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- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
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02-19-00

Elizabeth McDavit**921 Portswood Circle San Jose, California 95120**

December 5, 1999

Dear Marsha,

I hope you are well. I am sorry to have taken so long to write! Let me assure you that it is an indication of how busy and involved we have been working on behalf of the President rather than a lack of interest. I have thought of you so many times!

Over the past years, the *Clinton*Gore Action Network* has grown throughout California and we even have members in other states!! To bring you up -to-date, I have enclosed a few things we have done and thought I would try to give you some of our highlights, some of which are covered in the newsletters. We of course have continued our Clinton/Gore community outreach voter registration tables, information output, and media response. That has continued monthly since '91. Specifically, our *Clinton Accomplishments* literature was used State-wide during the '96 campaign,. After the election, we held a reception for James Carville, raising money for his investigation of Starr, which was a huge success. Our *Anti-Starr Rally*" in front of the Federal Building in San Jose was used by *CNN* as a lead- in to their "Investigating The Investigator" piece. We initiated and organized a "*Can Campbell Rally*" in front of Tom Campbell's District Office during the impeachment vote last year. People came from all over Northern Ca. and every media outlet was there. It was the beginning of Mr. Campbell feeling extremely uncomfortable in this district. We followed up with many visits to his Town Hall meetings with actual Clinton/Gore tables to re-register Republicans to the Democratic Party right in front of him and the cameras. It has been very successful - and fun!!

We are working hard on behalf of Vice-President Gore in order to continue President Clinton's legacy and all the hard work you have done on behalf of the American people.

I hope we get a chance to see each other soon and I look forward to hearing from you. I have the picture of you and Janice framed (the one from the State Convention way back when!!).

Let me know if there is anything I can do to help in any way.

My very best,

Love,
Elizabeth

02-19-00

MOORE

Send to MOORE for reply?

Yes ☒

No ☐

- S.C.

PARADISE

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Each year an estimated 100,000 people are forced into servitude in the United States—in factories, small businesses, prostitution rings, farms and private homes.

Now the U.S. government is asking Americans to help:

A Call To Fight Forced Labor

A Report By Molly Gordy



NEW YORK FORCED SUBWAY PEDDLERS.

This young man was one of more than 50 Mexicans—all deaf—who were spirited into the U.S. and compelled to sell trinkets on the subway for more than five years.

CALIFORNIA INDENTURED GARMENT WORKERS.

Thai immigrant workers wait outside an apartment complex in El Monte, Calif., after the building is raided by authorities in 1995. Eighty laborers, virtually all women, had been forced to live in the complex and work 16-hour days there as sewing-machine operators. The workers had been lured to America by the promise of high-paying jobs. Upon arrival, however, they were taken to the complex and had their passports and valuables confiscated. Seven of their captors pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy, requiring indentured servitude and harboring illegal immigrants. They also admitted to operating their El Monte garment factory from 1989 to 1995 with a captive workforce.

Brown

Can we do
more on
this—
TSC

More than 100,000 people—many of them smuggled into this country—are being forced to work in appalling conditions for little or no pay, often under threat of physical violence or death. You can do something about it:

A Call To Fight Forced Labor



By Molly Gordy

LAST YEAR, ROGERIO Cadeña, a Mexican national, pleaded guilty in a West Palm Beach, Fla., federal court to "conspiring to enslave" 14 women he had forced to work as prostitutes. Cadeña had lured the women—some as young as 14—from impoverished areas of Mexico with promises of good jobs caring for children or the elderly.

But once the women had crossed the border, they were forced at gunpoint to work in a network of nine brothels in Florida and the Carolinas. Cadeña said he and his family had made about \$1 million from the ring.

"This is one of the most vile, reprehensible and odious crimes I have seen in my 13 years on the bench," said Judge Kenneth Ryskamp of the U.S. Southern District of Florida. Yet the case is not isolated. Each year, according to combined figures from the Justice, Labor and State departments, more than 100,000 people are forced into servitude in the U.S.—in factories, small businesses and service industries, private homes and on farms. Their ranks include both immigrants and U.S. citizens. And their numbers are rising.

"When I joined the Justice Department in 1989, we'd see maybe two of these cases a year," Thomas Perez, a former U.S. deputy assistant attorney general, told PARADE. "By the time I left last February, we were seeing more than 100 victims a year."

The Justice, Labor and State depart-

Many cases of involuntary servitude are discovered only by chance. Now you can help.



NEW JERSEY: DOMESTIC WORKER KILLED. Marcelina Baluch (l) was convicted of reckless manslaughter in 1998 for slaying her Filipina maid, Imelda Ritua (r). In letters home, Ritua had complained of being forced to work long hours and to sleep in an unheated basement. Trial evidence revealed physical abuse.

ments responded by creating the National Worker Exploitation Task Force in April 1998. This week, to accelerate the effort,

they are opening a hotline to take calls from anyone to report cases of servitude or worker exploitation (see box). "We want to more aggressively pursue the cases that we can prosecute," said Acting Assistant Attorney General Bill Lann Lee. "A lot of cases don't get discovered now except by chance."

"Once word gets around how easy it is to turn someone in for this, it's bound to have an effect," said Rep. Lamar Smith (R., Tex.), chairman of the House Subcommittee on Immigration.

The Justice Department defines involuntary servitude as "using physical force, threats of force or legal coercion (such as threats of arrest or incarceration) to keep someone working for you." For example, an employer might threaten to turn in an illegal immigrant.

Several criminal cases in recent years

have brought the abuses to public attention. Three years ago, 18 persons pleaded guilty to holding more than 50 deaf Mexicans captive and forcing them to sell trinkets in New York. In 1998, a New Jersey woman was convicted of slaying her Filipina maid. The victim had revealed in letters home that she had been forced to sleep in an unheated basement and to work 16-hour days. Court evidence later exposed physical abuse. Last month, a prominent member of the Thai community in L.A. was sentenced to more than



CAROLINAS & GEORGIA: A FAMILY EXPLOITS MIGRANT WORKERS. Carrie Bonds (l) and son, Willie Bonds Jr. (r), ran a ring of farm-labor crews. In 1993, Carrie pleaded guilty to labor violations, and Willie admitted to "conspiring to hold migrant workers in peonage."

eight years in prison for involuntary servitude, harboring illegal immigrants and using credit cards obtained in their names.

In all of these cases, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) says, the victims had been lured to the United States by false promises.

Why is this problem arising now, 135 years after the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment, banning slavery and in-

Do You Know of a Case Of Forced Labor?

If you know of or suspect exploitation, report it by calling the Justice Department hotline:

1-888-428-7581.

