

Misc.

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KAREN McCOWAN

A different look at the first lady

AT THE WHITE HOUSE, most media attention last week focused on the book room of the first family's residence. That's where Hillary Rodham Clinton's billing records, long sought by Whitewater investigators, mysteriously resurfaced.

In the eyes of two local women, however, far more important business was going on two stories below, in the first floor library. That's where they were invited by Clinton to attend a follow-up session to last September's International Conference on Women in Beijing.

"I'm not saying (Whitewater) shouldn't be investigated," said Anita Weiss, an associate professor of international studies at the University of Oregon. "But it was a business deal. I don't think it's nearly as important as health care, or the empowerment of women around the world. Yet nobody's talking about

these issues anymore, because Whitewater is deflecting all the discussion and the discourse."

After meeting Clinton face to face, the two Eugene women say they saw little of the brittle, besieged image of the first lady that increasingly dominates front

pages, sound bites and magazine covers as the long-simmering Whitewater scandal comes to an election-year boil.

"She is an incredibly charismatic woman, with a warmth that isn't an act," Weiss said.

"I felt a very sincere kind of contact," agreed Susan Sygall, executive director of Mobility International USA, a Eugene-based disability rights and education organization.

Sygall heard Clinton champion equal rights for girls and women with disabilities in her celebrated "women's rights are human rights" Beijing speech. She found her equally impressive last week in small groups and one-on-one.

"She is very knowledgeable, speaking on a wide variety of issues without notes," Sygall said. "She knows her stuff. But she also really listens to what you have to say. Just hours after we spoke, (Mobility International) began to get calls from the White House staff on how we could work together on disability issues. It's obvious that her ears are open."



Weiss said she was struck as much by Clinton's heart as by her intelligence.

"She speaks with great conviction," she said, applauding Clinton's follow-through on Beijing.

"It's not the kind of 'been there, done that' approach we saw 10 years ago after Ronald Reagan sent his daughter to lead the U.S. delegation to the 1985 International Women's Conference in Nairobi."

In last week's session, Clinton updated the women on U.S. initiatives launched in response to the Beijing platform.

WITH HER EXPERTISE in international affairs — she has spent several years in Pakistan, including a trip in which she served as an observer of that country's 1993 elections — Weiss was particularly thrilled with two USAID (United States Agency for International Development) initiatives.

One aims to increase women's access to and participation in elections and other political processes in emerging democracies around the world. Another, the Girls' and Women's Education Initiative, aims to increase primary school completion among girls in USAID-assisted countries, as well as to increase women's literacy and young girls' school readiness.

Other initiatives will concentrate on the home front. A new U.S. Department of Labor program, for example, will recognize and publicize workplace changes that improve the lives of American working women in the areas they say they care about most: improving pay and benefits, balancing work and family, and training for advancement. About 600 employers, from small business owners to major corporations, have already pledged to make such changes. For Weiss, a recent conversation underscored how closely that initiative hits home.

"Just a week before I left for Washington, I talked to a Eugene woman who'd just quit her job, at great financial cost to her family, to return to school to earn an MBA," Weiss said. "She'd been a teller at a local bank for 11 years and never got promoted, even though she noticed that most of the men who came in as tellers at her bank quickly moved up to higher-paying jobs."

She also praised a draft Violence Against Women Act, released by the Department of Justice during the women's briefing last week. It proposes \$800 million in grants to assist states in improving the response of law enforcement and court officials to domestic abuse cases.

A related note: Mobility International USA is selling raffle tickets to raise funds to buy and equip a bus with up to 20 wheelchair tie-downs. The group plans to make the bus available to other community organizations that need to transport multiple wheelchair users.

Prizes in the raffle will include a \$1,000 shopping spree at downtown, Valley River Center, and Fifth and Pearl shops; weekend getaways; and a trip to Reno on Tri-Star Airlines. Tickets, \$10 each, are available by calling 343-1284 (TDD service for deaf callers).

