



The Phyllis Schlafly Report

VOL. 21, NO. 12, SECTION 1

BOX 618, ALTON, ILLINOIS 62002

JULY, 1988

America's Future Is Conservative

Back in the 1950s, conservatives' own self-image was that of a beleaguered minority battling at the margins against a liberalism that was the wave of the future. Conservative activists were plagued with a perennial prognosis of defeat. "Conservative" was then a label accepted by only a small minority of ideologues and writers, but not by successful politicians. Critics of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal had to face the reality that he had been four times elected President. Whittaker Chambers was widely quoted as saying that, when he renounced Communism and broke with his past, he believed that he was leaving the winning side and joining the losing side.

In 1960, Barry Goldwater proclaimed a startling new thought — that conservatives have a conscience. His famous best-selling book, *The Conscience of a Conservative*, captured the imagination and retained the loyalty of 27 million Americans despite the media's vicious smearmongering during the presidential campaign of 1964.

After the massive Goldwater defeat in 1964 and during most of the 1970s, conservatives suffered from a malady called the Goldwater Syndrome, which taught that "Goldwater's defeat proved that no one as conservative as Barry can ever be elected President." No conservative leader sounded a "certain trumpet," and most of the faithful were resigned to the conventional wisdom of the day that the American people would never elect anyone more conservative than Richard Nixon or Gerald Ford.

In their hearts, conservatives knew their philosophy was right; but they also "knew" they could not win. They believed they were just a remnant of the righteous, waging a holding action against the inevitable takeover by Orwellian totalitarianism in 1984.

On March 22, 1979, a volunteer organization called Eagle Forum staged a gala at the Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C., and proclaimed victory in its seven-year political battle against the Equal Rights Amendment. The celebration was called "The End of an ERA." The 1,200 persons who attended cheered what they called the constitutional death of ERA on that day which marked the expiration of the seven-year time limit set in the original text. The Washington press corps was shocked that these upstarts had the gall to announce they had "won" when the prevailing

conventional wisdom was that ERA would inevitably become part of the U.S. Constitution during the time extension voted by Congress.

With hindsight, we can see that March 22, 1979, was not "the end of ERA"; the ERA battle continued until the expiration of the extension period on June 30, 1982. But March 22, 1979, was the end of the era of conservative defeats and defeatism. The pro-family movement which demolished ERA taught conservatives that, indeed, it is possible for the grassroots to defeat the combined power of the entire liberal political and media establishment.

This new conservative/pro-family coalition, filled with enthusiasm about its discovery and hopes for the future, went on to elect Ronald Reagan and the conservative Republican Senate in 1980. Ronald Reagan, who is just as authentically and intuitively conservative as Barry Goldwater, shook the movement loose from the Goldwater Syndrome. Reagan "mainstreamed" conservatism and transformed the political scene so that aspiring young politicians who want to get ahead now know they must be conservative in order to win. Politicians began to avoid the label "liberal."

Ronald Reagan turned a decisive corner in American history. Despite his Administration's many defects and might-have-beens, he led Americans to adopt fundamental changes in attitudes. The most important is that conservatives now know they can win and that they are the majority. Twenty-five years ago, Soviet boss Nikita Khrushchev, presiding over Communism on the march, confidently proclaimed, "History is on our side." Today, history is on the side of conservatives all over the world, and they know it.

The 54-million-American, 49-state majority that Reagan rang up in 1984 completed the "mainstreaming" of conservatism, and made liberal an orphan word that few politicians want to claim. The liberals are now in disarray and leaderless.

Did Ronald Reagan really turn millions of liberals into conservatives? Not likely. What he did was to articulate the many facets of conservatism and allow people who are conservative in different areas of life, and for different reasons, to say, "Ronald Reagan speaks for me." "Conservative" has become a word with which the majority of Americans now feel comfortable. In politics, it is now "in" to call yourself conservative.

What's Ahead for Conservatism?

Is the Reagan Administration the harbinger of a conservative tidal wave that will generate its own momentum through the 1990s and beyond? Or will it be merely foam on the ocean of history that dissolves when it meets the real world on the shore?

The liberals have been busily predicting that Reaganism is just a passing phenomenon. During the last year of the Reagan Administration, television and newspaper pundits have been vying with each other in writing premature obituaries. However, reports of the coming crackup of conservatism are, like Mark Twain's famous quip about reports of his death, greatly exaggerated.

The *New York Times* looked at the primaries in the spring of 1988 and asserted that conservatives are "deeply divided over who should carry the standard of the coalition that Ronald Reagan helped build." On the contrary, conservatives are less deeply divided over who should be their standard bearer than in any contested nomination in our lifetime.

The televised debates starring the six Republican Presidential hopefuls not only proved the availability of six attractive candidates with personal leadership, ability, experience, and voter appeal, but also showed that all are determined to carry forward the conservative agenda. Conservative willingness to work for whichever candidate wins the 1988 presidential nomination is unique in the annals of Republican politics.