By exposing forced-labor abuses, you can help correct an injustice, relieve someone's suffering—perhaps even save a life.

voluntary servitude? For one thing, Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman told us. "There is better reporting of abuses as our perception of what is 'unacceptable' evolves. Slavery wasn't seen as bad for 200 years in this country. Even child labor was legal until 1938, when the Fair Labor Standards Act was passed."

National Worker Exploitation Task Force members noted several other contributing factors that converged in the '80s: Civil wars and collapsing economies in Third World countries created a flood of new immigrants to the States; lax U.S. border controls made it easier to sneak in; and a massive crackdown on drug traffickers

A Rutgers University survey of 300 such Chinese immigrants found that many had been tortured before paying off their debts.

By the 1990s, INS Commissioner Doris Meissner noted, sophisticated smugglers were demanding their fees in advance from employers, who passed on the cost to the workers by withholding pay.

A clearer picture of the problem emerged in 1999, when 18 persons pleaded guilty to running a \$200 million immigrant-smuggling ring. An INS investigation, "Operation Seek-and-Keep," found that more than 7000 immigrants from India and Pakistan had been smuggled in. "Employers were ordering people like pizzas,"

U.S. citizens also have been victims of exploitation. Prosecutions involving farmworkers were virtually unheard of before the early 1980s, when Congress passed the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Act. In a case prosecuted under the act, Willie Bonds Jr. pleaded guilty in 1993 to "conspiring to hold migrant farmworkers in peonage." His mother, Carrie, and father, Willie, pleaded guilty

guards with a... The abuses came to light when two of the workers escaped from a camp in Benson, N.C. One of them, who asked to be identified only as "Roosevelt," told PARADE that whiskey and crack cocaine had been urged on him and others, so that they would be too indebted and addicted to escape. Roosevelt said he'd walked 40 miles to Raleigh, where he found help

"Their story is an American story. My clients wanted to teach the corporations that they are human beings."

—Julie Su, attorney for Thai sweatshop workers



FLORIDA & CAROLINAS: PROSTITUTION RING.

Top: Rogerio Cadeña pleaded guilty in January 1999 to "conspiring to enslave" 14 Mexican women as prostitutes. Bottom: A trailer where the women were held.

led some to switch to smuggling immigrants. The result was a steep increase in illegal immigrants who entered the country indebted to and exploited by criminals.

Clearly, a business gains a competitive edge by using labor supplied by smugglers. "There's no way a business paying the minimum wage and taxes required by law can compete with one using involuntary help," Secretary Herman said.

By the mid-1980s, international rings of immigrant-smugglers were charging their human cargo up to \$35,000 for passage and false papers. When the immigrants were unable to pay, they became indebted to or victimized by their traffickers.



CALIFORNIA: CAPTIVE WORKERS FIGHT BACK.

Thai immigrants, forced to work and live in an El Monte apartment complex surrounded by razor wire (R), won more than \$4 million in out-of-court settlements from companies that contracted with the sweatshop. Above are four of the 80 workers (L-R): Praphaphon Pongpit, Buppha Chaemchoi, Sutchai Chaisuni and Rotchana Chunchuchit.

said U.S. Attorney Paul Coggins in Texas, whose office tried the case. "Only, instead of, 'I'll have a large pie with pepperoni,' it was, 'Give me a husband and wife who'll live in my attic and work in my store.'"

Recently, immigrants from China have promised smugglers as much as \$50,000 in future wages to stow away in metal cargo containers on giant freighters. Last month, 18 Chinese men were found in containers on a freighter in Seattle. Three had died during the two-week journey.



to labor violations. The Bonds family had recruited homeless men to work on farms in the Carolinas and Georgia in 1991. The men were promised minimum wage and free apartments. Instead, they were held in one room with a single toilet. Their wages were docked for food and "rent," so that pay for 60 hours of work usually ranged from \$10 to nothing. A

at a rural farmworkers' aid society and the North Carolina Council of Churches. "I don't know how I made it," he said. "I guess God showed me the way."

According to the Rev. James Creech, who helped bring the case to federal officials, "The only unusual thing about the Bonds case is that the criminals actually were arrested. Folks turned a blind eye back then, and it still goes on today."

There have been major reforms, however. In 1996, with overwhelming bipartisan support, Congress passed the Illegal Immigration Reform Act. Sponsored by Rep. Lamar Smith and then Sen. Alan Simpson (R., Wyo.), it made the trafficking in humans a felony punishable by up to 15 years. "When we cracked down on drugs with harsher sentences," Smith said, "we inadvertently created an imbalance in the penal code that made immigrant smuggling more appealing. This law redresses that."

Victims also have begun to fight back. Last month, a maid from Bangladesh accused a high-ranking diplomat and his wife of holding her a virtual prisoner in their Manhattan apartment. She is now suing her former employers in federal court. Over the last five years, 80 Thai garment workers, who had been held captive by sweatshop operators in El Monte, Calif., and forced to work 16-hour days under armed guard, won more than \$4 million in out-of-court settlements from manufacturers and retail chains that had contracted the work.

"Their story is an American story," said Julie Su, a lawyer who helped negotiate the settlements. "My clients wanted to teach these corporations that they are human beings too and to make it harder for this to happen again."

02-19-00

The Enemy Of Our Enemy

Complex and unpredictable,
Ahmed Chalabi is hardly
Washington's idea of the perfect partner
for a new Iraq policy.
For now, though, he's all we have.

By Janine di Giovanni

Copied
Berger
Podesta

A

HMED CHALABI, A SHI-ite Muslim from a prominent Baghdad family, is by turns haughty and brooding, princely and strangely preoccupied. In the cold weather, he goes about London in a goatskin robe, which he likes to flick grandly behind him, and Gore-Tex hiking boots. But while he may look like some tribal elder who wandered down from the hills (in trendy shoes), he holds a Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Chicago and is fluent in several languages. He is also the closest thing either the Clinton administration or its Republican opponents have to a strategy for replacing the failed policy of containing Saddam Hussein.

Chalabi, 55, is the head of the Iraqi National Congress, the once and, for now, future guiding body of the Iraqi opposition to Saddam Hussein. Having been pushed aside early last year, Chalabi managed to reclaim his leadership position at a general assembly of the I.N.C. in New York this fall. And that, it bears mentioning, was no easy task. The 300-plus delegates who came from Britain, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey and Canada shared little but a fissiparous history of backstabbing and mistrust. In truth, they gathered only to prove to their American patrons that they were still collectively committed to overthrowing the only person they loathe more than one another — the devil in Baghdad.

Janine di Giovanni is a correspondent with *The Times of London*.

In the dimly lighted corridors of a Manhattan hotel, men in flowing robes and headdresses stood next to men in cheap shiny suits, whispering in Arabic like schoolchildren. "No one likes each other," sighed one delegate who showed me around. There were other problems. Hamid al-Bayati, a representative of the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq, withdrew from the assembly. Massoud Barzani, president of the Kurdish Democratic Congress, never arrived.

