

The coming peripeteia of George Bush

by Webster G. Tarpley

Over the recent period, and especially since the Oct. 19 stock market crash, many aspects of the collective insanity dominating Washington have been prompted by the presidential ambitions of one George Bush. Bush's desire to supersede the fading Reagan regime has dictated above all the wild-west financial machinations and blackmailing carried on by Treasury Secretary James Baker, long known to insiders as Bush's idea man. In a very real sense, the precipitate fall of the dollar and the looming threat of world hyperinflation are part of the tribute that each ordinary citizen has already paid to the Bush campaign.

The monomania of the Bush leaguers has been the need to postpone Black Monday II and Super Black Monday, the likely next phases of the ongoing financial and monetary crash, beyond the currently relevant historical horizon—meaning, in the minds of Bush league pragmatists, until after the first week in November 1988. If only the really big cataclysms could be staved off until after the election, so this schizoid litany went, then Bush would get elected and be in office before the bottom fell out.

Or, according to the principal variation of this litany, President Reagan is scheduled to resign soon, probably under the hammer-blows of new stock market crashes, giving Bush the opportunity to move right into the White House and begin practicing the Schachtian crisis-management of emergency austerity rule.

A subtle change has now occurred in the way the U.S. ruling elite views this chain of events. The elite is confronted with the most massive empirical evidence that the next inflection points of the collapse are immediately at hand, and cannot be delayed until December. The "sucker bull" market of the first week of January changes nothing in this picture. With the crash thus palpably imminent, even the most imbecilic of the Wall Street-Boston immortals is now obliged

to contemplate the specifics of whether Bush is really the man to do to the United States and much of the Western world what Chancellor Heinrich Brüning did to Weimar Germany with his emergency austerity decrees during 1929-31. The oak-paneled boardrooms are ringing with the question, "Can the wimp deliver economic blood, sweat, and tears?"

Fixers prefer Bob Dole

The signs are multiplying that numerous opinion leaders among the ruling circles are beginning to defect from the Bush camp. According to one insider who has family connections to Chase Manhattan Bank, many patrician power brokers, while they are still prepared to abide by the outcome of the Republican Party contest, would much prefer to support Bob Dole for President. Such patricians see Bush as having two serious problems in his presidential bid. First, the Bush machine is viewed as lacking an institutional base sufficiently large to deal with the crisis. By contrast, the patricians see the Dole machine as enjoying a broader-based consensus among diverse social groupings. Secondly, Dole is deemed as advantaged because of his humble social origins. The plebeian Dole, according to this argument, is the preferable man for the White House during a period of aggravated economic crisis. Dole would be more effective than the wealthy, privileged, prep-school educated Bush, and would also have more insight into the reactions of the common man.

Or, as one picaresque Washington fixer put it: "I'm supporting Dole. Bush won't make it. His consensus is eroding. And then there are big Irangate skeletons in Bush's closet."

Of course, there are other candidates for the Republican nomination besides Bush and Dole. But the Wall Street cabal has been attempting to present the Republican race as being limited to these two, with cruel efficiency in Schachtian austerity as the key criterion of choice. Some patricians have

concluded that Bush, as front-runner and presumptive daughter of the Reagan regime, is too complacent and too accustomed to pointing with pride, whereas the situation would dictate that he view with alarm, which comes easier to Dole.

In the Republican candidates' debate on Oct. 28 in Houston, Bush summed up his qualifications with the following metaphor: "I've been co-pilot for seven years, and I know how to land the plane in a storm." Dole's counter to that was: "I have made a difference. I can make things happen. Tough times need a tough leader." Dole's main theme in declaring his candidacy is that the U.S. must stop living beyond its means. His stock in trade on the Iowa and New Hampshire hustings is that he is a product of depression-era rural Kansas who had to overcome a grievous wound suffered during World War II. "I understand the poor or the disabled or whatever," says Dole. "I've got a feeling for these people." In Iowa, Dole campaigns with the nativist, know-nothing slogan, "He's one of us." Dole's standard campaign rap includes passages like the following: "I know a little about real people and real problems. I know precisely where I'm from, precisely how I got where I am and I know how to get back where I'm from. I think I have been tested in my lifetime. I think I made it the hard way."

