

Soul-searching among the Dems has New Deal liberals pitted against "new ideas" pols, with some—dare we hope?—encouraging results.

DESPERATELY SEEKING SOLUTIONS

by Bill Kauffman

The Democratic Party is in deep trouble. It has been buried by landslides in three of the last four presidential elections, and public opinion polls indicate that the Republicans are fast becoming the nation's majority party. The old Franklin D. Roosevelt coalition of union members, ethnics, white southerners, and intellectuals has unraveled. Only black voters remain steadfastly loyal to the Democratic Party. This precipitous decline (remember back to 1974, when pundits fretted that the GOP might collapse under the weight of Watergate?) has encouraged an unusually lively and vigorous debate among liberals over what is to be done to return to the American people's good graces.

Some Democratic pols deny that the party has a problem. Geraldine Ferraro, for instance, thinks that Democrats can return to favor "not by changing our policies, but by articulating them in a slightly different way." This is a perfect example of the "blame Walter Mondale's barber" school of wishful thinking. To these Democrats, the Reagan era is a hideous aberration. Come 1988, the Gipper will ride off into the sunset and Americans will once again be clamoring for higher taxes, more regulation, and an expanded welfare state.

Not all Democrats are so sanguine. While the strategists and the party hacks

are busy hiring consultants to rearrange deck chairs on the Titanic, assorted journalists, intellectuals, and politicians are laboring to recast the shape and the platform of the Democratic Party. No one is suggesting (unfortunately) that the party return to its 19th-century role as the champion of enterprise and prosperity, limited government, and a relatively noninterventionist foreign policy. The Thomas Jeffersons and the Andrew Jacksons—hell, even the Grover Cleverlands—are long gone. The Democratic Party that emerges from this debate may be even more hostile to individual liberties than were the New Deal and Great Society forebears of today's liberals. But just maybe . . .

You can't tell the players in this contest of ideas without a scorecard:

The New Republic. It was founded in 1914 by progressive journalist Herbert Croly (progressives are the ones who were big on regulation and imperialism and determined to stamp out "the destructive individualism of Jeffersonianism"). *The New Republic* has for more than half a century been the nation's most influential liberal journal of opinion. The weekly's history is checkered by some spectacular missteps—including a reluctance to criticize

Stalin in the 1930s and Henry Wallace's ludicrous editorship in the late '40s. But since 1974, under the guidance of wealthy ex-New Leftist Editor-in-Chief Martin Peretz and sporting an ideologically variegated collection of writers and editors, *TNR* has become one of the most interesting idea magazines in the land.

The neo-liberals. This is an infelicitous label for younger Democrats who express skepticism about economic regulation and flirt with a noninterventionist foreign policy. The godfather of neo-liberalism is Charlie Peters, a former Peace Corps bureaucrat who edits the feisty magazine *The Washington Monthly*. The most prominent neo-liberal politician is Sen. Gary Hart (Colo.)—he of the unsuccessful presidential bid. Sen. Bill Bradley (N.J.), Rep. Richard Gephardt (Mo.), and Arizona Gov. Bruce Babbitt share the label, and *The New Republic* falls into the neo-liberal camp on many domestic issues.

The left. The flagship publication of the socialist Democratic left is *The Nation*, founded in 1865 by liberal reformer E. L. Godkin. The weekly has seen its better days. Although graced by pungent writers like Christopher Hitchens and Alexander Cockburn, *The Nation* has a drab, oppressive feel, much like being stuck in a college elevator with an earnest young Trotskyite hectoring you about the Rosenbergs' innocence.

The magazine's political philosophy is an admixture of bureaucratic socialism and a selectively noninterventionist foreign policy. Jesse Jackson, George McGovern, and the Democrats' peace-and-environment faction are at home here.

The right. These Democrats support a hawkish foreign policy and the welfare-state agenda (though they passionately oppose minority quotas). Many are neo-conservative intellectuals clustered around *Commentary* magazine and a couple of relatively impotent right-wing social clubs—pressure groups, the Social Democrats USA and the Coalition for a Democratic Majority (CDM). They endorse the Reagan defense buildup and fret over what they see as the party's slow drift toward pacifism. Sen. Henry ("Scoop") Jackson led this Harry Truman wing of the party until his death in 1983. No one has taken his place.

