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Commentary: Texas

THE NEED FOR A MODERATE INFLUENCE

by Bob Sobel

"Listen, Bob, we appreciate your efforts in Texas, but quite frankly, we don't want John Tower running someone against Javits in New York. We prefer to have nothing to do with Texas Republicans." The year was 1969 and the speaker was an aide to Sen. Jacob Javits. At the time, I replied, "I believe it is important for moderate-progressive Republicans all over the country to establish cooperative lines of communication. I feel that planning for the future is necessary and look to public figures like Sen. Javits for leadership."

The meeting ended abruptly at that point. Since that time, Paul Priddy, a longtime Texas Republican activist, and I have tried to get the Rockefeller people to take a more active role in constructing a moderate-progressive movement around the country. We have written dozens of letters urging Rockefeller to become more involved with the grassroots efforts of other Republicans, but 90 percent of this correspondence remains unacknowledged.

My purpose is not to diminish the credibility of Jacob Javits or Nelson Rockefeller. They have been extremely able public servants and their aides have been similarly worthy of high praise. Rather, I seek to show how difficult it is to interest moderate-progressive leadership in a nationwide political effort. The disinclination of a Javits or a Rockefeller have been equally applicable to other Republicans. The trouble is that this leadership doesn't lead, nor does it inspire broad voter participation.

Right-wing Republicans have taken quite a different attitude. Their leadership is the nucleus for a team effort, which draws on the energies of the rank and file from every section of the country. Whether through a Reagan campaign, the American Conservative Union, or the Young Americans for Freedom, their voices are loud, impressive, and united---so much so that moderate Republicans are easily intimidated by the possibility of a conservative backlash.

Much of this fear of conservatives is really self-induced. Moderate progressives are brainwashed by their own imaginary "southern strategy." They have come to believe that by being genteel and undemonstrative, the conservative opposition will become more compromising, more conciliatory. Even if that were the net effect, the GOP pendulum for "acceptability" has already swung too far to the right. The conservative fringe continues to remain firm in its demand for ideological purity.

It will take a lot more than position papers and rhetoric for moderates to emerge with an effective challenge to conservatives. To be successful, they will have to organize their politics into a team effort from the grassroots up, cooperate with those outside their immediate demographic area, answer their progressive mail, meet and encourage supporters, and not underestimate the importance of any Republican constituency.

In our correspondence, Paul Priddy and I have repeatedly said that if the influence of right-wing Republicans

in Texas were reduced, the national character of the GOP would moderate. Letters written to President Ford and Donald Rumsfeld cautioned the administration not to misjudge the importance of Texas in its impact on the national Republican scene. Our predictions proved accurate. When during the presidential primaries, it appeared that Reagan would soon be out of the running because of primary losses in some Eastern states, it was Texas which then revitalized the Reagan effort, delivering to him 100 delegates in a complete sweep.

Communication is essential. No moderate national Republican leader has shown any interest in whether a moderate Republican dialogue existed in Texas. Neither has anyone shown any interest in building a viable, moderate grassroots force. It was this indifference which allowed conservatives to run unchallenged in Texas Republican primaries and gave Reagan 100 delegates.

The attitude of the national moderate Republican leadership has been to stay within their own safe political enclaves---elsewhere compromising, acquiescing to, and supporting the lesser of Republican unacceptables. Sure, there was always Nelson Rockefeller and his influence. But that has really been the problem. We expected too much from Rockefeller and too little from other Republicans.

Texas moderates have long been experienced with indifference. They are accustomed to a dialogue between establishment (Dallas) and hard-rock (Houston) conservatives. There is never any cohesive opposition to conservative views. The predominant pattern is acquiescence. A Bob Sobel, a Paul Priddy, a David Reagan, an Alan Steelman, or another moderate may come forward with viable alternatives but they are the exceptions rather than the rule.

Yet, conservatives pay a price for their dominance in the Texas GOP: They continue to lose to Democrats. And when you compound party inactivity with right-wing extremism, the prospects for Republican success in 1978 are feeble. Without the help and influence of moderate Republicans, the party cannot make any meaningful inroads in Texas politics.

