platform was crowded with leaders. As the gathering was in Washington, the incredible Barry was there, as were several members of the Caucus, including Leland and Rangel, both whom being latter-day converts, having supported Mondale in 1984. William Winpisinger, of the International Association of Machinists, and Kenneth Blaylock, of the Federation of Government Employees, prize mutton from the National Labor Committee, were there. Mayor Tom Kough of Austin, a member of P-9 attended, as did one sitting Governor, Chicano Tony Anaya of New Mexico.

But the rank and file was thin on the ground. Some states, New York, California, New Jersey, i.e., where various leftist groups had moved into the movement and held it together, had fairly large delegations. But Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana and Mississippi, states where Jackson had gotten huge black votes in the primaries, had only two delegates each. The Latino contingent was also very small.

Populist movements are notoriously made up of people who agree on a few things, but don't hang together on other crucial

issues. Winpisinger, for example, opposed the P-9 strike. He also made himself odious by making a Bonds for Israel speech during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. *Frontline*, another left publication, conceded that a number of both the newcomers and the veterans

had strong tendencies to vacillate to the right on . . . defense of immigrant rights, non-intervention in the Middle East . . . affirmative action and . . . abortion rights and the ideological fight against the utilization of rabid anti-communism in Reagan's drive towards war.<sup>18</sup>

The Rainbow does not and can not enforce even the most elementary discipline on its ranks. If it tried to tell Winpisinger or Rangel what to do, the two would have taken a hike. And the last person on the continent who would obey a directive from the organization that he didn't like is Jesse Jackson. The Rainbow is a tail to his kite, nothing more. The problem is that he doesn't really want a tail, certainly not one with ideological pretensions.

The 1988 Jackson campaign and the Rainbow Coalition are two separate entities. Incredibly, for a group of world-savers, the Rainbow opted for non-partisan status, so that it could get tax-free donations. But that means that legally it can't even endorse Jackson. And it knows that Reagan would come down like a hawk if it tried to go around the law. However, Jackson is in the candidate game, which means that during campaigns he sees it as a fund-raising rival to the Jackson for President committees, which he naturally sees as critical. Accordingly, the Rainbow is the stepchild of his movement, and it can only grow by inches if at all. Without funds, it has no national newspaper, crucial to any group which seeks to win over new forces. The net effect was that one year after its initial convention, it had only one state chapter fully chartered. There was not even one office in New York City. One of Jackson's key advisors in 1984, Reverend William Howard, bluntly declared in April 1987, that

Jesse Jackson has projected himself as the voice of a coalition of common interests. To be candid, he has provided both a major opportunity and a major obstacle to the organization.<sup>19</sup>

When the second convention met, in October 1987, the weaknesses of the Coalition were glaring. There were only 641

delegates from 35 states, down from 756 from 42 states in 1986.<sup>20</sup> *Frontline* admitted that

For a convention situated in North Carolina, there was a relatively low turnout from the southern states . . . Given the . . . electoral role of Latinos . . . the small numbers in attendance . . . was cause for some concern.<sup>21</sup>

Jackson used the occasion to make his formal entry into the nomination race, even though he had obviously been in it for months. Since technically the Coalition is non-partisan, it was the Jesse Jackson Exploratory Committee which sponsored the not very startling announcement. The worldly reporters from *Frontline* had to admit the event "had the stamp of mainstream politics . . . The proceedings opened with a rendition of the Star Spangled Banner . . . the crowd . . . waved American flags."<sup>21</sup>

These leftists had thrown themselves into the Rainbow in the hope that it would ultimately evolve into a mass-based radical party. They were not therefore ecstatic over some of Jackson's speech:

The mainstream influence would be noted. While Jackson still calls for a homeland for the Palestinians, his remarks about the U.S. presence in the Persian Gulf tended to be watered down and bordered on neutrality. And while he still calls for an end to the aggressive adventurism . . . he now calls for a strong military . . . The Latino Caucus noted that Jackson's call to "militarize the border" as part of a war on drugs was contradictory to a progressive position on the U.S. immigrant/refugee question.<sup>21</sup>

While the convention liberalized representation on the national board, Jackson, as president, still appoints some of its members. The group is still going to go down hill as an organization. Executive Director Ron Daniels said

It may operate on a scaled-down basis, because our national president will be campaigning . . . the components of the Rainbow have found it difficult to cohere with each other, from an ethnic, an issue and an ideological point of view.<sup>22</sup>

It was the black Democratic officialdom, i.e., the do-nothings, who ended up as the dominant element in the organization. No



one was under any illusions that the Coalition had gotten its act together. If it didn't grow beyond them in the black community, and reach out to other ethnic groups, it would never get off the ground.

As it stood, the Rainbow was held together only by the expectation that everyone would vote for Jackson next time around, even if for different reasons. Although there was agreement on some issues, the Coalition is a collection of individuals and forces representing distinct causes to which they give their primary allegiance. But a serious movement for profound social change must be able to bullet its members' energies. If, say, the women's movement is at an ebb and the campaign for nuclear disarmament is on an upswing, it must be able to shift its female members into anti-nuclear work. And in all cases, its members must work under democratic discipline. They are its face to the public. If they make mistakes or betray some cause, it reflects on the movement.

It is for this reason that the revolutionary fundamental unit is the party, not coalitions. A revolutionary party is a body of people who come together for the propagation of a principle, as with socialism, and they subordinate their work in various causes to the higher interests of their principle. If they disagree, the minority accepts the majority's right to make policy and loyally carries it out. A coalition, by definition, is a far looser grouping of people who agree on one or two issues, and who strongly disagree on others. Because of this, it is unusual for coalitions to last very long.

Serious mass politics always has several ambitions: to organize the people, to educate them and to mobilize them in direct conflict against the powers-that-be. Jackson is doing none of these. His election committees, which vanish after his campaigns, are 1000 times more important to him than the spavined Rainbow. The flag-waving at the convention tells us Jackson's followers are political amateurs, and he has done nothing to elevate their consciousness. One of his severest black critics, Adolph Reed, Jr., of Yale, in his *The Jackson Phenomena*, is quite correct in saying that the campaign replicates a black Baptist church. Jackson is the preacher. He gets up at the podium and raps. Whatever ideology there is in the Rainbow cometh forth from him. The Rainbow's ranks are supposed to shout out "amen" and "say it, brother." And do a little psalm-singing. He is invited to speak at innumerable mass rallies. But it is always a case of if the

phone rings, he answers it. He organized some demonstrations in the past. Now, however, he calls himself a tree shaker, not a jam maker. In cynical circles, that is called rapology. He does all the talkin'. Somebody else is supposed to take care of the doin'.

### **Two By Two Do the Hacks and Sleaze Find a Place on Jesse's Ark**

Jackson's move to the right—or as he would say, to the mainstream—was one of the most commented aspects of the 1987–88 race. To be sure, endorsing Mondale in 1984 was not exactly a revolutionary act. But he didn't change what he was saying after backing the arch imperialist. It was simply a case of straight liberal lesser evilism. To the public, particularly blacks, he seemed an insurgent force, not only in the party but in American life. Not only did he come to the fore in the black community because of the mindless inactivity of the black Democrats, but most of the “black leadership family,” the leftovers from the civil rights tops plus the elected officials, opposed his run. Bradley, Coleman Young, Andrew Young, Goode and many other mayors were Mondale backers from the start. Even Harold Washington was neutral during the Illinois primary, only endorsing Jackson later. Rangel, Leland and many other Representatives also opposed him. So did Coretta King and most of the old guard of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

They knew he would never be the nominee. If Mondale won the presidency, he would have a lot of patronage to hand out. Why blow that potential on behalf of a sure loser, even if he was black? Besides, his running was an implicit condemnation of them for doing nothing for the masses, and they still hadn't a clue as to what to do. But they got the scare of their political lives when the overwhelming majority of black voters marched right by them to pull down the Jackson lever. Some of these hacks realized that if they opposed Jackson again they would be vulnerable to being beaten by some upstart Jacksonite. So they endorsed Jackson for 1988, even if few of them went so far as to join his Rainbow groupies. They still didn't think he would win. But their game was made easier by the fact that none of the 1988 party presidential white hopes had any early support among whites. They knew the ultimate nominee would need them in November 1988 and would be more than forgiving if they endorsed Jackson first, pro



forma, before getting down to business, after the convention. Besides, no one was sure which of the hopes was going to win the party race, especially after Hart's withdrawal from the imbroglio. Effectively confronted with a choice between some nonentity, without the slightest black support, and a black, they would have been even bigger fools than they are were they to have been seen holding up some white nobody's hand against any black, even if he were a black cat.

Jackson was eager to get the hacks' support. To get it, he endorsed Farrell's mock fight for Mayor of New York. He showed up at a fund-raiser for Lionel Wilson, Mayor of Oakland, California, who ran against Jackson's 1984 state campaign manager, black liberal Wilson Riles. He goes along with the crap about prosecutors persecuting black politicians, naming Barry.<sup>23</sup> He told *Mother Jones*

what you have today is prosecutors leaking news of sweeping indictments, and then relatively few convictions . . . You get a combination of an ambitious state attorney and a hostile press, and you have a dimension of power to struggle against. Every bark is not a bite. Every indictment is not a conviction.<sup>24</sup>

One of the most prestigious of the born-again Rainbows is its national campaign chairman, Willie Brown. He supported Cranston's abortive campaign in 1984 and then sat out the rest of the nomination contention. Even in 1987, he urged Cuomo to run. Willie made it clear that he was not about to waste his time trying to get Jackson elected. It was explained that the campaign was really being run by Gerald Austin, who had managed Ohio Governor Richard Celeste's efforts there. (Austin is Jewish, as Jackson never stops telling the public. He was chosen manager with the obvious intent of putting an end, once and for all, to the charge that Jackson is an anti-Semite.) Why did Brown accept the job as captain of the Titanic? We can speculate that he sees himself in the "smoke-filled room" with the other powerbrokers when and if the convention is deadlocked.

Did Jackson know about the press stories about Brown? It's hard to think he didn't. Harder still to think his California Rainbow groupies didn't discuss Brown's notoriety with him after they read about Brown's appointment. But he had already expressed his pleasure at getting the Cajun King's nod. And he had talked



about how the prosecutors were persecuting Barry & Co. He had supported another Alderman against Sawyer for Mayor of Chicago, and then played Mr. Cool It on Sawyer's behalf after that noble soul endorsed him. Then, in December 1987, came an announcement that, if Jesse got the nomination, he was considering offering the Vice President slot to Jim Wright. Maybe he thinks Barry, Edwards, Sawyer, Brown and Wright are the mainstream of the party. And maybe he's right. At any rate, such indifference, to say the least, towards the kleptocrats' charming peccadilloes, bespeaks of him as perhaps more of a black Huey Long than a Bryan. Jackson in the Black House is a difficult image to realistically conceive of in any case. But an honest Jackson administration? That is fantasy with whipped cream and a cherry.

This image was powerfully reinforced by the surprise appearance of a New York *Daily News* ad on October 7, 1987, featuring Jackson on behalf of the Allied Education Corporation. Jackson was going to appear in radio, TV and print ads pushing AEC's chain of business schools. No candidate had ever appeared in such ads during a campaign. Typically, in a situation where the candidate operated above the movement he claimed to represent, *The New York Times* reported, "Jackson's campaign was caught by surprise by the ads."<sup>25</sup> After saying he saw nothing wrong with the deal, he cancelled the ads the next day. Obviously, his staff convinced him that he would look like a hustler if he went through with the bizarre scheme. There was nothing illegal in it, although the only reason it wasn't was because no one before had done anything so crackbrained. Even a small child could have warned him that such ads would raise questions about equal time provisions of the laws governing candidates' appearances on TV. And the same infant could have told him the notion had about as much chance of going over with the public as the Hindenberg had of making a round trip.

### **"The Diving Bell of 'Responsible Candidacy'"**

The key to Jackson's turn to the right was the role of Ann Lewis in his entourage. She was political director of the Democratic National Committee from 1981 until after the 1984 elections, when she took over as director of Americans for Democratic Action, a post she held until July 1987. Then, on

September 22, 1987, *The New York Times* wrote about how

Ms. Lewis has drawn praise recently for her work for Mr. Jackson's campaign. "Ann has played a substantial role in moving Jesse Jackson toward a non-confrontational theme," said a Democratic official, who asked not to be named. "This time around, Jesse Jackson's not beating up on the party or its rules, as he did in '84."<sup>26</sup>

The ADA was once a power in the land, back in the days of Harry Truman, when it was set up to fight Henry Wallace. Its high point of influence was under JFK when its leading figure, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., was privy to the innermost White House secrets. He knew about the proposed invasion of Cuba, opposed it, but, good li'l liberal that he was, he kept silent about the forthcoming war crime. It was a factor then on campuses. Not among students but among professors. When the students started demonstrating against the Vietnam War, they went right by the ADA to more radical forces and it has remained a back number to this day. It gets into the news with its annual rating of Congress on a list of liberal issues. But that is it for the ADA. Jackson did not exactly have to push through a crowd to get to Lewis. It is safe to say that ADA's influence on popular politics is so nil that even now, with its former director playing Svengali to the candidate of millions of blacks and others, 999 out of a 1000 of those voters never heard of it, or her. It is as Alex Cockburn said of Jackson. He really "has bolted himself in the diving bell of 'responsible candidacy.'"<sup>27</sup> Except that, since he is an ideological amateur playing well above his league, he really thinks he is one of the lucky ones picked to go into space.

### **Picture, Picture on the Wall. Whose the Biggest Fool of Them All?**

That Jackson is politically gauche when he has to work without position papers was perfectly illustrated, as it were, in the July 1987 *Firing Line* debate. Bill Buckley asked the Lilliputians whose picture they would put on the oval office wall if they were elected. Jackson's choice? Lyndon Johnson. That's not the ADA's doing. By the mid-'60s, even the wretched Schlesinger was for Bobby Kennedy as the alternative to the mass murderer. Later

*Mother Jones* asked why Johnson:

JACKSON: Lyndon Johnson came in on the wind of tragedy, the assassination. People were very anxious because of his background—nonsupport for civil rights, being from the South. He rose above his background and achieved greatness. He directed the Voting Rights Act to victory.

MOTHER JONES: For my generation, LBJ symbolizes the Vietnam War more than the Voting Rights Act.