Dole's version of *Mein Kampf* has thrown Bush on the defensive. Bush's father, Connecticut Sen. Prescott Bush, was a partner of the Brown Brothers Harriman investment bank. Bush attended prep school at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, and graduated from Yale University, where he was a member of the sinister Skull and Bones secret freemasonic society.

Bush, indeed, has a problem. For about two-thirds of the U.S. electorate, he evokes memories of the prissy and arrogant rich kid who appeared from time to time in the Our Gang comedies—the boy born with a silver spoon in his mouth who could use his new speedboat to impress Darla, but who then abandoned her in a moment of danger, leaving her rescue to regular guys like Spanky and Alfalfa. Bush is used to moving up the steps of the *cursum honorum* without much effort. The rules have always worked for him. When Bush was asked by Al Haig in a presidential debate in December to account for his actions in the White House during the Iran-Contra affair. Bush dodged the question and then simpered, "Time's up" when Tom Brokaw of NBC News rang the gong. He appears as the Little Lord Fauntleroy of U.S. politics, too much even for many bluebloods.

Irangate skeletons

And then there are the skeletons in the closet. During the first week of the new year, the *Washington Post* began the gang-tackling of Bush with a series of leaks about the vice president's involvement in Iran-Contra wrongdoing. The article appeared under the bylines of Bob Woodward and Walter Pincus, experienced Watergaters both. The article relies first of all on leaks from an unnamed "participant" who attended Oval Office morning national security briefings dur-

ing 1986. The said participant specifies that Bush was present at "several dozen" such briefing sessions, including many in which Iran-Contra operations were a prime topic.

Who is this participant? Is it Don Regan? Or Admiral Poindexter? Or Alton Keel, Rodney McDaniel, Peter Rodman, or Howard Teicher, all members of the NSC staff of that time? Woodward does not reveal his source, but it is clear that Bush's presence at so many key meetings exposes as lies his often-repeated lame excuses on Iran-Contra, namely, that he was not familiar with many details of the operations, did not know of the objections of Weinberger and Shultz, was excluded from key meetings and denied key information. According to the mysterious "participant," Bush knew virtually everything that Reagan himself knew.

This allegation is corroborated in the article by references to still-classified notes made during an interview with Bush carried out by the Tower Commission in December 1986.

The previous day's Jack Anderson column had ridiculed Bush as "the little man who wasn't there," pointing to damaging revelations including a 30 April 1986 briefing memo in which CIA operative Felix Rodriguez was scheduled to brief Bush on Contra funding, including funding derived from the profits diverted from Iranian arms sales, which Bush therefore knew about. The Felix Rodriguez in question is the same person as the Max Gomez whose phone number was found in the downed plane of Eugene Hasenfus in early October 1986, and through whom investigators established a link between illegal Contra support operations and Bush's national security adviser, Donald P. Gregg. Then there was the meeting of Bush and his chief of staff, Craig L. Fuller, with Mossad operative Amiram Nir in Jerusalem in July 1986, in which the vice president in effect functioned as an emissary for Oliver North . . . and the list of very damaging skeletons goes on.

Dole has opened up a sizable lead over Bush in Iowa, confirmed by the latest polls. But although a Dole victory there has to some extent been prediscussed, the nightmare of the Bush camp is a third-place Iowa finish, with the place spot going to the Pat Robertson machine. The Bush effort is in any case accurately described as hemophilic, unable to survive the inevitable bruises.

This may become especially acute in New Hampshire. Here both Bush and Dole were roundly repudiated by Republican voters in the 1980 primary. The peculiar mentality of New Hampshire Republicans is far more congenial to a candidate along the lines of Jack Kemp. A victory of Kemp over both Bush and Dole in New Hampshire would be a healthy shock for the Republican Party, and would bring home the political importance of Kemp's rejection of genocidal Social Security cuts.

With the 140-point collapse of the New York Stock Exchange on Jan. 8 being attributed by the news media to the stock market reforms proposed by Bush operative Nicholas Brady, the stage is set for Black Monday II, and thus for the stunning peripeteia George Bush so richly deserves.