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forum

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THE POWER GAME



EDITOR'S COLUMN

Pulitzer Prize winning reporter Hedrick Smith's recent book is entitled "The Power Game," and that name fits comfortably with the book's subtitle: "How Washington Works." Power and Washington are often related, and Smith's book describes the process involved in capturing and maintaining political power today.

In an interview in this *Forum*, Smith says that the process is unfortunately becoming distorted. According to the former *New York Times* Washington bureau chief: "One of our great problems in modern politics is that there is a dichotomy between campaigning and governing." The result, Smith says, is that too much attention is placed on winning campaigns, and too little emphasis is placed on the essentials of governing, such as putting together bipartisan solutions.

The process involved in political decisionmaking is also the subject of former Corning Glass Works chief executive officer and chairman Amo Houghton's article. Houghton, now a member of Congress, examines the budgetary process and says that, unlike business, government has no clear budget-making hierarchy. Houghton also says that he is amazed by the conflicting data presented Congress and argues that more reliable information is needed.

Ripon Forum editorial board member Bill Tate examines another issue that challenges the modern political arena, namely the relationship between religion and politics. Tate claims that instead of thinking in terms of a "wall" between church and state, we should envision a "line" running between religion and politics. According to Tate, a Union Theological Seminary graduate: "The [First Amendment's] establishment clause does not prevent appeals to religious convictions. What it prevents is the use of coercion in any form by any side in political debates."

Perhaps these articles, plus Jim Leach's column on savings and loans and Mariann Kurtz's report on the environment, will help the next administration understand "the power game" and determine its priorities.

—Bill McKenzie

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A Conversation With HEDRICK SMITH



Photo by George Tames

Hedrick Smith's career as a journalist spans six U.S. presidents, and in his new book "The Power Game: How Washington Really Works" the former New York Times reporter details how power is acquired and wielded in Washington. The author of the bestseller "The Russians," Smith served 26 years as a New York Times correspondent before leaving that paper in 1988 to pursue film projects and commentary. A regular guest on "Washington Week in Review," Smith now writes news analyses for Universal Press Syndicate. In January 1989 the Public Broadcasting System will air his film series "The Power Game," and in 1989 Smith will film another documentary series, "Inside Gorbachev's Russia."

In this interview with Forum editor Bill McKenzie, Smith says that the current presidential election has not taught us much about either candidate's ability to put together coalitions. And it is coalitions, he says, that are essential to solving problems such as the budget deficit. In addition, Smith discusses campaign reform, party building and deadlocked government, a phenomenon that he says is unique to the post-World War II era.

Ripon Forum: In your book, "The Power Game: How Washington Really Works," you talk repeatedly about the importance of a president's first 100 days. What should be the priorities for George Bush or Michael Dukakis during their first 100 days?

Smith: Either person is going to have to deal with the economic situation, both in terms of the domestic budget and the national debt, and with American competitiveness. The latter not only includes our ability to market abroad, but also to sustain our capacity to make the world's best supercomputers, to provide research and development, and ultimately to regenerate our industries.

These issues are not susceptible to quick fixes and will require a maximum test of a president's capacity to build coalitions. He must be capable of rallying support from both parties. Partisan solutions are not the answer. These are durable problems and will require grand coalitions, the likes of which we have only seen rarely in our political history.

The real foreign policy test is whether or not a consensus can once again be assembled to sustain an intelligent but not excessive defense program while also moving effectively to more arms control agreements. In the Soviet leadership we have a partner who wants to move in this direction. Mikhail Gorbachev is not doing this out of goodwill towards the United States, but for the Soviets' self-interest. That is much better than if the Soviets were playing some kind of game for our sake. They see serious problems in their own domestic society and want to move economic resources in this direction.

Ripon Forum: How do you rate the two presidential candidates in their ability to

"One of our great problems in American politics is that there is a dichotomy between campaigning and governing."

put together coalitions?

Smith: The great tragedy is that the presidential campaign hasn't taught us very much about this important issue. As I said in "The Power Game," one of our great problems in American politics is that there is a dichotomy between campaigning and governing. Campaigns are more dependent on theatrical skills, image-making and negative politics, not on showing voters how a candidate can put together bipartisan coalitions.

To gauge the latter, you have to look at the pre-campaign records of both candidates. First, Michael Dukakis clearly failed as a coalition-maker during his first term as governor of Massachusetts. He was cold, aloof and almost arrogant in his handling of the Legislature. Therefore, he was not terribly effective as governor and ended up being defeated.

All the reporting I've seen, however, seems to say that Dukakis took that lesson seriously during his four years out of office and was much more effective in dealing with the Massachusetts Legislature

during his second term. He built coalitions and passed legislation that was important to Massachusetts.

Dukakis also has shown more links to the national Democratic Party than did Jimmy Carter, another governor to whom Dukakis is often compared. Carter ran independent of the national party apparatus and his people came to town almost with a chip on their shoulders. If Dukakis wins, we'll have to see whether his people come down with that kind of attitude.

A third factor is that Dukakis was able to pick a vice presidential candidate — Lloyd Bentsen — who came from a very different region and very different part of the party. He was able to maneuver that choice through the Democratic convention without it falling apart and without serious recriminations from Jesse Jackson's wing.

The down-side is that Massachusetts is a heavily one-party state and Michael Dukakis did not have strong, effective Republican opposition. So we don't know how well he deals across party lines.

Also, he is still an outsider to Washington, and he has a tendency to be technocratic and aloof like Jimmy Carter. So we don't know whether under pressure he will be a smooth politician, and if he is effective in massaging egos, telling stories, roping people in. He's got some handicaps. I'd give him a B, a solid B, but not an A.

Surprisingly, given how long George Bush has been a nationally-known politician, he has even less of a record as a political leader. The problem with having so many appointed posts, as Bush has had, is that you never have the buck stop on your desk. You never have to persuade other politicians to buy your solutions, which in the end is what a president must do.

Of course, George Bush is well-liked in this city, by some Democrats as well as Republicans. He knows Washington, even if he is untested in the crucial elements of coalition-building. He's done quite well with the Republican Party by flying the Reagan banner so high and by also keeping moderates interested and hopeful. But he hasn't had to make the hard policy choices that often offend wings of his own party, let alone the other party. The real question mark is how well would he deal with Jim Wright and the next Senate majority leader, whom I expect to be a Democrat.

What you can say about George

“Another way to close the gap between campaigning and governing is for reporters to keep pressing the differences as they report on candidates and campaign managers.”

Bush is that he's been around, is well-liked, and has friends in the Democratic Party, including Danny Rostenkowski. That should give him a B-, but with a question mark larger than Dukakis'.

Ripon Forum: To follow up on what you describe in “The Power Game” as the difference between “stagecraft” and “statecraft,” how do you close the huge gaps between campaigning and governing?

Smith: It is very, very difficult. In recent years, the parties have attempted to bring more officeholders into the conventions ex-officio. This gives them a larger role. Another suggestion is to have a two-stage convention. First, have a convention of major officeholders, national committee people and challengers for important offices. Let that convention pick four or five people who meet the criteria of the pros and let them compete in the primaries for the popular vote. This allows for input by both the Washington political community and the nation. Maybe then people with backgrounds like Howard Baker and Tom Foley, who are not good stump-politicians but good governing-politicians, would be more likely to run for the White House. Those two people are very, very good at building coalitions in two different houses and parties.

Ripon Forum: Can we really expect to combine in one person an understanding of symbols and a legislator's instinct?

Smith: You have to combine it; we need

it. We shouldn't have been so amazed at Ronald Reagan's success in 1981. He was governor of California for two terms, which is a big, tough political arena. He had a powerful Democratic legislative opposition and found ways to deal with it. He also found ways to deal on a symbolic level. There are lots of criticisms you may have about the Reagan presidency, but I don't think you can deny that he had the skill, especially in his first year, to work Congress as effectively as he worked the public.

Another way to close the gap between campaigning and governing is for reporters to keep pressing the differences as they report on candidates and campaign managers. Also, they should be discussed during presidential debates. At the moment, discussion of these qualities is not much of the national debate. One of my purposes in writing “The Power Game” was to raise this problem.

Ripon Forum: I was struck by your comment in “The Power Game” that major policy initiatives must originate in a campaign. LBJ campaigned about the “War on Poverty” during the 1964 campaign and thus could cite support for his idea after the election. And the same thing can be said about Ronald Reagan in 1980 with his talk about budget and tax cuts. But what we have heard during much of this year's election have been slick slogans like “good jobs at good wages” or rhetoric about the Pledge of Allegiance. Can we really expect any major policy mandates to come out of the 1988 election?

Smith: Well perhaps during the closing

“The problem in this election, it seems to me, is that far too much attention has been focused on winning and far too little on effective governing.”

days of the campaign the candidates will repair this problem. But by not spelling out more priorities, they hurt themselves. It is absolutely crucial to the success of a new president that he be able to go to Congress and the country and say, "I have a mandate to do such-and-such." There is absolutely no question in my mind that that has an impact on the public, the press and the Congress. Ronald Reagan and Lyndon Johnson were able to do that; Jimmy Carter was not.

The problem in this election, it seems to me, is that far too much attention has been focused on winning and far too little on effective governing. Eventually people have to rise up against that tendency and say it is unacceptable.

Ripon Forum: The television networks have complained during this election that their reporters, as well as print journalists, have been held at bay from the candidates. They claim that the campaigns do this so they can promote their story line, what Reagan advance chief Bill Henkel calls "H-P-S" for headline, photo, story. What if the networks stopped covering such events? Would this flush out the politicians?

Smith: I would like to think that if the networks decided not to give as much time to manufactured media events, the politicians would gradually change. I think it would have an impact.

I've noticed that there are fewer front-page spot stories in some newspapers on daily campaign developments, and more profiles, analytical stories and attempts to get behind the news. The manufactured political events are put inside the paper.

The problem with the networks is that they have become gun shy about making analytical judgments. The public and some politicians have jumped on them so hard. It takes courage and maturity to make analytical judgments. Maybe such judgments are better left to documentaries or public television. The networks are driven by ratings, so they want big audiences and visual wins out over substance. That's the real problem. The public has to reach the point where it doesn't want to be manipulated. Then the networks might change.

Ripon Forum: So what is the end result of stagecraft taking precedent over state-

craft? You say in your book that "Ronald Reagan's people demonstrated that the smoke-filled back rooms in modern American politics are not for cutting deals, but for plotting strategy for TV."

"Governing requires sitting down with other power brokers and power centers in Washington and hammering out very difficult decisions that involve expensive and painful trade-offs."

