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Duarte's Failed Reforms

Ken Bernstein

Washington is not typically a place of happy agreement. So when the House of Representatives debated sending aid to the Nicaraguan *contras* this year, the rancor was hardly surprising. White House Communications Director Patrick Buchanan accused Democrats of supporting communists and Democrats accused Republicans of abetting *Somocistas*. Back in 1981, Washington saw similar commotion—the Reagan administration condemned a revolution manipulated by the Soviet Union and Cuba, and liberals worried about "another Vietnam." But the subject of this earlier furor was not Nicaragua—it was El Salvador.

Since then, though America's attention has shifted to Nicaragua, the Salvadoran civil war continues. And, despite the lack of attention now paid to it, it has been ten times as bloody as the *contra* war, it has directly involved American advisors, and its guerillas are even more radical and given to terrorist acts than the Sandinistas.

Yet Jose Napoleon Duarte, elected in 1984 as civilian president of El Salvador, enjoys an era of good feelings in America. Not only has President Reagan praised Duarte for "the heartwarming progress he has made," but former Democratic opponents of administration policy have now joined in the praise for Duarte. All now accept the conventional wisdom: by pouring $1.8 billion into El Salvador since 1980, the US has suppressed a Marxist-Leninist revolution and created a democracy. To foster the belief that El Salvador is a closed case, administration officials rarely speak of the civil war against the Marxist 'Farabundo Marti National Liberation Army' (FMLN). The American media have followed their lead—while sensational El Salvador stories occassionally appear, the six-year-old civil war draws the same reaction as the six-year-old Iran-Iraq stalemate: a big yawn.

But don't consider the book on El Salvador closed just yet. Yes, Duarte is a committed life-long democrat, and yes, the civil war is now going well for the government. But after two-and-a-half years of the Duarte presidency, El Salvador does not fit even the most inclusive definitions of democracy. El Salvador has indeed held civilian elections, but no party to the left of center participated. Civilian rule exists in name only, for the military still maintains a virtual veto power over the Duarte government. Political violence has diminished but shows no signs of disappearing. The state of siege in effect since 1980 still limits judicial rights. Finally, El Salvador lacks autonomy—the US has poured so much aid into El Salvador that it serves as a virtual 'super-government,' relegating the country's formal authorities to a largely administrative role.

Duarte, America's democratic hero, has not only failed to achieve democracy, he has also pinned himself into a political corner. Bound by the twin shackles of Washington's strategic goals and the Salvadoran military's overwhelming power within the country, he has become a 'prisoner of war,' forced to shelve promised social reforms for the sake of the civil war. Duarte's increasingly right-wing stances, unpopular economic policies, and generally ineffective leadership have begun to isolate him within El Salvador. Groups which once formed the core of Duarte's coalition have now turned against him, and there are even signs that US support is on the decline.

El Salvador's instability is nothing new. Between 1841 and 1866, for example, there were 42 successful coups, or one every eight months. Instead of a pluralistic, democratic heritage, El Salvador has a history of leaders like President Maximilliano Hernandez Martinez, known as *el brujo*, or the witch doctor. An admirer of Hitler, Hernandez Martinez once proclaimed, "It is good that children go barefoot. That

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way they can better receive the vibrations of the earth. Plants and animals don't use shoes." In 1932, faced with El Salvador's first socialist movement, Hernandez Martinez initiated *La Matanza* (The Massacre), murdering about 30,000 Indians and peasants out of a population of only 600,000. During the 1960's and 1970's, the military combined with the landed oligarchs to rule through the National Conciliation Party (PCN). Even then, they held their power only by repeatedly resorting to electoral fraud.

But the elected Duarte administration was going to be different. Duarte's career and the beliefs of his political party created expectations of reformist democracy. Duarte himself has helped to foster such expectations by messianically portraying himself as El Salvador's last hope. And with El Salvador's decidedly undemocratic heritage, Duarte does stand out as a repository of democratic values. A Boy Scout and member of the national basketball team, he was educated at Notre Dame, where he befriended a young religion professor, Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, now the university's president. Duarte remained an apolitical professional engineer until 1960 when, spurred by the promise of free elections, he joined a group of upper- and middle-class Salvadorans to form the Christian Democratic Party (PDC).

Christian Democratic parties spread throughout Latin America in the 1960's as an outgrowth of the Catholic Church's social doctrine, opposing both Marxist socialism and classical liberalism and condemning both Soviet and American colonialism. Their programs were vintage reformist capitalism: redistribution of land, social justice, guarantees of basic needs, and free elections. In 1964, Duarte became the PDC's first major officeholder, winning the mayoralty of San Salvador. From all accounts, Duarte was a spectacular activist mayor, transforming PDC social thought into action by reforming municipal taxation, building a new system of public markets, and obtaining great improvements in city services. Such charismatic performance gained the PDC a solid core of voter support in San Salvador, enough to re-elect Duarte easily in 1966 and 1968.

In 1972, Duarte ran for president against the ruling PCN, only to be denied a victory by blatant electoral fraud. Reformist military officers, outraged by the rigged election, supported Duarte with an attempted coup. The government suppressed the overthrow by bombing its own capital and arresting and clubbing Duarte, only releasing him three days later due to an international campaign coordinated by Rev. Hesburgh. This election made Duarte a democratic martyr, but Duarte chose the further martyrdom of self-imposed political exile in Venezuela. In 1980, when the generals needed a junta president to present an appealing face to the world, they chose Duarte, the very man they had denied power in 1972. Duarte thus fulfilled his long-time dream of becoming president, much to the displeasure of many PDC members who opposed his compliance with the military.

When Duarte was elected in his own right in 1984, Salvadorans hoped that Duarte the reformer, PDC founder, charismatic mayor, and democratic martyr would reappear to replace Duarte, the largely helpless junta president who presided over 10,000 political deaths each year between 1980 and 1982. But the twin binds of US intervention and the Salvadoran military's power have, at least for now, left their hopes unfilfilled.

First, Duarte owes his political life to the United States. Only the need for congressional approval of American aid forced the military to appoint a civilian junta president in 1980 and has forced it to accept elections. While Reagan, uneasy with the PDC's plans for land reform, was initially lukewarm to Duarte, he soon realized Duarte's importance for legitimizing US El Salvador policy. A State Department memo of 1981, published by the *New York Times*, wrote that the US used Duarte "primarily as a fig leaf to cover the reality of a rightist controlled military regime."

Duarte also owes a debt to the United States for demanding and bankrolling the 1982 and 1984 elections. When a right-wing coalition led by the ARENA party's notorious Roberto D'Aubisson gained a majority of legislative seats in the 1982 elections, the US made clear to the Salvadoran high command that such a regime would assure the end of congressional support for US military aid. Faced with the cutoff of precious US aid, the military dictated the appointment as president of Alvaro Magana, a previously unknown banker from outside the conservative coalition. Magana's figurehead presidency paved the road for Duarte's election in 1984, a road paved more smoothly with $2 million in covert US aid to the PDC.

Duarte's second main constraint is the military, the traditional ruler of El Salvador. As Defense Minister Col. Eugenio Vides Casanova reportedly once declared, "We have been running this country for fifty years and we are prepared to keep on running it." Since the Salvadoran military and the Reagan administration share the same primary goal—victory over the rebels—the military also shares the same utilitarian view of Duarte. To Vides Casanova, Duarte is a public relations tool. "We know that improving our image is worth millions of dollars of aid for the country." He was right—US military aid to El Salvador in 1984, the first year of Duarte's term, was $196.5 million, equal to the aid in the previous three years combined.

When Duarte took over, he said he was accepting the

war as his government's central priority with the hope that the war's success and his popularity in the US would give him room to enact his own reformist program. He did get off to a promising start, taking bold steps to gain civilian control over the military. His administration transferred two of the military's most prominent hard-liners to foreign posts, dismantled the Treasury Police's notorious S-2 intelligence unit (the main center for death squad activities), issued new directives on aerial bombing of civilians, and appointed commissions to investigate well-publicized human-rights abuses. The most publicized human rights incident, the 1980 murder of four American nuns, finally ended with the 1984 conviction of five National Guardsmen. But though the military tolerated these changes on paper, its complete control over the war prevents Duarte from enforcing them. The S-2 officers merely scattered to other organizations, aerial bombing continues, and the commissions' strong evidence about human rights abuses have not resulted in many prosecutions because the military maintains that past abuses should be investigated internally.

Although many observers had hoped that Duarte, with a largely civilian cabinet, could boldly ignore the military, his acceptance of the war as his government's primary imperative means continued acceptance of the military's veto power. The signs of military independence are all too apparent. Field commanders violated Duarte's call for a Christmas truce in 1985. Reporters covering October's San Salvador earthquake noted that soldiers initally stood leaning on their rifles instead of helping the victims, as Duarte had requested. When Secretary of State George Shultz offered $50 million in initial disaster relief, Duarte, worried the money would be stolen, ordered it distributed through private channels rather than through his own government.

Duarte's record on peace negotiations followed the same pattern—bold moves at the beginning of the term, followed by military veto and acquiescence by Duarte. Though he had previously ruled out negotiations until the guerillas laid down their arms, Duarte surprised the world in October 1984 by agreeing to meet personally with the rebels in the town of La Palma. His sudden turnaround showed shrewd political sense, using his honeymoon period in El Salvador and with the US as leverage with the military. Duarte's move blunted Nicaragua's recent acceptance of a draft Contadora treaty, halted erosion of his social base, unified the PDC before March, 1985 elections, and helped demonstrate independence from the Reagan administration, which was ambivalent about negotiations. But if the military temporarily tolerated Duarte's bold manuevering, it would not acquiesce to concrete concessions to the guerillas. Before the second round of talks the next month in Ayagualo, the high command made clear to Duarte that it would not accept any of the rebels' main proposals. Not surprisingly, the talks got nowhere, and Duarte reverted to his uncompromising stance. On September 19, 1986, a scheduled third meeting with the rebels in the hill town of Sesori was called off when Duarte refused to withdraw government troops from the area and agree to a cease-fire. To gain public relations points, Duarte helicoptered to Sesori anyway and delivered a speech to 1,500 public employees trucked in to applaud.

Given the guerillas' ideology, Duarte's unwillingness to compromise with the left is understandable. The Farabundo Marti National Liberation Army, named after the Socialist leader whose execution began *La Matanza* in 1932, first took to the hills in October,1980. The FMLN's leaders are much more explicit about their Marxist ideology—more so than the Sandinistas were before taking power. The guerilla's political arm , the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR), contains both social democrats and Marxists. Its leader, the social democrat Guillermo Ungo, who actually ran as Duarte's vice-presidential candidate in 1972, has, like Duarte, served as a charismatic front man for more extremist wielders of power.

