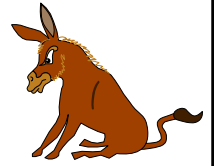


# Town & Country Democrat



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November 2005

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## Dean Aims to Overhaul Democrats

Howard Dean is no longer screaming he's scheming. The failed presidential candidate whose howling adieu to the Iowa caucuses helped seal his fate as a presidential candidate is plotting to overhaul the Democratic Party. Borrowing ideas from President Bush's re-election



campaign, Madison Avenue and his own Internet-driven White House bid, the Democratic National Committee chairman hopes to drag the party into the 21st century.

"What I'm trying to do is impose a system and run this place like a business," Dean said during an expansive interview in his office overlooking the Capitol. That vision would be welcome news to party strategists who have complained that the DNC and its chairman of nine months lag behind Republicans in the political arts of messaging, targeting and organizing.

Some Democrats look back at Dean's rise-and-fall presidential campaign and wonder whether he has the management skills to carry out his plans or the ability to raise the money

needed to pay for them.

Among Dean's goals are first, making Democrats the party of values, community and reform. Armed with extensive DNC polling, Dean is consulting with party leaders in Congress, mayors and

governors to recast the public's image of Democrats with a unified message.

Second, improving the party's "micro-targeting," the tactic of merging political information about voters with their consumer habits to figure out how to appeal to them.

Third, building a 50-state grass-roots organization, using the same Internet and community-building tools that took Dean's presidential bid from obscurity to the front of the pack before Iowa.

This is where Dean and Bush have something in common. Both their campaigns benefited from networks of supporters promoting their candidacies person to person friends telling friends, family and associates how to vote.

Bush plugged into existing organizations such as churches and

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## Join Us for Club Elections and a Special Election Victory Party on November 9th!

You are cordially invited to a Special Election Victory Party at Town & Country's next meeting on Wednesday, November 9th at 7:00pm at the Deterding Park Clubhouse (see map on page - 4). Additionally, T&C will be holding its 2006 Club Officers Elections.

Club business will be kept to a minimum and snacks and beverages

will be available during the party and we take a well-deserved break from the hard work of the past few months.

For those unable to attend and would still like to vote in the election, a ballot is printed on page - 4. Mail-in ballots must be received by Wednesday, November 9th at the club's PO Box. See page 4 for more information!

## From the President...

It has been a long and hard five years for the Democratic Party and all of us who do as much as we possibly can to get our candidates elected and have our voices heard. I'm proud of the work that our members do but so often many of those members work behind the scenes or work in the names of several other organizations. Unfortunately, Town & Country as a club and its members are not getting the recognition that I believe we deserve.

During this special election, it was remarked to myself and other officers and members that Town & Country seemed to be AWOL. Certainly, while those who have been the most active in the club's recent history have grown older and less active, accusing the club of being inactive is simply a bunch of "cow cookies."

Town & Country, for better or worse, has transformed into the mirror image of modern politics. That is, many of our members would rather write checks than contribute shoe leather and voices to our causes and our candidates. This has been happening all over America since the '60's and '70's. There's certainly nothing wrong with raising money. After all, without T&C's money, there is no Northeast Campaign HQ and no candidate donations. The problem is being accused of laziness.

Member activity has been changing of course since the election and reelection of GW Bush. Town & Country's members are getting out there to war protests, union picket lines and rallies in support of worthy causes. And don't forget participating in community events as we did in September.

But don't let others forget that Town and Country is alive and well! Wear your T&C buttons, volunteer to take the club banner with you places, and be proud!

## Trouble in Wal-Mart's America The Washington Post

Is Wal-Mart going wobbly? Over the past couple of weeks, America's largest company -- linchpin of the low-wage, no-benefit economy that is increasingly the norm in America -- has announced some surprising reversals of course. In a series of speeches and interviews, chief executive H. Lee Scott unveiled four initiatives that he clearly hopes will polish the company's increasingly tarnished image.

Wal-Mart, he said, will shift to more environmentally responsible practices -- demanding greater mileage of its truck fleet and better packaging of its products. It will offer more affordable health insurance to its employees, cutting the monthly premium in some cases to just \$11. It will monitor the environmental and health and safety practices of its foreign suppliers. And it will lobby for a higher federal minimum wage.

