

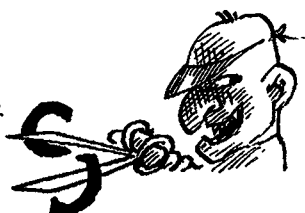
RIPON FORUM

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EDITORIAL NOTE



On January 6, the House Republican Conference voted overwhelmingly to support President Nixon's efforts to negotiate an end to the Vietnam War. Although the vote was 127-8, there are strong indications that the President has been given only a limited extension of House GOP support in his effort to bring an end to the conflict. The President's inauguration may well be the *congressional* deadline for serious negotiations.

The original resolution of support was sent by the White House to House Minority Leader Gerald Ford. Key Republican leaders balked at the wording and insisted it would never pass the conference. Instead, a resolution was drafted by Congressmen John Anderson, John R. Dellenback, Peter Frelinghuysen, William S. Mailliard, and Howard W. Robison. The resolution's wording supported only the current round of negotiations—not the bombing.

The eight Congressmen who opposed the resolution because of their strong opposition to the resumption of bombing were: Gilbert Gude (Maryland), Margaret M. Heckler (Massachusetts), William B. Widnall (New Jersey), Edward G. Biester, Jr. (Pennsylvania), Stewart B. McKinney (Connecticut), Bill Frenzel (Minnesota), Paul N. McCloskey, Jr. (California) and Charles A. Mosher (Ohio).

Perhaps a more significant indication of Republican discontent was the 91-43 vote against adjournment. Many of the "43" might have voted as well for the anti-war resolution proposed by Congressman Paul N. McCloskey, Jr.

Meanwhile, rotype machines on Capitol Hill are working overtime typing form letters replying to constituent protests. Republicans report that their offices are being deluged with a new variety of anti-war mail: not from the committed, anti-war activists of previous

write-ins, but from blue-collar workers and fresh conservative converts to the anti-war cause.

One Congressman received a tearful phone call from a woman who had prominently backed his conservative, pro-war challenger in the Republican primary last year. Distraught, the caller told him that she had been wrong—that the anti-war Congressman was the one who was truly looking out for the country's benefit. Another, southern conservative indicated that Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird's congressional testimony may have given him the opportunity for which he had been searching to change his position on the War. For if the South Vietnamese can defend themselves, as Laird says, then why in the name of peace must the President mercilessly bomb Hanoi.

So there is hope that House Republicans will cut their umbilical cords to the White House and exert their independence and conscience. Opposition to the bombing is coming from unlikely places; longtime presidential backers like Clark MacGregor and Bill Brock are reported to have questioned Laird recently on this point.

One wishes that Elliot Richardson was not quite so blind to the immorality of the President's actions. Must every Republican moderate who assumes a post in the Administration lose all vestiges of conscience?

Senator Bob Dole was originally appointed as Republican National Committee chairman because of his proven loyalty to the Nixon Administration. He was apparently sacked because his loyalty did not preclude forthright public comment — such as his admission that the 1972 election results were not the best of all possible worlds for Republicans. Nevertheless, during his tenure, Sen. Dole attempted to voice some of the frustrations and grievances of other Republican officials. But gripes were not popular at the White House, so the Republican National Committee took the post-election lumps for the failures of the Committee to Re-Elect the President. The tendency of the CRP to take RNC plans and put the CRP imprimatur on them was not appreciated at RNC. So Sen. Dole returns to the Senate, co-chairman Tom Evans to Delaware and co-chairwoman Anne Armstrong goes to the White House as the resident Texan and token woman.

In an interview with *Washington Post* reporter David S. Broder, William E. Timmons, President Nixon's congressional liaison, said that presidential advisors will be more accessible to Congress in the upcoming session. But the sessions will continue to be private, according to Timmons, "not because there is something to hide, but because I'm afraid if it becomes a matter of record, it sets a precedent for them demanding it in the future." So the White House will be more open this year ... in private.



Politics: People

● Columnist **Tom Braden** says Gov. **Nelson Rockefeller** (R-N.Y.) is headed for a fifth campaign for governor and a fourth campaign for president. Braden says Rockefeller has hired former Rockefeller and Lindsay aide, **Robert Price**, to direct his new campaign efforts. But the key to Rocky's presidential ambitions, argues Braden, is the present occupant of Camp David. "Any outgoing President, unless he has suffered a disaster, can name the man he wants his party to name. Is it conceivable that Mr. Nixon would name Rockefeller?" writes Braden. Only the current occupant of Camp David knows for sure.