The delegates chose to ignore the slights and continue. They distributed "Free Iraq" T-shirts and squabbled. They argued throughout the weekend — over the buffet dinner, over mint tea and over the fax machine spewing out messages from across the world. Somehow, by dawn on Monday morning, they managed to conclude the general assembly by electing a new seven-man leadership, and with a minimal amount of blood on the floor. But not before Ahmed Chalabi had walked out several times in disgust. "It was not a pretty sight," one delegate said. "They threw shoes at each other. I couldn't believe it. They took off their shoes and threw them at each other."

They threw shoes because they are desperate. With Washington acting as midwife, the organization is now under serious pressure to get results. With an impending presidential election — and with Saddam now exercising virtual veto power on United Nations weapons inspectors — the Democrats are growing increasingly anxious to have something, anything, they can plausibly hold up as a proactive Iraq policy.

The Republicans, eager to pre-empt the Democrats, are claiming it was their idea to back the I.N.C. and that they had to push the administration into getting behind it. With both parties competing to be its patron, the organization would seem to be well positioned to make good on its long-standing promise of fomenting a revolution from below. And yet it doesn't seem any closer now to that goal than it did eight years ago, when it was formed in the wake of the Persian Gulf war. While Congress appropriated \$97 million to bankroll the seven principal opposition groups, the money has remained in Washington as the groups have jockeyed for power.

The power struggle seems to be in abeyance, but that still leaves the I.N.C. with one major problem: it hasn't figured out a way to outsmart its nemesis, a ruthless dictator who has faced down more than one attempted revolution or coup in his years in power. "Saddam kills anyone he doesn't trust," says one observer. "He squashes opposition like a bug."

In its short and painful life, the Iraqi National Congress has done little to inspire confidence that it could ever serve as the linchpin for American policy. Only now can it be said to be coming of age, and at that, very slowly. The formal seven-man presidency includes representatives of all the major factions. Chalabi was given no official title, but he is acknowledged to be acting in a presiding role.

It is a perplexing group. Each faction appears to have its own agenda: the Kurds, for instance, have the issue of nationalism; the monarchists want to see a royal return; the Islamic groups are paralyzed by infighting. Yet all now protest their undying solidarity. "All Iraqi opposition groups are united on the need to get rid of Saddam," Chalabi insists. "We all want the same thing. A democratic Iraq."

Adds Sharif Ali Bin al-Hussein, the 43-year-old leader of the Constitutional Monarchy Party: "We have a common goal and a common strategy. It's not about power, it's about unity of Iraqi opposition." This was echoed (cautiously) by the Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani and the others.

"What is important now," one delegate said heatedly, "is getting rid of Saddam. Together."

Chalabi is insistent that this time the opposition will get it right. "Look, we don't want to get a bunch of guns and go blazing into the sunshine," Chalabi said. "We are going to work with careful steps to prepare with the U.S. so that our forces are ready."

For veteran I.N.C.-watchers, "blazing into the sunshine" is a not-so-

Photograph by Rankin

veiled reference to the group's Waterloo — the 1996 debacle in Erbil, a town in northern Iraq that served as its base of operations before it was leveled by Saddam's tanks. For the I.N.C., Erbil is a gaping, deep wound that just won't heal. "You ask why we don't have an army, why we aren't preparing actively?" asks Aras Habib, the organization's operations chief. "We had an army. We had a good army. We had weapons. We were fighters. It was destroyed in Erbil."

THE IRAQI NATIONAL CONGRESS WAS BORN IN 1992, IN THE wake of the Persian Gulf war, with Chalabi as its democratically elected president. Its operatives lobbied diplomats, opened a human rights office and developed military, political and intelligence operations, largely operating out of Erbil. What they did not do is establish a financial infrastructure or a real plan to overthrow Saddam. Vagueness has always been the I.N.C.'s downfall.

The closest thing to a plan was Chalabi's "enclave" or "three city" strategy. "I always refused to subscribe to the American policy of containment," he says. "My strategy was to construct an enclave and to unite all the opposition groups, including the Kurds, to form an alliance."

Chalabi's plan was to capture Kirkuk and Mosul, the leading cities in the north of Iraq, and Basra, the main southern city, and slowly squeeze the life out of Saddam's regime. "He believed that the Iraqis themselves have the willingness to rise up against Saddam," says Zaab Sethna, an I.N.C. adviser who sees Chalabi more as a visionary than as a naïf. "But this could only be done if the I.N.C. built up its strength in the north and the south by luring defectors and acquiring arms."

Whether ultimately feasible or not, the plan suffered from two major and, as it turned out, fatal flaws. First, it demanded the cooperation of the two main Kurdish factions — the Kurdish Democratic Party (K.D.P.) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (P.U.K.) — which had a long history of bloody feuds. "To think one could unite the Kurds under one anti-Saddam banner when they had historically been incapable of uniting themselves was overly optimistic," says Patrick Bishop, a Paris-based Middle East specialist. "Over the years, the main Kurdish groups have shown themselves capable of getting in bed with the devil if they felt it suited their interest."

Second, the plan assumed the full cooperation of the Central Intelligence Agency, which had been trying for years to oust Saddam. But the C.I.A. didn't buy into Chalabi's strategy, insisting that the dictator would succumb only to a coup.

Chalabi, believing the regime would topple under sustained pressure and counting on American support, went ahead with plans to attack Kirkuk and Mosul. By the summer of 1996, he says, he had a C.I.A.-trained army of more than 1,000 and a highly effective intelligence operation.

But on the night of Aug. 31, 1996, Chalabi's plans were blasted into the thin desert air. "I was sitting in a meeting at the American Embassy in London between the P.U.K. and the K.D.P.," he says, "when Saddam's tanks crept up on the outskirts of Erbil." A bitter tone creeps into his voice. "We waited for air support, but it never arrived."

"Apparently, it was gruesome," Sethna recalls. "Fighters were calling from the satellite phones. They could see the tanks in the distance, and they kept calling and calling for help but no one came." Saddam had been invited in by Massoud Barzani, the Kurdish Democratic Party leader, who saw a way to eliminate both the Iraqi National Congress and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan in one treacherous move. The C.I.A., fearing another debacle like the Bay of Pigs, refused to help. Hundreds of I.N.C. men were executed, and thousands more fled to Turkey.

Chalabi's critics scoffed at the idea that the I.N.C. could ever seriously challenge Saddam's Republican Guard, 80,000 strong, and his superior weaponry. They also dismissed his claims about his intelligence network and disparaged him as a leader. But the debate was moot by the morning of Sept. 1, when, for all practical purposes, the Iraqi National Congress ceased to exist.

