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the Board of Supervisors have also voiced their support of the health directive. Feinstein has been a persistent critic of the health department for not closing the businesses sooner.

Attorney Steele, speaking for the bathhouse owners, noted in a news conference held after the closure order, "My clients have been in the forefront of AIDS education and prevention efforts." Most of the city's gay bathhouses had already posted risk reduction signs, distributed condoms, closed orgy rooms, and increased lighting in their facilities. Steele concluded that closure of the baths was an unwarranted intrusion upon the rights of privacy of gay men in the city. He added, "This is not the time to undermine or abandon our civil rights in the name of disease control."

Other prominent physicians who have treated AIDS patients in the city disagree that the closure would be ineffective or disrupt education efforts. They believe that such a dramatic move may itself be an educational statement about the seriousness of the AIDS epidemic. They suggest that closure of the businesses would make it more difficult for some men to have the multiple partner, high-risk sex found to be a significant factor in contracting the disease.

The bathhouse controversy in San Francisco has now moved beyond the gay community and the elected officials into the city's courtrooms. Here it can be expected to pit medical experts against each other—while all observers attempt to untangle the civil rights issues from the public health concerns.

—Michael Helquist
and Rick Osmon

A British view of U.S. elections

LONDON—In a year that has seen a barrage of U.S. political figures on TV screens in Britain, November 6 will come as a welcome relief. In the meantime, inevitable misgivings about the election's outcome persist.

For British observers two issues are at stake. The first is economic. The colossal Reagan deficit and the widespread effects of high U.S. interest rates are the focus of much suspicion and anxiety in Britain. But the economic question is particularly important for the political classes. As British financial and economic pundits twitch with every flicker of U.S. interest rates, the likelihood of a Reagan re-election is the great hope of the Thatcher administration that has faith, in public at least, that the deficit will be tackled in a second term and, above all, that interest rates will drop significantly.

At the same time, the Conservative government has undeniably managed to blame many of its own problems on the effects of U.S. fiscal policy in what looks more and more like a very British failure of radical right-wing economic philosophy. Translated into practice this

meant a stagnant job market, rising unemployment (current official figures at 3.2 million), import saturation, a manufacturing sector in deep trouble and exports lagging behind "market potential." Without the revenue of Britain's off-shore oil fields, the picture would be worse still.

What lies ahead is bleaker still, as the miners' strike seems set to continue through the winter challenging pit closures that would lead to further social erosion in a landscape already scarred with the effects of recession.

Although willing when necessary to point the finger at America, the exponents of Thatcherism also have an irritating tendency to invoke the internal success story of the U.S. economy as a model. At last month's IMF meeting in Washington, UK Chancellor of the Exchequer Nigel Lawson stated that Britain should follow the path trodden by the U.S. and opt for real cuts in wages—the only way, he argued, to price Britain's unemployed back into the job market. Theories of this kind dovetail nicely with the government's anti-union stand.

However the supporters of Thatcherism underplay the decisive role of the Republican deficit in the highly selective U.S. recovery. Any suggestion that Reaganomics has spent its way out of trouble—albeit grotesquely—is anathema to Mrs. Thatcher and her associates.

The second issue in this election, as seen from Britain, is more widely debated. Prospects of a second Republican term raise obvious worries about the future of world peace. Reagan's policy failures in Central America and the Middle East have been key objects of criticism throughout the year. Cruise missiles, always the symbols of an unwelcome U.S. hegemony, continue to cause anxiety. At the Liberal Party conference in September, in a shock for Liberal leader David Steel, a motion was carried urging withdrawal of cruise. The Labor Party, displaying an unexpected consensus on defense policy, had no difficulty in following suit.

Most British agree with the Mondale assessment of Reagan's recent turn-around on arms control and relations with Moscow as a deathbed conversion. Criticizing the transparency of the president's new-found conviction, *The Manchester Guardian* declared: "It is only when you try to discern a consistent and coherent purpose to the president's initiatives that bemusement and cynicism grow like weeds on a derelict building site."

The image of dereliction is one which leaps instinctively to the British imagination, surrounded as it is with creeping inner city blight and a withered industrial infrastructure. It also tends to refer the British back inexorably—and perhaps rightly—to their own problems. With no let-up in unemployment figures and rising tension in its coalfields, Britain may face such serious domestic difficulties by the first sessions of the 1985 Congress that it will be paying a lot less attention to events in Washington than it has been lately.