● Sen. **Bill Brock's** election as chairman of the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee advances his presidential possibilities. Sen. **Barry Goldwater** held the same post from 1960 to 1962. As the *Wall Street Journal* observed before Brock's election, "He'd get visibility as a fund raiser in '74" in his new post.

● State Sen. **David Nixon** was elected president of the New Hampshire Senate after 28 votes in the Republican Caucus and six votes in the full Senate had failed to determine a leader for the Republican-controlled body. The election of the moderate Nixon was considered a defeat for Republican conservatives like Gov. **Meldrim Thomson**, who reportedly favored Sen. **Alf E. Jacobson** (R), the losing candidate for the Senate presidency.

● While rumors persist that the Nixon Administration will revive the SST during 1973 — some say in the name of conservatism — economist **Milton Friedman** has denounced governmental support of an SST as "a step toward socialism and away from free enterprise." Professor Friedman, the most preeminent of the country's conservative economists and **Barry Goldwater's** economics advisor during the 1964 presidential campaign, told the Senate-House Joint Economic Committee that he favors an American SST "if private enterprise finds it profitable to do so after paying all costs, including any environmental costs imposed by third parties." Friedman took the same position during the 1970 congressional debate over government subsidy of the Boeing SST, but failed to convince the White House, **Barry Goldwater** or the press that any true economic conservative would oppose the government support. May he be more successful in 1973.

● On December 30, Sen. **William Saxbe** told a reporter from the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* that President Nixon's resumption of bombing indicated he had "taken leave of his senses." In the following week, Sen. Saxbe's office received nearly 12,500 letters commenting on his statement. From Ohio constituents the ratio was 20-1 in agreement with Saxbe (8,050-350), whereas the out-of-state mail ran 5-1 in Saxbe's favor (3,450-640). Other Republican politicians in Ohio were less pleased. Congressman **Sam Devine** (12th C.D.) announced that Saxbe might face a conservative Republican challenger in 1974. Fellow Congressman **Donald Clancy** (2nd C.D.) later concurred with Devine.

● Problems in the transition from outgoing Secretary of Labor **James D. Hodgson** to incoming Secretary of Labor **Peter Brennan** have led to morale problems at the Department of Labor where officials feel uncertain about the direction the new chieftain will

take. Despite press reports to the contrary, however, the Department is continuing to pursue contract compliance cases (e.g., the Philadelphia Plan program) and it is rumored that the contract compliance program may be the only Labor Department program to be fully funded in the coming year. By contrast, Manpower programs are scheduled for drastic reductions.

● Maine Republicans opted to ignore the state's many gubernatorial aspirants and elected **Harold L. Jones**, the party treasurer, as the new GOP state chairman. Jones, an Augusta banker, was the compromise choice of party leaders who wanted to block the election of such candidates as former Attorney General **James Erwin** or former Senatorial candidate **Robert A. Monks, Jr.** The Republicans wanted to avoid the promotion of anyone who would use the chairmanship as a stepping stone for a 1974 candidacy.

● Vermont Republicans also compromised. National Committeeman **Roland Seward** approached outgoing Attorney General **James Jeffords** after the party's gubernatorial defeat in an effort to reunite the moderate and conservative wings of the party. As a result of their conversations, **Stewart A. Smith**, a Rutland car dealer, was elected as state chairman to succeed the acting chairwoman, **Mrs. Constance Johnson**. Smith is a pragmatic politician allied with Seward. For the post of executive secretary, Republicans chose a moderate, **James Sanderson**, a former deputy secretary of state. This post was formerly held by Mrs. Johnson, who would have liked to have kept the state chairmanship on a permanent basis.

● **Dorothy McCardle** has company. In choosing a pool of reporters to cover a White House reception for new members of Congress, Press Secretary **Ron Ziegler** excluded Mrs. McCardle of the *Washington Post*, **Isabelle Shelton** of the *Washington Star-News*, and **Trude Feldman** who reports for several papers. Ziegler instead chose a group of 13 reporters, some of whom had little interest in covering the affair and no interest in reporting it. When one of the chosen, *Knight Newspapers'* **Bob Boyd**, complained to Ziegler about the discrimination against Washington reporters, he was told, "I do not agree with you. The local papers have no special claim here." Perhaps they would have a better claim if they advocated no-fault coverage.

