

Elephants & Donkeys by Kathleen Klenetsky

Hart campaign manager scores Iowa 'blackmail'

The former national campaign manager of Gary Hart's ill-fated presidential bid, shook up the Democratic Party apparatus recently, when he accused the Iowa Democratic Party of being composed of greedy and corrupt politicians, who regularly extort money from the party's presidential candidates.

Bill Dixon leveled these accusations in a speech to the National Association of Secretaries of State July 14, in which he charged that "greedy" Iowa politicians have consistently resorted to "blackmail and threats" to procure campaign donations from the candidates.

Dixon denounced Iowa political leaders "who trade their support for campaign contributions." Iowa, he said, "is the home of sophisticated, greedy political leaders who threaten national political candidates with regularity and with crudeness in a quest for political money. . . . They have been corrupted by big money."

Dixon specifically accused the state party leaders of threatening to undercut those presidential candidates who refused to donate hefty sums of money to state Democratic campaigns. He said that several Iowa politicians had flatly refused to consider endorsing Hart, unless he came up with a donation to their own electoral operations.

"We know money corrupts, and Iowa has been first in the nation for too long, and political money is corrupting a small portion of the leadership there," Dixon later said in an interview with the *Boston Globe*. "I'm not alone in saying that. It's just other campaign managers still have candidates in the race. Iowa has gone too far. It's time for someone else to be

first in the nation."

Philip Roeder, communications director for the Iowa Democratic Party, denied Dixon's charges—although he did admit that presidential candidates Bruce Babbitt, Joseph Biden, and Richard Gephardt distributed liberal amounts of money to Iowa politicians last year, especially those who exert significant influence on the state's caucuses.

Chris Hamel, Babbitt's Iowa campaign coordinator, told the *Globe* that Babbitt and his supporters had donated about \$60,000 in money, services, and staff contributions to Iowans last year, including a \$10,000 contribution to Lowell Junkins's unsuccessful 1986 gubernatorial campaign.

Those contributions paid off in spades, Hamel said. Junkins "says nice things about my campaign, and nice things about Gephardt," who also contributed to Junkins. "He does trash Gary Hart. Is that worth \$10,000 to me? Yes. . . . We are looking for any advantage over the others to personalize relationships in any way we can."

Dukakis's anti-SDI stance stirs rancor

Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis's vehement opposition to the Strategic Defense Initiative is causing some consternation back home, where defense contracts in general, and SDI ones in particular, have become mainstays of the economy.

Dukakis openly acknowledged, at a meeting of the Association of State Democratic chairs July 17, that his commitment to terminating the SDI could cost Massachusetts a whopping 251 defense contracts. But he also insisted that the loss of SDI contracts would not harm his home state's economy.

Dukakis's claim was disputed by Stephen Levy, chairman of the Massachusetts High Technology Council. Noting that the defense industry makes up a large component of the state economy, Levy told the *Boston Globe* that "the absence of SDI would certainly hurt." He predicted that cutbacks in SDI contracts would cause layoffs—a view which Dukakis also disputes.

Southern Dems not charmed by 'Dwarfs'

Southern Democrats are singularly unimpressed by the current crop of officially sanctioned Democratic party presidential candidates, and unless the party comes up with a better candidate, they will once again vote Republican in 1988.

That's the conclusion of a study conducted by the Roosevelt Center for American Policy Studies, based on interviews with "hard-core Democrats, "swing" Democrats, and Republicans. "Swing Democrats [are] strongly—though not irreversibly inclined to back the Republican nominee," wrote report co-authors Mark J. Rovner and William A. Galston.

The findings present a real problem for the Democrats, who must win big in the South to take the White House. Democratic voter apathy about the "Seven Dwarfs" isn't limited to the South. Syndicated columnist David Broder reported recently that he and a colleague undertook an informal survey of Cleveland blue-collar workers shortly after the Democratic debate in early July. Most of those interviewed saw the candidates as "simply a blur." "The Democrats are almost certain to pay a price for offering a skeptical nation a stranger as President," Broder warned.