

GROUP RESEARCH REPORT

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Reagan takes national stage and conservative spotlight

Even before retiring as Governor of the largest state, Ronald Reagan had set up a well-organized mechanism for taking the national stage to promote his conservative views, with an eye on 1976 presidential politics.

The former actor hired a professional staff, announced his availability for speeches anywhere in the country, started a daily radio program and got syndicated for a weekly column. The radio program is on about 130 stations, the column is in about 120 papers, and he has had to turn down hundreds of invitations.

Reagan has not announced for the Presidency, though he hints at it, but right-wing spokesmen are fairly drooling at the prospects, particularly since President Ford has disappointed his conservative friends and Nelson Rockefeller, their anathema, is likely to face them in 1976.

As early as last November, the conservative Washington tabloid, Human Events, led an issue with this headline: Reagan Should Make Immediate '76 Bid. And the American Conservative Union, a related operation, has scheduled Reagan for a political action conference it is sponsoring (with YAF) in Washington, February 13-16.

Pressure grows for 3rd party

At the same time -- and partly because of disappointment with Ford/Rockefeller -- the right wingers are openly examining the option of forming a third party. For example, Young Americans for Freedom, who helped put Goldwater over at the 1964 GOP convention, are urging consideration of that course; and William Rusher, Publisher of National Review, is coming out with a book along the same line.

Human Events discusses such an option, while expressing dismay at conservatives in Congress for not standing up for their beliefs. For instance, its top headline after Congress confirmed Rockefeller for Vice President was: GOP Conservatives Roll Over for Rockefeller. The story complained that only 32 conservative Republicans voted no.

Another conservative leader who is getting good billing in advance of the 1976 elections is Senator James Buckley, who won election from New York on the Conservative Party ticket. He is the brother of National Review Editor, William Buckley, and is increasingly sought as a national spokesman.

GOP conservatives gain in Congress

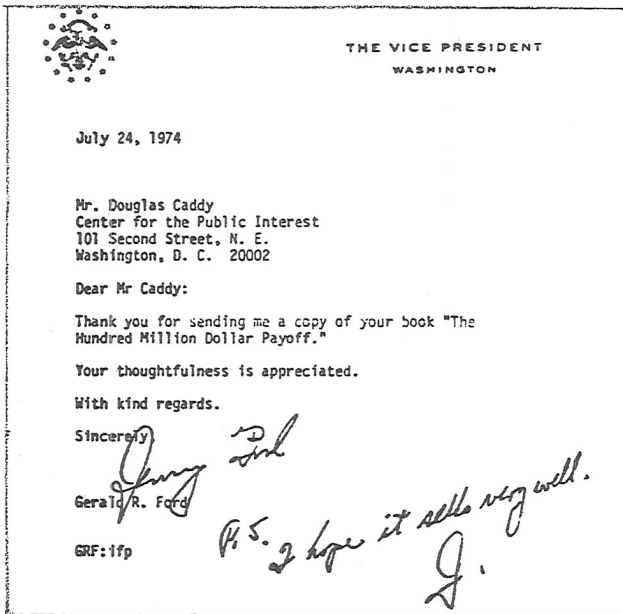
While liberal Democrats were making well-publicized organizational gains in the House, conservatives were consolidating within the Republican party. Most notably, the leadership of the GOP Conference in the Senate was won by Carl Curtis, of Nebraska,

one of the most reactionary members of either party. In the House, the Republican Study Committee, a group of about 70 conservatives, chose a new Chairwoman -- Marjorie Holt of Maryland, a crusader against school busing and high government spending. She is rated 93% by Americans for Constitutional Action.

* * *

Labor and anti-labor developments

The National Right to Work Committee, arch enemy of organized labor, is currently very disturbed that its long-time friend, Gerald Ford, has not said anything lately in favor of right to work laws. Meanwhile, they are reminding friends that Ford, as GOP leader of the House, was all for their restrictions on unions and are promoting Ford's plug last summer of the big anti-union book, Douglas Caddy's The Hundred Million Dollar Payoff (pp 17 & 30, 1974).



Also, Caddy and his right-wing publisher, Arlington House, have announced a revised edition of his book.

At about the same time, the attack on the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has been stepped up by the American Farm Bureau Federation, probably the single most powerful continuous lobby in the right wing of American politics and economics.