The hard fact is that the GOP must become relevant to the needs of people rather than to the needs of special in-

terests. Republicans cannot win when 96 percent of the black electorate opt for the Democratic ticket and Mexican-Americans vote Democratic in similarly massive numbers. Projecting an image which is anti-consumer, anti-environment, neurotically anti-labor, anti-just-about-everything in social and health programs...and then to expect a majority of the voters to favor Republican candidates is absurd. Exceeding the bounds of moderation and trying to make events fit doctrinaire solutions is a death wish. It makes the survival of the Republican Party as an effective spokesperson for the free enterprise system very doubtful. Nationally, the party has dwindled to about 20 percent of the electorate. In Texas, it is hardly in the ball game.

Are there any public figures who might shape a viable posture for Texas Republicans. I believe that John Connally, George Bush, and Anne Armstrong could help. They have special qualities which attract people, and they carry as well the weight of national stature. Although they have been functioning under conservative auspices, I am hopeful that they would be open to other views.

James Baker III, the Ford campaign manager who was recently suggested as a candidate for chairman of the Republican National Committee, is the sort of leader Texas Republicans should encourage. He is competent, credible, and his rise to national prominence is the most encouraging recent development in the Texas GOP. It is important that his talents not be lost and that he be encouraged by out-of-state moderate Republican leaders to remain active in Texas politics.

Right now, Republican prospects for 1978 are not good. Gov. Dolph Briscoe (D) is well entrenched and has indicated he will seek reelection---even promising not to impose any new taxes for as long as he remains governor. Republican gubernatorial prospects include hard-line conservatives Hank Grover, who lost to Briscoe in 1972, and Ray Barnhart, Reagan's statewide leader---or an establishment conservative like State GOP Chairman Ray Hutchinson or U.S. Rep. James Collins. But the Republican crisis remains: Will a courageous, moderate-progressive Republican come forward as a candidate. Will Republicans of like views boldly come forward to support him/her? And will he/she get help from out of state Republicans?

Whoever wins the gubernatorial primary must be sufficiently viable to attract independents, minorities, some of labor and Democrats to finish first in November. Without such support, the GOP nominee is certain to lose. Gov. Briscoe is vulnerable---but not to another conservative. That principle holds true to other Democratic officeholders and Republican aspirants. In the senatorial race, John Tower is in serious trouble with his own party as well as with Democrats. Ironically,

his best chance for retaining his seat lies in a shift to more moderate policies. But without such a moderate-progressive influence, the Texas GOP will continue to stagnate. ■

Contributer Note: Bob Sobel was an unsuccessful candidate against Ray Barnhart for Republican leader of Harris County.

Politics: Texas

TOWER'S TEXAS HITCH

While there has been some speculation that Democratic Attorney General John Hill might challenge Gov. Dolph Briscoe for renomination in 1978, most of the early interest and speculation has centered on Sen. John Tower's seat. Almost assuredly, Tower will face a Democratic liberal or moderate---thereby cutting the advantage he gained in 1962 and 1966 from Democratic liberals who were more intent on taking over their party than winning a Senate seat. And since George McGovern will not be on the Democratic ticket in 1978, Tower cannot count on a Republican presidential landslide to help pull him into office. Furthermore, since Tower's intraparty politics have alienated Texan Reaganites,

he has lost the enthusiasm that his earlier "wunderkind" image wrought among fellow Republicans.

In short, 1978 could be a very tough year for Texas' tiny senator. One reason cited for U.S.Rep. Barbara Jordan's difficulties in winning (or losing) a Carter cabinet post was her ambition to succeed Tower. Other Democratic office-climbers include Attorney General Hill, Land Commissioner Bob Armstrong, State Board of Insurance Chairman Joe Christie, and U.S.Reps. Robert Krueger and Charles Wilson. Krueger and Wilson seem to be the most enthusiastic runners after Tower's seat at this point.

