

THE TIPPING- POINT ELECTION

WILL FUTURE AMERICANS LOOK BACK AT THE 1996 VOTE AND SAY "BINGO"?

With national TV and a live audience looking on, a spirited and authoritative group of political experts and culture-watchers debated how the November races will reshape America's future.

MICHAEL BARONE	★	<i>U.S. News & World Report</i>
GARY BAUER	★	Family Research Council
KARLYN H. BOWMAN	★	<i>The American Enterprise</i>
ROBERT P. CASEY	★	Democratic Governor of Pennsylvania, 1987-1995
LYNNE CHENEY	★	American Enterprise Institute
MICHAEL FARRIS	★	Candidate for Lieutenant Governor of Virginia, 1993
CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS	★	<i>The Nation</i> and <i>Vanity Fair</i>
IRVING KRISTOL	★	American Enterprise Institute
FRANK LUNTZ	★	Pollster for the Contract with America
GROVER NORQUIST	★	Americans for Tax Reform

ROUNDTABLE ON THE NEXT PRESIDENT

MR. BARONE: We use the phrase in political journalism, "The president runs the country." It strikes me that nobody runs this country and that the president often doesn't even run the government. He will tell you on occasion that he's not running the White House staff.

How much does the president matter?

MR. BAUER: Some of my Republican friends, as they look at the polls, increasingly say the presidency doesn't matter, and I suspect if the congressional match-ups begin to look bad for

conservatives they'll say the Congress doesn't matter, either.

But of course the presidency *does* matter, if for no other reason than because it is the bully pulpit of the United States. The man or woman in that office can do a great deal to get Americans thinking about liberty and virtue by focusing the nation's attention, through speeches and symbolic events. This Congress has certainly learned over the last two years that a President matters just in the mundane act of either stopping or allowing important legislation to get through.

MR. CASEY: Having been a governor, I can tell you that the chief executive does matter: He sets the agenda.

MS. CHENEY: We have a country now where if you're Dick Morris, you can indulge in the most bizarre and morally culpable behavior and conclude a \$2 million book contract within a week. I worry about the kind of behavior that will be ratified with the election of Bill Clinton. We'll be electing a President who has gone on MTV and said to kids that drugs don't matter. Asked if he would inhale if he had it to do again, he said, "Sure, I would." This can't be good for the country.

MR. KRISTOL: If he gets elected, the thing I worry about most is his Supreme Court appointments. I don't think Bill Clinton has an agenda except to get reelected. The Democratic Party doesn't have an agenda,

and there are budgetary constraints on anything they could possibly do. The Republican Party is not going to go away.

MR. BARONE: Let me play devil's advocate and argue that ideas are in the saddle. After all, if you had told members of the 1992 Democratic National Convention that President Clinton was going to sign a bill terminating the federal right to welfare and that he was going to sign budget bills that were going to reduce in absolute dollars the amount spent on domestic discretionary programs, they would have said you were full of beans. The Republican Congress lost the battle of the sound bites but they won the policy argument to a significant extent.

MS. CHENEY: But in a second term Clinton will rewrite the welfare bill, as the delegates at the Democratic convention were promised.

MR. CASEY: There was a memorandum in mid-1995 from Stanley Greenberg to the President saying, if you want to get reelected you've got to become—are you ready for this?—a “cultural conservative.” That advice cost about \$5 million. I tried to tell him that for nothing in 1992 and he wouldn't listen. But since that time, Clinton has moved hard right on every issue except abortion. He's gone hard left on abortion.

Irving Kristol is absolutely right: The Democrats have a real identity crisis. Bill Clinton is as far away from Barney Frank and Pat Schroeder as Bob Dole is from Jack Kemp, but the press never talks about the Democratic debate. The Democrats may be able to squeeze one more election out of a reactive strategy as protectors of the elderly poor under Medicare—and I agree with that philosophically. But beyond that, the disintegration is going to continue. I see a whole new force emerging; if not a third party, certainly a third force. We could have a new configuration made up of middle-class voters, working-class families whose income is deteriorating, and churchgoers. Put them all together and you get 51 percent real fast. Change is coming in both parties.

MR. BAUER: I can't help but note the irony that as Bill Clinton was getting that advice to become a cultural conservative, elements of the Republican Party were absolutely convinced that the Republican

Party's problem was that it appeared to be too culturally conservative.

Having been in San Diego, I must say I wondered whether the Republican Party had an agenda of any consequence. You had to tune in very carefully to find the three or four things they were willing to talk about. After four or five days of cult-like chanting of phrases like “big tent” and “inclusiveness,” we got a bounce that lasted all of 48 hours—like Chinese food, gone before you knew it. The controversial Houston convention four years ago gave George Bush a 15-point bounce that lasted until the Presidential debates, when he actually had to defend a number of ideas and didn't do it very well.

MR. CASEY: Look at what happened to the big-tent advocates in the Republican primaries. Why did Pete Wilson and Arlen Specter finish behind “none of the above”? I think the big tent is really a pup tent. There are only two people in it, Pete Wilson and Arlen Specter.

MS. CHENEY: It is common political practice to run right in the primaries if you're a Republican, to run left in the primaries if you're a Democrat, and move to the center for the general elections. And that's what happened at both conventions.

MR. KRISTOL: I don't think Mr. Clinton is in any sense a cultural conservative. He'll be anything he has to be to get elected. But if elected, he will try to move left, where his party is.