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An Urban Homestead Act

Lewis B. Stone, the article's author, is chairman of the New York Chapter's Legislative Action Committee. A proposal similar to Stone's Urban Homestead Act was recently developed by the model cities commission in the District of Columbia.

The lack of comfortable, clean and safe housing at prices that people can afford is one of the major political problems facing our country today.

Government has been working on this problem for over a century and has made remarkable strides in making Americans among the best housed in the world today. While most of these programs, including the Homestead Act, FHA and VA home mortgage guarantee programs and Federal tax incentives have had remarkable success within their realm, the many programs for housing of the urban dweller, especially the indigent urban dweller, have shown only spotty success, and in some cases have led to disastrous results.

The Homestead Act in the 19th century was one of the most successful of all Federal programs ever enacted. The wealth created by the Act among the land-poor and recent immigrants contributed greatly to the success of this nation as a world power. The principle should be applied now to the landless urban poor.

The Federal government holds huge assets in the billions of dollars invested in low-income housing. Under an Urban Homestead Act, this property (apartments) could be given away (in condominium ownership) to the residents of such housing who had lived there for the requisite period, just as Federal lands were given to homesteaders who had lived upon them for seven years. As the value of the land lying fallow was multiplied many fold by its occupancy and use, so would the value of the apartments increase in private hands.

The social value of this program would be immense. Residents of poor neighborhoods would immediately be given strong incentives to maintain their neighborhoods and to police their projects to protect the value of their property. What the ownership of property did to the 19th century plainsman, this Act could do for the 20th century urban poor.

This program would impose no new cost to the Federal government because, at present, Federal subsidies cover, in their entirety, the capital costs of these projects, while tenant payments cover at most upkeep. If anything, the Federal government might stand to realize gains on the tax income resulting from the sale of apartments and by the increased income to municipalities on property taxes, reducing the pressure on the Federal fisc for further subsidies.

Appropriate provisions would be included to return the Homesteaded units to the tax rolls and to permit those unable to pay the taxes and maintenance to remain as tenants of the Public Housing Authority.

In addition to creating stabilized neighborhoods and central cities, the effect of the Act would be, like the Homestead Act, to create wealth not at the expense of anyone else and to place such wealth in the hands of relatively poor people.

The high level of success of the VA and FHA mortgage guaranty programs is illustrated by the sprawling suburbs now surrounding most central cities. While the extension of these programs to central city homeowners has been less than successful, the central city, single family house is in many cases an anomaly since it is often an older, decaying structure rather than the sounder unit on which mortgage guarantees were written in the suburbs. In any event, the fact that a very large percentage of urban dwellers live in apartments, means that the FHA and VA guaranty programs do them no good from the point of view of home ownership. Accordingly, it is proposed that the FHA and VA programs be expanded to include loan guarantees for cooperative and condominium loans made to tenants to enable them to purchase and own their apartments.

Such guarantees would reduce the cost of borrowing for the purchase of apartments. For example, in New York, where recent legislation has authorized banks to lend money on the security of cooperative apartments, the interest rate runs 1½% higher than that for ordinary homes. A loan guaranty program could eliminate the differential.

Another program which provides subsidies for multi-family housing, Section 236 of the National Housing Act, could benefit from a loan guaranty program. Section 236 purposes that the owners of the project would sell the project to the tenants after a holding period. While the statutory language is vague as to how this is to be accomplished, a loan guaranty program for tenant-owned apartments would ease the transition and encourage these transactions.

Homeowners have for years enjoyed the opportunity of deducting real estate taxes on their homes from their income taxes. Apartment dwellers, except for those owning their apartments through cooperatives or condominiums, cannot make similar deductions, although they effectively bear the costs of such real estate taxes in their rent payments. This constitutes a bias in favor of the homeowner.

While it may be possible for the states to change their real property assessment laws to cause the taxes to be directly imposed upon the tenant to achieve this purpose, Federal action would be desirable to eliminate the need for any new machinery on the state and local level to accomplish this end. To the extent that this deduction recasts the balance between ownership and renting, it will promote the stability of existing rental neighborhoods in the face of racial and social change.

