

A recipe for reviewing liberalism

Wunderkind journalist examines why Americans have lost faith in government

By Jamie Stiehm

This slender volume has an ambitious aim: to diagnose the political maladies ailing our republic and prescribe a remedy. In a sweeping analysis, Jacob Weisberg, formerly of The New Republic and now political columnist at New York magazine, attempts to go beyond journalism to write in a more lasting medium.

Weisberg, widely regarded as a rising star in the journalistic universe, has written a first book that shoots for the moon but lands on the mezzanine. Much of his reporting is derivative, and relies on the legwork of others.

That is not to say its main thesis — that the degree to which Americans have lost faith in their government is now at the danger level — is not true and alarming. It is all too true, and the author argues in two

archly titled chapters — "The Republican Evasion" and "The Democratic Confusion" — that Republicans and Democrats alike share the blame.

In a summary of the post-war decades that borders on pontificating, he asserts

that Democrats have bloated good government past the point of health, treating it as the solution to every problem, while Republicans have too often viciously attacked it as akin to a hostile force. He cites Ronald Reagan's simple statement in his 1981 Inaugural Address: "Government is not the solution, it's the problem."

Specifically, Weisberg points to the 104th Congress and House Republicans in particular, as the culmination of this anti-government trend. Mincing no words, he writes, "The barbarians are inside the gates. The assault is a reality."

Yet the latest arrivals, while they made the difference to creating a new Republican majority, are trivial next to those leaders whom Weisberg considers really responsible for the groundwork and rhetoric of the anti-government revolution: House Speaker Newt Gingrich (Ga.), Majority Leader Dick Armey (Texas) and Majority Whip Tom DeLay (Texas.).

When politicians contemptuously compare institutions, such as the Environmental Protection Agency, to the Gestapo, as DeLay has done, Weisberg suggests that such talk cannot help but poison the well of discourse and weaken ties of public trust.

But this Congress is not just about angry rhetoric. As Weisberg notes, it has passed legislation that few thought politically possible in the recent past.

Balancing the budget by the year 2002 has become a mantra pleasing to the ears

IN DEFENSE OF GOVERNMENT:

The Fall and Rise of Public Trust

By Jacob Weisberg
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of voters, but cutting social programs like Medicare to get there was something only this Congress dared to vote for in the budget reconciliation bill.

Yet Weisberg predicts that, for all Gingrich's scorching critique of LBJ's Great Society and FDR's New Deal, not even he can turn back the tide entirely: "What Gingrich cannot do, and knows he cannot do, is reverse the New Deal and survive."

Weisberg also provides an insightful discussion of ideological influences on both parties, such as Cato Institute libertarianism on the Republicans, and communitarianism on President Clinton's "New Democrat" 1992 campaign platform.

These pages expose Weisberg's book for what it really is: the work of a Washington insider (even though he recently moved to New York) written with an elite audience of other insiders in mind. Don't look for this to change the minds or hearts of more Americans than

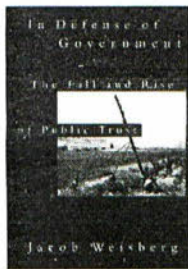
you can fit into a New Republic dinner party.

To his credit, Weisberg does not pose as an objective, just-the-facts-ma'am reporter. While his book reads like a long magazine article, it's clear what he thinks and where his sympathies lie. He believes in government as a positive, necessary and even lofty part of people's lives. Thus he finds fault with the consumer orientation of Vice President Al Gore's "Reinventing Government." It is an insult to people who are, he writes, "citizens in a democracy, not customers in a Wal-Mart."

Weisberg cites concrete examples of government programs that improve people's lives, such as the Gautreaux program for housing desegregation in Chicago, which moved inner-city blacks into the suburbs for a change of scene and culture.

The high point of the book comes when Weisberg reaches back to the touchstone of Wisconsin's Progressive tradition in the early 20th century to find hope for 1996. "Recovering and renewing lost principles" is the key to reviving liberalism, he says. But he stresses that he is talking about a "liberalism within limits."

