
PROFILE: JOHN GLENN

Sales pitch and economic policy of a middle-of-the road Malthusian

by Kathleen Klenetsky

A new political fraud is about to be perpetrated on the American electorate. On Oct. 16, the psychological manipulators who run the American film industry will make an intervention into the 1984 presidential election process with the gala Kennedy Center premiere of the widely publicized new movie, *The Right Stuff*.

Based on a book by pop writer Tom Wolfe on the first U.S. astronaut, particularly John Glenn, *The Right Stuff* is aimed explicitly at boosting Glenn's prospects for snaring the Democratic presidential nomination.

The Eastern Establishment is watching to see whether the film indeed causes the spectacularly boring Glenn to catch fire as a candidate. If it does, they will throw their weight behind his candidacy. Glenn already has the backing of an extremely influential wing of the British Freemasons, who have been exerting pressure on his behalf for the past year. Glenn himself is a 33rd-degree Mason.

Wolfe's book depicted Glenn as a self-righteous, self-seeking prig, but *The Right Stuff* makes him into an American hero in the old mold, a leader with a strong sense of morality, unsurpassed physical courage, and deep patriotism—in other words, true presidential material.

Produced by a subsidiary of Warner Brothers, the same organization which played such a key role in catapulting the grinning idiot Jimmy Carter into the White House, and directed by Philip Kaufman, whose film credits aptly include *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, the movie has already received huge pre-release publicity, including a cover story in *Newsweek* magazine. It is estimated that the overwhelming majority of the American electorate will have seen the film by the time they go to the polls in November 1984.

Clearly, the movie could help undercut the boost that current front-runner Fritz Mondale will get from the AFL-CIO and National Education Association endorsements early in October. Glenn already seems to be gaining on Mondale.

Yet anyone who thinks Glenn's surge represents a victory for the moderate wing of the Democratic Party is fooling himself. All it requires is a look at the *Congressional Record* to prove that Glenn's policies differ only in very minor respects from arch-liberal Mondale's. Take Glenn's stand on military issues, discussed in Part I of this profile (see *EIR*,

Sept. 27). Since he is a supporter of the nuclear freeze and non-proliferation of nuclear energy, and an opponent of both the MX and a beam-weapon defense system, a case could be made that Glenn is more anti-defense than Mondale! So much for the Eisenhower image the Ohio senator has been trying to cultivate.

Glenn's true policy agenda and political loyalties are revealed by his connection to the Trilateral Commission, the pet project of Henry Kissinger and David Rockefeller which ran the Carter administration. Glenn signed on with that august body in January 1978 and has consistently functioned as one of its prime mouthpieces in Congress.

'Volcker's doing the right thing'

Glenn's economic program is a straight Trilateral print-out. Despite his talk about rebuilding American industry, renewing the space program, beefing up education, and so forth, Glenn is a big supporter of the IMF and Fed Chairman Paul Volcker, the enemies of American economic development. Glenn strongly backed Volcker's reappointment to the Fed, claiming that "Volcker is the best person Reagan could have appointed to the post." He also has voted consistently for increased quotas to the IMF.

Glenn not only wants the second- and third-year tax cuts of the Reagan package rescinded, but also insists that new taxes must be levied. "We have to be honest with the American people," says campaign strategist Michael Wack. "We have to raise revenues." According to Wack, Glenn might endorse a version of the flat-tax, a scheme which originated at that bastion of right-wing free enterprise mania, the Hoover Institution.

Glenn's "solution" to the budget deficit is austerity and more austerity. Predictably, the Ohio senator advocates slashing the defense budget; in addition, he proposes to make big cuts in entitlement programs, including Social Security and Medicare, by implementing "more reasonable" cost-of-living adjustments.

Glenn is taking the same tack on medical care. While he claims to support high-technology health care, Glenn is one of the leading members of Congress pushing for health care "cost containment," a euphemism for slashing both the qual-

ity and accessibility of medical treatment.

The ranking Democrat on the Senate Special Committee on Aging, Glenn has initiated a staff study on how to reduce the country's health care bill. The measures he is pursuing are precisely those proposed by the insurance industry and its "right-to-die" front groups, including restructuring private health insurance plans to force participants to absorb a greater portion of their medical costs; finding ways to encourage the use of non-institutional care, such as home and community care; and expanding HMOs (health maintenance organizations) and other forms of pre-paid health care, where a premium is put on keeping treatment to a bare minimum. Glenn was one of the chief sponsors of a bill passed by Congress in August 1982 which permitted hospices to obtain Medicare funding. Aging Committee staff aides report that Glenn is "taking a serious look" at health care cost-cutting measures.