JACKSON: I have to approach the matter with integrity. LBJ ushered in the ending of apartheid in this country. That's a real part of my experience. If I'd had another choice, Carter would be it. His integrity stands as a mountain.<sup>28</sup>

"Fools," sayeth Heraclitus of Ephesus, 576–480 BC, "are like the deaf: of them does the saying bear witness that they are absent when present." Jackson was in the center of things when blacks got legal equality via demonstrations and riots. Johnson was bowing to the inevitable, 'directing' voting rights to success. Sophisticates understood that then and after. He had his good gaffaws catching those FBI tapes of King's affairs. "Absent when present," Jackson helped make history. Unfortunately, his grasp of social dynamics is so crude he insists "Iago is most honest." He makes another great emancipator out of a war criminal, giving him credit for what blacks and their allies achieved. He continues further into folly, putting yet another rogue, Carter, into his *Grand Guignol* gallery of horrific heroes.

Bizarre as Jesse's praise of Lyndon was, it was compatible with speculations of an FBI under him, mayhaps mightily implicated in several slayings. Hear assassinologist Jackson's November 1987 *Rolling Stone* ruminations:

Then Kennedy was killed. And then Dr. King was killed. The government's role in this killing is still very much suspect, and always will be in my mind. We know who was obsessed with Dr. King—the FBI . . . A memo from the FBI said that the role of the FBI was to disrupt and destroy the black movement, to neutralize the leader. And *neutralize* meant to kill. I guarantee that the movement as we knew it, this coalition, didn't just drift apart: it was blown apart. It was destroyed through terrorism. And then Robert Kennedy was killed a couple of months later.<sup>29</sup>



Henry Kissinger said it well: "This is a world in which even paranoids have enemies." Hoover bugged King and tried to destroy the black movement. But there is no evidence Hoover had anything to do with King's death. And this may be the first time anyone suggested Hoover had a part in Bobby's assassination. If a speck of this is true, what does it say of Jackson's putting Johnson on his wall? Either Johnson knew about crimes or else let underlings get away with murder. Fortunately, we don't have to worry our heads over this. None of it happened. And of course our heavy duty thinker isn't going to get elected.

Many more malapropisms popped out during the campaign. Most churlish was in answer to Mike Wallace in 1987. Had he ever lived in New York? "No, wouldn't even try it." Why so? "'Cause the people steal. There's no sense of neighborhood consciousness and stuff."<sup>30</sup> In fact Chicago, where he lives, has an enormous amount of serious crime. But the real question is this: Who ever heard of a previous presidential candidate fool enough to insult a city of seven million?

### **Who's the Black Dude with His Hand in His Overcoat and the Funny Hat?**

Considering the clay she had to work with, Ann Lewis did well. 1984's Jackson talked of a 20% defense cut. Not the 1987 Jackson. The Oct. 11 *Oakland Tribune* reported, "The Jackson of today speaks only of the need to scrutinize and justify military spending." The 1984 position was the work of Ron Dellums, Jackson's military guru as head of the military construction panel of the House Armed Services Committee. In 1987, master followed disciple, providing rationales for the move away from the 1984 figure. Yes, Jackson

still believes that you predicate defense spending upon a foreign policy that moves in pursuit of peace, in pursuit of arms control, away from interventionism... But he sees there is no intrinsic value in any dollar figure. To that extent I think Jesse has become more mature.<sup>31</sup>

Yeah. More mature. The truth is that neither Jackson nor Dellums were ever playing for keeps with that 20% figure. And, as with everything else coming from the Caucus, Congress never

paid the slightest attention to it. Both Dellums and Jackson voted for Mondale in 1984, despite the fact that Mondale was in favor of increasing the defense budget. Why then should they commit themselves to some figure they don't believe in? The problem is that they are no more serious about a vague cut. When Jackson loses the nomination, they will yet again vote for any Democrat, whether he is for lowering or raising military spending.

The newly-minted statesman was among the more conservative of the Democratic aspirants about the sending of the U.S. fleet into the Persian Gulf. Unlike others, Jackson said he was not prepared to immediately end the reflagging of the Kuwaiti tankers.<sup>32</sup> Michael Lerner of *Tikkun* asked him if his new found concern for U.S. geopolitical interests meant a struggle against the Soviets. Jackson replied

That is one feature. Certainly we would be in a substantially weaker position . . . if the Soviets . . . were occupying the Middle East, and occupying the oil reserves, occupying the Persian Gulf and the Straits of Hormuz . . . On the positive side, we are much stronger if we have a Middle East in which we have a substantial interest.<sup>33</sup>

Lerner is a fanatic Israel-right-or-wrong liberal, hostile to the black because of the Hymie incident. But he was justified in being "outraged" by Jackson's contention that the U.S. should balance support of Israel with a concern for American oil interests and its strategy of countering Soviet influence in the Gulf. "Instead of sitting with the most progressive candidate, here I was sitting with (Secretary of State) George Shultz."<sup>34</sup>

In a December 1, 1987 television debate, Jackson voiced his new-found concern with the presence of a Communist regime in Nicaragua, "the only one of the candidates to do so," *Newsweek* pointed out.<sup>35</sup>

we should negotiate bilaterally with Ortega. No foreign military advisers. No Soviet base. And if they, in their self-determination, choose to relate to the Soviets in that way, they must know the alternative. If they are with us, there are tremendous benefits. If they are not with us, there are tremendous consequences. If we are clear . . . the response will be clear.<sup>36</sup>

Alex Cockburn, by no means then an opponent of the

Rainbow, which he saw as progressive, was correct in his explanation of the undertones of this remark:

In other words, if you are not with us, you are against us—and in case you're wondering what that means, read up on the history of Guatamala.<sup>36</sup>

He means that if Nicaragua were to request Soviet or Cuban troops, as it has a sovereign right to do, in defense of its territory, then President Jackson would have no choice but to overthrow the Sandinistas, as the Arbenz regime in Guatamala was overthrown by American puppets under Eisenhower.

Similarly, John Fraire, for *The National Alliance*, a leftist paper which supported Jackson in the 1984 primaries, wrote ruefully about Jesse's remarks at the 1987 convention of his Operation Push. Fraire

wanted Jackson to comment on the uprising in Seoul . . . But while he called for pressure to be put on South Korea to work with the opposition, he also insisted that the 40,000 American troops stationed in South Korea should be used "to prevent a communist invasion from the North and not to impede freedom and democracy from within" . . . What struck me was his continual reminder that our troops are in Korea to stop a "Communist invasion from the North" . . . The performance was in marked contrast to his keynote address at the Rainbow Coalition founding convention . . . There Jackson passionately told . . . delegates that the issue was *not communism, but fascism*. He reminded us that history's most deadly rulers and murderers—Hitler, Mussolini, Somoza and others—were anti-Communist fascists and that the United States always lined up with fascists simply because they were anti-Communist.<sup>37</sup>

Jackson's foreign policy, i.e., the policy of Lewis and other on-the-reservation liberals, is that Americans have "national interests" in the Gulf and, ultimately, everywhere. But we don't have to go crazy and fight the Soviets on the other side of Mars. Nor should we completely neglect domestic reform while fighting communism. Except that for Jackson to talk about national interests is to accept the premises of imperialist logic. America intervenes in the Middle East only because it is a super power. From a democratic perspective, it has no more right to "protect"



its "national interests," i.e., U.S. oil company interests, than the Gulf sheikhdoms have a right to militarily intervene to "protect" Arab investments in the U.S.

Washington did not reflag Kuwaiti tankers out of any concern for the ordinary people of Iowa or the Chicago ghetto. It did so out of venal concern for the "seven sisters," the American companies who pull the oil out of the ground in the Gulf, for a profit, ship it, for a profit, and then sell it to the folks, at a profit. Still less did the U.S. protect those tankers out of any concern for democracy in the region. To the contrary, the U.S., under Republicans and Democrats alike, has remorselessly supported numerous despotic regimes in the area. Before ordinary Americans support either unilateral American naval intervention, or a multilateral United Nations force, which Jackson advocated, they would do well to ponder yet another proverb: "other people's worries burden the ass."

### Which Way Will the Bird Fly?

Jackson could jackknife into a "good cop" imperialist because he knew he would not lose either his black support or his attraction for discontented whites. Most of his black following are for him solely because of his skin, not his politics. They did not watch the debates, even with him taking part. And most of those who tuned in lack the sophistication to grasp the implications of what he was saying, as Cockburn and *Newsweek* did. Ditto for the hard-pressed white farmers and strikers who decided to "send Washington a message" by voting for a black. Only Arab-Americans and elements of the peace movement supported him primarily for foreign policy motives. And of these only some of the more leftist of his peacenik backers expressed any concern over his new turn. Most of his supporters were for him because of what they thought he would do for them.

There was nothing insincere about his marching on picket lines and denouncing farm mortgage foreclosures. He is a man of the people. But his economic program was, at best, a shopping list of reforms that did nothing to address the root causes of their woes. He was correct to say that the No. 1 exporter from Taiwan into this country was General Electric, that it had set up shop there to take advantage of the Nationalist dictatorship's repression of unions. But he did not say that it was his party that protected that

regime, that no Democratic President had been intelligent enough to recognize Red China. Nor did he call for ending all military entanglement with Taiwan or other slave-labor regimes. Instead, he called for tax changes that would penalize firms like GE. Only if that failed to stop runaways would he call for laws that would directly prohibit such moves. He favors

enforceable international laws against global union-busting, racism, sexism and sweatshops. By incentives, constraints, or both, multi-national labor exportation and exploitation must end.<sup>38</sup>

How real was any of this? The Congressional Democrats, not Jackson, would have to vote for such tax changes. But there is not the slightest sign that these recipients of business PAC bucks are interested in penalizing runaways. And the notion of enforceable international laws against union-busting & Co. is space travel without a space ship.

Similarly, he took part in a December 15, 1987, debate at a school in the Rio Grande Valley. He pledged to establish medical and law schools there. "But," the *Times* reported, "he did not explain how he would accomplish this."<sup>39</sup> And how would he do it? The President doesn't have the power to do so. Nor does Congress set up federal schools. Nor are the Congressional Democrats in any mood to give Texas, let alone other states, any great sum of money for such expensive schools.

Recall the Congressional Democrats. The majority who tried to con the people about their pay. The black do-nothings. The liberal Jew-woosers. The rightist minority who have consistently supported Contra-aid. The PAC-men, and all those who live on dishonorariums. Not a few outright banditi. Throw in a few parochial demagogues. Jackson is not calling for the defeat of any of them excepting occasionally when he supports a black against some sitting white.

Truth to tell, Jackson has made his peace with the party right. In June 1987, he showed up at meetings of Impac '88 and the Democratic Leadership Council. The *Times* said of his appearance at the DLC that it was "widely interpreted as a gesture of détente . . . 'The party has a progressive wing. It has a conservative wing. But it takes two wings to fly.'"<sup>40</sup>

But which way will the bird fly? Impac '88 and the DLC continue to stress growth, not quality. Labor is to join a "new social

compact." "A relentlessly adversarial stance towards employers" is an "anachronism."

The DLC would balance the budget "by 1991." Entitlements that are "merely desirable" should be cut or killed to apply resources for "essential" needs. Further savings would come from "curbing the growth of entitlements," presumably Social Security and Medicaid.<sup>41</sup>

Jesse yoked to the wheel, blind like Samson, grinding their corn, is how the DLC and Impac would accept the Rainbow as a party partner. Neither has banged on the Rainbow's door, begging to address its convention. Jackson adapted to them, not they to him.

The nonsense about building a law school in the Rio Grande Valley was not Jackson's only contribution to the vulgar art of demagoguery. He is for a \$10-per-barrel surtax on imported oil. That is called chasing after the vote of Louisiana-Texas-Oklahoma oil workers. They suffer because of the drop in world oil prices. But, if the oil workers would benefit from protectionist tariffs, the domestic oil companies would be the big gainers.

Flat-rate commodity taxes are called regressive. They place an "equal" burden on rich and poor. Post-enlightenment liberals and revolutionaries are for progressive taxes on income and property, with the rich paying higher rates. If Jackson's surtax passed, the poor, who, in many parts of the country, must travel long distances to work by car, would pay more in gas taxes than the rich.

He has another plan. For pie-in-the-sky a la mode. On June 15, 1987, he told the Conference of Mayors that if \$60 billion in public pension funds were invested in "affordable housing," transit and infrastructure, "we can act to rebuild America."<sup>42</sup> But managers of such funds are usually required to operate under "prudent man" rules. They are supposed to invest in things paying top dollar consistent with fiscal safety. When asked "how he would insure a return on the investment of such pension funds, he said such matters would be examined at a future conference."<sup>43</sup> To be polite about it, what he was saying was, 'Hey, gimme a break! Don't you guys know a tree-shaker when you see one? I leave petty details to the jam-makers.'

### **Givin' Some Deservin' Blacks Pols a PUSH Into Office**

Jackson had a sure strength. The black masses want real equality for themselves, not just a black Justice on the Supreme Court.



They won't get this from the black or white hacks. So, along came ex-leader from the '60s, when they made huge gains, and they think he will lead them to more victories. Since he pumps the populist pedal, and a lot of whites and Hispanics also want the jam jar down a few shelves, they vote for him. But his strength is his weakness. There are too many racist Democrats. "Let us not fool ourselves," he told Montgomery blacks before Hart dropped out in May 1987,

If we came out of the Democratic convention as the party's nominee for President, we won't have to have any more debates on the question of a third party—the majority of the white Democrats would hurry up and start a new party!<sup>44</sup>

Jackson is a believer and holy writ is full of miracles. But he doesn't think God is about to part waters for him. So in May 1987, he declared that "The Vice President option would be a serious consideration."<sup>45</sup> Except that racists who won't vote for a black for President are not about to vote for him for Vice President. Presidents get shot at. Jackson knows this. So an appointment as "special envoy" to get Central American peace would satisfy his ambitions.<sup>46</sup>

*Mother Jones* asked what he'd fight for at the convention if he had to release his delegates. "Getting from the winner a commitment to include a broad range of Democrats in any new administration."<sup>47</sup> In other words, Ambassador Jackson and a handful of deserving bows get fancy jobs. Rainbow aide Frank Watkins' rebuttal to the "broker theory"—that the campaign isn't designed to win, but provides black hacks with a chance to "influence" the party, meaning shake down the nominee for jobs—was singularly cynical: "He certainly doesn't lead with that punch. But for those who can't quite see what he sees, that's a scenario they might want to look at."<sup>48</sup>

Meanwhile, the black and other "hurtin' folks" make do with the added chump change even the worst of lesser evil Democrats would toss into their tin cups, as opposed to the best of "Rambo Coalition" Republicans, who would steal the pencils from a blind man. To be sure, material conditions would improve for them. But only marginally. The multi-triage crisis bashing the country's economy would continue, with time and money wasted on palliatives instead of cures.

