

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: PARTY LEADERSHIP**

PRESIDENTS AS PARTY LEADERS

James W. Davis • Western Washington University

In this era of party “decomposition,” some commentators have suggested that the president no longer needs his party because he has virtually unlimited access to the electronic media, public financing of his reelection campaign, and several hundred dedicated White House staffers at his command that enable him to operate independently of his party. This is a superficial view.

George Reedy, President Lyndon Johnson’s press secretary, observed some years ago that presidents are most effective when they understand the political process and are deeply immersed in it. The former White House staffer has it right. From Andrew Jackson’s time to the present the ability of the president to carry out his role as party leader has been the hallmark of effective government.

Presidents cannot hope to lead the nation unless they work closely with their political party—and sometimes with members of the opposition. Only by working with and through parties can presidents overcome the formidable institutional barriers built into the American system—the separation of powers, the federal system, staggered terms of office, numerous congressional committees and subcommittees, and shared appointment and treaty-making powers. Only by using the parties remarkable coalition-building functions can presidents meld the countless countervailing interest groups, regional forces, and minority groups into operating majorities.

All of the great twentieth-century Presidents—Teddy Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Harry S. Truman—successfully utilized their parties to achieve major social and economic goals. Other successful presidents—Eisenhower, Kennedy, Reagan, and—until the major escalation of the Vietnam War—Lyndon Johnson all relied heavily on their own ability to utilize the coalition-building function of their party to reach their objectives. On more than one occasion, however, these presidents

have needed votes from the opposition party to offset defections from within their own party. Even the “Grand Champ” FDR, for example, sometimes turned to the opposition Republicans for help. In perhaps the most crucial single vote of his presidency, the one-year extension of the Selective Service Act in August 1941—four months before Pearl Harbor—more than a dozen internationally minded Republicans from New England supplied the needed votes for a one-vote margin of victory, 203 to 202 votes, for the Roosevelt administration. These critical GOP votes offset defections from isolationist, urban House Democrats (mostly Irish-Americans) from several Eastern cities. Failure to continue the military draft would have crippled America’s military preparedness as Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany stood poised for further aggression.

(continued on page 3)

THEME: New Political Parties

From Headquarters 2
Early Returns 3
Scholarly Precincts 4

- 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.

*FROM HEADQUARTERS

THE 1992 POP AWARDS

LEON EPSTEIN, University of Wisconsin-Emeritus, winner of the Samuel Eldersveld Award for a lifetime of distinguished scholarly and professional contributions to the field.

WALTER DEAN BURNHAM, University of Texas at Austin, winner of the Leon Epstein Award for a book that has made a distinguished contribution to the field for *Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics* (New York: Norton, 1970).

JAMES Q. WILSON, University of California-Los Angeles (and Peter Clark), winner of the award for an article of unusual importance and significance to the field for "Incentive Systems: A Theory of Organization." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 6:129-166, 1961.

Report of the Nominating Committee

The nominating committee composed of William Crotty (Chair), Northwestern University; Cornelius Cotter, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee-Emeritus, and Denise Baer, The University of Akron, recommends the following slate of officers:

Secretary-Treasurer (2-year term):

Charles Hadley, New Orleans University
(second consecutive term).

Executive Council (2-year term):

Gary Wekkin, University of Central Arkansas
Joe Freeman, Brooklyn, New York
Robert Biersak, Federal Election Commission
Marjorie Hershey, Indiana University

Respectfully submitted,

William Crotty, Chair

Past POP Officers 1988-92

CHAIR: Gerald Pomper, Margaret Conway,
Frank Sorauf

SECRETARY-TREASURER: Charles Hadley

PROGRAM CHAIR: Ruth Jones, James Gibson

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL: Joyce Gelb, Charles Barrileaux, Anne Hopkins, John Jackson, Denise Baer, Cornelius Cotter, Frank Feigert, David Olson, William Keefe, Michael Malbin, Marian Palley, Richard Boyd, Anne Costain, Diane Prinderhughes, Gerald Pomper, Jack Walker, Margaret Conway, William Crotty, Lorn Foster, Kay Lawson, Sarah Morehouse, Joseph Schlesinger.