AMONG THE ISSUES RAISED AGAINST CHALABI — AND THERE ARE MANY, including a conviction for embezzlement — is the constant refrain that he

is not a "man of the people" and will never win the allegiance of his diverse and fractious supporters. There is some truth to this. Chalabi was indeed reared like a little prince until the monarchy under King Faisal II was overthrown by a group of officers in 1958.

His family was wealthy, powerful and renowned. His father, Abdul Hadi, was a cabinet minister and later the president of the senate. His grandfather, Abdul Hussein, was a member of Iraq's first Parliament, a cabinet minister nine different times. His mother held political salons at their grand house with its lush, jasmine-scented gardens, where young Ahmed listened attentively.

But his world began to come apart after the 1958 coup. The real threat was not from the new military rulers but from the Baath Party, a vaguely socialist and nationalist group dedicated to overthrowing what its members saw as a hopelessly corrupt regime in thrall to the colonialist powers. The Baathists had their first taste of power in 1963, in a coup led by Gen. Abdul Salam Arif.

Recognizing the threat the Baath Party posed to his family, Chalabi, then 19 and a student at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, plotted its overthrow with a group of disgruntled army officers in Beirut. "I was determined to claim my life back in Iraq," he says. He failed, although General Arif subsequently banished his former partners. But in 1968, a second Baath coup succeeded, with the help of a young deputy named Saddam Hussein. By 1979, he was president.

"The day in 1968 that I got the news of Saddam," says Chalabi, who by then was a graduate student at the University of Chicago, "I rushed through my Ph.D. exams in mathematics and caught a plane to Tehran. I had an idea. I knew the Kurdish leaders. And the only way to drive Saddam from power was to unite them."

This was no easier in 1968 than in 1996 — or now. It meant drawing together warring factions: the K.D.P., then led by Massoud Barzani's father, Mustafa, and its rival, the P.U.K., under Jalal Talabani. "The strategy is the same one I brought back 20 years later," when the I.N.C. was born, he says. It came to naught, of course, and by 1969, the Chalabi dynasty in Iraq had disappeared (his family compound now houses the Indian Embassy), its members dispersed throughout the Middle East, America and Europe.

The newly invigorated I.N.C. has temporarily shelved the three-city plan. Its more modest goal now is simply to get off the ground: setting up bank accounts, re-establishing contacts in Iraq. Mostly, says Daniel Byman, a Middle East expert at the Rand Corporation, they are waiting, waiting "for a lucky break so they can fill in the gap. I honestly don't think they know what that is. Maybe Saddam will take a lucky bullet. Maybe there will be a change in government and they will step in. That seems to be their plan."

But many who follow the I.N.C. detect another old strategy — revolution from below. They say the organization's leaders still fantasize about getting a chunk of American money, establishing a beachhead in Iraq and inspiring thousands of disgruntled soldiers and millions of frustrated people to rise up and slay the tyrant. "The regime topples," as one analyst says, "and they then get alongside the people."

But to Byman and many others that is wishful thinking. "In real life that doesn't happen," he says. "We would be in the same situation as the Bay of Pigs. Just watching guys get killed, or we go in and take on Saddam ourselves. It's a pathetic military plan." The Pentagon has already warned the I.N.C. that it will not bail it out if it gets into another Erbil-like mess.

Chalabi, back in London, admits that he is "not happy with the pace that things are moving." In December, a State Department contract that provided the I.N.C. with office space and supplies ran out. An answering service now takes the calls, and Chalabi is harder to pin down. "We are waiting for the grant, the money appropriated from Congress to arrive," Chalabi explains, once found, in his car driving to yet another leadership meeting. Arabic music blasts in the background, and he sounds frustrated.

But he also insists that the organization has a coherent plan and that last year was a turning point. "We have several projects," he says. The first one is comprehensible: setting up a media operation with satellite TV and radio broadcasts into Iraq to break Saddam's monopoly. "He controls the



The opposition Iraqi National Congress meeting in New York last October.

Among the issues raised against Chalabi — including a conviction for embezzlement — is the constant refrain that he is not a 'man of the people' and will never win the allegiance of his fractious supporters.

nerve center of the media," Chalabi says. "You can't communicate with people without him finding out; you can't move people."

The second plan is murkier. "It involves training," Chalabi says. "For instance, how to deal with large population movements — if Saddam attacks and people have to flee. How do we feed them, where do they go." Then he lowers his voice and opens up more. "Basically, we are training people inside and outside the country who will operate things in the process of getting rid of Saddam."

That strategy also involves more I.N.C. work directly inside Iraq. "We are working there," Chalabi claims. "The one difference is that we have moved focus from the north to the south and west of the country, even inside of Baghdad." The north of the country, for the moment, is left alone. "The Kurds," he says, "are enjoying relative security and we are concentrating on other parts of the country." Given the I.N.C.'s history with the Kurds, it seems a wise decision.

MEANWHILE, SADDAM IS WIDELY BELIEVED TO HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE of a year free of United Nations weapons inspectors to resume development of chemical, nuclear and biological weapons. While he is not di-

rectly threatened by outside forces, other than the occasional bombing raid by allied warplanes, he is said to be paranoid about internal threats. In November, according to intelligence reports, he called in his military commanders for consultations in small groups — an indication of growing suspicion.

Whether he was concerned about the I.N.C. or some other, undetectable threat is debatable. "There are signs," says one academic analyst. "Saddam was very nervous about the New York meeting." But there are also signs that he hardly noticed it. "If he was worried, the Iraqi press wouldn't be writing about it in their newspapers," another analyst says. "They are certainly not writing about what is happening in the south. Now that would be damaging to Saddam."

One thing has emerged from New York: the I.N.C. has been granted a last opportunity to grow up and become a serious player. "The October summit was like crossing the Rubicon," admits one State Department official, who said he had more faith in the opposition than ever before. There is also the growing Congressional support, particularly among Republicans looking to highlight the failed Clinton policy.

Ahmed Chalabi works hard on his Washington connections. Senators Trent Lott, Joseph Lieberman and Bob Kerrey have consistently backed him, and new friends like Senator Sam Brownback and David Scheffer, the United States ambassador at large for war crimes, all pledged their support at the New York meeting. Even Thomas Pickering, the under secretary for political affairs, offered "protection and help" for opposition groups working toward a regime change, and showed up for the conclusion of the I.N.C. general assembly.

But how seriously does Washington really take Chalabi and his organization? So far, the support seems to be a mile wide and an inch deep. "The I.N.C. has a lot of support because Congress is full of a lot of posturing idiots who couldn't find Iraq on the map and don't know anything about foreign policy," says one critic. "They just know something has to change."

But Daniel Byman points out that the I.N.C. has taken two major steps in the last year. "One is their change in leadership, which remedies some of their problems," he says. "The other is that they've moved away from past grandiose schemes like marching on Baghdad to addressing basic organizational steps that they avoided for too long." However, Byman still has his doubts about the fundamental differences within the coalition. "They all agree that Saddam should go," he frets, "but what else they agree on, I'm not sure."