Scott's timing is anything but accidental. The sweatshop conditions in which thousands of employees of Wal-Mart's suppliers routinely work, and the depressive effect that Wal-Mart has on working-class living standards here in the United States, are receiving increasing scrutiny -- enough to impede the company's growth. Wal-Mart's attempts to open stores in the major cities of the Northeast and West Coast have been largely checked by a coalition of fearful and indignant unions, smaller retailers, churches and liberal activists. Wal-Mart's stock is down 13 percent this year. And worse is still to come. In November filmmaker Robert Greenwald will release "Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price," a scathing documentation of the company's business practices at home and abroad.

So the leopard realized it was time to change its spots -- up to a point. Only 44 percent of Wal-

Mart's nearly 1.3 million U.S. employees are covered under its health insurance plan; indeed, as any state government can attest, many thousands of Wal-Mart employees qualify for and routinely use the Medicaid program for the indigent. Now the company says it will make its insurance more affordable -- though it still comes with a \$1,000 annual deductible, a hefty chunk of change considering that the average Wal-Mart employee makes less than \$19,000 a year.

Scott's announcement that Wal-Mart wants better environmental and workplace practices from its foreign suppliers raises many more questions than it answers. The reason Wal-Mart has 3,000 factories in China making the products that go on its shelves isn't that U.S. workers can't do the work, of course. It's because China is home to more cheap labor than anyplace else on earth. In 2003 Wal-Mart imported \$15 billion worth of goods from China, 11 percent of China's total exports to the United States.

Of all Scott's commitments, the one that does merit belief is his out-of-the-blue declaration of support for a higher minimum wage. For Wal-Mart is bumping up against a serious problem at least partly of its own making: Because it pitches its products to a disproportionately low-income clientele, its revenue rises and falls with the fortunes of the lower end of the American working class.

Wal-Mart, could, of course, raise its workers' wages, but Scott has dismissed that out of hand. So now it's the feds' responsibility to rescue Wal-Mart from the consequences of the low-wage, low-consumption economy that Wal-Mart, with such fanatical devotion, has created. For, in Wal-Mart's America, it's not clear that even Wal-Mart can thrive.

## California Group Steps Into Vacuum on the Left

By Thomas B. Edsall and Chris Cillizza

During last year's campaign, two big new groups -- America Coming Together and the Media Fund -- captured the imagination of such mega-donors as international financier George Soros and insurance magnate Peter Lewis. Exclusive Hollywood fundraisers drew movie stars and producers.

In the aftermath of defeat, however, many of these deep-pocketed donors have picked up their marbles and gone home. ACT and the Media Fund, which were originally billed as long-term projects, are in hibernation with uncertain futures after their billionaire benefactors stopped writing checks.

Last week a new organization was launched, aiming to build the liberal cause with supporters who have thinner wallets but longer attention spans. The New Progressive Coalition said it will try to create a "marketplace of ideas" in which donors of all sizes can be connected with "progressive innovators and organizations"

crafting long-term ideas to rebuild the left.

The group got going with a grant of nearly \$1 million from Andrew and Deborah Rappaport, a Silicon Valley couple who in the 2003-2004 election cycle gave at least \$4.7 million to liberal causes.

The group lamented on its Web site, [www.newprogressivecoalition.com](http://www.newprogressivecoalition.com), that the right has been better at funding a movement rather than merely focusing on individual campaigns: "The so-called 'vast right-wing conspiracy' is a powerful \$300 million network of conservative policy think tanks, grassroots organizations, advocacy groups and media entities that took decades to build. For too long, progressives have failed to develop our own infrastructure and make these investments in our future."

Executive Director Kirsten M. Falk and a staff of seven at the Redwood City, Calif., offices are setting up a Web site where prospective donors can examine proposals from various liberal activists or organizations.

## Poll shows Iraqis back attacks on UK, US forces

Forty-five percent of Iraqis believe attacks on U.S. and British troops are justified, according to a secret poll said to have been commissioned by British defense leaders and cited by The Sunday Telegraph.

Less than 1 percent of those polled believed that the forces were responsible for any improvement in security, according to poll figures.

Eighty-two percent of those polled said they were "strongly opposed" to the presence of the troops.