The Personal

As we have learned, with respect to public opinion the facts often matter less than the perception. That is to say, if people perceive you to be honest they are less likely to believe it when your honesty is challenged by others. Although it will be important to marshal the facts around the various issues that are sure to arise and communicate effectively those facts, the reality remains -- perceptions and impressions frame the way people think about you. We've got to give you a frame which can lend you some protection.

The Family Frame

A survey of news clips in the early administration show that we were beginning to get past the "unidimensional", sometimes cold, co-president First Lady.

We must focus again on situating you in a family context. It is one of the ways to inoculate you from the harshness which is sure to follow in the next few months.

People want to see you as a part of a family. Even those whose families are "nontraditional" (for whatever reason) find a sense of security in seeing a family. (See attachment A). A survey of newsclips from the past two years show that your most positive stories have been written in the family frame (e.g. the Associated Press picture of you and your mom during the convention, the Redbook cover story on you and your mom, the Texas speech during your father's illness, the People magazine cover of the Clinton family, any anecdotes used in speeches referring to Chelsea are printed and reprinted, the photo of you and Chelsea riding bikes at Martha's Vineyard, the one picture used over and over again by television, when they want to show the President and you together is the clip of you and the President holding hands and walking to the helicopter, campaigning for Hugh.

We must figure out a way to show you in a family context without being phony and without sacrificing your family privacy.

Recommendations

We need anecdotes -- about your immediate and extended family. We need anecdotes about you as a child. One thing that helped us a little bit with the commodities story was having the American public learn that your father had taught you to read the stock market prices. Learning sooner that you tried to enlist in the military could have helped early in the Administration when people were suggesting you didn't want any uniformed service men

and women in the White House.

Anecdotes about you and your family must, as appropriate, be a part of your speeches and forwarded to the gossip mill.

We must set dates and times now and routinely have the Liz Smiths of the world in for tea. They should be staffed, probably by Neel or Kathy Berlin and should have some tidbit leaked to them often-- (more on planning leaks).

Every Camp David weekend/or holiday we should release a White House photo either of some activity or at the very least your arrival walking from the car together. This means that we need to have a White House photographer with you for a designated period of time.

When possible, you need to be seen with your mother. It always helps to know that you are someone's daughter. Lunch with your mother or Christmas shopping etc.

I think we should continue to keep Chelsea out of the limelight but people want to know that you are doing things for her, paying attention to her. Shopping for Chelsea on foreign trips should be a part of your itinerary.

Community

Although Washington D.C. doesn't feel much like a real community, it is. You do need to be out in it, not just shelters and goodwill events (although we need to do some of those) but taking part in the life of the community. You have always spoken about how active you were in your community in Arkansas, it seems less credible without you connecting in small ways to your present community.

The perception in Washington which they immediately telegraph to the rest of the world is that you are in hiding or you won't speak to the press because you have a bunker mentality. We can expect that in the months ahead, this will be a ready reference, a convenient frame for the press.

We can greatly change the perception of "hiding out" without offering you up to numerous W.H. press corp availabilities, by starting now to have you frequently "turn up" around town. Being out and about will create the impression that you are not hiding. The Washington media (remember they live here and are a part of the "inside the beltway" buzz) will not be credible reporting you are hiding when you have been spotted.

Ann, Melanne, Lisa and I need to develop a list of small community events/outings that can be dropped into the schedule at the last minute. On the average these community happening should

occur every two weeks.

You have also asked what it is you might do on a sustained basis in the community, based on our discussion this morning, we might consider focusing on infant mortality as a health issue and a values issue.

Good examples already done

You and Tipper out to lunch
Liz Carpenter's book signing

Community and Your Staff

Melanne, Ann, Neel and Lisa (to some extent) are on the Washington social circuit. This is good for you. They keep the buzz up about you and I assume they are so clever and charming at a party that everyone has a better impression of you because of your association with them. This is called the "halo" effect. We all must make a concerted effort to be on the circuit and to use this time when necessary for planned "leaking".