Wanted!

Notices, announcements, reports, and
short articles for VOX POP.

Send material to:

John Green
The University of Akron
Akron, OH 44325-1904

*EARLY RETURNS

International Conference on Democratizing and Newly Democratic Regimes Planned for Next Year

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN this international network of scholars, and thus to facilitate communication among researchers with common interests in the comparative forms and effects of legislative institutions, processes, and politics. Membership in the Research Committee of Legislative Specialists currently covers the period 1991 to 1994, running through the 1994 IPSA World Congress in Berlin, and entitles international scholars to information concerning the professional activities of the Research Committee (including program plans for RCLS panel sessions at the 1994 IPSA Berlin World Congress), receipt of the *International Newsletter*, and listing in the *RCLS International Membership Directory and Research Register*. Membership dues through 1994 are only \$20 U.S. or 12 sterling, and may be paid in either currency.

In order to join the Research Committee of Legislative Specialists, please fill out the coupon below and mail it with a check for \$20 U.S. or 12 sterling to either:

Professor Lawrence D. Longley
Co-Chair, RCLS Department of Government
Lawrence University
Appleton, WI 54912, USA
Phone: (414) 832-6673 or 832-6647
FAX (414) 832-6944

or

Professor Allan Kornberg, Co-Chair
RCLS Department of Political Science
Duke University, Durham, NC 27706, USA
Phone: (919) 684-6581
FAX (919) 681-8928

Please make your check payable to the "Research Committee of Legislative Specialists" or "RCLS." Please do not forget to list your current research interests for the *RCLS International Membership Directory and Research Register*.

PRESIDENTS AS PARTY LEADERS *(continued from page 1)*

For a president, simply having large party majorities in both houses of Congress to back his programs is, of course, not enough. President Jimmy Carter, who enjoyed party majorities in both houses nearly as large as those of LBJ during his first years in the White House, failed miserably in winning party backing to his legislative objectives. As Stephen Skowronek later commented: "It was Jimmy Carter's peculiar genius to treat his remoteness from his party and its institutional centers as a distinctive asset rather than his chief liability in his quest for a credible leadership posture."

Successful party leader presidents have all possessed a certain personal "touch" in relating to members of Congress and party leaders throughout the country. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, though a member of the Hudson Valley aristocracy, had a masterful grasp of the human equation in politics. Confined to a wheelchair since a vicious polio attack in 1921, FDR thrived on having an endless stream of politicians visiting the White House, exchanging information and political gossip. And Roosevelt never failed to amaze visitors with his intimate knowledge of state politics and the leading players across the country.

President Harry S. Truman, originally a product of Boss Tom Pendergast's Kansas City Democratic machine, met weekly with his national party chairman to review party matters, especially patronage. But no better testimony exists of Truman's ability to work with Congress, despite his frequent blasts at the Republican opposition, than his crowning achievement in winning Congressional approval of the Marshall Plan, the famed post-World War II European recovery program, and the Greek-Turkish military aid package to block Soviet expansion in the eastern Mediterranean, while Republicans controlled both houses of Congress. Truman's secret weapon was winning over the influential support of Republican Senator Arthur M. Vandenberg, Chairman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, a pre-war isolationist-turned-internationalist.

President John F. Kennedy was an ardent suitor of Congress. In his first year in office, according to one source, the young president held 32 Tuesday morning breakfasts with the party leadership, 90 private conversations with congressional leaders that lasted an hour or two, coffee hours with 500 lawmakers, and bill-signing ceremonies with a like number of legislators. During his abbreviated 1,000 days in the White House, JFK had 2,500 separate

(continued on page 11)

The Gradual Institutionalization of the National Democratic Party in the 1980s and 1990s

Lawrence D. Longley • Lawrence University

Editor's Note—

In the preceding issue, Professor Longley recounted the story of the Democratic Charter Movement of 1972 to 1974, a party reform movement blocked at the time, but an effort at “party institutionalization” which anticipated subsequent changes in the national Democratic Party.