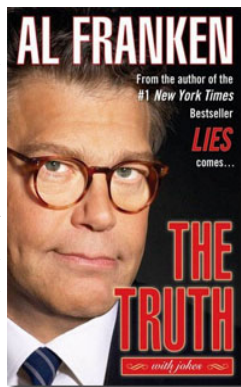
The paper said the poll, conducted in August by an Iraqi university research team, was commissioned by the Ministry of Defense.

Britain has more than 8,000 troops stationed in the south of Iraq, and has had 97 soldiers killed, the most recent the victim of a roadside bomb on Tuesday night.

## Franken's Back with "The Truth"

Al Franken's hot-off-the-press book is now in bookstores and available on the net.

Although all his recent books have been political, "The Truth" is probably his most frontal attack on Bushevism to date. On page 193, for instance, he states unequivocally, "Bush is lucky that he had a Republican Congress, or he almost certainly would have been impeached and imprisoned." (There's also a phony blotter of LSD on the page, which Franken claims is the only way you could possibly understand Bush's contorted, deceptive, changing



Social Security policy.)

And Franken means it. While the subtitle of the book notes "with jokes," this is a rather robust broadside about how Bushevism is destroying our nation and threatening world peace. Being Franken, wry humor emerges at times, but Franken is clearly, as

listeners of his Air America show know, truly baffled by how Bush and his cabal are getting away with highway robbery, death and economic destruction, not to mention the shredding of our Constitution.

When you think about how wishy-

washy most of the Democratic Leadership is, it's just so damn refreshing to read Franken take on the Republicans with "The Truth." Democratic leaders are so intimidated by the myths, fictions and lies created by the RNC and the White House that they believe that they have to move closer to the deceptive GOP image of America in order to win elections. But, Franken, who is mulling a Minnesota U.S. Senate run against Norm Coleman, doesn't see any reason not to simply tell it like it is.

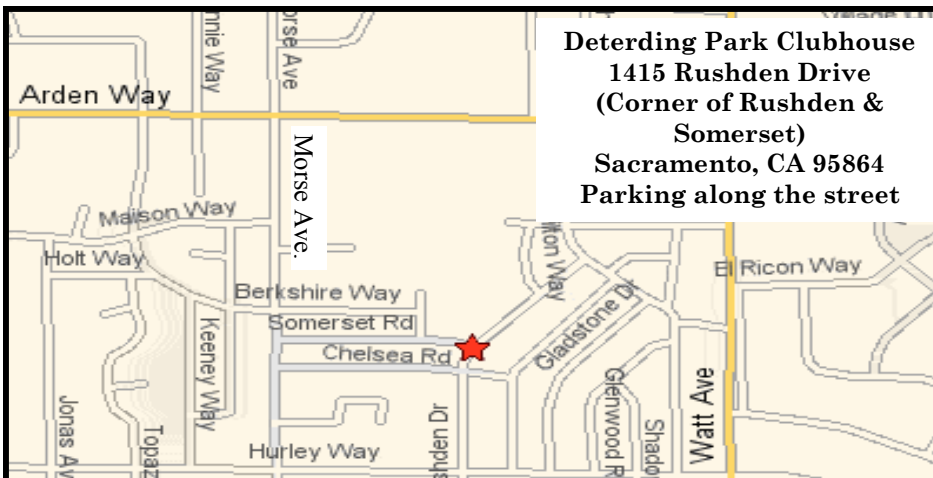
Franken closes "The Truth" with a letter to his grandchildren (written at some point in the future) entitled, "The Resurrection of Hope."

# Club News

## Volunteers Needed for GOTV!!!

Area organizations are looking for 700 volunteers on Election Day to knock on doors and Get Out The Vote. We will try to get 35,000 occasional voters to the polls. We need your help to do this. Volunteer a few hours to defeat Gov. Schwarzenegger's special interest election.

This election is very unpopular and there is a danger that voters will stay home. We need a big turn out to defeat Propositions 73 - 78. Please call 457-4008 to sign up for Tuesday, November 8th any time from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM!!!



**Deterding Park Clubhouse**  
 1415 Rushden Drive  
 (Corner of Rushden & Somerset)  
 Sacramento, CA 95864  
 Parking along the street

**Don't forget about T&C's next meeting on Wednesday, November 9th at 7:00pm!!! See you at the Deterding Park Clubhouse!!!**

## Official Ballot for 2006 Club Officers

At the General Membership meeting on Wednesday, October 12th the Chair of the Nominating Committee presented the committee's recommendations for 2005 Officers.

