

VOX POP Newsletter of Political Organizations and Parties

An official section of the American Political Science Association
Produced by the Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics, The University of Akron

***ISSUE THEME: INTEREST GROUP INFLUENCE**

THE SHIFTING VIEWS OF INTEREST GROUP INFLUENCE

Mark P. Petracca • University of California, Irvine

How much influence do interest groups have on government policy and in the American political system generally? This is probably the question which elicits the greatest fascination and concern by the public and scholars alike. Assessments of interest group influence have varied throughout the century. Conventional wisdom during the first third of the century was that "the lobby" wielded extensive power on government decision making. The phrases "controlling," "triumph," "effective," and "decisive" were used to define interest group influence on government policy. Many observers at the time concurred with Fred DeWitt Shelton that "interest group influence on Congress is greater today than ever before."

Within a decade or so this wisdom was overturned. The impact of lobbying on the legislative process had apparently been overstated. Lawrence Chamberlain's study of the origins of 90 major pieces of legislation from 1890-1945 showed that interest groups dominated the decisions in only seven cases and four of these dealt with the tariff. None of the cases indicating the dominant influence of interest groups occurred after 1931. Thus, despite an increase in the number of interest groups during the 1940s, their influence was on the wane. Increased presidential power, the decline of tariff measures, the rise of labor as a countervailing force to business, and the transfer of legislative preparation from Congress to the bureaucracy accounted for the decline of interest group power in national legislation.

The rise of pluralism in the 1950s and early 1960s created a new view of interest groups and interest group influence. They were now a pervasive, powerful part of the political process according to studies by David Truman, Earl Latham, and Robert Dahl, and their influence was the driving force behind the creation of the public good. The prominent critics of pluralism, such as E.E. Schatt-

schneider, Grant McConnell, and Theodore J. Lowi, further documented the influence of interest groups on public policy, but variously concluded that this influence subverted attainment of the public interest. Bias in the pressure group system, the capture of administrative agencies of multiple elites and "policy without law" made attainment of the public interest problematic.

Two main lines of argument challenged this popular view of interest group influence. First, case study and empirical research showed that interest groups were far weaker in shaping legislation than the pluralists had supposed. A study of reciprocal trade policy by Bauer, Pool, and Dexter concluded that "...the lobbies were on the whole poorly financed, ill-managed, out of contact with

(continued on page 5)

THEME: Interest Group Influence

From Headquarters	2
Early Returns	3
Scholarly Precincts	4
Special Interests	6

Chair: Gerald M. Pomper, Rutgers

Secretary-Treasurer: Charles Hadley, University of New Orleans

Program Chair: Ruth Jones, Arizona State University

VOX POP Editor: John Green, The University of Akron

Executive Council: Charles Barrileaux, Florida State University; Joyce Gelb, City University of New York; Anne Hopkins, University of Minnesota; John S. Jackson III, Southern Illinois University; Denise Baer, The University of Akron; Cornelius Cotter, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Emeritus; Frank Feigert, University of North Texas; David M. Olson, University of North Carolina-Greensboro.

Dear Colleagues:

My thanks for the honor of selection as president of POP. It's a pleasure to be associated with all of you. My congratulations go to the winners of this year's awards—Bill Crotty, Gary Jacobson, and Mike Hayes.

At the APSA meeting, Bill eloquently spoke for all of the Section in emphasizing the excitement of studying politics at this unique historical turning point. In these circumstances, I hope we can make POP an even more effective scholarly group.

The APSA program is a recurring opportunity for this scholarship. Ruth Jones will again be program chair for the Section's panels, extending the excellent job she did in 1991. I hope, in particular, that we can continue and expand this year's workshops and "perspective" panels.

Another scholarly opportunity would come from publication of an annual volume in the subfield. After many years of discussion, the Section approved this concept, subject to financial feasibility. We are now exploring this question with two publishers, and may locate others. Obviously, such a volume would not be a moneymaker.

However, if each member of the Section paid \$10, publication does seem feasible. Those attending the Section business meeting at APSA were unanimously willing to pay that cost. How about the rest of you? Let us know.