Smith: It becomes much harder for presidents to put together coalitions. Governing requires sitting down with other power brokers and power centers in Washington and hammering out very difficult decisions that involve expensive and painful trade-offs. And then you must have the capacity to build and hold support for those decisions.

What we are doing in the electoral process is teaching our leaders that imagery is more important than substance and that stagecraft is more essential than statecraft. Campaigns are not a good training ground, and we are paying for that in our difficulty to develop effective governing.

Ripon Forum: So is democracy, as the novelist Joseph Heller said recently, "full of illusions?" Do elections not really count?

Smith: Elections do count, but they leave us saddled with problems that they were supposed to solve. An election is supposed to be a signal to leaders of what the electorate wants and in what direction it wants to be taken. So I don't think Heller is right. The illusion is that if we just elect the right president, he'll take care of the mess. But power is much more frag-

mented than that. Leading is not that simple.

Ripon Forum: In your book you talk about the problems associated with a divided government and the need for a majority party. But didn't the Founding Fathers warn about the tyranny of majorities? Doesn't it take two sides to play the "power game?"

Smith: The interesting thing about our history is that for nearly 75 percent of our first 150 or 160 years, the same party controlled Congress and the White House. And there were enough checks and balances built into the system to protect against an overriding tyranny. Only once or twice was there any real problem.

During the last 30-35 years, however, we have had divided government—one party in the White House, the other dominating Congress. Now we have deadlock after deadlock: Social Security, aid to the contras, SDI, relations with the Soviets. It has always taken time to resolve major issues, like the civil rights struggles. But now all kinds of issues keep coming back again and again because of the political division and deadlock.

Ripon Forum: So how do we get rid of deadlocked government?

Smith: I don't think you can legislate or decree a solution. There are people who believe that we should impose a party ticket—tell people that when they cast their ballots there is a single ticket for president, vice president, senator and member of Congress. If you are going to vote Republican, then you vote for the entire ticket.

I don't think that this will happen any time soon. It might even come close to the majority tyranny you mentioned. But all of us as voters have to look more closely at the consequences of our actions. If we vote a split ticket, then we shouldn't get angry if the system gets tied up in knots. As voters, we create the situation in which nothing gets done.

I have been an independent voter for several decades and have been proud of that. But it seems to me that it is better to vote for one party and let it set one direction for government.

Ripon Forum: But there are limits. You can only go so far in one direction. The

Senate Republicans put the breaks to Reagan's excesses between 1981 and 1986, otherwise the deficit might have become even worse.

Smith: It is arguable that in the 1984 election, voters did put a limit to Reagan's excesses. Many polls suggested that voters liked Ronald Reagan as president, but disagreed with the specifics of his program. They voted for him, but also for a Democratic congressman or senator. That is a rare occurrence, and the reason it happened is that Reagan has been the most ideological president in years. Neither Bush nor Dukakis qualify as ideologues, so this election may not have the same corrective.

"During the last 30-35 years we have had divided government. Now all kinds of issues keep coming back again and again because of the political division and deadlock."

Ripon Forum: If divided government is not conquered by the straight ticket, what other solutions exist?

Smith: Something radical needs to be done to change the enormous advantages of incumbency, particularly in the House of Representatives. In all but 30 or 40 districts, almost every incumbent can expect to be reelected. They have great advantages — staff, travel allowances, the mail frank, video feeds, name recognition and strong political action committee support. PACs give six times as much money to incumbents as to challengers.

This issue should be of particular interest to a Ripon audience. As far as the eye can see, there is going to be a Democratic House. What is needed, partly as an antidote to divided government, is a floor underneath the challengers in both parties. Challengers need subsidies, such as the mail frank and travel allowances, to make them more competitive. We are also going to have to provide both sides more television air time so people can see both candidates and genuinely have a choice.

We also need political leaders who talk about divided government. It is crazy that this is an unmentioned part of our political debate. Mike Dukakis may have an advantage because his party is closer to a majority. But George Bush could alert Republicans to the built-in congressional Democratic advantages. Maybe then we could start addressing the real problems in our political system.

Ripon Forum: You also talk in "The Power Game" about the need for more bipartisanship. But it seems to me that the atmosphere in Washington is so charged with the politics of confrontation, either in the House or in the rhetoric of the Radical Right or on even on political talk shows such as "The McLaughlin Group," that we are not likely to get much bipartisanship.

Smith: You are right; confrontational politics does not accomplish very much. But the evidence is overwhelming that if you don't solve the problem, or solve it right, you will get it all over again. There is already talk of a bipartisan economic commission, which is a good way to depoliticize the issue. The budget issue, and even the trade deficit, might have been dealt with sooner if Ronald Reagan had been more willing to accept the compromises Congress wanted to offer. My hunch is that both Bush and Dukakis are closer to the mainstream than Reagan and they will be more willing to make necessary compromises.

In the country, there is a mistaken sense that we can afford the luxury of confrontational politics and selfish behavior. The pain of the underclass, for instance, is not palpable enough for middle class America to accept. At some point, this or other problems are going to worsen and cause people to act. It may take a sudden jolt, like the Soviets doing something unexpected, the economy taking a downturn

or an upheaval among minority groups. Then we will have to pull together and confrontational politics will no longer be tolerable. It's unfortunate but true that a crisis is sometimes needed to make our country respond.

"Something radical needs to be done to change the enormous advantages of incumbency."

Ripon Forum: You also write that "effective political parties are vital to governing." What is an effective political party?

Smith: An effective political party is one which matters enough to a candidate's election that when party leaders turn to him or her and say we need your support for our coherent program, that politician sees the communal good as valuable enough to support this program. At the moment our parties are so diverse and diluted in their power, they find it very hard to get sufficient loyalty for votes in Congress.

Individual candidates in each party run very independently. They build their own organizations, raise their own money, make their own pitch to voters on TV. And once they get elected, they pick and choose when they want to follow the party's program and the party's leaders. That makes it very hard to run our system and govern effectively. I think we would benefit from stronger parties.

But let me emphasize that I am not a reformer. I'm a reporter and believe it is very important for people to get non-partisan, straight stories. My aim then in this interview, as well as in "The Power Game," is to get people to talk about these problems, not to put too much emphasis on reform. That's not a cop-out, but rather to protect my credibility as a reporter. ■

A CEO'S VIEW OF THE BUDGET PROCESS

BY AMO HOUGHTON

At some point in your life, preferably early, you choose a career. Mine was business, and during my 35 years in that rather broadly defined profession, I watched over the development and execution of hundreds of corporate budgets. A corporate budget, to say nothing of specific tasks to be accomplished, is the main process for controlling growth during good economic times. More importantly, in periods of economic difficulty, anyone who has lived through a downspin looks to disciplined budgeting as a way of cutting losses and literally preserving the life of a corporation.

Now it's no secret that business and government are far, far different. The numbers bottom line—or the "sine qua non"—of business is to make a profit. Revenues must exceed expenditures. Our government's focus tends to be broader and requires a different kind of discipline as it provides for the common defense and promotes the general welfare. These objectives drive the government, at times, to spend more than it takes in.

FEDERAL BUDGETING WOES

While acknowledging these differences, what I've seen of federal budgeting, during the two years I've been in Congress, still worries me. We seem to be oblivious to the central issues of survival, while arguing long and hard over the details. We play political games while tottering on the edge of an authentic economic cliff. Consider the following:

- The federal operating deficit is averaging about 3.1 percent of GNP for fiscal 1988

Amo Houghton is a first-term Republican congressman from New York and the former chief executive officer of Corning Glass Works.

“Major difficulties arise because, in contrast to business, government has no overarching goal and no clear budget-making hierarchy.”

and 1989. This is 72 percent higher than the comparable figure for the 1970s. It is 520 percent higher than the 1960s deficit burden. That's a lot.

- The trade deficit has grown to enormous proportions. While recently improved, the trade deficit hovers at a point that would be unmanageable if the federal operating deficit were to widen.
- Financing the federal deficit each year has caused the federal debt to grow from 37 percent of GNP in 1971 to 53 percent in 1987. What happens if this continues at the same pace?
- From foreigners owing us \$141 billion in 1981 we turned into the world's biggest debtor by the end of 1987, owing foreigners about \$400 billion.

Any corporation with a similar track record would have been liquidated, and its management put out to pasture.

Who is at fault—the administration, Congress, the electorate? The answer is that there is plenty of blame to go around. Why hasn't corrective action been taken? The stockholders (i.e., the citizens) haven't yet spoken.

Major difficulties arise because, in contrast to business, government has no overarching goal and no clear budget-making hierarchy. As mentioned earlier, in business one tries to maximize profits. With that clear goal in mind, the budget of every operating and staff department is approved by management and ultimately by the board of directors.

In government, however, honorable people can differ not just about how best to achieve the goals of government but about the goals themselves. We often argue about such basic issues as how much for defense? what role for the government in education or medical care or housing? and what burden of taxation? The competition between the executive and legislative branches, and between the House and Senate, and among all the diffuse power centers in each body just adds to the confusion. And the numbers are so very large.

Some of this is inevitable, given the nature of politics and our particular form of constitutional government. Coming from business I am conscious of a big difference—the general unwillingness to make tough choices. To make it easier for us to avoid difficult decisions, Congress and the executive branch tend to hide issues and problems behind a cloud of incomplete and inconsistent data and draw from a large bag of legislative tricks.

INADEQUATE DATA

In business, if a management team is good, it is ready to prescribe painful short-term medicine for the long-term health of the company. This can involve the elimination of unprofitable product lines or departments, personnel cutbacks, asset or investment write-offs or bankruptcy and reorganization. During the budget pro-

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PLATFORMS, CONSENSUS AND THE FUTURE

At the GOP convention in New Orleans, among all the buttons, balloons, pamphlets, books and assorted political paraphernalia which seemed to shower down like confetti, we found one sheet of plain white paper which carried a powerful message. The page listed dozens of words you will not find, for better or for worse, in the 1988 Democratic platform. Among them are:

Tax, Taxes, Taxpayer, Taxation, Revenue, Revenues. George McGovern, Walter Mondale, Jimmy Carter. Recovery, Unemployment, Jobless, Joblessness, Interest Rates, Misery Index. Protectionism, Capitalism, Bureaucracy, Efficient, Inefficient, Inefficiency. Liberal, Conservative. Abortion, Adoption, Pornography.

Enterprise Zones. Space Station, Space Shuttle. Intelligence. Libya, Grenada, Cuba, Panama Canal, Poland, Canada, Palestine, Palestinian, PLO, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Japan, Korea, China. Nicaragua, Contra, Freedom Fighter. NATO, Army, Navy, Air Force.

President, Presidency, Veto, House of Representatives, Senate. Church, Synagogue, Worship, Prayer, God.