In an article in the January Texas Monthly, however, Griffin Smith, Jr., argues that Tower's primary problems lie with the GOP. Tower has gone through a three-stage evolution on Capitol Hill, according to Smith, from right-wing spear-carrier to Administration adjunct to legislative craftsman. While Tower's legislative impact has risen over the years, his political impact within his own party at home has fallen. Part of this can be attributed to his decision to eschew the right-wing knighthood that has been so enthusiastically sought by men like Sen. Jesse Helms or U.S.Rep. Phil Crane. That sort of knighthood appeals to the Harris County (Houston) crowd in Texas GOP politics, and Tower has become inextricably linked with the more establishment Dallas crowd. Smith writes:

Three reasons emerge for Tower's failure to assume the mantle of American conservative leadership. The first, evidenced by his mature Senate role, is that he wants to be a team player---and that is incompatible with the independence required of an ideological standard-bearer. The second is that he



has an ambivalent attitude toward leadership: the trials and tribulations of guiding other people appeal to some men more than others, and Tower has never been comfortable being a Leader with a capital L. He lacks, for one thing, the last full measure of egotism a successful leader usually has; for another, he surely senses that the need for a soft drink create has lessened his chances from the start. His feelings toward the job are summed up in his slightly disdainful description of it as 'The Pope of Conservatism.' Good Methodists (he is the son of a Methodist minister) have no use for popes.

Tower's failure to adequately back Sen. Hank Grover's gubernatorial bid in 1972 has not been forgotten by the Houston crowd. His apostasy was, of course, compounded by his support for Gerald Ford in the 1976 Texas primary. The Houstonites ability to attract Wallaceites to the GOP will naturally tend to decrease the influence of the Dallas or country club set. Tower is in the dubious position of living literally and figuratively in the shadow of John Connally's Republican shadow while watching apprehensively for retribution from a Houston-style conservative like former U.S. Rep. Ron Paul, Harris County GOP Chairman Ray Barnhart or Midland Mayor Ernie

Angelo. Even were one of these to best Tower in a primary, they would hardly have a chance in the November election.

Meanwhile, argues Smith, "Whomever the Democrats pick will find Tower no pushover. He has been campaigning quietly but diligently since 1972--- a marked change from his earlier habit of letting things slide between election years. His strength in normally Democratic territory, especially the rural areas, should not be underestimated. He has not actively antagonized nearly as many people outside the Republican party as he has inside. As late as last October, statewide polls were showing him with a 2.5 to 1 approval rating."

Like his Senate predecessor, Tower has a reputation for a roving eye for females. Says Tower: "My best friends tend to be women. That's supposed to be characteristic of us Libras." Like Lyndon Johnson, he won his first Senate election on something of a fluke. Like the late President, Tower has alienated a significant segment of his own party---and stands in danger of losing his nomination. It may be that 10 years after Lyndon Johnson ended his political career, John Tower may celebrate or mourn a similar milestone. ■

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Politics: RNC

CHOOSING A NEW NATIONAL CHAIRMAN

"Haven't we got a great bunch of choices. It's typical of the moderates. They wait until it's too late and end up with a bunch of conservatives," observed one moderate Republican state chairman about the selection of alternatives for chairman of the Republican National Committee.

Republican moderates did indeed seem to fumble the election. When Indiana GOP Chairman Thomas Milligan failed to catch fire as a candidate, moderates rallied at the last minute behind former Ford campaign manager James Baker. As quickly as President Ford and other moderates coalesced behind Baker, he dropped out of the race. The timing could hardly have been more disastrous; a letter from House Republican Conference Chairman John Anderson to colleagues endorsing Baker, for example, arrived after Baker's withdrawal. Northeastern

moderates also went out on a limb behind Baker. When he withdrew, northeasterners began a holding operation behind Connecticut State Chairman Frederick K. Biebel and midwesterners backed Ohio State Chairman Kent B. McGough. When Biebel declined to formally enter the race, moderate support virtually disintegrated entirely. Former White House aide Arthur A. Fletcher, for example, received 22 votes to McGough's 20 on the first ballot.