Please send your nominations to the below listed POP Award Committees:

Eldersveld Lifetime Achievement Award (2-year term)

—Sandy Maisel, Colby College, Chair

—Margaret Conway, University of Florida

—Robert Salisbury, Washington University

Epstein and Walker Book and Article Awards (1-year term)

—Kay Schlozman, Boston College, Chair

—James Gibson, University of Houston

—John White, Catholic University

Sincerely,

Gerald Pomper

MINUTES

Political Organizations and Parties Section, American Political Science Association
Washington, D.C., August 30, 1991

The section meeting was called to order by Margaret Conway, Chair, at 12:37 p.m. The following order of business transpired:

1. **1990 Minutes:** Ruth Jones moved the adoption of the August 31, 1991, *Minutes* as printed in *Vox Pop*, Volume 9, Issue 2, pp. 2,7. Chair Conway asked for any corrections. There being none, the *Minutes* were adopted unanimously.
2. **Treasurer's Report:**
 - \$3,555.11 Cash on hand August 31, 1991.
 - 160.00 Awards presented at the 1990 Business Meeting.
 - \$ 984.00 Dues portion received from APSA through July 12, 1991.
 - \$ 197.19 Interest earned through June 30, 1991.
 - \$4,567.30 Cash on hand before paying outstanding debt related to the 1991 workshops annual meeting.
3. **Program Report:** Ruth Jones reported that we had good attendance at our 18 sessions and that the allocation of sessions for next year will be based on session

attendance. Several workshops went well, including "Machine Politics, Sound Bites and Nostalgia: Substantive Issues and Methodological Problems in the Study of Party Organizations"; "Studying Party Conventions Using Participant Observation Methods"; and, "Studying Organizational Leaders Using Interview Techniques." Those present were reminded to take advantage of the FEC session, Accessing Federal Election Commission Data on Personal Computers, the following day beginning 9:00 a.m. at the Federal Election Commission office.

While some 40 to 50 people were in and out of the Wednesday workshop, Ruth raised the problem of some colleagues attending without payment. What should the fee be? How should it be collected? She was pleased that a number of graduate students were in attendance. Special thanks went to Paul Herrnson for his hard work to bring together such a stellar group of workshop participants and to Mike Margolis for organizing and chairing the workshop.

There will be a call for 1992 annual meeting papers in *PS* and *Vox Pop*. Colleagues were urged to come forward with ideas for workshops, roundtables, and panels.

(continued on page 7)

CALL FOR PAPERS

American Political Science Association Political Parties and Organizations

Proposals are invited for individual papers, coordinated panels and specialized roundtables which focus on all levels of political parties and political organizations. Of particular interest are panels and papers that focus on contemporary substantive topics or methodological issues or the intersect of parties and/or other political organizations with such areas as campaign technology, political media, policy formulation, political recruitment and institutional reform. Suggestions for panels that have a comparative design and/or an integrated thematic approach are encouraged.

Paper proposals should include a clear statement of the types of panels for which the paper is most appropriate. Suggestions for complete panels are welcome, but preferences will be given to panels that focus on the topics mentioned above and represent a diverse set of scholars/scholarship. Roundtables that have a clear structuring mechanism will be viewed more favorably than those with a free-form discussion format.

Members wishing to propose panels should specify individuals who have agreed to participate and indicate the degree of flexibility that exists to incorporate others into the panel. (POP has been allocated 13 panels for the APSA). All correspondence should indicate if the proposal is being sent to another section as well as any constraints or alternatives related to the proposal. Please send proposal to Ruth S. Jones, Department of Political Science, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85287-2001; (602) 965-6551; Fax: (602) 965-2012; by **December 1, 1991**. Include telephone, Bitnet, or Fax number as well as address as of December 1991.

A Conference on "The Political Parties of the New Europe"

Vienna, April 24-26, 1992

The Work Group on Elections and Parties of the Committee on Political Sociology, an international committee cosponsored by the International Political Science Associations and the International Sociology Association, will hold a conference on "The Political Parties of the New Europe," April 24, 25, and 26, 1992, in Vienna. The conference is being organized with the support and assistance of the Paul Lazarsfeld Gesellschaft, the City of Vienna, and the National Bank of Austria. Meetings will take place in the Bundesrat, and the general public will be invited to attend the first day, which will be devoted

to general studies of current party politics in East European nations, to be presented by scholars from those nations. The second and third days will be devoted to specific studies of specific parties, with approximately 15 paper-givers and 15 discussants. These studies will focus on the internal developments of individual parties during the past two years, with a view to developing a future volume of studies on this topic.