Though American self-congratulation for Duarte's 'success' is generally misguided, most military analysts agree that without American aid, the FMLN would have won the civil war by 1984. But as a result of U.S. arms, the war has now become a stalemate. The U.S has provided El Salvador with a huge surveillance aircraft fleet, large transport helicopters to bring troops to remote areas, and training in small unit tactics. The US can also take credit for professionalizing the Salvadoran military, breaking it of its habit of "9 to 5" warfare.

But success has not come without human rights abuses. To remove civilian bases of support, the government has forcibly relocated civilians from the conflict zones and used its new air power to bomb villages. Despite clear evidence of abuses by security forces such as the National Guard, the US has been unwilling to push for their curtailment. The Reagan administration believes that too much pressure on the armed forces could unravel the fabric of the army and imperil the war against the guerillas. Duarte can boast some human rights progress since 1981, when the earlier Duarte regime presided over 13,000 political deaths. But political violence remains a part of everyday life, and the right-wing death squad activity, while reduced, has not disappeared. As the monitoring group Americas' Watch recently reported, "There are few places where some 1,900 political killings and disappearances in a year—approximately 90 percent of them at the hands of armed forces ostensibly controlled by a civilian democratic government—would be considered routine."

The Salvadoran army's success forced the FMLN to change tactics in 1985. The guerillas' new hit-and-run strategy involved land mines, economic sabotage, and political actions such as kidnapping PDC mayors and destroying town offices. But these terroristic tactics, combined with the increasingly radical Marxism of the FMLN's leaders, have alienated many Salvadorans, even drawing criticism from the FDR. Duarte's agreement to conduct the third round of talks could have been an attempt to exploit the slight rift between the FDR and FMLN. Although the alliance should remain intact, its lack of unity may afford Duarte a future opportunity for compromise with the more moderate FDR.

Amazingly, although Duarte agreed to scrap the peace talks and subordinate his entire political program to the civil war, his support among the generals has eroded. This occurred largely as the result of one incident—the September,1985 kidnapping of 35-year-old Ines Duarte, Duarte's daughter and perennial campaign aide. To secure her release, Duarte broke with precedent by negotiating directly with the kidnappers, who had links to the FMLN. He then undermined public confidence by sending the remainder of his family to Washington. The complicated final agreement freeing 22 political prisoners and providing passage to Cuba for 96 captured guerillas especially angered the armed forces. Duarte, torn between family and country, had tilted toward his family. The picture of a haggard Duarte with his arm around his daughter as she recalled tearfully embracing her guerilla captors farewell was, for the commanders, the final straw. The affair may have embittered Duarte toward the left, making compromise in the peace process less likely. The London-based Institute for Strategic Studies recently reported that the military exacted a high price for agreeing to the release—Duarte had to give up his constitutional powers as commander-in-chief. Even so, Duarte had to urge the US to pressure the military to allow the release, using his limited leverage with the Reagan administration on a personal affair. US Ambassador Edwin Corr even forstalled a brewing coup attempt.

Duarte's debt to the US from the Ines Duarte affair has forced him to toe the Reagan administration's line on Central America. Just before a key March House vote on Nicaraguan *contra* aid , Duarte helped Reagan by announcing that he would negotiate with the FMLN only if Daniel Ortega opened talks with the *contras*. The recent Eugene Hasenfus affair revealed that Duarte has allowed private US supply planes for the *contras* to use El Salvador's Ilopango Air Force Base.

Just as Duarte's efforts to placate the generals have not reduced their enmity, Duarte's unflagging loyalty to the US has not brought enthusiasm from the Reagan administration. Despite Reagan's glowing praises for Duarte, there are new signs that the administration's commitment to Duarte is only tentative. Never thrilled with the PDC's reformist platform, the Reagan administration quietly supported ARENA and the PCN over Duarte's PDC in the March, 1985 legislative elections. The administration hoped that a conservative legislature would check Duarte's reformist inclinations, but the PDC won a resounding victory anyway, resulting in the ouster of Roberto D'Aubisson as ARENA party leader. The US has since established ties with the new, more moderate, ARENA head, coffee grower Alfredo Cristiani. Cristiani is the first fruit of a long-term administration project to turn Salvadoran growers, cattlemen, and businessmen into a "civilized right," which will shun violence and turn to politics. In addition, Reagan's Agency for International Development (AID) has given assistance to projects of the new rightist party founded by Hugo Barrera, D'Aubisson's 1984 running mate. The State Department recently paraded Barrera around Washington, trying to make him a respectable rightist candidate for the 1989 elections. If US willingness to entertain rightist alternatives indicates only tenuous support for Duarte, Duarte could lose Washington as a source of leverage with the military and forfeit the US embassy's safeguarding role against coup attempts.

Duarte keeps trying, nonetheless—his economic programs would make the Reagan administration proud. Though Duarte campaigned in 1984 on an economic program based on an expanded public sector, his long-awaited economic policy, announced in January, was an orthodox austerity program. It included a 50% devaluation of the colon, drastic cuts in public expenditures, a price freeze, and a rise in interest rates. Duarte hopes to stimulate exports and thus spur the country's growers back into production, and he has explained that "like President Reagan" he has a great concern about budget deficits. In addition, he hopes that restraint will bring inflation (officially at 30%, but probably higher) under control. But contracting the economy and eliminating social programs does not solve the country's biggest problem—the shocking 30% unemployment rate and the additional 40% who are underemployed. Even at the risk of igniting hyperinflation, Duarte must attempt expansionary policies to increase employment.

The budget deficit problem, of course, has grown out of the civil war. Since 30% of the budget directly finances the war, no economic policy could promote strong economic development and equal distribution. Duarte seemed to acknowledge this in October by imposing a new, $24 million 'war tax.' Though the tax was designed to soak the rich, it will only constrict the economy further. Duarte

and the PDC once supported agrarian reform, and in 1980 helped enact a sweeping three-phase plan, considered one of the most ambitious ever in Latin America. But land reform stalled after the first phase, with only fifteen percent of Salvadoran peasants receiving any benefits, and Duarte shows no interest in reviving it.

Even before the announcement of the austerity program, El Salvador's limited democratic opening had given rise to labor demands which Duarte countered with repressive meausres. In April, 1985, major strikes began among public sector workers, and in June, 1985, national guardsmen raided five hospitals and twenty health clinics to end a four-week occupation by striking social security health workers, killing five people. Last November, Duarte announced he would not permit any public sector strikes, and asserted the right to force offenders into the Salvadoran armed forces.

The repression of wages and cutback in social programs have sealed Duarte's fate with labor. In February, four of the five labor unions that formerly made up a pro-Duarte, centrist labor alliance broke with Duarte and allied themselves with militant leftist unions, forming a new anti-government front, the National Unity of Salvadoran Workers (UNTS). The UNTS, which demands salary hikes, an increase in social programs, and a dialogue with the FDR/FMLN, now claims 500,000 members and is an increasingly potent force on Duarte's left. Because the FMLN has lost popular appeal, the UNTS could provide a more moderate outlet for left opposition which would help stabilize democracy. As labor becomes more assertive, Duarte could crack down further, driving the UNTS into the arms of the FDR/FMLN and sending Duarte even deeper into the arms of the military. Or, he could revise his economic policies and attempt to reach accomodation with the UNTS, which could grow into a political party.

An even more surprising development is that leaders of the Catholic Church, the wellspring of PDC ideology, have begun to join the opposition to a Christian Democratic government. Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas, El Salvador's religious leader, has begun harshly denouncing Duarte in his nationally broadcast Sunday homilies. Though El Salvador's labor movement and Catholic Church lack the power to overthrow a government, their opposition has serious consequences—if these groups, traditionally the backbone of democracy, are ambivalent toward the "democratic" regime, it is unlikely that other groups will rise to defend democracy during a national crisis.

They have every reason to be disappointed. Duarte's performance as president, while superior to previous Salvadoran presidents, if only because he occassionally considers the public interest, is nonetheless lamentable when compared to his promises and abilities. Agrarian reform is dead, the human rights situation is still abysmal, the peace process is stalled, and his economic policies seem inappropriate. But this does not mean that the US policy of massive aid to El Salvador is misguided. The alternatives to Duarte are even worse—the right, however "civilized" it is becoming, has proven its lack of commitment to democracy, and the FMLN would institute radical reforms. Alternatives which American liberals might favor—power sharing with the FDR or greater incorporation of the UNES—would face a prompt veto by both the military and the Reagan administration. Despite his record as president, Duarte is still a caring, democratic man who is El Salvador's most charismatic political leader, particularly when compared to the drab, faceless authoritarian figures now to his right.

Despite all of Duarte's difficulties, most observers of El Salvador do not view the country as a stick of dynamite waiting for a match. Duarte will probably serve out his term, which expires in 1989, if only because none of the most powerful players desire a change. Duarte's Salvadoran military benefactors, pleased with the results of the civil war, the aid which continues to pour from the US Congress, and Duarte's ready compliance, have no reason to alter the status quo. The Reagan administration, satisfied for the same reasons, appears content to stick with Duarte until the next presidential election, when a more conservative candidate will be primed to win. Duarte himself seems determined above all to serve out a full term as civilian president, as if that alone would prove that democracy is possible. If Duarte desired change, his vanishing social base would undermine his bargaining power with the generals, and the decreasing US enthusiasm would inhibit his ability to turn to Washington. Though the status quo may satisfy many, it holds little hope of a peaceful, prosperous El Salvador. Without a change in direction, Duarte will at best limp through the remainder of his term, continue his modest progress on human rights, and likely turn over power to one of the "civilized right" leaders in the next election. At worst, a deteriorating war situation, labor unrest, or a faltering economy could force the military to crack down and reverse all the slight gains accrued during the Duarte administration.

The situation in El Salvador is not hopeless—the US can push it away from its current stasis. Because Duarte can no longer gain sufficent room by playing his twin constraints off each other, US policy must shift to release one of his shackles. Congress' hands-off approach has given the Reagan administration sole hegemony over US policy toward El Salvador, and this monolithic line parallels the Salvadoran military's by demanding only military success as the price of continued aid. Duarte can only re-

gain the critical ability to use the US as leverage if US policy differs from the military's, and the Salvadoran military has demonstrated that it will only allow democratic progress and reforms if aid is imperiled. For these reasons, Congress must immediately replace the largely unconditional aid to El Salvador with aid contingent on the resumption of land reform, human rights improvement, the completion of Duarte's term as president, and progress in the peace talks. Duarte has desired such a policy in the past, but explicitly asking for this leverage today would imperil his support by the military.