Those are the parties to the debate. They've been at it since June 1980, when former Sen. Paul Tsongas of Massachusetts, an unremarkable man anxious to escape the capacious shadow of Ted Kennedy, kicked off the Democrats' public soul-searching with a speech to the liberal interest group Americans for Democratic Action. That speech, a seminal event in the still-brief history of neo-liberalism, made the ritual obeisance to the civil-rights movement, the Great Society, the Peace Corps, etc. But Tsongas also admonished liberals to get "tough" and "work for a new liberalism—rooted in the sound values of the past but relevant to the all-too-real problems of the present and the future."

Okay, so Tsongas is no Daniel Webster. But he's a keen political observer, for in 1980 he espied what became *the* political story of 1984—young people were rejecting Democratic liberalism as stale, effete, and bureaucratic and throwing their lot in with a Republican Party that promised growth, enterprise, and opportunity.

Alas, Tsongas drew some strange conclusions from his dead-on diagnosis. In fact, what is most interesting about his speech (and a subsequent book, *The Road from Here*) is the issue that provoked it—Senate rejection of a 10-cents-a-gallon oil import fee pushed by Pres. Jimmy Carter. Tsongas scolded the assembled liberals because they'd opposed the fee. That's right—the problem with the Democrats was their reluctance to levy new taxes! What planet was this guy living on, anyway?

To be fair, Tsongas had other concerns (notably, liberal reticence in criticizing the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979), but keep in mind the thrust of this original neo-liberal complaint. (Sen. Gary



Hart has even revived this specific issue—he's sponsoring a bill that would slap a \$10-a-barrel fee on imported oil.)

Five years and two disastrous elections later, thoughtful Democrats are still seeking a "new liberalism." Mondale's failure in 1984 to resurrect the old Roosevelt coalition with an old-style campaign gave their search added urgency. Nowhere is that search more wrenching than in their responses to the manifold failures of the welfare state.

Fifty years of government attempts to run the economy have produced \$200-billion deficits and recurrent sprees of inflation and unemployment. Twenty years of an all-out war on poverty, and the backstreets of our cities are littered with the casualties—the poor themselves.

The sages at *The New Republic* know that something has gone horribly wrong. They lament the Democratic Party's propensity to "promise everything to everybody." They call for the elimination of the most egregious and wasteful government programs—Amtrak, farm subsidies, the Small Business Administration, college loans for rich kids. They decry the protectionist themes sounded by organized labor. They chastise the president for being so timorous in going after corporate welfare handouts such as the Export-Import Bank. But beyond these breaths of fresh air . . . nothing. They are

baffled and befuddled.

Case in point: Nicholas Lemann, writing in *TNR*, calls Charles Murray's indictment of the Great Society, *Losing Ground*, a "compelling" book with a "feeling of horrible authenticity about the social and economic fortunes of poor Americans." Yet he demurs from Murray's policy prescription—abolish all social welfare programs except unemployment insurance—as "unimaginable." Why accept Murray's evidence but not his conclusion? Because, offers Lemann, "the idea that government should give money to poor people is basically a good and moral one."

And that, my friends, is the one immutable Democratic truth. Ever since William Jennings Bryan's populist coup in 1896, the Democrats have preached that the government must intervene in the economy and in society in order to protect individuals from the ravages of the free market.

The most intellectually scrupulous of today's Democrats accept the unpleasant truths that social scientists are now telling us about the welfare state. It destroys incentive. It breaks up families. It does very little for the abject poor—except lock them and their children into a nightmarish cycle of dependency. But rather than just scrapping the New Deal/Great Society nostrums, the new Democrats propose to replace the old, discredited programs with new and improved schemes cooked up deep in some

public policy laboratory.