The stymieing of the Democratic Charter Movement in the early 1970s did not end the process of institutionalization of the national Democratic Party. Instead of being advanced at one time through one reform vehicle, however, it would progress instead slowly over nearly two decades, the 1980s and early 1990s. A major stimulus for this gradual growth of Democratic Party structure, authority, purpose, and resources came not from within the Democratic Party, but from outside. This was the dramatic growth of the capabilities of national Republican Party organizations in the late 1960s and 1970s under two innovative RNC party chairmen, Ray C. Bliss (1965-69) and, to an even greater extent, William E. Brock (1977-81). These developments included major expansions of the staff size of the Republican National Committee and of allied congressional campaign committees, technical support services for candidates, finances, and independence from domination by state parties and political leaders.

What occurred within the national Republican Party during these years—and eventually in the Democratic Party in the 1980s during the DNC leadership of Charles T. Manatt (1981-85) and Paul G. Kirk, Jr. (1985-89)—was a significant degree of party institutionalization, marked by the recruitment of greater numbers of full-time staff, a clarification of the division of labor among staff structures, a heightened degree of general professionalism in organizational activities, and a significantly expanded budget. Paul S. Herrnson has defined the concept of party institutionalization and applied it most fully to the national parties:¹

The institutionalization of the national party organizations refers to their becoming fiscally solvent, organizationally stable, and larger and more diversified in their staffing; it also refers to their adoption of professional-bureaucratic decision-making procedures.

Table 1 summarizes the staff growth of the two national party committees for the 20-year span from 1972 to 1991. At the beginning of this period, the RNC and DNC were

equal in staff personnel, each only minimally staffed with about 30 persons—considerably fewer than the number of staffers typically commanded by even a medium-sized city mayor! Four years later, however, the number of Republican National Committee staff personnel had leaped sharply upward to 200, and by 1980 the staff resources of the RNC had surged more than tenfold over the comparable figure eight years earlier. By 1984, total RNC staff personnel topped 600 persons, 20 times its 1972 size! Meanwhile, the Democratic National Committee continued at minimal levels of three dozen or so staffers until the early 1980s, when the DNC staff increased threefold in the period between 1980 and 1984, about eight years later than the far greater Republican staff expansion.

Table 1
Democratic and Republican
National Committee Staff, 1972-91

	1972	1976	1980	1984	1988	1990	1991*
DNC	30	30	40	130	160	130	113
RNC	30	200	350	600	425	400	335
RNC/DNC Staff Ratio	1.0	6.7	8.8	4.6	2.7	3.1	3.0

*As of mid-November 1991

Source: See Note 2

What is particularly evident in Table 1 is the dramatic *difference* in Republican and Democratic national committee staff totals at every point after 1972, with RNC staff sizes being between 2.7 and 8.8 times greater than comparable DNC personnel resources. This massive staff advantage of the Republican National Committee over the Democratic National Committee has continued: as of late 1991, the RNC had a staff of 335 persons,

(continued on page 5)

SCHOLARLY PRECINCTS *(continued from page 4)*

whereas the DNC had a staff of but 113—a Republican staff advantage of 3 to 1.

Of course, it is possible that the persistent personnel disadvantage of the DNC might be offset somewhat by the staff members employed by its allied congressional campaign committees, commonly known as the “Hill committees.” After all, one might reason, recurrent Democratic majorities in House and Senate should be able to support staff resources for the election of fellow congressional partisans greater than those of the minority Republicans, perhaps rebalancing the Republican National Committee staff advantage.

Table 2 disproves this theory. The figures reported there for the combined national committee and Hill committee partisan staffs reflect at best a slight narrowing—but by no means an elimination—of the substantial Republican National Committee staff-size advantage, with the combined total Republican/Democratic partisan staff ratios after 1972 ranging from 5.2 (in 1976) to 2.0 (in 1988). As of late 1991, the combined Democratic national partisan staff totaled 193 persons and was greatly exceeded more than 2½ times by the combined Republican national partisan staff total of 506.