It's tempting to draw specific conclusions from this list of omitted phrases and ideas; to do so would ultimately sound like questioning the Democrats' patriotism. But whether the Democrats' aim was to avoid the image of special interest pandering that has crippled them since 1968; or to paper over raging debates between the pragmatists who wanted a win and the ardent liberals to whom principle is most important; or to produce a document the average American could read at the grocery checkout—the Democrats have specif-

"The Democrats' lack of vision or courage on the issues is simply pathetic."

ically refused a more meaningful contribution to the "Great American Dialogue." Why can't the Democrats back up their aggressive attack on the Reagan-Bush administration with specific ideas of their own? Why must they avoid crucial topics like taxes, abortion, NATO or capitalism? We'll leave the answer to you, but the Democrats' lack of vision or courage on the issues this year is simply pathetic.

The GOP, we might add, has flirted with the other extreme of this platform problem. The Republican Party, of course, has put together a proud, effective consensus, at the expense of nearly ignoring its progressive heritage and leaders. Fortunately, Ripon Republicans are not a dying breed. The GOP '88 platform includes acceptable wording on progressive concerns like the disabled, the environment, education and AIDS. Still, all in all, these were meager, hard-won achievements.

To keep the party effective beyond Reagan, conservatives should build upon the rapprochement achieved this year with moderates and progressives as all campaigned together for the election of George Bush. We must continue to blend our sus-

picion of government solutions with the realization that in many areas, the nation cries out for leadership. In planning for the 1990s, the party establishment and conservative movement would do well to remember that the 1980-'86 Senate majority was composed of a mix of Republican styles and views. Building toward that kind of majority again will require steady, cautious and principled bridge-building by both sides.

HOW TO BATTLE THE "GENDER GAP"

Here's one place to begin the bridge-building. Iowan Beverly Hubble Tauke offers a persuasive argument for why Republicans deserve more credit for policies that help women achieve higher status and security, an argument that translates into ideas for future policy.

In a recent *Chicago Tribune* editorial, Tauke asks, why did the Democrats fail to tackle inadequate pension, child support and tax laws when they controlled the White House and both chambers of Congress from 1977 to 1981? Younger and older women now have greater pension rights due to reforms pushed by Senators Robert Dole (R-Kan.) and Robert Packwood (R-Ore.) in 1984 and '86. Colorado Senator William Armstrong authored legislation which strengthens the child support payments system, and Republicans sponsored tax reforms that maintained or enhanced tax credits for child care.

Even Reagan's policies have slashed inflation and indexed sharply lower tax rates, changes which deliver the greatest benefit to low-income workers (millions of

whom are women supporting a family).

Why, then, does the GOP battle a "gender gap" in the polls? According to Tauke, "Rare indeed is the Republican leader who has mastered the 'language of the heart' necessary to impress crucial women's victories on the public consciousness." Republican men (and after all, most politicians are men) suffer from the handicap of being, as S.I. Hayakawa defined it, the guys who act like they own the place. Unsurprising, then, that many women are uncomfortable with politicians who remind them of their boss, or worse, as the Democrats have cruelly joked, their first husband.

There is another reason why women distrust the Republicans—the GOP's messianic crusade to rescind or restrict the modern woman's reproductive choices. Sadly, abortion and birth control have become heated, litmus-test issues among Republicans, even as the overwhelming majority of women and men support the legal right of a woman to make these choices freely, answerable only to her own conscience. A less threatening platform on reproductive choice, including at least greater sex education for minors, contraceptive assistance for developing nations who want it, and the option of abortion in cases of rape, incest or an endangered mother, is one logical place to begin repairing the gender gap.

By highlighting Republican men's awkwardness with women's issues, at least Tauke has pointed to a way around the bitter abortion dispute. For starters, we should all remember how important economic gains are to women, as well as men, and the numerous ways women's economic status lags behind that of men. Further, phrases like "a kinder, gentler America" are important.

But follow-through with solid ideas on the full range of social and economic issues is better. In the next four years, you can expect a lot of talk about those other "women's issues": government-subsidized and -regulated day care; mandated health insurance; and temporary job security for people nurturing a newborn or seriously-ill family member. Many Republican women leaders are offering solutions that don't rely on an ever-expanding role for government; as a rule, the men should listen. The GOP needs both the right words and ideas to enhance women's choices, security, and access in a changing society.

AND WHAT ABOUT THE "RACIAL DIVIDE"?

Despite several decades of progress, perhaps the most disturbing trend in modern society is the continued, overwhelming polarization among Americans by race.

Even a marginal improvement in black support for the GOP, less than 10 percent in the 1980s, could be the margin that elects presidents, governors and members of Congress. A stronger effort to communicate GOP leadership on the concerns of black Americans could strengthen the party's image (no Republican can be comfortable with the labels most blacks would affix to us).

Ironically, conditions were ripe this year for a major Republican initiative to black voters. Courting the so-called "Reagan Democrats" through mid-October, Governor Dukakis did not schedule a single campaign event in a black neighborhood; the fuming mayor of Newark, New Jersey described the Jackson and Dukakis forces as "together, yet

"Perhaps the most disturbing trend in modern society is the continued, overwhelming polarization of Americans among race."

separate"—a phrase that evokes the old racist doctrine of "separate but equal."

At a deeper level, public opinion polls show that many blacks do not agree with Jackson's populist, left-wing views. In September, black columnist Courtland Milloy bluntly declared, "The time has come for black people to drive a stake

through the demon of Democratic paternalism that saps our will. . . . This requires an attitude change and, frankly, it is the Republican Party that embodies it."

Black Americans are justifiably reluctant to join the GOP bandwagon. Before the Great Society, both parties largely treated the black community with benign neglect. Since 1964, the Republican Party increasingly welcomed the support of those who opposed all proposals to assist or empower poor blacks as reverse discrimination. Much of the Reagan program was a frontal attack upon, not reform or replacement of, those programs poor blacks had come to rely upon.

Even in New Orleans, where symbols of outreach to blacks were pervasive, two major opportunities were missed. First was the failure of party leaders to reform party rules that inhibit the selection of black delegates in states with large black populations. Second was George Bush's failure to choose a running mate who has spoken forcefully on the need for more outreach to minorities and working class Americans: a Tom Kean, Jack Kemp or Robert Dole.

As these examples indicate, the GOP does include many who believe in greater opportunities for blacks; George Bush himself supported fair housing laws as a southern congressman in the mid-60s. In New Orleans, Jack Kemp suggested that if the GOP does its job right, one-quarter of the 1992 delegates should be black, Hispanic, or Asian Americans. Ripon Republicans think it can and should be done.

There are many ways the GOP can respond to the concerns of black Americans: maintaining economic growth and low inflation; keeping the pressure on for greater educational access and achievement; appointing officials who will be looking to strengthen, not weaken, the rights of minorities; ensuring the access of minorities to all levels of decision-making, including recruitment and support of black candidates; using the tax code to promote urban development in "enterprise zones," building local efforts to deal with literacy and self-esteem, job-training and child care; turning public housing over to resident control.

These are not ideas that depend on bigger government, special interest group support, or left-wing social theories. They go right to the heart of the Republican Party's commitment to freedom, growth, and the individual. ■

Budget Process

Continued from page 7

cess, every department in a company is usually required to propose cost reductions or program cuts. Good management is ready to insist on this because, in most cases, the company's survival is at stake. The occasional government bailout of a Lockheed or a Chrysler is the exception. The rule is that uncompetitive or poorly-managed companies go out of business or are swallowed up in hostile takeovers.

In government, it is all too easy to put off tough decisions. Businesses cannot print money. Economic mismanagement may cause a depression, but it is unlikely to threaten the nation's survival or the reelection of politicians who caused it. So in addition to whatever comfort this past resilience has provided, it is getting difficult to say what will happen with the economy two months from now, let alone 12 or 18 months by the end of the next fiscal year.

"If we are to make progress on eliminating the budget deficit, then someone—preferably the president—is going to have to lead. And we also need better economic, accounting and financial data."

A few economists say that we have turned the "budget deficit" corner and that economic growth will close the rest of the gap. But most of us have at least a vague sense that the deficit and our economic problems are larger than that. It is difficult, however, to measure how close we are to the edge of the economic chasm or how deep that chasm is. Some economists predict that foreigners may soon stage a "dollar strike," and refuse to go on funding our

twin trade and budget deficits without a sharp hike in interest rates. Other economists simply foresee a slow decline in future living standards, caused in part by the budget deficit's erosion of national savings and investment.

Barring outright catastrophe, such ambiguity in the economic outlook undermines any strong incentive to prescribe the bad-tasting budgetary medicine that many of us sense is needed for longer-term economic health. What happens then is that we all find it easier to protect our favored pieces in the deficit puzzle: defense, old and new entitlements, popular domestic discretionary spending, even tax rates. After giving birth to the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings law to protect us from ourselves, Congress now has slipped its targets and will slip them again—mark my words. Deficit reduction is painful. Only because of last October's market crash did we achieve as much deficit reduction in fiscal 1988 and 1989 as we actually did. The administration will not lead. Congress cannot lead. Meanwhile, back at the ranch, the electorate does not have enough information to easily understand the seriousness of our budgetary and economic situation.

In a well-run company, it is easier to address economic and business problems because management has access to the necessary information. A company's budget is based on absolutely the best economic data and assumptions available, no matter how distressing their implications. The accounting system will provide complete, consistent information to all decision makers on a timely enough basis to be useful for managerial decisions. When it comes time to show results for the quarter or the year, the data will be presented in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and in a way that fairly represents the financial position of the company. Companies that violate accounting conventions or pull financial tricks can count on being discovered by financial analysts and having the price of their stock take a beating.

In government, "fed speak" and confusion are so commonplace it is no trick to hide the size of the problem. The main reason it was so easy to pass a FY'89 budget that (barely) meets the requirements of Gramm-Rudman-Hollings was the tailor-made use of optimistic economic assumptions, thereby saving the administration and Congress from having to come

to grips with an additional \$38 billion of deficit reductions.

The economy has, in fact, turned out to be stronger than most of us expected in February. But it is worth remembering that when the Office of Management and Budget came in with growth and interest rate assumptions that were more optimistic than those in 90 percent of private-sector

"The government has over 300 incompatible accounting systems producing incomplete and inconsistent information."

forecasts, Congress dismissed its own budget office to embrace OMB's economic assumptions. Why sweat it? Faced with a choice between OMB and Congressional Budget Office economic assumptions, Congress was under great pressure to adopt the most favorable because it freed Congress from having to take a difficult stand. And this has not been the first time. Congress has a long record of this. For fiscal years 1980 through 1987, overly optimistic economic assumptions that Congress used for its first budget resolutions added an average of \$23 billion to each year's deficit, amounting to \$183 billion for the period.

