

## NDPC Vote Tally

# Your congressman's votes on the issues

by John Chambless

As part of its ambitious initiative to challenge every congressional seat in 1986, the National Democratic Policy Committee (NDPC), the political action committee which shares the ideas of presidential candidate of Lyndon H. LaRouche, has announced the forthcoming publication of a Voter Rating Book on members of Congress who will be up for re-election in 1986.

Certain problems are attendant on the publication of such a rating. First, as demonstrated in the recent overwhelming vote in favor of the Gramm-Rudman "balanced budget" legislation, Congress has abandoned its responsibility as a legislative body, and the membership as a whole has revealed itself as morally unfit to be returned to office. This creates difficulties in the formulation of categories with which to classify the congressmen. The authors of the rating book have tentatively come up with three categories, into which each congressman will be placed: the first is "Totally Unacceptable"; the third is "Potentially Salvagable." In between, the category

"Generally Spineless, But Not Totally Unacceptable."

As part of the preparation for the rating book, the NDPC has prepared a tally sheet on every congressman, indicating their votes on crucial issues during the past three years. This tally sheet will be printed as an appendix to the rating book. However, one of the major problems in construction of this tally sheet was finding legislation which truly posed the crucial issues of national survival in a clear way—particularly when it comes to economic policy. Of course, there are a few clear cases—the vote on the re-confirmation of Federal Reserve chairman Paul Volcker, for example, or the vote in 1983 to continue U.S. authorization for the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Defense issues in general were also a good indication of a congressman's commitment to the national interest, as were, to a lesser extent, farm appropriations. But, in general, there were few clear cases in which the American System of economics was the issue in a vote. Likewise, there were few votes on education policy in which the issues were clear.

Despite the problems, 20 votes were identified for the Senate and 13 for the House of Representatives for inclusion in the tally sheet. Among the votes chosen for the Senate are

the following: the 1983 vote on Volcker's nomination; the 1983 vote on supplemental appropriations, the final motion in favor of the IMF; the 1983 vote on supplemental appropriations, to kill an amendment to reduce U.S. authorization to the IMF; the 1985 Department of Defense Authorization, the Hart amendment against initial MX production; the 1984 Omnibus Defense Authorization, the Tower motion to kill the Moynihan amendment to stop MX deployment; the 1985 DoD Authorization, amendment to move toward deployment of some SDI components; the 1985 DoD Authorization, Gore amendment to reduce SDI funds; the 1985 DoD Authorization, Bumpers amendment to limit SDI research and cut budget; the 1984 Omnibus Defense Authorization, Tower motion to kill Nunn NATO troop pullout; the 1985 confirmation of Richard Burt as ambassador to West Germany; the 1985 State Department Authorizations, Kassebaum amendment to table Helms amendment to curtail U.S. support for international population control efforts; the 1985 Agriculture Appropriations, Cochrane motion to kill Proxmire amendment to reduce agriculture budget by 4%; the 1985 final vote on Gramm-Rudman bill; and the 1985 vote on the nomination of euthanasia-advocate Otis Bowen as Secretary of Health and Human Services.

For the House, the votes used include: the 1985 vote on DoD authorization, Aspin amendment to cut overall defense budget; the 1985 vote on Courter amendment to DoD Authorization to fully fund SDI, per President's request; the 1983, vote on final IMF passage; the 1984, Kazen amendment to H.R. 1652 against waterway user charges; the 1985 vote on Smith amendment to H.R. 1555 against international population control measures; the 1984 Chandler amendment to H.R. 1904 against "Baby Doe" protections for severely handicapped infants; and the 1985 vote on Gramm-Rudman.

The results of the NDPC tally are hardly surprising, but in many cases reveal that certain "presidential hopefuls" currently being pushed by the media as "conservatives" or "moderates" are just as liberal as their avowedly liberal colleagues. Joseph Biden (D-Md.) scored 5%, exactly the same as ultra-liberal basketball player Bill Bradley (D-N.J.), and Gary Hart (D-Colo.) scored 25%, the same percentage as liberal Mark Hatfield (D-Oreg.). Perennial non-candidate Teddy Kennedy (D-Mass.), who briefly donned a "conservative" image, scored 30%, the same as Thomas Eagleton (D-Mo.).

For the most part, in the night of Congress, all the cows are more or less black. No senator scored higher than 75%—James McClure (R-Idaho), Howell Heflin (D-Ala.), Edward Zorinsky (D-Neb.), and Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) scored exactly 75%—and only 15 scored higher than 50%. In the House, a total of 9 representatives scored over 90%, while 17 were below 10%.

The authors of the rating sheet emphasize that the NDPC plans to challenge every congressman who is running in 1986, and that the primary purpose of the rating sheet is to establish priorities for attack rather than to provide endorsements. As far as the NDPC is concerned, not a single congressman is morally fit to continue to hold office.