The Progressive legacy, which Weisberg finds timely today, is that government must be made to act as a referee to make sure that all Americans, particularly those not born rich, get a fair chance in life's contest.



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PRESERVATION

'Pork busters' anger their colleagues by targeting funding for latest pet projects

By Sarah Pekkanen

When a House Appropriations subcommittee wrapped up the VA-HUD spending bill recently, members walked away with more than the knowledge that they had completed their day's work; they had also set aside \$10 million for pet projects in the districts of seven full committee members.

Then, just before the full committee took up the same spending bill last week, history buff and Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) weighed in by orchestrating the transfer of \$13 million from a NASA project to a natural history museum in New York City.

But unlike past Congresses — when pet projects often slipped through with a wink and were even doled out according to a formula that favored the majority — a bipartisan group of "pork busters" is targeting these earmarks for extinction.

In the process, they place their colleagues in the uncomfortable position of angering GOP leaders and the Appropriations Committee members they rely on for their own project funding. At press time Tuesday, a vote had not yet been held.

Several members said that while they don't oppose Gingrich's intent to fund the museum — hailed by The New York Times as "one of the world's great scientific resources" — they are rankled by the way the money was obtained. Sources said Gingrich asked the panel to set aside funds for renovating the museum's exhibition halls and planetarium.

"I'd like to see how many peo-

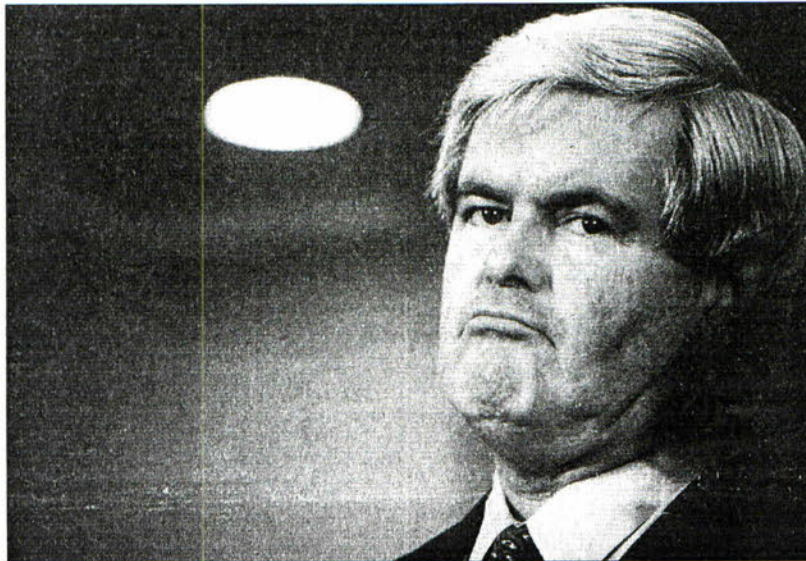
ple who voted for the \$13 million would like to see it funded in the regular way, through authorization and through competitive review," said Rep. George Brown (D-Calif.), "and how many prefer to have these things decided by some mysterious figure, who may be the Speaker and may be someone else, and tacked on as earmark." Brown is one of those sponsoring an amendment to eliminate the funds.

"I see it as very critical decision," Brown added. "They're going to be very strongly torn between adhering to their communities and principles that the federal government shouldn't be involved in funding local projects... and between their loyalty to their Speaker who has taken the opposite point of view here."

At least one Gingrich ally who opposes earmarks — Rep. Bob Walker (R-Pa.), chairman of the Science Committee — is expected to support slashing the museum's funds, his spokeswoman said.

Brown stressed that he doesn't oppose federal funding of the museum, just the way it was handled. "This was a real stealth earmark," explained Robert Palmer, minority staff director for the House Science Committee. "There was no hearing on it, no testimony on the Hill, no record whatsoever that we could tell."

