

IN THESE TIMES

# Democrats plot their comeback

By John Judis

WASHINGTON

**M**OST POLITICIANS AGREE that the 1980 election did not create a new Republican majority on the model of the Democrats' New Deal majority. If a new GOP majority emerges, it will do so in 1982 or 1984, when voters have a chance to affirm a Republican approach to the economy and defense.

But the 1980 election did signal the end of the permanent Democratic majority, which has not always controlled the presidency, but which has held comfortable margins in Congress and the state houses for 34 out of the last 38 years. The Democrats still enjoy greater party identification than the Republicans—48 to 26 percent by a Gallup post-election count—but the rise of independent voters and divisions within such traditional Democratic constituencies as Catholics, blue-collar workers, white southerners, and Jews have eroded its majority coalition. Except in local races in a few northern cities and southern towns, no Democrat can feel secure.

The Democrats therefore face the challenge of rebuilding or transforming their coalition. A few Democrats—long identified with the Henry Jackson wing of the party—have opted out altogether. But others have advanced plans for revitalizing the Democratic National Committee ("Brockizing it," in the manner of former GOP chair William Brock), setting up Political Action Committees (PACs) and think-tanks, and expanding the party's base.

Efforts to rebuild a party's national organization usually follow a presidential defeat. But given the current structure of American politics, which places candidate selection in the hands of primary voters rather than party-appointed delegates, such an effort will probably not affect the party's fortunes. With the DNC assembling in Washington Feb. 26 to choose a new chairman, *New Republic* editor Martin Peretz expresses the sentiments of many Democrats when he says, "I can't raise a flicker of interest in who becomes the national chairman."

But the formation of independent PACs, the expected decision of the AFL-CIO to enter primary battles, and the growing interest in electoral politics among citizens groups could eventually transform the party. They could do so by creating movements, ideas and candi-

and corporate bigwigs once played in the Democratic Party.

There are numerous Democratic, liberal, or progressive PACs now on the drawing board. Defeated New York City congressional candidate Mark Green, former South Dakota Senator George McGovern, television producer Norman Lear, and moderates Janet Howard and Pamela Harriman are all starting PACs. But the most interesting proposals are coming from Roger Craver of Craver, Mathews and Smith and Vic Kamber of Kamber Associates.

Craver, Mathews and Smith has raised money through direct mail for Common Cause, the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the National Abortion Rights Action League. Last year they raised money for the independent John Anderson campaign. Since the election, Roger Craver, along with former Anderson staffers Ed Coyle and Francis Sheehan, has been setting up a PAC that would be independent of the official Democratic Party, but that would raise money to "protect Democratic incumbents and surface new leadership."

Craver rejected the idea of working directly with the DNC. "When we looked around after the election," he said, "it was clear the Democratic Party was going to take a long time to get its act to-

gether. Anderson raised \$14 million in seven months. You can do it if you have discipline and decision-making on your side.

"But the party isn't going to be able to do that. In the party, you can't deal with issues as sharply as you need for direct mail."

Craver's goal is to recruit 100,000 donors by mail who would give the PAC \$2-3 million to pour into the 1982 elections. The basic mailing list will come from the Anderson campaign, and the issues will be vintage Anderson—"right of abortion, women's rights, environmental protection, and [reduced] military spending."

Craver denies that this mailing constituency (which he terms "the Anderson constituency") will tilt the PAC away from funding, say, a black central-city Democrat whose main issues are economic. According to Craver and other direct mail specialists, the PAC's choice of a revenue base simply reflects what is possible through the mails. "Blacks and the working guy don't give money through the mail," Craver says. "And while the economy is a vital issue, it is hard to raise money on that alone."

But Craver's sympathies do lie closer to Anderson-type "new Democrats" like Colorado Senator Gary Hart, Massachusetts Senator Paul Tsongas, Repre-

sentative Morris Udall (Craver's partner Coyle was Udall's chief aide) and former Arkansas Governor William Clinton. These Democrats project a "clean" image unsullied by urban interest groups; they focus on "middle-class" rather than "working-class" issues; and they tend to see economic solutions, as Anderson did, in the equitable application of punitive free-market remedies like the 50 cents gasoline tax rather than in the redistribution of wealth and power.

## Kennedy admirer.

Vic Kamber is a former liberal Republican who worked seven years for the Buildings Trades Department of the AFL-CIO before setting out on his own in December 1979 as an independent political consultant and direct mail expert. Kamber did some direct mail for the Kennedy campaign. Now he is organizing PROPAC—the Progressive Political Action Committee.

Kamber remains an unabashed admirer of Senator Edward Kennedy and rejects the charge that Kennedy's defeat in the presidential primaries was attributable to his "liberalism" or "New Deal politics." "If it wasn't for Iran, Ted Kennedy would have been the nominee," Kamber said. Asked to define the term "progressive" in the title of his PAC, Kamber replied, "Not John Stennis. Not



**Kennedy aide  
Carl Wagner says  
the party needs  
at least one  
"compelling idea."**

Howard Cannon. People like Ted Kennedy; people with ideas."