Without such a shift in US policy, Duarte must still try to enact pieces of the unfulfilled Christian Democratic program, even at the risk of failure. Though Duarte gained a reputation as a man of action in the 1960s, his career shows little inclination toward taking risks. Guillermo Ungo who knows Duarte both as friend and foe, calls Duarte a "political engineer" whose first question is always "Can it work?" Such an outlook toward politics also explains Duarte's apparent willingness to compromise the bold ideals of the Christian Democratic movement for more modest goals. Since Duarte has proven he will only take action when absolutely safe, a US policy of conditional aid would assure him that he has the political room to manueuver, and could allow him, for once, to muster the courage necessary to do more than simply survive as president. ❑

Long Live The Establishment: A Book Review

Fareed R. Zakaria

The Wise Men: Six Friends and the World They Made, by Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas (Simon and Schuster, New York, 1986): 853 pages, $22.50.

On the morning of March 26, 1968, a group of men gathered in the cabinet room of the White House. Lyndon Johnson had summoned them there to ask what should be done about the intractable war in Vietnam. Their advice was unequivocal and the President wrote it down: "Can no longer do job we set out to do...Move to disengage." Six days later, he announced on national television that he would be taking immediate steps to "de-escalate the conflict" in South-East Asia.

Not one of the people in that room was a member of Johnson's administration. Their *eminence grise*, Dean Acheson, who voiced the group's consensus to the President, had last been in government almost twenty years earlier, as Harry Truman's Secretary of State. But this was precisely why Johnson had called on these aging men. They were the original architects of all that was sinking in the swamps of Vietnam. When in office they had worked together to help the Allies win the Second World War. In the peace that followed, they had created the role that America was to play as it was thrust onto the center of the world stage. Since then they had served as advisors whenever a President had needed them. Critics on the left decried what they called "the New York foreign policy syndicate;" the populist right fulminated against "the eastern liberal establishment." But staffers at the White House had nicknamed them the "WOM"—Wise Old Men.

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The Wise Men is a narrative account of the formation of American foreign policy from World War II to Vietnam as seen through the interconnected lives of six of these men: W. Averell Harriman, Robert A. Lovett, Dean Acheson, John J. McCloy, Charles Bohlen, and George F. Kennan. Using this ingenious construct the authors, Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas, take the reader on a journey through not just American foreign policy but social history as well, for they claim that their six subjects "as individuals and even more so as a group...embody what has been called...the American Establishment." The story is told as a heroic tragedy of sorts—a tale of six bold, generous patriots, born and bred to lead, who fought isolation, rebuilt Europe, thwarted the Soviet Union, but who withdrew from public life watching their legacy disintegrate during the most disastrous war in their country's history.

It all begins, write the authors, "with boys rowing at a New England prep school and riding horses in the snow on a sprawling ranch in Idaho." W. Averell Harriman was raised in the kind of wealth that has not been seen since income and inheritance taxes were established. He was the eldest son of E. H. Harriman, the Robber Baron who built Union Pacific Railroad into a 23,000 mile empire. He grew up in majestic townhouses on Fifth Avenue and vacationed at the family's 20,000 acre, 100 room estate, complete with its own polo field. When father and son went on a three month "jaunt" along the Alaskan shore the party included sixty-five crew members, twenty-five scientists, eleven woodsmen, three artists, two photographers, and one cow, so that Averell and his brother, Roland, would not have to do without their morning glass of milk. None of the other five men came from quite such an extraordinary background. But in an age when such things mattered far more than they do today, they all went through the small network of prep

schools, colleges, clubs, and work–places that were the privileged domain of the American elite. Beginning with childhood associations (Harriman and Lovett) the story moves from the prep schools of Groton (Harriman and Acheson) and St. Paul's (Bohlen), where these young men wre imbued with a sense of *noblesse oblige* , to the senior societies at Yale (Acheson was a member of Scroll and Key, Lovett and Harriman were members of Skull and Bones) where they learned camaraderie and trust, to Felix Frankfurter's lectures at the Harvard Law School (Acheson and McCloy) which stimulated them intellectually, to their jobs in New York and Washington at which they all excelled.

Those who were not born into this *milieu* could be accepted and assimilated: George Kennan came from a decidedly middle class background before his years at Princeton and the then club–like foreign service. For John McCloy, who went to Amherst on a scholarship, acceptance into the establishment took longer. It was only after he went to Harvard Law School and then joined Cravath, Swain and Moore in New York that he began moving in social circles close to those of the Harrimans and the Lovetts. While some of them knew each other through these various associations, the pivotal point in this story, at which the paths of these two bankers (Harriman and Lovett), two lawyers (Acheson and McCloy), and two diplomats (Bohlen and Kennan) converge, is World War II. Harriman and Acheson ran the economic aid to the allies, while the "heavenly twins" of the War Department, Lovett and McCloy, transformed a dormant military service into the largest war machine in history. Kennan and Bohlen began the slow process of educating Washington about the Soviet Union, culminating most dramatically in Kennan's "long telegram" on containment.

The last years of the Truman administration were the heyday of this group. Their success in wartime, coupled with Franklin Roosevelt's death, had made them extraordinarily influential: Acheson was Secretary of State; Lovett of Defense. Harriman was Administrator of the Marshall Plan and then Ambassador to Moscow, McCloy was Governor of Germany and then President of World Bank, and Bohlen and Kennan were unquestionably the nation's top Soviet experts. They survived the wrath of Joseph McCarthy and the "exile" of the Eisenhower years. But they could not survive Vietnam. They watched their proteges—MacGeorge Bundy, Robert McNamara, Dean Rusk—make policies that repeatedly and relentlessly failed, and failed in the simple concrete sense that the policies didn't achieve the goals that had been set for them. Besides the occasional advisory meetings—the March 26, 1968 meeting being the most important—the wise men retreated ino their private lives.

The approach of this book invites comparison with *The Best and the Brightest*, David Halberstam's study of the Kennedy establishment and the Vietnam War. But they are quite different. *The Wise Men* is not a book about US foreign policy, or at least not principally so. It is about who made that policy and how. Halberstam spends a great deal of time analyzing the content of US policy in Vietnam. His biographies of policy makers are usually presented as two-page background material introducing real issues. For Isaacson and Thomas the biographies are the real issues. What results is as much a history of 20th century America's upper class as it is of her foreign policy.

The authors have done an extraordinary amount of research, and have gone through masses of private papers, unpublished essays, interviews as well as the more routine material. While most of the narrative is journalistic, the first section truly captures the spirit of an era long past—from the "Groton Ethic" that pervaded prep schools at the turn of the century, to the Yale of Cole Porter's "smart set," to the partner's room at Brown Brothers, Harriman & Co. The portrait is valuable not because of nostalgic appeal for a gilded age that probably never was (though there is some of that), but rather because it shows the casual associations and connections that a small, homogeneous group of people could have had. As the story moves on, the authors' subjects come to life and we see the tortured genius of George Kennan, the unceasing ambition of Averell Harriman, the subtle charm of Robert Lovett, the methodical thoroughness of Jack McCloy, the witty brilliance of Dean Acheson, the diplomatic *savoir faire* of "Chip" Bohlen.

On issues of foreign policy the authors are on less solid ground. By and large they provide a balanced perspective and do not delve too deeply into interpretation, but some points stand out. They argue that the wise men had to exaggerate their case against the Soviet Union when selling the Marshall Plan and the idea of containment to Congress, but that subsequently they fell prey to their rhetoric and began believing it. This notion that the six men were duped by themselves is quite strange. If these policy makers truly believed everything they told Congress, they certainly were a rare breed. Does George Schultz believe that the contras are the equivalents of the founding fathers? Does Ronald Reagan believe there was no linkage in the Daniloff–Zakharov case? Does Congress believe its sanctions package will end apartheid? The rhetoric of politics in Washington is—and

always has been—the rhetoric of exaggeration.

Another minor irritation is the occasional descent into cliche, as when explaining the ineffectiveness of Paul Nitze's opposition to Vietnam—"Nitze was trapped by his Cold War logic"—the presentation as common wisdom of the argument that Vietnam followed inexorably from containment. Whether this is true, or whether the war was a tactical error that does not invalidate the grand strategy of containment, is an ongoing debate, and one too serious to be dismissed in such a flip manner.

The authors are quite correct when they argue that the wise men were hard–nosed pragmatists who urged a tough line against the Soviet Union earlier than anyone else. But then they assert that, had the six men been able to forsee the long Cold War their policies caused, "they would have been taken aback." But there is no evidence in these men's handling of any of the problems they faced—the dropping of the A-Bomb, the Berlin blockade, the Korean War—that they thought the US could live in a world without international tension, in general or *vis a vis* the Soviets in particular. Indeed NSC–68, which they approved as a long term plan, virtually endorses the idea of cold war. Not one of the group, not even Kennan, was an idealist.

It is true that a whole generation of strong-minded internationalists drastically changed their views after Vietnam. But those were Kennedy's "best and brightest," not the wise men. To the end Acheson argued against negotiations with the Vietnamese, as did Lovett and McCloy, who were for strategic bombings. More recently, Lovett thought Cyrus Vance too cautious and "lawyer–like," and McCloy was on the Reagan transition team. George Kennan was at odds with them, but his anguished wanderings began back in 1948, and he disagreed with his five friends—and most of the rest of the world—from then on. Harriman was the only one who really changed, and that had a great deal to do with his desire for negotiations above all else (partly because he always saw himself as the negotiator). On the other hand, comparing McGeorge Bundy's and Clark Clifford's statements today with their positions twenty years ago, one does not see any logical or even understandable progression. Does Vietnam explain it all? Or is an elitist disdain for the rise of a harder line populist right another factor?

The other manner in which this book differs from Halberstam's is that the authors admire their subjects—the cover sketch is a Mt. Rushmore-like frieze of the six men. In fact, the authors' central thesis can be summed up in their quotation from Henry Kissinger's *White House Years* : "For the entire post–war period, foreign policy had been ennobled by a group of distinguished men who, having established their eminence in other fields, devoted themselves to public service...an aristocracy dedicated to the service of this nation on behalf of principles beyond partisanship." Isaacson and Thomas argue, in their conclusion, that today's ruling elites are more self–serving and less effective than the wise men. They agree with Walt Rostow—the American Establishment is dead.

The idea of an establishment in the sense that Isaacson and Thomas use it predates the period they deal with. Joseph Schumpeter argued that the "new imperialism" of the 1880's and 1890's was a result of the atavism of Eupope's ruling nobility. British historians Roland Robinson and John Gallagher fleshed this idea into a thesis: Britain's policies in Africa were decided by what they called the "official mind," a group of statesmen from both parties who were educated at the same schools and colleges, apprenticed under the same people, lived in the same social circle, and hence had very similar world–views. America certainly had a similar group of people, a white Anglo–Saxon Protestant establishment. But it was less closely knit than the London–based one because it was scattered all over the Northeast. More importantly, it was almost exclusively a commercial establishment. Lord David Cecile provides a portrait of the Whig aristocracy in Victorian England in his book on Melbourne. He writes: "The Whig Lord was so often as not a minister, his eldest son an MP, his second attached to a foreign embassy, so that their houses were alive with the effort and hurry of politics." In America the upper classes confined themselves to the great banks, law firms, and corporations of the Northeast. None of the old, or new, line WASP's of the world of Edith Wharton and F. Scott Fitzgerald were even interested in politics.