The Democratic Party is unified in a way that the Republican Party is not. The welfare state is the crucial institution for the Democratic Party, not the market or the economy. The welfare state is where those people at the convention get their jobs.

The Republicans are split between economic conservatives and cultural conservatives, but they shouldn't be. They should understand, as Democrats do, that the welfare state is both a cultural and economic issue. Some Republicans forget that you don't cut the budget just to balance it, but also to stop the growth of that parasitic presence on the American economy and society which influences our educational system, our religious systems, everything.

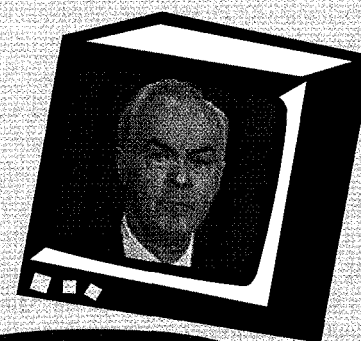
The Republican Party is going to have to meld these two forces, but I'm unclear how. It will require a completely new leadership.



MICHAEL BARONE



GARY BAUER



ROBERT P. CASEY



LYNNE CHENEY



IRVING KRISTOL

MR. BARONE: What would a Dole administration be like? Would he follow through on his economic promises? Would he make abortion, in Bill Clinton's words, "safe, legal, and rare"—although it's never safe for the child, is it?

MR. BAUER: Dole's problem is that people can't answer that question. A voter in 1980 knew that Ronald Reagan was going to try to make government smaller, lower taxes, and rebuild our defenses. The polls indicate that even on the tax issue, which has been the centerpiece of the campaign so far, there is great skepticism about whether Dole means it.

MS. CHENEY: Bob Dole is known as a man of his word. That was his entire reputation in the United States Senate.

MR. BAUER: Nobody is going to want Bob Dole and Jack Kemp in office more than you and I, but we're skirting around the issue. Why is it that the Clinton Presidency, with all its warts, enjoys anywhere from an 11- to 20-point lead?

MS. CHENEY: Part of it's the media.

MR. BAUER: Falling back on media distortion is what losers in campaigns do. Ronald Reagan had a very bad media. The Republican message during those years was profound and clear and concise enough that the American people could grasp it. I think we're fooling ourselves if we think the only reason there's a 15-point gap is because of editorials in the *Washington Post* and because Dan Rather looks cross when he mentions Bob Dole's name.

MS. CHENEY: It's much more than that. The media, for example, implies smoking cigarettes is worse than doing drugs. Give me a break. I am waiting for Bill Clinton to go on the "Today" show and be worked over on the issue of drugs as Bob Dole was worked over on the issue of tobacco.

MR. KRISTOL: It's a mistake to focus on drugs, as the Republicans have been doing, because the American people are very skeptical as to what the government can do about drugs, and I think properly skeptical. The problem of drugs is not a problem of what the President wants or

BAUER: WHILE BILL CLINTON WAS REPACKAGING HIMSELF AS A CULTURAL CONSERVATIVE, ELEMENTS OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY WERE ABSOLUTELY CONVINCED THAT THE REPUBLICAN PARTY'S PROBLEM WAS THAT IT APPEARED TO BE CULTURALLY CONSERVATIVE.

what Congress wants. It is a cultural problem, just as illegitimacy is a cultural problem, and it's not so easy for the government to intervene.

What Dole could do, which would outweigh everything else he could do in domestic policy, is appoint a couple of new Supreme Court Justices, because the Supreme Court has been a major villain in the culture wars, actually creating problems like school prayer and abortion. If he did that, I really wouldn't care whether we got a tax cut.

MR. BAUER: The Dole campaign played around with making court appointments a major issue. Bill Clinton has put a lot of fairly radical judges on the courts. Judges who are wrong about how much authority Washington ought to have also tend to be wrong on all the cultural and social issues, and so it's the easy way to bring together the two wings of the Republican Party and remind them that their interests do coincide.

MR. BARONE: What would a second Clinton administration look like? I've talked to numerous Democratic politicians, in the administration and Congress, and the response is always, "I don't know."

MS. CHENEY: It's certainly a mystery, since we don't know what the first one was like. The first two years were entirely different from the second two years.

MR. BARONE: The Hillary Rodham Clinton years and the Dick Morris years.

MS. CHENEY: Governor Casey said one

word that troubled me. He said, President Clinton has gone right. No, he talks right, or he talks centrist, but where he goes is just a complete and total mystery.

MR. BARONE: But he did sign the welfare bill.

MS. CHENEY: The President said to Dick Morris that he's worrying about his role in history.

MR. BARONE: At one point, he regretted he didn't have a big crisis like World War II to deal with. I think the rest of us are probably thankful that we don't have World War II to deal with.

MS. CHENEY: How would he become an historical President?

MR. KRISTOL: Do something unprecedented, like divorcing his wife.

MR. BARONE: Does anybody think Clinton will be a "Nixon goes to China" President on domestic issues?

MR. CASEY: I don't see it, but who knows? The reason he signed the welfare bill is because the polling data said, "sign the welfare bill." It's very simple. Tobacco must poll very high.

MR. BAUER: The chances of the Clinton presidency being historic are probably in the hands of the special Whitewater prosecutor in Little Rock, and I'm not sure that's the history that the President had in mind.