None of the extreme loyalties and bitter animosities that deeply divided the Republican Party in previous pre-Convention posturing are evident in 1988. Today we see none of the emotional commitment for or against a cause or a candidate that characterized the battles of Ford vs. Reagan in 1976, Nixon vs. Reagan vs. Rockefeller in 1968, Goldwater vs. Rockefeller/Scranton in 1964, Nixon vs. Rockefeller in 1960, and Eisenhower vs. Taft in 1952.

All six 1988 Republican Presidential candidates ran as conservatives; none ran as a liberal or even as a moderate. To those who battled Nelson Rockefeller's well-financed and media-backed campaign to take over the Republican National Conventions in 1960, 1964, and 1968, not to speak of similar efforts by the Thomas Dewey crowd in pre-1960 Republican Conventions, it seems that the whole universe has shifted.

Republican liberals and moderates have almost disappeared from sight. The power center of the Republican Party has moved right — and west — and the Chase Manhattan Bank crowd can't even field a candidate.

In 1964 the diehard Goldwaterites wore campaign buttons proclaiming "I'd rather fight than switch." It's obvious now that all the switching has been done by the liberals. This change cannot be explained just by the personalities involved. America has had a reformation of the entire national approach to solving problems.

Starting with Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, and flowering under Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society, it had become pervasive for politicians to parlay any social "problem" into a "crisis" and then promote an expensive federal solution. Invariably, it was, "let's set up a new agency, start a new spending program, and build a new bureaucracy."

That's not the first thing people — or even politicians — think of any more. Americans have soured on the whole notion that government can solve our problems. An increasing percentage believe what conservatives have always argued, that government is not working on the solution at all — because government itself is part of the problem. The federal deficit has had one good effect. It has made it very difficult for the liberals to come up with new spending programs, much as they lust for an ever-expanding bureaucracy.

On top of the general disillusionment with federal omniscience, the Reagan Administration provided a stunning demonstration of the fact that tax cuts promote economic growth and the creation of new jobs. That's the best possible way to wage a "war on poverty."

The *New York Times* has been trying to fracture the conservative movement and set it at war against itself by asserting that the conservative coalition "is straining under the weight of the contradictions inherent in any broad-based political alliance." On the contrary, conservatives of all ancestries (economic, social, and foreign policy) have learned to co-exist with one another in harmony and to be tolerant of other groups that support the same candidate for different reasons.

The *Times* keeps hashing over the hoary hypothesis that conservatives are split on "whether the Reagan Administration was right in its early years to emphasize its tax-cutting agenda over such social issues as prayer in schools and limitations on abortion." That so-called division was a media strawman when it was first invented in 1981, and it is completely irrelevant today.

The Reagan tax cut of 1981 was the most important and essential move of his Administration because it resulted in the creation of 15 million new jobs in the private sector. There is every reason to believe that conservatism is the wave of the future so long as in 1988 we elect politicians who have learned the lesson of how to "just say no" to tax increases and big government. On that issue, our choice is clear. George Bush has pledged his opposition to all tax increases, while Michael Dukakis just signed a 1988 tax increase.

The Many Facets of Conservatism

In the post-Reagan era, the conservative movement lacks a leader of Reagan's charm and charisma. But Ronald Reagan did not create the movement; the movement created him, and his exit from the White House should be viewed as just a milestone in the maturation of the movement.

Without Reagan's communications skill, conservatives will have to do a better job of identifying and cooperating with the different segments of their movement. If they don't, conservatives could be outwitted by the liberals even though they lack a rational ideology and suffer from an awesome leadership vacuum. Liberals could regain power by using their established mechanisms of control in the media, the bureaucracy, the courts, and the election process.

It is essential that conservatives know who they are, where they are, and what their goals are. Even more important, conservatives need to understand that the old image and definition of conservatism has long since been overtaken by the political dynamics of the Reagan years.

The reality today is that American conservatives come in (not 59 different flavors like ice cream) but several strains that have different economic, religious, ethnic, and political ancestries. These strains definitely can merge into a definable sense of purpose and politics, as well as support of a presidential candidate who most closely speaks their language.

The neatest summation of the broad reach of the new conservatism was given recently by a liberal columnist. He said, "When it comes to hard drugs for 13-year-olds, everybody's conservative and nobody is liberal."

For those who want to take a look at the philosophical foundations of this conclusion, a good place to start is a new book published by the Free Congress Research and Education Foundation called *Cultural Conservatism: Toward a New National Agenda*. It presents the many facets of conservatism today, in the family, education, economics, welfare, the environment, religion, law enforcement, the military, and community preservation.