SOLUTIONS

And the list goes on and on and on. The government, incidentally, has over three hundred incompatible accounting systems producing incomplete and inconsistent information. Also, the failure to use accrual accounting—which we all use in business—means, among other things, that the government's books show no provision for bad loans, bankrupt financial institutions, retirement or many other liabilities staring you in the eye. When the

bill comes due, there we are—horrified, surprised. Congress has used un-businesslike, normally unacceptable tricks to get around the provisions of Gramm-Rudman-Hollings and last year's budget summit agreement. For example, it moved a military payday from September 30th to October 1st to "save" \$2.5 billion in fiscal 1988; it called in past years for asset sales to meet Gramm-Rudman limits on the government's operating deficit. It also defined discretionary spending as mandatory just to meet budget summit limits on the former. One wit has noted that the last move created a new category—"mandatory discretionary" spending. A company that tried such tricks would find its stock price rapidly heading south, and its officers subject to legal action.

"If a management team is good, it is ready to prescribe painful short-term medicine for the long-term health of the company."

It may be naive, but if we are going to make progress on eliminating the budget deficit, it seems to me that two things are necessary. First, someone—preferably the president—is going to have to take the lead. Tough financial decisions must come from the top. The rest of us—Congress and the electorate—are just going to have to limit ourselves to constructive contributions and be willing to accept some sacrifices, as long as they are fairly balanced. Second, I don't think it's too much to ask to begin demanding the best economic, accounting and financial data that we can get hold of. Our decisions should be based accordingly. Doing otherwise would merely postpone the day to get our budgetary house in order, which is something no good company would do. ■

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THE MEDICAL LIABILITY CRISIS: *A Time for Action*

BY JILL C. GREENWALD

Most members of the medical profession dedicate their lives to combating and conquering the ills of man. But today's medical practitioners are plagued by an ill they cannot cure—the crisis of medical liability.

Today's physicians are embroiled in a vicious circle of action, blame and reaction which has led to increases in insurance premiums, claim frequency, award severity, doctor's fees, defensive medicine, patient expectation and the percentage of doctors leaving their specialties or practices altogether.

Patients blame doctors for imperfect results. Doctors blame tort systems and greedy patients and lawyers. Lawyers blame doctors for medical negligence and insurance companies for charging premiums that do not adequately reflect their risk and interest earned on reserves. The insurance industry blames the crisis on the unpredictable claim frequency and severity.

THE CRISIS

Regardless of which way the fingers point, the statistics speak for themselves. Since the late 1970s, premiums, suits and awards have increased at alarming rates. Between 1980 and 1985 frequency of claims increased more than 300 percent and their severity increased 90.5 percent from 1981-1985. In 1984 one out of every 6.25 doctors was sued compared to one out of every 33.33 in 1978.

Some critics, however, most notably trial lawyers, still deny that a crisis exists. While doctors blame a flawed litigational

“There is no denying that malpractice exists. But the recent claim explosion does not signify a corresponding increase in negligence.”

system, groups such as the American Association of Trial Lawyers argue that the increasing frequency and severity of claims is the result of medical negligence. ATLA suggests that malpractice incidences exceed the number of plaintiffs compensated and that most negligent actions are not reported so the actual cases of negligence are even greater. ATLA also suggests that a handful of incompetent physicians account for most of the problem.

According to the executive vice-president and counsel to the North Carolina Academy of Trial Lawyers, David Blackwell, only 675 of Florida's 22,000 doctors paid two or more malpractice claims over the last decade. But those 675 accounted for 48 percent of all malpractice awards in the state.

Such numbers prompt another ATLA complaint: state disciplinary procedures are inadequate. Blackwell in particular believes that medical boards have failed to adequately discipline doctors. Of the 100 disciplinary actions in North Carolina from

January 1984 to May 1987, only 12 licenses were revoked.

Groups like ATLA complain that the so-called “crisis” is, in part, manufactured by the insurance industry's mismanagement and underpricing. Some trial lawyers argue that insurers exaggerate their underwriting losses by not including investment income when determining their profitability. Subsequently, insurers try to justify charging excessive premiums by publicizing their losses.

Insurance companies explain that they decreased premiums to attract investment income when interest rates were as high as 20 percent five years ago. But when interest rates tumbled and returns on investments were low, the industry was forced to drop policies and raise prices to recoup their losses. Trial lawyers assert that insurers have gone beyond this and are now justifying exorbitant premiums by falsely claiming to be operating at a loss.

Despite ATLA's contentions, the insurance industry's investment income is not sufficient to counter its losses. A Best's Insurance Management Report concluded that “medical malpractice is reaching a point of no return in terms of producing investment income from loss reserves that exceed the underwriting loss.” According to a recent Best's report, dated September 15, 1986, premium income for the total industry increased 45.4 percent from 1984-1985, while the loss ratio climbed ten points from 110.7 to 120.7.

Also contrary to ATLA's assertions, the real problem is not medical negligence but the movement toward no-fault liability where doctors are liable even in the absence of wrongdoing. Judges are holding that anyone who suffers harm should be entitled to damages, regardless of fault. The surge in claims and rewards does not mean that malpractice is rampant, but that

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it is easier to award compensation without proving fault.

RESULTS OF RECENT TRENDS

Former Assistant Attorney General Richard K. Willard said that while tort law was a predictable set of legal rules 20 years ago under which losses were transferred from innocent plaintiffs to negligent defendants, now negligence has been eroded as a standard. According to one Washington D.C. obstetrician, "Malpractice used to mean negligence or error. Now it simply means a bad result. If a child is born with a withered arm, all the lawyer must do is get that child before a jury and he'll win an award. The jury may even understand that the doctor is not to blame and see the whole case as a simply a withdrawal from a vast fund designed to compensate victims."

Subsequently, a large portion of awards are subjective and based on the emotions of the jury. Law professor Jeffery O'Connell described a lay jury as "apt to be influenced more by its subjective and emotional reaction to the injured patient's plight than by the appropriateness of the defendant's conduct." Some plaintiffs therefore may not receive compensation while others receive an award far exceeding their actual loss.

Jury awards in the 1980s have skyrocketed forcing insurers to increase premiums. In 1975, the average award was \$220,018 and only three awards were greater than \$1 million. Jury Verdict Research, Inc. has compiled 1986 statistics through October and already the average award has doubled to \$2,056,525.

Because insurers cannot predict with any confidence the actions of sympathetic juries or the frequency and severity of claims, they are forced to increase their premiums. For highly-specialized physicians, these premiums represent about one-third of their gross incomes. This exorbitant burden, coupled with decreasing limits of coverage, has forced many doctors to alter their practices or abandon them completely. A 1985 survey showed that 32 percent of obstetricians in California restricted their number of deliveries, and more than 46 percent reduced their high-risk caseload.

According to a 1984 study, 38 percent of surgeons, including over 50 percent of orthopedic surgeons, refused to accept more cases for fear of potential malpractice suits. A New York obstetrician who successfully defended four malpractice suits

recently stopped practicing. Echoing other doctors, he said: "I decided that at age 64 I did not wish to expose my personal assets and life savings to a mishap that would wipe me out."

"Clearly, fault-based liability must be reinstated. Defendants should only pay claims for which they are at fault and only to the degree to which they are at fault."

Such a concern has been resounded even louder since insurance companies have reduced their coverage under high risk of litigation. In 1985, limits of \$100 million were available but by the end of 1985 coverage above \$10-20 million was difficult to obtain and prohibitively expensive.

Only one or two insurers write medical liability policies in each state as a result of the medical malpractice crisis of the 1970s. The St. Paul Fire and Marine Insurance Company, the largest national provider of medical malpractice insurance, has imposed a moratorium on new policies. In Florida, more than 8,000 physicians were notified by St. Paul and CIGNA that their insurance would not be renewed as of July 1, 1987.

DECLINE IN MEDICAL CARE

Virginia also faces a severe threat to its physician supply. The company that insures approximately 16 percent of Virginia's physicians stopped insuring those practicing in groups of less than 10. Subsequently, patients are faced with reduced access and availability to quality medical care.

When a six-year-old boy in Florida was hit by a car and rushed to the emer-

gency room, he was turned away. The ambulance had to travel another 35 minutes to get him to the only hospital in Dade County accepting trauma victims.

Many doctors don't want to accept the risk of malpractice suits for performing emergency room surgery. Since July 1, 1987, when the largest insurer of Florida doctors raised its rate 43 percent in Dade and Broward Counties, more than 1,000 specialists have refused to work in the emergency rooms. (Most of the region's hospitals have shut their doors to emergency patients.) In Broward County, only three of the 17 emergency rooms are taking patients. A Florida paramedic said, "I don't really know who's to blame, but if this crisis doesn't end soon, it's going to start killing people."

There is no denying that malpractice exists. But the recent claim explosion does not signify a corresponding increase in negligence. Most malpractice claims do not involve negligence. Insurance industry statistics indicate that the majority of claims are closed without any indemnity payment.

The increasing frequency and severity of claims also does not prove that physicians are less competent, only that their practices are inherently riskier. The technological advances in the medical field coupled with the increasing litigiousness of our society, result in tort suits from which even the best physicians are not immune.

In an attempt to combat this crisis some states enacted tort reforms in the mid '70s which included measures such as capping verdicts, eliminating specific dollar requests by plaintiffs and authorizing periodic payments. A study by Patricia M. Danzon and Lee A. Lillard concluded that such actions reduced average verdicts by 30 percent, the average settlement by 25 percent and the portion of cases dropped was raised by five percent.

Although the reforms of the 1970s had an impact, not enough states enacted enough of the reforms. As a result, today's medical liability crisis does not appear to be abating. Obviously, new reforms are needed as is a refocusing on our system's primary goal: access to affordable, high quality medical care.

REFORMS

While the goal of our civil justice

Continued on page 21

IS MOTHER EARTH HEADING FOR A GRAVEYARD ORBIT?

BY MARIANN KURTZ

“Mr. President, this is Mission Control, do you read?”

“Mission Control, this the president, go ahead.”

“Mr. President, we are reading a Code-Red warning on Mother Earth’s environmental protection shields. Repeat. We are reading a code-Red warning on Mother Earth’s environmental protection shields.”

“Damage Control reports complete contamination of Mother Earth. Boost sequence for Graveyard Orbit has begun.”

Just over one month ago, a nuclear reactor aboard a failing Soviet satellite was fired into the Space Age scientists’ version of a trash can. The radioactive cargo was boosted into a “graveyard” orbit before the crippled space craft plunged back into the atmosphere. This standard disposal orbit is home to various abandoned payloads which would prove environmentally harmful if allowed to return to Earth. Luckily, scientists have designed autopilot maneuvers to send tainted materials to this final resting place if their ships become disabled, thus posing an environmental threat.