From pie-in-the-sky salesman to piecard-in-office. Would that not be fitting in a party that made a Secretary of State out of the likes of Bryan? And the Rainbow Coalition ending up as just another *ignis fatuus*, so much foolish fire, with its followers winning peanuts and then dispersing as an organization, would also be in keeping with the history of the party as the graveyard of populism.

### The Marxocrats

In December 1987, the *Times* ran a story that Reverend Jackson's campaign, anxious to maintain his mainstream image, requested that the Democratic Socialists of America not endorse their tiger. The next day he reversed Austin's decision, after advisers warned he was turning away a cadre of willing activists. Dellums, Harry Britt, Ruth Messinger of the New York City Council and about 30 other elected officials are in DSA and it is reliably said that some of them protested the snub of their organization.

American socialists are like Heinz's pickles. DSA is but one of 57 varieties of socialist groupings. Trotskyists and a few others opposed working in the Democratic Party, as capitalist, but the DSA and other such Marxocrats are a majority of the organized socialist movement on this question. These "entrists," or at least their leaders, usually started out similarly opposed to the party but eventually lost confidence in their ability to ever reach the masses while outside its ranks. But even inside the Rainbow these groupuscules are not united. Each has its own strategy toward Jackson.

Although no one Rainbow socialist grouping is large by itself, collectively they are quite important to the Coalition and campaign. They are more experienced than most folks who orbit around Jackson. Indeed, it is doubtful if the Rainbow could have survived without their participation. Certainly the black hacks could never have organized any whites, especially students, into Jackson's movement. As these leftists are sprinkled around the anti-war and social issues camp, Jacksonism is ubiquitous in those circles.

DSA is the most conservative of the Rainbow socialists. Its founder, economist Michael Harrington, was in the Socialist

Party along with Thomas and Kahn and has his own sordid story about collaboration with the CIA. In 1973, he told some of it in his autobiographical *Fragments of the Century*.

In 1959, the Soviets organized a youth festival in neutral Vienna. The CIA organized an anti-Communist delegation:

They enlisted the aid of Gloria Steinem . . . I stumbled on the CIA front . . . and immediately figured out that it was some kind of government operation. However, I naively and wrongly assumed that it was simply a matter of the State Department's encouraging some rich individuals and corporations to give financial aid to the American youth who wanted to go to Vienna . . . The CIA tricksters had meanwhile offered to help me get to the festival and I was in a quandary. (Had I dreamed that the CIA was involved, there would have been no issue.) I took the question to the National Committee of the Young People's Socialist League . . . It was decided that I would tell the front group that I would accept an airline ticket from them only if I could go on my own, completely independent of their organization, and with the explicit understanding that I would attack American capitalism and foreign policy. That did it. The offer of help was withdrawn forthwith and I paid my own way, having nothing to do with what turned out to be the CIA's dirty games.<sup>49</sup>

How honest was any of this? Harrington went on to tell how when he got to Vienna, he and other anti-Communist "socialists" were roughed up by a Festival "commando squad." He did not say that their "anti-festival" was paid for by the CIA.<sup>50</sup> At any rate, even in 1973, he still didn't think there was anything wrong with taking secret government subsidies, as long as they didn't come from the CIA. Certainly, he did not expose the plotters after they rejected him.

On February 20, 1967, during the daily *New York Times* revelations of CIA subsidization of anti-Communist fronts, Steinem grudgingly conceded that she was a knowing agent from 1958 through 1962:

Far from being shocked by this involvement, I was happy to find some liberals in government in those days who were far-sighted and cared enough to get Americans of all political views to the festival . . . The CIA's big mistake was not surplanting itself with private funds fast enough.<sup>51</sup>



Steinem is now a honcha in DSA. What is even more gross, DSA gives out an annual Debs-Thomas award to deserving liberals. Does Harrington know about Thomas' intimate collaboration with the Company? Of course. He was Thomas' crony in 1967. The current editor of DSA's *Democratic left* is Harry Fleischman, Thomas' biographer, who discussed some of the facts in his boring book. Today, library bookshelves groan under the weight of subsequent biographies detailing the enormous extent of Thomas' collaboration.

In April 1987, I confronted Harrington at a panel of a DSA scholars conference. I asked why they gave an award in the name of a notorious CIA collaborator? He denied Thomas was an agent. I then asked him to tell the audience about his own contact with the CIA. He refused to do so.

Harrington is not an agent. But he has made a religion out of what he and DSA always call "democratic socialism." This is not the totalitarian kind practiced by Gorby & Co., nor the equally wicked type advocated by the disciples of Leon Trotsky. No. Democratic socialism's practitioners are to be found in the Democratic Party, trying to push it to the left. Problem is that in serious politics, people want to know an organization or ideology's track record. Thomas' name is unknown to most young intellectuals. But to many of us middle-aged types, he was famous as one of those rather-be-right-than-President guys, i.e., a sterling example of a democratic socialist. For DSA to admit now that its hero was a CIA collaborator would expose its members to unanswerable ridicule.

That is the organization that Jackson's war council wanted to spurn. It could support Jackson, who does not pretend to be a socialist, because it is no more socialist than he is. As the *Times* once delicately put it, Harrington

calls himself a Socialist, although he has a definition of the term that an earlier generation of Socialists might find odd: He is . . . a firm believer that nationalization of private property would be foolhardy.<sup>52</sup>

When Harrington went into the Democratic Party, it was with the notion of converting it, or at least its liberal wing, to socialism. Instead, it converted him to a spurious liberalism not noticeably different from ADA's State Department liberalism. Far from

becoming any kind of left party, the Democrats consistently moved to the right. For a brief period, in the late 1970s, Harrington had his day as a leader of the party's liberals. Working through a grouping called the Democratic Agenda, the then-Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee elected almost one-sixth of the platform committee at the party's 1978 mid-term mini-convention. By 1982, it claimed 8,000 members.

From then through today, it has been in steady decline. From its beginning, DSA has been almost all white and in 1984, most of these had no interest in Jackson. Of course, it backed Mondale in the election as the lesser evil. The end result was that it found itself stranded. Too far to the right to jump on board Jackson's populist bandwagon. And too left to have the slightest ability to brake the party's rightward trajectory. By 1987, it was down to 5,000 members. It was this precipitous decline that compelled it to support Jackson for 1988. The Rainbow had simply usurped its niche as the party's on-the-reservation radicals.

There is nothing sincere in DSA's leaders' conversion. Political Director Jim Shoch is a classic crackpot realist. Writing in November 1986, in their organ, *Democratic Left*, this would-be shrewdie assessed the future:

the best we can hope for in the general election is that we'll have an acceptable "left neo-liberal" to back, such as Hart or Cuomo . . . If, in his (Jackson's) anger at the current rightward drift of the Democrats, he strikes a hostile stance, he could be disruptive of the party's ability to build a workable alliance of middle and lower income voters. But if he places the goals of the Rainbow in the wider context of the vital needs for this alliance, then he can play a significant role.<sup>53</sup>

In plain English, as long as Jackson understands that he is just running for the exercise, and as long as he is not too far to the left, then these quondam reds can go through the motions of backing him in the primaries. That chore out of the way, they can get down to the serious biz of electing whomever, or even whatever, the convention, in its infinite wisdom, picks as its standard bearer.

The real implications of their provisional endorsement of Jackson were not lost on many in DSA's ranks. What was the point of sham support for a sham candidate? Better to get in with the ultimate nominee. Only 51% of members supported Jackson.

Another 20% were for Simon, with 6% for Dukakis. A vote for Jackson makes a sort of sense from a socialist perspective. He is the black candidate and it is impossible to conceive of any serious movement for profound change without a base among blacks. But simple Simon Socialists? Or Reds for Dukakis? At first, these seem to passeth understanding. Until we realize that all of them, including the Jacksonites, real and hypocritical, will be either simple Simon Socialists or Reds for Dukakis, in any case Democratic Socialists for Dopey the Democrat, come November 1988.

### **“40% of Communists Didn’t Vote for the Communist”**

Late in 1987, the Communist Party announced that it wouldn’t be running a presidential candidate in 1988. The reason cited was the difficulty minority parties have in getting onto the ballot in most states. In fact, the decision was made to permit them to support the Democrats. For decades the party has placed members inside the Democratic Party. In innumerable races below the Presidential contest, the Communist Party all but endorsed the Democrats. It only avoids formal endorsement so that it wouldn’t be used against the supported Democrats by the Republicans. The Party also fears the humiliations that would inevitably come if it did endorse, and the endorsement was denounced by the Democrats.

In practice, its presidential campaigns have been jokes. Party chairman Gus Hall, perennial candidate, and his supporters, would usually tell people to vote for him—or, if not, at least to vote against the Republicans. He meant that for the public, not his own ranks. But even they took his advise to heart. In a 1973 assessment, given to his central committee, he ruefully guessed

that 30%, maybe 40% of Communists didn’t vote for the Communist presidential ticket. In some areas it may be higher. Let us face a still more serious problem. There are members of this body who didn’t vote for the Communist ticket.<sup>54</sup>

The Communist Party, particularly but not exclusively its black cadre, will support Jackson in every way they can, through to the convention. They were not pleased with Jackson’s crap about American “strategic” interests in the Persian Gulf.<sup>55</sup> But they would scarcely not vote for him because of his rightward turn.



After all, they will surely vote for Dukakis, and he will certainly be no better.

Several other leftist tendencies supported Jackson in 1988. The most important of these was the *Guardian*, a New York weekly that has become a sort of bulletin board for the entire left. *Frontline*, an independent pro-Soviet Stalinist paper, also backed him. Both were for Jackson in 1984 and then voted for Mondale as the lesser evil. Other groups, as with the Workers World Party and the New Alliance Party, voted for him in the 1984 primaries and then ran their own tickets in the general election. It seems that the WWP will not vote for him at all in 1988, while NAP will vote for him again in the primaries.

Generally speaking, most of these Marxocrats were behind the "bourgeois" press, as they call the capitalist journals, in commenting on Jackson's right turn. Its easy to see why. The media had no emotional commitment to Jackson. They did. But even after they finally acknowledged reality, they were very moderate in their descriptions of events and sparing in their criticisms.

These Marxocrats are serious groupings. Whatever their failings, they do not give out awards in the name of any CIA collaborators. Nor are they 99% white as with DSA. It is impossible to see the reemergence of a broad left without the involvement of these currents. They support the Rainbow with the best intentions. They tried to reach the masses on their own without success. Then Jackson appeared. As if from nowhere, a mass black movement erupted, even if inside the imperialist Democrats. Demoralized and isolated, it was inevitable they would think Jackson and/or the Rainbow would be their conduit to the people. But had the Marxocrats an historic grasp of populism they would not have wasted time supporting him. In the end, they will have recruited few for the time they put into "Jackson work." And they will discredit themselves as analysts, at least in the minds of politics buffs.

## **The Crisis of Black Politics**

If anything, what is extraordinary about Jackson is how his trajectory already imitates Bryan's. By 1900, no serious observer still thought of the boy orator as much of a challenge to the system, and by 1987, none but some of the Marxocrats thought of Jackson as a danger to Wall Street.

The black community will vote for Jackson again, perhaps in even greater numbers, as fewer black politicians are as openly against him as in 1984. But there is no great enthusiasm for him, in sharp contrast to 1984. Some black intellectuals, at least, who voted for him last time, will not do so again, given his right turn. However, regardless of how well he does in the primaries, or whether the Democrats win or lose the 1988 election, history will record that the most significant result coming out of Jackson's efforts will be the profound lesson that economic equality between blacks and whites is unattainable through the Democratic Party. Not unlikely. Not improbable. Absolutely impossible.

The crisis of the black community will not diminish in any substantial way if Jackson becomes a high muck-a-muck in a Democratic administration. What such a step would reveal is the profound limitations of the black middle class. Blacks own almost nothing in the way of the financial assets spoken of by the Bishops. Nor is it possible for the middle class to ever accumulate enough wealth to achieve a fair share of such private wealth. Hence, politics becomes the avenue for their ambitions. Politicians, lawyers and other professionals can attain perches within the system, as individuals. But even then, strictly in so far as they work for the powers-that-be, as the mayors do. But the black underclass and blue collar working class must have deep rooted social changes or they will continue to move backwards.

Jesse did better with whites in 1988 than in 1984. Many union militants and anti-war activists back Jackson as the best one out there, mainstream and all. But those concerned about issues (and not careers in the party) have to be coldly objective in assessing the realities of the Jackson movement. Is it an adequate vehicle? Or is it another blind alley. In the end, does working for his campaign divert their energy away from their causes? Wouldn't it be better in the long run to build a new party now, no matter how small at first, that never accommodated to the system?

These questions are important because it is highly unlikely that the Rainbow Coalition will continue to exist in anything but name after the primaries. It barely exists now, and most of its components will return to their prime causes after the election. The Marxocrats will be less interested in Jackson or the Rainbow, given the low ideological level shown by both, and, more importantly, the Rainbow's inability to get off the ground. But a minority of these pseudo-lefts will march with it towards final oblivion.

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## PART IV

# How Dopey the Democrat Is Going to Save Us All

Most commentators agree that the 1987-88 Democratic nomination contest has been a disaster. Several factors converged to produce the debacle. Some flowed directly out of the archaic electoral structure of these sometimes not very United States. Some were fortuitous, or appeared so. Others were rooted in the party's ongoing ideological contradictions. The net result will be the discrediting of the party, regardless of whether it wins or loses. To be sure, in either case, tens of millions will vote Democratic. But the disintegration of any significant political structure is always first reflected in the alienation of the most conscious of the intelligentsia. There is no doubt in this case that the party is already an object of ridicule in their eyes. Even if it wins, it will not, indeed can not get its act together.