All expenses plus a small honorarium will be paid for East European participants in the program who make presentations; some meals and reasonably priced hotel lodgings will be arranged for all other participants. If you are interested in taking part, please send an appropriate proposal stating the subject of the paper you would like to present (or stating your interest and qualifications for serving as a discussant) to Professor Kay Lawson, Convener of Work Group on Elections and Parties, Department of Political Science, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA 94132, USA, by November 15, 1991.

CALL FOR PAPERS AND PRESENTERS

The New York State Political Science Association

The 46th Annual New York State Political Science Association meeting is scheduled for Friday and Saturday, **April 24-25, 1992**, in Buffalo, NY. Those interested in participating should contact association officials or the appropriate section chair listed below. The deadline for submitting proposals is November 20, 1991.

PRESIDENT

Nancy C. McGlen
Dept. of Political Science
Niagara University
Niagara University, NY 14109
(716) 285-1212, ext. 322

VICE-PRESIDENT

Robert Heineman
Division of Social Science
Alfred University
Alfred, NY 14802
(607) 871-2870

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Iva E. Deutchman
Dept. of Political Science
Hobart and William
Smith Colleges
Geneva, NY 14456
(315) 781-3429

COMPARATIVE STUDIES

George Priestley
Latin American Studies
Queens College/CUNY
Flushing, NY 11367
(718) 520-7334

(continued on page 7)

LOBBYING FOR JUSTICE: ORGANIZED INTERESTS BEFORE THE SENATE, 1916-90

Gregory A. Caldeira, The Ohio State University
John R. Wright, University of Iowa

For the past two and a half years, we have worked on a project on the rise, institutionalization, and impact of organized interests in the politics of federal judgeships. It has expanded from a modest study of the Bork nomination, then to the controversial nominations of the Reagan years, and finally to the nominations since the turn of the century, mostly to the Supreme Court, in which some measure of controversy developed and in which organized interests took part. For a part of the project, we have executed a large-scale survey of interest groups. For another part, we have dredged the archives of numerous interest groups and presidential libraries in order to uncover evidences of strategies, tactics, direct lobbying, and advocacy at the grassroots on our set of nominations. To fill in the historical gaps left by our archival work and survey, we have conducted well over a hundred personal interviews in Washington, DC, and elsewhere.

During the Summer and Fall of 1987 the period of the fight over Judge Bork's nomination to the Supreme Court—we were in the midst of collecting data on the role and impact of amici curiae in the formation of the Supreme Court's plenary agenda. That project turned on the crucial signaling function of organized interests in the Court's decisional process; and, even at that stage of our project, we had strong evidence of the importance of interest groups. Then, too, Wright had studied the connections among PAC contributions, direct lobbying, and voting in the United States House of Representatives in the areas of energy and agriculture. So the spectacular mobilization of organized interests for and against Judge Robert H. Bork's nomination to the Supreme Court in the Summer and Fall of 1987 naturally captured our interest and attention. Supporting or opposing a nominee to the Supreme Court is, after all, just another means of influencing the agenda and decisions of the Supreme Court.

The extraordinary degree of mobilization, intensity, and visibility, and sheer numbers of interest groups—of many different kinds—involved in the hearings, debates, advocacy at the grassroots, and direct lobbying of individual senators seemed to mark a watershed in the history of the Senate's advice and consent to federal judicial nominations. Never had so many groups or collections of interests of various political stripes taken part in the consideration of a nominee to the Supreme Court. Five years ago, in the Summer of 1986, many of the same groups surfaced in a significant but, ultimately unsuccessful attempt to derail Mr. Justice Rehnquist's elevation to the chief justiceship. Just a few months ago, in a much less visible effort a small subset of the anti-Bork coalition

came together once again to defeat the nomination of Judge Kenneth Ryskamp for a seat on the United States Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit. And, of course, we could cite many other examples from the last decade. These three instances, together with older and less familiar experiences on other nominations, provide strong circumstantial evidence of the liveliness and efficacy of organized interests in influencing the Senate's decisions on the makeup of the federal judiciary and in particular the Supreme Court.