The Clinton administration is equally unsure about Chalabi, both for his personality quirks and for his history. For a time last year, it even seemed as if the White House would rather see Saddam in Baghdad than Chalabi. "They were down on Ahmed because of Jordan," says one Washington observer. (In 1989, Chalabi was indicted for embezzling millions from a Jordanian bank he founded in the 1970's. He was eventually convicted in absentia.) Another blow came in 1998 when Gen. Anthony Zinni, commander of the American forces in the Persian Gulf, bluntly told Congress that the opposition groups "have little, if any, viability."

But the skepticism has quieted down, whether for cynical reasons, a growing sense of respect for the I.N.C. or plain desperation. "The Saddam regime has got to go," says one senior State Department official. "We crossed that bridge last year. But what is different now is the opposition. Their recriminations have subsided. They're watching each other, watching Washington. They're more sober."

Exactly how Chalabi and his men are going to pull off a stunt like getting rid of Saddam Hussein, when the international forces during the gulf war could not, remains to be seen. For now, the Iraqi National Congress appears to be starting with basic organizational issues that should have been addressed a decade ago. "They're asking how broad a coalition they can get, and how they can share resources and leadership," says Byman. "It has been a good year because they are sitting down and talking, but that's the first step in 100 and they still have 99 to go." ■

2.20.00

Podesta

At least he understands
what the problem is — ~~the~~
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WORD & IMAGE BY MAX FRANKEL

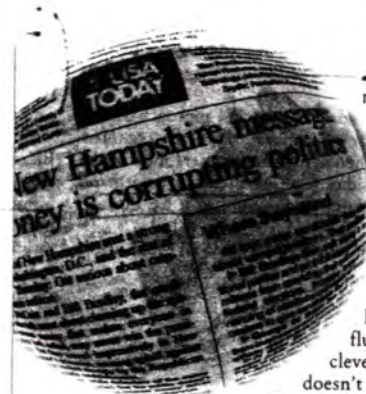
You Can't Dam the Money

It's the high cost of TV that haunts all politics.

navy look distinctive. The most important thing for me is that when they walk up and down the ais they have a distinct attitude. And I wanted them all one color, because I think that when you get oil being broken at the midriff just isn't the best scenario. Then the idea came to me: what if I don't give them jackets? It's like eliminating the suit from the banker. So this incredible shirt became the co of the uniform. And we've taken off the stripes, we've taken off the bells and whistles that are normally associated with airlines, so they look like regular clothes. The woman's shirt could also be worn at a party. And they don't have an apron, because they're not going to be servants. The pants have the shape of flat-front trousers, but they have pleats. (It's my compromise to the age group.) The ramp guys have bomber jackets and cargo pants. We gave the flight crew these little sort of Prada pouches. When people put it all on they say, 'Oh, my God, these are all clothes I would buy.' But when you put them all together, they're a ready-to-wear approach to uniform."



JetBlue's uniform includes: One hundred percent wool windowpane-pattern shirt in deepest navy with double-pocket front and name-tag eyelet (men's) or fitted princess seams and decorative silver-button collar closure (women's). • Black nylon multipocket hip pouch, designed to hold money. • Single-pleat wool-polyester pants in deepest navy with slightly narrow legs and single-welt pockets. • Nylon double-breasted peacoat in deepest navy with removable lining. • Silver-colored double-wing JetBlue pin. • Chenille scarf in silver and jet blue with jet blue fringe.



As the primaries go wholesale across the country, it will become even more painfully obvious how much money talks. Money talked on buttons, billboards, bands and bumper stickers in Iowa and New Hampshire, but it now drowns out every other medium as it shouts with television commercials. Now, if money is speech, then political money is political speech. And political speech is protected by the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law. . . ." — right?

Well, not exactly, the Supreme Court keeps saying. To help curb the corrupt influence of political money, the court has too cleverly maintained for a generation that money doesn't actually speak; it only enables speech. So when candidates use money to promote themselves, it

reasons, their dollars are as instrumental as their vocal cords and may never be constrained. But it's O.K. to put some limits on money contributed to a candidate, the court thinks, because a donor's views are no less clearly expressed with a gift of a thousand dollars than of a million.

The consequences of this splitting of First Amendment hairs have been horrendous.

Unlimited spending has resulted in unlimited television combat. The candidates with the most money — their own or their patrons' — get to speak the loudest. And the biggest donors gain the greatest influence over public affairs. The system mocks the Supreme Court's once proud assertion of the rule of "one person, one vote."

Most politicians have to spend their days soliciting contributions and redeeming promises made to contributors. Millionaires can be spared this corruption but, like Steve Forbes or Ross Perot, get to meddle in contests for which they would never otherwise qualify.

More perniciously still, well-heeled contributors and interest groups that seek political power routinely collude with needy office-seekers to find new paths around the hollow contribution limits. They "bundle" hundreds of checks from corporate employees or union members to turn small gifts into conspicuous six-figure offerings. Or they make in-kind contributions of incalculable worth, providing planes, cars, computers and troops to wage the campaign.

Hardest of all to police is so-called soft money. In cynical disregard of legal limits, big donors have learned to channel vast sums to national and state political parties, which then buy television ads that falsely claim to be uncoordinated with the candidates who benefit. In the name of reform, Congressional majorities have tried to outlaw soft money. But that is a futile effort; whatever Congress or the Supreme Court may decide, political money will always flow, like water, into the thirsty soil of political campaigns. Close the party pipeline and the ads will be bought instead by a gaggle of new "committees" and "associations," all aimed at supporting or attacking specific candidates.

And as long as candidates need enormous sums, they will give excessive weight to the interests of their big contributors. (In New York this year, two already well-known contenders for the Senate, who command the full resources of the White House and New York's City Hall, will nonetheless spend about \$50 million, much of it from donors who want access and extensive favors.)

In again addressing the issue a few weeks ago, the nine justices of the Supreme Court wrote five separate opinions, all revealing an obvious guilt about the confusion and corruption to which they have contributed.

Ruling on a relatively minor case from Missouri, a majority of six justices reaffirmed

the hair-split that permits limits on contributions. But two of the six thought the court's past rulings may still leave room for constitutional spending limits as well. Two other justices said all limits were intolerable. And Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, acknowledging an evil mess, wanted to flee from past rulings and give Congress one more shot at finding a way to limit both contributions and expenditures. Failing that, he thinks (like many Republicans in Congress) that instant disclosure of contributions would avert most corruption. This naively assumes that the public could quickly find the true sponsors and motives of the charmingly named Do-Good and All-American associations that flourish every electoral season.