Although Glenn takes pains to differentiate himself from the "Atari Democrats," who openly say that the United States should chuck its troubled basic industries in favor of a post-industrial society, the Ohio Democrat has not come up with anything resembling an industrial recovery program. Among the few specific proposals he has issued on the subject, one calls for setting up a tripartite board of labor, government, and management to develop a national investment and labor policy—a suggestion which smacks of Mussolini-style corporatism—and the other would create a national retraining program for unemployed workers. This training trust fund would lend workers money for retraining, education, and relocation. The plan would be based on "local community control," said a Glenn aide, because "We don't want any bureaucrat in Washington deciding what kind of training a laid-off steel worker in Cleveland should get." Where that laid-off steel worker is going to get another job in the depressed U.S. economy is a question Glenn has not bothered to answer.

And if Glenn's domestic economic policy is founded on a commitment to austerity, his approach to the developing sector is genocidal.

'Third World must knuckle under'

Last January, Glenn took a trip to Ibero-America aimed primarily at investigating the possibility that nations in the region might form a debtors' cartel and declare a general debt moratorium. The senator met with top-level representatives of government, labor, and the private sector in Mexico, Venezuela, Peru, and Brazil. According to his top foreign policy aide, former CIA agent Carl Ford, "Glenn began every meeting he had with two questions: 'Are you forming a debtors' cartel?' and 'Are you going to pay the IMF?'"

Ford reported that Glenn came away from these meetings "alarmed" at the prospects that a debtors' cartel could indeed materialize, and confided that "Mexico would be the most likely country to lead the way." Glenn, said Ford, was "taken aback" by the "lack of seriousness" governments he visited

had shown in implementing the austerity measures required by the IMF as a condition for future loans. "Glenn was really struck by the lack of a crisis mentality, especially in Mexico, Brazil, and Venezuela. . . . We were especially struck by the Mexican attitude, where they've had to go through a stringent plan laid down by the IMF. They clearly don't have any intention of meeting the IMF requirements. . . . This just means that that next year, Mexico will have to go through a series of debt crises. When they try to borrow money from the international banks, they will finally realize that that won't be possible, at least until they knuckle under. That should inject some reality into their attitude!"

According to Ford, Glenn plans to make the international debt crisis "a major focus" of his presidential gambit, and has pulled together a group of experts to advise him on this and other international economic issues. Heading the group is Bob Hormats, a Kissinger protégé and former State Department functionary in both the Carter and Reagan administrations. Currently the assistant to Kissinger in the latter's capacity as an adviser to the New York investment bank of Goldman, Sachs, Hormats is also the executive director of David Rockefeller's Commission on Latin American debt, for which he is preparing a report on the subject.

Hormats has publicly stated that the solution to inflation involves "tighter fiscal and monetary policy" combined with ending environmental protection, health and safety regulations, minimum wages, agricultural price supports, and tariffs. He is also on record in favor of reducing reliance on energy-intensive forms of production, and specifically advocates "small-scale, labor-intensive" production modes for the Third World.

Glenn also relies on Hormats for advice on the "Japan problem," one of the candidate's bêtes noires in recent years. Glenn's sabotage of U.S. nuclear technology exports has not prevented him from loudly denouncing Japan for her aggressive marketing strategy. The former chairman of the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Glenn has embraced many of Hormats's proposals, including the revaluation of the yen, the elimination of barriers to import competition in the Japanese market, especially for manufactured goods, and "voluntary" export curbs as the means to reduce Japanese "export competition." Glenn has also endorsed so-called domestic-content legislation, a protectionist measure pushed by the steel and auto industries and unions. The measure, which would compel certain exports to the United States to contain American-manufactured parts, does not offer much help to ailing U.S. industries, but it will inflame existing U.S.-Japan tensions.

True presidential material? An alternative to Walter Mondale? Come on. Rather than trying to make a case that Glenn might somehow pull the nation out of the depression and reverse its strategic decline, Democrats should ask themselves whether their party, much less the country, can afford a replay of Jimmy Carter—even without the teeth.