A December 3, 1984, *New Republic* editorial illustrates the current liberal predicament. It advises the Democrats to discard six "old ideas"—(1) domestic content proposals that would effectively keep foreign-made cars out of the United States; (2) comparable worth, an apple-and-sunshine name for an insidious scheme that would give government bureaucrats the power to decide how much your job is worth; (3) the nuclear freeze, which the editors call "a silly gimmick"; (4) election campaign reform laws that prevent individuals from giving money to candidates they like; (5) quotas that "enshrine reverse discrimination in

paleo-liberals (*National Journal* rated Senators Hart and Tsongas among the seven most liberal members of the 98th Congress). Although their rhetoric—long on pleas for pragmatism and short on New Deal boilerplate—is sometimes heartening, most of the new Democrats' much-advertised new ideas would involve mere redeployments of government power and resources.

Senator Bradley and Representative Gephardt are paladins of tax reform, but their interest is in simplifying the tax code and encouraging growth in favored sectors of the economy. They care not one whit about reducing the overall tax burden so that beleaguered individuals

dies—to a recipient's income level. (This is one of Charlie Peters's and *The Washington Monthly's* pet ideas. "The country can't afford to spend money on people who don't need it," grumps Peters.) It may not be a frontal assault on the welfare state, but at least the battle would be joined.

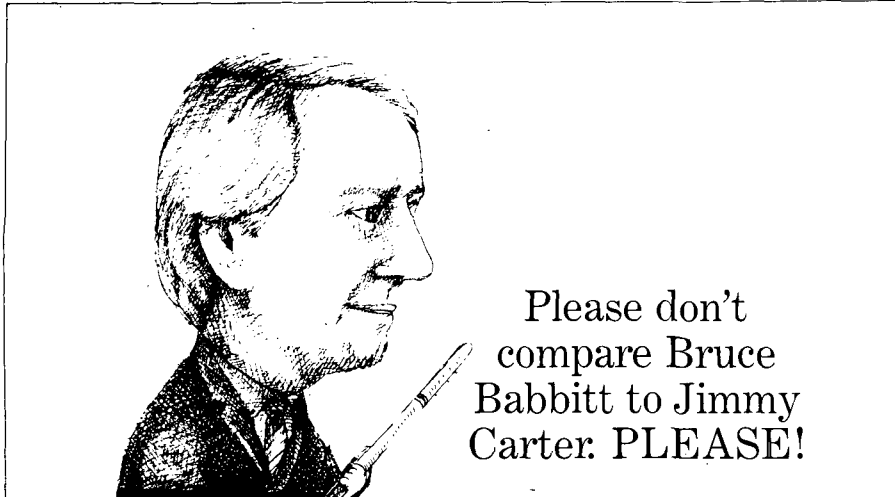
Babbitt stresses decentralist themes that are wholly inconsistent with 20th-century Democratic thinking. He speaks of turning historically local government functions such as education and transportation back to states and localities. And unlike other neo-liberal politicians, Babbitt isn't afraid to deal in specifics. A Babbitt spokesman indicated that the governor would abolish the Department of Education and get the feds out of the business of repairing the Interstate Highway System—two reforms that would pry more than \$25 billion of taxpayers' money out of Washington's profligate little hands.

The Democratic left has been mercifully silent in the economic debate. Sure, they denounce tax cuts as "giveaways" and call for more, more, more spending on nondefense programs. But the left's cynosure has shifted to Central America and South Africa. There has been no retreat from statolatry in this wing of the party, though, as *Nation* editorial board member Alan Wolfe makes clear:

The decisions that have to be made about our economy are political decisions, not economic ones, and they will be determined by the forces that command the levers of political power. . . . The left's strength lies in its ability to remind Americans that the economy must be shaped to fit their conception of the public interest, not the other way around. Neither neoconservatism nor neoliberalism can talk seriously about the common good because both allow private centers of power to determine it indirectly.