Americans will allow me to explain to foreign readers some of the complexities of our political structure. There are 50 states, plus the District of Columbia, the capital, and several territories, including Puerto Rico. Each of these has its own rules governing the internal life of the two major parties. In some states, there are caucuses and conventions which pick delegates to a national convention. In 1988, it meets July 18-21 in Atlanta. For most who attend the local caucuses, this is their only involvement in the party's organizational life.

In 35 states there are primaries. The rules again vary. In some, only party registrants can vote. In others, any registrant can take part. Most Democratic primaries operate under proportional

representation. But you must get at least 15% of the vote in each Congressional District. The party is even looser in primary states than in caucus states. The vast majority of party registrants never attend any party functions and most haven't a clue as to where the local party headquarters is located.

About 15% of the convention will be made up of "super-delegates," members of Congress, governors, mayors and party officials, all there ex-officio. To show that the Democratic Party is at its best in dreaming up organizational complexities, it is to be realized that only four-fifths of Congressional Democrats go there via this route. Of course the House and Senate pick their contingents differently. The House will be divided into 12 geographic regions, each nominating three-fifths of its members to go. Then the Steering and Policy Committee, wise old heads, will select the rest of the crew, taking care of race and gender imbalances. Then additional delegates can be nominated by any five members.

Given the absence this time around of a superhack like Mondale, with automatic claim to the party's united vote, the weight of the officialdom will not come into full play unless it is apparent that no one can win 51% in a straight ballot contest and the nomination must be brokered.

The result was an enormously expensive nomination season which began in the fall of 1986. Then, after their conventions, the two parties will battle for months, again at enormous expense. Sane readers will wonder why something isn't done to establish a uniform national nomination procedure, with all caucuses and/or primaries on one day everywhere. The problem is that each state would have to agree, or else a Constitutional Amendment would have to be passed, forcing one date on them. That would take years, at best, thanks to our antiquated constitution. Super Tuesday only passed in the South so that the regional winner would have more clout nationally. For that impact to be felt, there must still be further nomination contests. The southern states are not interested in any national Super Tuesday. Nor are the Iowa and New Hampshire parties, as well as some others.

Most would-be nominees think all this is screwy. But they usually have kept quiet about it, because they don't want to offend voters and party leaders in the states that like the present system. Neither they nor the voters really grasp the full implications of this. It means they go about the countryside, claiming to have "new ideas," solutions for their nation's ills, while not talking



about what is obviously the most senseless aspect of their party's structure. To do so would make it immediately apparent that the villain of the piece is the Constitution itself. It belongs in a museum, what with the leftover "states rights" electoral system and near impossibility of abolishing it via speedy amendment. The would-be's think such a discussion would be over the head of the typical voter and strike many people as unpatriotic. So they put themselves through this strange ordeal like so many lip-serving priests chanting prayers in a dead language they don't understand, to a God they no longer believe in.

### **We Need a New Iowa Painting: American Barbaric**

In 1975, Jimmy Carter, the Governor of Georgia, was so little known out of his home state that he stumped the panel on TV's *What's My Line?* Then he made eight trips to Iowa in the next year and astonished the pundits by winning there with 29% of the caucus vote. Press coverage made him a national figure and Iowa a major political state. Hoping that the same lucky lightning would strike them, some of the would-be nominees started coming into the state in the fall of 1986. To be sure, they campaigned elsewhere. But again and again they returned to Iowa and New Hampshire. Some spent so much time in Iowa that they rented apartments. Dick Gephardt even had his mother move into the state.

The more obscure candidates have no choice. They must do everything they can to let the national public know they exist. They hope to do well in Iowa and New Hampshire, "well" meaning finishing first or second, even third, thus making them serious contenders. With those who don't have significant constituencies elsewhere, if they do not do well in these states, they have to pack it in as supporters abandon ship and swim over to those they think have a chance.

The notion of the politics of the country revolving around atypical Iowa began to grate on the media folks' nerves. *The New York Times* reported that Iowans, "sensitive to complaints that the television networks" were "growing bored with having their correspondents report from pigpens," could only say it was better than having them go to "Montana and talk to people who are growing dental floss."<sup>1</sup>

Iowa and New Hampshire differ in that the first suffered

severely in the '80s as thousands of farmers failed and the state lost population, while the second is thriving. But they both are unrepresentative of our major population centers. The two combined have less than two percent of the country's people and very few blacks and Hispanics. They received one-third of 1984 media primary coverage, far more than California, Illinois, Ohio, and Pennsylvania combined.<sup>2</sup> They have gotten even more in 1987-88. However, all those pictures of Jackson milking a cow and Babbitt holding a baby pig were corn even in Iowa, where only 10% of the people live on farms.

Only about 25% of Iowa's registered Democrats went to the caucuses. These "super voters" divided into preference groups. If there were not enough local supporters of a candidate to reach a 15% threshold, that candidate's backers then made a second choice. The two tiered procedure determined how many of each candidate's backers went on to county conventions. These, in turn, picked delegates to Congressional District conventions. Then 34 delegates from the District conventions went to a June 25 convention, which picked an additional 18 delegates. Then they and six ex-officio state party leaders went off to Atlanta where they, plus those Congressional ex-officios, joined other state delegations, some of them likewise elected through such cumbersome procedures, in nominating the party's standard bearer.

None of this elephantine procedure was of the slightest interest to the over 2,000 media reporters shoehorned into Iowa on caucus night. All they wanted to know was the first vote in those 2,495 folksy meetings in the local firehouse, i.e., the vote before the 15% cutoff was applied. Simply put: those wheels within wheels of elaborate structure mean nothing in the "reality" of the national nomination process. What matters so vitally to the candidates is an absolutely unofficial tally. Once they had that result, the sundry candidates decided whether they had enough momentum to go on and try to save America, or whether it could go to hell without them.

Was there any validity to caucus night, the end result of so many months of bone-wearying traveling around the state? Of course not. *Newsweek* was 100% right in commenting that

In Haiti . . . when an estimated 10 to 20% . . . turned up at the polls, it was considered a dramatic refutation of the rigged

process. In Iowa, when 17% . . . showed up, it's supposed to be a model of democracy at work.<sup>3</sup>

### **Donna Rice Has No Excuses. But I Must Apologize**

Given the length of the campaign, and the arbitrary setting of the first part of it, it would have taken all the talents of a Lincoln daily debating a Douglas to keep the media from being bored to its collective socks. But it was the scandals that assured that the political pundits would turn a sharper eye than normal on the hapless Democratic field. However, before discussing them I must begin with an apology.

"It's a lousy time," a friend complained. "I'm used to being stared at. But now people think there's something wrong with our heads, which is new. Things got better when Biden dropped out and they became the sixpack. But then Hart came back in and we had to put up with all the Randy the dwarf jokes. And now the *Times* is editorializing about the 13 dwarfs. What have us dwarfs done to deserve this?"

Of course my friend is right. We should never disparage anyone's diminished intellect by a term that refers to someone else's characteristics. But whoever started calling the remaining Democrats in the field after Hart dropped out the seven dwarfs meant no harm to real life dwarfs. Besides, it's too late now to do much about it. Historians have to tell it like it was. And I have to confess that I can't pass up a chance to write about Dopey the candidate. But he is Dopey the Democrat, not Dopey the dwarf, at least with me.

Although some of the candidates had already been campaigning for months, the press was only looking at them with one eye until May 1987, when the Hart scandal broke. But there had been some questions about him even before that. He had changed his name from Hartpence. Only, so what? And he had fibbed about his age, saying he was born in 1937 instead of 1936. A little odd, but again so what? And there was that debt left over from 1984. Even that seemed to be of more interest to his creditors than anyone else. Added to these petty things was another nagging rumor about his womanizing.

*The New York Times Magazine* ran a cover story interview in its issue of May 3, 1987. It was strange, all about how "questions of character still haunt him." Still he seemed to handle the



womanizing thing pretty well: "Follow me around. I don't care. I'm serious. If anybody wants to put a tail on me, go ahead. They'd be very bored."<sup>4</sup>

That very day, the *Miami Herald* ran an article about how the candidate had "spent Friday night and most of Saturday in his Capitol Hill townhouse with a young woman who flew from Miami and met him." Of course, it was all a lie: "No one was staying in my apartment. I have no personal relationship with the individual you are following."<sup>5</sup>

Hart had the audacity to appear at the American Newspaper Publishers Association convention on May 5th to deny that he had slept with model Donna Rice. And that strangest of all women, wife Lee Hart, rushed to support him. But by the 8th the charade was over and he was out of the race. A journalistic debate immediately broke out. Was it ethical for the *Herald* to spy on him? And over a question of personal morality?

The answer is yes and no. John McEvoy, a 1984 campaign advisor, had brought up his womanizing in a *Newsweek* interview only a few weeks before, when Hart announced for 1988: "He's always in jeopardy of having the sex issue raised if he can't keep his pants on."<sup>6</sup> Then Hart accused the other campaigns of spreading rumors. And there was his defiant challenge in the *Times*.

However, it's hard to think of a Paris paper troubling itself over a rumor about a candidate for President of France and the ladies. But the Democratic Party is not some worldly French anti-clericalist party. The delegates started waving a sea of flags at the 1984 convention. And we may be sure every session of the 1988 convention will open and close with a prayer. Hart, who bailed out of the Nazarene Protestant sect after divinity school, is one of numerous intellectuals who cynically tolerated this hokum, done strictly for the couch potatoes. We the people have the right to tell the media to keep their pig's snout out of our private lives, and of those of us who run for office, even the highest. But Hart and all those who went along with the mock-pious official party face do not have any right to complain if the media investigates alleged infractions of that God and country morality.

Eventually the whole story came out, in the crazy A-murican way. The June 2nd *National Enquirer*, which normally has nothing more exciting to offer bored customers at the Safeway checkout than a ho-hum headline about a three-headed baby space alien being brought back from the dead and telling us all about

heaven, pictured Donna sitting on Gary's lap in Bimini and him wearing a "Monkey Business crew" t-shirt. By September, Donna was richer than cream from an ad with No Excuses jeans. And Hart was admitting on TV that he had committed adultery. However, as he insisted he had "no plans to run for President," people stopped paying attention to him.

### **"Stop Me If You Heard This One"**

Hart had been way ahead in the polls when he dropped out. Everyone recognized Jackson from 1984. The problem was they also understood he couldn't win because he was black. For all the general public knew, Biden, Dukakis, Gephardt, Gore, Simon and Babbitt were indeed three-headed baby space aliens. Even most newspaper political editors would have had difficulty being specific about them. Within days of Hart's debacle, the whole crew were dubbed "the seven dwarfs." It beat out "the-almost-ready-for-prime-time-players," probably out of considerations re headline space.

If it wasn't bad enough that they were now absurdly linked together—"joined at the hip," as comedian Mark Russell put it, the September 12th *Times* sprang another scandal on the party. It seems that on August 23, Joe Biden had cribbed some successful lines from an ad by Neil Kinnock, head of the British Labour Party. Next, the paper was noticing that he had done the same with some speeches by both Kennedys. Then came charges that he had plagiarized an article while in law school. He had no choice but to drop out on September 23.

Biden had a tremendous reputation as an orator. When he dropped out, he had already raised \$3.7 million. The *Times* said that it "was in part a result of his willingness over many years to speak at fund-raising dinners for Israel."<sup>7</sup> He claimed he believed in women's right to abortion, but he opposed federal financing of such operations. He seems to be a classic Democratic demagogue run wild: Tell the suckers what they want to hear. And ghostwriting is so endemic in both major parties that it is more than probable that the lines he stole from the Kennedys were written by someone else. In such a milieu, to go from using ghostwriters to outright plagiarism is not a big leap.

At any rate, the Biden scandal, coming after the Hart affair, was devastating, at least in regard to the party's image among

intellectuals. If they were no longer the seven dwarfs, cartoonists started drawing the "sixpack" as Gong Show contestants. Jackson was still leading in the polls, but of course most of his supporters were still black. Neither he nor the others were exactly turning on the party's registrants, much less the independent voters.

### **"Aw Right You 60,000,000 People. Y're All Under Arrest"**

There were a couple of curious non-scandals after Biden gonged. Turned out that Pat Robertson, indisputably the most ludicrous of the candidates, had married his wife after he knocked her up. And, sure enough, similarly Reverend Jesse Jackson. But the public simply yawned. It may have been because neither was backed by more than a small minority of his party. But it also shows the public's attitude towards private morality is beginning to catch up with the enormous and irrevocable change in typical sexual behavior in the last few decades.

It was then revealed that Judge Douglas Ginsburg, Reagan's Supreme Court nominee, smoked the killer weed during his schoolin'. Babbitt and Gore admitted they had done likewise. Again nobody cared. No sane person believes there are 60 million criminals out there. Truthfully, the scandal here lays in the fact that neither the youthful sinners nor any other candidate had the brains to suggest that if a judge, a U.S. Senator and an ex-Governor admit to having smoked marijuana, it is past time to legalize it.

Given the deficit and national debt, it is a sign of the unreality of party life that no contender said "legalize it and tax the hell out of it." The several candidates must have used the word "leadership" millions of times. In fact, all are "leaders from behind." They looked at the polls, which show a majority of the citizenry still opposed to legalization, and kept their mouths shut. The minute the polls show the public moving towards legalization, every candidate will leap frog to the head of the parade.

The marijuana question is proof that the party rot runs from top to bottom. Millions of registered Democrats smoke pot. Yet no one comes forth to call for full legalization and concomitant reduction in price. Think, if you will, of the liberals, many of them smokers, all of them self-proclaimed civil libertarians. Yet none say "screw this. I'm not voting for any party that doesn't have the brains or the morality to defend the rights of tens of



millions of smokers. If the party cannot come to grips with a simple problem like this one, what reason is there to think it can solve some of the more recalcitrant ones?"

### **"Their Own Rather Special Language"**

Womanizing and plagiarism are not abnormal events on our planet. But it is hard to think of a precedent for Hart's re-entry into the race on December 15, 1987, after jumping out months earlier. He had met with a few of his ex-staffers in San Francisco for old times sake. Phil Schaefer later said that, when Hart told them he was considering re-entry, "my jaw just dropped open. I just couldn't believe it."<sup>8</sup>

It is rare for all pundits to be of one mind—and correct, to boot. *Newsweek* saw it as the screwiest event in "this hallucinatory political year."<sup>9</sup> The Republicans were as happy as a pig in garbage. George Bush's campaign manager cackled that "the Democratic race becomes a sideshow with Gary Hart as the five-legged calf and the other six candidates running around as clowns."<sup>10</sup> Democratic chairman Paul Kirk confessed, "It certainly wasn't a moment of elation."<sup>11</sup> But he put a good face on and said it wouldn't cause permanent damage.