Lucky, too, the good ship Earth does not have the same autopilot system. Otherwise 1988 might have been the year that Earth took a tour of the galaxy Glad Bag.

Republican presidential nominee George Bush has said that 1988 “in a sense, is the year the Earth spoke back.” Citing the unusually hot summer ascribed to the trend of global warming and the closing of beaches due to the dumping of medical wastes, the Bush campaign has

“In a clear break with the current administration, Vice President Bush has proposed a variety of environmental initiatives, not the least of which is enforcement of zero tolerance for polluters.”

promised an administration of environmental leadership.

Under the hand of President Ronald Reagan, dangers of the greenhouse effect and results of global warming have become household worries. The Reagan-designed, Bush-chaired, Task Force on Regulatory Relief successfully gutted the Clean Air Act of 1970 and relaxed, delayed or eliminated many other environmental regulations. Subsequently, the Reagan administration has been widely criticized as the most partial to polluters of any government since the Environmental Protection Agency was created in 1970.

But in a clear break with the current administration, Vice President Bush has proposed a variety of environmental initia-

tives, not the least of which is enforcement of zero tolerance for polluters. Bush, who has declared himself an environmentalist, promises to bring a new “conservation ethic” to the White House. The League of Conservation Voters, however, is not so optimistic. During the primary elections, the League gave Bush a “D+” for his record on the environment and said that the vice president “wears ideological blinders.”

Along with other critics, the League pointed to Bush’s record with the task force which represented a preference for limited government control of polluters. As an example, a *New York Times* editorial noted that Bush opposed standards for auto efficiency and the removal of lead from gasoline. Only after considerable opposition from the EPA and health specialists did Bush and the task force relent on their proposal to relax or rescind the lead phase-out program.

To combat such negative reviews, the Bush camp has promoted their candidate’s environmental record from his days as a Texas congressman. Fortunate for the environment and unfortunate for political comparisons, Bush’s big-ticket agenda items included the preservation of Big Thicket National Park and the halting of channelization of Buffalo Bayou near Houston. Hardly a comparison to the problems he would inherit as president such as carbon emissions, ocean dumping, ozone depletion and global climate change.

A *Washington Post* editorial noted that “Mr. Reagan did so little on the environment, after all, that Mr. Bush could do—or promise to do—a great deal more and still not be doing very much.”

Obviously, Bush must step out of Reagan’s do-nothing environmental shadow. According to Vermont Senator Robert T. Stafford, Bush is on his way to

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just such a distinction. "A vice president has to be loyal to the president," said Stafford. "Bush was in a delicate position and much of what he did with the task force is in the category of loyalty to the president. I believe George Bush will be environmentally acceptable. He must do something about acid rain. He must be sensitive to global problems. He must go further than the current administration."

"Obviously, Bush must step out of Reagan's do-nothing environmental shadow."

Enter George Bush on the shore of Lake Erie near Detroit. [I will] "lead the world to a new recognition of the importance of the environment. Those who think we're powerless to do anything about the greenhouse effect are forgetting about the White House effect," Bush contended. "As president, I intend to do something about it."

Part of Bush's "something" includes the promise to convene an international conference during his first year in office to tackle acid rain, ozone depletion and global warming. Also on the Bush agenda is the promotion of a strengthened Clean Air Act, the implementation of the Montreal protocol to reduce chlorofluorocarbon use which destroys the ozone layer, and the reduction of carbon emissions through more efficient uses of energy and alternate fuels. Similarly, Bush has called for the reduction of millions of tons of sulfur dioxide emissions by the year 2000 and significant reductions in nitrogen oxide emissions.

Hoping that the next president will inherit legislation to take just the steps Bush has outlined, Congresswoman Claudine Schneider of Rhode Island, along with two dozen bi-partisan compatriots, has introduced the most comprehensive

proposal to date to battle environmental woes. At the foundation of this 200-page bill aimed at curbing the greenhouse effect is the rigorous commitment to a least cost planning or efficiency approach by which impact, costs and benefits are ranked.

Under the bill, the Department of Energy along with other agencies would reprioritize their budgets using the cost effective guidelines. As a result, energy conservation, research and development of renewable energy sources and the slowing of deforestation would become prominent agenda items.

To further encourage efficiency, the bill proposes tax rebates for the purchase of fuel efficient vehicles offset by a higher gas-guzzler tax. According to Schneider, investments in energy efficiency over the past 15 years have cut energy consumption by one-third, carbon emissions by 40 percent and the U.S. energy bill by \$160 billion per year.

"Success breeds success, and this is undeniably true about remaining opportunities for saving more money and cutting carbon and nitrogen oxide emissions through additional efficiency improvements," Schneider said.

This legislation goes to the heart of a report from the EPA's Science Advisory Board which claimed too much emphasis is placed on cleanup and not enough on prevention. Clearly the authors of this bill understand the relationship between prevention and cure and manage to balance that understanding with economic realities.

Reduction and prevention of pollutants coupled with increased efficiency not only makes good environmental sense, it makes good economic sense. This bill promotes environmental caretaking as well as global competitiveness, two issues Bush most certainly embraces. As Bush noted in Detroit, being an environmentalist is "not inconsistent with being a businessman nor is it with being a conservative."

Continuing this business-like, pragmatic approach, Bush has called for zero tolerance for polluters and suggested the EPA sue toxic-waste polluters for triple damages. Currently fines on hazardous waste dumpers average less than 10 percent of the money polluters save by dumping illegally. Bush's plan attempts to make those responsible for dumping responsible for the cleanup.

Similarly, Bush hopes to make the Superfund program more responsive.

Flush with more than \$9 billion through 1992, the Superfund has been heavily criticized for its slow response to toxic-waste problems and its reliance on short-term fixes rather than permanent remedies. Bush wants the EPA to use the money faster and more efficiently and make greater use of its power to authorize immediate cleanups.

Although Bush has proposed programmatic changes for the EPA, he has not accepted the suggestion of six Republican senators to change the leadership status of the agency. While Bush has said he would seek "the most qualified individuals in the land" to run the EPA, Senators Rudy Boschwitz (Minn.), John H. Chafee (R.I.), David Durenberger (Minn.), John Heinz (Pa.), Stafford and Lowell P. Weicker Jr. (Conn.) introduced a bill that would give the EPA Cabinet-level status. The legislation calls for the creation of the Department of Environmental Protection headed by a Cabinet secretary who would have equal status with foreign ministers with whom EPA negotiates treaties.

"The president needs to be involved in making environmental policy. And the EPA needs to be involved on the Cabinet level in setting national policy,"

Continued on page 18

Bush on the Environment

- Convene a global conference during the first year in office to discuss acid rain, ozone depletion and global warming.
- Reduce dependence on fossil fuels by exploring alternate fuel sources and increased reliance on nuclear power.
- Cut sulfur dioxide emissions by millions of tons by the year 2000 and obtain substantial reductions in nitrogen oxides.
- Implementation of the Montreal protocol to reduce the use of chlorofluorocarbons and encourage U.S. industry to find safe alternatives and move toward phasing out CFCs.
- Zero tolerance for polluters. Fine toxic-waste dumpers triple damages and increase effectiveness of the Superfund program.
- Ban all ocean dumping by 1991.
- No net loss of wet lands.

UP AGAINST THE WALL: *Religion, Politics and the Establishment Clause*

BY ALFRED W. TATE

The consternation created among professional politicians by the campaigns of the Reverends Robertson and Jackson for the presidential nominations of their respective parties, and the immense if unspoken relief felt by many when their races fell short, are symptoms of a peculiar form of national schizophrenia. We Americans like to think of ourselves as a deeply religious people, but we become intensely uncomfortable when this putative religiosity is expressed in the political arena.

One source of this "split" in our corporate personality is the way in which these two ways of being and acting are inextricably related. The intimate connection between the "religious" and "political" dimensions of our lives has made arriving at a comfortable accommodation between the two difficult throughout history.

For Americans this difficulty is compounded by the peculiar disjunction between religion and politics institutionalized in the so-called "establishment" clause of the First Amendment. The unique experiment in governance created by the rejection of a national religion has left us without historical precedent for understanding the role of religion in the politics of the United States.

INADEQUATE LANGUAGE

But we have placed ourselves at a further disadvantage. The terms in which any issue or question is put will in large measure determine the range of serious

Alfred W. Tate is a member of the Ripon Forum editorial board. This essay is based upon his chapter in the recently-released, "A Newer World: The Progressive Republican Vision of America."

*"The problems we are
having in answering
questions about religion's
place in politics can be
traced to the
inadequacies of the
language we have used to
frame it."*

responses to it, and nowhere has this proven more clear than in our ongoing national colloquy on what part, if any, religion should play in our system of governance. That is to say, the problems we are having in answering this question can be traced to the inadequacies of the language we have used to frame it. Almost immediately after the nation's founding, Americans began to debate the place of religion in their corporate life using language that obscured rather than clarified the issue.

The unlikely villain here is Thomas Jefferson. Writing in 1802 to the Danbury Baptist Association of Danbury, Connecticut, Jefferson described the effect of the First Amendment to have been one of "building a wall of separation between Church and State." The phrase is one of the most often quoted in American politics and the image it contains has almost totally captured our thinking on the question of religion and politics. Jefferson's choice of

words, however, was an unhappy one for several reasons. First, the concepts of "Church" and "State" did not then and most certainly do not now adequately describe the American experience. As Paul Kauper puts it:

"Church-state terminology comes to us from Europe and recalls a background which is quite unlike the American scene. It had its origin in a time when the church was indeed a single monolithic Church and government power was centered in a single ruler. It is inadequate to describe the American situation because of both the multitude of churches in this country and the dispersion of governmental power among the federal government, the states, and the local communities."

Jefferson's use of the term "wall" is equally unfortunate. The reference is to a permanent barrier, set in place once and for all along a predetermined boundary. This, too, does not adequately describe what was and is the case here. A far more accurate image for the state of affairs in America is found in a 1832 letter from James Madison to the Reverend Jasper Adams in which he addressed the potential for confusion created by the First Amendment. He had to admit, Madison wrote:

"that it may not be easy, in every possible case, to trace the line of separation between the rights of religion and the Civil authority with such distinctness as to avoid collisions & doubts on unessential points."