I suggest Ann do what she is now doing for Ira -- telling us what invitations we must accept to see and be seen, essentially serving as your extensions into the community. Patti, Capricia and I should do more.

Faith

I believe we are all agreed that we should work hard not to exploit or politicize your faith in any way. At the same time we cannot ignore the fact that your faith can be inspirational to many of the faith and serve as another window into who you really are.

Immediately we should develop a plan for contributing to religious publications either by essays, letters to the editor or developing special/exclusive pieces where you focus on one issue in an interview format (e.g. violence and children, personal responsibility and government empowerment). For one of the major religious publications we should consider offering a piece where you interview a respected philosopher, theologian etc.

It would also not be a bad idea to pay a visit to the bipartisan prayer group. They meet every month. I am planning to go in December.

Media Training

We must eliminate the adjectives currently being used to describe you in the press "irritable, "combative", "agitated". This does not help. Whether it is sloppy staff work, a reporter out to get your goat or exhaustion that makes you irritable -- the public doesn't need to hear about it. This doesn't mean you have to be a "smiley face" all the time.

I know for a fact that training can kill that edge. Let us start that training and be somewhat consistent about it.

The Political

Inside the White House

No matter what approach we take over the next two years, inside the White House you should still be seen as a player. You must spend more time in your west wing office. People should see whose going in and whose coming out. I urge you to routine meetings with the NEC and DPC and key cabinet officials in your areas of interest. When you are not in your office it contributes to the bunker talk. And you know how they talk in the White House. It should be clear by your activities you have not been "demoted" since health care, you are just tinkering with new tactical approaches to achieve the goals of the President.

You should also outline for us the other administration initiatives you have a particular interest in so we can get ourselves geared up to staff those areas.

We must continue to speak with our women appointees. You are such an inspiration to them. It is important for them to hear from you during this time.

Looking at 1996

Our travel schedule, starting now, should be developed with an eye toward states which will be important to us in 1996. (See Attachment B - key state list developed for Christmas parties by Craig, Rahm, Harold and Kevin- note Arkansas "O" because special party planned). We should modify this list to include states where you are loved.

We should also take the advice we've given to the President about smaller towns and taking the time to actually talk to people out of camera range. Let the people talk on camera about those meetings.

And we must change the visuals of you, not always at a podium but in smaller events and working meetings. This is our old campaign argument--crowds versus small groups but I think we can find a comfortable mix. (See Attachment C)

Further, we must continue to accept prestigious awards in person and when you can't be there, we should make an effort (in selected cases) to send someone on your behalf. Someone who represents you -- another example of using the "halo" effect.

In terms of target audiences, we should follow elementary political rules -- solidify your natural base, then reach out to persuadables and if there is anything left over try for the miracles.

Your target generally should be women.

- Women who are trying hard to manage work and families
- Women who are mothers -- those who care for children
- African American women -- they are the voters in black communities - have same issues as above
- Special subfocus on white women who are lower to middle middle class/noncollege
- Young women - we must reclaim the voters on campuses
- Elderly women
- and
- Elderly men

(See Attachment D - two state focus groups "top of mind" response to you.)

Congress

Attached are graphic presentations of the percentage of women currently in Congress. (See Attachment E). We must target the Democratic women in Congress so that they can reinforce our message and we can reinforce theirs -- when possible. We are likely to be alienating Democrats on any number of issues. You can play an important role of simply keeping doors open in tough times. Do something serious and do something fun with these girls - how about a movie night or lecture in the White House Theater.

I also worry about our ability to communicate effectively to the Black Caucus and to keep them in sync with our strategy. I am less concerned about them with respect to what they do in Congress but more concerned about what they'll do in their Districts with our base - (especially if there is a primary challenge from Jesse). We should target several members of the caucus for more personal relationships and develop a powerful strategy for black radio and black newspapers. (I'll do this over the weekend.)

