

## Campaign 1980 by Kathleen Murphy

### More trouble for Anderson

John Anderson appears to be running into some serious obstacles in his independent presidential gambit.

Beginning with the flap three weeks ago when he announced he would withdraw his candidacy if Ted Kennedy got the Democratic nomination—and his reversal a few days later amid media accusations of “gross political opportunism”—Anderson has found even liberal press outlets like the *Boston Globe* starting to dismiss him as “irrelevant.”

His standing in the polls is declining and attempts to enlist support from big-name Democrats appears to be heading nowhere despite Jimmy Carter's extreme unpopularity.

From last month's 25 to 30 percent range, he dropped this week to a low of 13 percent in both the latest ABC-Harris Poll and the AP-NBC Poll, and scored 14 percent in the Gallup Poll. These ratings panicked Anderson headquarters; since the candidate will be excluded from the League of Women Voters' presidential debates this fall if he doesn't climb back above 15 percent.

And it is generally acknowledged that if he does not appear in the nationally televised debates, Anderson won't establish himself as a major alternative to Carter and Reagan. As of this writing, Anderson is on only 19 ballots nationwide.

At a press conference Aug. 19, Anderson's chief counsel, Mitchell Rogovin, announced the League had granted them a week's extension to Sept. 7 to get back up.

Whether they'll succeed is an open question. White House sources reveal that President Carter's campaign strategists are displeased with the idea of having Anderson participate in all three scheduled League of Women Voters debates.

Although Anderson held a series of meetings with key liberal Democrats, including Boston Mayor Kevin White, former Pittsburgh Mayor Peter Flaherty, American Federation of Teachers head Albert Shanker, and long-time Kennedy ally Patrick Lucey, the only significant endorsement he's secured so far is from Joe Rauh, the Washington, D.C. lawyer and co-founder of Americans for Democratic Action.

In Boston last week, in an attempt that the *Boston Globe* characterizes as a “try to stop his eroding support,” Anderson was bluntly refused a meeting with former Massachusetts Governor Dukakis.

Back in Washington Aug. 19, Anderson also failed to get some anticipated endorsements from key Democratic congressmen. Not only did black Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, whom Anderson has cited as a potential running mate, remain noncommittal after a Capitol Hill meeting, but Sen. Henry Jackson, who had a cozy tête-à-tête with Anderson two weeks before the Democratic convention, flatly refused to meet.

Jackson's office explained, “The Senator is a lifelong Democrat, with no intention of leaving the party, nor running for Vice-President or anything else.”

Meanwhile, Anderson is keeping a high profile on Capitol Hill and insisting he's the only U.S. candidate acceptable to Western European leaders.

Some observers believe that behind the sudden reversal in Anderson's political fortunes are the

proverbial backroom boys who engineered his rise to media stardom in the first place; they want Anderson on hold now to stabilize Carter. Since they had deployed Anderson simply as a tool for throwing the election to Reagan—or into the House of Representatives—his campaign is on the back burner, while it will be maintained as a deployable resource as long as possible. Other analysts add that the backroom boys don't want to order the McGovern-Kennedy faction of the party to bolt to Anderson, essential for a credible campaign, for fear of creating a vacuum in the party allowing conservative constituencies including farmers, Dixiecrats, labor, and minorities to regain their hold on the party.

In line with this analysis, prominent liberal Democrat George Wald, a Nobel Prize scientist and a former McGovern adviser, this week accused Anderson of being a “tool of the Trilateral Commission” in a letter published in the Aug. 19 *New York Times*.

“I have a suspicion approaching conviction that John Anderson's try for the presidency was invented by, or with the connivance of the Trilateral Commission, to cut into the Democratic vote and so secure the election of Ronald Reagan,” Wald wrote in the CFR-Trilateral Commission house organ.

“In some sense, John Anderson represents a replay of Jimmy Carter's 1976 candidacy. Anderson and Carter were both members of the Trilateral Commission from its inception. . . .

“What all this means, if I am right, is that David Rockefeller and his Trilateral Commission, having had four years of Jimmy Carter, have decided that they can do even better with Reagan and their man Bush. . . .”