Below are the names of those members and spaces for write-in candidates. Additional nominations will be accepted at the club's General Membership meeting on Wednesday, November 10th after which nominations will be closed. Ballots will be collected at that time and counted. Please bring this ballot with you if you are attending the meeting.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please vote now by circling the names below or write in the name of another member. Please detach and then mail this ballot in a sealed envelope, with your signature across the seal, to the club's PO Box in time to be received by Wednesday, November 9th at 12:00pm: PO Box 1286, Citrus Heights, CA 95611-1286.

**Please circle the candidate's name or provide a write-in name for each office...**

- PRESIDENT: TIFFANY CRAIG-BROWN      WRITE-IN \_\_\_\_\_
- VICE PRESIDENT: ARNIE GODMINTZ      WRITE-IN \_\_\_\_\_
- SECRETARY: LAURE OLSON      WRITE-IN \_\_\_\_\_
- TREASURER: JAMES NAKATA      WRITE-IN \_\_\_\_\_

## Meeting Minutes from October 12th, 2005

The meeting was called to order by President Kevin Murphy with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by asking for and receiving approval of the evening's agenda and the previous meeting's minutes.

Treasurer Jim Nakata reported \$7,561.80 was in the treasury.

V.P. Arnie Godmintz reported on the Central Committee meeting which lasted 5 minutes and was then adjourned to allow members to phone bank.

Pres. Murphy introduced Larry Miles, a Trustee from the San Juan School District Board of Education and a member of Town & Country. Larry spoke on the status of education in the San Juan Unified School District and in California in general. Of special note were the ramifications of the passage of Proposition 76, which is really about bringing down spending by establishing caps. This is a terrible idea and emergency cuts give the Governor too much power to cut programs. The wording is designed to give the Governor more power.

Larry's presentation was followed by good questions and even better answers.

Carmichael Founder's Day and Citrus Heights' Sunday

Funday coordinators Arnie Godmintz and Andy Alderman were thanked by President Murphy along with all of the volunteers who helped register voters and pass out information about the special election at these two community events.

Charles Brown announced that he is now a declared candidate for Congressional District 4 now occupied by John Doolittle. He asked for support of his campaign and the Veterans Rally that is being held at the Capitol on Saturday, October 29th.

It was reported that the Special Election Forum held downtown was not well attended.

The Nominating Committee proposed a slate of officers for 2006: Tiffany Craig-Brown for President, Arnie Godmintz for Vice President, Jim Nakata for Treasurer and Laure Olson for Secretary. The slate was seconded and approved and all the candidates accepted their nominations.

A proposal was made to make the Membership Committee Chair an officer of the club. This would require a change in the club's bylaws and should be addressed in future Steering Committee

meetings before being brought to the club's membership for a vote. President Murphy suggested that the change be incorporated into the ongoing discussions of revising the club's bylaws.

Peggy Gorman was made chair of the club's annual Holiday Party in absentia.

The Steering Committee has endorsed raising membership dues. A vote will be taken by the membership at the November general membership meeting.

Robert Dawa spoke regarding the Federal Election Committee meeting held in San Diego that he attended. The meeting emphasized accountability and new rules to accommodate McCain-Feingold campaign financing laws.

The California Clean Money campaign is having a "fun meeting" on November 19th. More information will be forthcoming. Save the date.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Krings  
Secretary

## Join the Town & Country Democratic Club!!!

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Strengths/Experience \_\_\_\_\_

**The Town & Country  
Democratic Club  
encourages the  
participation of  
young members.**

Please check one box and circle the correct membership below:     NEW                       RENEWAL

