

## Elephants & Donkeys by Kathleen Klenetsky

### Soviets 'intensely interested' in 1988 U.S. campaign

Soviet leaders are "intensely interested" in the progress of the 1988 United States presidential campaign and are pumping all relevant American visitors to Moscow to find out as much as they can about the line-up.

That's the news from several Americans who recently returned from Moscow, including one Midwest businessman with longtime personal links to top Kremlin officials. The latter reported that his meetings with Mikhail Gorbachov, former ambassador to Washington Anatoli Dobrynin, and propaganda czar Aleksandr Yakovlev were dominated by talk of the upcoming presidential elections.

"The Soviets wanted to know everything I knew about the candidates, the mood of the electorate, the key issues," he disclosed. "They don't understand why Gary Hart was forced out of the race, and they're not really sure what all the Iran-Contra revelations means for Reagan."

Asked who the Soviets would like to see in the Oval Office come January 1989, the businessman replied: "They're a lot more pragmatic than that. They're trying to figure out who will win, and from there decide what the best approach to that person would be."

### Do the Russians have a Trump card?

The Soviets are reportedly looking a lot more kindly on a possible presi-

dential bid by Donald Trump, the New York builder who has amassed a fortune through real-estate speculation and owns a controlling interest in the notorious, organized-crime linked Resorts International.

Trump took an all-expenses-paid jaunt to the Soviet Union in July to discuss building the Russians some luxury hotels. The Soviets "treated me beautifully," he told reporters. "The government would like me to build a major hotel in Moscow in quality and in style like Trump Tower"—the garish structure which Trump built on Manhattan's Fifth Avenue.

Shortly after Trump's return to the United States, Mike Dunbar, a well-known Republican Party organizer in New Hampshire unveiled plans to enter Trump in the 1988 New Hampshire Republican primary. Although Trump said he had no prior knowledge of Dunbar's effort, he refused to categorically deny that he might be interested in running for President. "Anyone would be honored to hear this," he commented, when informed of Dunbar's draft.

Dunbar, who thinks George Bush is "boring" and that Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kan.) has voted for too many tax increases, believes he can convince Trump to run.

### Bush 'dumb,' Biden a 'good bet'

The Soviets, he reported, think George Bush is a sure bet to get the Republican nomination. But, "they think Bush is dumb," he said. "They don't quite put it so bluntly, but you can tell they view him as a lightweight."

On the Democratic side, the Russian leadership estimates that Joe Biden, the senator from Delaware, has "a good chance" at his party's nomi-

nation.

From Moscow's standpoint, Biden would make a dream U.S. President. Historically a fan of the arms-control mafia, Biden this year chose to adopt a high-profile role within the congressional bloc fighting the Reagan administration on key strategic issues.

In addition to sponsoring legislation that would force the United States to comply with the unratified SALT II Treaty, Biden has emerged as one of the most vehement foes of the Strategic Defense Initiative, which he regularly excoriates as "a Maginot Line that is ravaging our economic capital, nuclearizing the heavens, and yielding the fate of our children's world to the malfunction of a computer."

Biden has introduced legislation which would require the United States to comply with the Soviet-backed "narrow" interpretation of the ABM Treaty, with the obvious intent of preventing the development and deployment of a strategic defense system that could match Soviet efforts.

According to several sources, the Soviets are trying to line up a slew of American visitors to Moscow this summer, for the purpose of getting an ever-more refined and precise picture of the election line-up.

One can imagine how alarmed Russia's leaders must be by recent CBS polls, conducted in early July in Boston and Concord, New Hampshire, showing that Moscow nemesis, Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., not only has high name recognition, but also enjoys widespread support for his program. In Concord, a man-on-the-street poll conducted by the local CBS news affiliate July 8, showed that two out of three people interviewed recognized LaRouche, and one out of two said they would support him for President. In Boston, a CBS-TV news reporter found the same rate of response.