The pollsters rushed out to take the public pulse. *The New York Times*/CBS Poll found he had lost over one-third of his pre-withdrawal support. But he was still the front-runner among Democrats with 21%, followed by Jackson with 17%. However, as today's pollsters look for mindlessness on the part of much of the electorate, they found

About half of Mr. Hart's supporters, and about half of Mr. Jackson's, too, do not have an opinion of even one of the five other Democratic Presidential candidates.<sup>12</sup>

Similar airheadisms recurred in later polls. A January 1988 Gallup in New Hampshire found Hart had 19%, compared to 39% for Dukakis of next-door Massachusetts. Hart's strongest support was among those with less education, who were less likely to go to the polls. A *Times*/CBS Poll in January in Iowa found his "support was concentrated among those who appeared to be the least interested in politics."<sup>13</sup> By contrast, he finished dead last, with three percent, in a poll of 288 national leaders.<sup>14</sup>

There is a type of intellectual who attracts a following by disdaining "establishments" but who has no essential quarrel with them. Hart's "new ideas" is standard kit for these superficial elements. Mondale easily ridiculed him in 1984 with his "where's the beef?" Even before Hart dropped out, commentators said there were no more new ideas in his 1987 head than in 1984. When he upped periscope in December, the pundits jumped all over his insistence that the rest of the field wasn't dealing with the issues. The analysts disdained the then sixpack, but they had become family, to be defended against this loosest of cannons. ABC's Ted Koppel asked what he had to say that wasn't already being dealt with by them.

The world stopped making jokes and waited to be refuted. Hart started talking about the need for military reform and how his ideas were based on contributions from many officers and defense specialists. Koppel scornfully asked if the now-and-then candidate really thought this was about to turn on the public. It was obvious that he was a head case and his revived campaign was going to go nowhere.

That Hart could suddenly reemerge from disgrace and jump to the top of the polls is a devastating commentary on the party. It compels us to look at his "new ideas" to see what they can tell us about him that made him so attractive to his flaky following. William Schneider, in *The Atlantic Monthly*, gave us a board meeting at his Center for a New Democracy, which claims to be "seeking answers that transcend traditional liberal and conservative post-war orthodoxies":

The people who are attracted to Gary Hart speak their own rather special language . . . The following words kept coming up: parameter, interactive, consensus, instrumental, modernize, transition, dialogue, strategic, agenda, investment, decentralize, empowering, initiative and entrepreneur. The word of the day . . . was pragmatic. "Be pragmatic in all things" seemed to be the group's motto. "Be not ideological."<sup>15</sup>

In as much as one of *The New York Times* leading Op-Ed columnists confessed that he found it hard to remember all the candidates, the paper decided to run basic stump speeches by the contenders. Hart's devoted considerable attention to military reform. There is nothing "new" in his *ur-politik*. He is a dead-

end anti-Communist cold warrior:

we have . . . lost four out of the last five national elections in part, at least, because a lot of voters didn't think we had anything positive to say about the defense of this country and I think they were basically right. On the other hand, part of the mess that I think this country's in today . . . is caused by kind of a traditional mindless mentality that says give the military everything it wants . . . people win wars; weapons don't . . . if our strategy and our tactics and our doctrines are wrong, all the gold-plated weapons . . . won't matter . . . the non-nuclear . . . weapons that we do buy ought to work on the battlefield and not just on the drawing board . . . we're going to have to learn to outthink, to outsmart our opponents and not just try to overpower them.<sup>16</sup>

Again, platitudes. But before we give up, let's turn to "What's Wrong With the Military?," Hart's 1982 *Times* piece in which he gave forth as a military mavin. It starts with an anecdote about the Maginot Line. It warns that "we are well along the road to repeating the French mistake . . . New ideas . . . are seldom . . . welcomed." Then the magic formula comes, "maneuver warfare." The name of the game is "to destroy the enemy's cohesion—and the opposing commander's ability to think clearly—by creating surprising and dangerous situations faster than he can cope with them." And then we get a dose of examples. The Germans in 1940, the Israeli wars, even Stonewall Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley. There are denunciations of "in-box, out-box" bureaucracy. After all, the name of the game is to confront the enemy with "the baffling and the opaque, resolving quickly into the surprising and dangerous."<sup>17</sup>

And that's it. Frankly, it's hard to understand why the *Times* bothered to run the piece. What's the difference between maneuver warfare and the good old fashioned blitzkrieg or lightning war? What American general says "no, let's build another Maginot Line, only bigger and better." He gives one example of a muscle-bound weapon, the M-1 tank. Surely there are more. But that scarcely makes maneuver warfare into a new idea. We may be absolutely certain that the Soviets have their equivalent doctrine. And the notion of Soviet armies reeling before ours, their generals baffled by the powerful minds of our Rambos, is ludicrous.

If, as the Christians claim, Jesus died for our sins, us



psychoanalysis buffs say Freud lived so we could understand them. Clinically, Hart is the classic narcissist. The buzz words he tosses off are his appeal. Narcissism is the regression to the most infantile mental state. Small children are magical thinkers. Their thoughts are omnipotent. "Parameters, interactive, consensus, pragmatic" and so on are his abracadabra. In the end, what was he saying?: "Don't you see? I, Gary Hart, I'm the only one who wants to talk about the real issue: Elect me, Gary Hart, as Commander-in-chief. I'll use mind-power to defeat the Soviets if they are stupid enough to defy me."

Ronald Brownstein tells us Hart was "Hollywood's favorite candidate" before he dropped out.<sup>18</sup> Show biz crawls with egos as big as his, who become "successful" because they can create a celluloid world out of their thoughts, that appeal to fantasies in the heads of others. One, Warren Beatty, a fellow ladykiller, was the crucial voice urging him to do "Hart Runs for President, Take II."<sup>19</sup>

Many of his popular supporters couldn't begin to describe his politics. They were fans rather than adherents. For them, a candidate is a star, not essentially different from their favorite rock musician or ball player. As the star, he is the active narcissist. They are passive, as is typical with fans. By definition, narcissists are superficially connected with reality. In so far as they listen to him or read about him, it is not his specifics that attract him, but the magical word formulas.

Most are males. That his sex life is at the center of the opposition to him was a big part of his draw. He is acting out their unconscious fantasies. Defying the conventional moralists, their hero gets the damsel in the tower, combing her long blonde tresses, slays the Soviet dragon, and goes on to his inauguration ball in the palace on the Potomac.

The show-biz types, the yuppies and college kids who fell for him are over-verbalized. They have enough money to indulge their oral fixations and narcissism, so apparent that yuppie is a synonym for superficiality and self-indulgence. And notoriously these milieus are the happy hunting grounds for gurus. With many of the reborn-Hartites, if they didn't go for him, they would have fallen for some other world-saver's rackety-rack.

Usually it is wise to avoid predictions. But in this case, it was certain he would lose. The pros knew he was too flaky to ever tolerate him as a candidate. Maybe he can get himself reelected in

Colorado. But nationally he is finished. In the end, the fact that he led the polls nationally and in Iowa at the onset of his comeback, and then ended up with less than one percent in Iowa, only weeks later, is more important than anything that will happen to him personally. Bluntly: a significant portion of the party is, for the most part, far too "giddy" to ever develop strong realistic convictions, at least not without a social convulsion compelling them to become objective.

### **"Like the Mating of Pandas in the Zoo"**

The fact that Jackson became front runner after Hart's drop out, and no one thought he could become the nominee, helped bring the entire field into disrepute. Not only were rest of them great white hopes, whether they wanted to be or not, but none of them possess any distinction. Jeffrey Frank of the *Washington Post* was expressing the journalistic consensus when he described the two party race, early in 1988:

To put it nastily, in our hearts we know they're slight. Or worse . . . What is the difference between a number of the current office-seekers and someone like Harold Stassen? (long an eccentric perpetual candidate—LB) A very thin line may be all that separates self-confidence from a mild form of psychosis. In fact, almost everyone I know has entertained the idea that several of the announced candidates are certifiable.<sup>20</sup>

Frank was slightly in error on two points. None were even mildly psychotic. Not even Pat Robertson. But all were narcissists. And they were not the only ones suffering from it. Their parties are nothing but herds of turtles, each one slowly wandering off in his own direction. It can be stated as dictum that corruption or vanity—or both—is absolutely inevitable in any party without a unifying ideological principle and organizational discipline.

Normally the grafters do not run for President, Nixon being the famous exception. They either come into national office behind a new President or they operate on their local level. But innumerable "Stassens" have sought the position. And some of them have won it. If the present field are mediocrities, was Carter any brighter? Or Mondale?

With some of the Republicans, it was obvious they were on ego trips. Did anyone expect to have to live under President Al Haig? Or Pierre Du Pont? Or even Jack Kemp? But who ever thought they would see Bruce Babbitt had been elected President? What makes it certain that all of the above were running for the exercise was their abysmally low standing in the polls from early on. No conceivable concatenation of events could have occurred that could have propelled any of these past all their competitors to their party's nomination, and then on to the White House.

How different was it with Simon, Gore, Gephardt and Dukakis? In the end, everyone knew that either one of them would get the nomination, or it would go to a "savior," who most thought would be Cuomo, if it came to that. But the only reason anyone thought the nomination would probably go to one of them was due to the conviction that the candidate would never be Hart or Jackson or Babbitt. Cuomo kept insisting he wasn't a candidate and it appeared unreasonable for the party to pick him if he didn't run in any state contests. But none of this gang of four was able to substantially separate himself from the other three in the polls prior to the Iowa caucuses, much less get past Hart and Jackson.

This campaign saw an unprecedented number of debates. But to no purpose. My candidate—for the best joke of the election season—is Babbitt's line "The Democratic debates have been like the mating of pandas in the zoo: there's a lot of fuss and commotion, but there's never any kind of result." Kirk O'Donnell, former general counsel to Speaker Tip O'Neill, declared that in all corners of the national party "there's a feeling of uncertainty . . . its all up for grabs."<sup>21</sup>

### **A Miracle Worker Without a Miracle—or Even a Bright Idea**

The "conventional" wisdom correctly pointed to Michael Dukakis as the one to watch. He raised \$10.8 million in 1987, compared to Gephardt's \$4.4 million and Gore's \$3.8 million. The same poll of pols showing Hart as their least popular candidate, had Dukakis as favorite, first choice of 29%. But the machines no longer are effective in delivering votes. He can win the presidency because of Reagan's crimes and the money and organization the party falls heir to as the lesser evil in the political circus act. Approval of the dreary hacks is a blinking red warning sign that he's another with a severe personality problem.



His is incurable. Rigor mortis has set in. According to *The New York Times*,

reporters who have followed the Democratic candidates have remarked on the fact that, in private, they are as policy-minded and colorless in their conversation as they are in public . . . they are more likely to talk about a subject such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, or not to talk at all—ignoring their companions . . . and pulling out abstruse articles on foreign policy and economics . . . Dukakis, for one, stays so official day and night that he makes it a practice never to go off the record at all.<sup>22</sup>

Day and night? Let's have a contest for the best "official" Mike-and-Kitty-in-bed joke. Fred Barnes of *The New Republic* called Dukakis "dull on the stump." He "comes off as bloodless." He "lacks a message, an issue. He's the George Bush of the Democratic race. His résumé is his message: I am the beef."<sup>23</sup> By January 1988, his advisors realized they had to "warm up" their bore. They hired a consultant to "bring out some of the passion that's inside Mike Dukakis."<sup>24</sup> Ads were duly made, showing him properly indignant about Central America and the homeless. But it isn't going to work. Scot Lehigh, of the *Boston Phoenix*, described his Iowa campaign to the folks back home as "muscle-bound but brain-dead. Michael Dukakis is . . . stuck in intellectual neutral."<sup>25</sup>

His stump speech was elephantine. Full of pomposities. "Today, on the threshold of a new decade and a new century, it's time to call Americans to meet the challenge of the American Frontier."<sup>26</sup> High points are insipid quotes from JFK's ghostwriters' equally empty rhetoric. "I am the beef" catches the vulgar narcissism of his campaign. The *Times* described one of his Iowa TV ads. It

plays on the "Massachusetts miracle," a reference to that state's economic upturn, which is the centerpiece of the Dukakis campaign. Against a soundtrack of a child's piano playing "America the beautiful," the commercial shows toddlers walking in front of a huge American flag. "Little American miracles," an announcer says. "Is their American dream guaranteed? Good schools, college, steady jobs, their own homes. Or do we need some insurance?"<sup>27</sup>

Massachusetts had only 2.8% unemployment in November 1987. But New Hampshire had 2.1%, Connecticut 2.8%, Rhode Island 3.1%, Vermont 2.9%. Massachusetts is massively endowed with major universities. Dr. James Howell, chief economist for the Bank of Boston, pointed to "technology transfer" from these schools as crucial to the "miracle":

Two-thirds of all the venture capital investment in young technology-driven companies in the decade of the '70s was in California and Massachusetts. That's savings from Michigan and Mississippi that's flowing in here.<sup>28</sup>

The regional commissioner at the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics is likewise unimpressed with the role of Great Leader Governor Dukakis: "Governors can create a positive environment. In terms of affecting these numbers in a statistical sense, they don't seem to have much relationship."<sup>28</sup>

All states and cities compete in giving tax favors and such to attract jobs. But give-to-the-corporations programs don't help when things get tough. Dukakis used to cite General Motors' Framingham plant as an example of his ability to bring in industry. Until it closed down in November 1987, laying off 3,700 workers. Multinationals move their facilities from state to state and country to country to suit themselves, not any governor. And as Howell pointed out, industry now prefers Massachusetts to Iowa. It's closer to a port, and to the eastern mass market, and it has MIT. Under capitalism as she is played here, it is hard to see a President being able to get companies to locate in Iowa, which is the only miracle the Christians out there are interested in.