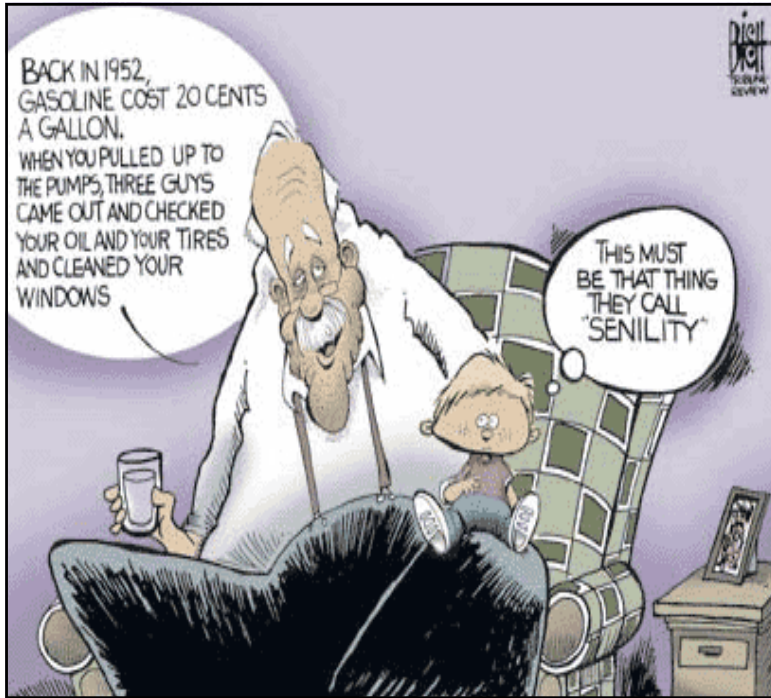
Annual Dues:    \$20.00 Individual                      \$25.00 Family                      \$12.00 Full-Time Student/Unemployed  
                      \$12.00 Senior Individual                      \$16.00 Senior Family                      \$12.00 Newsletter Only

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to: Town & Country Democratic Club  
 P.O. Box 1286  
 Citrus Heights, CA 95611-1286

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Just for Fun!!!



## Why Help Was Delayed in FL, TX & LA



### LEGISLATIVE REPORT

From the Natural Resources Defense Council

#### Budget/Appropriations...

Congressional leaders have once again signaled a delay in completing a budget reconciliation bill for this year. Following passage of two emergency supplemental spending bills to respond to the Gulf Coast hurricanes, and the likelihood of a third supplement soon, House Speaker Hastert (R-IL) has called for an across-the-board budget cut for fiscal year 2006 spending, totaling about \$30 billion. It remains to be seen whether this proposal will gain Senate support. House and Senate committees have begun work on the 2006 budget reconciliation bill, and both bills are expected to contain language opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling and possibly expanding offshore oil and gas exploration.



#### Energy...

On 10/7, the House narrowly passed a new energy bill (H.R. 3893), 212-210, after Republican leadership held the vote open for almost an hour to garner the necessary votes. Sponsored by Rep. Barton (R-TX), the legislation would weaken numerous provisions of the Clean Air Act and provide regulatory incentives for quick construction of oil refineries. The bill also would reduce the number of automotive fuel blends designed to reduce polluting emissions, and would allow the president to designate areas on federal land, including closed military bases and wildlife refuges, as new refinery sites. The Senate is not expected to take action on the bill.

#### Wildlife Protections

On 9/29, the House passed a

drastic overhaul of the Endangered Species Act by a vote of 226-193. The bill (H.R. 3824), sponsored by Rep. Pombo (R-CA), House Resources Committee chair, represents the biggest change to the Endangered Species Act since it was first enacted over 30 years ago. The bill would severely undermine several key provisions of the act; among other things, it would completely eliminate the designation of "critical habitat" for species on the brink of extinction, roll back regulations protecting endangered species from harmful pesticides and create a new entitlement program to pay developers for loss of the use of some land due to ESA restrictions.

Thirty-four Republicans voted against the bill, creating a closer than expected margin on final passage and sending a strong signal to the Senate that the bill is extremely controversial. The Senate must now decide if it wants to take up the House version of the bill before the end of the year.

## Editorial: Bring Liberal Radio to the Troops

Former Democratic Nominee General Wesley Clark has launched a new online advocacy campaign to restore political balance to the programming on Armed Forces Radio by putting Liberal radio host Ed Schultz on the air.

Last year, Sen. Tom Harkin introduced a resolution that was unanimously passed by the Senate, urging Secretary Rumsfeld and Armed Forces Radio to ensure more political balance in programming.

Then, at the end of September, Manny Levy, Chief of the Radio Division of the American Forces Network Broadcast Center, advised the distributor of Ed Schultz's nationally syndicated radio program, Jones Radio, that: "AFN

Radio has squared away everything on our end to begin carrying the first hour of 'The Ed Schultz Show' each day, beginning Monday, October 17, 2005."

