

## Elephants and Donkeys by Kathleen Klenetsky

### The shape of Reagan's next term?

Various sources now say that a group of administration insiders, who include White House Chief of Staff James Baker III, two of Baker's top lieutenants, Michael Deaver and Richard Darman, and others, are carefully positioning themselves to consolidate their grip over administration policy should Reagan be reelected.

This Palace Guard not only maintains close links to both Henry Kissinger and the Mondale camp (former Democrat Baker, for example, is Democratic Party leader Robert Strauss's self-described "closest friend"), but has consistently functioned as the Eastern Establishment's Trojan Horse within the administration. Among other things, the group has successfully pressured the President into backing off from his previous strong commitment to space-defense, into reappointing Paul Volcker chairman of the Federal Reserve, and so forth.

According to Aug. 27 columns by Evans and Novak, and by *Washington Times* White House correspondent Jeremiah O'Leary, the Kissinger-James Baker III control over administration positions would look as follows:

- Baker plans to elevate himself to a cabinet-level position at Treasury, State, or the Justice Department.
- Reagan loyalist Ed Meese is not expected to win confirmation as Attorney General, and will be forced to withdraw from the administration.
- Baker then intends to extend control over the White House by making Deaver Chief of Staff.
- Baker collaborator Richard Darman has his sights set on becoming director of the Office of Management and Budget, replacing David Stock-

man, who is reportedly anxious to leave government.

"Deaver's rise from glorified errand boy to his present eminence has indeed been based on his making himself indispensable to the first lady," write Evans and Novak, who also report that the conservatives' major choice to replace Deaver, Judge William Clark, is the victim of a Deaver-orchestrated whispering campaign directed to Nancy Reagan. "The task of convincing Nancy Reagan that her husband needs Clark, not Deaver, at his side may be an impossible mission."

Darman is a protégé of Elliot Richardson, an opponent of the administration's beam-weapons program and the probable winner of the U.S. Senate race in Massachusetts.

The most blatant proposal, however, is that former *New York Times* writer and current assistant secretary of state for European affairs, Richard Burt, step in as director of the National Security Council. Burt's confirmation at the State Department post was mysteriously allowed through the Senate, despite the fact that a Senate Intelligence Committee investigation had established that he had done serious damage to U.S. intelligence capabilities by printing sensitive intelligence information in the *Washington Times*.

Surveying the palace intrigue, the *Times's* O'Leary reports that "Deaver could put Mr. Burt" into the National Security Council while "another plus for Mr. Burt is his friendship with Gail Hodges, social secretary to Nancy Reagan." Current NSC director Robert McFarlane "could write his own ticket" to an ambassadorship or a "senior State Department post."

Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, the major backer of beam weapons and opponent of Kissinger's NATO decoupling schemes, O'Leary gives "about even money to leave in

the first year."

Resistance of conservatives to the Deaver and Darman appointments has centered on the pathetic counter-suggestion of Drew Lewis, whom Baker set up as head of the Republican Platform Committee. It's a no-win position. Lewis has been bloodied by the platform skirmishing, and his political star is falling.

### More on Ferraro and the mafia

Geraldine Ferraro may have thought that the troubles concerning her mafia connections had blown over, but the Aug. 29 *Philadelphia Inquirer* opens a new chapter.

According to an *Inquirer* investigative team, Ferraro received two campaign contributions from one Michael La Rosa, a man who served eight months in prison for labor racketeering after a 1982 conviction. La Rosa is allegedly the connection between New York's five big mafia bosses and certain U.S. labor union leaders. After he had already been convicted, he gave the Ferraro-for-Congress committee \$500 as a contribution, several weeks before she was nominated as Democratic Party vice-presidential candidate.

Also, a company that *La Rosa* owns, according to the *Inquirer* team, has violated federal campaign law by giving a contribution to her campaign, which is illegal for corporations to do.

La Rosa has a history dating back two decades of financial dealings with P. Zaccaro & Sons, the company that is two-thirds owned by Ferraro's husband John Zaccaro and one-third owned by Geraldine herself. At last report, according to the *Philadelphia* paper, the Zaccaro firm has been managing the real estate operations of La Rosa.