

## Elephants & Donkeys by Kathleen Klenetsky

### Bush's Super Tuesday a Pyrrhic victory?

George Bush's sweeping victory in the March 8 Super Tuesday primary elections—he won 16 out of the 17 Republican contests that day—could quickly turn to ashes, as the Irangate noose tightens around his neck.

It has now become common knowledge that Bush's protestations that he was "out of the loop" of the Iran-Contra decision-making were hogwash, and that, in fact, he personally ran the secret government apparatus responsible for this and other travesties.

Bush's Irangate problems skyrocketed on March 11, when special prosecutor Lawrence Walsh issued the first indictment in his investigation of the illicit operation. The indictee, former national security advisor Robert McFarlane, who currently serves as an adviser to the Bush campaign, immediately pled guilty to lying to Congress.

Washington is now rife with rumors that the McFarlane indictment is just the beginning of a long list of criminal charges that will soon be handed down against other members of Bush's inner circle, including, possibly, the vice president himself.

A few days earlier, *New York Times* columnist William Safire urged Bob Dole to stay in the race, on the grounds that Walsh's investigation could soon bring Bush's political career to a dead halt.

William Schneider, a political analyst with the Reagan administration-linked American Enterprise Institute, told NBC news, "George Bush can be stopped by . . . the special prosecutor, who's going to be heard from very

soon." And former Kennedy family operative Frank Mankiewicz, in another television interview, predicted that Bush himself, or members of his family, will soon be indicted.

The same week as McFarlane's indictment, Bush received another political blow, when his name came up in the trial of Democratic presidential hopeful Lyndon H. LaRouche and a number of his associates (see article, page 61). The judge ordered the prosecutor to search various government offices, including Bush's, for further evidence that LaRouche, as he and his fellow defendants have contested, were victims of an FBI-CIA dirty tricks operation.

Bush's office has been unavailable for comment on his role in the "get LaRouche" conspiracy.

### Dole gets the message

Bob Dole, who's adept at sniffing the prevailing political winds, has clearly gotten the message that Bush is in deep trouble. Following his trouncing on Super Tuesday, an obviously depressed Dole laid off half his campaign staff and canceled large chunks of his television ad campaign for the March 15 Illinois primary.

But all that changed following McFarlane's guilty plea on March 11. Dole issued an upbeat statement that day, asserting that he was in the race to stay, and expected to do extremely well in Illinois. Although the Kansas senator had obviously drawn some encouragement from the *Chicago Tribune's* endorsement of his candidacy that morning, sources report that his decision to stick it out was due principally to his expectations that Prosecutor Walsh was about to deep-six Bush's political career.

If Bush does get caught up in the Walsh investigation, Dole will have

the Republican field to himself. New York Congressman Jack Kemp withdrew from the race a few days after racking up another string of defeats in the March 8 contests. Pat Robertson's campaign is hurting badly, especially in the wake of his extremely poor showing Super Tuesday. Robertson, who has been collaborating informally with Dole during the course of the Republican campaign, had mooted in a television interview March 6 that if he dropped out of the race, he would throw his support to Dole.

### Dems move toward brokered convention

The results of the March 8 Democratic primaries make a brokered convention a foregone conclusion. Michael Dukakis, Al Gore, and Jesse Jackson are now nearly neck-and-neck in the race for delegates, and there is little chance that any one of them will emerge at the end of the primary process with a sufficient number to win the nomination.

This has led to a new round of speculation about whom party kingmakers will designate as their presidential standard-bearer. In addition to the standard roster—Sen. Sam Nunn, Sen. Bill Bradley, and Gov. Mario Cuomo—several other contenders have now emerged, among them Rep. Tom Foley of Washington, and Rep. Bill Gray of Pennsylvania.

The big problem is, however, that none of the "unofficial" candidates has anything substantially different to offer than the current gaggle, who have noticeably failed to elicit any enthusiasm on the part of the voters. Democratic Party officialdom seems dead set on repeating the same mistakes that have resulted in crushing defeat in four out of the last five presidential elections.