This, sadly, represents the sum of economic wisdom on the left. Control of the economy must be wrested from 235 million individual Americans and handed over to "the forces that command the levers of political power." The left's grievance against their more moderate Democratic comrades is that the moderates tolerate "private centers of power" and a measure of economic freedom. The Jesse Jackson campaign, despite some early free-trade rumblings, failed to shake free of this left-wing statism.

Meanwhile, the Democratic right, desperately seeking to keep labor unions from abandoning the hawkish George Meany-Lane Kirkland tradition, steps gingerly on the subject of the welfare state. The neo-conservatives appreciate the hard-line anticommunist role the AFL-CIO plays within the party (though the



much of American life"; and (6) bilingual education.

Bravo! But wait—the editors, unable to leave well enough alone, proceed to hand out a mixed bag of new ideas—good (make the Japanese pay for their own defense; repeal tax and pension laws that discourage worker ownership of companies); bad (tax reform, because it's "the best way to raise new revenues"; a United Nations of the democracies, as though one is not enough); and positively ugly (free television time for political candidates, an offense against the First Amendment and the nation's poor television viewers).

Democratic politicians, a congenitally cautious breed, eschew *The New Republic's* candor. It's hard enough to get them to criticize Amtrak, let alone the vaunted social safety net. As a result, neo-liberal Democratic solons have yet to come up with the "comprehensive successor to the New Deal" promised by Gary Hart.

Neo-liberal members of Congress have compiled voting records that are virtually indistinguishable from those of

can pursue happiness as they see fit with their earnings. Gary Hart advocates closer cooperation between government, business, and labor, an idea popularized by 1930s' Italian leaders of the *f-word* persuasion. Gephardt (the *Wall Street Journal's* favorite Democrat) is an ardent protectionist—he's sponsoring legislation that would slap a 25 percent tariff on imports from Japan, Brazil, South Korea, and Taiwan. And the neo-liberals were quick to jump on the "infrastructure" bandwagon when some clever neologist coined the term as a respectable euphemism for public works. (Senator Hart recently introduced a bill to create a "National Infrastructure Fund" to dish out \$3 billion a year to fill potholes.)

The most interesting new Democrat may be Arizona Gov. Bruce Babbitt. It's a good bet that he'll be running for president in 1988, and if you can ignore the people who compare him to Jimmy Carter (ouch!), you'll find the guy is, well, different—from Carter, for sure, and also from run-of-the-mill neo-lib politicians.

First, there's his obsession with "means-testing." He'd tie eligibility for a whole slew of government programs—Social Security, Medicare, farm subsi-

newly influential white-collar unions are pushing the labor organization leftward on nuclear disarmament issues). And they generally refrain from criticizing union demands for protectionist legislation and government handouts.

Strategy aside, the right-wing Democratic intellectuals just don't seem very interested in nonracial domestic issues. Many are ex-socialists who left the faith in disgust over the pacifist and allegedly anti-American nature of the New Left in the 1960s. Their mission is to restore the pre-McGovern Democratic consensus—aggressive globalism abroad and a noble welfare state at home. The free market does not figure prominently in this vision, although they're willing enough to say a few kind words about capitalism in the abstract.

If the Democratic Party is to move away from its regnant hostility to economic liberties, the push is going to have to come from the neo-liberals. Yet for all their refreshing talk about the failures of interest-group liberalism, the neo-liberals can sound almost Prussian when discussing the citizen's duty to the state.

Almost every prominent neo-liberal supports either the military draft or national service. Their enthusiasm for conscription is not based on a perceived manpower shortage in the armed forces. Rather, it springs from a sincere belief that free men and women are incapable of forming communities and engaging in cooperative enterprises unless prodded to do so.

The Washington Monthly's Charlie Peters, the high priest of national service, decries "a trend toward separatism . . . that has divided the nation and produced the politics of selfishness." Failing "a rebirth of the spirit of service that motivates people to volunteer to give," he believes a draft is necessary to *make* them give. Gary Hart, who intends to make national service a central plank of his 1988 presidential bid, laments that Americans "lack a feeling of fellowship and concord." Under his guidance and the government's helping hand, we lonely Americans can "reestablish the ties of a common cause."