This began to change at the turn of the century. Established men like Elihu Root and Henry Stimson devoted their lives to public service, and upper class families sent their children to the Foreign Service and the State Department. After World War I, the Council on Foreign Relations was founded. But all of these impulses were isolated, sporadic, and weak. World War II changed that. The nature and urgency of the cause struck a chord in that group of Ivy League Americans who were attached to Europe and who believed in a vigorous foreign policy—causing an infusion of extraordinary talent into the government. There was a selfless devotion to the task at hand, and a unity of purpose that never could have occurred in peace. Consider, for instance, the fact that the four most senior officials in FDR's War Department—Stimson, Harvey Bundy, McCloy

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and Lovett—were all Republicans.

The war created a deep sense of public service within the establishment, which lasted through those crucial years of peace while America defined its role as the world's first superpower. Isaacson and Thomas are well aware of the pivotal nature of the war; one half of their book, which begins, in the 1890's, is devoted to the nine years from 1940 to 1949. If not for World War II, the "New York foreign policy syndicate" would never have gained the kind of influence it did in Washington. Two other facts made it possible for the group to exert authority: the consensus on foreign policy that was the product of the war, and the passive role that Congress played in foreign affairs. The first has at times been exaggerated: there was as much dissent over China and Korea as there has ever been. On the other hand, it would be impossible to talk of a few appointed statesmen making policy today, because so much of it is made by the Senate and even the House of Representatives: "There are now 535 Secretaries of State," Lovett once remarked in dismay.

Truman's policy–making elite has been criticized by both the extreme left and the right, but of the two the left is more accurate. If one believes that containment is evil and the cold war is a result of US provocation, as the left does and this reviewer does not, then the blame must lie with the wise men, for they were responsible for the shaping of these policices. The radical right, on the other hand, believes that the establishment sold out US interests and was "soft" on communism. The *Wise Men* provides ample evidence that this charge is based more on moral outrage at communism, and a desire to find a scapegoat, than on an accurate appraisal of the situation. The "Acheson Gang" was as tough–minded on the issues it confronted as was realistically possible. In fact, Acheson himself was often overruled by Truman for political reasons, as in the case when he wanted to slow down the withdrawal of American troops from Europe so that the US could negotiate settlements from a position of military strength.

Both sides have one common charge: that establishments are elitist conspiracies, and in this particular case "a conspiracy so immense and an infamy so black as to dwarf any previous venture in the history of mankind," in the words of Joseph McCarthy. One—and only one—aspect of this argument is worth considering, and that is to what extent the insulation of a group of policy makers can cause them to be insensitive to the problems of less powerful sections of society. McCloy's decision, for example, not to bomb train lines to Auschwitz was not, in and of itself,

immoral. Perhaps a case can be made that the best way to help those being oppressed by Hitler was to defeat him as quickly as possible. But McCloy's inability to sympathize or even quite understand the anguished pleas of Jewish groups in America was completely inexcusable, as was his cavalier disregard for the civil rights of Americans of Japanese origin. It is not surprising that all six men thought that the formation of Israel was against US interests.

The general idea, though, that the establisment is some kind of masonic conspiracy is absurd. Consider this scenario. If someone were to write a book on the period 1968 to 1988, years when every president elected was an anti–establishment populist of some sort, the following would still be true: George Bush (Andover, Yale) George Shultz (Princeton, U. Chicago) and Caspar Weinberger (Harvard, Harvard Law School) were in cabinet level positions for four of the five administrations during that time, i.e. for 16 of the 20 years. Henry Kissinger reigned supreme for eight years, and his fellow Harvard men, James Schlesinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski (Director of the Trilateral Commission), were Secretary of Defense and National Security Advisor, respectively. His successor, Cyrus Vance, was, like Bush, a member of a Yale senior society (Scroll and Key). Kissinger's aides rose to prominence as well: Alexander Haig became Secretary of State, Brent Scowcroft became National Security Advisor, Winston Lord (President of the Council of Foreign Relations) became Ambassador to China, Lawrence Eagleburger became Undersecretary of State. When Shultz was in office, he hired his former colleague at the University of Chicago, Kenneth Dam, as Deputy Secretary of State. Shultz and Weinberger, of course, worked together for years at the Bechtel Corporation. Do we have a conspiracy?

Of course not. These kinds of theories are based on the fact that policy makers in office often hire people they have known in some context before. Like everyone else in an important job, in both the public and the private sector, the Secretary of State will appoint those people to positions of authority whom he trusts and is sure are competent and honest. Inevitably, he will have known many of these people before. The alternative is to have him put an advertisement for Assistant Secretary of State in the newspapers and then review resumes. The worst way to read *The Wise Men* is to think of them as a club or cabal. They were nothing of the kind. Indeed, there is not a single point in the book when all six men are together in the same place at the same time. They are meant to be representative of the highest echelons of the establishment. As Isaacson and Thomas write, "these half–dozen friends fit together in a complementary way, epitomizing a style and outlook."

"The American establishment is dead," said Walt Rostow, to which we must add "long live the American establishment." America cannot be governed without a group of people in and out of governemnt dedicated to this endeavor. The Reaganites, the most unabashedly anti–establishment group in decades, realized this on coming to power and quickly and successfully built a new establishment; a network of foundations, think–tanks, and magazines that works with the public and private sectors. The Carter Administration's failure was due in some part to its inability to bring together the shattered post-Vietnam Democratic establishment; this is seen most dramatically in the feuds between Vance and Brzezinski.

The final question, then, is how today's establishment differs from the wise men's. What we have today is a meritocracy: well qualified people, often professional foreign policy experts, working in a group that does not place much importance on social standing. This is unquestionably good. But equally important is what an aristocracy like the wise men embodied, which has been lost in our ever-widening corridors of power. An aristocracy, theoretically, is composed of men and women who serve the public good above and beyond self-interest. As the authors show us throughout the book, and explain in the conclusion, the wise men worked together in an atmosphere of trust, by a code of ethics. Seeing themselves as a part of an honorable tradition that transcended party politics, they set high standards for the future. This goes a long way in explaining how six amateurs conducted a foreign policy for their country that was realistic, consistent, and yet principled. Even if they should be remembered only for their greatest success, the Marshall Plan, they will still be models to emulate. Washington is quite different today. Much cannot be changed; educational institutions think that character building is anachronistic; the yuppie ethic of self–service has obsessed the commercial establishment. But if the power brokers, lobbyists, and consultants of Washington (and the investment bankers and corporate lawyers of New York) could take time off from stabbing one another in the back, "advising" foreign governments, making money and making more money, they should read this book. It is a primer on public service, which means they can probably write it off as a business expense. ❑

The United States of Europe?
An Interview with Fernand Herman, Member of the European Parliament

Adam J. Freedman

The European Parliament, while something of a mystery to most Americans, is the legislative branch of the European Economic Community (EEC). Since 1979, Members of the European Parliament (MEP's) have been directly elected from the 12 (previously 10) member states of the EEC. The Parliament meets regularly in Strasbourg, Luxembourg, and Brussels. There is a strong movement among Members of the European Parliament to bring the European states together in one federation. Last year the European Parliament passed a draft treaty proposing a European Union. Fernand Herman, MEP is the leading European federalist in the Parliament. Yale Political Monthly *Editor-in-Chief Adam Freedman interviewed Mr. Herman last summer in his Brussels office.*

Yale Political Monthly: Why is a united Europe so important to you?

Fernand Herman: Basically, I am an economist and therefore I am very attracted to the benefits which derive from a larger market and a larger economy. Today, economies of scale are crucial in the field of new technologies. For instance, a new computation facility for telephones, which is based on electronics, costs something like one billion dollars. Now there are six or seven companies [in Europe] able to develop such a facility. So why is Europe lagging behind the US and Japan in this field? It is because we still have 12 markets instead of one. We have been abolishing customs barriers and borders, but in the field of public procurement we still have our governments giving orders with preference for national companies. Even the largest, *Bundespost*, is small. This is one of the many reasons that convinced me to pursue further European integration.

YPM: But now that the EEC has expanded to include southern Europe, many northern Europeans complain that the Community only serves to redistribute wealth from North to South.

FH: Personally, I don't see the process that way; that is a static Marxist view. We have a much more dynamic view: the money we give to the South is a way to reinforce the growth of Europe. It is absurd to believe that you can have an island of prosperity within a sea of poverty.

If you had not had, between the wars, a social policy designed to redistribute wealth you wouldn't have had the fantastic growth you had in the US and the West. In fact, redistribution is part of economic growth because it enhances global demand. How can Germany export [for example] generators without giving money to Portugal to buy them. Belgium produces six times the amount of steel it needs; all of our countries have a tradition of public spending [to support these industries].

YPM: What are some of the reasons that other Europeans don't share your enthusiasm for a more unified Europe?

FH: To me, it was an historic mistake to seek enlargement before going further in the European political construction. In retrospect, it would have been much more efficient, much more positive to continue with the [original members of the EEC: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands] and be able to produce a federalist government like the US or Germany. We should have a European government instead of the European Commission [the civil service of the EEC, located in Brussels]. But we made the mistake of looking for enlargement.

YPM: Why had the Community been so keen to include Great Britain, whose government has opposed European integration?

FH: The Benelux countries [Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands] and Italy were always very disturbed by Germany and France having a special relationship as the two leaders of the Community. Belgium and Holland have

always sought British help, such as in the founding of Belgium. The Dutch felt that with the British inside the Community there would be more room to manoevure. Another reason was democracy. Italy and Benelux were in favor of a European government with a strong congress and they were under the illusion that Britain, being the "Mother of Parliaments" would support this goal.

As far as including Southern Europe, we were sensitive to the reproach that we were a "club of rich people who want to keep wealth for themselves." European politicians have long had remorse for what happened, for instance, to Czechoslovakia. It could have remained a democracy if we had the solidarity we should have had. So we were very sensitive to the charge that the Community was a closed club. So, all this has driven the European Community to seek enlargement before integration. This has slowed the process to integrate, which is obviously harder with 12 than with six; especially when the others don't have the same traditions.

The original six all have strong Christian Democratic traditions. They shared the same view on many political issues. That's why it was so easy for Schumann, the first President of the Commission, et al to reach decisions. When you come to the others, they have no Christian Democratic tradition, especially the United Kingdom.

YPM: To what extent is the pan-European ideal achieved? Do MEP's vote according to national or ideological affiliations?

FH: This is why the European Parliament is so important. It is probably the only one in the range of European institutions that is *truly* European. National distinctions are disappearring. Increasingly we are taking positions based on political views rather than nationality. Look at the votes: ninety–five percent are divided according to Left versus Right. In the few cases where we have very different national situations, such as agriculture and nuclear energy, we may vote according to national partisanship. Even that is diminishing. We have, for instance, a split between North and South on agricultural issues; but this is not a split between nation states.