These programs are progressive programs to stabilize and improve the housing of urban dwellers and apartment dwellers. They have the advantage of being essentially self-regulating and not needing an extensive bureaucracy for their administration. They also recognize the principle of motivation through ownership and motivation through the creation and preservation of wealth — aspects of the free enterprise system which have been traditionally recognized by the Republican Party. ■

Politics: Reports

MONTANA

HELENA — A recount of a legislative race in Montana's District 14 confirmed that a tie had developed. Under state law, outgoing Gov. Forrest H. Anderson appointed the winner. Logically, he chose fellow Democrat John Murphy, 22, as the winner, although he could have chosen any "eligible person."

The appointment of "landslide Murphy" was symptomatic of Republican troubles in Montana in 1972. The new lineup in the House is 54-46 in the Democrats' favor and 27-23 in their favor in the Senate. It is the first time the Democrats have controlled the legislature since 1965. (The Senate was already Democratic.)

Democrats also swept seven out of ten statewide races. At a post-election, party conclave in Helena on November 31, defeated GOP gubernatorial candidate Ed Smith complained about the lack of Republican unity. He blamed his defeat on party disharmony, low name recognition and the imposition of a state sales tax by the Republican legislature. Smith's folksy image was apparently not enough to overcome the sophisticated, but "slippery," image of the new governor, outgoing Lieutenant Governor Thomas Judge.

The speaker of the house in the last legislative session, State Rep. James P. Lucas, blamed the poor Republican showing on "general ineffectiveness on the part of the Republican Party on a statewide level. There was a lack of organization and a lack of expertise — not being at the right place at the right time with the right issues." Lucas said the GOP was "under-financed and under-staffed and in certain areas, somewhat divided."

By contrast, the Democrats were united and the result was the election of Judge and a Democratic legislature and the re-election of Sen. Lee Metcalf over Republican Henry Hibbard, who acknowledged later that his campaign suffered from a "good deal of negativism." But the key element may have been the heavy pressure brought by Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield to assist the re-election of his fellow Democrat.

The only rays of sunshine for Republicans were the re-election of Attorney General Robert Woodahl (a possible, future candidate) and Congressman Richard Shoup, and the election of Hollis G. Connors as state treasurer. The other Republican winner, State Auditor E. V. Omholt, was unopposed.

State GOP Chairman W. A. Holter says that the GOP can only go one way in Montana: "up." However, in the wake of the election results, the state's top paid Republican, party Executive Secretary Frederick C. Caruso, resigned "for personal reasons." A replacement has not yet been appointed and there are indications the post may be left vacant. ■

NEVADA

LAS VEGAS — Looking ahead to 1974, Republicans conducted a poll last summer which showed that Democratic Gov. Mike O'Callaghan was "the most popular politician this state has ever known."

Speaking before a post-election meeting of a Republican women's group, Republican National Committeeman William Laub disclosed that the poll also showed that Attorney General Robert List, the state's top Re-

publican official, ran far behind O'Callaghan in the poll's job performance ratings. List is considered a possible gubernatorial candidate.

The political situation would really open up if Sen. Alan Bible, who will be 65 when he comes up in 1974, decides not to seek re-election. Then O'Callaghan might seek a Senate nomination and the political levees might be flooded with candidates from both parties for Senator, Governor, Congressman-at-large, and lesser state offices.

Republicans suffer a heavy registration disadvantage in Nevada. As of October 1972, there were 133,268 registered Democrats compared to 80,201 registered Republicans in the state. And other than the state's lone congressional race, the November results were disappointing for the GOP. National Committeeman Laub has called the legislative races "a disaster" which show that the GOP needs to "sell our party." Republican legislative minorities dropped from 22-18 to 25-15 in the House and from 13-7 to 14-6 in the Senate.

Newly-elected, Republican Congressman David Towell, for instance, is already marked for Democratic extinction in 1974. Writing after the election, *Reno Gazette* reporter Warren Lerude said, "Almost everyone else and his Aunt Susie will run against (Towell in 1974)."

Towell's opponent, James Bilbray, Jr., was stunned by his defeat and blamed it on Towell's ability to make "me look like a candidate of the political left while Towell stood in the middle."

Bilbray predicts Towell's defeat in 1974. "There won't be a Nixon landslide; there won't be the problem of Walter Baring (the Congressman who Bilbray defeated in the primary); it will be an off-year election that generally goes against the party in power; Gov. O'Callaghan and Sen. Bible will be running; and Democrats will have a two-one edge in registration." ■

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