### **Meet the Boss' Li'l Helper**

Nowadays, the papers are always full of discussion of the national debt, and on-going budget deficits, which increase it yearly. By October 1988, the debt will be \$2,587 trillion. The interest is \$203 billion per year. The Congressional Budget Office estimates the deficit will be \$176 billion in fiscal 1989, which starts on October 1, 1988. Everyone knows that the bedrock of that debt is military spending, which will be \$297.5 billion by the end of fiscal 1988. The Democrats talk about how Reagan has cut this or that social program. But clearly, if they do not cut military

spending then there isn't much that can be spent on the civilian society, certainly not without raising taxes on someone. But our miracle man has it all figured out. He claims he can raise \$35 billion per year merely by strict enforcement of existing tax laws. But the *Times* ran a special article on December 21, 1987, critiquing the Democratic candidates' economic programs, and the film-flam nature of Dukakis's platform was easily exposed:

Half a dozen tax experts in Congress, the Treasury and major accounting firms agreed . . . that granting tax scofflaws a temporary amnesty and beefing up the enforcement branch of the International Revenue Service would generate some revenue, but they doubted it would raise even a tenth of what Mr. Dukakis has suggested. They also noted that he had not been bold enough to suggest the one enforcement measure guaranteed to raise money: mandatory withholding of taxes on interest and dividends . . . he would save \$2.4 billion by trimming expenditures on a space-based missile defense system, but he calls for strengthening conventional military forces in a way that would cost at least that much. Beyond that, he advances no specific budget-cutting or revenue-raising programs.<sup>30</sup>

It is scarcely an accident that Dukakis doesn't call for withholding of interest and dividends. He can barely conceal his desire to be Wall Street's man in the White House. According to his issues advisor, Dukakis

doesn't want to run an anti-Wall Street campaign. This is a guy who, if you name almost any social problem . . . one of the first things he thinks about is: "How do I get the private sector engaged?"<sup>30</sup>

His foreign policy and military spending lines are standard kit hack Democrat. He was against Contra aid and opposed sending his National Guard to Honduras for "training." But "if Nicaragua or any other government seeks to overthrow or subvert its neighbors, we have the right and the responsibility to stop them." The *Times* said that speech "mentions the word 'strength' or some derivation nearly 30 times."<sup>31</sup> In plain words, if the Sandinistas decided to unite Central America, as the 13 colonies were united in 1776, why then, 'tis only right that Mike Dukakis blow them off the face of the earth.



In the heat of a September 1987 debate, he sounded like he was for the U.S. withdrawing its troops from South Korea. But, not to worry:

Peppered with questions by reporters after the debate, he said that he was not proposing a withdrawal . . . and that South Korea had been making progress on human rights in recent months.<sup>32</sup>

As with all Democratic contenders, he is for weapons negotiations with the Soviets. He opposes Star Wars deployment, but favors research at lower levels than at present. Miracle makers are actually practical fellows. He is not about to kill the military spending goose that lays so many fine golden eggs in his state, so proficient in high-tech weapons research.

Yes. He's for talks on conventional armaments levels. But, God forbid they fail, he is for what was described in the *Times* as "enhancing the West's conventional strength in Europe."<sup>32</sup> At best, he is a hawk in doves' feathers:

However, Mr. Dukakis did not promise a cut in defense spending, a strategy that was widely popular among Democrats four years ago. "We may be able to make significant cuts below current levels of spending for defense, if negotiations with the Soviet Union go well . . . That will not happen overnight. And we should not assume—or promise—that it will."<sup>33</sup>

He is for research on submarine-launched D-5 warheads. After all, A-murica needs a President who is not only "confident" in negotiations with Gorby, but who is "tough."

The December 1987 Palestinian Uprising dramatically shifted American opinion about the Middle East. Normally, the Democrats reflect anti-war sentiments in the society, as with opposition to Contra aid and negotiations with the Soviets regarding the bomb. But, given its deep financial dependence on pro-Zionist Jews, the Party now runs from the Palestine question like the devil at the sight of holy water.

The *Times* explained, on December 31, 1987, that Jackson goes further than all the other Democrats in his criticisms of Israel. But even he focuses on Reagan's failure to get the two sides together for negotiations. Not even Jackson calls for cutting off military and financial aid to the Israelis. Not even after the infamous policy of breaking hands, which did so much to alienate

the public, including most Jews. The paper was candid, even if the Democrats were not:

policy toward Israel is an especially sensitive political issue . . . in part because of politicians' fears of offending Jewish voters and contributors and in part because the issues seem so intractable.<sup>34</sup>

They avoided the issue "unless asked." Dukakis was one of the more mealy-mouthed of the pack: The paper described how he

issued a statement saying only that Israel "should review carefully the procedures used to respond to disorder consistent with legitimate security concerns."<sup>34</sup>

Eventually he had to say that a Palestinian state was possible. But his favoring of more aid to Israel made his statement the obeisance vice pays to virtue.

This is the man most favored by the hacks to be their candidate! Let us be blunt. The party will not vanish before the election. Dukakis will be the candidate. It will not be because of any miracles this would-be thaumaturgist will perform. Indeed, he has enough trouble convincing the sceptical media that he is among the living. Let's leave him with this: Some may quarrel about whether he is evil. But no one doubts he is lesser.

### **"Clothing Appeals to Selfishness in the Language of Compassion"**

The media's hostility to Hart was psychological. Normal people instinctively react negatively towards neurotics. But distaste for Dick Gephardt was political. *Newsweek* put it simply: "Gephardt has packaged himself as the candidate who Dares to Pander."<sup>35</sup> He's been doing it throughout his career. A Baptist, married to a Catholic, he represents a conservative Catholic blue-collar St. Louis Congressional District. He is against busing. He opposed extending the deadline on the Equal Rights Amendment. He once backed tuition tax credits for parents sending their kids to parochial schools. He sponsored a constitutional amendment outlawing abortion. When these got in the way of his national ambitions, he dropped them. He's still against federal funding of abortions, but says he won't veto legislation containing it.

Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, endorsed by 80 Representatives, first chairman of the rightist Democratic Leadership Council, his stump rap denounced the "establishment" 12 times.<sup>36</sup> Everything about him is phony. For over a year, this populist demagogue never stopped babbling about his milk truck-driving father. Turns out pa had been one, but ended up a prosperous real estate agent. When the deception was revealed, his staff laughed it off: "So he was a milkman who happened to own a couple of banks."<sup>37</sup> His speeches, including his announcement speech, were written for him by Bob Shrum, a recycled Kennedy idealistic rhetoric-merchant.

He insists he's not a protectionist. Hell no. Just a "promotionist." According to one of his aides, "There's a visible grimace on his face when he is asked to get into a foreign car."<sup>38</sup> but he concedes that "about 80% of the \$160 billion trade deficit is our own fault."<sup>39</sup> His "Gephardt Amendment" would require countries with large trade surpluses with the U.S. through "unfair" trade practices to cut the imbalances by 10% annually. If they don't, they face dollar for dollar tariffs and quotas. The countries effected are those whose exports exceed imports from the U.S. by 175%. His key ad talked about South Korean tariff and taxes that raised the price there of a Chrysler K car to \$48,000. But South Korea discourages all car sales. Eight of those "tariffs" apply to a Hyundai, which costs two to three times what it costs here.

His farm program is equally demagogic. He's for mandatory limits on production if a majority of farmers approve. The *Wall Street Journal* reports that he "concedes it would drive up food prices . . . but says it is the only way to save the small family farm."<sup>40</sup> Will anyone be surprised to know he is also for a tax on imported oil, which again would raise prices?

Allegedly, this is out of concern for the jobs of Americans. But until he got the presidential bug, he opposed raising the minimum wage. And he's for taxing fringe benefits. As the *Times* commented,

Gephardt, the quintessential insider politician . . . who said after the 1980 election that the Democrats needed to make peace with business interests now crusades against "big corporations" and the very Washington establishment that has been so helpful to him . . . friends among those he calls "political insiders" don't protest this approach. They cheer him on.<sup>41</sup>



Among the friends of the friend of the woikin' man who contributed to his coffers were lobbyists for Gulf & Western, Bear Stearns, Goldman, Sachs & Company, General Motors, Citicorp, H.J. Heinz, Merrill Lynch & Company, Hallmark Cards, Philip Morris, and the Flying Tiger airline.

Gephardt's announcement he would return to Washington from Iowa to "lead the fight" against the administration on the February 3 Contra aid vote, was a sure sign that aid was doomed. "When we read that he'd be 'leading the fight as he had in the past,' it was sure news to us," said one startled anti-aid congressional assistant.<sup>42</sup> Beyond that specific issue, he is a hawk among hawks. He is for military aid to El Salvador. He backed the invasion of Grenada and the Libyan bombing. For all his focus on South Korea's trade policies, he is for maintaining our troops there to defend that well-known citadel of democracy. He voted for the MX missile, the B-1 bomber, and even the neutron bomb and replenishment of nerve gas stocks. Of course, he is for Star Wars research, but at half the present costs. He's for production of the Stealth bomber and the mobile Midgetman. After all, "the Democratic nominee cannot be against every new weapons system and earn the trust of the American people."<sup>43</sup>

TRB, the anonymous columnist for *The New Republic*, summed up what is so hideous about Gephardt. He is

clothing appeals to selfishness in the language of compassion . . . Gephardt never tells his audience that *they* should be more compassionate, or contribute more to help others, or reject their own status quo.<sup>44</sup>

Wool sellers know wool buyers. Gephardt knows what the polls show about the stultified character of much of the working class is absolutely true. For the auto workers, and above all their bureaucratic misleadership, Korea is a terrible place because it sells its cars here, jeopardizing jobs. For all the UAW's leaders being members of the National Labor Committee for democracy and blah-blah in El Salvador, it never occurred to those miniminds that they should have helped auto workers get democracy in Korea. Nor does it occur to them now to call a worldwide auto workers conference, to generate solidarity with each others' strikes against their employers, in many cases the same multinationals. They can not do that and at the same time rant against

foreign cars as the source of their own members' problems. As bureaucrats, they instinctively prefer to pander to the "football nationalism" of their under-educated ranks. Given this, they were inevitably attracted to Gephardt, exactly as a pig is drawn to garbage.

Gephardt put his all into the Iowa caucuses contest, spending more time there than anyone else. He figured a win there would make him a serious contender in the South on Super Tuesday. Success there would, he hoped, make him a contender elsewhere. He did have some national strength among union bureaucrats, particularly in the United Auto Workers. But the *Times* reported that, excepting an endorsement by Representative Thomas Manton, leader of the wretched Queens (N.Y.) gang, the Missourian's campaign had "been invisible" in New York state.<sup>45</sup> Dittò California, except for Shorenstein. It is a profound commentary on the total isolation of the party machinery from the registered party voters that the endorsement of the head of the California campaign committee meant absolutely nothing in terms of his having the slightest popular support. Gephardt's victory in Iowa was far from massive. It generated some media attention, but he hardly picked up much following in California. For most of the state's registered Democrats, Shorenstein is invisible.

Gephardt's popular appeal was to the most backward elements in the party. A post-caucus *Times*/CBS poll found his Iowa voters 36% unionists, compared to Simon's 18% and Dukakis' 20%. They were older and less educated. Gephardt voters were 17% liberal, 31% moderate and 42% conservative. Simon supporters were 27% liberal, 23% moderate, 22% conservative. Dukakis backers were 20% liberal, 21% moderate and 12% conservative.<sup>46</sup> Polls showed a similar composition to Gephardt's southern white following. Some hacks thought him the ideal November candidate because he appeals to these elements, so necessary to beat the GOP, especially in the South. But his strength was also his very severe weakness. The educated despise him. They can never feel comfortable with anyone who dislikes getting into a foreign car. And rightly so. Feminists dislike him because he is against funding abortions. Liberals see him as a hawk. And many on Wall Street find him distasteful for all of the above, and prefer the responsible stuffed-shirt, Dukakis. And, for all of these reasons, plus professional integrity, which compels them to describe him as a demagogue, the press commentators commonly can't

abide him.

### **“I Listen to Donors”**

One contender no one in the media seriously believed in was Paul Simon. *The New Republic* did a spotlight on him in its October 1987 issue, titled “Pee-Wee’s Big Adventure.”<sup>47</sup> By now, every politically literate American can recognize him, with his bow tie, beetlish thick black glasses, and dreary blue suits. “Yes,” he tried to convince us, “I have to confess I’m another homely candidate from southern Illinois.” In July 1987, *M* magazine did a piece solemnly proclaiming that we are turning away from those in the fast lane. We were told that we were beginning to look towards those like “Simon—who blurs the line between straight arrow and nerd . . . he could be a comer with his straight-arrow nerd hybrid appeal.”<sup>48</sup> Incredibly, Simon’s press secretary called reporters’ attention to the article.

Simon’s bow tie has become the symbol of his representing the party’s “traditional values.” “I’m not a neo-anything. I’m a Democrat.”<sup>49</sup> His heroes are FDR, Truman, Humphrey and even Carter. By listing these, he means to tell us he is another one of those friends o’ da woikin’ man. Instead, he reveals that he is indeed well within the party’s wretched traditions. He is a hack to the nth power.