You must encourage the Vice President to organize the Democrats to take advantage of the new technology. (I don't know who else can encourage him to make this a priority, other than the President.) According to Jock, Newt is already setting up E-mail in all the Republican offices and trainings to get them on board. He is developing a centralized faxing system that will shoot instructions in three minutes to the House Republicans. Think about it -- our leadership will be trying to reach people by phone or sending a messenger with a piece of paper telling them they are needed immediately on the floor.

Finally, we must try and get the Democrats to develop an effective strategy for using C-Span. And, nearly all these folks need media training.

(Also needed a discussion of systematic outreach strategies to the base)

Policy

Melanne has a much better handle on this than I do but I offer the following basic areas of focus.

Health

Continue your health focus -- by maintaining a high visibility role as advocate of the administration health care plan, whatever it is. But stay above the fray. Despite all the advice I've heard about you moving out of health care, I instinctively believe this is a huge mistake.

Continue to build your health care credentials with women by focusing on women's health and what this administration is doing. More visuals of you in women's hospitals, rural clinics, talking to women of all ages about their health care.

Children's Health

Use children's health as your bridge issue with all women of all classes and ages (e.g. immunization, infant mortality) This may fit nicely with the administration's health initiative if we prioritize insuring children.

Violence and Values

Use violence, not so much as a health issue but a values issue -- respect for human life, a reason for communities to

unite, working towards a civil society (this is how you can take the high road with respect to negativism, rhetorical violence by the Republicans, lying in the press etc. and I believe we can somehow use a discussion of your faith) This needs to be flushed out more.

Teen Pregnancy and Welfare Reform

Let's Talk.

An International Network of Women

Let's talk with Melanne

LESSONS FROM THE ELECTION

There is an overwhelming perception that the Administration is not about anything positive. There is no central core. It is worse than not recognizing our accomplishments -- it's not believing that "there is a there, there."

1. We need to reclaim the commitment to helping middle class Americans who do not see themselves as beneficiaries of economic change. Right now, the President is as out of touch with ordinary people as George Bush was.

Ordinary working people are not experiencing the economic prosperity and improvement that the Administration has been touting. For the average worker, the thought that he/she will have six jobs in a lifetime -- not one secure job -- is a frightening prospect. What he/she is experiencing is job insecurity and a workplace where employers have no loyalty to their workers. That's what these workers expected the President to change and they wonder if it's what we stand for.

We need to figure out how we are going to win back the confidence of ordinary workers and prove that we are committed to helping them.

2. The voters believe the President is a big government liberal. This stems largely from their perception of the health care plan. Specter's flow chart summed it up for them, and we never successfully countered it. The voters' negative view of the health care plan has colored their view of the Administration in general.

3. The President has no moral standing as President. Bill Clinton needs to govern with values, not talk or preach about values. He needs to be the person he was in 1992. Actions have consequences.

He has been undermined significantly in this regard by extraordinarily negative, hostile views of Joycelyn Elders. She is "death for the Administration," in PH's words. "You can't get rid of her fast enough. She is worse for Bill Clinton than James Watt was for Reagan."

4. A recent focus group at Colgate University shows how wide the gulf is for us. When students were asked how they would describe the President's appearance, they talked about: "bags under his eyes, his girth, a McDonald's bag in his hand." Nothing was said about vibrancy, vitality, or strength. The students also talked in panicked terms about the future. The bottom line is that 22-year-old males feel as insecure as the 50-year-old males.

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202-862-5025

April 24, 1995

VIA TELECOPY

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
 First Lady
 The White House
 Washington, DC 20500-2000

Dear Hillary:

I attach a copy of an article from last week's National Journal. It demonstrates quite convincingly that the "enemies list" concept is alive and well and going strong in the Republican Party.