Table 2

Total Democratic and Republican National Party Staff, 1972-91—Combining Staff of National Committees and Party House and Senate Campaign Committees

	1972	1976	1980	1984	1988	1990	1991*
Democratic	39	41	86	207	290	255	193
Republican	40	214	420	820	593	611	506
Rep./Dem. Staff Ratio	1.0	5.2	4.9	4.0	2.0	2.4	2.6*

*As of mid-November 1991

Source: See Note 2

In short, Republican National Committee staff resources soared from the early 1970s through the mid-1980s. To a lesser degree, Democratic National Committee staff totals increased, but starting only in the early 1980s. In addition, total national Democratic partisan staff—DNC in combination with the Democratic Hill committees—have been outnumbered consistently by

counterpart Republican national partisan staff by a factor of at least two to one—and often much more.

Staff resources, of course, do not determine electoral outcomes. Money, the “mother’s milk” of politics, plays an even greater role than staff in determining the level of candidate services available from the national parties—as well as the extent of direct financial support for those candidates.

Table 3 summarizes Republican and Democratic national committee receipts for the 15-year period from 1976 to 1991. Here again one can observe a persistent and sizable financial edge for the RNC over the DNC, ranging up to an astonishing high of about five to one. Since 1976, only in the presidential election years of 1984 and 1988 (when receipts for both national committees were swollen by some degree of “flow-through” of presidential campaign funds) has the money received by

Table 3

Democratic and Republican National Committee Receipts, 1976-91 (in millions)

	1976	1978	1980	1982	1984	1986	1988	1989	1990	1991*
DNC	\$13.1	\$11.3	\$15.4	\$16.5	\$46.6	\$17.2	\$52.3	\$ 6.8	\$14.5	\$ 3.3
RNC	29.1	34.2	77.8	84.1	105.9	83.8	91.0	30.6	68.7	17.6
RNC/DNC Receipts Ratio	2.2	3.0	5.1	5.1	2.3	4.9	1.7	4.5	4.7	5.3*

*The 1991 figures apply to the first six months of 1991 and covers only “hard money” receipts (funds available for direct campaign use).

Source: See Note 2

the DNC totaled as much as *one-third* that raised by the RNC. Looking at late 1991 financial data, we find that the RNC’s financial advantage over the DNC was more than five to one. Even if we consider the combined total of direct campaign funds (“hard money”) and party-building, non-campaign receipts (“soft money”), the 1991 Republican National Committee financial advantage is still considerable—in the range of 4.5 to 1.

Once again, one might speculate that Democratic money available through the efforts of that party’s congressional campaign committees might substantially offset the RNC financial advantage over the DNC. Table 4, however, shows that this is not the case.

(continued on page 8)

**POP WORKSHOP
1992 APSA ANNUAL MEETING**

"Representing Interests and Interest Representation"

William Crotty and Mildred Schwartz
Workshop Organizers

Wednesday, September 2

1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Fees: Students, \$2; POP Members, \$15; Non-members, \$25

Registration: Send registration fee to:

John Green
Bliss Institute of Applied Politics
The University of Akron
Akron, OH 44325-1904
Phone: (216) 972-5182
Fax: (216) 374-8795
Bitnet: RIJGI@AKRONVM

OR

William Crotty
Department of Political Science
Northwestern University
Evanston, IL 60201
Phone: (708) 491-2624
Fax: (708) 491-8985

Scholarly Perspectives

1:00 to 2:30 p.m.

Chair: William Crotty, Northwestern University

Allan J. Cigler
University of Kansas

Andrew S. McFarland
University of Illinois-Chicago

Robert H. Salisbury
Washington University

John T. Tierney
Boston College

Jeffrey Berry
Tufts University

Virginia Gray
University of Minnesota

David Lowery
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

Applied Perspectives

2:45 to 5:00 p.m.

Chair: Mildred Schwartz, University of Illinois at Chicago

Representatives of business, labor, professional, and cause groups from the Chicago area.

POP ANNUAL VOLUME

The section of Political Organizations and Parties is completing plans to publish an annual volume on innovative scholarship in the subfield. We are now seeking proposals for themes and editors for the series, planned to begin in the fall of 1993, and to be published as free-standing journal issues, through the *Midsouth Political Science Journal*.