YPM: What about the vote on the budget, isn't that the most divisive matter?

FH: Probably, it is much easier to be truly European when you have nothing to say! When we vote, it is often on matters of principle. When you come to much more concrete proposals it is very difficult to have the same unanimity. In the budget, our fight has been to increase our powers *vis a vis* the Council of Ministers [the executive of the EEC, consisting of the ministers of the member state governments] and recently we won.

According to the last change in the Treaty of Rome [which established the European Community], we were living on what was called national contributions. The Council assessed members according to a national key, which was related to the area of the country, the number of inhabitants, and their income. In 1972, we created our own resources, we acquired taxing capacity. The European Community took for their own budget all taxes from export and import and they took a slice from VAT [value-added tax]. Since we have had our own resources, Parliament has had greater powers, and it was decided that the budget should be decided by the Council and the Parliament.

We were unanimous in the wish to increase our powers with respect to the Council. Now that we have increased power, how are we divided? A split which has just changed recently is over agriculture. We had an agricultural majority, but when Spain and Portugal joined the Community, most of their MEP's joined the Socialist Party and the unbalance in favor of agriculture has been reversed. Reagan is playing this very skillfuly because he has had problems with farmers. He knows that the European Parliament is no longer as in favor of agricultural subsidies as it was, and he is pressing the issue. Our farmers and your farmers are competing to sell surplus goods and yours are now winning.

YPM: The European Parliament has endorsed a federated European government. What is the background of this decision and how will it affect European politics?

FH: The battle for further integration of Europe has been going on since the beginning, since De Gaulle stopped the process by introducing the right of veto in the Council of Ministers. But the most spectacular effort was that by the European Parliament. The Parliament decided, on the initiative of [Late Italian MEP] Altiero Spinelli to introduce its own treaty. A treaty that would provide means for a federated Europe. How? By increasing the independence of the European Commission, increasing the powers of Parliament, and eliminating the veto of the Council of Ministers. These were the three main proposals in the Spinelli treaty, but of course the most interesting thing was that it was not a constitution but a schedule for a process. More and more competences would be given to European institutions, on tasks which the nation states could not do better by themselves.

The Treaty of Rome has a provision that states that all changes in the treaty must have unanimity. Spinelli was sure that the (then) ten member states would not approve the new treaty. So Spinelli took a precedent from American history [the ratification of the Constitution]. He stated that as soon as a majority of states representing two-thirds of the population approved the treaty, European Union exists and the union would enter into negotiations with states not

accepting the Union to establish adequate relations. The Dooge Committe was formed to suggest changes in the treaty in line with the wishes of Parliament. The committee issued a report very much in the same vein as the treaty of the European Parliament. It was decided to use the Dooge report as the basis for an inter-governmental convocation, and on December 8, 1985, we had the Luxembourg summit. This is where the *Acte Unique* comes from; but since the act itself had to be approved unanimously, the results were much less than the provisions of the Dooge report or the treaty.

YPM: And what are the provisions of the *Acte Unique* ?

FH: The Act contains a few new elements all relating to political cooperation. The Treaty of Rome deals only with economic matters, since then we have tried to achieve EPC: Economic Political Cooperation. The EPC is based on unanimity in Parliament and the Commission is not part of it. We have always said that the EPC should come into the competence of the European institutions, but the treaty has only minor changes.

One of the changes of the treaty is to extend the number of cases decided by majority. This was an answer to the call for an abolition of the veto. But there remains uncertainty over the veto. When Mrs. Thatcher spoke about it in Westminster, she said that since the veto—created by the so-called Luxembourg compromise—is not part of the treaty, changes in the treaty do not alter the fact of the veto.

The Act also creates a second reading for Parliament. Spinelli's legislation had stated that all decisions in the European Community must be a result of the Parliament and the Council. The Council refused that but gave us a second reading possibility. After Council decides, Parliament may add an amendment to what council decides; we may accept or reject [the legislation], but to reject we must reach a qualified majority or, in some cases, unanimity.

YPM: Since the results of the *Acte Unique* are so disappointing, what is the next step for European federalists?

FH: The Parliament is now trying to make a second Spinelli Treaty and I am in charge of that. The strategy is to get a mandate to be a constitutional Parliament. In other words, for the next election of the European Parliament in 1989, we will seek from the population a mandate saying that when you elect us we will discuss a new treaty and we will discuss this with the national governments. In Luxembourg, they forgot everything that Spinelli and the Dooge Commission said. We [the Parliament] will discuss all proposals to the end. If the government is making a new treaty it must include Parliament; Parliament cannot be bypassed or forgotten. Two national parliaments have already passed such legislation [asking for a mandate]: the Belgian and Italian parliaments.

YPM: Mr. Spinelli aided the cause of European federalism by his attractiveness as a leader. Since you have taken over the political role of Mr. Spinelli, do you feel any obligation to measure up to his colorful personality?

YPM: The situation in Parliament is against charismatic figures. Probably, though, I have an element that Spinelli did not have. He did not believe in market forces; he was a Marxist. I have much more regard for the social and economic consequences and the social and economic requirements of European integration. He was not taken seriously by national governments because he did not take into account the economy.

I, on the other hand, am not saying that integration is the only way to preserve peace, but that if you do not have integration it will cost you so much. Some, like Mrs. Thatcher, believe that Europe is costly, but not making Europe costs 10 times more. Did you know that in America, your phone calls are costing you 50 percent of ours? Why is it so? Because we have 12 telephone monopolies. We have 14 million unemployed. Why is that? Because we are lagging behind in technology.

YPM: What progress has the EEC achieved in economic affairs as compared to political affairs?

FH: We are far behind expectations in political cooperation, but in economic cooperation, we have achieved a lot of things: 70 percent of our exports are within the community. We are now much more integrated than 20 years ago. If not for inflation, and the oil crisis, we would have gone further. Because the oil crisis came at a bad time, instead of acting together, we went different ways.

YPM: But this is where your political agenda concerns economics: doesn't further economic coordination depend on further democratization of decision making?

FH: Yes. How can you tell people that they must follow a monetary policy if some of them cannot follow it? You must have political cooperation and therefore more power to Parliament. One government is elected for four years, with policy x, and then it changes. How can you merge 12 monetary systems that way? How can you expect people to relinquish monetary policy without a democratically-elected power [to assume the policy]. The Commission alone cannot replace governments, but if the Commission is supported by Parliament, it gains legitimacy in the process.

YPM: How do you think the US government regards the idea of European union. On the one hand, it would be beneficial for the West's defense; at the same time, a united Europe might represent a formidable trade competitor.

FH: Without willing it, the protectionist attitude of the US

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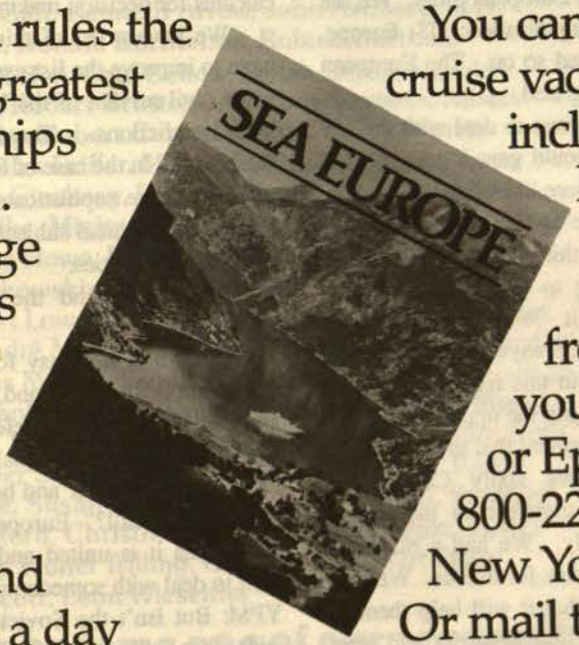

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unify on a number of issues, but when the [US] Congress recently passed the protectionist measures, suddenly there was agreement. Europe was born under a Soviet threat in the fifties. That was a military threat, now it is an economic threat. But I think a strong Europe is in America's best interests. In most things we share the same values and thus are allies. Of course, it will be hard to be allies and competitors.

YPM: What role would a united Europe take in East-West relations? Could it become a third force, independent of the two super-powers?

FH: Europe will not become a third force, at least not for a long time. We see ourselves as the European pillar. We see NATO as a two or three pillar organization: US, Europe, and the others, Canada, Turkey, and so on. The European pillar would just become more integrated.

YPM: So how would you like Europe to deal with the US on technology transfers? Europe could gain a great deal if restrictions on technology trading were liberalized.

FH: To me the KGB and spies are as successful in the US as in Europe. It is an illusion to think that by prohibiting European technology from going to the USSR we can prevent the Russians from getting it. With regard to space technology, Russia is ahead of the US anyway. The Reagan effort for Star Wars is interesting in this regard because it allows the West to come back and gain the upper hand.

We could subscribe to any agreement that says that trade with Russia must be limited. We apply Cocom [an agreement governing technology transfers to the Soviet Union] with Russia most rigorously. We had a machine, Pegar, a high precision boring machine for metals. We sold them to Russia and America said that it will help them to make rockets. The company cancelled the order and went bankrupt. Also, we didn't sell, when America asked, compressors to the Russians. The Russians made their own and now they are very good at making them. And when you have the KGB agency with thousands of people doing nothing else but spying, how can you avoid transfer?

YPM: If Russia is destined to acquire high technology, what are the security implications for Europe and the West?

FH: I am convinced that if Russia is allowed to gain more access to technology it will change the system. It is impossible to control the population if information is readily available. If anyone has an interest in the status quo, it is Russia. They pay for military technology and keep everyone else sub-human.

I am in favor of not selling to the Russians things which can increase their military capacities, but I think that embargoes on companies in Europe have a negative political effect here. When the US says that a company based in Europe , using European materials and European employees, cannot be free to make its own trade, it is against the sovereignty of the nation. It is better for nations to enter into an agreement on trade and then follow it.

YPM: And such an agreement could be facilitated by a unified Europe?

FH: Now we are back to the original question. How can we be trusted unless we are one political entity? Some Americans are against Europe; they want a divided Europe. In the short run, we are in competition. But if you believe in what you say, in a free market and democracy, and if your enemy is Russia, then a divided Europe is the wrong calculus for decision making.

We have a list of things regulated by Cocom, but we have to improve the list every day. What is worrying is that some civil servant of the US is making decisions about the trade restrictions. These things must be explained to Europeans. In the case of Pegar, we found that America was selling a more sophisticated version of the same machine. We are not political subjects of the US; you are dealing with political sensibilities.

YPM: Do you find the US generally insensensitive to European politics?

