

HARRY C. BOYTE

## Escalating arms budget forces administration to strengthen new right

**OMINOUS INDICATIONS OF a new bellicosity on foreign policy have recently emerged from the right and center of the American political spectrum. Against the background of right-wing efforts to raise a huge war chest against the expected SALT agreement between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, Carter administration officials have sought to appease their critics by capitulating to their programs.**

The White House sponsored research for the enormously expensive MX missile system. Paul Wanke, articulate advocate of disarmament progress, was replaced by Benjamin George Seignious, a retired three-star general, as head of the only government agency designed to "sustenance" the Pentagon. Reports were leaked to the *New York Times* that Defense Department and National Security Council officials were "moving toward a vast revision of American strategy on nuclear warfare" that "would greatly enhance the ability to wage a limited nuclear conflict."

Such measures simply fed the right wing. Senate Minority Leader Howard Baker—warning that "Who Lost Iran?" would be a major issue in 1980—joined with Henry Kissinger and Gerald Ford in charging the administration with insufficient support for the Shah. "The geopolitical momentum in that area has turned against us," Kissinger told *Time* magazine. "The more the United States looks out of control of events, the more this process will accelerate."



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By mid-January, every major business publication was railing against administration "weakness" around the world. The *Wall Street Journal* summed up the "new consensus" on Jan. 19. Pointing to "trouble spots" for the U.S.—but neglecting to mention the Soviet Union's own foreign policy setbacks from Eastern Europe to India, China and Japan—the *Journal* declared its opposition to what it dubbed "The So-What School" of foreign policy. "There is brewing a vast foreign policy debate that will lay before the public the 'So-What School's' dismissal of geopolitical thinking," the *Wall Street Journal* wrote.

The drive for undisputed corporate control over domestic politics, so salient in the Nixon-Ford years, has meshed with a resurgent militarism among large sections of business. Origins of the new militarism lie in the early '70s. Confronted with the prospect of defeat in Vietnam and mounting economic difficulties at home, the Nixon administration charted a hardline attack against such "liberals" in the foreign policy establishment as Clark Clifford and

Averill Harriman, who argued that the U.S. should cut its losses in Indochina and negotiate to reduce tensions elsewhere. As a counterpart to its domestic program for what Treasury Secretary John Connally called a "new partnership" between big business and big government, Nixon and Kissinger asserted a doctrine of great power politics overseas.

In a world of rising third world demands, trade competition, threats to American prestige, the Nixon-Kissinger design of American policy called for a mixture of threats and bribery toward Russia, combined with a ruthless aggressiveness towards smaller nations that got out of line. This "geopolitical thinking" was epitomized during Christmas 1972 when the U.S. conducted unprecedented and savage bombing of Hanoi and Hai-phong, while Nixon simultaneously planned his visit to the Soviet Union.

There was considerable irony in Nixon's demise. His corporate political offspring survived his departure and reshaped American politics in the coming years (see "Quiet Knights: Business Roundtable Wilds Immense Power Behind the Scene," *IN THESE TIMES*, Sept. 14, 1977). But world events proved less susceptible to American control.

In 1976, shortly before leaving office, Gerald Ford ordered an intelligence study of the arms situation. The report, released after Carter's inauguration, had little to do with objective assessments. As *The Nation* pointed out, it was "a stacked jury, chosen to deliver a predetermined verdict" that the Soviets were gaining military supremacy. Similar evidence of militarist propaganda appeared in the bitter controversy over Paul Wanke's nomination as head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and in the campaign for the B-1 bomber.

The May-June 1978 issue of *Public Opinion*, a little-known journal put out by the corporate think-tank of the American Enterprise Institute, ran an interview with Kissinger and Daniel Patrick Moynihan that provided a rare glimpse into the rationale for military escalation.

The interviewer, Henry Jackson's speech writer Ben Wattenberg, began by asking if freedom was in fact threatened around the world. Kissinger had no patience with such mystifications. Freedom was not the point, he said (perhaps thinking of his friend the Shah). Nor was Russian supremacy: "It is an absolute absurdity to say that the Soviets are stronger

than we are."

Kissinger identified three problems. First, there had been a failure of nerve among the elite during and after Vietnam. Second, "there is lacking that base of support which gives leaders self-confidence." And third, there was subversion from within: "the existence of a group in the political establishment who always thought the cold war was unnecessary."

Moynihan enthusiastically added that for him the "great symbolic moment" of the elite's loss of nerve had come in the fall of 1966 (!), when students protested Robert McNamara at the Kennedy School in Cambridge. Now, subversives abound—Moynihan pointed to Sam Brown, head of ACTION, as an example, a man who had the gall to meet with the Vietnamese delegation to the UN. Kissinger concluded the interview by suggesting that all was not lost, however. There existed "leaders around this country who could be mobilized" in support of American self-assertion.