MR. BARONE: So this is not "Nixon goes to China," it's "Nixon goes to jail"?

MR. BAUER: Clinton is teaching the Democratic Party how to operate in a culturally conservative America. I assume that a second Clinton term would be liberal, but I don't believe the Republican Party will have the luxury anymore of having its opponents call themselves liberals. They'll pursue a liberal agenda while cloaking it with culturally conservative rhetoric, and so far, we haven't figured out a way to deal with that.

MR. BARONE: The welfare bill or the interracial adoption bill that Clinton endorsed and signed: Is that just tactics, or is there conviction behind that?

MR. BAUER: The hardest thing in Washington is to know the heart of a man in public life, but Clinton twice vetoed those same adoption reforms. I believe the signing of the welfare bill had to do with where the calendar was and what the nightly polling data showed.

MR. CASEY: Tactically, his embrace of adoption is a reactive strategy to appeal to the constituency who are horrified by partial-birth abortion. We're talking about the Reagan Democrats, the ethnic Democrats, the Catholic Democrats. They live in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois.

MR. KRISTOL: So much depends on advertising. Will they even mention partial-birth abortion? There will be a lot of people in the Republican leadership who say, "Talk only about taxes. Forget about that issue."

MR. CASEY: That's bad advice.

MR. KRISTOL: It's terrible advice. If they just talk about taxes, the party remains unhealed.

MR. CASEY: If we learned one thing in the primaries—Steve Forbes learned it in Iowa—there's got to be a two-track message. The people of this country are more concerned about the moral deficit than the fiscal deficit. If a candidate talks about the economic issues, that will get him part of the way home, but he had better address the cultural unease of America. Why don't we value life? Why do we have a Declaration of Independence that guarantees the right to life and yet we give the unborn child less protection than any other country in the world?

MR. BAUER: Governor Casey, if Bob Dole would say what you just said in an upcoming Presidential debate, we would be having another forum here before election day about why this race had suddenly tightened.

MS. CHENEY: Dole did say in his acceptance speech, "Those people who told you four years ago that 'It's the economy, stupid,' were condescending to you. It is not the economy that is our principal concern as a nation. It is our moral fiber."

MR. BAUER: But Lynne, it's got to be specific. That would be the equivalent of

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talking about property in the 1850s without ever mentioning slaves and whether they're property or not.

MR. KRISTOL: I want to pick up on the phrase that the governor used, about the Republican Party running on two tracks. One track is better. The Democratic Party is on one track. The Republican Party should be the party opposed to high taxes, opposed to high rates of illegitimacy. Why do you need two tracks to send out that message?

MR. CASEY: I could not disagree with you more. If you don't think Bill Clinton is running on an economic and a cultural message, you're not listening to what he's saying. He weaves these family-related issues in with economic concerns, like tuition tax credits and adoption credits. He understands better than anybody in the country what I'm talking about.

MR. BARONE: They're both trying to weave this together. Dole says, "Look, if you have my tax-cut money, it'll be easier for mom to be home when the kids get home from school."

MR. KRISTOL: When Clinton talks about the family, what does he have in mind? Not your family, not my family. *Any* kind of family. Families with two members, four members, same sex, different sex—he doesn't care.

MR. BARONE: In trying to weave economic and moral issues together, Dole and

Clinton are responding to an unease that includes liberals and conservatives. You often hear, "Our children are not going to be as well off as we are." I think there's also a fear that we are not raising our children as well as our parents raised us, that we are perhaps indulging in things for ourselves, not doing enough for the children. Clinton and Dole are suggesting that they could use government or tax cuts as a way to enable people to raise their children better. Is that just nibbling at the margins?

MS. CHENEY: Moral leadership from the top is very important. Fish rot from the head down. This notion that we can do drugs and it won't hurt—"Just do it," as the Nike ad says—is a very dismaying one, and when it comes from the father figure of the country, it's damaging.

MR. KRISTOL: When Morris resigned, the President called him to affirm his friendship. Mrs. Clinton then called to affirm her friendship. I thought, why is Mrs. Clinton calling this guy, who spent a year deceiving his wife with a prostitute? Maybe he knows things he shouldn't know. Or maybe she thought, he needs therapy and we'll have a program, spending a lot of money, to make sure that people like that don't go to a prostitute. That's the way the people at the Democratic convention would think. They would not for a moment approach it from a moral point of view.

AUDIENCE QUESTION: I expected to hear the good, the bad, and the ugly about both candidates. The references to the President are all negative. Is there anything good to be said?

MS. CHENEY: Bill Clinton is an astonishing politician. He can work a crowd better than anybody I've ever seen.

MR. KRISTOL: He also has the advantage of being a very lucky President. He's got a good economy going, for which he's entitled to claim credit as President, though in fact he has nothing to do with the strength of the economy. He has no foreign policy crises that anyone is paying attention to. This Saddam thing might even give him a little blip. Every President wants a Saddam crisis. Don't send any American troops in to get shot

at. All you do is fire missiles. What a wonderful war.

AUDIENCE QUESTION: Why is it that a male politician can dump his first wife, upgrade to a more politically attractive, newer model, and the cultural conservatives don't make that an issue?

MR. BARONE: Of the last four Republican presidential nominees, two were divorced and one was married to a divorced woman. What do you have to say to that, Gary Bauer?