But suddenly, at 7 am on Monday the 17th, Allison Barber, the Pentagon's deputy assistant secretary for internal communications called Schultz's producer. Without any further explanation, she simply said that the deal was off. Many speculated that Barber, who was a target of Schultz the previous week when she was shown prepping soldiers for a "unrehearsed" one-on-one with President Bush, was trying to get back at Schultz.

It was just 11 years ago when 70

Republican Members of Congress, led by then Congressman Robert Dornan (R-CA), demanded that President Clinton's Secretary of Defense Les Aspin broadcast Rush Limbaugh's radio and television programs to the military.

Well if Armed Services Radio is good enough for Rush Limbaugh, it's certainly good enough for Ed Schultz.

Please email your Members of Congress now, urging them to call on the Pentagon to honor their promise and air the Ed Schultz Show on Armed Forces Radio. It's time to restore political balance in the programming being broadcast to our men and women in uniform.

## Dean con't...

hunting clubs. Dean nurtured his word-of-mouth networks through the Internet.

The DNC is getting outside help from private-sector consultants who specialize in creating and strengthening corporate images or "brands." "The last time this party was branded was Lyndon Johnson," Dean said. "We'd been in power so long that we didn't think we needed to do it." The lack of a message or brand makes it difficult for Democrats to capitalize on Bush's political slump and a series of GOP scandals. While the party is unified in accusing Republicans of creating a "culture of corruption," Democrats still need to give voters a compelling alternative to GOP rule.

A March 23, 2005, memo by DNC pollster Cornell Belcher found that most voters view politics through a values-laden prism rather than through the economic framing traditionally used by Democrats. On a list of issue choices, "moral values" ranked in the middle of the pack and well ahead of abortion and gay rights. That suggested to Belcher that moral values has a

broader meaning for voters than do social wedge issues.

Dean's take on the polling is that Democrats must recast the values-and-morals debate.

"It's morally wrong that so many children live in poverty. It's morally wrong that we have so many working poor people who can't pull themselves out of poverty," he said.

A Sept. 26 memo by Belcher found that people are placing a greater emphasis on community and sacrifice for the greater good. Dean tries to appeal to this sense of higher purpose when he says, "We can do better."

Bush's campaign revolutionized the use of micro-targeting to find potential GOP voters and tailor messages to their tastes. Republicans also used niche media including cable television, radio, the Internet and even internal video feeds at gyms to push their message in 2004. In an era of iPods, text-messaging and blogs, Dean said new media will grow in influence as the power of traditional network TV advertising

wanes.

Can the DNC catch up to Republicans by next year's elections? Or even the 2008 presidential race? "No," Dean said, "but we can close the gap." For this, too, Dean is getting help from the private sector.

Dean is also putting four or five DNC staff members in every state with orders to organize every precinct. One of the organizers' first mandates is to conduct four major events a year, one or two of which are mainly social. Dean learned from his own campaign that it is critical to form relationships that turn into small communities and build into networks of people who feel part of a bottom-up operation with a purpose larger than themselves. It's a long-term investment that runs counter to the political culture in Washington that, in the last years of the 20th century, has valued multimillion-dollar TV buys over grass-roots organizing. "You've got to recruit people. You've got to ask them to do something," Dean said. "You have to treat them like a community."

## Contribution: Let's Fix This Mess

by Molly Ivins

I have been collecting material for a series of columns on the peppy topic, "How Do We Fix This Mess?" The news is dandy in that there are a lot of a sound ideas being passed around. Really serious messes, like the one this country is in, do not, in my experience, have simple, definitive solutions. And if they do, such solutions are politically impossible. We are looking for progress, not perfection, so anyone who tells you the entire tax code should fit on a postcard is a bona fide, certified, chicken-fried moron.

But listening to the Democratic debate on what to do now, it seems to me some of the brethren and sistren are asking the wrong questions. The question is not, "How Do We Win?" That's a technical question that comes after, "What the Hell Can We Do About This Disaster?"

I personally think some good ideas and a plan should come first -- and to this end, let me chime in on a note of agreement with some Actual Moderates, William A. Galston and Elaine C. Kamarck, a couple of Clintonites still carrying on in that old Third Way that was good enough for Bill C.

They are opposed to putting too much stock in the political strategy of "reframing" issues as advised by the linguist George Lakoff. This seems to me merest common sense, and I'm not sure Lakoff himself wouldn't agree.