Conventional Democrats have been slow to rally round the conscription banner. Perhaps they fear the American people's stubborn good sense and innate distrust of government. Yet the old liberals' eloquent new champion, New York Gov. Mario Cuomo ("Mario Status Cuomo," to some wags), sees the individual's relationship to the state in much the same light.

Cuomo speaks of the polity as a family. Just as a good father sees to his children's needs, so should government

officials take it upon themselves to redistribute income "fairly" and to protect risk-taking citizens from their own foolish impulses. (Not surprisingly, New York State has the largest bureaucracy and one of the highest tax rates in the nation. It was also the first state to enact a mandatory seatbelt law for adults.) The fundamental flaw in this vision—a family is voluntary and based on love, the state is coercive and relies on force—eludes Cuomo's reputedly nimble mind, and the Democrats climbing aboard his bandwagon seem untroubled by the Orwellian implications of the metaphor.

The fiercest fight among liberals, and the one that augurs best for supporters of limited government, is occurring over foreign policy. Democrats abandoned laissez-faire principles in the early decades of this century and embarked upon a crusade of liberal internationalism and intervention in the affairs of other nations. We were going to make the world safe for democracy, in Woodrow Wilson's memorable phrase.

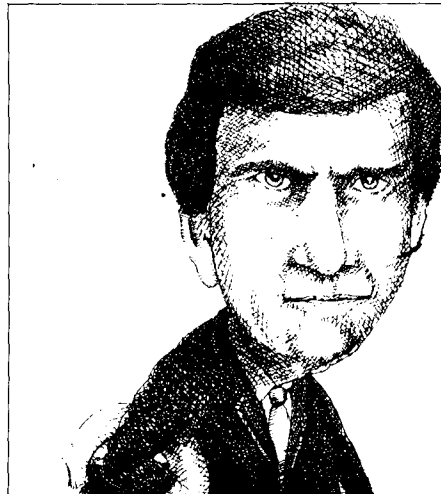
Two world wars, two undeclared wars, and 425,000 dead American soldiers later, most of the world's people still suffer under tyrannical or undemocratic governments. Yet advocates of withdrawal from our role as world policeman are routinely slandered as isolationists,

the Democrats away from their fondness for international military commitments; the neo-conservatives and *The New Republic* (an ally of the neo-liberals on domestic issues) are stoutly defending the FDR-Truman-JFK-LBJ interventionist tradition.

The Democrats' split was highlighted during the 1984 primary campaign. Gary Hart, who shamelessly aped John F. Kennedy's mannerisms on the stump, ran on a neo-isolationist (Democrats love that prefix) foreign-policy platform that had little in common with JFK's pledge to "pay any price, bear any burden" in defense of democracy around the globe. Hart called for withdrawing US troops from Lebanon. He opposed the invasion of Grenada. He sponsored a plank in the Democratic Party platform urging strict limits on the use of force in foreign policy. He assured voters that in the event of a Middle East oil cutoff, "not one [American] life would be put ashore in any Persian Gulf area."

Hart's rhetoric—the US government should stop "sending the sons of minorities and working people to serve as bodyguards for dictators"—was stridently noninterventionist, particularly with respect to Central America. One exasperated Mondale advisor summed up the Hart wing's foreign policy as: "Don't do it. Don't get involved in any struggle that might get our skirts dirty."

That's an overstatement. Hart and the



Hey, kids. You'll
love national
service. Here, you
can have my Joni
Mitchell records.
See ya in two years!

accused of geopolitical naiveté, and denied a voice in political discourse. (Most noninterventionists believe in free trade and vigorous diplomacy and are uncomfortable with the term *isolationist*, but I'll use it anyway.)

The times they are a changin'. The Democrats' 20th-century role as the party of interventionism is the subject of a bitter, contentious dispute across the liberal spectrum. The neo-liberals and the *Nation*-Jesse Jackson left are tugging

neo-liberals are not isolationists. Except for Charlie Peters (he says he's "willing to consider" an American pullout from NATO), almost all of them support a strong US role in the Western alliance, and they think that generous aid to the Third World should be a cornerstone of US foreign policy. But the neo-liberals are genuinely skeptical of interventionism. Given time, they may yet become yuppie America-Firsters.

