

Elephants & Donkeys by Kathleen Klenetsky

Jackson and the Democrats' dilemma

Jesse Jackson made it official on Labor Day: He will be a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination. Jackson's not-unexpected declaration coincided with a *Time* magazine poll, showing the political associate of Nazi-admirer Louis Farrakhan with the highest ranking of the Democratic field: 26%.

That high of 26% underscores the dilemma facing the Democratic Party: It's moved so far left, most voters consider it beyond the pale. According to Al From, director of the Democratic Leadership Council, a group established by Sen. Sam Nunn (Ga.) and former Gov. Chuck Robb (Va.), the Democrats have "ceded to the Republicans the winning issue of economic growth, opportunity, and strength."

"No single factor contributed more to the party's electoral decline than its identification with ideas, causes, and values foreign to most Americans," From said in an address at the American Political Science Association convention in Chicago Sept. 3.

"If our candidates spend most of their time before audiences of isolationists or pacifists in Iowa, they are likely to take positions that hurt them with key swing voters in the general election." From also criticized "elements in the party who are estranged from its mainstream roots, exhibiting an affinity for cultural radicalism, at home, and an extreme reluctance for the United States to exert its power abroad."

Trump card— but whose is it?

The latest (tentative) entry into the Republican Party presidential race is New York construction king Donald Trump. Talk about chutzpah! Trump's qualifications boil down to owning big chunks of prime New York City real estate, and a hefty slice of the mob-linked Resorts International gambling casino in Atlantic City.

Rumors have been circulating for months that Trump was eyeing a possible presidential run. They took on substance in early September, when Trump let it be known that he had accepted several speaking engagements in New Hampshire, and at the same time shelled out \$100,000 to purchase full-page ads in the *New York Times* and other key newspapers, assailing the Reagan administration's current Persian Gulf military deployment.

The ads claimed that, "The world is laughing at America's politicians as we protect ships we don't own, carrying oil we don't need, destined for allies who don't help," and suggested that the United States slap a "tax" on Japan and other American allies to pay for the deployment.

Trump's particularly nasty and uninformed attack on Western strategic interests, came just weeks after he traveled to Moscow, to hold preliminary negotiations with Mikhail Gorbachov and other Russian officials on building some of his trademark glitzy hotels in Red Square. (Apparently, like most of the Democratic presidential hopefuls, Trump thinks it necessary to get the Kremlin's green light before running for the White House.)

Could it be that Trump is trying to curry favor with Moscow for his presidential bid (and maybe get a good deal on his proposed Soviet business ventures in the bargain) by trying to rally public opinion against the Per-

sian Gulf deployment, a deployment Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger has identified as crucial to prevent the further spread of Soviet influence in the Mideast?

Robertson on the skids

Other Republican contenders are falling by the wayside. Paul Laxalt has bowed of the race, ostensibly because he couldn't touch George Bush on the fundraising front. (Bush has already accrued a whopping \$10 million war chest, leaving all his competitors, Democrats and Republicans, in the dust.)

Now the news comes that televangelist Pat Robertson has put his announcement plans on hold. Robertson said last year he would formally enter the race Sept. 17 if he got 3 million signatures endorsing his candidacy.

But he's fallen far short of that goal. As of early August, he had gathered only 1 million signatures, and on Sept. 3, campaign spokesman Scott Hatch indicated that Robertson would almost certainly delay formally announcing whether he will become a candidate until October.

Sources say that Robertson, who has reaped the whirlwind of the PTL and other scandals which broke this year, may end up calling it quits. He certainly hasn't learned much from the Irangate scandal: In a speech to a Republican group in Miami Sept. 4, Robertson encouraged Nicaraguan Contra leaders to form a government-in-exile, and asserted that the key to a "free Nicaragua" includes monetary aid outside normal government channels.

Who knows? Maybe Robertson entertains thoughts of running for President of Nicaragua someday, now that his prospects in the United States look so poor.