—Jeremy Harding

Briefing: U.S. pre-empts Costa Rican airwaves

On August 31, U.S. Ambassador to Costa Rica Curtin Winsor and Lilia Berocal of the Costa Rican Association of Information and Culture (A.C.I.C.) signed an agreement to install a high-powered radio transmitter in Costa Rica—only 20 kilometers from the Nicaraguan border. Winsor signed on behalf of the Voice of America which will use 60 percent of the airtime. The A.C.I.C. will get the remaining 40 percent for programming.

In September 1983, Costa Rican President Luis Alberto Monge petitioned funds from the Reagan administration in order to "recapture Costa Rica's radio sovereignty." The Reagan administration responded with \$1,143,000 for "start up costs" and an additional promise of \$168,000 per year for the maintenance of a full scale operation of the Voice of America.

The Association of Information and Culture was privately formed in December 1983 by major media and communications figures of Costa Rica to allow Voice of America access to airtime by circumventing a Costa Rican law which prohibits any communications system being owned by foreigners. A.C.I.C. President Berocal defends the move, saying that "the people of northern Costa Rica have been exposed to extensive propaganda from the Nicaraguan communication system."

The transmitter will function at a frequency of 930 kilohertz with a strength of 50 kilowatts. It will be one of the most powerful radio systems in Central America and should be picked up easily on inexpensive AM/FM radios as it will be medium and not short wave frequency. The system is expected to reach Managua and some observers say that it may reach as far as El Salvador. Although the broadcasting of a medium wave radio system into another country is a violation of Costa Rican Constitutional Law, a diplomat at the U.S. Embassy in Costa Rica said "radio transmitters don't function according to borders."

The cooperative agreement between the Voice of America and the A.C.I.C. states that the U.S. Information Service is the sole owner of the radio transmitter and other equipment, and that the USIS will control all finances regarding maintenance and operation of the transmitter. Article VI of the Agreement frees the Voice of America, the U.S. government and all employees of any responsibilities or damages which may arise while operating the transmitter. The agreement—signed for five years—provides an option for a "five year renewal plan which will depend on funds solicited from the U.S. Congress."

U.S. Embassy officials tried

to keep the agreement quiet, but an article in the University of Costa Rica's *Seminario Universidad* publicized the signing ceremony in the home of President Monge. The newspaper and its editor Carlos Morales soon came under sharp criticism by US Ambassador Curtin Winsor. In an interview with Agencia France Press (AFP), Winsor said he would like to "tear to pieces the communist *Seminario*...and see established a magazine for the youth of the University as an alternative to the communist publication."

Winsor also made headlines recently over remarks to a Republican group in Charleston, West Virginia when he described Nicaragua as a "piece of contaminated meat which attracts insects from all over the world." The insects, he said, included Cubans, Lybians, Eastern Europeans, PLO members and Basque separatists. Winsor said that a multinational force was needed to fight against the Sandinistas, calling them "bandits who came to power due to our own ineptitude...but the U.S. lacks the will to exercise such military might."



Reagan and Costa Rican President Luis Monge are buying airtime for their views.

Another new phase in Costa Rica's growing "media war" came early this month with an announcement of plans to install three television transmitters in the same region. The U.S. government will finance the \$1.5 million project. Preparations are underway to have a private Costa Rican broadcasting concern place large transmitters in three locations near the Nicaraguan border. Each transmitter will be 30 kilowatts, larger than any currently operating in Central America. Equipped with high gain antennas, the signal received in Managua will be stronger than the signal of Nicaragua's official Sandinista television.

Last November Costa Rican President Monge signed a Neutrality Act which formally states Costa Rica's policy of

neutrality and independence affirming that "we also commit ourselves to make every possible effort to prevent our national territory, airspace and jurisdictional waters from being used in any way by belligerents."

University newspaper editor Carlos Morales points out that sovereignty of airspace refers to more than just the flying of aircraft. The decisions to transmit Voice of America and to expand television transmission, seen by some as an infraction of the Neutrality Act and violation of Costa Rican law, were at no point brought before the Legislative Assembly for a vote. Two Assembly members are suing over the legality of the decision. Assembly member Sergio Ardon said that "the communication system headed by the U.S. Information Service with links to the C.I.A. is intending to communicate to the people of Costa Rica and Nicaragua their impartial opinion concerning national and international matters."

Some political groups in Costa Rica believe that a U.S.-operated radio system in Costa Rica focusing on anti-Sandinista programming will create further tensions between the two countries. During a time when Costa Rican economy has become increasingly dependent on U.S. loans, pressure to break ties with Nicaragua and militar-

ize against its northern neighbor has grown immeasurably.