Many, perhaps most, of those who have written on the controversies over Judge Bork and other nominations in the Reagan and Bush administrations treat the phenomenon of organized interests actively and aggressively pursuing a role in these decisions as something entirely new and different. Lack of historical perspective on the role of organized interests in the composition of the federal courts knows no ideological or institutional boundaries. It is as true of the celebrants on the left (e.g., Pertschuk and Schetzel, *The People Rising*) as it is among the aggrieved on the right (e.g., McGuigan and Weyrich, *Ninth Justice*). And it is, for the most part, true of scholars of the courts and of interest groups. Yet, in our view, the historical record reveals numerous examples, going back at least as far as the fight over Brandeis in 1916 and probably even further, of the clash of organized interests over nominations to the Supreme Court and even on occasion to the lower federal courts.

Two nominations from yesteryear provide vivid illustrations of the vigorous role of interest groups in federal judicial politics throughout this century. Most students of the courts know of the stiff opposition to Louis Brandeis in 1916 for a position on the Court, but few realize the depth and intensity of organizational participation in this fight. Organized labor put on a major campaign for Brandeis among friendly senators and especially among members of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. Behind the scenes, very quietly, Jewish organizations worked for Brandeis—in many places in which labor had no clout. And, in opposition, a collection of interests from corporate America, the American Bar Association, and law firms on Wall Street invested a great deal and even hired a full-time lobbyist in Washington.

Judge John J. Parker, President Hoover's unsuccessful nominee for the Court in 1930, ran afoul of the American Federation of Labor—much bolder this time than in 1916—and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Organized labor launched a major effort

(continued on page 5)

at both the grassroots and in Washington; locals from around the nation filled the mail pouches of senators with memorials against Judge Parker. The NAACP's campaign against Parker has to rank among the most sophisticated and best organized political operations of the twentieth century—not least because of the major disadvantages under which blacks worked in those days of segregation. For two months, Walter White of the NAACP orchestrated pressure from the grassroots, worked closely with friendly whites to lobby senators, and carefully courted the press. Most of the elements touted as “new” in the fight over Judge Bork figured in one fashion or another in the nomination of Judge Parker.

One of the objectives of this project is to assess the impact of organized lobbying efforts on the decisions of senators to support or oppose the controversial nominations to the federal bench during the administration of President Reagan. We have an extraordinarily rich set of longitudinal data, so we intend to take advantage of the structure of these controversial nominations and analyze lobbying and decision making in them as a sequence of political fights. Second, we are investigating how organized groups allocate their lobbying resources across states and senators. Third, we aim to account for the participation of groups in coalitions on the right and left in the politics of federal judicial nominations in the 1980s. Why, in the light of the considerable actual and potential costs of doing so, do organized interests decide to take part in such controversial battles? Fourth, we cannot ignore the role of other institutional actors: the lobbying efforts, or lack thereof, on the part of presidents figure prominently in the success or failure of controversial nominations; and we have assembled data on the activities of presidents and their lobbyists for the 1980s. Fifth, for nominations prior the 1980s, of course, the data proves sparser and harder to obtain, but we have, nevertheless, pieced together data on the lobbying efforts of organized interests and presidents for all of the controversial nominations to the Court from Brandeis to the present.

In most of the nominations of this century, of course, interest groups did little or nothing. Accordingly, one of our main concerns is why interest groups choose to take part in nominations. We are not far enough along in our theoretical work to provide a good answer, but even a cursory look at the nominations since 1916 shows the ebb and flow of organized conflict; and it looks very much as though divided government and evenly balanced courts have a major role in giving rise to fights in which interest groups play a major role. We seek to develop a theoretical model of organizational participation and to document, through historical narrative, the ebb and flow of organized conflict in the politics of federal judgeships.