It was clear before balloting began that former Tennessee Sen. Bill Brock was the favorite to succeed Mary Louise Smith. Contrary to the usual traditions of Republican National Committee meetings, the ballroom of the Washington Hilton was jammed---with people---many of them wearing Brock buttons. One had the feeling that Brock's ties with the Young Re-



publicans had been put to good use. He exhibited his strength with the geographic diversity of his nominators---including Illinois' Don Adams and North Dakota's Gerridee Wheel---which strengthened his southern base. Former White House legislative liaison William Timmons, himself a veteran of Young Republican politics, masterminded the Brock effort.

In winning election, Brock managed to overcome the stigma of his recent reelection defeat in Tennessee by making himself acceptable to all segments of the party. Lacking the backing of Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan was a long-term advantage. Because moderates and conservatives were both unable to unify behind one candidate, Brock was able to put together a winning coalition of members of both camps. The inability of Reagan to successfully promote the candidacy of Utah State Chairman Richard Richards---despite the organizational support of Reagan aide Lyn Nofziger---is perhaps as important as moderate ineffectiveness. Southern conservatives refused to move behind Richards---and some made it clear that former Reagan campaign manager John Sears would also be unacceptable because of his role in the Richard Schweiker vice presidential move.

The seriousness of Brock's effort was indicated by his detailed response to a questionnaire by the Republican Women's Task Force. His answers clearly violated strict conservative dogma, though Brock supposedly "moved right" in his chairmanship campaign. In an answer to one question, Brock stated, "... if we care about a specific constituency then let us directly and overtly attempt to involve that constituency in our own processes. In this same sense, I propose that we undertake a major effort to gain access and voice in our decision process for members of minorities, heritage groups, women, young people, and others who have much to contribute to this party and its future. We need their help, If our goal is freedom, and if we are correct, as I believe we are, that political and economic freedom are interdependent with one another, then there is no group which cannot be considered a natural (albeit potential) constituency. Their problems are our problems and we must have their knowledge, their experience, and their support if we are to solve those problems...In so many words, this party simply cannot just open its doors; it's got to go out and bring some people in, and in the process give them a real voice in our leadership and in the development of our objectives and programs.

Brock's first priority is the development of a new corps of RNC organizers to assist state Republican committee. The 100 new field agents would be have their salaries paid by the Republican national committee and their expenses paid by state committees. The \$1.7 million program is particularly directed as recruiting new, highly qualified candidates ...with a special emphasis on black candidates. If his initial acts are any indication, Brock seems to intend to combine the "technician" and "spokesman" roles of the national chairman. The new national co-chairman, Mary Crisp of Arizona, was elected without controversy---and apparently has broad ideological support similar to Brock's. ■

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Commentary: The City

"Urban Death" as Policy

by Ralph E. Thayer

The nation's current urban dilemma was strikingly portrayed last fall in two documents. The first was a set of hearings convened by the House Committee on Banking, Currency, and Housing in late September and published as The Rebirth of the American City. At the same time, an interesting article appeared in the Public Interest entitled "On the Death of Cities" by William Baer.

Despite its title, the House study really gives little room for optimism in the area of city futures. A massive catalog of urban ills is listed which, if nothing else, represents the most significant evidence of the strength of the nation's cities. Any entity that can be as afflicted as America's cities and still survive has remarkable resiliency. The title topic of Baer's article is, however, far more to the point than the momentous testimony of the urban poobahs.

The basic hypothesis is that "Urban death---or at least least neighborhood death---in the nation's cities is coming to pass. It may be hindered by expertise, detoured by cajolery, impeded by charismatic leadership, and delayed by simple faith, but it will come." And a similar notion escapes from the mass of congressional testimony about urban "possibilities."