Kamber would like to use his PAC to move the Democratic Party in a "progressive direction." "The party has to stand for something if it is going to be effective," he said. "It can't be all things to all people. It can't represent both [Mississippi Rep.] Jamie Whitten and Father Drinan."

Kamber's and Craver's PACs, along with the McGovern, Green, and Lear PACs, could play the same role in revitalizing the Democrats that NCPAC and other New Right PACs played in the Re-

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**Roger Craver's  
direct mail efforts  
will be aimed at  
the "Anderson  
constituency."**

dates outside the official party structure.

## The Anderson constituency.

With the new campaign finance laws, PACs have become the principal means of raising campaign funds. The Democrats have always had their labor PACs and the National Committee for an Effective Congress (NCEC), but the Republicans and the "New Right," through the use of direct mail solicitation, have been able to outpace and outspend the Democrats.

By using their funds to train campaign workers, finance independent expenditures, and recruit candidates, the GOP and the New Right PACs have also become important actors in the electoral arena. On both a national and local scale, they play the role that machine bosses



# IN SHORT

## But can he teletype?

At least four of America's 52 former hostages in Iran were on assignment for the CIA, according to an article in *City on a Hill*, the student newspaper of the University of California at Santa Cruz. The central piece of evidence obtained by the paper was "teletype #8933," a secret message sent on Aug. 9, 1979, from Tehran to Washington over the State Department's covert "Roger Channel" (used only for CIA-related correspondence). The article's author—listed as "George White," a pseudonym—also drew on public documents and an unnamed "deep source" in Washington to refute official U.S. claims that all American Embassy employees in Tehran were "innocent diplomats."

In the secret 100-word teletype, U.S. embassy charge d'affaires Bruce Laingen asked then-Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to provide "cover" posts in the Foreign Service Reserve (FSR) for two CIA officers, Malcolm Kalp and William Daugherty. "It is of the highest importance that cover be the best we can come up with," Laingen wrote. (John Marks, an associate of the Center for National Security Studies, has written that, "although there are rumors of exceptions, the CIA personnel abroad are always given the cover rank of Foreign Service Reserve or [Foreign Service] Staff.")

While it mentioned only Kalp and Daugherty by name, Laingen's message referred to four FSR titles in all. According to *City on a Hill*, the other two FSR officers "may have been Clair Barnes and Phillip Ward. And there may have been other CIA officers operating under the Foreign Service Staff designation"—particularly one Thomas Ahern, who served in the Economic and Commercial Section of the embassy. Barnes and Ward came to Tehran as veterans of respective stints as "telecommunications" workers in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and the Philippines. Ahern had been an Army "analyst" and a "political officer" in the Dominican Republic in 1968—both of those titles being listed by John Marks as possible indications of a CIA link.

## Build a car, lose a check

According to our sources, Chrysler workers were none too happy with the wage-cut and wage-freeze package forced on the United Auto Workers by the corporation and the Chrysler loan guarantee board (*In These Times*, Jan. 21). Only 58.22 percent voted for the revised contract—generally a low rate of approval in contract votes, especially so when workers were told by union and company alike that their jobs were on the line. The UAW has since been swamped by requests from other employers seeking contract reopenings. To deal with those please, the union has circulated a memo suggesting that its negotiators emphasize the concessions in control that Chrysler made in return for the workers' concessions in wages and benefits.

## Solar bank withdrawal

According to preliminary proposals from Reagan's Office of Management and the Budget, solar and conservation projects are about to take a terrible beating. The new Solar and Conservation Bank will be eliminated before it even starts, and the remaining federally-funded solar programs will be cut 23 percent this year and 62 percent in fiscal year 1982. In the same periods, 46 percent and then 65 percent of the conservation funding will be axed. Other energy development projects will be trimmed, though not as drastically, while it seems that the nuclear budget will not be tampered with.

Sam Enfield, budget policy analyst for the Solar Lobby, is most upset about losing the Solar Bank, for which Carter had asked a mere \$246 million to be authorized over the next two years. The bank "would help low-income people who can't afford the up-front costs of solar and conservation and so can't take advantage of the tax credits," Enfield told David Moberg. "And it would open aid to passive solar equipment, which the credits don't cover."

## Sign on the glowing line

Fifty-five prominent Americans have begun to circulate an International Peace Petition, which calls upon presidents Reagan and Brezhnev "jointly to terminate immediately all research, development, testing, manufacturing and deployment of nuclear bombs and missiles." The document's sponsors include labor and religious leaders, as well as "representatives of every major peace group in the country." Coordinating the petition are Sidney Lens and Stewart Meacham, the former co-chairs of the New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam. Write for copies to the International Peace Petition, 1127 W. Division, 5th Floor, Chicago, IL 60625.