Frank Luntz, the focus-group king and message-meister who keeps the Republicans all chorusing the same carefully worded talking points, is indeed a large part of the R's win strategy. But I think the reason R's have been successful in selling rotten policies that really hurt people is not so much because of clever wording as because Democrats haven't stood up and pointed out what was happening.

Believe it or not, there is a

certain charm to simply telling the truth, and even to telling the truth simply. This emperor isn't wearing any clothes, and the people who are pointing that out now that Bush's approval ratings are at 37 percent, but who were nowhere to be heard when he was at 60 and better, are maybe not the people we should be looking to now.

Which brings us to the Democratic Leadership Council and the Al From-Bruce Reed take on what we should do now. The DLC is regularly condemned as being Republican Lite, but it seems to me its problem is being Light Lite. The From-Reed proposal is security, values, opportunity and reform -- a perfect symphony of the obvious. I do like their Opportunity ideas:

Create high-wage jobs by making the United States the top exporter of energy-efficient products.

Cut \$300 billion in subsidies, and invest it in innovation, education and growth.

Pass tax reform to replace 60 tax breaks with four: college, homes, kids, universal pensions.

The problem comes when you look at their reform initiatives -- lobbying reform to close the revolving door and a ban on partisan gerrymandering. Uh, how about we address the problem that our entire political system is corrupt, that it has been corrupted by corporate money, and that we have government of corporate interests, by corporate interests and for corporate interests -- and that we really need to change that, instead of trying to raise more corporate money than Republicans?

David Sirota, a stout liberal attacking from the other side, decries Partisan War Syndrome, which he defines as beginning with the assumption that substance is irrelevant when it comes to winning elections and "far more damaging to actually building a serious, long-lasting political movement." I like people who think like that.

Bob Borosage, director of the Campaign for America's Future, offers a "Real Contract With America" in the current issue of the *The Nation*. He has some excellent ideas, and I'll discuss them more later. Like the others, Borosage emphasizes Making America Safe and Real Security for America.

What you find across the Democratic spectrum is agreement that the Bushies are hopelessly inept at homeland security. Essentially nothing has been done to protect the ports, and almost no progress has been made on helping first responders and improving public health capacity, despite all that money spent on small towns in Wyoming. The chemical plants are obvious targets -- but heaven forbid that the Bushies should force their dear friends in the chemical industry to spend money on public safety.

For me, the most annoying suggestion being made is that Democrats somehow need to claim or reclaim patriotism or to do something to let folks know that we, too, love our country. I find that hideously offensive. I have always thought the only way to respond to Republican statements and implications questioning the patriotism of non-Republicans is with a good swift blast of venomous anger.

How dare they imply that opposing war in Iraq calls one's patriotism into question? Take the offensive. Anyone who would use that kind of slimy attack sullies America, where dissent is honored, respected and, Lord knows, needed.

The contemptible, petty, little would-be Joe McCarthys need to understand what love of country really means -- love of the highest and best in America. Never to be confused with "pre-emptive war" over nonexistent weapons and certainly not with using "democracy" to sell a rotten, failed war.

## The Final Word: Will The Democrats Blow It?

By Bill Press

The list of Republicans in Washington under investigation or indictment grows by the day. So far, they include: Dick Cheney, Bill Frist, Tom DeLay, Karl Rove, Scooter Libby, Jack Abramoff, David Safavian, Armstrong Williams, plus Congressmen Duke Cunningham, Bob Ney and Richard Pombo.

I don't know what you call that, but I call it a good beginning. Indeed, it's tough for some of us to wipe the grin off our face these days. As much as we hate to take pleasure in anyone else's misery, the George W. Bush house of cards is collapsing on every front: the war in Iraq, Social Security, out-of-control spending, record deficits, Hurricane Katrina, the Harriet Miers fiasco. It's fun to watch. They've gone from the gang that could do no wrong to the gang that can't shoot straight.

For Democrats, it doesn't get much better than this. In the latest NBC/Wall Street Journal, 49 percent of Americans said they'd like to see Democrats take charge of Congress in 2006. Only 34 percent want to see Republicans retain control. Still, the good news for Democrats is tempered by reality: No matter how good an opportunity, Democrats could still blow it — and will, unless they soon get their acts together. In politics, it's not enough to watch the other side crumble; you've also got to give voters a reason for coming your way.