The purpose of these volumes is to further theoretically-significant and creative research on particular aspects of political organizations and parties. Each volume will concentrate on a single theme, rather than covering multiple areas in the subfield. The published volume will comprise about 200 published pages, typically 8-10 articles.

The designated editor of the volume will be responsible for developing the theoretical structure of the theme, soliciting and reviewing articles, and developing a coherent, innovative and well-written final manuscript. Separate publication as a book is possible, but not guaranteed.

Prospective editors should submit a short, 2-4 page proposal, stating the theme, its theoretical significance, list of possible topics and authors (but no commitments from these persons is necessary), and the editor's qualifications to complete the volume. Send proposals by August 1, 1992, to:

Gerald Pomper
Eagleton Institute of Politics
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

The choice of editors and topics will be made during the fall APSA meetings by the Executive Committee of the Section.

**WANTED:
ABSTRACTS, RESEARCH REPORTS,
BOOK REVIEWS, RANDOM THOUGHTS**

Just completed seminar research on parties or political organizations?
Got a wild idea you would like to run by fellow scholars?
Read any good (or bad) books lately? Need to get something off your chest?
Feeling neglected?

WRITE SOMETHING FOR VOX POP!

Send your material to:

John Green, Editor, *Vox Pop*
Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics
The University of Akron, Akron, OH 44325-1904
[FAX: 216-374-8795; BITNET: R1JG1@AKRONVM];
or call 216-972-5182.

Table 4

**Democratic and Republican
National Committee Receipts,
1976-91 (in millions)—
Combining Receipts of
National Committees and Party House
and Senate Campaign Committees**

	1976	1978	1980	1982	1984	1986	1988	1989	1990	1991*
Dem.	\$15.0	\$14.4	\$20.2	\$28.6	\$65.9	\$42.9	\$81.1	\$18.9	\$41.1	\$ 9.6
Rep.	43.1	59.2	120.4	191.0	245.9	209.7	191.4	80.2	167.6	40.8
Rep./Dem. Receipts Ratio	2.2	3.0	5.1	5.1	2.3	4.9	1.7	4.5	4.7	5.3*

*The 1991 figures apply to the first six months of 1991 and covers only "hardmoney" receipts.

Sources: See Note 2

Since 1976, the total receipts of Republican national party organizations (the RNC, the National Republican Congressional [House] Committee, and the National Republican Senatorial Committee) have run between 3.7 and 6.7 times the total receipts of the counterpart Democratic national organizations (the DNC, the Democratic Congressional [House] Campaign Committee, and the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee). In the first six months of 1991, for example, national Democratic partisan receipts of \$9.6 million were dwarfed 4.3 to 1 by the comparable Republican fund-raising total of \$40.8 million. For the same six-month period, the party receipts combining 'hard' and 'soft' money reflected a continuing Republican domination over the supply of "mother's milk": whereas Republican national partisan entities raised a total of \$51.6 million, the Democratic national party organizations gathered but \$12.9 million, a Republican advantage of 4 to 1.

The data provided in Tables 1 through 4 have illustrated a number of important trends in the gradual institutionalization of the national political parties over the past two decades. To summarize, these trends include:

- the striking expansion of Republican National Committee and allied congressional campaign committee staff and financial resources in the period from the early 1970s to the mid-1980s;
- the significant yet belated and less dramatic growth of Democratic National Committee staff and receipts during the early to mid-1980s;

- the growth of both parties' congressional campaign committees as significant partners with the two national party committees in terms of staff resources and fund-raising;¹

- the failure of the Democratic congressional campaign committees—despite their linkage to persistent majorities in both chambers—to offset significantly Republican partisan staff and financial advantages; and

- the overall development in both national parties of new levels of staffing and financial receipts (hard money alone or in combination with soft money), thereby allowing the national organizations of both parties, including the Democratic party, to exercise far greater degrees of influence over and involvement in electoral politics and party organizational processes.