In August the Costa Rican Chamber of Commerce proposed to President Monge that all economic and political ties with Nicaragua be cut. The request was rejected only to be followed by Chancellor Jorge Urbina's declaration that relations with Nicaragua were at an all time low and that Costa Rica might find it necessary to ask Panama for helicopters to patrol its southern border. The recent decision by Honduran-based counter-revolutionary group the Nicaraguan Democratic Front (FDN) and the Costa Rican-based Democratic Revolutionary Alliance (ARDE) to join forces against the Sandinistas has further added to tensions on the border.

In a region moving toward full-scale war, the movement in neutral Costa Rica is toward an instability that breeds a growing dependence on the U.S.

—Maureen Meehan

ILLINOIS

Paul Simon whittles away at Sen. Charles Percy's base



After their debates, it was clear Simon would be well to the left of Percy in the Senate.

By David Moberg

CHICAGO

SEN. CHARLES PERCY HAS LED a charmed political life. The wealthy former chief executive of Bell and Howell has won three terms in the Senate without ever having a committed base of support and without being very well liked even within his Republican Party. But by adjusting adroitly to the political winds, he has always picked up enough unenthusiastic backing from varied sources to carry him to victory.

Long known as a moderate Republican, Percy started his career in 1964 as a vocal opponent of open housing. In the last few years he has abandoned the few remaining liberal Republican senators and become a staunch defender of President Reagan's policies, even though he had earlier been one of President Jimmy Carter's most reliable allies in the Senate and in 1976 described a possible Reagan presidential nomination as "the beginning of the end of the Republican Party."

Over the years Percy could count on the votes of Republicans, many liberal Democrats and independents upset with his conservative Democratic opponents, those downstate who were suspicious of Chicago machine ties of the Democratic candidates, as well as many Jews, a sizable bloc of blacks and some union members. But the coalition was unstable and did not reflect any real attachment to Percy. Last spring he faced a strong challenge from conservative Rep. Thomas Corcoran, and now many national New Right groups are urging a vote for the Libertarian candidate and against Percy.

Rep. Paul Simon, a former crusading small-town newspaper editor and lieutenant governor, seemed like an ideal candidate to unravel much of the remaining Percy backing. As representative from the southernmost district of the state since 1975, Simon has a favorable image outside the Chicago metropolitan area enhanced by his career as a squeaky-clean, ethically unimpeachable politician. This brings him support from conservative Democrats and independents who might otherwise disagree with some of his liberal views.

That cautious liberalism—his approval ratings from groups like the Americans for Democratic Action, the AFL-CIO

and consumer, civil rights and environmentalist groups typically are in the range of 75-80 percent—should erode Percy's crossover vote. But Percy carries residual support, and the Simon campaign has not yet clearly got through its message about how Percy has changed. Likewise many voters do not have a clear idea of what Simon stands for, even though they may be sympathetic to him.

In addition, Percy's widespread campaign of distorted, dishonest TV advertising accusing Simon of favoring tax hikes more than double Mondale's proposal has hurt Simon and forced him to spend time and money combating Percy's "big lie" strategy, as Simon campaign manager David Axelrod describes it. Although Percy's ads could backfire, so far they seem to have outweighed Simon's defense. With his own personal wealth available to supplement his already larger campaign fund, Percy can be expected to continue a heavily negative ad drive into the final days of the campaign.

The Simon dynamic.

In early October polls showed the race to be extremely close. The pros' best guess is that Simon is probably slightly behind but that there are many undecideds and a large fraction of weakly committed Percy voters. Political strategist Don Rose is convinced that "the dynamic is in Simon's direction." Percy's support seems to have peaked earlier below what is needed, but Simon has not yet shaken the ripe apples into his basket.

After a lackluster primary campaign that he nevertheless won handily against three competitors, Simon began a series of soft biographical ads. But Percy attacks on Simon as an ultraliberal big spender began to take their toll. Simon initially criticized Percy for refusing to release his tax returns, as all other primary candidates had, then used the partial figures available to argue that Percy, like other rich people, had benefitted handsomely from the Reagan tax cuts and shelters. "There are plenty of people fighting for the rich and powerful," one Simon ad said. "That's not me. I'm fighting for you" and your grandson, he tells a working-class grandmother.

But Simon quickly launched his major theme that Percy is undependable, inconsistent and vacillates from one side to another on major issues.