The point is that in the United States there is no "Church" in the traditional sense, rather there are a myriad of "churches." By recent count, there are over 1000 organized religious groups in this country to which the label could be applied. Similarly, there is no "State" in

the sense of a single seat of government, but a variety of "civil authorities" with overlapping constituencies and differing jurisdictions and powers. In such a context, the term "line," one definition of which is a path without width and of indeterminate length generated by two or more points, is much more helpful. It allows us, as the historian Sidney Mead has argued, to see that the relationship between "religion" and "Civil authority" is a close, dynamic and indissoluble one. Further, the image enables us to appreciate that, under our system of governance, this relationship and its boundary must be refixed in each new situation in which the question of its definition arises.

DEFINING RELIGION AND POLITICS

Consideration of just what is meant by the terms "religion" and "politics" makes clear why Madison's language is preferable to Jefferson's in better understanding what we have inherited in the "establishment clause."

"Jefferson described the effect of the First Amendment to have been one of 'building a wall of separation between Church and State.' . . . The term 'line' would have been much more helpful."

"Religion" is the name given to the system of beliefs and practices expressive of the faith in the ultimate meaning of existence common to the members of a community. The Latin root of the word means "to bind," and, as both a constellation of beliefs and the source of the standards by which morality is measured, reli-

gion performs two "binding" functions. First, in providing answers to the questions of life's ultimate meaning and purpose it gives individuals their sense of personal identity and worth. In this sense, religion creates an awareness of being an integrated self that both transcends its needs and desires and is more than the sum of its experiences. Second, religion makes genuine and lasting community possible. It does so because it is our recognition of the possession of this same selfhood and personal worth by others that unites us as individuals into groups whose purpose goes beyond simple physical survival to the enhancement of the worth of this shared selfhood.

"Politics," on the other hand, is the art or science of government. It is the name given to the institutions and activities which define, structure and give order to the life of a particular group or community. It is derived from a Greek word meaning "city" or "state." The term and its cognates can be used to refer to an explicitly or implicitly incorporated community of whatever limited or extended sort, the way in which such a community is organized and the processes through which it functions. This includes the specific things its members do in gaining control of and administering it.

"Religion," the British statesman Edmund Burke maintained, "is the basis of civil society." The German theologian Paul Tillich said essentially the same thing when he wrote: "Religion is the substance of culture and culture the form of religion." Implicit in both statements is the truism that every political entity, every human group, no matter how large or small, no matter how formally or informally organized, is founded upon and takes its shape and direction from the shared religious beliefs of its members. Religion supplies the content for which politics may be said to provide the social structures.

To live in a genuine community, whether one as intimate as the family or as impersonal as that of the modern nation-state, requires individuals to subsume their self-interest under the greater good represented by the whole of which they are part. By supplying answers to the question of life's ultimate meaning and goal, religion defines this greater good and offers the inspiration of self-interest our life together requires and sanctions the restraints imposed by society when these sacrifices are not voluntarily made. Politics determines

how the demands of communal life are to be distributed and enforced, as well as what punishment is to be exacted and how it is to be administered when these demands are not met.

"Religion supplies the content for which politics may be said to provide the social structures."

The fact that a discussion of definitions and distinctions of this sort seems abstract and artificial is itself a symptom of the impossibility of finally separating religion and politics. And it is this intimate nature of their connection that makes distinguishing between religion and politics in any specific society at any one time very hard to do. For most countries, however, the question of the role of religion in politics never arises. Because of the "establishment clause," for Americans it does so constantly.

ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE

We take so much for granted the fact that the United States has no established church to place its imprimatur on public policy that we tend also to overlook the fact that this represents an experiment in governance unique in Western history. Further, overlooked in turn is the way in which the religious freedom we enjoy in this country is itself the expression of a profound religious conviction. This conviction is the belief that the free and open conflict of ideas and ideals is the essence of democracy.

The inclusion in the Constitution of the edict "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof" has provided a safeguard ensuring the continuance of this essential conflict. In obscuring the true relationship between religion and politics, Jefferson's talk of a "wall of separation between Church and State" has

obscured the faith stance on which our system is founded. In turn, it has led many to believe that the expression of religious convictions should somehow be excluded from the political arena. The opposite is the case. Our response to the ultimate religious question of the meaning of human existence is inextricably linked to our response to the fundamental political question of how shall we order our life together to most fully realize that meaning. Any specific effort to address the latter will inevitably entail an equally specific answer to the former. Every serious political debate will thus ineluctably be finally resolvable to appeals to the authority of religious convictions.

“The establishment clause does not prevent appeals to religious convictions. What it prevents is the use of coercion in any form by any side in political debates.”

The establishment clause does not prevent such appeals. What it prevents is the use of coercion in any form by any side in such debates. The problem the First Amendment confronts is contained in the fact that the authority religious convictions carry is absolute because the questions to which they are responses are ultimate ones. Thus possession of such convictions brings with it the temptation to claim that the use of any means are justified in their imposition. The Constitution resolves the problem by confronting the claims to absolute authority by specific religions with a claim of equally absolute authority of its own. This claim is that—no matter how firmly held the faith on which they are

founded may be—the political response religious convictions elicit are always human products and thus relative and fallible. Their imposition must therefore be only through the medium of persuasion in free and open debate and never through the use of coercive force, however subtle in its application. Coercive force always interferes with and can potentially extinguish free debate.

The First Amendment created something very different from a “wall.” It has instead provided the occasion for determining in any specific political conflict whether the expression of religious convictions by the parties involved is persuasive, and therefore permitted, or coercive, and therefore “unconstitutional.” This determination can only be made on the basis of the particular issues involved and the specific modes of argument used. The result has been something much better described in terms of Madison’s “line,” a line the course of which has been generated by past such determinations and the direction of which will depend upon the circumstances of future political debates.

Like every other body politic, ours is founded in faith. As has been true for all tribes and nations from time immemorial, our system of governance retains its authority over us as individuals only so long as we remain convinced of the essential “rightness” of the faith on which it is founded. Further, as has also been true for all peoples in all times and as most recently witnessed to by the pageantry surrounding the celebration of the bicentennial of the Constitution, the power inherent in our institutions of government is constantly being enlisted in the cause of inculcating this faith. The stakes are high. If and when this faith loses its ability to give meaning and direction to our lives—and in the process inspire in us the sacrifice of self-interest that life in community requires—our society will begin to unravel. For us that unraveling will take the form of giving into the temptation to allow the ends we seek to dictate the means we use to achieve them. ■

**What’s Ahead in the
Ripon Forum:
More on Blacks
in the GOP**

Durenberger told the *Washington Post*. “If any agency deserves to be represented at the Cabinet table, it is the agency responsible for the quality of our water and air and the protection of our irreplaceable natural resources,” Chafee added.

Although Bush has not adopted their notion to his agenda, the bill’s sponsors believe the vice president will not disregard the idea entirely. “I think when the time comes, if Bush is elected president, he will be prepared to look at the EPA for Cabinet-level representation,” Stafford said.

Many proposals have been made for adding Cabinet ministers including representation for the Veteran’s Administration. Bush clearly opposes more government and recognizes the dangers inherent in adding place settings to the Cabinet. The vice president must remember, however, that environmental problems dramatically affect the posture and disposition of those already at the table.

As Stafford points out, “as people squawk about coughing, and sneezing and eyes burning,” it is clearly time to take action. But granting the EPA a Cabinet seat should not become the litmus test for the environmental policies and priorities of either Bush or Democratic nominee Michael Dukakis. The true task is gaining congressional support for prudent and pragmatic environmental leadership.

According to John Topping, director of the Climate Institute in Washington, D.C., Bush must heal election wounds quickly and gain bipartisan cooperation in order to promote environmental initiatives. “Bush will be under pressure to provide environmental leadership early,” Topping said. “He must bring in the Democrats, set better priorities and create a basis for good will. He cannot do it unilaterally. He must share the credit.”

Stafford concurs. “The people of the world are looking to American leadership to address these environmental problems. The time has come for more action and less study, but the president (Bush) can’t do it alone. The president has to know that considerable national anxiety will arise if steps are not taken. As people become uncomfortable—the climate gets too hot, throats ache, eyes burn—the people of the world will want to eliminate these things which cause such manifestations to occur. As president, Mr. Bush must provide that leadership and gain the support of Congress.” ■

S&L's: "The Lure of Leveraging"

BY JIM LEACH

The time has come for Congress to cease mincing words about thrift problems. The dilemma we are confronted with is of our own making. Too loose laws have led to too loose regulation which in turn has led to too loose banking practices. The overleveraging of other people's money by high-flying thrifts has put taxpayers on the line for billions of dollars of liabilities developed outside the normal budgetary process. Multi-billion dollar obligations have been made by politicians refusing to stand up to special interest concerns and made larger by regulators preferring to buy time rather than spread ill winds through an industry strewn with ill will.

The statistics speak for themselves. A \$1.3 trillion industry has a negligible capital base, negligible insurance fund and negligible disincentive to take risks with taxpayer dollars. If the first quarter of 1988 is a guide, the industry is losing money at a \$15 billion annual clip. The weak are getting weaker, with Congress facing the prospect of the largest private sector bailout in the history of the Republic.

Commentators like to suggest that regional problems—i.e., a weak economy in the oil patch and on the farm—precipitated the savings and loan problem. Actually, there are more human culprits than abstract rationales. The root cause of the thrift problem is greed, the regulator-sanctioned capacity of high flyers to attract and overleverage other people's money because of receipt of federal or state charters to take deposits backed by federal insurance.

The quid pro quo—prudential investment and lending practices—has been ignored by a significant element of the indus-

"Too loose laws have led to too loose regulation which in turn has led to too loose banking practices."

try because regulators followed the pandering exhortations of legislators at both the state and federal level who have given too much power to too few to exercise too wantonly.

A classic example of egregious thrift power is the regulatory rule that allows savings and loans, but not banks, to put 300 percent of their capital in direct investments. Alleged representatives of the little guy have encouraged thrift investors to use government insured deposits to speculate in real estate or the stock market rather than home loans.

If executive branch scandals—some have gone so far as to suggest the presence of a sleaze factor—may be ascribed with partisan fervor to Republicans, thrift conflicts of interest can just as fairly be considered disproportionately Democratic. Such is the case because over the years in a battle for powers between savings and loans interests and commercial banks, thrift executives chose up sides with the Democrats, presumably on the assumption that bankers historically identified with the Republican Party.

Just as large banks have come over time to be regulated less firmly than small

ones, thrifts used their legislative power base within the dominant political party at both the state and federal level to see to it that they would not become as forcefully regulated as commercial banks.

Compounding the problem of weak regulation and a weak capital base in the thrift industry is the epidemic of greed that seems to exist within a number of overextended institutions in growth states. Thrift managers who are in negative net worth situations understand that they have nothing to lose as they pay premiums to attract deposits insured by others. Hence, there is every incentive—through dividends, salaries and perks—to live high on the hog today and make risk investments in the hope of striking gold tomorrow. Without stern regulatory oversight, imprudent circumstances breed more imprudent decisions.