In fact, Rep. Jerry Nadler's (D-N.Y.) office — in the district containing the museum — didn't even know about the federal funding until after it was inserted in the committee bill, sources said. Gingrich's office did not return a phone call.



PAMELA HAZEN/THE HILL

A Gingrich-backed project is being targeted by a group of House "pork busters."

Other members are wondering whether Gingrich will bother twisting arms in an effort to push the project through. Rep. David Minge (D-Minn.), a cosponsor of Brown's amendment, speculated that Gingrich may have told New York officials he would try to obtain the funds.

"In a way, Gingrich did his duty to [Mayor Rudolph] Giuliani, if that was what was going on here," said Minge, stressing that he had no direct knowledge of this.

Meanwhile, Minge, along with Reps. Scott Klug (R-Wis.), Gil Gutknecht (R-Minn.) and Tom

Barrett (D-Wis.), sent a June 24 letter aimed at rallying colleagues' outrage for the "pork-barrel projects" conveniently located in the Appropriations Committee members' districts.

"These earmarks are not specifically authorized, have not been the subject of authorization hearings, and, most important, they violate the competitive process that was established by Congress in federal law," the letter read.

Although the letter did not single out the members, the legislation details where the money is

slated to go. It includes \$1 million for renovation of the Valentine Theatre in Democrat Marcy Kaptur's Toledo district; \$1 million to complete the Multi-Agency Visitor Center in Republican Joe Skeen's district in Cibola County, N.M.; and \$1 million for demolition of the Casey Hotel in Rep. Joseph McDade's (R) district in Scranton, Pa.

"In a time when we're making hard choices to balance the budget, the very existence of this process undermines the resolve of members of Congress," Minge said.

Filegate figure remembered as nonpartisan Hill staffer

By Eamon Javers

Although Anthony Marceca has been portrayed as a fierce partisan operative, Democrats and Republicans who worked with him on the Hill in 1989 remember him as a hard-working investigator who was as nonpartisan as a congressional staffer can get.

Marceca, 54, whom Republicans accuse of reviewing FBI files on hundreds of Republicans while working in the White House in 1993 and 1994, served on a temporary special investigations subcommittee of the Indian Affairs Committee. There he investi-

gated accusations of misdeeds against American Indians.

"My experience was that he was a very pleasant fellow, a very open person," said Peter Taylor, a former committee counsel who worked with Marceca on the Hill in 1989. "I don't recall him being very political to any extent. I was surprised to read in the newspaper how many campaigns he had worked on."

The Indian Affairs Committee and its subcommittee — then co-chaired by Arizona Sens. Dennis DeConcini (D) and John McCain (R) had a reputation on the Hill for a non-partisan atmosphere, not necessarily a place where a budding Democratic dirt-digger

would cut his political teeth.

And despite the White House claim that Marceca was incompetent, none of the Hill staffers interviewed recalled him as particularly inept. In fact, many praised his work.

"He was intelligent, open-minded and inquisitive as he should be as an investigator," Taylor said, echoing many of his colleagues.

Marceca is scheduled to testify before the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee today, making public comments about the incident that has brought him into the national spotlight. President Clinton has urged an independent counsel to look into the FBI

files incident. In Marceca's sworn testimony provided by the White House Counsel's office, Marceca wrote, "[I] did not single out any person for special scrutiny or treat any person differently, because of who he or she may have been."

Ken Balon, Marceca's former boss on the Hill, declined to comment, except to confirm that Marceca had worked for him on the subcommittee for nine months as a detailee from the Army.

Taylor hypothesized that Marceca might not have known he was doing anything wrong. "I describe him as the guy who was standing next to the fan when the stuff hit," Taylor said.

"I think he was just doing the detail work he had been told to do. I feel a little sorry for Tony being involved in this. But maybe he just got his head in deeper than I thought he would."

Another former staffer agreed.

"Tony was that type of military guy. A guy who, if you asked him to do something, he would follow orders."