This little volume is based on a recognition of the importance of culture, in the broad sense, as a formulator of our self-image as a people, and of our expectations for ourselves, society, government and the future. The book is not a wild flight into the clouds of philosophical posturing; it is a practical exposition of how cultural underpinnings can translate into political policies.

Do we, as a people, continue to adhere to the work ethic that built America, or are we a play-now/pay-later people? What are our accepted norms of behavior in terms of respect for life, for the family, for the schools, and for the way government treats the helpless, the wrongdoer, and the taxpayer?

This book spells out a political agenda for policymaking by those who want to build on the broad conservative realignment that occurred during the Reagan years. It is a good springboard for brainstorming among those who want to keep the Reagan Revolution alive. It will help George Bush and other candidates to understand the political dynamics they need to harness in order to ride to victory on election day.

Iran-Contra is Political Not Criminal

The media keep trying to hang the albatross of "Iran-Contra" around George Bush's neck. Give the guy a break! He didn't make any of the decisions, and Don Regan's book proves that Bush was "out of the loop" on this issue.

The \$4 million dollar hearings, the 26-member committee, the 709-page report produced not a shred of evidence of a constitutional crisis, a conspiracy, a coverup, or a collapse of confidence. All that ranting and raving, posturing and polemicizing, was much ado about nothing. The real Iran-Contra issue is the aggrandizing attempt by Congress to take the conduct of foreign policy away from the President by passing vaguely worded and constantly changing laws about Central America.

The Democrats issued a highly partisan and adversarial report trying to claim that the Reagan Administration acted in violation of or disrespect for "the law." The Republican report showed that the Administration did not violate the Boland Amendment and did not intend to violate it, but proceeded legally in both its Iran initiative and its encouragement of others to send aid to the Contras.

The principal issues in the Iran-Contra affair were not legal issues, not constitutional issues, not ethical or moral issues, but simply political judgments and policy decisions. One can disagree with and second-guess any of the Reagan decisions, but trying to turn them into a criminal prosecution is wrong.

In most other countries, when one faction carries out a coup and captures the reins of government, the losers have to flee the country because the penalty of losing is usually to be assassinated or imprisoned. It would be very sad if the United States sunk to a situation where, when one party achieves ascendancy, it simply sets up a televised star chamber proceeding and criminalizes the losers' decisions so they can be prosecuted and sent to prison.

The Republican report called this "interbranch intimidation." It can also be called a perversion of the political process.

Less to Dukakis than Meets the Eye

There is an old political story about the candidate who offered to make a deal with his opponent. "You promise not to tell any lies about me," he said, "and I'll promise not to tell the truth about you."

It's time for George Bush to start telling the truth about Michael Dukakis. The truth is that there is far less to him than meets the eye of the nightly television viewer. The much-acclaimed "Massachusetts miracle" should be called the "Massachusetts mirage." The economic recovery that came to Massachusetts in the late 1970s and early 1980s was due to Proposition 2½, a major tax cut which Dukakis opposed because liberals always oppose tax reductions. The economic growth that resulted from Proposition 2½ even happened during the years when Dukakis was not Governor, having been thrown out of office because of the high taxes during his 1974-1978 regime.

Since Dukakis returned to the Governor's chair in 1983, the rate of growth in jobs has been 20% less than the rest of the country. In the last 12 months, Massachusetts has lost 17,400 industrial jobs, the steepest decline of any state.

Now, Massachusetts is facing a state revenue shortage of at least \$600 million over the next two years, and there is no way Dukakis can present himself to the voters in 1988 as a manager who can balance the budget. He just signed a new tax increase, thus bolstering his state's nickname Taxachusetts.

Dukakis' record shows that he is a typical tax and tax/spend and spend liberal. Since 1983 he has raised state spending 62%, the highest of any state. His principal talent seems to be using taxpayers' money to build his own political power base.

Since 1983, Dukakis increased the state payroll by 10,000 fulltime jobs, the largest increase in Massachusetts history, and raised the pay of the average state employee 51%. In addition, Dukakis made widespread use of state funds to reward his political pals by paying consultants' fees and giving grants to provide state services. For example, Dukakis awarded a consulting contract for \$275,000 to an investment banking firm whose partners had raised \$275,000 for Dukakis' campaign. Wasn't that a coincidence!

Investigative reporter Warren Brookes, who has monitored Dukakis for ten years, has reported numerous examples

of how Dukakis' cronies or campaign fundraisers wrote lucrative state contracts and then awarded them to their business associates. In one case, a member of Dukakis' cabinet voted to give a \$3.7 million low-interest loan to a housing project in his own wife's name. State Inspector General Joseph Barresi, a Democrat, said that, under Dukakis, the state "routinely enters into large ill-defined endless contracts in which genuine competition is illusory and money is no object."