In short, the national parties, including the national committees, now command the resources to ensure that their activities are marked by more than "politics without power." Although the national parties and the national committees do not—and never will, given our federal and separation-of-powers system—control the state parties or dominate independently elected officeholders, they have gathered the means to ensure their political relevance in elections and their importance to officeholders, candidates, and state parties. Various scholars and party analysts have described this new role for the contemporary national party as the "service vendor" party as the "broker party," on the "candidate service center." Whatever the term, what is being described is an involvement of national party organization in electoral campaigns of an unprecedented nature.

This support role for the national parties takes many forms, ranging from direct candidate financial assistance to such "in-kind" campaign assistance as polling, campaign management, and other technical services. In the Democratic Party, this conception of party organizational assistance and cooperation with candidates and their campaigns has been formalized in recent years in terms of what has come to be called the "Coordinated Campaign"—the hallmark of DNC Chairman Ronald H. Brown, who became head of the Democratic National Committee in early 1989, and DNC Political Director Paul Tully.

The Coordinated Campaign involves the strong encouragement by the DNC of the creation of independent campaign structures within state Democratic parties financed in large part by individual Democratic candidates and supported by other Democratic power centers, including Democratic elected officials not on the ballot

(continued on page 9)

and constituency groups such as organized labor. The Coordinated Campaign in each state performs key campaign organizational tasks such as voter registration, voter identification, absentee ballot and get-out-the-vote drives, and, in some cases, such additional tasks as polling, scheduling, targeting, press relations, and purchasing paid media. In the 1990 campaign alone, the DNC recognized and supported more than 36 such statewide Coordinated Campaign programs, and efforts are under way to create 1992 Coordinated Campaign structures in virtually every state.

In presidential election years, such as 1992, these state-by-state Coordinated Campaigns will work closely with the presidential campaign, on both the national and state levels, in setting overall strategies as well as in conducting polling, focus groups, and other voter-research activities. One late 1991 account described the 1992 presidential electoral strategy being developed by the DNC political staff as a complement to the above-enumerated campaign support services:

Target key coastal, midwestern and southern border states, revive efforts to mobilize black voters who were generally neglected in 1988, and concentrate extraordinary resources in California, which, with 54 electoral votes, is assured of a pivotal role in any close presidential contest.³

Although such electoral strategies are obviously always subject to subsequent review or even rejection by the presidential nominee when determined or evident, this type of forward planning of electoral priorities is further evidence, along with the fervently sought and emphasized linkage on the state level between state party Coordinated Campaigns and the presidential campaign, of the new involvement and significance of the Democratic National Committee in electoral activities. The new campaign-centered role of the DNC, then, entails services for candidates, together with vigorous efforts at the coordination of multicandidate activities. The purpose is to ensure that the total electoral effort is at least as great as—or greater than—the sum of its parts.

In conclusion, the events of the past 20 years have finally given promise that the national Democratic party can lead, that it can play a meaningful role in electoral politics, both nationally and locally. It is undergoing a long-term process of revitalization and institutionalization, including the incorporation of some of the ideas of the Democratic Charter Movement reformers of the early 1970s, and it is becoming increasingly electorally relevant and mobilized sufficiently to affect critical political and electoral decisions.

Lawrence Longley is co-editor of *The Democrats Must Lead: The Care for a Progressive Democratic Party* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992).

Notes

¹ The premier chronicler in recent years of the renascent national and congressional campaign committees is Paul S. Herrnson. His major works include *Party Campaigning in the 1980s*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988); "Reemergent National Party Organizations." In L. Sandy Maisel, ed., *The Parties Respond: Changes in the American Party System*. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990); "National Party Organizations and the Postreform Congress." In Roger H. Davidson, ed., *The Postreform Congress*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992a); and with David Menefee-Libey. "The Dynamics of Party Organizational Development." *MidSouth Political Science Journal*, 11:3-20, 1990; "Political Parties and Congressional Elections: Out of the Eighties and Into the Nineties." In Michael Margolis and John Green, eds., *Machine Politics, Sound Bites, and Nostalgia: On Studying Political Parties* (University Press of America, forthcoming, 1992b).