MR. BAUER: Divorce is a major issue. The problem is that human beings are conducting the debate, many of whom have suffered or committed some of the problems that we're trying to deal with, and it becomes very uncomfortable for people in public life to give voice to these issues if their own life doesn't hold up under scrutiny. So what they often do in Washington is just fall silent about it.

AUDIENCE QUESTION: Isn't the divorce a blot on Dole's character?

MR. BAUER: I want to avoid critiquing individual episodes in someone's life and focus on policy. What I want Bob Dole to do is to push for divorce-law reform. People can make their own judgments about how he handled his first marriage.

AUDIENCE QUESTION: What about the differences between the two candidates on foreign policy?

MR. BARONE: If you go to Republican rallies, anytime they want a big cheer, they will denounce Boutros Boutros-Ghali and American soldiers serving under the United Nations' flag. President Clinton did not speak out in favor of having United States troops placed under the U.N. flag. In fact, the Democratic position is that this doesn't happen and we're not for it.

MR. BAUER: I don't know whether it's correct to label it isolationism, but there is a growing distaste for foreign aid and the United Nations. I'm not sure the establishment of either party is doing very much to address that. The only candidate who said much about it was Pat

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Buchanan, who often said it in ways that made it hard for people to agree with him.

MR. KRISTOL: I don't think the mood can be fairly described as isolationist. I think nationalist would be more accurate. Mr. Clinton in his second term is likely to give us a replay of Mr. Carter. His inclination seems to be to rely on diplomacy and as little as possible on truly forceful intervention. Dole, of course, does have a military background. He fought in a war. He knows that war is terrible, but he also knows sometimes it's the only way of accomplishing your mission.

Things could easily happen, particularly in the Far East or in the Middle East, where the presence of a strong President who believes in America intervening to preserve world order and a weaker President who relies solely on diplomatic tools could make a major difference.

MR. CASEY: In fairness, the President's action in Bosnia was quite courageous. He brokered that truce, and so far, it's held up.

MR. BARONE: With that endorsement of the Clinton record, we'll end this discussion.

ROUNDTABLE ON THE NEXT CONGRESS

MS. BOWMAN: Observers have suggested that this fall's congressional elections will be among the most important in the country's history. Is that just elec-

tion-year hyperbole or is there more at stake than usual?

MR. NORQUIST: For the House there is. If the Republicans maintain control, you're looking at a situation where the Republicans could keep that majority for 20 or 30 years. I think the Republicans will pick up seats this year, even if Clinton runs strong, and also in 1998, because there are a whole series of Democrats in marginal or Republican seats who are waiting to see if the Democrats are coming back into power before making a retirement decision.

MR. HITCHENS: I'm in the weird position of wanting to recommend a piece in *Commentary* by Daniel Casse (July 1996) called "Party of One." It's a study of Clinton's relationship to this Congress and the next one. What he says, and what I have every reason to think is true from conversations with members of the Clinton entourage, is that the truly emancipating moment for the Clinton Presidency came when the Democrats were destroyed in the House. That allowed him to be unbearably light, to rise clear of his party. Casse says Clinton "has learned how the Republicans can be at once a steady source of new ideas and a perfect foil." In general, he will do well when his party does least well. The counterpart probably holds true, too.

Pretend, for the moment, to be Newt Gingrich. Who do you want to be President? Obviously, you don't want a mediocre, moderate Republican. What you want is Bill Clinton. Which pleases me because it makes nonsense of the current formulaic style of bipartisanship. The difficulty in starting a third party in this country is that there are not yet two parties. This will probably be the first bipartisan election of the new style, and it will emancipate us from the idiotic donkey-elephant discourse that's dominated everything from Herblock cartoons to "Crossfire" for so long. I personally can't wait.

MR. LUNTZ: 1992 was really the first election where Republicans and Democrats didn't matter so much. We did instant response work for ABC News where we tested speech after speech at the Republican and Democratic conventions, and one of the things we found is that if you just mention the word *Republican*, approval goes down. Mention the word *Democrat*, approval goes

down. You have to be 60 years of age or older, or a member of Grover's family, to be really partisan at this point. Clinton's done a great job blurring the distinction between Republican and Democrat.

The key vote in 1996 is that Perot vote. If Republicans are successful in 1996, as they were in 1994, in demonstrating that they have something to appeal to people who aren't partisan at all—in fact, they're anti-partisan—but want their budgets balanced, their taxes reduced, and welfare reformed, there's no doubt they'll keep the majority.

MS. BOWMAN: Mike, from your perch in Virginia, do you think party labels mean a lot less than in the past?

MR. FARRIS: Definitely. When I ran for lieutenant governor three years ago, I carried heavily Democratic areas; the Ninth District of Virginia, for example, is dominated by the United Mine Workers. The people there believed in three things—God, guns, and unions—and I was right on two out of three. So you can see a chance for a basic realignment if the Republicans will realize that this is coalition politics and we have to stay true to each other.

I was on Jesse Jackson's show going opposite the United Mine Workers' president, and he started talking about the Equal Rights Amendment. Now what in the world does the Equal Rights Amendment have to do with the United Mine Workers? If you ask the average mine worker, he'll say "nothing." But the president of the UMW was smart enough to realize the ERA supporters are part of the Democratic coalition and he was going to be loyal. Some Republicans aren't smart enough to realize that.

