

inflation, the spiral is perceptibly weakening. Indeed, with a speed that has shocked most observers, notably those in Washington, D.C., who are usually the last to know, the decline in business activity has begun to leave its mark on wages and prices alike.

Layoffs, of course, are mounting apace, and the rise in unemployment already has begun to blunt labor's demands. In Buffalo, for example, Plasterers and Lathers locals have agreed to a one-year wage freeze. Pilots working for troubled Pan American World Airways have accepted an 11 percent, one-year reduction in wages. In order to save the jobs of 100 colleagues or so, editorial and business employees of the *Washington Star-News* recently voted 347-44 to go on a four-day work week at a 20 percent cut in pay. Even more striking, members of the militant unions which deal with the City of New York, faced by the prospect of widespread layoffs for the first time

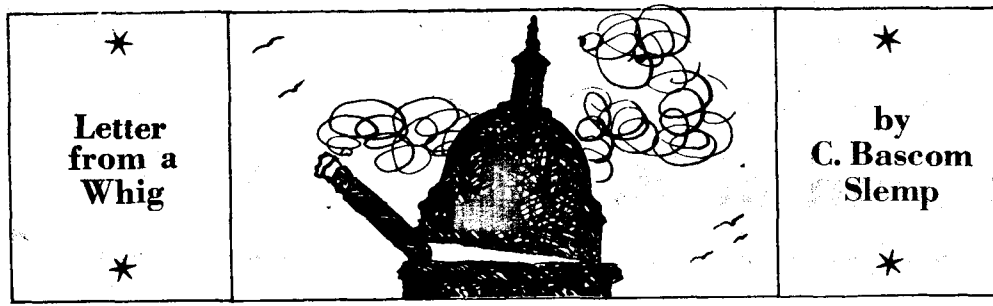
since the Great Depression, are weighing the acceptance of pay cuts.

As to prices, softening is visible across-the-board. Even the official Wholesale Price Index, artificially ballooned (as noted above) by a wave of list price hikes, in November showed a decline in its rate of annual increase from well over 20 percent to 14 percent. Official statistics aside, quotations for copper, waste paper, steel scrap, and a host of other industrial commodities have declined lately. Even farm products and foods, where inflation has run rampant, have begun to ease. From a peak of 430 in mid-November, the Dow Jones Commodity Futures Index by year-end had plunged to 350.

Just a few weeks ago, the Council on Wage and Price Stability held two-day hearings on the unprecedented surge in the price of sugar; since then, sugar has declined sharply at the commodity,

wholesale, and retail levels alike. While the U.S. Department of Agriculture predicts further rises in food prices next year, it's significant that a number of leading supermarket chains, including Kroger and Great Atlantic & Pacific, have decreed price freezes of their own in coming months. What that suggests is that some of the shrewdest merchants in the world are convinced that prices are more likely to decline than to rise. And according to *Women's Wear Daily*, which ought to know, dress houses are trimming prices as much as 20 percent for spring. "Paving the way for the decreases are lower prices of fabrics, reflecting drops at the fiber and yarn level, as well as distress selling by mills."

The workings of the marketplace, in sum, may write finis to demands for wage and price controls. If so, one can only say, along with Shakespeare, "Sweet are the uses of adversity...." □



A Vanishing Species

(Washington)—According to a recent press report GOP Mayor Jack Hunter of Youngstown, Ohio, asked his congressman, Democrat Charles J. Carney, to introduce legislation adding Republican office holders to the list of endangered species.

After the November elections it is going to take more than a citation on an endangered species list to save the Grand Old Party.

The foreboding prophecies which political pundits cast for the Republicans turned out to be well-founded, as the Democrats recorded a net gain of some forty-three seats in the House, three in the Senate, and five in the Governors' mansions.

Initial election returns revealed further that Republicans were saved from losing seven additional congressional seats in four states by less than 5,000 votes.

With a voting age population of approximately 145,000,000 and a turnout of only about 53,000,000 (roughly 38 percent) voter apathy was clearly rampant. In the last off-year elections approximately 48 per cent of the voting population had voted.

Preliminary figures from the Republican National Committee revealed that

about 23,000,000 Republicans voted (16 percent of the voting age population), and 30,000,000 Democrats (21 percent of the voting age population). Voter figures for the Congressional races alone were even lower than for the Senate and gubernatorial races. Approximately 43,000,000 Americans voted in the Congressional races, or about 30 percent.

It has been speculated that the GOP was particularly hurt because it was the Republican voters (who normally come out to vote in droves) who stayed home, but the RNC has yet to analyze sample precincts to see whether in fact this was the case.

Even without Watergate and the dismal state of the economy political statists and commentators would have expected the GOP to lose Congressional seats—political wisdom holds that the party in the White House will lose substantially in a midterm election. But 1974 was no more a normal political year than was 1972.

Despite the Nixon landslide in 1972 there had been no coattail effect for the Republicans. The GOP picked up only twelve seats in the House and, in fact, even lost two Senate seats. In the recent elections, then, the GOP did not lose

what are normally considered marginal seats. Instead, the Democrats made strong inroads into traditional Republican districts.

The Democratic win was a clear across-the-boards victory; it included victories in every region of the country (reversing the Republican gains in the South in recent years). Particularly damaging for the GOP was the loss of fifteen seats in the Republican Midwest (Indiana, once the Heartland for the Iron Guard, alone lost five Republican Congressmen) and the loss of nine seats in the South, where the GOP had been making inroads since 1952.

Democratic gains also included an expansion upon the old New Deal coalition (low-income, blue-collar, Catholics, blacks, and ethnics). The Democrats now won in rural areas as well as the wealthy suburbs, a traditional GOP stronghold.

Not too surprising, but perhaps of far reaching consequences, some 64 percent of the votes by those younger than thirty-four went to Democratic candidates.

The new party line-ups in Congress give the Democrats 291 seats in the House (slightly over the two-thirds figure needed for a veto) as compared with 144 Republicans. In the Senate there are 61 Democrats (six votes short of a two-thirds majority) and 39 Republicans.

While American parliamentarians have traditionally voted less on straight party lines than their European counterparts, there can be no doubt that the Ninety-fourth Congress will experience a shift to the Left. If Democrats outnumber Republicans by two to one, liberals will probably outnumber conservatives (including Louisiana Democrat Joe Waggoner's Conservative Southern Caucus) by nearly three to one.

Liberal Democrats, under the influence

of the Democrat Study Group, have been wresting control of their party in Congress away from the Southern conservatives. A power struggle on the Republican side of the aisle has also been underway. Under the guidance of Rep. John Anderson (Ill.) liberal Republicans sent out trial balloons challenging the more conservative Republican leadership.

Columnists Evans and Novak, who are well known for writing planted columns, spoke of the devastating defeat suffered by "stone age" Republicans, and the new found strength of the "courageous feisty moderate" Republicans.

As part of a power play Anderson staffers charged that the conservative House Republican Steering Committee had lost thirty of its seventy members. However, while there can be no doubt that important conservative losses resulted from the election, including Republican Steering Committee Chairman Lamar Baker (Tenn.), as well as three Vice Chairmen (Blackburn, Ga.; Dennis, Ind.; and Huber, Mich.), the

losses for the Steering Committee are approximately equal to those for the GOP as a whole.

In fact, of the ninety-five Steering Committee members sixteen lost their reelection bids, and six retired. Furthermore, of the seventeen newly elected GOP House members at least six are expected to become dues-paying members of the Steering Committee.

In response to the sniping from the Republican Left, and the widespread press coverage their charges received, Ed Feulner, the Executive Director of the Steering Committee dashed off his own clarifying memo, and was able to halt any erosion in the Committee's ranks. The 1974 election, as Feulner stated, was a defeat for Republicans, and since conservatives are the Republican mainstream they had their share of the losses; but the GOP defeat was not a defeat for conservative Republicans only.

While Democrats seek to build on the substantial political advantages they accrued in the elections the Republicans are faced with rebuilding their own party.

Many GOP conservatives believe that their party can no longer merely shadow the goals of the Democratic Party, but instead must establish clear-cut alternatives. If the GOP fails many leading conservatives see a third party move as imminent (despite Reagan's personal disavowal).

Sen. Jim Buckley, M. Stanton Evans, Howard Phillips, and other leading conservatives are calling on the GOP to embrace conservative principles. The American Conservative Union and Young Americans for Freedom are co-sponsoring a political action conference to be held in Washington in February, and this promises to bring more leading conservatives to the Federal enclave than the city has experienced in recent years.

The political future promises to be interesting. If the problems before the nation were not so serious the extravaganzas about to unfold could make an enjoyable tragicomedy, for neither the Democratic nor the Republican Party received a vote of much confidence from the American electorate. □

Book Review/William Kristol

A Man of Honor

William Buckley's *United Nations Journal* is a depressing book. Buckley effectively portrays, with grace and wit, shunning harsh polemics or apocalyptic predictions, this organization characterized by stultifying hypocrisy, shameless irresponsibility, and moral cowardice, and made more disheartening and repulsive by the fact that its character results entirely from the freely-chosen words and actions of its members.

Yet it is not the UN itself that is so depressing. After all, one would have to hold a preposterously high opinion of the various rulers of mankind to be surprised by their performance in the UN; to be surprised, for example, that "while as a legislative body it is useless, and while as a debating body it is invaluable, it does a great deal of legislating and absolutely no debating"; or to be surprised by the hypocrisy Buckley identifies as the UN's salient characteristic. What is most depressing about Buckley's book is his suggestion of the extent to which U.S. participation in and support of the UN serve to corrupt us. We accommodate ourselves to the UN, for example, by refusing even to raise the issue of the exclusion of Israel from UNESCO, a blatant violation of the UN charter, because we do not have the votes. We debase our public discourse by obeying the UN convention simply to ignore Soviet infractions of the stated ideals of the organization, and "not merely against those ideals that are tucked away

in the old idealisms of the venerable documents of the very early years. But to ignore those that are being hotly debated at the very moment." This disregard, according to Buckley, "becomes something in which everyone is automatically trained; even as, say, altogether spontaneous conversation deploring drunkenness will take place in households in which a principal is an alcoholic; after a while, nobody notices."

Buckley does not call for a liberal

moderation, or worse, a perverse combination of both.

The kind of stance Buckley suggests is difficult to find and hold; moralistic commitment or what Buckley calls "moral evasion" are easier positions for nations to maintain. These days, the moralistic commitment seems to be all on the side of the terrorists; while moral evasion seems to be increasingly the stance of the nations of the free world, whose abstaining votes in the UN are only one manifestation of their policy or lack of it. In the debate on the exclusion of South Africa, only Baroody of Saudi Arabia had the courage to point out a simple truth: "I want also to draw the attention of my colleagues, regardless of whether they come from Africa, Asia, or from anywhere else, to another point. Unfortunately, there are many governments that are not representative of their people. In every-day jargon we call them dictatorships. I am not going to mention names—God help me if I were to. I believe there are about three or four dozen of them...." (There are about ten dozen of them.) This instance of utterly shocking candor at the UN could only be said by a comic figure like Baroody.

The "genuine outrage" felt by Buckley and others at the baseness and hypocrisy of the UN may not be the best guide for the making of foreign policy; but such outrage cannot and should not be ignored, for it is justified, and represents at least in part our attachment to a notion

United Nations Journal: A Delegate's Odyssey

by William F. Buckley, Jr.
Putnam \$7.95

democratic crusade to free the world, nor for a liberal democratic absolutist stance vis-a-vis the rest of the world. He does suggest that it is not inconsistent for the United States to negotiate constructively with the Soviets on several matters while at the same time maintaining in public debates on questions of human rights "a dogged position seeking to reaffirm the ideals of the United Nations." This sound advice has usually been neglected either in favor of moralistic crusading or mere accom-