Hart was echoed on the left by Jesse

Jackson, who alternated pleas for the judicious and restrained use of American military might—and less generous defense welfare for Japan—with paeans to Third World murderers and dictators. (Who can forget his execrable “Long live Castro” spectacle?)

A more respectable leftist critique of interventionism, perhaps derived from revisionist scholars such as William Appleman Williams, was absent from the campaign. That’s not surprising, since the Jackson-*Nation* left isn’t really noninterventionist. They’re just selective about which nations’ affairs warrant our interference. Thus they oppose aid to the Contras in Nicaragua because we shouldn’t be “bullies to the world,” yet they are not at all reluctant to use American foreign policy to bully the white racist regime in South Africa. American Empire would be okay if only we weren’t on the wrong side of history!

Nevertheless, the Hart and Jackson campaigns signified a tremendously important shift in the major parties’ ideological alignment. The Republicans, once home to principled noninterventionists such as Sen. Robert Taft, have become, as Rep. Jack Kemp (R-N.Y.) says, “the new internationalist party.” Taft’s warnings about the dangers to liberty inherent in an aggressive foreign policy no longer resonate through the GOP. Republicans support government aid to rebel forces in Nicaragua and Afghanistan and Cambodia and Angola. They launched an invasion of Grenada. They offered little opposition to stationing Marines in the bombed-out ruins of Lebanon. They are champions of a strong US role in NATO. They defend the Vietnam war, which was designed and prosecuted by liberal Democrats, as a “noble cause.”

Liberal Democrats, on the other hand, who 25 years ago would have been champing at the bit to get the United States involved in a Third World tussle, are providing the most significant opposition to President Reagan’s Cold War internationalism. The noninterventionists are not yet ascendant within the party; three of the top four House Democrats in the leadership and foreign-policy wing—Jim Wright (Texas), Tom Foley (Wash.), and Dante Fascell (Fla.)—are comfortably within the interventionist tradition. But the establishment is clearly on the defensive.

The New Republic is particularly agonized over this development. Senior Editor Charles Krauthammer, a former speechwriter for Walter Mondale in his

storied vice-presidential days, has written plaintively that the United States “finds itself with the responsibilities of empire, but without the self-justifying ideologies of the old imperial powers.” He goes on to set two conditions for US intervention in the affairs of other states: justice and strategic necessity.

Exactly what changes this prescription for Wilsonian realpolitik would require in current US policy is unclear, though Krauthammer suggests that our best bet in the Third World is to throw in with “the third force”—democratic movements opposed to left- and right-wing dictatorships in the Philippines, Chile, Nicaragua, and South Africa, among others. Morally admirable, perhaps, but still squarely within the interventionist tradition.

The grand paradox of today’s foreign-policy debate is that neo-isolationist Democrats are lined up in well-nigh unanimous opposition to President Reagan’s “Star Wars” defense program, which is the most radically isolationist foreign-policy proposal in many years. The deterring shield against nuclear attack that Star Wars promises would free the United States of the necessity of risky strategic alliances. Our security would no longer be inextricably linked with that of our supposed allies. We could escape NATO and ANZUS and all the other entanglements and alliances that George Washington so presciently warned against in his Farewell Address in 1796. (“The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations to have with them as little *political* connection as possible. . . . Why. . . entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of [other nations’] ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or caprice?”)

If Star Wars works, the old isolationist dream of an impregnable fortress America would be a reality. (Washington’s words are again relevant: “Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course [from other nations’]. . . . the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; . . . when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation.”) We would be immune from the possibility of nuclear attack (military strategists of all stripes concede that a foreign invasion of the United States is exceedingly unlikely) and could return to the peaceful, prosperous role in world affairs that our revolutionary forefathers envisioned.