We've got to be pro-life. We've got to be pro-gun. We've got to be pro-free enterprise. We've got to be against the United Nations taking over our troops. But when the fiscally conservative, socially liberal Republicans think that we have to move to the left, it is a move in the direction of defeat. I agree with Christopher about the need to have two parties in this country, and I think the freshmen in the Republican Party are the light of the future.

MS. BOWMAN: If party leaders are downplaying party labels, will candidates do the same thing this fall?

MR. NORQUIST: I don't know that people are running on party labels so much as they're running on the Contract with America, with the name taken out and deconstructed to the ten broad-brush issues that the entire Republican coalition did and could agree on. They passed all of them in the House.

MR. LUNTZ: Yet they made a strategic error: They passed health-care reform and welfare reform and relief for small business, all at the same time, and no one heard anything. Bill Clinton picks an issue, like school uniforms, and stays on it for two weeks, then jumps on the tobacco issue and stays on it for two weeks. The Republicans go from issue to issue, and then wonder why no one knows what they've done.

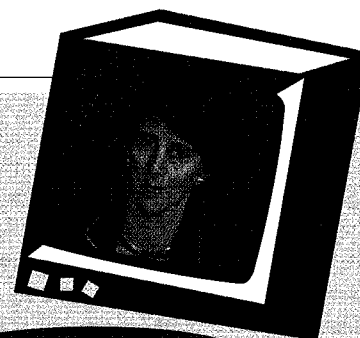
MS. BOWMAN: Christopher, does the Republicans' current slump come from the packaging, or what someone called the radical nature of the reforms?

MR. HITCHENS: It's probably to do with credibility. People may say, "I agree with what you say, but I don't think you believe it yourself." The Republican Party has to suffer from that because there is self-evidently an absolute want of conviction in its leadership.

I invented a heartless game in San Diego, which was to stop delegates at random in elevators and men's rooms—hoping not to have my intentions misunderstood—and say, "If Jack Kemp were the nominee"—and the delegate's smile would stay pasted on at this point, because Kemp was an upbeat name—"do you think he would pick Bob Dole as his running mate?" The smile disappeared. I didn't get anyone to say yes.

I also think we haven't properly estimated the impact of the oncoming millennium. It's almost un-American to pick for the millennium someone who is older now than Ronald Reagan was when he first ran. I've read that the older people are, the more suspicious they are of people of their own vintage. They know how crumbly the situation can get.

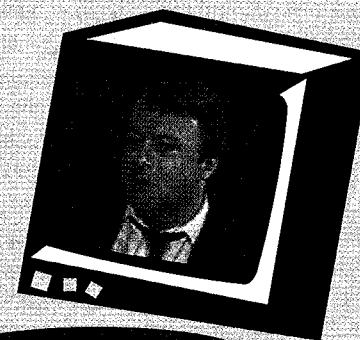
MR. LUNTZ: Bob Dole made his biggest gains in the post-convention bounce among the 18- to 34-year-olds and the next most among 35- to 49-year-olds.



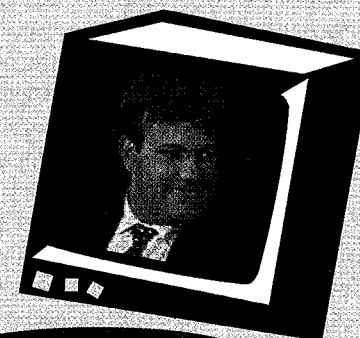
KARLYN H. BOWMAN



MICHAEL FARRIS



CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS



FRANK LUNTZ



GROVER NORQUIST

MR. NORQUIST: People who became 21 years of age between 1930 and 1950—a period of Democratic dominance, when big government and big unions and big business fought big wars and did big things—thought of themselves much more in terms of large institutions. They are now 66 to 86 years old, and so that's a more Democratic age group.

They are less likely to share Kemp's way of looking at a dynamic economy, where there are now more self-employed businessmen and women in this country than there are labor-union members. That's not what somebody who came of age in 1935 thought the world would look like.

MR. FARRIS: The older Republicans who have been around here for a long time are relatively devoid of conviction compared to the younger people in the party. The new crop absolutely believe what they say, and the difference between their beliefs and the Democrats' is stark.

MS. BOWMAN: If party labels are a lot less important, what cleavages are going to be important? Gender? Age? Class?

MR. LUNTZ: You've got a generation out there that is far more likely to believe in the existence of UFOs than to believe that Social Security will exist when they retire. The Generation X-ers have grown up believing that government just doesn't work, that it's a hindrance, not a help, and that is very different from the older baby boomers and the FDR generation. So you will see more divisions by age.

And you will also see a gender gap, which is far greater among younger voters. The unmarried professional woman has nothing in common politically with the unmarried professional man. They are at opposite ends of the political spectrum, and it takes until they get together and have that first child before you start to see a unity of political ideas.

MS. BOWMAN: Pat Buchanan talked a lot about class differences in his campaign. Do you see class cleavages?

MR. LUNTZ: No.

MR. HITCHENS: You know the old story about the Rhodes scholar, the American, who meets his Oxford profes-

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**LUNTZ: YES. EVEN
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**NORQUIST: I THINK
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sor years later at a conference and the professor says, "Nice to see you again. What have you been doing?" And the American says, "I've been doing a thesis on the survival of the class system in the United States." And the Oxford professor says, "Oh, frightfully interesting. I didn't think they had a class system in the United States." The guy says, "Well, no, nobody does. That's how it survives."