There simply is no effective way to stop the flow of money from donors intent on buying influence over public servants and policy. It's the office-seekers' need to buy costly television ads that needs to be addressed.

The cost of all political TV ads this year will approach \$2 billion. It would be cheaper by far for taxpayers to pay for commercials directly than to suffer the payoffs the winners must make with huge tax breaks and subsidies. Congress could even demand free air time to match every purchased minute, as it has done in its antidrug propaganda.

But an even happier remedy would be to chase all those noisy,

mendacious ads off the air. Political commercials should be burdened with the fairness doctrine that used to be imposed on TV editorials and commercial ads. A simple rule that every political ad must pay for equal time for an opposing view would either level the playing field or eliminate most 30-second spots.

In their place, society has a right to demand that national networks and local stations redeem their debt for the use of the public spectrum by giving candidates ample free time to introduce themselves and their views.

A government-sponsored commission that studied the problem of fair campaigning recommended last year that TV stations voluntarily provide a mere five minutes each night for "candidate discourse" on the 30 nights preceding elections — if only to compensate for television's shameful abandonment of serious political news coverage. But hardly any broadcasters heeded the plea. Even if they did, that proposal alone would do nothing to reduce the candidates' need for money to buy commercials.

Whether defined as direct or indirect speech, money is property. By requiring our politicians to command huge sums for TV campaigning, we have in effect erected a property requirement — a means test — for public service. We have created a system of pay and payoff that forces officeholders to sell their favor to moneyed elites, raising the taxes and diminishing the voice of most Americans. ■

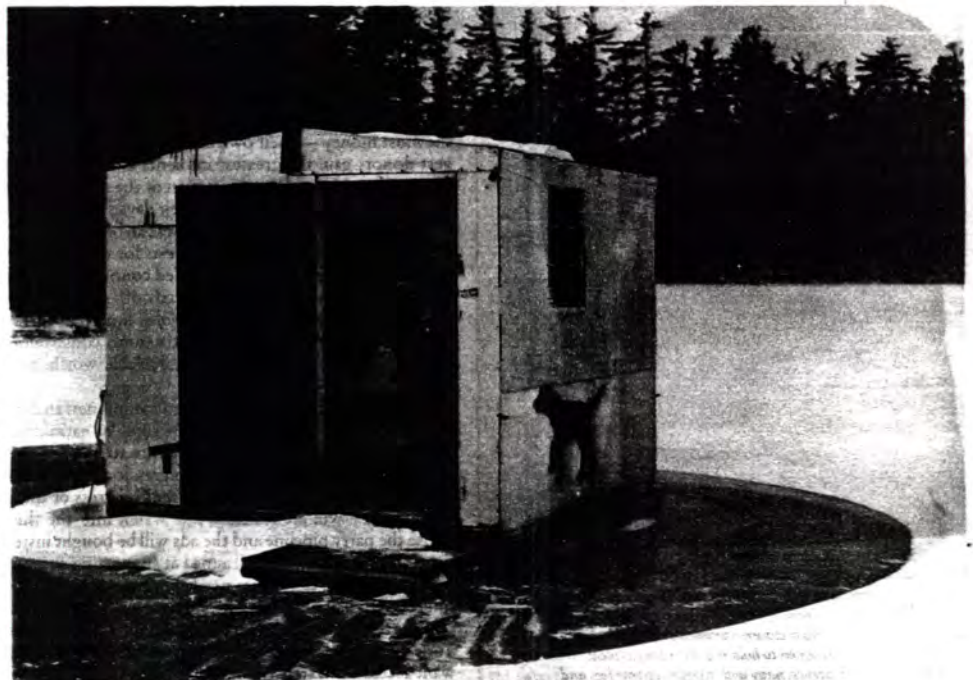
WHAT THEY WERE THINKING

Howie Bamforth,
Sabbathday Lake,
New Gloucester, Me.,
January 2000

"I was thinking how bad the fishing was. It's bad enough nearly freezing, but freezing and not catching any fish... well, I was bored to tears. Ice fishing is a stupid thing we do around here. It's an ego thing. It's testosterone. Plus, there's pretty much nothing in Maine in the winter. But it was pretty warm that day — 10 to 15 degrees. I went in the shack. Two years ago, I wouldn't have dreamed of going inside when I was fishing, but now everything hurts more — knees, elbows, wrists, hands. When you are young you can put up with discomfort. Now I just think, Why would I want to?"

— Interview by Catherine Saint Louis

Photograph by
Scott Peterman



THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

02-19-00

Bad Ideas on Bankruptcy

AMERICA, AS Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan said recently, is the land of the second chance: You can declare bankruptcy, pay your creditors what you can afford and then start your life again. This clean-slate possibility is part of the American ethos, much as immigration is: It welcomes risk-takers, people with ambition; but sometimes the risk-takers fail, triggering a backlash. A few years ago, immigration was the object of restrictive efforts in Congress. Now, thanks to some pricey lobbying by financial firms, bankruptcy is in the spotlight.

The House and Senate have each passed a bankruptcy reform bill and are now working on a joint one. The reformers point out that the number of people filing for bankruptcy has shot up from 330,000 in 1980 to 1.4 million in 1999, and that this is costing credit card firms and other lenders a few billion dollars annually. The fact that credit card issuers mail out more than 3 billion solicitation letters a year suggests that they may not be suffering all that much. But the reformers also argue that the growth in bankruptcy signifies that risk-taking has gone too far. People are borrowing casually, then using the law to avoid even repayments they could afford. Consumers ultimately bear some of the cost.

This may be true: A balance must be struck between risk-taking and responsibility. If so, reform should seek in part to influence creditors, who spend millions enticing people into

debt. The House bill does very little in this regard; the Senate, more, but not enough. For example, the Senate would require that solicitations disclose lenders' normal interest rates, not just the "teaser" rates that are seductive but temporary. But the Senate has dropped restraints on predatory lending that were part of an earlier reform effort. Equally, it wants credit card statements to carry warnings about accumulating debt, but it shrinks from making these too scary.

Reform should deter debtors from using the law to avoid obligations they can afford to repay, while at the same time not penalizing those who are genuinely bankrupt. Again, the House bill gets this back-to-front. It fails to close a loophole that puts a debtor's house beyond the reach of creditors, even if the house is lavish. Meanwhile, it clamps down on shelters that matter to poor debtors. The Senate bill is better.

If no bankruptcy reform passes, that will be fine. Creditors and lenders have noted the rise in bankruptcy, and they seem to be adjusting: Last year's bankruptcy filings were considerably down from the 1998 peak. The administration should therefore let it be known that it will only sign a bill cleansed of the House's harshness. Most bankruptcies are triggered by misfortune, not irresponsibility: by illness, a job loss, a broken marriage. America should remain the home of second chances.