² **Table 1 and 2:** For 1972-84 data: Herrnson (1988, p. 39), see Note 1 for identification; for 1976-88 data: Herrnson (1990, p. 49 and 1992, p. 50); for 1988 and 1990 data: Herrnson (1990, p.51), Herrnson (1992a, p. 9-11, 12), and Herrnson (1992b,

p. 53); 1991 data were based on estimates provided by the DNC/RNC staff. The RNC/DNC ratios were specially calculated for these talks.

Table 3 and 4: Same as Tables 1 and 2, except for 1989 data: Richard L. Berke, "Contributions to Democrats Lagging," *New York Times*, Feb. 2, 1990, p. A12; for 1991 data: Federal Election Commission figures (for six-month data for both political parties), Finance Division of the DNC, and Report of DNC Chairman Ronald H. Brown to the Executive Committee of the Democratic National Committee, Chicago, IL, Nov. 21, 1991. The 1976 to mid-1991 figures are based on Federal Election Commission data; 1991 data were based on estimates provided by the Democratic and Republican National Committees and by each of the parties' House and Senate campaign committees in mid-November 1991, and are first reported here. The RNC/DNC staff and receipts ratios were specially calculated for these tables.

³ Thomas B. Edsall and Dan Balz, "The Democrats Put Together Their Teams," *Washington Post Weekly Edition*, Sept. 30, 1991.

ADVANCE ANNOUNCEMENT

The Proceeding at the 1991 POP Workshop will be published in the summer of 1992 by the Bliss Institute and The University Press of America.

Machine Politics, Sound Bites, and Nostalgia: On Studying Political Parties

Scholarly Perspectives

Overview of Research on Party Organizations

Leon D. Epstein

Political Parties and Congressional Elections: Out of the Eighties and Into the Nineties

Paul S. Herrnson

The Organizational Strength of Political Parties at the County Level: Preliminary Observations from the Southern Grassroots Party Activists Project

Charles D. Hadley

The Importance of Local Party Organization for Democratic Governance

Michael Margolis

Questions Raised by Recent Attempts at Local Party Reform

Kay Lawson

Applied Perspectives

Comments by Practitioners

Michael Margolis

Workshop Organizer

John Pitney

*Former Research Director, Republican National Committee and
Assistant Professor, Claremont McKenna College*

Lynn Cutler

Vice Chair, Democratic National Committee

Mark Strand

Administrative Assistant, Congressman Bill Lowery

Les Frances

Executive Director, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee

Tom Cole

Executive Director, National Republican Campaign Committee

Inquiries should be directed to

John Green, Bliss Institute, The University of Akron, Akron, OH 44325-1904, (216) 972-5182.

PRESIDENTS AS PARTY LEADERS *(continued from page 3)*

contacts with members of Congress. Nor will veteran Kennedy supporters ever forget that the day of his assassination JFK was visiting and speaking in Dallas in an attempt to reconcile the warring liberal and conservative factions of the Texas Democratic Party.

President Lyndon Johnson's party leadership skills were legendary throughout his years in the U.S. Senate and during the first two years of his presidency. To this day, his "Great Society" legislative boxscore ranks next to FDR's on the all-time list. But there are limits to the president's party leadership, as LBJ discovered after his rapid escalation of America's involvement in the Vietnam War and his repeated promises of victory turned sour. The mounting cost of U.S. casualties, without victory in sight, coupled with Johnson's growing "credibility gap" with Congress and the American public, were clearly too much for Johnson's renowned brand of "consensus politics" to overcome, even though his Democratic Party maintained solid majorities in both houses of Congress throughout his presidency.

President Ronald Reagan, despite his widely reputed aversion to a heavy work schedule, seldom missed a step in dealing personally with members of Congress. During Reagan's first hundred days in office, for example, his Capital Hill liaison office arranged 69 Oval Office sessions in which 467 lawmakers participated. Also, President Reagan invited 60 Democratic legislators to the White House for a friendly chat in the summer of 1981, shortly before a crucial vote on the Reagan-proposed budget cuts. Beyond doubt, personal accessibility of presidents to congressional members of both parties is one of the keys to being an effective party leader.