As you doubtless remember, Gingrich made a widely quoted statement before the election last fall to the same effect. While none of this is so far tied directly to any of the Republican presidential candidates, surely some campaign use can be made of the vindictive, mean, personal-reprisal spirit still so evident in the Republican Party - and still so clearly manifesting one of the worst, most universally condemned aspects of the Nixon days.

With warmest wishes.

Sincerely,

Tom
 Thomas A. Troyer

Attachment

B U D G E T

The Ax Files

In a project coordinated by the office of House Majority Leader Richard K. Armey, R-Texas, conservatives are aiming to "Defund the Left" by stopping the flow of federal money to not-for-profit organizations that have been associated with liberal causes.

BY JEFF SHEAR

With its dark legacy of witch-hunts and enemies lists, the Republican Party is once again collecting names. In a project coordinated by the office of House Majority Leader Richard K. Armey, R-Texas, conservatives are working hard to identify political advocacy organizations that get federal money. And they're obviously not gunning for their ideological brethren.

"Defunding the Left" is the catchphrase for the campaign to stop the flow of federal funds to not-for-profit organizations that are associated with liberal causes, and it's gained powerful new impetus through the GOP's takeover of the House. In its latest incarnation, the drive aims to disrupt the liberal infrastructure that supports the legacy of the New Deal. It differs from earlier efforts because it is more narrowly targeted, and because the GOP controls the Congress.

Conservatives say that they are preparing to storm the ramparts of the "welfare-

industrial complex"—the "iron triangle" of federal departments and agencies, liberal advocacy groups and their allies in Congress. These organizations fuel the federal government's runaway spending, they say. Yanking them off the federal teat is fundamental to dismantling Big Washington, a key goal of the House GOP's Contract With America.

While the leaders of liberal organizations that may end up on the Republican hit list say that they've been bracing for something like this, they've yet to discern any coordinated maneuvers by conservatives to go after them. They're wary, but like their Democratic allies on Capitol Hill, they're not privy to the machinations of the Republican leadership.

Though still in its formative phase, the "project," as it's sometimes referred to by those involved, will heavily rely on the House Appropriations Committee. Already, the committee has struck hard, pruning back funds promised in the fiscal 1995 budget to the Corporation for Pub-



Grover G. Norquist, a leading Republican strategist
"We will hunt them down one by one and extinguish their funding sources."

Richard A. Ilson

lic Broadcasting, the Legal Services Corp. (whose board of directors Hillary Rodham Clinton once chaired) and the National Endowment for the Arts.

But these three targets are only a small part of a much larger, coordinated effort run by Virginia Thomas, the wife of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas and a top adviser to Arney. A variety of conservative think tanks, chief among them the Heritage Foundation, are helping to identify federally subsidized organizations that influence federal policies.

The office of Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., has been acting as the liaison between the GOP leadership and various House committees. "We're looking at what is the appropriate role of government and the proper use of taxpayer dollars," a key leadership aide said.

Conservatives are forthright about their intentions. "We will hunt [these liberal groups] down one by one and extinguish their funding sources," Grover G. Norquist, a leading Republican strategist and a member of Gingrich's inner circle, said in an interview. "With control over Congress and the White House, it's all over. We will go back and sue people who broke the law, who were ripping off taxpayers to do political work. If Planned Parenthood is lobbying, taxpayers need to be reimbursed."

Scott Hodge, the Heritage Foundation's budget director, acknowledged participating in the project. "I have heard about and have been indirectly a part of those efforts to identify the various channels in which traditionally liberal institutions are funded and to cut those pipelines," he said in an interview.

Republican rhetoric on the issue is remarkably consistent. Referring to the Legal Services Corp., Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas, told *The New York Times*. "They're being advocates for the existing welfare bureaucracy, and while they may have a right to do it, they don't have a right to do it with taxpayers' money."

The party line was again evident when Rep. John L. Mica, R-Fla., recently told reporters. "It is a travesty to require taxpayers to subsidize the fund-raising efforts of political and ideological advocacy groups."