I'm amazed that you can offer a member of the House or the Senate a common-law bribe. It's increasingly a profession attracting either those who have money or those who want to speak the language—very easy to learn—of those who have got it. I think there will and should be a populist revolt against that. I hope it will not be led by fascists.

MR. FARRIS: Within the Republican Party, there's a definite class system, and there is a distrust of people who come to the party for the purpose of advancing social conservatism. The John Warners simply have got to understand that people who don't own polo ponies have the right to be leaders in the Republican Party.

MR. NORQUIST: I think the Republican Party today is much more unified and ideologically coherent than it was 20 years ago. When you go back to the time of Richard Nixon in 1968-72, there were Republican governors who viewed their role as to spend more money and raise taxes. Not just Rockefeller Republicans—Richard Nixon himself introduced all sorts of new taxes, regulations, wage and

price controls, detente. If Richard Nixon came back to life today and were a member of the House of Representatives as a Republican, he'd be the most left-wing member of the Republican Caucus. Jim Leach wouldn't talk to him.

We got a majority of the Republicans in the House to be Reagan Republicans by 1984. It took until 1994 to have a Reagan majority among Senate Republicans. This next election, the big gain will be among Reagan Republicans, because the people who are retiring are the old Nixon Republicans. But look at the Republican Party. Where you have a debate is on abortion, but when a left-wing Republican wants to cut the budget, deregulate, sell off everything, privatize, and is pro-choice on abortion, that's not a party that's falling apart. Growing parties will always have some divisions.

MR. FARRIS: A lot of us have as secondary or tertiary points of our philosophy the issues you outlined. But I wouldn't go to war over any of those things. I want to get rid of the National Endowment for the Arts. I want to see the U.S. Department of Education eliminated. I want to see some advancement on the pro-life cause. But the Contract with America is devoid of anything meaningful that will get the social conservatives activated, and they're starting to look at things like the U.S. Taxpayers Party, at Howard Phillips and others. We've got a real rebellion on our hands.

MR. HITCHENS: Michael, how do you come out on NAFTA, GATT, and the World Trade Organization?

MR. FARRIS: I'm against all of them. I'm also Michael New's lawyer, the soldier who refuses to fight for the United Nations.

MR. HITCHENS: As I understand the Gingrichian view, it's a free-market and free-trade one, and that seems to me an interesting and important split between the Gingrichian and the Buchananite views, though on social views there's not much discrepancy.

MR. LUNTZ: 1994 happened because the Perot-style Republican voted for the same candidate as the Christian Coalition-style Republican, who voted for the same candidate as the moderate establish-

ment Republican. I'm afraid that even though you talk unity, you're seeking to pull this coalition apart. There has to be room in the Republican Party for Ralph Reed and John Warner. The Democrats won in the '50s and the '60s because the segregationists and the integrationists voted for the same candidates, because on other issues they agreed. Are you backing John Warner now?

MR. FARRIS: I am. Because I took an oath as a Republican activist to support my party. My complaint is we don't deliver on our promises to the social conservatives. They make speeches about the National Endowment for the Arts. They don't deliver. They make speeches on the Department of Education. They don't deliver. They make speeches about party unity, and when a social conservative wins the nomination, they trounce him.

MR. HITCHENS: I think you're wrong in saying that your first duty is to support your own party. We wouldn't have Bill Clinton as President if it weren't for Democrats for Nixon in 1972, which, incidentally, was a group mainly out of the Texas Democratic Party (for which Clinton was then working), who, having defeated McGovern, became the Democratic Leadership Council, which gave rise to the lesser evilism that we all enjoy today.

MS. BOWMAN: Irving Kristol said Clinton would move sharply left if re-elected. Do you agree?

MR. HITCHENS: At least since that experience in Texas in 1972, Mr. Clinton has been self-consciously moving himself, and hoping to move the country, to the right and has done so in ways that no Republican leader could have hoped to do. Murray Kempton and I were having a conversation in San Diego. He said, "You know, the Democratic Party used to be a bunch of pretty tough-minded white Southerners who were appealing to the loyalties and the emotions of Catholics and Jews and who knew how to keep the blacks more or less in their place."

"They've lost all that completely," said Murray, with a slight note of regret in his voice, "but look how the Republicans are masterfully reproducing the idea of a

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party run by tough-minded white Southerners that successfully appeals to the aspirations and emotions of at least native-born Catholics." They fall down on immigrant ones a bit. Whereas at the Democratic convention, if it weren't for the welfare-type delegates and the moral energies—as they see it—of the pro-choice forces, it would be very hard to think of what really got them going.

MS. BOWMAN: Do you see significant Democratic schisms: the Gore versus Gephardt wings, for example?

MR. NORQUIST: I don't think it's in terms of their core constituency that they've got a disagreement. You've got the big-city machines. Trial lawyers. Labor unions. Government workers. Both wings of the dependency movement: the people who are locked into welfare and the people who make \$80,000 a year making sure everybody stays locked into dependency and doesn't escape and become a Republican.

The problem they have is if the Republicans are able to say, "no more money," then everybody in that group who makes a living off the taxpayer starts to look at everybody else as lunch. That's why the Democrats were willing to throw welfare over the side: They were defending all of the other spending interests.