FH: First, it is not easy for the US, European matters are very complicated. Second, it is a fact that it is hard to ask an elephant not to be an elephant when dealing with a gnat. They are powers of unequal size. We are building Europe. I met Henry Kissinger and he asked, "When I call to Europe, whom do I call?" Europe has not a political existence, sometimes it is united and sometimes it is not...and it is hard to deal with someone who is and is not.

YPM: But isn't the Soviet Union more skillful at dealing with other cultures?

FH: They are more subtle in using propoganda. What is frustrating about them is that they have a fantastic continuity of power. Gromyko has had relations with something like 16 Secretaries of State. I'm sure that if the US had a Secretary of State for 35 years, he would be very subtle in dealing with Europe.

YPM: With the EEC developing European passports, a European flag, and other symbols, do you believe that individuals will adopt a sense of being European rather than, say, German or Italian?

FH: It all depends on our success. When the Belgian soccer team is winning in Mexico City, there is a great sense of Belgian nationality. If they lose, they are nobody's team. The same is true of Europe: if we can succeed in proving that we can do things better through European institutions, then there will be a sense of European citizenship. ❑

Who Cares?
A Look at the 1986 Elections

Jonathan Zasloff

Paul Kirk is probably breathing easier now. Kirk, the Democratic National Chairman, can't help but be overjoyed at the results of November fourth's election. After all, his forces gained five seats in the House but more importantly, picked up eight in the Senate, giving the Democrats control of the upper house for the first time since 1980. For six years, Democrats have been hearing talk of the "Reagan Era," the "emerging Republican majority," and realignment, and now, they finally have something to answer it with. "We can say it all in four words," exulted Kirk. "The Democrats are back."

Kirk wasn't the only prominent Democrat to offer the conventional wisdom. Retiring House Speaker Tip O'Neill pronounced that "if there was a Reagan Revolution, it's over." Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Chairman Tony Coelho of California declared that "we won." The 1986 results, say this view, destroy any hope of a Republican realignment.

For many Democrats, the results also give hope for a return to more progressive politics. The vanguard of the New Right — including Senators Jeremiah Denton of Alabama and Paula Hawkins of Florida — was pushed from the national scene: Jesse Helms will find allies harder to come by in the next session. More importantly, several committee chairmanships will devolve from Republican rightists to liberal Democrats: for instance, Edward Kennedy will replace Utah's Orrin Hatch as chairman of the Labor and Human Resources Committee. Many of the new Democratic senators, like Barbara Mikulski of Maryland or Wyche Fowler of Georgia, can be expected to fight for progressive legislation.

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Liberals and Democrats are optimistic. They are also sadly mistaken. The Democrats' morning after their election night euphoria will be punctuated by a splitting hangover. No, the Democrats are not back — at least, not the progressive ones. Even if the Democrats can prevent a Republican majority, they may wind up doing very little to construct and implement a liberal agenda. Even worse, they may be deluding themselves that Reaganism is indeed dead and thus inadvertently entrenching the losses of the last six years.

To begin with, this group of Democratic senators has demonstrated a total lack of ability to fight President Reagan's initiatives effectively. In fact, they have distinguished themselves in being one the least effective minority coalitions in the past few decades. A *Washington Post* story in July pointed to an appalling lack of strategic competence among Senate Democrats, along with numerous petty rivalries, and ideological rudderlessness. "In a divided Congress," the *Post* reported, "Senate Democrats are the lowest of the low, overshadowed by the Republican majority in the Senate and the Democratic majority in the House...With their world turned upside down by Ronald Reagan and the coattail effects of his landslide victory in 1980, Senate Democrats have been gun-shy of the President, often supplying enough Democratic votes to assure him legislative victories in the Senate."

It is more than understandable that the senators were in disarray from 1981 to 1983; after all, they had been in the majority since 1956 and had to grapple with smaller staffs, fewer votes, and defensive postures. But their inability to stop Reagan's actions after the 1982 election (when they picked up two seats to bring their total to 47) does not bode well for those hoping for legislative progress and a rollback of the Reagan program.

Senators across the political spectrum echoed the *Post*'s findings. Conservative Democrat J. Bennett Johnston of Lousiana (about whom more later— see below) admits that President Reagan "has been bold in his ideas and his criticism of Democrats, and our reaction has been to run for cover and say he's a 'Teflon President'...we've been too timid, too afraid of the President." Arkansas's more liberal Dale Bumpers explains that "the Republicans had been in the minority for so long that they learned to stick together. The Democrats have always had such a big majority that they could afford six or seven defections. Now occasionally, we can conspire to stop something bad, but *it's an exception.*" (italics added).

It's not just the Democrats' minority status that has made them ineffective. The *Post* observed that the Senate Democrats "have rarely presented party-backed alternatives to Reagan programs, claiming that, in holding only 47 of 100 Senate seats, they lack the votes to prevail. But even when enough moderate-to-liberal Republicans have peeled away from Reagan to give the Democrats the majority, they often split apart themselves. Consensus has been difficult to achieve, agreement on specific alternatives virtually impossible."

The strongest Democratic initiatives in the last six years have been solo efforts, where individual senators have had to buck the party altogether. A case in point is tax reform, where New Jersey's Bill Bradley had to get the backing of a large number of Republicans before he could get his own party to go along. Most Democrats were too busy protecting their own special-interest constituencies to support any significant reform. "It was difficult," recalls Bradley, "to get a consensus with any sort of cutting edge."

A classic example of the Senate Democrats chronic disarray leading to a betrayal of traditional Democratic ideals was seen this past July with an amendment offered by Maine's George Mitchell to the Senate tax reform bill. The top bracket in the original bill — for the very wealthiest taxpayers as well as for most middle-income families — was just 27%. Mitchell's amendment would have created an additional bracket for upper-income taxpayers. A great opportunity for the Democrats to return to their populist roots, right? Wrong. Despite the efforts of those such as Bumpers, who complained rightly that "if Democrats don't stand for a progressive income tax, they don't stand for anything," 22 of 47 Senate Democrats voted against the amendment, while the Republicans stayed virtually unanimous in opposition. Mitchell's amendment failed by the whopping margin of 71 to 29. So much for Democratic progressivism.

This last example points out that it is more than inability that will prevent the new Democratic Senate from de-Reaganizing the legislative landscape. The truth is that many Democrats have *supported* the Republican program over the last six years. In 1981, the Reagan tax cut passed with nearly a nine-to-one majority; at the time, more than *40* Democratic senators favored a bill that not only has given us fiscal chaos but also did so in the most inequitable way possible. A like number also voted for the 1981 Reagan budget, which gutted many programs for the poor. Democrats (including Ted Kennedy and Joseph Biden) voted for Gramm-Rudman; Democrats voted for the Reagan defense build-up; Democrats voted to confirm William Rehnquist and the dozens of other Reagan-appointed judges. The old cliche that American politics gravitates toward the center still applies; but in the Reagan years, the "center" has not held. It has all-too-often been the center-right, and the Democrats have moved toward it.

None of this should be surprising if one looks closely at the Democratic Senate leadership. The rejoicing in Democratic circles after the election was due not only to the party's new-found electoral strength, but also due to the prospect that the Democrats would regain the committee chairmanships and set the Senate agenda. But exactly which Senators will be committee chairmen? The optimists looked to Labor and Human Resources and Judiciary (where Biden will replace Strom Thurmond) as examples of an ideological sea change, but on virtually all of the remaining crucial committees, the most prudent expectation is business-as-usual.

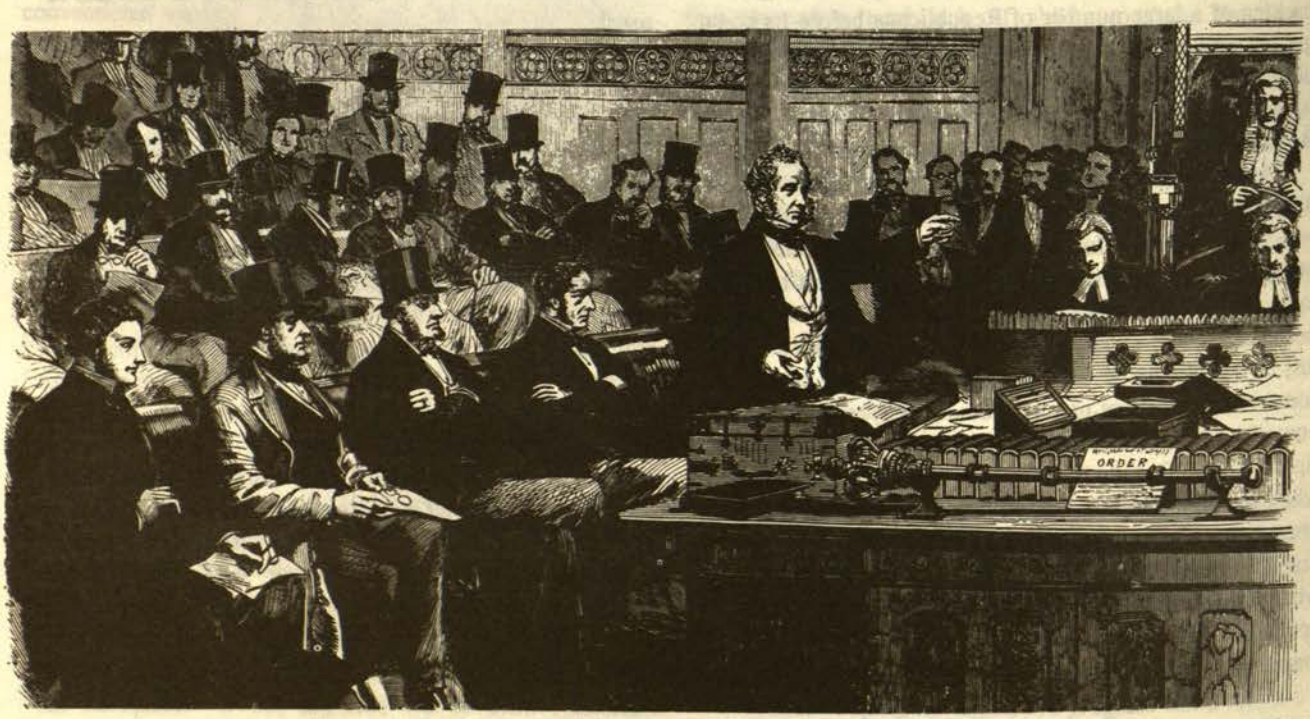
A typical example of this changeless change lies on the powerful Finance Committee, which writes the nation's tax laws and where Texan Lloyd Bentsen is taking over from Oregon's Bob Packwood. Packwood, along with Bradley, engineered the tax reform bill this past summer. But Bentsen went along with the bill only reluctantly and has a few changes planned already. Is Bentsen's problem with the package that it isn't progressive enough? Is it that the IRA deduction, which lost the government billions in revenue, helps only upper-middle- and upper-income families? No, not exactly. Bentsen worries about the bill because he thinks that it hit corporations too *severely*. Like any good Texan, he wants to restore big oil depletion allowances for native oil producers. "He is the quintessential establishment insider," said a former Bentsen aide who is now a corporate executive. "He will work very closely with President Reagan and with his successor, no matter who it is." Robert MacIntyre, who heads the liberal Citizens for Tax Justice, which fought for the tax reform bill, noted glumly that "[Bentsen's] record has been one of favoring incentives for business, which in the past has led to widespread tax avoidance." Not exactly the sort of thing that progressives are looking for.

