

Campaign 1980 by Kathleen Murphy



Haig on the march

General Alexander Haig, the intended political beneficiary of the contrived "Who Lost Iran?" debate, will announce his candidacy for the Republican presidential nomination "by the Christmas holidays." According to National Draft Haig Committee spokesman Lew Helm, who has been meeting frequently with Haig to map out campaign strategy, "the Iranian crisis has definitely persuaded the General that he, as a military man, owes it to the country to offer his services as a national leader."

It is expected that Haig's announcement will coincide with the release of a study of U.S. global strategy he has been working on—between campaign speeches—at Philadelphia's Foreign Policy Research Institute. Sources say the report will bemoan America's "lack of will" and "softness toward Soviet aggression" and will specifically cite the Carter administration's abandonment of the Shah as an example.

In preparation for his announcement, Haig's backers are hurriedly fleshing out the frankly skeletal "Draft Haig" campaign organization. Out in Illinois, for example, the statewide Draft Haig committee has recruited a Standard Oil of Indiana attorney as its Chicago chairman, while John Hoff of Lord, Bissell, and Brook,

the same prestigious Chicago law firm that houses Alex Seith, Averell Harriman's eyes-and-ears in the Democratic Party, has signed on as treasurer.

Connally wild card?

Apparently persuaded that he's been dumped as a potential Republican presidential nominee by the kingmakers at the New York Council on Foreign Relations, John Connally has begun to play a "wild card" role in the 1980 election game.

Connally, who has been rapidly losing ground as George Bush (formerly, "George Who?") is being widely publicized as the up-and-coming dark horse, threw the East Coast press into a tizzy last week when he announced he will not seek Federal Matching Funds. Connally's decision, which drew fire from the Eastern press (no less than eight of them editorialized against the former Texas Governor's surprise move), is clearly geared to scoring an upset in the crucial New Hampshire primary Feb. 26, where he now intends to pour in money from his \$8 million plus campaign war chest. Under present law, candidates who receive matching funds cannot spend more than \$264,000 in the state's primary contest.

Connally's plunging political fortunes are linked not only to Bush's rising star, but to the CFR's decision to pull the plug—at least for the moment—on Ted Kennedy's candidacy. As explained recently by such CFR insiders as Hoyt Ammidon, who brought Connally onto the board of his U.S. Trust in 1968, "We would probably give John the nomination if Kennedy heads the Democratic ticket. If not, then I'm afraid he loses out to Bush."

Candidates court gays

The homosexual vote has become a hotly contested item among three of the Democratic presidential contenders. Avidly wooing the gay community are Jerry Brown, Jimmy Carter and Ted Kennedy, who have all come out publicly over the past few weeks in support of "homosexual rights."

Speaking to a gay political rally in Washington Nov. 27, Brown—a former Jesuit seminarian and confirmed bachelor who has been making the rounds of gay organizations—hailed homosexual activism as a sign that a "new order" in society is emerging. "We live in a time when peoples' attitudes are changing, where the society is in transition ... and are embarked on a very different age and very different ethos than presently reigns as conventional wisdom. ... That's your movement, and I join with you," he proclaimed.

While Brown may be the most outspoken, Carter and Kennedy are apparently not far behind. Carter sent aide Mike Shannon to the same rally with the message: "You do have a White House that is meeting with you, that will listen to you, that respects you and that will act with you."

Kennedy informed the group that he was "very concerned about the problems" faced by gays. In fact, Massachusetts Senator Paul Tsongas, a close friend and collaborator of Kennedy, has introduced legislation into the Senate that would extend the 1965 Civil Rights Act to homosexuals.

Asked whether Kennedy might cosponsor the bill, a source close to Tsongas commented privately, "We don't know if this is the kind of proposition Ted can go with right now. We wouldn't want to compromise his appeal to the ladies."