"We're saying to supporters of both Ronald Reagan and Walter Mondale, 'Is this guy with you or will he be with you tomorrow?'" Axelrod said. Simon's slogan—"a senator you can count on"—reinforces that question. Percy rejoined with a series of "Simon says, Simon does" ads, such as attacking his vote against a constitutional amendment to balance the budget. (Ironically, Simon disappoints some supporters by backing one form of a balanced budget amendment that does not tie the budget to a fixed percentage of the gross national product as well as the line-item veto that Reagan wants.) Axelrod is convinced that Simon's ads worked better than Percy's, since Percy already had an image as a vacillating weathervane. But the parallel charges may have partially neutralized each other.

"There is a choice in this campaign," Axelrod insists. "It's a choice between someone who stands for something and someone who stands for nothing. Percy is not a born-again Reaganite. He's the same old opportunist."

Yet in order to win the needed votes from blacks, liberals and moderates, Simon has to show how Percy has changed. At first Simon's campaign was cautious, since it did not want to alienate Simon's appeal among conservative Democrats and independents, many of whom may vote for Reagan. Lately the attack has picked up. Mayor Harold Washington recorded ads aimed at Chicago's black voters accusing Percy of betrayal.

Percy snapped back with a charge that the ads were "racist" since they appealed only to blacks. (In 1978 Percy ran black-oriented radio endorsements by his pal Jesse Jackson, who has not been in evidence this time.) There was speculation that Percy was making a bid for the white racist vote. Later, Percy, still defending his comment, told a black audience he "loved" Washington. Although polls now show 20 to 30 percent of blacks for Percy, that is likely to drop dramatically.

Percy appears to have lost heavily among Jews, many of whom were angry at him for supporting sale of AWACS jets to Saudi Arabia. Pro-Israel contributions have helped fill Simon's coffers and financed independent attacks, such as billboards and TV ads showing Percy as a chameleon financed by a wealthy young Californian. Simon is unquestionably

pro-Israel, favoring moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem, for example.

Although Simon has a more favorable rating among liberals than Percy does, still nearly two-thirds of voters think that Percy is for the nuclear freeze, despite his steadfast opposition (one point of consistency). Simon ads are now driving that lesson home. They are also attacking Percy on his support for lifting natural gas price controls and for his votes to weaken toxic waste clean-up ("the Senate race is as close as a glass of drinking water" the ads say, implicitly an attempt to bring some voter passion into a race that has been slow to engage the public).

Percy's vulnerabilities.

Despite Percy's Reaganite themes ("I'm an optimist, Simon's a pessimist; growth is coming and will take care of budget deficits, unemployment and every other ill"), he is vulnerable on economic issues. Recovery has been slow to come to much of the state, and unemployment officially remains at 8.4 percent. Pat Caddell polls in Delaware show 85 percent of voters think the U.S. is on the right track with the economy. In Illinois only 40 percent think so.

In their October 18 debate, when Percy bragged about bringing a contract worth 300 jobs to Caterpillar, the biggest downstate private employer, Simon reminded him that a few days earlier Caterpillar had laid off 2,450 workers. In one of his final issue ads, Simon attacks Percy for supporting tax breaks that send jobs overseas to France, Japan and Brazil, ending with a French worker going to his job saying, "Merci, Senator Percy."

Although Percy once had a favorable labor voting record, that has shifted dramatically, starting with opposition to labor law reform. Reagan-style economic views that belie his liberal image were apparent in a business magazine interview when he was asked about high unemployment insurance costs in Illinois. "Our costs are so high and benefits so high that it's hard to get people hungry enough to go out and get a job," Percy replied.

Simon repeatedly questions Percy's effectiveness as a senator in serving Illinois, a counter to Percy's campaign slogan, "the Illinois advantage." In 1978 Percy hit the airwaves in the last days with a desperate plea to voters that he was sorry for neglecting the state and had heard their message. Simon replays part of that plea and then concludes, "With Paul Simon, you'll never have to say you're sorry."

But Percy scored a solid hit when he attacked Simon's deficit reduction plan as a \$200 million tax compared to Mondale's \$89 million tax increase. The ad did not mention that Simon's plan covered four years, not one as in Mondale's. Also, there was no tax rate increase in Simon's plan.

He favored unspecified budget cuts (admitting that making them clear would be politically dangerous) and closing tax loopholes, such as enacting a minimum tax for corporations, elimination of tax breaks for companies moving jobs to other countries, cutting tax benefits for corporations that use their money for non-productive ends and eliminating deduction of state and local sales tax—the latter seized by Percy as a tax increase for individuals.

Simon is a very reserved, quiet campaigner. His good guy image is neatly symbolized by his trademark bow tie.

Sen. Percy will likely continue his heavily negative ad campaign.

CAMPAIGN