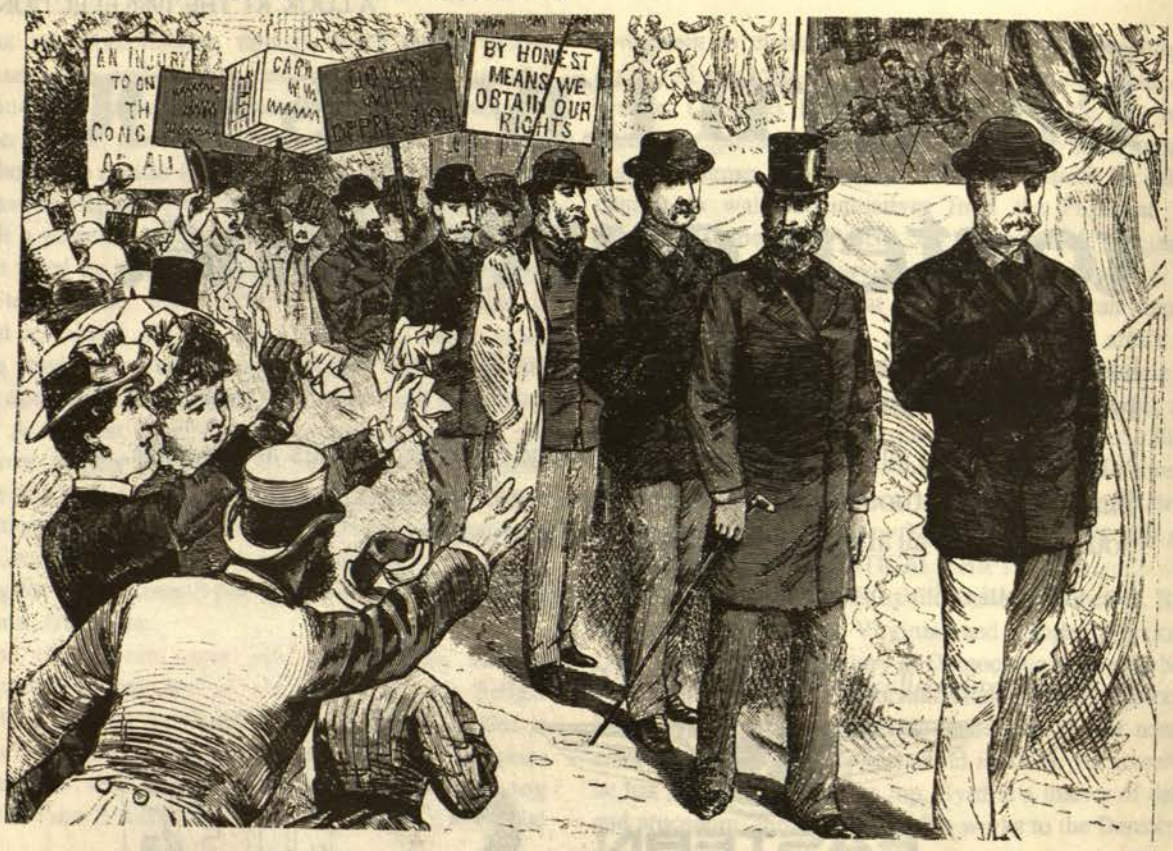
Cut to Appropriations, through which every funding bill must pass and is thus one of the most powerful committees on Capitol Hill. Once again, Oregon loses out: its other senator, moderate Republican Mark Hatfield (who co-authored the nuclear freeze resolution with Ted Kennedy) will have to step down as chairman. Who is replacing him in such a powerful post? A liberal? Guess again. The job will be filled by none other than Mississippi's 84-year-old John Stennis, who, with nearly 40 years in the Senate, is the last remaining old-line "Dixiecrat." You might recall Stennis from American history textbooks. Remember him voting against the Civil Rights Act of 1963 and the Voting Rights Act a year later? Remember him opposing all the key Great Society programs? In his years in the Senate, Stennis has built a voting record that is roughly similar to his ultraconservative Mississippi colleague, Republican Thad Cochran. Well, he's your chairman now. You want funding for Food Stamps? For educational programs? Talk to Stennis. Good luck.

And if you can some how get your bill through Appropriations, then try to get it through the Budget Committee, chaired by Floridian Lawton Chiles. Chiles is not nearly as conservative as his counterpart on Appropriations; after all, unlike Stennis, Chiles didn't grow up during the antebellum period. But he remains skeptical of social investment to eliminate poverty, for instance, spending to reach full employment, or any type of national health care system. Chiles is hardly an ultraconservative, but he is hardly an egalitarian either. He will probably push for some cuts in defense, but do very little else. Instead, he will be content to wait for initiatives from the President. The overriding message, then, is not to look for much progressive legislation survivng the budget process.

It might be argued that the top leadership can keep the chairmen in line; after all, chairmanships aren't the dictatorships they once were. But there are two flaws in this argument. First, if chairmanships aren't that powerful, then why the rejoicing at the turnover in the first place? Either it's important, in which case the troubles outlined above are still operative, or they're not, in which case people should not be heralding, as the *New York Times* did the day after the election, a "BIG POLITICAL SHIFT."

The second flaw goes by the name of Robert C. Byrd, Jr, Democrat of West Virginia, and Senate Democratic Leader. Byrd's major victory as Democratic leader has been, well, keeping himself Democratic leader. Senate Democrats have been grumbling about his leadership almost nonstop since he succeeded Mike Mansfield in 1976; yet somehow, he has always come out on top. Byrd is a master of details and procedure, and sometimes this works to the Democrats'





advantage; during the first confirmation vote for Daniel Manion, Reagan's nominee for judge of the seventh Federal Circuit Court this past June, Byrd saw that his party would lose, so he purposely voted with the pro-Manion majority. Since only a member of the winning side can ask for a re-consideration, the Democrats were able to force another vote.

But most of the time, Byrd's mastery of the little things has worked predominantly to the advantage of, well, Robert Byrd. He has always made sure to remind other senators when key votes were coming up, always remembered to write thank you notes, always been there when another senator had a favorite piece of legislation on the floor. Other senators do not forget these sorts of favors, and unsurprisingly, Byrd has collected a great many IOU's, which keep him in the leadership spot. The problem with this leadership style is that it doesn't show much leadership; one of the reasons why the Democrats have been so divided is that Byrd tries to do favors for all of them and consequently jawbones very few. It's no surprise that not a lot of far-reaching legislation comes out under Byrd's leadership. The Byrd style is one reason why no one will be able to exert pressure on chairmen like Stennis or Bentsen — after all, they are crucial votes. If Byrd was unable to engineer any major legislative initiatives during the Carter years when he had a Democratic President and an 18-vote majority, why will he be able to do anything with a Republican President and a 10-vote majority?

If Byrd loses the leadership race, he will be defeated by Louisiana's J. Bennett Johnston, who otherwise will chair the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Johnston is also a big fan of Big Oil, so his committee is another which doesn't figure to undergo a major ideological shift. But if he beats Byrd, his leadership will either be A) just as weak as Byrd's because he has so recently had so many do him the favor of making him leader in what figures to be a bitter fight, or B) even more conservative than Byrd's was to begin with. Byrd won't qualify for the Liberal Hall of Fame, but his rating by American for Democratic Action over the past four years has averaged in the mid-70's (on a 0 to 100 scale), a respectable if not spectacular number. Johnston's, on the other hand, has averaged in the mid-30's about the same as Republicans Alfonse D'Amato, William Roth (co-author, along with Jack Kemp, of the 1981 Reagan tax cut), and Rudy Boschwitz. The progressive wing of the party is between a rock and a hard place.

What all of this means is that the Democrats will be both unwilling and unable to effect any major changes of the Reaganism of the past six years — or anything else, for that matter. If anything, the 1986 election will amplify the cleavages that already exist in the party. Consider farm

policy, for instance. New senators like Tom Daschle of South Dakota, Kent Conrad of North Dakota, Terry Sanford of North Carolina, and Wyche Fowler of Georgia were all elected in response to the national farm crisis. What does that have to do with either Reaganism or anything else? First, farm subsidies cost $26 billion last year, a record (and incidentally, helped the farm states lead the nation in per capita income growth last quarter: North Dakota alone jumped 13%). But don't look for any relief to the deficit crunch through the reduction in farm subsidies — politically, it's just not feasible. A huge chunk of federal spending is already off-limits. Try defense and you run into Armed Services Committee Chairman Sam Nunn and Stennis, probably the two biggest Democratic hawks in the Senate. If any of the Senate liberals want to do any of the things that comprise the remaining progressive agenda, they won't be able to find the money to do it because so many of the sacred cows are Democratic ones.

Social policy provides a good example of where liberals are going to run into these kinds of roadblocks. One of the new hot topics in Washington is "welfare reform," which as *Atlantic* correspondent Nicholas Lemann comments, "is just a polite way of wondering what to do about the black underclass." But the problem, as everyone—at least every liberal—should know is that alleviating poverty costs money, lots of it. The only proposed solutions that do not are those of the "Charles Murray" variety (named after the author of the conservative study *Losing Ground)* , which call for the elimination of welfare to spur the work ethic in the inner cities. But for anyone without a sink or swim mentality—and that definitely includes all progressives as well as most moderates and a few conservatives, the hard reality is that more Federal money is needed. The same applies for education programs, infrastructure renewal, industrial policy, and a whole range of ideas that liberals have cooked up over the past few years. And money is the one thing this Congress isn't prepared to give, especially for social programs which, unlike farm subsidies and defense, don't have entrenched constituencies.

Even the bright spots lose their luster on close inspection. Sure, Ted Kennedy might try new initiatives on Labor and Human Resources, but will it get through Appropriations? Survive Budget? Pass on the Senate floor? Don't bet on it.