Such sentiments are the stuff of imperial ambition. Indeed, in the thinking of the resurgent right, defeat of SALT II will only be a first step. There is to follow a major expansion of military spending, massive civil defense preparedness, perhaps a reinstatement of the draft, and above all a renewed ability to make American "will" supreme wherever it is challenged. This kind of ambition, now surfacing with enormous power, leads as cautious a man as Cyrus Vance to caution resignation if the U.S. becomes "gripped" by a new wave of anti-Russian hysteria.

Resurgent militarism forms a new context for the left and for those who believe in peace and social justice. We need to build support for SALT II—not as a "solution" but because its defeat would be a disaster. But beyond SALT, a peace movement must have more substantive goals. We must demand that Carter's election promises be made a reality—that the U.S. and Russia move beyond limitations on the pace of the arms race to real progress toward disarmament, a halt to arms sales and a nuclear-free world. John Fitzgerald Kennedy put it simply before the UN General Assembly in 1961: "Every man, woman and child lives under the nuclear sword of Damocles, hanging by the slenderest of threads. The weapons of war must be abolished before they abolish us."

Harry C. Boyte is a member of the national board of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee.

## BOOKS

### G. William Domhoff's political wisdom

By Edward Kelly

**THE POWERS THAT BE: Processes of Ruling Class Domination in America** By G. William Domhoff Random House, \$10.00

In examining political power in America, most social scientists have paid little attention to the top of the economic class structure. While acknowledging the existence of "the rich," they have downgraded their power and importance. For these scholars, America is a pluralist society in which shifting alliances of constituencies and special interest groups determine policy.

The work of G. William Domhoff is part of a growing reaction against this pluralist view. Since the publication in 1967 of his *Who Rules America*, Domhoff has argued that real political power is concentrated in a small upper class and its allies. This upper class consists of the 0.1 percent of American adults with over \$1 million in net assets. It effectively owns and controls America's large corporations and, Domhoff believes, is a politically dominant ruling class.

*The Powers That Be* is an extended essay in which Domhoff provides an analysis of four processes through which this upper class exercises its power.

Through the "special-interest process," the various particular interests of upper class individuals, corporations, and industries are satisfied. This process includes the achievement of tax breaks, subsidies,

and other favors. It is the most visible demonstration of upper class power.

But this visibility is deceptive. It appears as little more than an anarchistic series of power grabs in which different parts of the upper class often are in conflict. According to Domhoff, without coordination, the upper class cannot be a ruling class.

Domhoff argues that such coordination does exist. He examines the "policy-formation process" through which the upper class achieves a high degree of unity on the larger long-term issues which transcend those settled through the "special-interest process." Unity is accomplished through mediation of such institutions as the Council on Foreign Relations, the Committee for Economic Development, the Business Council, the Conference Board, the National Planning Association, and the Population Council. In these, the coordination necessary for the upper class to rule is achieved.

But the "policy-formation process" is not sufficient for upper class rule, because elected public officials must still carry out the policies which the upper class wants. In Domhoff's view, this generally happens because most successful politicians quickly accede to upper class policies, if not from conviction, at least from a compelling desire to advance their careers.

Needing money, connections, and favorable media attention, most politicians develop close ties to some part of the up-

per class. Only a limited number of ultra-conservatives, liberals, populists, and socialists have managed to slip through the "candidate-selection process" controlled by the upper class. Rarely have these few been able to block the overwhelming majority of politicians, only too willing to carry out the special interests and broad policy objectives of the upper class.

Finally, Domhoff examines the "ideological process" by which the upper class attempts to mold the views of the rest of the population so that they will believe that the U.S. is "the best of all possible worlds." It achieves the general resignation of most people and guarantees the smooth functioning of the "special-interest, policy-formation, and candidate-se-

lection processes."

*The Powers That Be* is an important examination of the politics of contemporary American society. The emphasis on the processes of upper class rule is a fruitful approach toward understanding how so few can have so much power. It provides at least a basis for understanding why voters so infrequently get the policies they believe they are choosing in elections.

Domhoff's analysis offers an alternative to the sense of bewilderment so many citizens now feel. Through his work and that of other critics of the pluralist viewpoint, the possibility of a new political wisdom is beginning to emerge.

Edward Kelly is the research director for the Ohio Public Interest Campaign.