In fact, the present distribution formula for Community Development aid by the federal government almost guarantees that the urban areas who are neediest will be pushed the most rapidly along the road to oblivion. An early examination of the distribution formula for Community Development aid was done by Dr. Patrick Beaton of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte; he found that those scarce funds were going in disproportionate amounts to semirural counties on the fringe of urban areas. Once received, the funds went to build "growth-inducers" such as airports and roads. Naturally, the growth induced often came at the expense of the urban core. A parallel study by the Harvard MIT Joint Center for Urban Studies on Community Development patterns within cities noted that local officials often use their powers of discretion to shift funds from impoverished neighborhoods to other parts of the cities "with at least tacit federal approval."

No public policy system is flawless, but the current Community Development program seems positively deleterious. Many people have the impression that a great deal of public money is being channelled to the inner city and justifiably wonder why the evidence of positive impact is so meagre. With this impression, it is all too easy to conclude that the inner city is terminally ill and without a redeeming social future.

In his article, Baer concludes that the idea of urban death as a concept should be opened for discussion ---"for scholars, if not for politicians." In fact, I would argue that a de facto decision on the subject of urban death has already been made. The heavy-handed demolition of "urban renewal" by the Nixon Administration really eliminated the only moving force in made core city areas. Furthermore, the stumbling start of the Section 8 Housing Assistant Payments program has not been a good omen to those who work in the housing field. More ominous clouds are also forming: Homebuilders are plumping heavily for a new construction program that will likely duplicate the experience of the Section 235 housing program that drained off stable, central city families to peripheral locations. The signs point to programs that will work---either by design or default---only in peripheral areas rather than the core city.

There are, perhaps, good and sound reasons to avoid the central city, particularly if there is a conscious policy decision not to strand current city residents in continued limbo. Many decisions, however, are the result of the unconscious accumulation of independent actions. Our present path seems to ratify the "non-survivability" of many of the impacted urban areas.

It is exceptionally difficult to attract urban investment under the best of conditions; to expect redevelopment to occur when thousands of local governments in partnership with federal agencies have drawn up policies which effectively surrender many areas to urban decay is unrealistic. This is the legacy that has been left to incoming Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Patricia Harris. If this uncertainty is not eliminated, all urban programs may be doomed. ■

Politics: Kentucky

THE CONTINUING DECLINE

by Joel Goldstein

The Democratic stranglehold on statewide elections continued in 1976. The Kentucky Republican Party has won only one statewide race (Nixon's 1972 campaign) since 1968. Jimmy Carter carried the state by close to 85,000 votes---down from the 135,000 votes with which he beat George Wallace in the May primary. Kentucky Republicans realize that it is exceedingly difficult to defeat a united Democratic Party and Democrats presented no open wounds for the GOP to exploit in 1976.

Republicans were able to hold onto the GOP's two congressional seats. Conservative Gene Snyder in the 4th C.D. was able to build a 19,000 vote victory, compared to his narrow 4,000 vote margin in 1974. In the traditionally Republican 5th C.D., Dr. Tim Lee Carter was able to fashion a 2-1 victory.

GOP efforts in other congressional districts were less impressive. The party failed to offer a candidate in the Blue Grass 6th C.D. which could be a swing district; President Ford lost the area by fewer than 11,000 votes. Substantial efforts in the 2nd and 3rd C.D.s were unsuccessful. In each race, the Republican challenger lost by 20-30,000 votes. In Louisville's 3rd C.D., conservative Denzil Ramsey attempted to use the busing and gun control issues as his springboard to office. His campaign, which was aimed at attracting blue-collar voters, succeeded in gaining few converts while it lost several thousand traditional Republican votes in the middle-class, white-collar sections of the district. In an introspective mood, one local Republican worker commented: "We learned one thing in 1976: that we cannot successfully use the busing issue."

The GOP's future prospects are mixed. The Republican Party has so few office-holders that its source of major-office candidates is limited. Two Republican members of the state legislature have talked about future races for major offices. State Sen. Joe Graves of Lexington, a progressive Republican, is thinking of running for the "non-partisan" position of mayor of the Consolidated Urban County of Lexington-Fayette County. Graves combines a distinguished Fayette County family name with a fine

legislative record for a race in a county which has gone Republican in five of the last six statewide races for major offices.