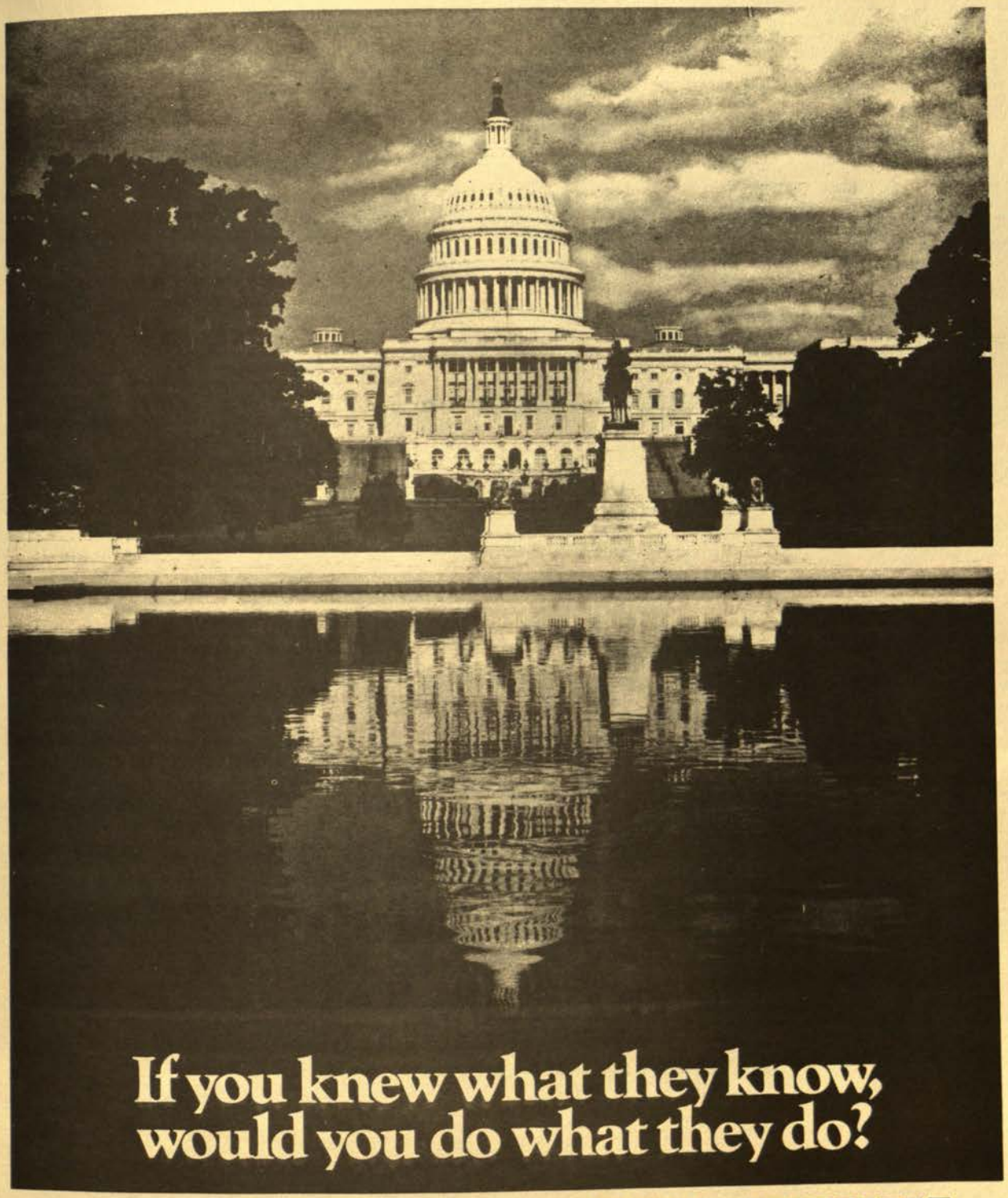
On Judiciary the prospect doesn't look much brighter. Biden will make more noise as chairman than he did as ranking minority member, but he may not be powerful enough to have any significant effect. To see why, all you have do is take a look at the record. In five years, the Senate has rejected exactly *one* Reagan nominee to the Court: Jefferson Sessions of Alabama, who had made overtly racist comments as a district attorney. The overwhelming majority of nominees passed without a hitch. No, the Senate won't confirm any more Daniel Manions, but odds are that Reagan won't nominate anymore, either. Instead what he will do is nominate more Antonin Scalia types, judges of impeccable intellectual credentials who are some of the most conservative minds in the country. Manion didn't get into trouble because he is conservative: he did so because he is incompetent. The Democrats were able to get a near-majority against him because his credentials were so much in doubt. But most of Reagan's nominees have been more or less qualified, just very right-wing. Biden *et al* will have to get a majority that opposes Reagan's nominees on ideology alone. A difficult task, to say the least; will Senators like Stennis, Nunn, Chiles, and Johnston vote to turn down a conservative appointee? Add to that the reservations of many moderate and liberal senators who hesitate voting purely on ideology, and you can only forsee two more years of more Reagan judges. The power of appointment, after all, still resides in the executive branch.

Foreign policy is not very much more promising, despite the fact that Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island will replace Indiana's Richard Lugar as chairman. Presidents from Wilson on have complained about Congress eroding the presidential prerogative to make foreign policy, but Reagan will still have latitude — too much latitude — to subvert arms control, antagonize the Third World, and resort to exclusively military options when dealing with international problems. Congress may refuse funding for the *contras,* but Reagan can still drag his feet in the Contadora process, and there's very little the Democrats can do to stop him. This is a best-case scenario which assumes a unified and effective Democratic action on foreign affairs. But with Pell at the helm of Foreign Relations, best-case scenarios soon turn into wishful hypotheticals. *The Washington Monthly* has labeled Pell as one of the six worst legislators in the Senate, and it has a point: Pell is famous in the Senate (and in Washington) for what times seems like an incurable dilettantism and provincial, elitist outlook. He has dabbled in federal aid to education (he is the father of the Pell Grants), oceangraphic research, and now he has decided to focus on foreign policy. On a high-powered committee like Foreign Relations, which contains some of the most powerful and effective legislators in the Senate, it's far from certain that Pell will be able to control things: he simply may not have the expertise. One Washington journalist has remarked that "the senators will discussing major issues of American foreign policy, and Pell will bring in an anecdote about his nanny in Newport." Pell will also have to contend with Jesse Helms who, freed from his post as Agriculture Committee chairman, can concentrate on stirring up trouble

on Foreign Relations.

All of the preceding assumes, of course, that this past election is a harbinger of the future dynamics of American politics, and thus that the Democrats really are "back." Just as the result of 1980 election led too many to declare a Republican realignment dominated by the New Right, November fourth's tally is leading everybody in the opposite direction. Don't count out the Republicans just yet. The Democrats gained only five seats in the House—a ridiculously low number for a midterm election for a party out of power. The Republicans also picked up eight governorships. For a party that has been in power for six years to do so well is a remarkable achievement. For the Democrats to pick up only eight Senate seats when A) 22 of 33 up were Republican, when B) the economy is going soft nationally and is a disaster everywhere but the Northeast and California, and when C) a U.S.-Soviet summit has just ended in frustration, reveals that the party still has some serious changes to go through if it wants to recliam majority status. Franklin Roosevelt took a beating in 1938, too: the Democrats lost dozens of seats, and a coalition of Republicans and southern Democrats was able to stop the New Deal from continuing. But the Democrats held power as the majority party for another 42 years. Eight new Senate seats does not make a realignment.

If anything, the 1986 election heralds not the destruction of the Reagan revolution, but rather its *entrenchment*, albeit without some of its harder edges. The New Right may be stilled; but social conservatives will dominate the judciary for decades, and on national policy the terms of debate are unquestionably Reaganite, at least when compared with before 1980. The question now is now *whether* austerity, but whose. Nobody is talking about new initiatives to alleviate poverty, improve the environment, strengthen civil rights, or provide adequate health care to all Americans; the best that is hoped for is holding the line at the status quo. Optimistic Democrats may lay all the blame on the President's personality, but that personality—and the policies behind it—has permeated the direction of American political discussion. Just as Republicans were haunted for decades by memories of fireside chats and fearing only fear itself, Democrats may be hearing the soothing Hollywood delivery in their dreams for many years to come. ❑



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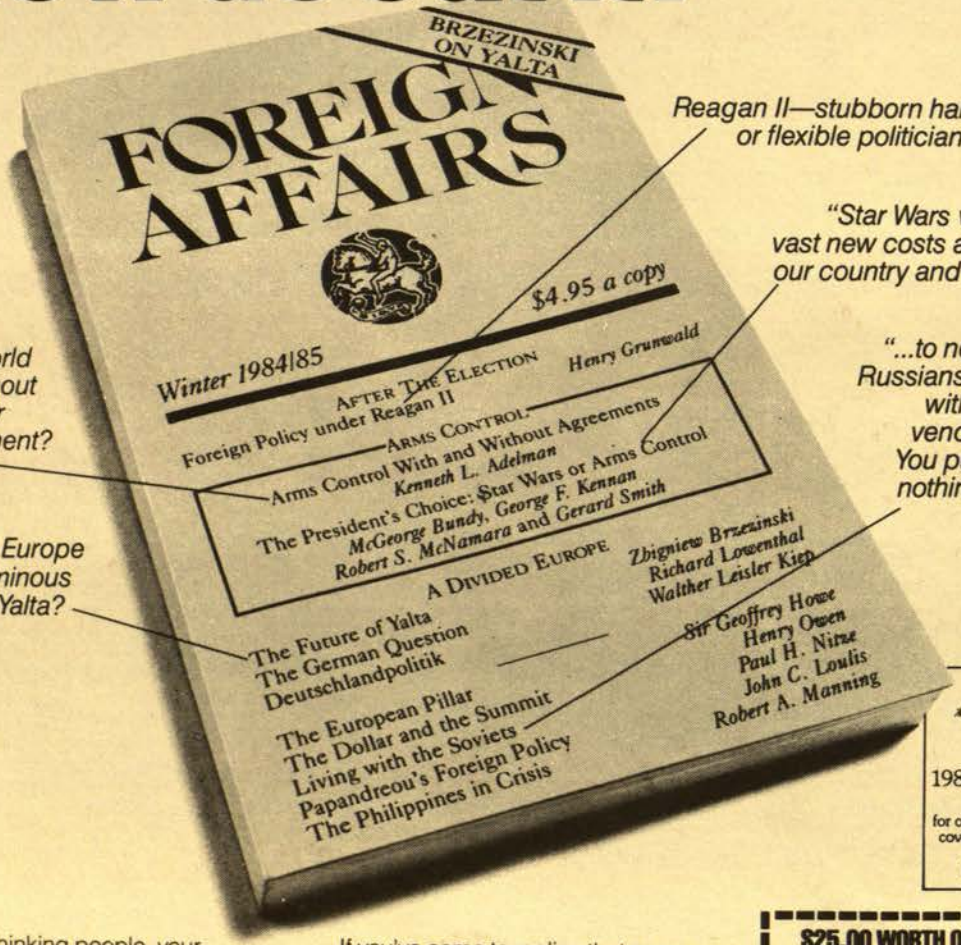

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