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# PERSPECTIVES

## The Weber case: blue collar Bakke?

By Laurence R. Sperber

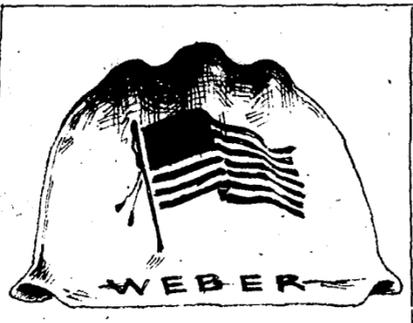
**OPENING BRIEFS WERE FILED** with the U.S. Supreme Court Jan. 24 in the case originally called *Brian F. Weber vs. Kaiser Aluminum & Chemical Corp. and United Steelworkers of America, AFL-CIO*. The case brought by Weber against his union and his employer at Gramercy, La., challenges an affirmative action job training program set up voluntarily by the company and the union in 1974 to assist black workers. The program was not ordered by any governmental agency or court.

The U.S. Court of Appeals in New Orleans ruled in Weber's favor last November.

Alan Bakke's legal challenge to a voluntary affirmative action program of the state University of California at Davis Medical School involved state action within the reach of the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Although four Justices agreed that the Davis plan violated the U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1964 (and the rights of white people), the Court decided *Bakke* on Fourteenth Amendment grounds. It held that the use of race to obtain a diverse student body was protected under the First Amendment and did not violate the Fourteenth. But the Court also ruled out fixed quotas if there was no proof of past discrimination by the university.

*New York Times* correspondent Roger Wilkins reported (Dec. 22, 1978) that Weber was being called "the blue-collar Bakke" because he too was challenging a voluntary program set up to assist minorities. Wilkins noted that in *Bakke* the Supreme Court had not dealt with voluntary affirmative action programs in employment, "although much of the public believes that it did." Will Weber be as famous (or infamous?) as Bakke? Bakke got into medical school. Will Weber get his chance for on-the-job training?

It is not generally known that the U.S. government, acting through Solicitor General Wade H. McCree Jr., had joined



Tom Greenfielder

Kaiser and the union in urging that the Court review the case, but had gone on to ask that the court of appeals judgment be vacated for reconsideration in light of the *Bakke* case. McCree's brief stated:

"*Bakke* teaches that the legality of an affirmative action program may turn on the presence of governmental findings of discrimination and the degree of governmental participation in developing the affirmative action program.... The record in this case does not reveal the full extent of the role played by the OFCC (Office of Federal Contract Compliance, Department of Labor) in the development of Kaiser's on-the-job training programs. The OFCC made specific findings and recommendations concerning craft jobs at Gramercy, but these findings were not put in the record.... Thus, a reopening of the record might well indicate that the affirmative action program... could be upheld," because a bona fide government body had in fact found a record of past discrimination. (Citing the Powell opinion in *Bakke*.)

The Court did not follow the government's suggestion in Weber any more than it followed similar cautions in *Bakke*, where past discrimination by the University was also kept out of the record. As long as the Court requires a showing of discrimination in affirmative action cases, it will be the rare case where either party to a suit brought by a white person will rush in with proof of discrimination in the past. The white plaintiff certainly will not prove the defendant's case.

The real parties in interest, as lawyers

say, are not in court—the women, the blacks or browns, who want to see the affirmative action plan sustained because they need the relief.

Not everyone agrees that proof of past intentional discrimination should be required as the test of the validity of affirmative action programs. But the various opinions in *Bakke* suggest that the doctrine is not about to vanish on its own. In the Weber case, Judge Minor Moore Wisdom dissented in the court of appeals, saying that the majority judged the affirmative action program "by the wrong standard." He suggested "a zone of reasonableness," which would encourage private settlements, especially in this case where the statistics constituted "a *prima facie* case of discrimination." Wisdom also argued that the job program may be upheld "as a proper response to societal discrimination against blacks." This latter argument had been made in *Bakke*, and advanced in dissent by Justice Thurgood Marshall, but rejected by the Court's majority.

A post *Bakke* group known as the Affirmative Action Coordinating Center, formed by the Center for Constitutional Rights, the National Conference of Black Lawyers, and the National Lawyers Guild, filed a brief in the *Weber* case based on Marshall's position. The Center argued that "to require any standard other than the existence of under-representation which has its roots in this country's history of slavery and its legacy of white supremacy and discrimination against non-white people, will eliminate voluntary affirmative action."

Department of Labor people told the *Times'* Wilkins that the *Weber* case could throw the whole government enforcement program out of whack. Eleanor Holmes Norton, chairperson of the department's Equal Employment Opportunity Commission stated, "What's a poor employer to do? If it acknowledges the past discrimination, which would protect it against a Weber suit, it would be opening itself to the range of liabilities available to employees under the federal nondiscrimination requirements now on the books." She pointed out that most large employers in the U.S. are faced with two major anti-

discrimination requirements. One is Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination in interstate commerce by employers with 15 employees or more. The other is Executive Order 11246, issued by President Johnson in 1964, which requires nondiscrimination by employers with federal contracts worth \$10,000 or more.