The Washington Post

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2000

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Insurance Man's Medicare Drug Plan Draws GOP Interest

By JULIET EILPERIN
Washington Post Staff Writer

Insurance magnate Patrick J. Rooney, who helped make medical savings accounts a hallmark of conservative health care policy, is marketing a plan to provide prescription drug coverage to Medicare recipients and has received a friendly reception from some key Republicans on Capitol Hill.

Rooney's proposal bears some similarity to the plan advanced by President Clinton to add a drug benefit to the Medicare program. Under Rooney's plan, as with Clinton's, the federal government would pick up half the cost of a senior's prescription drugs, up to a total of \$2,500 a year.

But unlike Clinton, Rooney would not require seniors to pay a premium to receive that benefit. Instead, he anticipates, the government would pay for the benefit—which government actuaries estimate could cost up to \$160 billion over 10 years—through savings achieved by restructuring the Medicare program.

Several top Republicans empha-

sized that the program is one of several options they are considering on prescription drugs this year. But it would mark an important shift for the GOP, which traditionally has resisted the idea of providing prescription coverage for all Medicare patients.

Scott Reed, a GOP strategist who now chairs the Republican Leadership Coalition and is promoting the Rooney plan, said the proposal could boost congressional Republicans' standing on what is shaping up as one of the hottest issues on the campaign trail this year.

"It gets the Republican Party off defense on prescription drugs, which has to be a political priority as we move into a national election," Reed said, adding that Democrats currently hold the upper hand in the debate. "They've put us in the corner of defending large prescription drug companies at the expense of granny."

The plan, however, seems likely to draw scrutiny from Democrats, who view Rooney with considerable suspicion given his close ties to the GOP and his past promotion of medical savings accounts, in

which individuals are permitted to save money tax-free to pay for health expenses. Critics see such accounts as disproportionately benefiting the wealthy without greatly expanding access to health coverage.

Democrats noted that Rooney's Golden Rule Insurance Co. reaped the rewards of the tax-free medical savings accounts Congress first approved in 1996. "His motives on health care issues have always been questionable," said Laura Nichols, spokeswoman for House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.).

The 73-year-old Indianapolis businessman and his companies have donated more than \$1 million to the GOP over the past decade, according to the public interest lobby group Common Cause.

In an interview this week, Rooney said he did not stand to benefit financially from the proposal. "I'd like when I am gone for people to say, 'You know, he did good things,'" he said, adding that he hoped seniors would reward Republicans at the ballot box.

In addition to meeting with aides

to the top three House Republicans, Rooney has personally visited with House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Bill Archer (R-Tex.) and seven other GOP lawmakers to sell his plan. Sen. Robert C. Smith (R-N.H.) said Wednesday he is drafting a plan based on the Rooney proposal.

Archer said he is intrigued by Rooney's approach: "This would be for anybody, anybody who is a Medicare recipient. . . . I'm excited because I think it can work."

Administration officials were more cautious, saying they could not comment until they review details of the plan.

Rooney's approach would represent a major departure from how the Medicare program has been structured since it was created in the 1960s. The program has two parts that pay for hospital and doctor bills—but not prescription

drug costs—for people 65 and older. There is a \$776 annual deductible for hospital costs and a \$100 deductible for physician office visits.

Under the Rooney proposal, a prescription drug plan would be added to the program and there would simply be one \$675 annual deductible for all health care costs. The plan also envisions the government prohibiting insurance companies that offer so-called Medigap policies—which pick up costs not covered by Medicare—from covering any of the deductibles.

That provision is central to the way the Rooney program works because actuaries estimate that Medigap coverage encourages excessive use of health care services by seniors. Rooney and his associates estimate that, for each elderly patient with Medigap coverage for their deductibles, the government pays

an extra \$1,400 a year for services that otherwise would not be used.

Golden Rule sells Medigap plans in multiple states, though Rooney said insurers may lose money under his plan because premiums would decline dramatically.

Some health care officials questioned the premise that a prescription drug benefit could be provided without costing the federal government money. Consumer groups also argued that the combined high deductible could deter all but the sickest seniors from enrolling in the program.

"The vast majority of people could not benefit from this," said Ron Pollack, executive director of the group Families USA. "In fact, if they opted into this, they would be worse off than they are today."

Staff writer Amy Goldstein contributed to this report.

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EPA Closes Web Site After Hill Disclosure

By BEN WHITE
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Environmental Protection Agency took down its Web site late Wednesday evening after a member of Congress publicized information from the General Accounting Office indicating that the site was vulnerable to cyber-terrorism.

The decision to take down the site, which provides information on a variety of environmental topics to millions of visitors each month, was part of "ongoing efforts to prevent computer hacking," the EPA said in a prepared statement.

EPA said it took the action after a meeting Wednesday in which computer security experts "warned that the public attention brought to the agency's potential computer vulnerabilities made EPA a likely target for hackers."

Privately, EPA officials fumed at House Commerce Committee Chairman Thomas J. Bliley Jr. (R-Va.) for canceling an oversight hearing that had been scheduled for yesterday and instead, on Wednesday, releasing a letter written to Bliley by a GAO official describing the "serious threat" posed to EPA's computer system by potential hackers.

The release of GAO information

prompted a telephone conference call among several government officials from other agencies, who tried to sort out the implications of Bliley's announcement, and the EPA shutdown decision, one administration official said.

Bliley issued a statement on Wednesday calling on the EPA to shut down the Web site and criticizing EPA Administrator Carol M. Browner for her "gross mismanagement of cyber-security." Bliley kept up the heat yesterday, releasing the prepared testimony of GAO official David L. McClure describing the problems with the EPA site.

EPA officials reacted angrily to Bliley's actions, arguing that they were about to put new firewalls in place to protect the site from hackers and had been working closely with GAO officials.

"We thought that Bliley calling greater attention to Internet hacking in this fashion was the height of irresponsibility," one EPA official said yesterday.

Bliley's office dismissed that argument, saying that EPA had been aware of the security problems for years and had done nothing to correct them.

Bliley's office said the data at risk included "hundreds of millions of

dollars of proprietary information ... confidential chemical formulas, trade secrets by private businesses, ongoing law enforcement actions [and] national security information."

In the prepared testimony, GAO's McClure described "several serious computer security incidents" at EPA and concluded that the agency "cannot ensure the protection of sensitive business and financial data maintained on its larger computer systems."

EPA officials said that no national security or other highly sensitive data was ever compromised. The Web site is expected to be back up within a few days, the EPA said.

Staff writers Stephen Barr and John Schwartz contributed to this report.

Demand 'Golden' for New Dollar Coin

The U.S. Mint says it has shipped more than 60 million of the new GoldenDollar coins, which debuted late last month, to Federal Reserve banks—about the same level of bank demand for an entire year for the Susan B. Anthony dollar coin.