Mica, who chairs the Government Reform and Oversight Subcommittee on the Civil Service, is trying to expel advocacy groups from the Combined Federal Campaign, the federal government's version of the United Way.

On April 7, Sen. Alan K. Simpson, R-Wyo., announced that he and his staff are investigating the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), which he said has 33 million members and receives about \$100 million a year in federal grants. "I'm going through their books



Gary D. Bass, the executive director of OMB Watch
"It's illegal to lobby with federal funds. The nonprofits wouldn't do it."

and their records," he told the Associated Press.

"The perception is that it's an unfair playing field," Michael Franc, the Heritage Foundation's director of congressional relations, said. "Advocacy groups on the Left dip deep into the federal till."

Stephen Moore, the director of fiscal policy studies for the Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank that's championed the idea of closing the federal spigot to advocacy groups on the Left and Right (in 1985 it published a book titled *Destroying Democracy: How Government Funds Partisan Politics*), said that his organization is trying to identify the "Terrible 10" of advocacy groups.

Among the advocacy groups singled out by conservatives so far: the AARP, the AFL-CIO, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, the Association of Head Start Grantees, the Child Welfare League, the Children's Defense Fund, Families USA, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund Inc., the National Council of La Raza, the National Council of Senior Citizens and Planned Parenthood Federation of America Inc.

Thus far, the conservatives' tactics have been subtle, built on process: slash the staffs of congressional committees, cutting off the Democrats' knowledge base; eliminate funds for legislative service organizations, the Congressional Black Caucus and the Democratic Study Group chief among them; and attack the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the putative voice of the "welfare-industrial complex."

"We've known for a long time that a lot of liberal advocacy groups have been put in a position to sustain themselves through federal grants and fronts," Ed Gillespie, a spokesman for Arney, said. "These groups are not actually delivering goods and services or doing charitable deeds, as much as they are advocating policy."

"WE'RE COVERING THE WATERFRONT"

The flow of federal funds to liberal advocacy organizations may not be the river that conservatives imagine. Ala. Abramson, the associate director of nonprofit sector research at the Aspen Institute's Washington office, estimates that not-for-profit organizations receive \$10.8 billion in federal funds in 1994.

Citing the work of Lester M. Salomo, the director of the Johns Hopkins Institute for Policy Studies, Abramson said that there are about 164,000 such organizations with at least one paid employee. This estimate doesn't include trade associations, foundations, labor unions and charities.

About 39 per cent of the \$10.8 billion the largest share, goes to social service organizations, with 25 per cent going to civic organizations, 22 per cent to health organizations, 11 per cent to education organizations and 3 per cent to arts-related organizations.

The first phase of the defunding-Left effort entails gathering information about liberal organizations and figuring out how to cut them off from federal funds. "Meetings are going on among

THE GOURMET FOOD CHAIN?

Conservatives who are trying to break what they describe as a food chain in which federal money is used to influence the federal government argue that it's one thing for *privately* financed advocacy groups to make their ideas known to Congress and quite another for *federally* subsidized advocacy groups to do the same.

Conservatives have no problem with lobbyists for the National Federation of Independent Business Inc. or the National Restaurant Association meeting weekly with John Boehner, R-Ohio, the chairman of the House Republican Conference. "They're competing in the marketplace of ideas," said Kate O'Beirne of the Heritage Foundation, "and they use their own money."

But while business groups may be competing on their own dime, they're doing it to gain federal benefits that are anything but chump change. Trade associations and other business groups have enjoyed such extraordinary access to key Republican leaders since

the November elections that their efforts amount to a gourmet food chain of special-interest influence.

In a well-publicized case, the staff of the Senate Judiciary Committee allowed Hunton & Williams, a law and lobbying firm that represents electric utilities and other corporate interests before federal regulators, to brief it before markup sessions on the Comprehensive Regulatory Reform Act.