Congress, and at best only marginally effective.” Lester Milbrath's study of Washington lobbyists led to a similar conclusion: “The weight of evidence that this study brings to bear suggests that there is relatively little influence or power in lobbying *per se*.” Second, a new theoretical framework developed by Mancur Olson explained why groups would have difficulties organizing to pursue collective goods. Contrary to pluralist assumptions, group formation would not occur automatically, taking place only if membership was small or if selective inducements were employed. In the face of these challenges, groups would spend more time maintaining membership than influencing government policy.

This conventional wisdom was in turn displaced by researchers drawn to the analysis of interest groups by the advocacy explosion of the late 1970s and 1980s. Changes in the structure of Congress and the decline of political parties led students of congressional policy to discover the influential role that interest groups were playing in the formation of public policy.

Many of the chapters in *The Politics of Interests* point to a very different conclusion, bringing the assessment of interest group influence to the completion of its third cycle of the century. The “conventional wisdom” of the 1980s concerning the influence of interest groups on congressional and administrative policy making may have been outmoded while it was being discovered.

For example, Andrew McFarland identifies four major sources of countervailing power—issue networks, patrons, social movements, and solutions to the problems of collective action that save the system from collapse into the interest group stasis predicted by McConnell, Lowi, and other prominent plural elitists. Compared to Western European economic groups, Graham Wilson argues that American interest groups are less well organized and as a result less influential in shaping government policy. In a study of how groups are organized in relation to each other in four policy domains, Robert Salisbury, et al, show that interest groups have shifted their functional emphasis from influence to information gathering.

Interest groups interacting with Congress are doing more of what they have been doing for years, according to John Tierney. However Tierney finds that speculations about interest group influence are often over-blown by journalists. And, there is little evidence that organized interests dictate congressional outcomes as was once alleged by Earl Latham. When it comes to promoting the public interest, Joan Lucco argues that access to the presidency is no guarantee of group influence on government policy. The value of access to the presidency turns on a president's general effectiveness and a willingness by the president to act as a champion for consumer causes. With the exception of the Carter presidency, the goals of consumer groups were rarely realized. (continued on page 6)

"Machine Politics, Sound Bites, and Nostalgia: Substantive Issues and Methodological Problems in the Study of Party Organizations"

POP-APSA Political Parties Workshop

Michael Margolis, University of Cincinnati Workshop Organizer

POP sponsored a research workshop on Wednesday afternoon, August 28, preceding the regular program at the Washington Hilton. The workshop consisted of two main sessions, the first featuring presentations by a panel of five party professionals, the second featuring presentations of academics. Each session was informed by five "thinkpieces" that the academic presenters had prepared and circulated to panelists and those participants who had preregistered.

Although the academic panel came second, the problems and questions raised in the thinkpieces provided a stimulus for both sessions. Leon Epstein produced an overview of research on local party organization in which he argued that we still know relatively little about how local parties have adjusted to candidate centered campaigns. He pointed out that in addition to the costliness of study-

ing numerous local organizations, research on local parties generally promises less glory for its principal investigators than does research on topics with a national focus. Michael Margolis suggested that comparative studies of local party organizations might be encouraged by focusing upon the processes that democratic theorists suggest are critical for effecting democratic governance. Such a focus would provide a theoretical framework for what might otherwise seem like a series of isolated case studies. Charles Hadley and Lewis Bowman reviewed the practical difficulties they encountered and the remedies they developed in carrying out a comparative study of county party organizations in 11 southern states. Underwritten by NSF, Hadley and Bowman's study is a collaboration among more than a dozen party scholars.

(continued on page 8)

INTEREST GROUP INFLUENCE *(continued from page 5)*

The great expectations of successful conservative "public interest" litigation did not become a reality according to Karen O'Connor and Scott McFall. Personnel recruitment by the Reagan Administration sapped the conservative movement of key participants, the lack of coordination among conservative groups, and the atrophy of several major conservative organizations negated the anticipated triumphs of conservative public interest litigation. By many accounts in this volume, the woman's movement is an example of a successful mass-based political movement. However, Ann Costain shows that the movement's success was not attributable to the traditional mobilization of interest group resources. Instead, the movement's success is attributable to a shift in governmental emphasis consistent with the goals of the movement.