The quandary regulators confront is the problem of how to rein in overextended institutions when their primary resource is an overextended insurance fund. Ingeniously, the short-term answer appears to be a government-backed Ponzi scheme: the issuance of long-term capital notes on a fund backed, in theory, by the Treasury. The undeniable effect of such note issuances is taxpayer accountability for the printing press of an independent regulatory agency. But incredulously no one in this conservative administration is crying foul. No one desires to bite the bullet just now. Apparently the Reagan administration simply wants to get out of town before the horses are out of the barn and a stampede commences.

The only way it can do this is to give license to the licentious. Even though well-capitalized and well-managed thrift institutions have had record profits in recent

Jim Leach is a member of Congress from Iowa and chairman of the Ripon Society.

years, the "Dr. Jekyll" portion of the industry is so poorly managed that losses not only exceed the deposit insurance fund for thrifts but for banks as well. These losses are almost certainly likely to multiply unless regulators learn to just say "no." Otherwise, a \$50 billion headache today could become a \$100 billion migraine tomorrow.

The best antidote to public bail-outs of individual institutions is the simple requirements that they be adequately capitalized and responsibly regulated.

"Unless enormous real capital infusions are made by private sector investors, the only prudent regulatory guidance to the thrift industry should be to shrink."

The most effective means of limiting taxpayer liabilities to the industry as a whole is to curb its overall growth. There is no doubt that the Federal Home Loan Bank Board under Chairman Danny Wall has upgraded significantly its regulatory manpower. Doubt remains, however, that improvements in the micro-management ability to deal with today's problems are matched by an adequate macro-approach to constraining tomorrow's. It is simply nuts to advocate, as the Bank Board does, a growth in industry assets that exceeds the inflation rate when the industry itself has less than \$6 billion of General Accepted Accounting Principles capital minus intangibles to back up \$1.26 trillion in assets.

One half of one percent is anybody's definition of overleveraging. Unless enormous real capital infusions are made by private sector investors, the only prudent

regulatory guidance to the industry should be to shrink. As a representative of individual taxpayers and of an institution with primary responsibility for federal spending decisions, my strongest admonition to regulators is to shut down the presses. Under today's circumstances where an industry is under water as extensively as this one, schemes that provide paper certificates to induce barely solvent thrifts to take over insolvent institutions stretch the constitutional and legal prerogatives of regulators.

What is needed is a new macro-economic approach to pruning back, rather than the current micro-management largess implied in certificated gift-giving. In an effort to establish a model of discipline, I would propose that the Bank Board establish a model of guidelines: 1) all thrifts with GAAP capital minus intangibles less than zero should be required to reduce their size on a yearly basis by a factor of three times their percentage negative net worth—i.e., an institution with a minus three percent capital-to-asset ratio must shrink its assets nine percent a year; 2) all institutions with a capital-to-asset ratio between zero and four percent should not be allowed to expand their asset base; 3) those between four and six percent should be allowed to increase at a rate of two times their percentage capital-to-asset ratio; 4) those above six percent should be allowed to grow as fast as they want, as long as their capital-to-asset ratio stays above six percent. Failure to comply with these growth restraints should lead to immediate removal of key officers and directors.

Congress, for our part, should review seriously the direct investment issue and the current federal insurance guidelines. In this regard, I have introduced two pieces of legislation which: a) restrict thrift direct investment powers to that authorized commercial banking; b) limit institutions with minus five percent or less net worth to direct home loan investments; c) reduce the insurance coverage for new deposits to 20,000 for thrifts with a negative 10 percent or less net worth.

To take away incentives to place hot money in hot thrifts, I have introduced legislation to limit insurance fund pay-outs to principal, not interest, on deposits in closed financial institutions.

If thrift industry extravagances continue to be countenanced, the country and the financial community have to be prepared for the greatest jolt in public confi-

"Congress should restrict thrift direct investment powers to that authorized commercial banking."

dence since the Depression. A run up of deficit or an easing of Federal Reserve monetary policy could all too easily spark a run down in thrift industry spreads and assets. A cascade of thrift failures could have an avalanche effect on the economy leading to recession, or quite possibly, depression.

The time could thus not be more propitious for Congress to come to grips with the pressure group syndrome that precipitated the overleveraging problem in the first place. Despite the implications of interference with the free market, there is no substitute for prudent laws and regulation of financial institutions when the economy as a whole can be so dramatically affected by the decisions of a few. ■

Can We Talk?

For future issues, the *Ripon Forum* is seeking to strengthen its role as a "forum" for Ripon Republicans nationwide. We need your letters with reaction to our best and worst features, your views on major issues, your activities to spread the progressive Republican message. The best letters will be printed, subject to editing for considerations of taste, length and appropriateness for the *Ripon Forum* audience.

MEDICAL LIABILITY CRISIS

Continued from page 13

system is to fairly compensate people who are injured as a result of another person's negligence, the courts are expanding the liability doctrine and awarding compensation for adverse outcomes without paying much attention to negligence. Clearly, fault-based liability must be reinstated.

Defendants should only pay claims for which they are at fault and only to the degree to which they are at fault. In other words, we must abolish joint and several liability so that a person five percent at fault would be liable for only five percent of the damages. Under the current law, plaintiffs can collect all or part of their damages from any defendant found liable, irrespective of that defendant's proportionate fault.

Furthermore, the federal government should develop its own set of tort reforms including measures which had positive impacts in the 1970s. Such actions included capping non-economic damages and eliminating the collateral source rule. The spirit of the law supports compensation for pain and suffering. Capping non-economic damage awards would serve to balance the actions of sympathetic and emotive juries.

Similarly, abolishing the collateral source rule would permit awards to be reduced by the payments received from other sources. The present rule prohibits a defendant from introducing evidence that the plaintiff has received payments from other sources.

A limit should also be placed on contingency fees paid to legal counsel. Legal fees should be based on a sliding scale where the percentage of the award going to the attorney decreases as the award increases. This would allow plaintiffs to receive most of the award and help reduce the number of frivolous cases. Currently, only 28 cents of every dollar paid by defendants or their insurers reaches injured patients. The remainder pays for legal fees and administrative costs.

Two other reforms which proved effective at the state level are the modification of the statute of limitations and the inclusion of period payment awards. Limitation periods must be set at levels which allow plaintiffs ample time to discover their injuries and yet protect defendants from claims that would be difficult to defend because too much time had elapsed and the evidence is no longer available.

Similarly, periodic payments benefit both plaintiffs and the insurers of defendants. In medical liability cases, periodic

"Legal fees should be based on a sliding scale where the percentage of the award going to the attorney decreases as the award increases."

payments would assure the plaintiff of adequate funds during his or her treatment, an assurance that lump sum awards cannot

give. Also insurance costs would be reduced since companies would not have to maintain large reserves.

States should be encouraged to adopt such federally-designed reforms and be given a specific time period in which to implement them or design their own reforms within federal guidelines. If the states do not, then the federal reforms would automatically go into effect.

States do not want the federal government to mandate tort reforms. They want the freedom to fashion their own reforms, but we cannot sustain the human costs of this crisis while states continue at their present pace. This politically feasible solution gives the states flexibility to pass their own reforms according to their severity of crisis, while assuring nationwide tort reform and access by all to quality medical care. ■

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MODERATES IN NEW ORLEANS

Over 200 conventioners and Ripon friends attended a party at the Royal Orleans Hotel in the French Quarter on Aug. 17, to celebrate the release of Ripon's latest book, "A Newer World." Moderates and progressives from Hawaii to Mississippi to Iowa to Massachusetts were on hand for the release of the Society's first book in 15 years. One of the Society's founders, Emil Frankel, was among the crowd who spent the evening swapping stories and welcoming newcomers. Shirley Temple Black and *Washington Post* reporter Haynes Johnson were also on hand.

Copies of "A Newer World" and the *Ripon Forum* were distributed at the media center in the Hyatt Hotel. Hungry journalists picked up the books and magazines as quickly as we put them out. The *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, the *Dallas Morning News*, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* and the *Wall Street Journal* all gave Ripon considerable ink.

The *Plain Dealer* said: "Moderate Republicans generally came away from last week's convention feeling good about the GOP's future and their role in it. To a degree, that reflected their (moderates') belief that for all his Reaganite talk of the past eight years, Bush was and is one of them."

The *Times-Picayune* also discussed the future of progressive Republicans and noted the comeback of the Ripon Society. "In the Washington offices of the Ripon Society, a bastion of liberal Republicanism, things were so tough when Ronald Reagan was elected in 1980 that the staff consisted of a part-time employee and an answering machine. But now, the Ripon Society has two full-time staffers, four telephone lines and it just held a dinner that raised \$160,000. And like the society, the liberal wing of the Republican Party is making a comeback."

The *Dallas Morning News* pointed out that the Republican Party has a long tradition of moderation. "The GOP celebrates a history of moderation, even liberalism. It was the Republican Party that brought about the abolition of slavery in the last century. And it was the Republican Party that produced the politicians who first pushed for antitrust and consumer protection laws.

"These moderate-to-liberals believe the GOP's future is as much theirs as it is the conservatives' who have lately held

sway. And they vow, moreover, to fight for what they believe."

Of course all the news for moderates was not good. The *Wall Street Journal* said, "There are two reasons for the fading prominence of Republican moderates. One is the way Ronald Reagan has personally dominated the party for the past eight years, singlehandedly setting the agenda. Second is the fact that, on issues of the economy and national security, there aren't any significant disagreements."

One disagreement that arises between moderates and conservatives, however, is whether or not George Bush is moderate. An article run in mid-October by the *Journal* said, "Mr. Bush lately has been moving subtly but with increasing speed toward the political middle." In the same article, Ripon Executive Director William McKenzie said, "When he's been specific and when he's talking about the future, he has moved toward the center. It's really very encouraging."

Another mid-October piece on moderates was written by the *Washington Post's* Sidney Blumenthal, who said: "For eight years, [moderates] endured the Reagan presidency. And though a deliverer has appeared, they are uneasy about the tone of his campaign."

Blumenthal went on to say, however, that "in spite of an eight-year conservative reign, almost all the GOP governors are viewed as moderates, as are many U.S. senators and House members." Likewise, he says "moderates cannot bring themselves to view Bush as a Reaganite. None of the moderates expects Bush to govern as he has campaigned. The doors and the telephones of the White House, they believe, would open wider to them."

BOOK DISTRIBUTION

Since its introduction at the convention, "A Newer World" has been mailed to over 250 people, including Ripon members, journalists and members of Congress. During October we have promoted the book at receptions in New York, Des Moines and Minneapolis and have made the book available in a popular Capitol Hill bookstore.