The gold-colored coin, which features an image of Sacagawea, the Native American guide for explorers Lewis and Clark, is intended to replace the Anthony coin, which was often mistaken for a quarter and was rejected by the public. Not wanting another flop, the Mint has aggressively marketed the new coin, encouraging

banks and retailers to use it, promoting it in special boxes of Cheerios cereal and making it available for change Jan. 30 at Wal-Mart and Sam's Club stores.

Because of the heavy demand for the Sacagawea dollar, the Mint is doubling production to 5 million coins a day. By the end of this month, more than 200 million of the coins are expected to be in circulation.

"The initial public demand for the Golden Dollar has been extraordinarily strong," Mint Director Philip N. Diehl said earlier this week in a prepared statement. Diehl said there is a backlog of orders that will be filled over the next several weeks.

The new coins were released by Federal Reserve banks to commercial banks beginning Jan. 26.



JP
in Moredoo as
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on campus (I haven't been
on one in a while) and to groups

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Democrats Ahead on Education

Boost in Spending Is Favored in Poll

By KENNETH J. COOPER
Washington Post Staff Writer

A bipartisan poll has found that Democrats have retained their edge over Republicans on the prime issue of education and drawn a "startling" level of voter support for specific policies advanced by President Clinton, including federal funding to reduce class sizes and modernize aging school buildings.

In this election cycle, Republicans have hoped to narrow or even overcome their traditional disadvantage on the education issue by going beyond a push for tuition vouchers and refashioning the party's message to emphasize local flexibility to spend federal funds and tough measures to hold schools accountable for academic results.

But the nationwide survey in late January for the National Education Association, the largest teachers union, indicates Clinton so far has dominated the education debate and won public favor for a more activist approach that has the backing of congressional Democrats. The poll, conducted jointly by the Democratic firm of Greenberg Quinlan Research and a Republican firm, Voter/Consumer Research, found that Clinton's proposals have attracted independents and moderate Republicans as well as Democrats.

On a generic question, 37 percent of the sample of 1,000 likely voters replied Democrats would "do a better job on education," compared with 27 percent who said Republicans would.

The Democratic advantage on first impression—10 percentage points—doubled when the question was rephrased in terms that spelled out each party's stance on the issue.

"When faced with a choice between a Democratic message of national commitment to invest in smaller classes, academic standards and modernization, and a Republican message of local decision-making, school accountability and vouchers, voters favor the national commitment and investment by a startling 20-point margin, 53 to 33 percent," the pollsters said in an executive summary.

The poll had a margin of error of 3.1 percent.

Increased federal spending was also favored, with 61 percent saying the government devotes too little money to education and 42 percent identifying it as their top budget priority—more than those who named health care, national debt reduction or any other purpose.

Currently, Washington provides 7 percent of the nation's spending on education.

Even among conservative Republicans, education spending rated as a top budget priority, virtually tied with paying down the debt and slightly ahead of tax cuts.

Mary Elizabeth Teasley, the NEA's chief lobbyist, said the teachers union has already begun briefing members of Congress about the poll's findings in an attempt to secure support for education spending "as they grapple with the surplus and tax issues."

The survey found the top priority for action on education was improving the quality of teachers, with national standards for the profession, training to use computers and higher pay ranking 1-2-3 out of eight proposals. Clinton's plan to reduce class sizes by hiring 100,000 new teachers ranked fourth, and his proposal to subsidize school construction ranked sixth.

Last was private school vouchers, a result the pollsters called "a lackluster response." The survey gave Republicans reason to invest more political hope in another GOP proposal—education savings accounts that could be used to pay private school tuition—even though the idea finished next to last. The pollsters said such savings accounts are nonetheless "capable of attracting broad support."

For Democrats, the survey contains one message that runs contrary to the strong support for government spending more money.

Voters remain skeptical of Washington expanding its control over local schools, with 38 percent favoring a larger federal role, 35 percent a smaller role and 24 percent endorsing the current role.

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ACCESS

Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services
المركز العربي للخدمات الاقتصادية والاجتماعية

December 27, 1999

The Honorable William J. Clinton
President of the United States
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

On behalf of the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS), I am extending this invitation for you to join us as our honored guest and keynote speaker at the ACCESS 29th Annual Dinner on Saturday, May 6, 2000 at Cobo Hall in Detroit, Michigan.

ACCESS, based in Dearborn, is the premier human service organization in our community and one of the most highly respected institutions in Michigan. An organization – started nearly thirty years ago in a storefront by a group of volunteers – today provides a wide range of programs, including, employment, educational, legal, medical, mental health, social and cultural arts services to thousands of people.

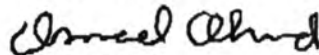
Our annual dinners are our community's show of support for the center and like past years, our dinner will be the largest Arab American event in the country. We are expecting to host more than 2,000 people, including many of the key corporate, political, labor and civil leaders in Michigan. Past dinners have featured members of your Administration, including Secretary Shalala, late Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, Deputy Chief of Staff Maria Echaveste and Mrs. Gore.

Your personal outreach to our community is unprecedented and your presence at the dinner would be a historical event for us that would bring national recognition to the many contributions we have made to America. As you so eloquently noted in your videotaped address to our annual dinner in 1996, we are a community whose contributions are all too often overlooked. Your words were received with great pride that year and your actual presence at the dinner would be met with great honor and enthusiasm.

In addition, the efforts your Administration and you personally have made to the Middle East peace process and the breakthroughs made as a result of that, have no stronger group of supporters than our community in Michigan.

On behalf of our board and members, I do hope your schedule will permit you to join us.

Best regards,



Ismael Ahmed
Executive Director

cc: The Honorable David Bonior
The Honorable John Conyers
The Honorable John Dingell
Christine Stanek, Office of Public Liaison
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- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
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- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
02-19-00

*Called
Goo Pinner
Summitt*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

00 FEB 14 AM 10:19

February 14, 2000

~~RECOMMENDED PHONE CALL~~

*Copied
Marshall
Balderston
Podesta*

TO:

James Lee Witt, Director, Federal Emergency I

DATE:

As soon as possible

RECOMMENDED BY:

Thurgood Marshall, Jr.
Kris Balderston

PURPOSE:

You are calling James Lee Witt to get an update on the situation following tornadoes touching down in Georgia and throughout the Southeast.

BACKGROUND:

Early this morning tornadoes were confirmed throughout the Southeast. The media reports that tornadoes have killed 12 and injured hundreds in Southern Georgia. Damage from the storms has also been reported in the Carolinas, Arkansas, Alabama, and Florida. Tornado watches and warnings remain in effect throughout the Southeast this morning. FEMA and state emergency management agencies are on the ground.

(b)(6)

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Home: (501) 229-4644 FEMA Ops Center (202) 898-6100

DATE OF SUBMISSION:

February 14, 2000

ACTION:

