



# Body Counts

by Grover G. Norquist

**T**he long-predicted partisan realignment has finally come to pass, and Washington is in a state of shock and disbelief. The Democrats' grip on America was broken on Election Tuesday, and the damage inflicted on their party's infrastructure was immense. The GOP gained strength in every region of the nation: Republicans won a net increase of at least 52 seats in the House of Representatives, giving the GOP a 230-203 advantage—a majority for the first time in forty years. The party also gained eight Senate seats on election day; after Alabama's Richard Shelby switched parties, Republicans controlled a 53-47 Senate majority.

The overthrow also touched state houses nationwide. Republicans gained eleven governorships and now hold a 30-18 majority of state executives (with one undecided and one independent), their first majority since 1969. Republicans gained 472 state legislative seats; they took over eighteen state legislative chambers, and now control fifty—three more than the Democrats. Prior to November 8, seventeen states had been under complete Democratic control: a Democratic governor and control of both houses of the state legislature. Only three states had full Republican control. Now only eight states are completely controlled by Democrats, while fifteen are completely controlled by the GOP.

One drastic result of the mid-term elections is a massive loss of Democratic political jobs, estimated nationwide at anywhere between 30,000 and 70,000 positions. The loss of fifty-two House members, each with the authority to hire twenty-two congressional staff, means up to 1,144 jobs will be lost to begin with. Republicans have promised to cut House staff by more than a third, and because Democrats have

understaffed the Republicans over the years, all of these cuts will come from the Democratic side—meaning the loss of another 1,400 jobs. All patronage jobs in the Capitol, such as elevator operators who manually run the automatic elevators, may be eliminated or given to Republicans. That's another several thousand jobs. On the Senate side, another 1,000 Democrats will lose staff and committee positions.

Defeats at the state level will spell Democratic job losses across America. Mario Cuomo's loss of the governorship of New York alone will cost Democrats more than 12,000 patronage jobs—some estimates suggest two and three times this number. In New Mexico the new Republican governor can replace 1,250 Democratic appointments; in Wyoming his counterpart has about 1,000 appointments available. If the 472 state legislators defeated by Republicans have only one staffer each, 1,000 Democrats will be looking for work from those defeats. And the eighteen state chambers taken over by Republicans will replace Democrat committee staff with Republicans: another 1,000 jobs.

The mid-term election also resulted in a tremendous destruction of human capital; knowledge of who's who in the Democratic Party is no longer commercially viable. Dozens of Washington careers have depended on the ability of lobbyists to get their calls returned by key staffers for Speaker of the House Tom Foley, Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dan Rostenkowski, Senate Judiciary Chairman Joe Biden, as well as other committee chairmen. Reporters at CBS, NBC, ABC, and other establishment media outlets know only one-half of Washington—the Democratic half no longer in power.

Defeated congressmen, state legislators, and their former staffers, meanwhile, cannot simply jump into corporate lobbying

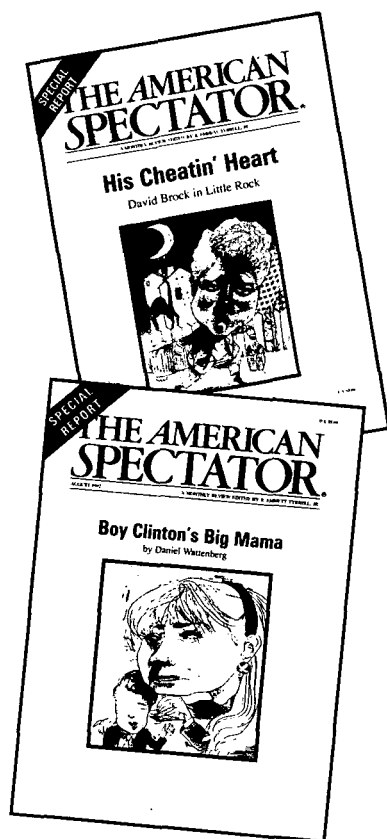
jobs and trade associations. The nation's 22,000 lobbying groups now need Republicans. Fortune 500 firms, many of which have almost exclusively hired former Democratic staffers as lobbyists, will now find it behooves them to have Republicans comprise at least 50 percent of their Washington offices. This will cost Democrats more jobs than the loss of Congress itself. More subtle shifts will take place in the media, where one can detect that the *Washington Times*, the conservative Washington paper, now has better sources and access to power than the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*.

**T**his massive victory was won by the Republican Party. Some dismissed the Republican sweep of the Senate in 1980 as a personal victory for Ronald Reagan. But in 1994, Reagan's ideas and a party that embodied them—at all levels of government and in all regions of the country—won on policy, not personality.

Dick Arney (R-Tex.), unopposed to become majority leader of the 104th Congress, argues that there are two central reasons this election was "a strenuous reaffirmation of the Reagan revolution." First, the debate over health care exposed the unrelenting left-wing ideology of the Clinton administration, and turned the 1994 electorate more anti-government than 1992 voters had been. A Fabrizio McLaughlin and Associates exit poll found that conservatives outnumbered liberals in the electorate by a margin of 44 to 16 percent. Exit polling by Frank Luntz and Company, commissioned by the Progress and Freedom Foundation, found that 73 percent of voters believed "the federal government is much too large and has too much power." Only five percent felt the government was too small. Of those who indicated that government was too large, 33 percent thought it should be cut in half. →

*Grover G. Norquist is the president of Americans for Tax Reform.*

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Asked if they believed the federal government was "more of a partner or more of an opponent in your pursuit of the American dream," 59 percent of Americans said opponent and only 32 percent, partner. Fifty-six percent agreed that "the government has limited [their] rights or threatened [their] basic beliefs." A majority could "foresee a time in the near future" when they would have to disobey the law to protect their constitutional rights.

The second catalyst for the Republican victory, Armev says, was the Contract With America. The contract, which listed ten major pieces of legislation that Republicans committed to bring up for an open vote within the first hundred days of the 104th Congress, was signed by almost every Republican running for the House of Representatives. Democrats attacked the contract, but could not do so without admitting that Republicans had a political agenda they wanted to share with America, while the Democrats and the Clinton White House did not.

The contract itself was made up of ten proposals, such as term limits and a balanced-budget amendment, each of which has more than 70 percent support among the American people. Republican tacticians were particularly delighted that Democrats spent \$2 million attacking the contract, money thus not available to be spent elsewhere.

Some Republican strategists have made an analogy with Gettysburg to explain how the contract worked with voters. The contract, they say, allowed the Republicans to take the high ground, forcing the Democrats to come to them at their best possible defensive position. Republican candidates were trained to take hard questions about the contract; only the weakest and least capable buckled.

Democratic advisers James Carville and Stan Greenberg urged Clinton to invite comparison with Reagan and the 1980s—a comparison he could not withstand successfully. Carville and Greenberg seem to have learned nothing from this tactic's failure in the 1993 New Jersey gubernatorial race, in which tax-hiker Jim Florio was defeated by tax-cutter Christine Todd Whitman.

**B**ill Paxon (R-N.Y.), chairman of the National Republican Campaign Committee, points to another factor in the Republican win: the unprecedented decision by the Republican leadership to

make a congressman's support for other Republican candidates a factor in committee assignments and intra-party promotion.

One hundred twenty-two of 178 Republican House members participated in a drive to raise \$3 million dollars for the NRCC campaign war chest and \$3 million for Republican challengers. Amo Houghton (R-N.Y.) and Bill Archer (R-Tex.) reportedly raised \$500,000 each. Tom Bliley (R-Vir.), John Boehner (R-Ohio), and the three candidates for Republican whip, Tom Delay of Texas, Bob Walker of Pennsylvania, and Bill McCollum of Florida, not only raised money for other candidates but traveled widely. McCollum helped bankroll a \$35,000 independent expenditure against Tom Foley. Jennifer Dunn, a freshman from the state of Washington, was a leader in this effort.

Republican governors William Weld, John Engler, Tommy Thompson, and Christine Todd Whitman helped Republican candidates in New York, Connecticut, and Maryland by sending letters endorsing their tax cut proposals, giving greater credibility to GOP challengers and their tax cut platforms. In 1993, Whitman was the first recipient of similar backing from Republican governors—help provided across state borders within the party.

Yet another factor in the rout was the strong support of the entire GOP coalition. Polling showed that the two groups most likely to vote were households with more than one gun in the home and evangelical Christians. The National Rifle Association, Gun Owners of America, and the Christian Coalition worked hard to get out their voters. Their efforts were energized by the Clinton administration's determination to threaten gun owners and denigrate Christians. Opposition to gun control was a key factor in defeating Tom Foley and Jack Brooks, and in winning the Senate seats in Oklahoma and Pennsylvania. All told, the NRA endorsed 276 House and Senate candidates, 221 of whom won.

The Christian Coalition distributed 33 million voter guides in the two weeks before the election. Exit polling showed that religious conservatives made up 33 percent of the vote, up from 18 percent in 1988 and 24 percent in 1992. Their vote this time went 69 percent for Republicans in the House and Senate, and 71 percent for Republican governors. Social conservatives achieved forty-five pro-life/pro-family victories in the House, as well as eight Senate seats and seven

governorships. The Democratic Party's effort to stigmatize evangelical voters did not work. In fact, when asked "Which of the following organizations represents your beliefs?" voters gave the Republican Party 32 percent agreement "all or most of the time," while the Christian Coalition and the Democratic Party roughly tied at 17 and 19 percent respectively.

While the media have been pointing to the defeat of Ollie North as a defeat for the religious right, exit polls by Frank Luntz found that 51 percent of those who voted against North cited Iran-contra concerns as the reason for their decision; only 8 percent cited his support from the religious right. Virginia voters, asked whether religious conservative groups or liberal activist groups presented a bigger threat, feared the liberals more—by a whopping 54 to 25 percent.

Term-limits activists also strengthened Republican candidates. Pro-term-limit groups spent more than \$1.5 million in independent, issue-oriented ads. Some ads reminded Washington state voters that the Democratic Party was leading the fight against term limits, which led to the defeat of six Democratic congressmen—the biggest state loss in the nation.

Another key aspect of the Democrats' massive defeat is their loss of committee and subcommittee chairmanships, which radically changes the balance of power in fundraising capability. The Clinton administration and leading committee chairmen squeezed millions out of corporate America for the 1994 elections. Now the Democrats will not be able to continue the Tony Coelho strategy: extorting campaign cash from businesses terrified of what could be inserted into the hidden recesses of a large tax or regulatory bill. Clinton may continue to abuse regulatory agencies as fundraising tools, but a Republican Congress will have subpoena power, as well as the power of the purse, to stop funding to abusive agencies. Much of what has been viewed by the establishment of the last forty years as "hardball politics" is nothing more than the solicitation of bribes.

How fierce a fundraiser will Congressman John Dingell (D-Mich.) be in 1996? Or former terror of the telecommunications industry Ed Markey (D-Mass.)? The Democrats will have to fall back on labor unions, big city machines, trial lawyers, and Hollywood for the money.

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# I'm a Soul Gland

by Benjamin J. Stein

Friday

**A**aarghh! This cannot be happening. But it is. A modern nightmare. A modern efficiency-productivity-don't-give-a-damn nightmare.

Tommy and I are at the Alaska Airlines counter at LAX, gnashing our teeth. A few days ago, I made reservations to fly on Alaska to Spokane, thence to Sandpoint in a rented car. When we got to the counter, a young man named Mr. Wong laboriously made out our tickets, but made them for three times the price I had been quoted on my reservation. *Three times*. When I brought the tickets back to him another agent, a Hispanic woman, helped. She said, "Oh, Mr. Wong is brand new. He makes these mistakes all the time. But I can't change them once they're issued."

"What do you mean? These are for three times the price in the record."

"Still, the computer won't let us change them."

"Well, figure it out," I said. "We have an hour before the plane leaves, and I want the right tickets."

"All right," she said. "I'll do it by hand. It'll take a few minutes."

She disappeared behind the wall behind the counter. Forty-five minutes later, she emerged to tell me they still could not override the computer and issue the right tickets. Her supervisor came out and stood behind her as she ever so slowly tried to write out new tickets by hand, like a scribe copying the Bible.

"Look," I said. "The plane is about to leave. Mr. Supervisor, could you please just take us to the gate, explain the deal, get us on the plane, and fix the tickets later?"

"No," he said, yawning. "I'm too busy. I can't leave here."

*Benjamin J. Stein is a writer, actor, economist, and lawyer living in Malibu, California.*

By this time, Little Mr. Perfect was getting restless. I couldn't blame him. He'd been waiting, sitting on his tackle box, for over an hour. "I don't even want to go anymore," he said. "Let's go fishing here at Lake Arrowhead."

"No," I said. "I'm sure the tickets are just about ready."

But they weren't ready, and they did not get ready. Tommy and I missed the plane, all because the first agent was incompetent, the later agents were incompetent, the people who had programmed the computer were incompetent, and the manager did not give a damn.

I was seething by the time we left, with the agents apologizing and promising that at least we would not have to pay for the tickets.

"You'll do a lot more than that," I said. "I hate to litigate, but I think I'd like to sue you just so you'd get a taste of what it's like to jam someone's gears and ruin his outing with his son."

Tommy perked up mightily at that. "Yeah, Daddy," he said. "Let's sue 'em."

**T**ommy and I went to a shabby McDonald's, had a stale cheeseburger, and then some stale fries, and then went home to mother. I was still seething. Out of my mind. We went to the Universal City Walk and strolled around. Dozens of kids recognized me and wanted their pictures taken with me. There was a chorus of "Buellers" all up and down under the garish, gaudy lights. But it did no good. By that time, I had expected to be staring out at the lake, listening to the lanyards jingling against the masts of the sailboats, feeling the breezes off the Selkirks and the Cabinets, feeling the roar of the passing Burlington Northern. My boy would be in the next bed, begging me to tell him Ren and

Stimpy stories as he ate hot chocolate and strawberries from room service at the Edgewater Inn.

But no. Because Alaska is hiring new people and paying them low wages, they get people who can't operate the machines of modern commerce. It's like this everywhere. The tellers can't figure out how to get me an account balance. The people at the yogurt shop don't know how to make chocolate mixed with peanut butter. The clerks at clothing stores don't know how to charge something on my credit card. Airline reservations clerks are the worst of all. You get three different fares for the same trip on the same carrier if you call three different times.

Where is the service in the service economy?

Tuesday

**F**orget all that. It's a new day and I feel *great*. I woke up in Malibu with Ginger the dog looking me in the face. We got dressed, went for a walk, had breakfast on the deck looking at the hawks and the quail and the waves and the Fuji blimp. Then we fertilized the plants with something miraculous called Miracle-Gro, and then walked around and around the house figuring how much the jacaranda had grown. Very little, because I have the poorest soil on earth, but still, there is growth. There are dark green shoots and new branches.

I felt happy. Yeah. New growth. I like that. There's a smell that comes up Encinal Canyon, through the dense gully of brush and scrubby pine and occasional madrone oak. It tastes of the Pacific and of the sun and of the pine needles. I used to smell that smell in Santa Cruz. Now, there is one small part of my little yard, one patch of a few feet on that lot, where I can still smell it. It's intoxicating.