

Eye on Washington by Nicholas F. Benton

DNC sets stage for Nunn candidacy

In keeping with recent revelations that Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) is the new up-and-coming favorite of the Trilateral Commission to become the Democratic presidential nominee for 1988, the Executive Committee of the Democratic National Committee met in Washington, D.C. in November to move the public image of the party further to the "right."

It is indicative of the incurable sickness of the current DNC leadership under Chairman Paul Kirk that the keynote speaker for the meeting was a pollster from CBS television. These hacks aren't concerned about issues—they are concerned about perceptions and image.

Paul Kirk says, "If moving to the right is what will get us votes, then that's what we're going to do." The party hacks cheer, because for them, votes mean jobs and perks.

Before my very eyes, the Democratic leadership made it clear at this meeting its utter disdain for constituency-based politics, especially the black voter. It was not only the committee's refusal to touch the racially-tinged party-splitting squabble in Chicago that is indicative. It was also the report from pollster Warren J. Mitofsky, director of the CBS News Elections and Survey Unit, that despite all his best efforts, Jesse Jackson did nothing to increase the net voter turnout for Democrats in 1984.

This comes as surprising news, and in days gone by it would have aroused great concern. It has two implications: 1) Jesse Jackson does not appeal to black voters—which is true, and re-

freshing to see confirmed by a pollster's data. 2) The Democratic Party leadership should not "waste its time" trying to appeal to the black voter in the future, since it doesn't produce results.

The DNC was also told that, after all the publicity and bipartisan support for a War on Drugs that led Congress to pass a multibillion-dollar anti-drug package in September, drugs was very low on the list of priorities of voters.

But if so, that is only because voters feel that this issue is no longer a major point of difference between parties and candidates.

Nonetheless, the DNC, again, chose to interpret the data to mean that issues especially of concern to inner-city minorities, like drugs, can be ignored.

So, what does the DNC want to focus on? Well, Mitofsky told them they need to recapture the youth vote—the 18- to-29-year-olds, who were the key to the Reagan landslides in 1980 and 1984. He was even more precise: Males in this age group like the ideas of the "Reagan Revolution."

In short, those who are for pulling the plug on their grandmothers to cut costs, who think that "entrepreneurship" means managing your own McDonald's franchise, playing lotto, and maybe peddling a little coke, are the ones the Democrats are designing their 1988 presidential campaign for.

Remember, they are against big industry, toxic wastes, and overpopulation in Africa, but they are also big on computers, all the "technetronic" stuff, and fiercely for saving the Free World from browned-skinned Soviet surrogates.

The DNC thinking is that the broken trade unionists of the "rust belt," the desperate farmers, and the inner-city minorities will "have no choice but to vote Democratic," so their con-

cerns can be ignored.

In Paul Kirk's twisted mind, the phoenix rising out of the Democratic ashes is a young, self-centered, post-industrial eunuch (not a faggot—they are definitely "out"). This is the kind of voter Sam Nunn, as well as a half a dozen other young Democratic potentials, were made for.

By the way, the DNC Executive Committee also increased its own powers at the meeting to insure that its scenario unfolds without a hitch. They voted their entire membership of 363 as automatic delegates to the 1988 Democratic convention, taking away slots formerly reserved for "uncommitted" delegates.

Senate committee to go after Merrill Lynch?

Sen. William Proxmire (D-Wis.), who will become the chairman of the Senate Banking Committee when the new Democratic-controlled Senate is sworn in next month, is reportedly a major opponent of "non-bank banks," and the interstate banking frenzy that is reducing the nation's banking industry to a handful of Eastern Establishment "megs."

But even though Proxmire's Rockefeller connections and his stand on many issues leave a lot to be desired, it could be very interesting if he really begins to probe Merrill Lynch and fellow corporate entities who are lobbying heavily to retain loopholes in the laws that allow them to unfairly compete against all but the biggest banks in the country.

In a time when drug money-laundering and international arms trafficking have become very unpopular, Merrill Lynch might not be so anxious to have Senator Proxmire poking around into all of its highly diversified activities.