Paul Peterson's chapter addresses the question of interest group influence directly, showing that the influence of special interest on residual categories of the federal budget has declined dramatically during the 1980s. The increasing difficulty of translating economic resources into fiscal ones, the disappearance of the peace dividend, and the increased centralization of decision-making power in Washington changed the conditions under which interest groups had previously operated to the demise of their impact on government expenditures.

This is in no way to suggest that interest groups are without influence. Various conditions are identified throughout the volume. Studies suggest that interest groups are more influential in the House than the Senate when it comes to blocking the placement of issues on the

government's agenda compared to creating them, the lower the level of partisanship, ideological, and campaign visibility on a particular issue; when the issue is linked to an identifiable constituency; when it comes to raising money and mobilizing campaign volunteers; and when it comes to the intensity by which group positions are promoted and advocated by legislators. Likewise, individual lobbies, such as the insurance, farm, hospitality, and publishers, continue to laud their influence on government policy.

The apparent decline of interest group influence leads to an important paradox about the interest group system. Conventional wisdom suggests that a larger number of interest groups, of enhanced capacity, and with more diversified techniques of influence should probably result in greater influence for the interest group system as a whole. Despite the advocacy explosion of the past two decades, interest group politics is one example of where "more" turns out to be "less." We have a much larger interest group system than we did 20 years ago, and yet, as so many of the chapters in *The Politics of Interests* illustrate, that system has less influence on government policy.

Interest groups no doubt continue to influence government policy in a plethora of ways and in a great many arenas. However, new empirical research on interest groups is beginning to refine our understanding of the changes in the influence wielded by interest groups under various political and institutional conditions.

*A revised excerpt from "The Future of an Interest Group Society," in Mark P. Petracca, ed., 1992, *The Politics of Interests* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press).

FROM HEADQUARTERS *(continued from page 2)*

Another workshop is planned for the Wednesday before the 1992 APSA, and the title will be announced soon.

With respect to the workshops, Chair Conway noted that there were a lot of rooms available the Wednesday before the APSA annual meeting. She hoped the workshops served us well and went on to note that the research workshop was an opportunity to exchange research ideas but was not very effective at identifying ongoing research. She suggested that colleagues notify John Green when research proposals were funded so he could publish a notice in *Vox Pop*.

4. **Vox Pop Report:** John Green noted that he depended upon our section members for articles and information. Keep the information coming to him.
5. **Nominating Committee Report:** Bob Harmel, Chair, and his Committee (Charles Barrilleaux and John S. Jackson, III) recommend the following slate of officers:

Chair: Gerald M. Pomper, Rutgers University (2-year term)

Secretary-Treasurer: Charles D. Hadley, University of New Orleans, [(1-year term) to provide continuity by having the two-year terms of the Chair and Secretary-Treasurer out of synch].

Executive Council: Denise Baer, The University of Akron; Cornelius Cotter, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Emeritus; Frank Feigert, University of North Texas; and, David M. Olson, University of North Carolina-Greensboro (2-year terms)

The slate was moved, seconded, and adopted unanimously. Chair-Elect Pomper raised the idea of a journal

for the section, suggested it be an annual volume on a political organizations and organizations theme. It could be done at Rutgers for \$7,000 up front, succeeding issues being paid for with income from subscriptions. Secretary-Treasurer Hadley noted that such a move would wipe out the treasury. Bill Crotty backed the idea, noted the argument articles could be published in one of the basic journals was not true and suggested a one time \$10 to \$15 fee to get one started. Ken Janda agreed, noting that the journals do not reflect the amount of research in the political organizations and parties area. JAI was suggested as an alternative as was the dedication to the Section of one of four issues of Gary Wekken's *Midsouth Political Science Journal*. Wekken indicated he could do it for far less than \$7,000.

Chair Conway moved that the Council be authorized to explore the alternatives, make a decision, and move on it. The motion carried unanimously.

6. **Awards Ceremony:** The Annual POP Section awards ceremony was conducted by the Awards Committee; made up of William Keefe, Chair Joyce Gelb, and Richard Boyd. The 1991 annual awards as listed elsewhere in this issue.