The jury is still out on President Bush's party leadership performance. Faced with Democratic control of both houses of Congress, Bush has viewed party fund-raising for GOP Senate, House, and gubernatorial candidates as a major function of his party leadership role. And in this capacity he set an all-time presidential record by collecting approximately \$80 million at fund-raising events in the 1990 off-year election campaign. But in the trench warfare against opposition congressional Democrats, Bush has had to rely far more heavily on his veto power—27 vetoes and no overrides—than on strong party leadership during his first three and one-half years in office. Still, he has been unable to placate right-wing Republicans sufficiently to avoid a challenge to his first-term stewardship. While he has been able to hold off conservative Republican Pat Buchanan's challenge to his renomination, it remains to be seen if his revived "Rose Garden" strategy will be effective enough to assure his re-election in November 1992, especially if H. Ross Perot, the Texas billionaire, mounts a strong independent, third-party candidacy.

Divided government in recent decades has decidedly threatened the president's role as party leader. Since 1952, opposite parties have shared control of the presidency and one or both houses of Congress for 26 years out of 40. Still, Republican Presidents Eisenhower and Reagan, faced with divided government over a 14-year period, were, occasionally, able to build bridges with the opposition Democrats to achieve significant legislative results. Contrary to the popular view, divided government does not necessarily lead to legislative deadlock. David R. Mayhew, in the only careful empirical study of the policy consequences of divided government versus unified government since World War II, discovered that the presence or absence of unified party control of the national government has had surprisingly little effect on the productivity of Congress. Mayhew identified 257 pieces of legislation enacted between 1947 and 1988 and found on average that 12.8 laws were passed by each Congress during 18 years of unified government, while an average of 11.8 laws were enacted per Congress during 24 years of divided government. This comparable record can be traced in part, I believe, to the considerable party coalition-building skills of General Ike and Ronald Reagan. By contrast, during the first one hundred days of 1992, President Bush, according to Adam Clymer of *The New York Times*, did not hold a single meeting with Democratic congressional leaders on pressing domestic issues.

Despite the intractable fragmentation of party politics in the United States, no known substitute has yet been found to replace the ability of political parties and their leaders to facilitate consensus and redirect public policy. The president and his party are mutually dependent on each other. The president needs his party's support in order to enact a legislative program; the party, in turn, needs the president's leadership and prestige of his office to achieve its goals.

Adroit presidents know that as party leader they can serve as a vital communications link between the executive and legislative branches. Failure of presidents to grasp this fundamental political tenet, particularly in an era of divided government, can lead to constant executive-legislative gridlock. Worse yet, the president's failure as party leader over a period of time may open the door to a plebiscitarian presidency.

James W. Davis is the Author of *The President as Party Leader* (Westport, CN: Praeger, 1992)

WANTED! Notices, announcements, reports, and short articles for *Vox Pop*. Send material to: John Green, The University of Akron, Akron, OH 44325-1904.

POP ANNUAL VOLUME

The section of Political Organizations and Parties is completing plans to publish an annual volume on innovative scholarship in the subfield. We are now seeking proposals for themes and editors for the series, planned to begin in the fall of 1993, and to be published as free-standing journal issues, through the *Midsouth Political Science Journal*.

The purpose of these volumes is to further theoretically-significant and creative research on particular aspects of political organizations and parties. Each volume will concentrate on a single theme, rather than covering multiple areas in the subfield. The published volume will comprise about 200 published pages, typically 8-10 articles.

The designated editor of the volume will be responsible for developing the theoretical structure of the theme, soliciting and reviewing articles, and developing a coherent, innovative and well-written final manuscript. Separate publication as a book is possible, but not guaranteed.

Prospective editors should submit a short, 2-4 page proposal, stating the theme, its theoretical significance, list of possible topics and authors (but no commitments from these persons is necessary), and the editor's qualifications to complete the volume. Send proposals by August 1, 1992, to:

Gerald Pomper,
Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University,
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

The choice of editors and topics will be made during the fall APSA meetings
by the Executive Committee of the Section.

— 12 —



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

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