On March 31, in a pointed letter to Hunton & Williams, Patrick J. Leahy of Vermont, a senior Democrat on the committee, asked, among other questions: "Who are the major clients of the firm that have an interest in the legislation?" and "Who was billed for drafting or other assistance supplied by Hunton & Williams to the committee with regard to this legislation?" In a letter dated April 4, the firm didn't answer Leahy's questions, but said that it would furnish "lobby disclosure materials."

Two days later, the committee's markup of the legislation was pushed back to April 26.

Republicans to figure out how to do this," a participant in the project said.

Among the approaches under consideration is applying the Freedom of Information Act to organizations that receive federal funds, which would give the GOP strategists a powerful investigative tool. Another is requiring organizations whose representatives testify at congressional hearings to divulge their sources of funds. Though innocent-sounding, this would allow Republicans to assemble a list of targets.

Privatization and block grants are other potential weapons in the GOP's arsenal. Privatization could be used to cut social advocacy groups out of the money loop by replacing them with for-profit contractors. Block grants to the states could be used to achieve the same end, in that they would bypass the federal departments and agencies that award funds to advocacy groups.

As conservatives see it, their trump card is the House Appropriations Committee. "That's where the institutional memory resides to root out these programs," said a former committee aide who asked not to be named. "Bob Livingston [R-La., the committee's chairman] kept the key staff in each subcommittee with jurisdiction over these

programs. They know where the bodies are buried."

Ironically, some conservative loyalists have attacked Livingston for not firing aides who long worked under the Democratic majority. "Now," the ex-aide said, "they're his biggest asset."

Just as the Appropriations Committee has, over the years, been able to dole out pork morsel by morsel, it can excise spending in the same way. "One of the challenges is getting beyond the trash talk of town meetings, to what you can do in an appropriations bill," a key leadership aide said. "There are no broad targets. We're working on identification and analysis. What we are striving for is a surgical plan that will make a difference."

Advocacy groups can be frozen out of the federal budget through an appropriations device known as "limitations." Limitations (which often begin, "provided that none of the funds shall be used for...") have become a popular tool of lawmakers who want to exert their will on such issues as abortion and highway speed limits through the appropriations process.

Even then, conservatives acknowledge, the winnowing won't be easy. "The tentacles of these liberal organizations are so deep and ubiquitous that there is no magic bullet," said Kate O'Beirne, the

Heritage Foundation's vice president for government relations. "There's no set piece in what we're doing. We're covering the waterfront."

THE DEEP FREEZE

Conservatives maintain that liberal advocacy groups are illegally using federal funds to lobby. The money, they say, flows into a feedback loop in which lobbying initiatives are aimed at getting more money to be used for more lobbying. The seamless circuit of cash and influence drives up federal spending, they say, and even worse, few dollars ultimately go into programs that benefit people.

Now that Republicans control Congress, and the federal purse strings, they have the opportunity to tie off these money connections—"cleaning out the institution," as Cato's Moore put it.

"One of the things that caught our attention was when a group called ACORN broke up a speaking engagement for Newt [Gingrich]," Gillespie said. "ACORN gets federal funding, and here they were keeping the Speaker of the House from talking."

ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now) is a low-income housing advocacy group that was founded in Arkansas in 1970. Gingrich was driven off the program involving more than 2,000 county executives when hundreds of demonstrators organized by ACORN showed up at a Washington hotel to protest GOP cutbacks in the school lunch program.

Gingrich's subsequent comment echoed the party line: "I thought it was an interesting commentary on those who would extort money out of the taxpayer."

While there are strict laws and accounting standards to prohibit federal funds from being used for political advocacy, conservatives argue that they aren't enforced.

"The law is most often honored in the breach," Heritage's O'Beirne said. "Publicly funded political advocates rarely find themselves debating anyone who's privately funded," she added. "They are all supported by tax dollars. If their ideas are so compelling, let them go out in the marketplace, as Heritage does, and see if the public agrees with them enough to support them."