He also got the sense that Marceca enjoyed the secretive aspects of his job as an investigator, recalling that Marceca handled the testimony of one man who was in the federal witness-protection program and testified using a voice scrambling device.

He also mentioned another interesting detail about Marceca's tenure on the Hill: Marceca's son, Nathan, also worked on the subcommittee.

"It was more of a glorified gofer position for the summer," the staffer said, adding with a laugh, "Gee, that's never been done on the Hill before."

Father and son worked in the same place again at the White House, where Nathan Marceca works in the correspondence office.

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

~~West~~ P.R. ~~file~~

Thomas Jefferson

8.3 pieces.

previous Pres. next most mail RR 1981
≈ 3/4 get well cards.
1 of 7 million after shot

President Carter - count line
456 - ~~1111~~ 1111

Jackie Kennedy First Vols. → condol. cards

Greeting Cards - like Pres. John

First Children Unit - Pres. Kennedy - had cards

no
dates

~~Press file~~ (facts
from
C. Abrams)

PRESS

1. Chelsea wrote Ray
went to mailbox
2. Young. very upset
3. 83,000 most mail
4. Guder → more mail than Jefferson
→ Volunteers.

Press Rules by Lou A.

(Press rule)
P.1

Don't talk about issues -

very personal what families do

every healthcare } affect their lives

feel accessible - ~~we~~ feel very personal
- Don Bill in my cases.

→ POTUS encouraged people to write

8.4 MM \$89 1st year

?
Mancini
incl 1st lady?
Socks -
D. Wood

20-25,000

~ ~~20,000~~ per day for POTUS

Socks > T. Jefferson

Keagan → ^{his} most after big shot

Bush → his most during the Gulf War conflict

W. W. H.
reps single anything
repat → (Mail, e-mail, comments)

- POTUS sig w/ real pen
We respect what we do + provide
POTUS respects what we do + we are his
means of communicating w/ public

E-Mail / 250K since 6/1/93
≈ 600/day now.
(school out)

(new category)

First Lady > ~~10,350~~ ^{4RC} 396,284 as of 12/31
in 1st year
(No Stats from prior years)
- gets report every 2 weeks, incl case work

Greetings ≈ 500K _{BC} v. 576K GB

PODVS 8.4 ^{BC} all _{PODVS above} v. 6.4 ^{GB} v. 5.3 _{RR}
6.8 v. 3.7

Condolence > 26,000 + 2500 + 3,000 -

2K/day - 300
82K day - 3/93
2K low - about 400
10-20K - averaging.

AL 142,000 hardship Cases

MH
all
groups

Visuals. - { Clinton v. others 181 year.
others.

~~Gifts companion~~

MH

Neg/positive - BC asked for it
people felt not have an ear.

Meaningful letters. - (Sangeli.)
- blocked AL report

~~ML/Kant~~

~~Condolence letters~~

E-mail stats + examples

MH

~~Greetings companion~~

181 yr.
500,000 BC
516,000
GB

Shubh

New WH book ✓
Society Card ✓
How to Write POTUS ✓
Newsletter - ✓

AP/2nd

181 Lady Stats - Comparisons. (181 year)
First Lady (Reports) Case work/Stats

Success

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

First Lady

B. Bush vs N. Key

- FL single / card each

Card v. letters →

→ POTUS + winters

Gifts ↔

VISUALS

- Charts -

Meaningful letters →

Sochs -

- new with boards
How to write
Sochs cards

Forrest's Computer
+ Mail #11

574-
4967

Mail very input - ^{as Gov.} ~~as Gov.~~ POTUS
BC asked for mail
letter writer - carries note cards
+ jots notes

- One of his favorite ways of
communicating

Came to Comment Line
↳ writes reports daily +
weekly

~~Victims~~

~~Barometer~~ barometer of public opinion

Things affect personally -

Crime
health care
welfare
economy

People address as Bill more than

previous admin.
- Career Stoppers - "being" - find of Pres.
view -

⇒ "politically inspired campaign mail"