State Rep. Louis R. Guenther, Jr., a Jefferson County conservative, is preparing for a race against Sen. Dee Huddleston(D) in 1978. He will seek reelection from his silk stocking Louisville seat and use the 1978 session of the General Assembly to expand his political visibility.

The major GOP candidates for both mayor of Louisville and for Jefferson County judge have not held previous elective office. The mayoral candidate is Russ Maple, a local insurance executive who lost a 1972 bid for the Louisville School Board in a non-partisan race and a 1973 bid for alderman in a city-wide contest. Maple has been a ward chairman and active critic of the regular Republican organization. His campaign kickoff, for example, was weak on attendance by "country-club" Republicans and relatively strong on black attendance.

County judge candidate Mitch McConnell, on the other hand, is a former Republican county chairman and a former aide to Sen. Marlow Cook. McConnell, who recently returned from a job in the Justice Department, is making his first run for elective office. Both Maple, a leader of the anti-organization wing of the party, and McConnell, the "organization's" candidate, are moderates. Intraparty conflict in the state's largest county is largely based on personality rather than ideology.

The reason for Republican optimism is that Democrats have such tight control over elected offices in the state that any upward Democratic movement has to be over the body of a Democratic colleague. There are already three Democrats starting to prepare for the governor's race in 1979: Terry McBrayer (Gov. Julian Carroll's candidate, current state commerce secretary and a former leader of the General Assembly); U.S.Rep. Carroll Hubbard(1st C.D.); and State Auditor George Adkins. Their political activity, in many cases, has been directed at their opponents within the Democratic Party.

Gov. Carroll and the majority of the state legislature, for example, passed a bill which required a candidate to use money raised in a congressional campaign only for election to that position. Thus, Hubbard would not be able to divert any surplus money from his 1976 and 1978 congressional campaigns to a 1979 bid for the governorship; the bill did not appeal to Hubbard partisans' sense of fair play. Auditor Adkins, meanwhile, has been using his office to investigate the propriety of several state contracts, and the hint of scandal has not appealed to Gov. Carroll's partisans.

A similar situation has developed in Jefferson County. Mayor Harvey Sloane and County Judge Todd Hollenbach have been vying for support among local Democrats for the last two years. For a long while, it appeared that Sloane, who is ineligible to succeed himself, would challenge Hollenbach for the county judgeship (the chief executive and legislative post). Sloane ruled out that bid in early January, but factionalism that characterized the last two-three years continues.

The situation is even more complicated by factionalism within the city of Louisville. The divisions on the Board of Aldermen go back four years and coincide with antagonism to Sloane that dates back to 1973. The two leading candidates for mayor have alternated as the board's president. Sloane led a slate of candidates in the 1975 elections which won a clean majority on the board, but several of the defeated aldermen have teamed up with their allies on the board to take up the bat-

tle again this year.

The organization/anti-organization factionalism which dates back to the 1972 primary has been complicated by the entry of two additional groups. The militant anti-busing elements, who have expanded their platform to include opposition to abortion and gun control, have a candidate seeking the county judgeship as well as several legislative seats. The black community has also attempted to flex its muscle. Two prominent blacks are seeking the mayoral nomination in the May Democratic primary; one is a former alderman and the other is an associate superintendent of the Jefferson County school system.

Another disquieting development for the Democratic Party is the effect of the new judicial article on the allocation of powers among the county's constitutional officers. The county judge, who has been the chief legislative, executive, and judicial officer, in the county, has lost all of his judicial functions. The consequent loss of political power and control over lucrative patronage positions should result in political upheavals in several counties while the political leaders adjust to the new rules of the game. The judicial article also led to creation of 100 new judicial positions---23 in Jefferson County alone. These new positions will be filled in the 1977 general elections, opening further possibilities for intraparty friction. ■

Contributor Note: Joel Goldstein is an associate professor of political science at the University of Louisville.

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