—Josh Kornbluth



Clyde Loo (left) and Rodney Johnson, two of the "NASSCO Three"...

## Union activists go on trial for sabotage conspiracy

In a trial just now getting underway in San Diego, Calif., three fired employees of NASSCO—owner of the largest shipyard on the West Coast and a major Navy supplier—are charged by federal indictment with conspiracy to bomb the shipyard and failure to register destructive devices. The young defendants, who have all been active in a drive by the Ironworkers union to organize NASSCO, claim that they are victims of a frame-up aimed at curbing the union's strength.

One defendant, Clyde Loo, told *In These Times* how he first ran across Ramon Barton, a police and FBI informant posing as a union sympathizer, who became a central figure in the case:

"He recently joined our ranks at the shipyard as a sympathizer [after



...and the third, David Boyd.

the defendants, along with 14 other union activists, had been fired). All we knew about him was that he was born in South Africa in 1952 and travelled a lot before coming to this country.... He talked like an extremist—he began saying we should put a bomb in the transformer at the facility. We considered him foolish and tried to persuade him terrorism is not the way to win a political battle...

"On Sept. 16—while I was at home—[co-defendants] Rodney [Johnson] and David [Boyd] met Ramon with the intent of stopping once and for all his crazy ideas. They thought they had persuaded him. Ramon told them he had a bomb in his car and that he was willing to drive out to the desert and get rid of it.

"They were still in town, on 28th Street, when their car was stopped by police. The police got Ramon out, found the device and arrested David and Rodney. Everything had

been set up—even TV cameras were there. At that point, Ramon's role became clear. The police came to my house and arrested me, too."

Soon after the arrests were made (just before the union election at the shipyard), Ramon Barton, now under the government's witness protection plan, declared in a TV interview that his goal in informing had been to stop the "communist threat." (Two of the defendants, Loo and Johnson, are members of the Communist Workers Party.) Barton said he was only recently converted to the role of informant, but some of his co-workers believe he had been feeding information about the union drive to NASSCO for quite a while.

The main evidence Barton gave to the police is a collection of tapes he secretly recorded in his van while talking politics with Loo, Boyd and Johnson. Loo says that the police erased a tape in which the defendants tell Barton to abandon his plans for sabotage.

Loo says that a majority of the workers at NASSCO—who voted in favor of the Ironworkers in the recent union elections—support the "NASSCO three." Attorney Leonard Weinglass, a member of the NASSCO Three's defense team, traces the issue back to the on-the-job deaths of two NASSCO workers in a section of the shipyard where Loo and Boyd had previously led a work stoppage because of unsafe conditions. "Their deaths," says Weinglass, "escalated the demand by the workforce that [the 17 fired union activists] be rehired and that strong safety measures be insured. It was against this backdrop that the prosecution against three of the 17 was uncorked."

—Margherita Pagni

## "White lists" for sale at ETS

The ubiquitous Educational Testing Service, whose tests play such an enormous role in determining whether and where we go to college or get a scholarship (and continues to control our access to graduate school, law school or med school) may also be helping some colleges filter out applicants who are too poor or who are simply not white.

The ETS, headquartered in a huge corporate complex in Princeton, N.J., does this through a little-known sideline enterprise called the Student Search Service (SSS). Most high school students who take their college boards probably don't pay much attention to the notice about the service when they are nervously filling out the first page of their tests. They aren't required to fill in the blanks for race and family income, but most innocently answer everything anyway.

ETS says that the SSS aids colleges and scholarship agencies that may want to select students for mailings, and claims that it sends out information only to the agencies selected by each student. What ETS and the SSS *don't* say is that, for a fee of 11 cents a name, they sell lists of students broken down, among other things, by race, by income bracket, and by test score.

This means that in addition to those schools that may legitimately want to target scholarship opportunity mailings to poorer students, in hopes of attracting them to apply, or to students who did poorly on their SATs but who may have other redeeming features, there is the equally likely possibility that schools and scholarship agencies using SSS figures may decide to pass over those students when they send out promotional material.

There is also the more insidious possibility that a school to which you apply on your own initiative may have obtained a list of "undesirable" students (those with low scores, low income or who are non-Caucasian, say) against which your application may be checked.

According to SSS head Daryl Stevens, during the 1979-80 testing season 11 colleges (which he declined to name) asked the service to supply a "white list"—a list of white students only. Six of those schools, he said, also asked for a "black list" of only black students—indicating, he claimed, that they were simply planning to send out separate sets of specialized promotional mailings. (Those schools might be asking for the additional black list just to cover themselves in case of a lawsuit.) The other five colleges asked only for a list of whites.

—David Lindorff



Draft registration protesters block the entrance to a Cambridge, Mass., post office with Christmas trees. Forty-four Boston area resisters were arrested during last month's sign-ups for men born in 1962.