Chair Conway gave thanks to all those who served and passed the Section responsibility to Gerry Pomper. There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles D. Hadley
Secretary-Treasurer

EARLY RETURNS *(continued from page 3)*

New England Political Science Association

1992 Annual Conference
April 3-4, Providence, Rhode Island

The New England Political Science Association encourages participation across a broad range of interests and disciplines in political science.

Please write directly to the appropriate Program Section Chair or to Eileen McDonagh, Program Chair. Proposals for whole panels are welcome. The deadline for receipt of submissions is December 15, 1991.

PROGRAM CHAIR

Eileen McDonagh
Dept. of Political Science
Northeastern University
Boston, MA 02115
(617) 495-8140
(617) 437-2796

*Comparative Politics,
Europe in 1992, Ethnic Politics*
Ernesto Zirakzadeh
Department of Political Science
341 Mansfield Road
University of Connecticut
Storrs, CT 06288
(203) 486-2440

*Legislative Politics, Political
Parties, and Interest Groups*
Diana Evans
Dept. of Political Science
Trinity College
Hartford, CT 06106
(203) 297-2546

*Media Politics, Political
Campaigns, Electoral Behavior,
Political Ethics*
Marion Just
Dept. of Political Science
Wellesley College
Wellesley, MA 02181
(617) 431-1356

SPECIAL INTERESTS *(continued from page 6)*

Paul Herrnson concentrated on how parties at the national level have modernized. In both major parties all three national committees—the national, congressional and senatorial—have increased their institutional resources, improved their fund-raising, and become more active in congressional elections, and also in some state and local elections. He called for studies to assess the effects of these changes on electoral politics. Kay Lawson stressed the normative questions raised by efforts of groups like the Northern California Committee for Party Renewal to effect local party reform. The role of parties and other political organizations in linking citizens to the state becomes the key focus of inquiry here.

The party professionals' observations arose from their experience. Jack Pitney, who had just returned to Claremont McKenna College after completing a term as Research Director of the Republican National Committee, noted that the RNC is a bureaucracy that deals with 50 state parties and 3,042 counties. Recommendations that arise from research often make less difference than one might expect. Pitney also suggested that when party research leads to more effective appeals for funds or winning strategies for campaigns, news organizations tend to give little credit or coverage. Only when misjudgments or mistakes occur do the mass media seem to provide extensive coverage.

Tom Cole, Executive Director of the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC), and Mark Strand, a congressional staffer who serves on the Virginia State and Prince William County Republican Committees, expressed some envy of the Democrats' ability to maintain good grassroots organizations. Both panelists contended that neither the nearly equal proportions of the electorate who now identify as Republicans versus Democrats nor the National Republicans' superior ability to raise funds, compensate for advantages that the Democrats' local organiza-

tions still provide in municipal, county and state legislative elections. Cole suggested that organizational change often lags behind changes in demography. Political scientists might look at the extent to which local party organizations show signs of growing Republican strength.

Les Francis, Tom Cole's counterpart at the DCCC, suggested that 1992 will be a critical year for House elections. Due to reapportionment and retirements, at least 100 seats are expected to be competitive. If President Bush's popularity remains high, the Republican party should be free to concentrate its efforts on winning a majority in the House. Francis argued, however, that 1992 has become a "do or die" year for Republicans. As Mark Strand had observed, "the number one reason for losing is losing [in the past]." If the Republicans can't win the House in 1992, when all the conditions seem favorable, then when can they win? Francis contended that even though the DCCC can't match the NRCC's money, the DCCC is better organized to provide services at the local level.

Lynn Cutler, Vice Chair of the Democratic National Committee, indicated that the National Democratic Party has responded to the Republican challenge by improving its organization and increasing its resources. She reported that the DNC is conducting its own national polls for the first time and that the DNC has already called Democratic hopefuls together to plan for a concerted presidential effort, regardless of who becomes the party's nominee. She also suggested that as the Republicans attempt to expand their following, scholars should study the extent to which the Republican coalition develops stresses similar to those that have troubled the Democrats over the past 25 years.

The workshop participants, who included more than 20 scholars, pollsters, and party activists, shared their own experiences and ideas for research in the discussions that followed the panelists' presentations.



Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics
Akron, OH 44325-1904

FIRST CLASS
U.S. Postage Paid
Akron, Ohio
Permit Number 222