The battle may well turn on how scrupulous advocacy groups have been about staying in-bounds legally. Such organizations are rarely cited for mingling federal funds in their lobbying or advocacy efforts. "Almost all organizations that receive federal grant money also engage in lobbying, but they can't use their federal dollars to pay for lobbying," said Bob Smucker, the director of government rela-



Michael Horowitz of the Hudson Institute
 "The concept of defunding the Left [is] ... appalling."

tions for Independent Sector, an association of 800 not-for-profit organizations.

"It's illegal to lobby with federal funds," said Gary D. Bass, the executive director of OMB Watch, a watchdog group founded as a response to the Reagan Administration's efforts to defund the Left. "The nonprofits wouldn't do it. There's real sensitivity on their part about what their funds are used for."

ACORN, for example, the New York City-based organization that aroused Gingrich's ire, receives no federal funds, raising money through dues and grassroots fund-raising events. It isn't a tax-exempt organization. ACORN Housing, a Chicago-based affiliate, receives federal money but does no lobbying. Former Housing and Urban Development Secretary Jack F. Kemp has been among its biggest fans. In 1995, the organization's budget was \$14 million, of which \$3.5 million came from the federal government.

"There has never been any documentation of abuse of these rules by the non-profit community," Bass said. "The only report of abuse had to do with Defense Department funds being used by contractors to lobby for an aircraft contract."

THE HATCHET ACT

"I broke my pick on this issue," said Michael J. Horowitz, who led the Reagan

Administration's campaign to smash the "iron triangle" of advocacy groups as the chief counsel at the Office of Management and Budget from 1981-85.

The campaign was so controversial, Horowitz recalled, that James A. Baker III, who was then the White House's chief of staff, confronted him in the halls of the Old Executive Office Building and said, "The leader of the free world has come to me and said that all he has been hearing about is this business of A-122."

Baker was referring to a government-wide directive issued by OMB titled "Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations," which Horowitz had crafted to assail the triangle. In the process, he set off a rebellion.

Horowitz says today that the directive was aimed solely at curbing undue influence by government-subsidized organizations and not an attempt to "defund the Left," although that is how conservatives refer to the Reagan effort.

"It is illegal to cut funding for a program for ideological reasons," Horowitz, who's now a senior fellow in the Washington office of the Hudson Institute, a conservative think tank, said in an interview. "I find both the expression and the concept of defunding the Left wholly appalling."

"OMB said you couldn't use a copier purchased with federal grant dollars for any purposes related to lobbying," said Bass of OMB Watch. This was dubbed the "taint theory" by the nonprofits, which described it as a kind of Midas touch in reverse—anything fingered in the lobbying or advocacy process was tainted.

Controlling the appropriations process is the chief distinction between the 1980s version of defunding the Left and its 1990s sequel. This approach offers clear advantages. The ability to target a few key organizations is a political asset that conservatives hope will allow them to divide and conquer entrenched constituencies. An obscure and tedious process, appropriations move line by line, behind closed doors, mostly out of the



Kate O'Beirne of the Heritage Foundation
 "We're covering the waterfront."

eyes of the press and beyond the attention span of the public.

The seemingly minor points raised by limitations language have the additional advantage of not arousing a more moderate Senate, which has been described as a black hole for the House's radical intentions. Republican leaders in the Senate might not be inclined to stand up for a singled-out organization, particularly if it helps the Democrats and is less visible than the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

For the Republicans, the appropriations process has the additional advantage of complicating matters for the White House. The President can't put back into appropriations money that Congress has zeroed out. Even the line-item veto would be a futile tool, because vetoing a zero still adds up to nothing.

Indeed, the line-item veto could just make matters worse for the White House. To kill the offending language in an appropriations bill, Clinton might have to cancel a program he especially liked. That could become a formula for gridlock, with the President threatening to block favored GOP items to defend programs of his own. The horse-trading would be monumental and the public reaction predictable. In that sense, defunding the Left could spell trouble for both parties.