Dukakis' choice of personnel is curious. His education adviser was convicted for giving away \$80,000 in bogus consulting contracts (known as ed-scam). Dukakis' choice to head the Metropolitan District Police Commission was convicted for stealing and selling police examinations and answer sheets (known as exam-scam). Dukakis' number-two man in public safety was forced to resign after FBI documents revealed his ties to a convicted loan shark. Dukakis appointed a man to a \$54,000-a-year college professorship who had paid \$10,000 in hush money to the family of one student and settled out of court a suit brought by the family of another student.

Dukakis, Furloughs and Rapists

The liberal clique has started yapping again about the so-called "gender gap." That's an alleged phenomenon invented by public opinion pollsters (the same ones whose predictions are so frequently wrong) and popularized by the anti-Reagan, anti-Bush media.

Use of the term in 1984 and 1986 was supposed to translate as "the majority of women won't vote for Reagan and/or Republicans." The term has been revived in 1988 to mean "the majority of women won't vote for George Bush."

When women find out about Michael Dukakis' views on criminals vs. victims in general and on rapists in particular, it is likely that the gender gap will evaporate in a puff of smoke.

Dukakis is an enthusiastic supporter of the unique Massachusetts prison furlough program. Until the law was changed this year despite Dukakis' objection, Massachusetts was the only state to grant furloughs to first-degree murderers sentenced to life imprisonment without parole.

A furlough is a pass that allows a prisoner to go free for a few days without supervision. This program, largely unknown to the general public, was designed for specific limited purposes, such as to get medical care not available in prison, to attend the funeral of a close relative, or to look for a job during the last few months before a prisoner's scheduled release or parole.

Although a majority of states have furlough programs (California, New York and Illinois do not), nine do not allow furloughs for first-degree murderers at all, and the rest allow a furlough for a first-degree murderer only if he has first received a commutation or parole. The Massachusetts Legislature had second thoughts about this furlough program and passed a bill in 1976 to deny furloughs to first degree murderers, but Governor Dukakis vetoed it.

William Horton, Jr., was serving a sentence of life imprisonment without parole in a Massachusetts prison after being convicted of robbing a 17-year-old gas station attendant in 1974, brutally stabbing him 19 times, and stuffing his body

into a 30-gallon trash can. Since Massachusetts has no death penalty (Dukakis vetoed a death penalty bill a few weeks earlier), Horton received the toughest sentence possible.

Horton was given a Massachusetts furlough in June 1986, and he took advantage of the opportunity to escape and leave the state. On April 3, 1987, Horton broke into a Maryland home and terrorized a man and woman for 12 hours. Horton tied up the man, robbed him, pistol-whipped and kicked him, and cut him 22 times across the middle of his body. Horton dragged the woman upstairs, kept her tied up for four hours, and raped her twice.

Maryland found Horton guilty of 13 crimes and sentenced him to two life terms plus 85 years. The sentencing judge stated, "With all due respect to the citizens of our sister state, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, I'm not prepared to take the chance that Mr. Horton might again be furloughed or otherwise released. ... [Horton] now belongs to the state of Maryland."

A Lawrence, Massachusetts newspaper became interested in the story but was stonewalled by the Dukakis administration's refusal to permit public access to information on the circumstances of Horton's record and furlough. Prison officials said they were protecting prisoners' privacy rights.

The newspaper stories, however, activated the Massachusetts Legislature. At a public hearing, victims told how other murderers had committed heinous crimes, including rape, while on Massachusetts furloughs.

The public was shocked when a prison official admitted that in Massachusetts a sentence of "life without parole" is meaningless. After ten years, a lifer in that state is routinely transferred to minimum security and made eligible for furloughs.

The sister of the murdered gas station attendant then started a petition campaign under the name Citizens Against Unsafe Society (CAUS). When she and other female victims of murderers-on-furlough encountered Governor Dukakis, he warned them that they were "not going to change my mind."

The CAUS women set out to gather the 50,525 certified voter signatures needed in order to put the issue on the ballot in a November 1988 referendum, and they succeeded in getting them by the December 1987 deadline. In the face of this voice from the grassroots, the Massachusetts Legislature in April 1988 overwhelmingly passed a bill to prohibit furloughs for murderers.

The issue isn't dead, however, because it's clear that Dukakis didn't want to sign the law and did so very reluctantly. He has never apologized to or expressed compassion for the victims of Massachusetts-murderers-on-furlough. At the present time, there are 76 convicted criminals (including 10 murderers and 9 rapists) who are missing as a result of being released on furloughs and similar programs during Dukakis' administration.

The Phyllis Schlafly Report

Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002
ISSN0556-0152

Published monthly by The Eagle Trust Fund, Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002. Second Class Postage Paid at Alton, Illinois. Postmaster: Address Corrections should be sent to the Phyllis Schlafly Report, Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002.

Subscription Price: \$15 per year. Extra copies available: 50 cents each; 4 copies \$1; 30 copies \$5; 100 copies \$10.