These two programs expose employers to actions by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which enforces Title VII, or by the Office of Federal Contracts Compliance, which enforces the executive order, and to lawsuits brought by any employee aggrieved by an employer's practices. (The lawsuit being brought by former ACLU lawyer Charles A. Morgan Jr. for Sears, Roebuck & Co., seeks relief against EEOC, among other government agencies, "to cut through the impossible conflicting regulations.")

The *Weber* case has stirred less public interest than *Bakke*, but the briefs filed this time, though fewer in number, are more significant in the range of interests represented. The case will not be argued for some time; Weber's brief is not due until Feb. 26. In the court of appeals, a friend of the court brief was filed for the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith by its former executive secretary Arnold Forster. Prof. Philip Kurland of the University of Chicago is expected to file another brief for the ADL in the Supreme Court, urging that the Kaiser plan violates the Civil Rights Act. Kurland made the same argument in the brief he filed for the ADL in the *Bakke* case, and four Justices agreed with it. It is this argument that the appeals court accepted in the *Weber* case, and that the Supreme Court must now review.

But this time the Steelworkers, the AFL-CIO, and the independent unions have joined the major civil rights groups in entering briefs against Weber. If the *Bakke* case is a guide, the Court will deliberate a long time before deciding the *Weber* case.

Laurence R. Sperber, a member of the New York and California Bar, and Bar of the Supreme Court, wrote on *Bakke* for *IN THESE TIMES* last year.

## Where Power Lies

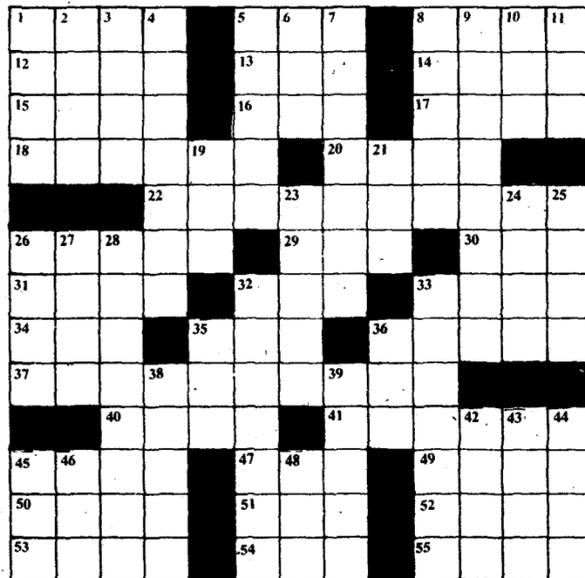
By Jay Shepherd

### ACROSS

- 1 Iowa college town
- 5 Hansom
- 8 Dueller's weapon
- 12 For fear that
- 13 Ottoman official
- 14 Worship
- 15 Choir member
- 16 Alley cat
- 17 Locale
- 18 Semi-arid grassy plain
- 20 Coalition
- 22 Legislative body
- 26 Tear
- 29 Common conjunction
- 30 \_\_\_ the line (obey)
- 31 Fit to be \_\_\_ (angry)
- 32 Bikini part
- 33 Sugar unit
- 34 Omelette requirement
- 35 Persist
- 36 Encouraged
- 37 Executive mansion
- 40 Glut
- 41 Homeric sage
- 45 Persian and Siamese
- 47 Play unit
- 49 Shore factor
- 50 Help
- 51 502 in Rome
- 52 Joycean turf
- 53 Simply
- 54 Certain Gal
- 55 Impression

### DOWN

- 1 Woe is me!
- 2 Swoon
- 3 Italian noble family
- 4 Prevented
- 5 Provide food service
- 6 Past
- 7 Italian girl
- 8 Medicinal salt
- 9 Shopper's bane, often
- 10 Dine
- 11 Word with evil
- 19 Tiptoe
- 21 Lass's counterpart
- 23 A Key
- 24 "And then there were \_\_\_"
- 26 Played golf
- 26 Irish or beef
- 27 Like a kite
- 28 Cashier's equipment
- 32 Guillotines
- 33 Broke, as a wave
- 35 Fido, for one
- 36 Employ
- 38 Word with bud
- 39 Up to the time
- 42 Spare item
- 43 Norse god
- 44 Let
- 45 Type of wheel
- 46 Beame or Fortas
- 48 Fed. group



### Solution to last week's puzzle:



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