The new internationalists in the Republican Party, particularly the

vigorous young turks of the Conservative Opportunity Society, are ardent partisans of Star Wars. Yet they may recognize the inconsistency; for in justifying foreign intervention, the young Republicans shun talk of strategy and containment and have adopted the language of moralists. According to them, the United States isn’t trying to overthrow the Nicaraguan government because it fears another Communist presence in the Western hemisphere; rather, the Contras should receive taxpayers’ money because they are the “moral equivalent of the Founding Fathers.” If the Reagan administration succeeds and the Star Wars shield is in place, politicians who want to send ghetto kids off to die in foreign jungles will be forced to rest their case on such dubious claims.

So long as President Reagan keeps us out of war, the Democratic ideology will evolve slowly, incrementally, and in an unpredictable direction (though 20th-century American history suggests that staying out of war is no mean feat for the US government). But it will evolve. Political parties may flirt with principle, but in the long run the Democrats and the Republicans face the same categorical imperative—to go where the votes are. All but the most obtuse Democrats have figured out that the votes are nowhere near the reactionary liberalism of the sort served up by Mister Mondale last fall.

So stands the Democratic Party, 50 years after it abjured its proud individualist heritage and plunged headlong into a tragic affair with big government. The romance of welfare statism remains strong; no prominent Democrat dares criticize the fundamentally collectivist assumption undergirding US social policy. But a disillusionment has set in.

Young neo-liberals are joining leftists in opposition to the party’s 20th-century internationalist crusade. As the Republicans claim the FDR-Truman-JFK mantle in foreign affairs, we may see a revival of a prudent, Robert Taft-style noninterventionist foreign policy—in the party that vilified Taft as an irresponsible isolationist two score years ago.

On the domestic front, a few courageous Democrats are admitting the failures of expensive social programs and casting around for an alternative. They haven’t hit upon the free market yet, but stranger things have happened. Remember—the party that gave us Tip O’Neill and LBJ once gave us Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson. □

Assistant Editor Bill Kauffman, formerly a legislative assistant in the US Senate to a Scoop Jackson Democrat, is now an Andrew Jackson democrat.

In the 1960s,
the Mozambicans
threw off
Portuguese
colonialism.
Now, guerrillas
are fighting to free
their country from
Soviet
imperialism and
an insane ruler.



PHOTOGRAPHS • JACK WHEELER

FROM ROVUMA TO MAPUTO: MOZAMBIQUE'S GUERRILLA WAR

By Jack Wheeler



It took the author, at right, three attempts to get into Mozambique.

My introduction to the mysterious guerrillas of Renamo—*Resistencia Nacional de Mocambicana*, the Mozambique National Resistance—was sobering. It was late in the afternoon of June 13, 1985. Some hours earlier, I had secretly crossed into Mozambique from a neighboring country, paddling a bark canoe across a muddy river that forms the border. After hiking some 10 miles through the dry bush, my two guides indicated we were approaching a Renamo camp. Finally, I thought—my fourth attempt in two years to get inside here and see these people, and at last I am doing it.

When a shot rang out from the trees ahead, I didn't think much of it—probably a sentry notifying others of our arrival. I was wrong. When I walked into the camp, a grisly scene awaited me. An executioner had fired the shot, performing a *coup de grâce* on a captured spy of Frelimo (Mozambique Liberation Front),

the Soviet-backed Marxist insurgency that had gained power upon Mozambique's independence from Portugal in 1975. The dead spy had just been decapitated with a machete. As the headless corpse was being carried off, a Renamo soldier picked up the head, the left temple blown away by the executioner's bullet, and held it up to me. "I do not think," he said with a relaxed smile, "that we will have trouble from Frelimo spies for a while." The commander of the camp, Commandante Fujao, ordered the soldier to place the head on a stake by the nearest road as a warning to any other Frelimo agents in the area.

A table with a clean red-and-white-checked tablecloth and makeshift wooden chairs had been set up. Fujao gestured for me to sit down and explained: "If President Dhlakama [Afonso Dhlakama, president and chief military commander of Renamo] hears of this, he will be so