In 1972, as Illinois Lieutenant Governor, he ran for Governor, as Daley’s pick. Dan Walker slaughtered him in the primary by identifying him as the machine’s man. Of course, Illinois Democratic politics being what it is, Walker eventually wound up in the joint. No one in Illinois thinks Simon is some kind of idealist. He claims to be against the PACs. But he took their money, even for President. He confessed, in his book, *The Glass House*, that

If Jane Green calls, and she has made a \$1,000 campaign contribution, I usually make myself available. I hardly suggest that this is right, but its the reality of the situation . . . I listen to donors.<sup>50</sup>

His foreign policy is conventional anti-Communism, Democratic style. He’s against Star Wars deployment, but for research at reduced rates. Of course he opposed Contra aid. That was a “policy that values guns over common sense in the fight against the Communist threat in the hemisphere.” After all, “we give the



Sandinistas an excuse and a scapegoat for their own failures and wrongdoing." Besides, "Military commitments should be prudently made, for neither our resources nor our spirit are unlimited."<sup>51</sup> He is for reducing the U.S. military presence in Honduras, not for completely withdrawal. Similarly, he is strongly against withdrawing troops from South Korea. He is for building up NATO's conventional forces. Andrew Kopkind of *The Nation* was correct to write, in a discussion of Simon, about "all those silly noises about building up 'conventional' warfighting capability that Democrats now do to prove their military macho."<sup>52</sup>

Simon is a dead-end pro-Zionist. The *Wall Street Journal* says that when he ran against Senator Charles Percy in 1984, he "stumbled into the gutter."<sup>53</sup> Michael Goland, the southern California real estate mogul and fanatic, spent \$419,573 to beat Percy. Goland was later fined for illegal advertising.<sup>53</sup> The paper says that Simon claims "he twice wrote to Mr. Goland asking him to stop the negative advertising, but he did little to publically disavow it until late in the campaign."<sup>53</sup> Additionally, "a Simon fund-raising letter, which Mr. Simon says he never saw, placed Mr. Percy in a league with anti-Israel 'guerrilla-bands or hostile Arab states.'"<sup>53</sup>

Kopkind, not the most daring of liberals, nevertheless attacked Simon for his pandering to the Zionists, in a December 5, 1987 article in *The Nation*. A Simon campaign worker wrote in to defend his tiger. Kopkind was quite correct in his reply:

It should be remembered that in 1984 pro-Israel meant pro-Likud (the then ruling right-wing Israeli party—LB), pro-invasion (of Lebanon) and pro-permanent occupation (of the West Bank and Gaza). One has only to look at the headlines out of the Middle East in the past month to see the results of the policies Simon championed . . . No doubt his endorsement of the Republican bill banning the Palestine Information Office represents further repayment of his debt to the Israel lobby.<sup>54</sup>

Naturally, his response to the uprising was moderate in the extreme, as it were. The December 31, 1987, *Times* had him saying that the disturbances "might have been handled differently." He even qualified that by adding, "That's easy for me to say." The State Department should bring "Jordan and Israel together to resolve the situation."<sup>55</sup>

But, as Fred Barnes of *The New Republic* put it, a genuine

Roosevelt Democrat makes it on the basis of a liberal domestic program of "polite class warfare."<sup>56</sup> He would assure everyone of a job, four days a week at the minimum wage. It would be voluntary, at least at the beginning. It would only cost \$8 billion and would get rid of the deficit. He claimed every one percent reduction in the unemployment rate means a saving of \$30 million. The media dismisses the figure as demagoguery. *Newsweek* described it as "like a doctor saying he is going to cure a sick man by getting rid of all his unpleasant symptoms."<sup>57</sup> He had a "self-financing" plan for nursing care for the elderly. But again the media asked how this would be done. What made his WPAish program especially suspect is the fact that he voted for the Gramm-Rudman Bill for mandatory cuts in federal programs to balance the budget. He is in favor of a balanced budget amendment. He claims he can balance the budget within three years.

He is for the demagogues' panaceas, the Gephardt Amendment and a tax on imported oil. Under pressure to show where revenue would come from to pay for his works programs, he called for a surtax on incomes of over \$100,000. And he talked of cuts in Pentagon spending by seven percent over three years.

"Polite class warfare" says it all about Simon. He really is a traditional Democrat. The critiques of Roosevelt, Truman, Humphrey & Co., found in the front of this book, based on uncontroversial research by political historians, available in public libraries, has utterly passed him by. Similarly, his foreign policy reveals him as devoid of any critical approach to his party's anti-Communist orthodoxy and egregious pandering to Zionist donors. His domestic program is without even the slightest hint of a change in property relations. His reform program is piddling. Not even pie-in-the-sky. Make-work at slave-labor wages is nothing more than Twinkies-here-on-earth. Unemployed youths in the ghettos would ignore it. Risks of getting caught, or severely punished, for dealing coke are not that high in many cities, and the money to be made is too attractive.

Back in December 1987, party chairman Paul Kirk proposed that the convention go from the 45,000 word 1984 platform to one "an eighth-grader could memorize."<sup>58</sup> He is a virulent rightist, a Contra supporter, determined to move the party away from appeals to blacks, women, labor, and towards those southern white male conservatives he is convinced are the key to electoral success. Make no promises and you don't even have to



pretend to get them through Congress. Simon rushed to support the idea, hoping it could be kept to 500 words, "a vision."<sup>59</sup> This is ludicrous. A certification of intellectual bankruptcy. But, after all, what was his program? It could be spelt out in far less than 500 words: "trust a nice old guy in a bow tie."

### **Who Walks Like a Bomb, Talks Like a Bomb, Is a Bomb?**

The columnists are unanimous in seeing Albert Gore as a hopeless stuffed shirt. *The New Republic's* TRB described him as "an old person's idea of a young person."<sup>60</sup> *Newsweek* said he couldn't shake "his pompous, student body-president delivery."<sup>61</sup> James Reston of the *Times* remarked that he sounded "a bit like the class valedictorian."<sup>62</sup> They are right. He could put anyone to sleep with both the style and content of his homilies.

It is not necessary to say much about his domestic program. He has the obligatory reference to FDR. But no one voted for him as a reformer. Not only was Gore a founder of the DLC, he is entirely programmed to pandering to the southern white male vote, primarily on foreign affairs. In hustling oil worker votes, he did ultimately say he would think about an import tax. But his heart really wasn't in it, and he is opposed to the Gephardt Amendment. He is against federal funding of abortions. His wife, Tipper, is on a wacko crusade against sinful rock lyrics, which is sort of like trying to push the ocean back to China with a broom, and our guy is for school prayin'. He's "open" to taxing Social Security benefits, but given that the *Forbes* 400 get them, this isn't as reactionary as it sounds. He is for a balanced budget amendment. But beyond these few pecadilloes, he actually gets about 65% of those ADA liberalism scorecards.

On foreign affairs, he is by far the most right-wing of the rightward moving Democratic herd. His pitch is King Kong militarism. Yeah, he's for arms control. But the way you get there is you arm to the teeth and then negotiate with Gorby while lookin' down the barrel of a gun. His big kick is getting away from fixed silo missiles, which can be blown up by the other side. Instead, both sides should get into nothing but mobile missiles that can't be pin pointed. Then they will have no choice but to negotiate. Peace through mutual terror is what that is called. And, of course, he is for Star Wars research and only opposes "accelerated" deployment. He was against military aid to the



Contras but was for "humanitarian" aid to the murderers. He was not happy with the reflagging of the Kuwaiti tankers. But once it was done, he backed Reagan.

Gore got into a slingin' match with the other contenders in the fall of 1987. He criticized Gephardt for proposing a ban on in-flight testing of missiles. He claimed his opponents fostered the feeling that they were against "every single weapons system that has been proposed."<sup>63</sup> He warned that Nicaragua couldn't be trusted to carry out the Arias plan. He hailed the invasion of Grenada. On October 7, he claimed that some Democrats were for "the politics of retreat, complacency and doubt." He was challenged during a debate to name these miscreants, but declined to do so. Afterwards he said that all of the others had positions which "come close" to what he described.<sup>64</sup>

I rise to the defense of the others. Dick Gephardt retreating? Even Jackson would blow \$1.2 billion for Star Wars research.<sup>65</sup> Gore decided early on that he couldn't possibly do well in either Iowa or New Hampshire, where the Democratic voters tend to be pacific, even if neither state is noted for big anti-war demonstrations. He saw Gephardt as his rival for those cracker votes and said what he thought he had to so as to get them. Because those southern Super Tuesday primaries permit Democrats to vote Republican, he felt he had to run against Bush and Dole or, to be more accurate, to run towards them, so as to convince registered Democrats that they didn't have to vote Republican to vote for a homicidal maniac. Al Gore was available.



### **"Promising to Protect Each from the Other"**

The favorite of the media was undisputably Bruce Babbitt. He has a sense of humor which, for Americans, covers a multitude of sins. Everyone knew he was serious in his ideas. No one thought of him as a panderer. He had everything going for him as a decent person. But absolutely no one thought to vote for him.

He was the ultimate ego-trip candidate. He represented no element in the society and wasn't aiming at anyone in particular. In 1983, as Governor of Arizona, he sent in the National Guard to escort scabs into a struck Phelps Dodge copper mine after a scab's daughter was shot by a sniper. Hundreds lost their jobs as a result of his intervention.

Now he was running on a program including such crowd pleasers as a five percent consumption tax with offsets for the very poor; a tax on Social Security benefits for those earning more than \$25,000 as individuals and \$32,000 as couples, and the elimination of tax deductability for mortgage interest on second homes. All this was supposed to help cut the deficit. But of course, this was politically unreal. The people will never punish themselves with a five percent tax to pay for a deficit the politicians inflicted on the country.

At the same time, he had a few ideas that assured that business would never consider him. He would have prohibited companies from taking a tax deduction for executive bonuses if they didn't grant performance pay to all workers. He wanted a requirement that any company that took a U.S. loan or guarantee had to permit partial ownership and control by its workers. He wanted universal child-care vouchers for day care for working parents. And he favored full federal medicaid funding, on the proviso that the states use the cash they saved for education. In short, he did not understand what politics, more particularly Democratic politics, are all about. As Edward Bennett Williams once said, it is "the gentle art of getting votes from the poor and money from the rich by promising to protect each from the other." He comes off as his own man, but no one sees him as their man.

He had a few foreign policy ideas, but few paid any attention to them, as no one thought he had any chance of becoming the candidate. They again revealed his double-gaited orientation. He opposed reflagging but favored a beefed up American naval presence in the Persian Gulf. He favors strengthening of NATO's conventional forces in the wake of the 1987 U.S.-USSR missile agreement. He favors Star Wars research but not testing. But he was strongly against the Contras and opposed sending the Arizona National Guard to Honduras for maneuvers.

Although he joked about what a untelegenic candidate he was, if some TV network is smart they will get him for a talk show host. But a President of the U.S. he will never be. As long as the

system holds together, the capitalists don't want someone who could go off on his own toot. And when it fails, the workers will want a radical.

### **A Savior! A Savior!**

As it became clear that none of the contenders was really credible, a huge percentage of registered Democrats began to wish for a "perfect candidate." But in as much as the ranks are amateurs, without serious political knowledge, their saviors were no better than the bimbos, as they saw the contestants. Some were reactionaries like Senator Bill Bradley of New Jersey, who only abandoned the Contras after it was obvious the public would never back them, or Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia or ex-Governor Charles Robb of Virginia. Even Senator Daniel Moynihan of New York toyed with the idea of running as a favorite son so as to leave New York's delegation's options open. Indeed, "waiting for Mario," as Trudeau had it in a *Doonesbury* series, became a popular hobby. However, anyone who thinks Cuomo is any better than the jokes in the field has another think coming. It isn't just that the public doesn't know about son Andrew's sudden rise to riches. The sad truth is Mario has nothing to offer that isn't said by a million and one other Democrats: "We've overdone the social agenda sometimes, under-emphasized the defense agenda sometimes, because we lack subtlety."<sup>66</sup>

The *Times* did a lengthy piece on him in January 1988. It told how he invokes the name of Roosevelt in his speeches, all that blah about how FDR "lifted himself from his wheelchair to lift this nation from its knees"—and put the Japanese-Americans into concentration camps, he omits to say. But then the paper added that

Cuomo never mentions . . . a Republican who was Governor, Thomas E. Dewey. But in the interview, he expressed more of a kinship with Dewey's governorship than with Roosevelt's. "If you read Dewey's speeches," Mr. Cuomo said, "one of the things that surprised me is how much like my speeches they sounded, so much so that I was embarrassed. He talked about government's needing both a heart and a head, about being practical and progressive. Dewey. Dewey."<sup>67</sup>

It is submitted that anyone who thinks the party or the nation



would profit even a teeny, tiny bit by having a President who can't think any better than the defeated Republican candidate of 1944, is an idiot. In fact, that Cuomo is thought of as one of the last of the Rooseveltean Democratic elected officials of stature, is probably the most clear signs that official liberalism has evaporated into nothingness.

### **Who Does Not Yet Know That "The Love of Money Is the Root of All Evil"?**

The record is clear. From Gore on the far right to Jackson on the left, none of the potential nominees came anywhere near to dealing wisely with the profound issues facing the country and the world. As in every election season, there are the immediate questions of the day. But they must be put in perspective. The contenders all acknowledged that the overriding domestic concerns are economic. However, even foreign policy is about economics. This is openly so in respect to trade. But why is Washington so fixated on Nicaragua? Only the very naive believe that Reagan has some kind of missionary zeal for free speech in Managua. The Sandinistas are a challenge to the backward social order in all of Central America. American capitalism is the prime beneficiary of that ancient regime. Similarly, no one with a dot of brains thinks the U.S. armed the Islamic fundamentalists in Afghanistan out of concern for the religion of Allah and his prophet. The U.S. backed the fanatics against the Soviets because Washington is the world defender of the system of private profit.

Jefferson and Madison, the party's founders, were revolutionaries. But that was then. Today, their party is a pillar of the old order, here and abroad. Those statistics from the Bishops' statement tell the whole story: "54% of the total net financial assets were held by two percent of all families . . . 86% of those assets were held by the top 10%." No one believes that those figures will noticeably change if the Democrats win, now or ever. But those numbers are indisputably incompatible with human equality. None of the contenders, not even Jackson, has any intention of ending that system of inequality. No one thinks *Life Styles of the Rich and Famous* is in any danger of going off the air if there is a Democrat in the White House.

The Democratic Party is a leopard that categorically refuses to change its spots. However, once it locks into the capitalist

system, it can only act in certain ways. For example, we know that the bomb and nuclear proliferation are the gravest danger before humanity at large. Now profound changes have occurred in the Soviet Union. Mikhail Gorbachev is obviously determined to end the nuclear arms race, indeed all military confrontation between the two superpowers. That is not merely my opinion. Who would have ever expected the Secretary General of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to be number eight on the list of world figures Americans admire most? Yet what has been the Democratic response to his overtures?