Funds have also been solicited to sponsor book distributions to college and university libraries, political science departments, municipal libraries and journalists. If you would like to sponsor a book to a library, college or newspaper, please

contact us for details.

Anyone who missed pre-publication offers can still order the book for \$16.95. Please see the order form on page 11.

STAFFORD RETIRING

Vermont Senator Robert T. Stafford is retiring from the Senate as his term ends with the close of this session. Stafford has been in the chamber since 1971 and has served on key committees including Environment and Public Works, Labor and Human Resources, and Veterans Affairs. A long-time member of the Ripon Society and its Congressional Advisory Board, Stafford authored the environmental chapter of the Society's recent book, "A Newer World". His presence in Washington will be missed by Ripon, as well as by his congressional colleagues.

Vermont Republican Representative Jim Jeffords, who is attempting to replace Stafford in the Senate, told the Forum: "It has been my tremendous privilege and pleasure to know Bob Stafford as a friend, a fellow Vermonter and a colleague with whom I have worked in the Congress. He has been a tireless defender of education, the environment, of the health and welfare of us all. I cannot think of a senator who embodies the Ripon Society ideals better. When he retires in January, he will be greatly missed but certainly not forgotten."

NEW MEMBERS RECEPTION

Ripon Chairman Jim Leach, along with members of our Congressional Advisory Board, will host a welcoming reception in honor of the 101st Congress. We will pay special tribute to newly elected members and recognize the contributions of current Ripon supporters during this event scheduled for early December.

STAFF CHANGE

Former Assistant Editor of the Forum Barry Edwards has given up his red pen to pursue a masters degree in English at the University of Minnesota. Replacing Edwards is Mariann Kurtz, a native of Indiana and recent graduate of the University of Louisville's School of Business. Kurtz has four years of reporting and editing experience which she gained as editor of her university's student newspaper and as a sports correspondent for the Louisville *Courier-Journal*. ■

WASHINGTON NOTES AND QUOTES

Baby boomers beware: It's been reported that 90 of 131 members of Congress roughly Dan Quayle's age did no service of any kind during the Vietnam War. During the flap over Supreme Court nominee Douglas Ginsberg, politicians as diverse as Senator Al Gore on the left and Representative Newt Gingrich on the right admitted they had once smoked pot. While the majority of voters aged 18-35 lean Republican, it's anyone's guess whether younger voters' more tolerant social attitudes will someday be accepted in national political debate, much less in the GOP.

* * *

Heavy sigh: *Time* reports that the '88 GOP platform was a struggle between the "ultraconservatives" and the "tiny progressive remnant."

* * *

Again: The *Washington Post* headline of a story profiling freshman Representative (and Ripon Congressional Advisory Board member) Constance Morella of Maryland: "Morella's Record Eludes Easy Labels." Hey, here's an easy label you missed: PROGRESSIVE REPUBLICAN!!

* * *

And yet again! David Gergen, editor of *U.S. News and World Report* and former Reagan White House communications chief, writes that "the old George Bush—the decent, mainstream conservative of the 1970s—is emerging after seven years in cold storage, and that seems to suggest a genuine eagerness to listen to new ideas." But heaven help us! Gergen says "some of the best ideas in areas such as the environment, education, child care and inner cities come from . . . conservative . . . imaginative Republicans like Jack Kemp and Newt Gingrich."

Gergen, generally one of the country's most perceptive observers, is correct about the right's new emphasis on "people" issues. But unfortunately he has joined the legions of journalists so intrigued by this conversion that they don't see progressive Republicans as a major source of ideas and national leadership on such issues as the environment and education. Further, Gergen fails to see that the conversion creates the best conditions *ever* for a consensus between Republican progressives and conservatives. C'mon, Mr. Gergen, give us a break!

* * *

Robertson-Green Feud: A fund-raising appeal by MODRNPAC, the progressive GOP PAC, signed by Representative Bill Green of New York, warns, "There was once a time when I—like many Republicans—could not imagine Ronald Reagan in the White House. And today, most Republicans assume the same about Pat Robertson. . . . Yet he's setting the stage for a comeback now." In sharp wording, the letter adds: "The Republican Party is not the Party of intolerance, censorship, religious favoritism and exclusion that Pat Robertson represents."

Robertson saw the letter and fired back: "Dear Bill: Some jackass has sent a letter out over your signature. . . . If Jim Baker, Lee Atwater, Bob Michel and [Bush finance chairman] Bob Mossbacher [sic] felt that you were . . . trying to split the Bush coalition seven weeks before this election . . . you would find yourself in 'deep doo-doo.'"

Green's retort to Robertson: "I overestimated you: I never thought that an experienced jawboner would need to resort to such a shopworn line. . . . I stand by my statements . . . some of your views endanger the party and are harmful to the country. . . ."

Robertson's political action commit-

tees, capable of raising millions, are aimed at voter registration among conservative Christians and Catholics, and party-building in at least 20 states where the minister gained a toe-hold this year. Asked by *Campaigns & Elections* if his goal was to exclude GOP moderates, Robertson replied: "We won't [win elections] as an 'evangelical group,' and it won't happen as a 'Rockefeller moderate wing,' either. It's going to take a broad coalition. . . ." Pressed on what common ground exists for such a coalition, he added: "We have common ground on the platform. I agreed with George Bush that we should stand together to preserve as much of the '84 platform as possible."

The prospect of more bloody battles through 1992, like those in Michigan or other states in 1987-88 is alarming, and moderates suffer from appearing to exclude the Robertson newcomers. But at the nuts-and-bolts level, another flood of intolerants into the party structure could wreck the long-awaited goal of a *genuine* GOP coalition.

One way *not* to respond, as Ripon member Masu Dyer wrote in the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, (Robertson forces have taken over the historically-moderate Hawaii GOP) would be to quit or talk of a third party movement, as some former officials are doing there. Much better is action directed at the roots of the problem. MODRNPAC's goal: up to 100,000 members this year, and \$565,000 for campaign donations to traditional Republicans. In addition to other party-building efforts, that's a modest, but important beginning.

* * *

Blue Ribbons: Despite this publication's frequent criticism of Congress, it's worth applauding a few of the 100th Congress's notable achievements: in 1988, meeting the law's *spending limits* (barely) and budget deadlines (barely, for the first time in 14 years); uniting, at last, education and

work requirements with *welfare*; strengthening *anti-bias* protections in housing; enacting sweeping, much-needed and less-protectionist-than-feared *trade reforms*; making a commitment to close unneeded *military bases*; getting the Environmental Protection Agency started on stricter *pesticides* regulation; making responsible investments in highway, airport and clean water *infrastructure*; and keeping the "Star Wars" missile defense concept down-to-earth.

* * *

Pies in the Face: Among the issues where Congress's sordid, selfish, partisan failings were upheld in the highest style: *clean air*, where Democratic leaders for the sixth year running were unable to overcome their environmentalist-labor split and schedule action on a bipartisan bill cutting acid rain and smog; *drugs*, where law enforcement, education and treatment were overrun by NRA handgun crusades, attacks on civil liberties and half-baked plans to deploy the military; *Speaker Wright's* unprecedented intervention (no matter what you think of the contras) in Central American diplomacy; and the inability to produce *campaign finance* reforms that address the real issues—near 100% incumbent protection and exploding campaign costs.

* * *

Environmental "One-Sidedness": Douglas Wheeler, a long-time environmental activist, in a piece for the *Washington Post*, cites six specific cases in recent years where his colleagues disbelieved or downplayed the work of pro-environment Republican leaders. Wheeler argues one result is "little real incentive for Republican support of environmental legislation."

While Ripon Republicans are most often the victims of this bias, they can take heart in the Sierra Club's own poll taken of GOP delegates in New Orleans. The poll discovered big majorities in favor of stronger enforcement and higher funding for environmental protection among young and old, conservative and liberal, and Eastern and Western Republicans on the full range of environmental issues.

* * *

Toward a Landslide: Following up on a *RF* editorial (see p. 9), there was a boomlet in Washington just prior to the GOP convention in favor of naming National Security Adviser Colin Powell as Bush's Veep. Among Powell's pushers were columnists George Will and William Raspberry, actor Ed Asner and Representative Jack Kemp.

Lieutenant General Powell is smart, moderate-conservative, and rose from humble origins to become the nation's top national security official. Racist and skeptic opponents of a Bush-Powell ticket would have been outweighed, said Raspberry, by the millions eager to rewrite America's history. And given blacks' dissatisfaction with the Democrats this year, the move could have led, in Jesse Jackson's words, to a voter realignment as profound as the shift under FDR.

* * *

Ripon at the Races: Here's a final wrap-up of congressional races important to Ripon Republicans:

For the House of Representatives, Stanford Law professor Tom Campbell is expected to win Ed Zschau's former Silicon Valley seat; Campbell beat conservative Ernie Konnyu in the June primary. Buechner of Missouri, Morella of Maryland, Saiki of Hawaii, and Shays of

Connecticut—each in their freshman term representing Democratic districts—are likely to solidify their base of support. Michigander Carl Pursell and John Miller in suburban Seattle face tough opposition. Moderate Peter Smith is running hard to replace Jim Jeffords of Vermont, who is strongly favored to replace retiring progressive Robert Stafford in the Senate. Syracuse City Council President Jim Walsh is favored to take the seat of retiring Representative Wortley.

Impressive challengers needing support include Ed Howard in Bucks County, Pennsylvania (who is competitive since incumbent Kostmayer was quoted telling women, gays and environmental groups to "just shut up" during the campaign, since Dukakis would give them "everything you want" if he wins), Ted O'Meara in Maine, Ann Haney in Wisconsin, Earl Mollander in Oregon and John Holmes in Rhode Island (where incumbent St. Germain, under investigation on ethics charges, was beaten decisively in one poll by "New Person").

For the Senate, most of the hotly contested Senate seats must be won by conservatives to enlarge the GOP contingent, such as Karnes in Nebraska, Mack in Florida, and Lott in Mississippi. As for moderates, Wisconsin State Senate GOP Leader Susan Engeleiter is being outspent by Milwaukee Bucks owner Herb Kohl; Cleveland Mayor George Voinovich has so far failed to overcome ads by incumbent Metzenbaum on Social Security; Washington's Slade Gorton is looking better in his comeback bid; and New Jersey's Pete Dawkins is flagging in pursuit of lackluster incumbent Frank Lautenberg. Durenberger of Minnesota and Wilson of California are locked in races too close to call; Weicker of Connecticut, Danforth of Missouri and Heinz of Pennsylvania are in usually strong shape. ■