Center started by right-wing professor

In the midst of this milling around, a right-wing law professor, Dr. Sylvester Petro, has started a center at Wake Forest University called the Institute for Labor Policy Analysis. Although the announcement refers to promoting "sound and progressive developments in labor relations, labor law and labor policy," the background of Prof. Petro makes clear that its impact will be to the right.

Petro has written books about two of the more infamous strikes -- Kohler and Kingsport Press -- from the management viewpoint. (His Kohler book was reprinted by the John Birch Society.) He has been active in the Conservative Party of New York, the American Conservative Union and other right-wing movements.

Organization notes

● John R. Rarick, the Louisiana Congressman who was defeated last fall after gaining a reputation as perhaps the most extremely right-wing member of the House, is now representing Liberty Lobby at regional meetings. Among rightist movements, Rarick has helped the John Birch Society, Rev. Carl McIntire, the (White) Citizens Councils and others too numerous to mention. In his 8 years in the House Rarick jammed the Congressional Record with radical-right material.

● The Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms has opened a Washington office and public relations campaign against gun controls. It will be directed by John M. Snyder, previously an editor for the National Rifle Association.

● Dr. Edward Teller has withdrawn his name from the Center for Science, Technology and Political Thought at the University of Colorado; and its main backer, a California oil man, has withdrawn further support. A conservative professor, Edward Rozek, will continue to direct the controversial project. (See p. 28, 1973, for background.)

● Dr. Charles Secrest has taken over the executive duties at the Christian Crusade from its founder, the ailing Billy James Hargis. Secrest signed his first fund-raising letter as brother-in-law of Hargis.

● Rev. Carl McIntire raised \$1,000,000 in cash and loans in time to hang onto his organization's property at Cape Canaveral. He now plans to build a huge "Temple of Solomon" in the complex.

● Just before H. L. Hunt died, the staff of his Life Line Foundation announced that it would have to sell memberships to the public to sustain its daily broadcasts, which peaked in 1971 at 531 stations. The change was made necessary because Hunt's enterprises reduced their advertising.

● Rev. Paul D. Lindstrom has popped up again, this time in Venezuela arranging finances for a team of former South Vietnamese Army officers to explore U. S. Air Force crash sites for Americans missing in action. He is using the letterhead of Christian Defense League, which he says was organized in 1968 to help get the U. S. S. Pueblo back. Lindstrom has several Birch connections.

● Community Churches of America is the latest letterhead of Rev. William Steuart McBirnie, a veteran right-winger who operates out of Glendale, Calif. His latest fund-raiser is for relief of hurricane victims of Honduras, for which he has opened a postal box in D. C.

● Edgar C. Bundy, Executive Secretary of the Church League of America, writes that our paragraph on page 39 did not properly identify which branch of the Presbyterian Church is their current target. Amplification: It is the United Presbyterian Church.

Congress gives Hoover
Institution \$7,000,000

In the waning hours of the last session, Congress quietly authorized up to \$7 million to the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace as a memorial to the late President who started the center for his papers at Stanford in 1919. No record vote was taken, and only one member of either house objected.

The funds are to be spent on a matching private grant basis over a period of five years for the purpose of an educational building. The building now housing the Institution is one of the finest on the campus, and the Institution is already well-heeled from conservative contributors.

It is run by a board and staff which interlocks substantially with the American Enterprise Institute (p. 42) and is equally conservative. For instance, William Baroody, Sr., runs AEI and is on the Hoover board, while W. Glenn Campbell runs the Hoover group, was research director of AEI and is now its program adviser.

Birch
watch:

The John Birch Society plans to open a university in California by 1979....The new coordinator of the Society's Support Your Local Police committees is Timothy Heinan, a former undercover police operative who helped fan the story that Gov. George Wallace's shooting was a conspiracy....The Society's publishing house, Western Islands, reports that it has sold 650,000 copies of a book, Teddy Bare, about Senator Edward Kennedy's mishap at Chappaquiddick; and John Farrar, the diver who pulled Kennedy's car out of the water, is on the lecture circuit....The latest project of the Birchers is called Tax Reform IMmediately (TRIM) and has a slogan: "Lower taxes through less government."....Nearly 300 of the 800 youngsters at last summer's Birch camps joined the Society....And the Society has started distributing a daily five-minute radio program, "The Alan Stang Report," named for one of its writers.

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