

Elephants & Donkeys by Kathleen Klenetsky

New DNC chairman: pure Establishment

The election of Washington lawyer Ron Brown as chairman of the Democratic National Committee sends out several signals.

First and most obvious, it means that the party's policies will almost certainly keep to the same old anti-defense, soft-on-Moscow line, which has alienated large chunks of the party's traditional base, and led to the humiliating defeat of Democratic presidential hopefuls.

Second, it suggests that the Democrats will call an early end to their honeymoon with President Bush, and start exploiting the political problems which will soon start engulfing Bush, as the U.S. economy continues to nosedive. Brown threw a few punches at the Republicans in a speech to state party leaders Feb. 9, blasting them for not caring "about truth or about decency."

Much has been made of the fact that Brown, who will be the first black to head up either party, is close to Jesse Jackson. While it's certainly true that Brown was brought into Jackson's campaign after the primaries were over, to negotiate what kind of deal Jackson would get in exchange for backing Mike Dukakis, and his election as DNC chairman is likely to bolster Jackson's political muscle, Brown's more important links are to the Washington liberal Establishment.

A partner in the prestigious Washington law firm of Patton, Boggs & Blow, Brown has been heading down the Establishment track since his days at Middlebury College. He studied law under Mario Cuomo, became a

protégé of the Urban League's Whitney Young, and got his first taste of national politics when he served as deputy manager for Ted Kennedy's 1980 presidential bid. He served as deputy chairman of the Democratic Party from 1982 to 1985.

Although a number of prominent Democrats—several former Congressmen among them—were also contenders for the DNC post, Brown's election was assured after Kennedy, Cuomo, Sen. Bill Bradley (D-N.J.), and, finally, the AFL-CIO publicly endorsed him.

Brown's selection caused some grumbling among more conservative Democratic leaders, who objected that the party desperately needed a leader who wasn't cast in the McGovern-Mondale mold.

Texas hacks remove LaRouche Democrat

Ron Brown's fellow Democrats in the Texas state party were thrown into a tizzy last year, when Claude Jones, a LaRouche Democrat, won election as chairman of the Harris County (Houston) Democratic Party—the largest Democratic entity in the state.

Led by state party chairman Bob Slagle, the party leadership tried every trick in the book to prevent Jones from performing his duties.

Late last month, Slagle decided to resort to straight bonapartist tactics. He simply declared that he was throwing Jones out of the post, on the grounds that he had violated party rules by not supporting the 1988 Democratic presidential slate.

Jones fired back a letter in which he documented that Slagle's charges were fabrications, and that his action to remove Jones violates Texas State Law, the First Amendment of the Constitution, and the Statement of Principles of the Democratic Party.

Jones, known in Texas as an outspoken proponent of a strong defense, and pro-growth economic policies, is considering legal action against Slagle.

John Warner faces electoral challenge

In Virginia, LaRouche Democrat Nancy Spannaus, a longtime associate of the internationally famous economist, announced Feb. 3 that she will try to unseat Republican Sen. John Warner, more widely known as the former Mr. Elizabeth Taylor.

Spannaus told the press that she had decided to initiate her campaign now, even though the election won't be held until 1990, because of the urgent necessity of solving the massive crises currently facing the United States.

These crises, she said, range from the collapse of the U.S. and global economy, to the horrendous decline of culture, epitomized by the growth of AIDS, the rock-drug scene, and the frightening growth in overtly Satanic activities, through the destruction of the American justice system, most clearly seen in the jailing of LaRouche and six of his associates, including Mrs. Spannaus's husband, Edward.

Mrs. Spannaus said she believed it was her duty to run, because the United States is headed "into a devastating economic and financial crisis, where the Soviets will gain dictatorial power internationally, and where the opposition to the austerity in the U.S. and to the capitulation to the Russians will be crushed by a far over-reaching Justice Department." Is this the future you want for your children," she asked. "It is not the one I want for mine—nor do I believe that we have the right as human beings responsible before God, to allow such a future to come into being."