In the last two years, Clinton's model has been Richard Nixon in the early '70s. Nixon moved to the left and absorbed much of the Democratic Party's agenda, undermining the Republicans, and a sec-

ond Clinton term would look a lot like a second Nixon term, largely because he has the same problems Nixon had in terms of what subpoenas and indictments can do to everybody standing near you.

MS. BOWMAN: And a second Clinton term with a Democratic Congress—what would that look like?

MR. NORQUIST: Then he'd lurch to the left, because the party has lost its moderate and conservative wings. There isn't a single conservative House Democrat.

MR. LUNTZ: Can you imagine what would happen if Clinton got elected with a Democratic House and Democratic Senate? The people who would stand up and claim the greatest victory would be the very people who have the least power right now: organized labor. They really have dug deep into their treasuries: This is betting on 36 red in roulette. Unlike the Democratic Party, who just say they're going to target 50 people and then don't do the media buy, when someone from the AFL-CIO says that they've targeted one of my clients, I know there'll be hundreds of thousands of dollars of ads. If they take the majority, labor will, with some legitimacy, be able to say, "We delivered it to you. You owe us."

MS. BOWMAN: What do you think their agenda would be?

MR. LUNTZ: First, to undo everything that's been done over the last two years. Probably to arrest and court-martial Newt Gingrich.

MS. BOWMAN: If Clinton is president and the Congress Republican, will they fix Medicare?

MR. LUNTZ: Yes. Even Bill Clinton's got at least that much integrity.

MR. NORQUIST: I don't think he has that much integrity, and I do think he would allow a train wreck, all the time arguing that somebody else was responsible.

MR. FARRIS: I'm a friend of Mike Huckabee, the governor of Arkansas. Mike has known Clinton from his youth and insists he really isn't interested in politics. He just

wanted to be famous. He would have been equally happy to have been Elvis.

MR. HITCHENS: I was at Oxford with the President. I can tell you about the inhaling thing. It was because the President's allergic to smoke, but fortunately, marijuana could be baked into cookies, for which he's always had a pronounced fondness. The technical truth of that lawyerly lie has never ceased to fascinate me.

His image of the millennium is of an America that's practically ideologically neutral, where politics is only management. There is no chance at all that he'll move to the left, and I may say, there's no chance whatever he'll be pushed there by the AFL-CIO. They can spend all the money they like on him and he can still tell them at will, as he has in the past, where else are you thinking of going if I tell you to get lost?

AUDIENCE QUESTION: How many freshman Republicans will lose their seats?

MR. LUNTZ: My guess would be that about half-a-dozen of those seats that were won in 1994 were won because of the wave and may be given back. But most freshmen will win because this class has worked harder than any in modern congressional history. It's not been good on their family life. A few families have come apart. But they are prepared to do what it takes to get to know their constituents.

MS. BOWMAN: Let's talk about the potency of issues: term limits, gay marriage, partial-birth abortion.

MR. NORQUIST: The Republicans came in, delivered the Republican vote for term limits in the House but didn't have the two-thirds necessary for the constitutional amendment. Some term-limit advocates have said, "Oh no, we didn't get everything we wanted." If you look at what the Republicans did in the House the first day, and then in the Senate, they term-limited committee chairmen. Speaker Gingrich is term-limited to eight years. Every committee chairman is term-limited to six.

That's turned the people who would be opponents of change into radicals. Bill Archer, for instance, now the head of the Ways and Means Committee, immediately walks in and says, "Let's get rid of the IRS

and go to a sales tax." The other side of term limits is that now there are 2,000 state legislators in the country who are term-limited, and so every six and eight years, you're turning out competent, well-funded, well-known state senators and representatives who can become serious challengers to the incumbents of either party.

MR. HITCHENS: On the partial-birth question, the irony for the pro-choice people—most of whom are secular and consider themselves scientific—is that it's precisely the advance of medical science, and in particular embryology, that has re-defined the viability of an unborn child, earlier and earlier. Probably the sonogram has done the most to recruit support for the pro-life cause.

MR. LUNTZ: One issue that's not going to hit this year but it's bubbling underneath and it's going to explode is education. Americans are disgusted with the shape of public schools. Every time a Republican or a Democrat talked about it at either convention, the reaction was more positive than anything else except eliminating the IRS.

MS. BOWMAN: But do people think of it as a federal issue?

MR. LUNTZ: That's the challenge. It will be very hard for Republicans to deal with because it's a state and local issue, and very hard for the Democrats to deal with because they're in the pocket of the teachers' unions.

MR. HITCHENS: Clinton began to attract the attention of the DLC types by taking on the teachers' union in his home state. This is an issue on which he's probably quite maneuverable.

MR. LUNTZ: When they hear about teachers' unions, Americans hear the word *teacher*. They don't hear the word *union*. It's the one union in America that Americans still feel even remotely positively towards.

MR. FARRIS: You have to explain to Americans that only so many people can make a decision about a child, and if they want their child to have a person who loves them and cares about their making the decisions, as opposed to some remote

bureaucrat, getting rid of the Department of Education puts the decision-making back in that teacher's hands and in the school board's hands and in the parents' hands. There's also the related issue of parents' rights. That will be on the ballot in Colorado. It's a case of the villagers versus the parents.

AUDIENCE QUESTION: Republicans are using the President in TV ads, and Democrats are using the Speaker in TV ads. How's that working?