Here is *The New York Times* for October 17, 1986, after Reagan's hardlining about Star Wars at Reykjavik:

the Democrats are in a familiar posture. Most of them privately are critical of President Reagan in the aftermath of his arms control meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev last week in Iceland. But they are wary of making it an issue in the Congressional elections next month, especially when the President is trying to revive the old charge of Democrats being soft on defense . . . Democrats . . . waited for him to tell his story . . . and for the public to comprehend the arms control opportunity that had been lost. . . . Reagan lashed out at the Democrats for questioning his missile defense program and demanded that they declare where they stand on "defending America." Suddenly, the Democrats were on the political defensive . . . The Democrats, perhaps making the best of a bad situation, say they do not intend to take the bait and will continue to stress economic concerns in their campaigning. The arms control debate is "basically a stopper issue to try to divert attention from the economy and farm problems," said an aide to Speaker of the House Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. "Democrats have acknowledged that arms control is not a partisan issue, and we're going to keep talking about these other things" . . . Democrats were wondering today what they had done to provoke the President. They have offered little resistance to exploring possibilities of the missile defense program, supporting, in a time of fiscal austerity, the expenditure of billions of dollars to continue research.<sup>68</sup>

Plainly, a party that was afraid to talk about arms and rattled on about crops had its collective ass on its neck. But that was then, what about now? The December 4, 1987 *Wall Street Journal* listed the atomic positions of six of the contenders (all but Hart). Each and every one was in favor of research on Star Wars

research.<sup>69</sup>

Let's go further. Gorbachev has written a book, *Perestroika*, detailing his program for getting the West, most crucially the U.S., to agree to disarmament, nuclear and conventional. None of the Democrats has written an equivalent book describing how he plans to get Gorbachev to disarm. The reason is perfectly obvious and everyone knows it. No book is necessary. Gorbachev would disarm before this day is out, if the West would agree. He tries to be a realist. He proposes step-by-step reductions because he doesn't think it possible to get an agreement on immediate disarmament out of the West. He tries to anticipate all reasonable objections:

Let Western Europe quickly get rid of the fears of the Soviet Union . . . In the West, they talk about inequalities and imbalances. That's right, there are imbalances and asymmetries in some kinds of armaments and armed forces on both sides of Europe, caused by historical, geographical and other factors. We stand for eliminating the inequality existing in some areas, but not through a build-up by those who lag behind but through a reduction by those who are ahead . . . there are many specific issues awaiting solutions: reduction and eventual elimination of the tactical nuclear weapons, to be coupled with a drastic reduction of the armed forces and conventional weapons; withdrawal of offensive weapons from direct contact in order to rule out the possibility of a surprise attack; and a change in the entire pattern of armed forces with a view to imparting an exclusively defensive character to them.<sup>70</sup>

There is much more along these lines. Every word is in this spirit. It becomes apparent that he means it. As he says,

What are you afraid of, gentlemen? Is it so difficult to rise to the level of real assessments for the truly historic processes which are taking place in the Soviet Union and the entire socialist world? Can you not understand the objective, unbreakable connection of these processes with the genuinely good intentions in foreign policy?<sup>71</sup>

And what are they afraid of? Gorbachev is being overly diplomatic when he says that

we realized that the militarist group in the United States (I mean



neither the Republican or Democratic Party, but those firmly linked to the arms business) stood in awe of the slightest hint at a thaw in relations between our countries.<sup>72</sup>

To be sure, not every Democrat is a hawk. The vast majority of those who attend anti-war demonstrations are Democrats. But the party leaders are most assuredly militarists. They break down into two categories. There are those who are committed to capitalism and who recognize that this has real implications, that it's a have system that must be defended against the have nots and/or the Soviets. And there are the domestic demagogues. These include many who are for Star Wars research but not for deployment. Such research means jobs. For this group, militarism is like an old-fashioned dress hanky in a lapel pocket. It's for show, not for blow. And then there are many pro-Zionist liberals. They wish there wasn't a Pentagon. But in fact there is. And it is impossible to be for the U.S. giving weapons to a foreign country without voting for a military budget for the U.S.

At any rate, both the active and passive militarists have material reasons for being for the continuation of a large military establishment. The Department of Defense employs millions as soldiers and in civilian capacities. Here, in the San Francisco Bay area, where I live, the bulk of Democratic officials fought very hard to get the battleship Missouri home-ported in the city, with civilian jobs being bait to get popular support. But let's take things a step further. What would happen if the permanent war economy came to an end? Competition between existing producers, domestic and foreign, for the American civilian market is already fierce. If the industrial capacity now devoted to weaponry turned out civilian products, the effect on the market share of existing manufacturers would be devastating. Similarly, if the military establishment was demobilized, it would be all of five minutes before most of it would be on the unemployment lines.

The sundry party approaches to militarism are the paradigms of how it deals with all questions. Some Congressional Democrats are well off and are motivated by what they think is best for the system. Others are nothing more than dead fishes, always moving with the tide. They pander to anyone for votes and contributions. Many are bribe takers. This is far from saying no reformer is motivated by a desire to win some rights for the masses. But all too often they end up well-intentioned well poisoners. They

justify opportunism, pleading the need to get elected so they may work wonders for their pet projects.

This is especially so among liberals trafficking with Zionism. But they are scarce alone. Gephardt and Ferraro were for banning abortion when they represented Catholic districts, secure in the knowledge that it would never happen. Slyly voting for bullshit to please the airheads back home, knowing it will never get on the law books, is endemic in the mock-Democratic Party.

The imperialists and the tricksters could never get away with their stunts were it not for the toleration of the liberals. As lesser evilists, they take their party's sinister qualities as given. But if, for example, you say to them that they, who voted for the Jew-wooters, are in no small measure responsible for Zionism's murders, you have set the cat among the pigeons. Yet there is another Biblical proverb that fits such liberals like a leash: "As a dog returneth to his own vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly." But beware. Before you dare utter that obviously apt phrase in the wrong circles, you would do well to be sure you have a saddled horse.

Many liberals are now Jacksonites. That is to say, they voted for him in the primaries, despite their concern about his turn toward the mainstream, i.e., to the right. That was with full certainty that he would lose, and that his strategy could not avail him anything. Then, without a bounce, they will, in great majority, go over to Dopey. This they will do with eyes wide open, well aware that he will continue to support tyranny abroad and be at best a lukewarm supporter of minimal reforms at home.

Their party chairman, Paul Kirk, is a contra supporter. Twenty-two percent of House Democrats voted for Reagan's February 1988 bill for military aid to the murderers. Even after it lost, Speaker Jim Wright rushed forward with proposals for "humanitarian" aid to the guerrillas, even while they continued their depredations. Yet Jackson could contemplate Wright as his running mate.

Not a few protest movements are run by these elements. These organizations proclaim themselves against Contra aid, including bogus humanitarian patronage. Similarly, they are all for a nuclear freeze. Nevertheless, come election Tuesday, they will rush to the polls and vote for a party in favor of funding the Contras and Star Wars research. And these liberals will think themselves fine fellows for having done so.



They do not even begin to understand the implications of what they are doing. Without realizing it, they put up a blinking red sign: "don't believe a word we say. We are for and against all manner of things. But we have no confidence in our ability to mobilize the public. Instead, we vote for those who deservedly hold us in contempt."

The redistribution of wealth is at the core of progressive politics. But "not by bread alone liveth man." For profound social change to occur, movements for it must develop dedicated cadres. The paradox is that for the ordinary people of America and the world to gain their fair share of that world's wealth they must, as with the revolutionaries of 1776, "mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor." Without that commitment, they can get reforms, as a dog is thrown a bone. But they can never ultimately triumph. That is not merely difficult. It is impossible. Voting for lesser evils, and doing it over and over again, is to guarantee you never will generate the morale absolutely required for victory.

Because so many protest movements are dominated by double-gaited liberals, they are going nowhere. The '60s demonstrations put the fear of God into the politicians. The civil rights demonstrations eventually led to fiery riots on the part of the poorest of the poor. The anti-war rallies inspired—I repeat—inspired American soldiers to Vietnam to kill 2,000 of their officers, rather than go out on search and destroy missions in a war they had ceased to believe in. The hacks granted numerous reforms, and were forced to retreat in ignominious defeat from Vietnam.

Eventually the black poor left the streets. The anti-war soldiers came home and melded back into the general public. And the politicians discovered they had survived. They realized that the size of a demonstration is not all that matters. In 1981, the AFL-CIO organized "solidarity day." No less than 400,000 workers showed up in Washington. Reagan gave nothing in the way of their demands. But, in as much as Kirkland & Co. are secretly in cahoots with the White House, regardless of who is in it, they never organized another march. In 1982, 800,000 marched in New York for a nuclear freeze. That was at least 300,000 more than the largest Vietnam era rally. Again, in 1983, Coretta King brought 250,000 to the capital to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the 1963 march on Washington.

The net result of these three massive events was not zero. It



was absolute zero. The reason in all three cases is the same. Reagan asked that classic question: If I don't give the beggars what they want, what will they do to hurt me? The beggars' thinking went no further than voting Democrat in the next election. In no case were the mendicants prepared to stay in the streets building ever bigger movements, until they won their demands.

Reagan couldn't have cared less. For two reasons. First, it was no secret that most of the demonstrators were going to vote Democrat, regardless of whether they won their demands. Second, Reagan believes not only in his program, but also in what the politicians of both parties refer to as "the two party system." None of them is so foolish as to think his party can win every election. To be sure, they don't like to lose office. But there are times when you have to take that chance. As long as people don't go beyond the two-party hustle, the economic system which they both openly declare they serve survives. That is sufficient for them.

Now, in fact, Reagan did not even have to fear losing the 1984 election because he did not give those hundreds of thousands a dot of what they marched for. Because they were so irresolute in regard to building their movements, they were in no position to significantly aid their party to beat him. Let us go further. If, in the future, all the politicians, Republican or Democrat, have to concern themselves about are demonstrators who continue to soldier on, voting Democrat, they will give from little to nothing, regardless of which party is in the White House.

### **There Are Buddings, Still Only That, of a New Upsurge**

Enough, for now, of cursing the darkness. It is time for a little light. If all is folly, we too would be fools, writing and reading about injustice. We would go with Voltaire's *Candide* and cultivate our own gardens, taking social tragedy as life, trying to find private pleasure and purpose before sickness and death return us to oblivion.

There are hopeful signs. Many Americans know Gorby is sincere and intelligent, and are beginning to listen. But they do not yet grasp that he is not only not the obstacle to peace. He is the one making proposals. It is America's hacks that are stonewalling. They divide. Republicans, with their space-blitzkrieg

strategy. Democrats, secure behind their modern Maginot Line mentality. Peace maintained by "mutually reduced" atomic arsenals and beefed-up conventional forces in Europe. However, if Gorby talks directly to the folks via TV and visiting delegations, they will heed and act.

The Palestinian Uprising has dramatically effected the "peace movement." The quotes are ironic because, until December 1987, most activists evaded the question out of consideration for the irrationality of Jewish liberals on the topic, and their own ignominious reliance on the Democrats as their electoral lesser evil. Now the activists speak out. But most do not yet grasp what it means to be pro-Palestinian. Most are Jacksonites. But a Democratic vote is a vote for the Israeli army. Jacksonites must learn a bit o' Bible the right reverend ignores: "You cannot serve two masters. You cannot serve God and Mammon."

The success of the Maine paperworkers in mobilizing broad union solidarity for their strike is a harbinger of increasing labor militancy, regardless of who wins in November 1988. Naturally, the relationship between the party and the unions will be very much different if it wins. But even if it does restore some lost benefits, and even if it grants some new ones, the militant wave will inexorably go beyond what the party wants to see. Many local and state Democratic administrations will try to enforce reactionary laws against public worker strikes, and against militant actions against scabs.

With growing acceptance of militant strategies, notably an awareness of increased strength acquired by obtaining solidarity beyond labor, particularly among anti-war activists and other causes, many workers will come to see their struggles ideologically, obligating similar support for other fights, here and abroad. And they will learn, in practice, that the state repressive apparatus can be beat with such methods. Such a mentality can not be bottled forever by the party, nor the Rainbow, with their utter lack of organizational capacity. This militant breakthrough will not be the work of a day. But it will happen. The party is not moving to the left, despite some appearances. A populist running for office can sound like a militant. But that is just electioneering or response to mass action. The fact remains that when the workers begin to fight back on a large scale they will go well beyond the party.

Growing TV "glasnost" towards the Soviets, combined with

news reporters' disgust with Israeli brutality, bring some fundamental axioms of Democratic foreign policy into disrepute, starting first among the intelligentsia. In February 1988, I had the pleasure of hearing Christopher Hitchens and Alex Cockburn of *The Nation* and Edward Said, speaking in defense of the Palestinian struggle, before a packed house in one the leading bookstores in Berkeley, California. I thought it would be incongruous, given the magazine's abhorrence of Israeli repression, for it to endorse the Democrats in 1988. I asked if editor Victor Navasky would make an ass of himself, for the umpteenth time, by his automatic endorsement of the Democratic candidate as the lesser evil.

Cockburn jokingly reminded all that editorial stupidity there goes back to the 19th century. That Navasky, doyen of vapid lesser evilists, was capable of breaking with tradition was utterly discounted. Actually, it is possible. But only if that was the overwhelming consensus among liberals. If the rest of the fishes were to float away from the party, surely the deadest of them all would likewise go with the flow.

What was important in their response was that they, the most prestigious of the magazine's feature writers, were scarcely interested in Dukakis or some equally dismal stand-in. To be sure, even they have not yet taken the next step. They do not call for building an alternative party. Still, the alienation of intellectuals of their stature is a sure portent of the direction of events.

In short, there are buddings, still only that, of a new upsurge of the left that can take us beyond the Democratic Party. If the economy sours, that would eventually drive the activist minority out. And that "if" is really a "when." In that event, one thing is sure: We shall know in our time, once and for all and forever, whether it is possible to create a society where all men and women are equal.

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*(continued from front flap)*

largely because the follies and crimes of the Republicans have caught up with them, not because of the virtues of the Democratic nominee. Certainly Dukakis, the open friend of "the private sector," i.e., the rich, will not propose to end our massive economic injustices. Two percent of all families hold 54% of the country's business assets. Ten percent of these control 86%. These statistics are incompatible with the notion of equality. We can no longer tolerate them and be politically healthy than an individual can ignore a stick in his eye and remain physically healthy. Yet no one really believes these figures will be significantly changed if the Democrats win.

As per usual, the Democrats will again dangle paltry reforms before us to trick the gullible into voting for them. But if we are to be hung, let it be for a ram instead of a lamb. This book is an exposé of blatant demagoguery, of never-ending corruption and of imperialist murders, past, present and future.

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lenni Brenner is a peace activist turned journalist and author. His articles have appeared in the ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION, FREEDOMWAYS, the GUARDIAN, IN THESE TIMES, the LA WEEKLY, the WASHINGTON REPORT ON MIDDLE EAST AFFAIRS, and London's MIDDLE EAST INTERNATIONAL and NEW STATESMAN.

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