MR. LUNTZ: People still feel that their member of Congress is local. Newt Gingrich is a distant figure. He's something in Washington. So the strategy is flawed. I don't blame them for using it, because we tried it ourselves. It's one thing to use it against the President in 1994, because he is the President of the United States. It does not work as well when it is a Speaker of the House.

MR. HITCHENS: It used to be speculated in the Reagan-Bush years that there was cognitive dissonance among the electorate in that they would like to have a president who was tough on the communists and strong on national security, and then when it came to the House and Senate, they wanted to make sure that there were fuzzy Democrats who would keep the checks coming. Could it be that this is now being inverted?

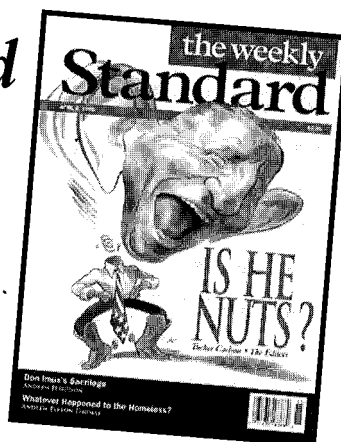
MR. LUNTZ: I don't see any intensity for Bill Clinton. Even his own voters sit there and talk about why they don't like him. The intensity for the Republicans that existed in 1994 is not there because people say, "Been there, done that." The frustration among those people in the middle, the Perot types, has actually increased. Whereas they turned out in 1992 and 1994, I don't think you're going to have that same level of turnout in 1996.

MR. HITCHENS: A woman held up a banner saying "Republicans for Clinton" the other day at his rally. I don't know whether she was a plant or not, but if she wasn't, she is not the harbinger of anything as far as one can see. There are no Clinton Republicans.

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Two Cheers for the Suburbs

By Allan Carlson

It's always tempting to knock the suburbs: I have done it, at times, myself. Yes, they tend to be numbingly repetitive and stylistically incongruous. Sure, they gobble up good farmland and have depended on oceans of cheap gasoline and rivers of asphalt for their survival. And obviously, they lack the rootedness of farms, the identity of villages, and the ethnic links, extended families, and neighborhood pubs of the urban immigrant ghettos.

Yet for all that, about 55 percent of Americans now live in suburbs or suburb-like environments, up from 20 percent a half-century ago, a shift in preference that must be labeled revolutionary. Federal tax, housing, and transportation policies had something to do with this remarkable change. So did propaganda mills such as Henry Luce's Time-Life empire, which cast the suburbs as the locus of the "New America," superseding old ethnic and regional loyalties. Even the Cold War ethos embraced suburbia; as Bill Levitt, of Levittown fame, once explained: "No man who owns his own house and lot can be a communist. He has too much to do."

At the same time, though, something more fundamental, and more human, has been at work. In G.K. Chesterton's 1910 tract, *What's Wrong with the World*, the English journalist observed: "As every normal man desires a woman, and children born of a woman, every normal man desires a house of his own to put them in." Chesterton emphasized that this normal man "does not desire a flat" nor a semi-detached house, with walls necessarily shared with others. Instinctively, he wants "a separate house," on its own piece of ground, built with the "idea of earthly contact and foundation, as well as [the] idea of separation and independence." This normal man wants, as well, an "objective and visible kingdom; a fire at which he can cook what food he likes; a door he can open to what friends he chooses."

Viewed charitably, the American suburbs represent an unrivaled fulfillment of these instinctive dreams. A nation of renters in 1940—when only 44 percent of housing was owner-occupied—became a nation dominated by home-owners, who now inhabit 64 percent of all housing. For the first time since in-

dustrialism fundamentally transformed American work and living patterns, the homeowner has again become the authentic American. Land and housing have been widely distributed, and the opportunities for family formation advanced. Even average newly married couples can enjoy the illusion of ownership, and the reality of equity. These are changes for the good.

For nearly two decades, family life in America responded to the home-owning revolution with an astonishing vitality. Between 1946 and 1964, the proportion of persons ages 20 to 40 who were married reached an historic high, the divorce rate declined, and the marital birth rate climbed sharply. For the first time since 1840, American families appeared to be growing stronger, rather than weaker—changes closely bound to the new suburban life.

True, not only cities but farms as well were emptying, with the suburbs drawing folk from all locales. While the movement from city-to-suburb represented an attempt to regain some attachment to the land, the movement from farm-to-suburb derived from the rapid automation of farming during and after World War II, as ever larger tractors and combines made human laborers superfluous. Without legal restraints on farm technology—no tractors larger than 10 horsepower, say—which were never contemplated here, and an end to federal transportation subsidies that favored national over local agricultural markets, also not considered in this century, the process became inexorable. Still, the suburbs allowed these agrarian refugees to find a residual attachment to land and place.

Those moving to the suburbs from the cities came for other reasons, and they were normally satisfied with the results. Some fled mounting urban crime. Crime rates are highest in large cities and lowest in rural areas, with the suburbs falling in between. Others came for better schools. While cause and effect might be disputed, the public education statistics do show suburban schools to be—on average—the best performing. This has been due, at least in part, to the responsiveness of these schools to parental expectations, rooted in turn in the smaller size of many suburban school districts. Indeed, in an age primarily given over



Illustrations by Laurie Hamilton