Why didn't Democrats learn anything from Newt Gingrich? Back in 1993, Gingrich was in a similar position: leader of the minority party when the majority was falling on its face. Although, by comparison, the ethical cloud hanging over Speaker Jim Wright — accused of persuading lobbyists to buy multiple copies of his autobiography — was child's play

compared to the criminal charges now hanging over DeLay, Frist, Cunningham and other Republicans.

Gingrich saw the opportunity for Republicans to seize power, but he also saw the need for them to stand for something. So he very carefully crafted the "Contract with America" — outlining what Republicans would do, if successful in winning control of Congress. It was pure political

**"No matter how good an opportunity, Democrats could still blow it..."**

propaganda. Of 10 legislative measures proposed, not one ever saw the light of day. But the Contract served its purpose: to lay out for voters the road map Republicans would follow, if only given the chance. And it catapulted them into the leadership.

So what are Democrats waiting for? I don't care what they call it, but Democrats should get busy shaping and selling their own agenda. Without it, nobody knows what they would do differently. Without it, it's too easy for Republicans to claim, as we hear so often, that the Democratic Party has no ideas and stands for nothing except anti-Bush.

What should that document contain? That's up to Democrats in Congress to decide. But I would suggest something like this. Democrats will: End the war in Iraq and bring our troops home. Achieve energy independence by the year 2015. Give every American the same level of health care enjoyed by members of Congress. Fix Medicare and Social Security, and stop Congress from raiding the trust fund. Raise the minimum wage. Provide tax cuts for the middle class. Give every first grader a new laptop computer.

Whatever. It almost doesn't matter

what it contains, as long as it's new and different. It doesn't matter what they call it. Just make it big, make it bold, and get something out there. Quick!

As I outline in my new book, "How The Republicans Stole Christmas," there's one more thing Democrats must do: Get religion. As recently as the civil rights movement, Democrats owned the Bible. Then they let Republicans steal it. It's time to steal it back.

Democrats also need to take back the moral high ground from the religious right — by affirming their faith, talking about values and, most importantly, expanding the list of moral issues beyond abortion and gay marriage. Jesus never said anything about abortion or gay marriage, but he had a lot to say about helping the poor. Poverty's a moral issue. So are the death penalty, the living wage, health care, protection of the environment, and pre-emptive war. Those and other issues are the ones Democrats need to talk about as moral imperatives.

One thing for sure: The burden is now on Democrats. Republicans have given them a big, fat opening. Will Democrats take advantage of it?

### Contribution Policy

The opinions expressed in editorials or other contributions do not necessarily reflect those of the membership of the Town & Country Democratic Club. Contributions may be edited due to space or content, are due by the 25th of each month for the coming issue, and can be sent to.....

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# The Calendar



**Special Election Day!!!  
Tuesday, November 8th**

**Gray Panthers**

Tuesday, November 8th, 1:00pm  
Hart Senior Center  
27th & I Streets, Sacramento  
Contact: Joan Lee  
(916) 332-5980  
www.graypanthersacramento.org

**Sacramento County  
Democratic Central  
Committee, Truman Club &  
Sac Central Labor Council  
Special Election Victory Party**

Tuesday, November 8th, 8:30pm  
Skybar Café—908 15th Street  
(across from Memorial  
Auditorium).  
No host bar and free hors  
d'oeuvres  
Info: (916) 442-0264  
www.sacdems.org

**Town & Country Democratic  
Club**

Wednesday, November 9th, 7:00pm  
Deterding Park Clubhouse  
1415 Rushden Way, Sacramento  
Corner of Rushden/Somerset  
Contact: Kevin Murphy, President  
(916) 944-0669  
www.tandonline.org

**California Clean Money  
Campaign Party**

Saturday, November 19, 5 - 8pm  
Southside Park Cohousing Common  
House, Sacramento  
(Enter on T St. Between 412 and  
440 T Street)  
RSVP: Sara Nichols (916) 444-3669

**Women Democrats of  
Sacramento County**

Monday, November 21st, 6:30pm  
Sacramento Teachers Association  
5300 Elvas Avenue, Sacramento  
Contact: Linda Rogaski  
(916) 332-8732  
www.wdsc.net

**Town & Country Steering  
Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, November 30th,  
7:00pm  
Location: Kevin Murphy's Home  
4211 Paradise Drive, Carmichael  
Contact: Kevin, (916) 944-0669  
All Members Welcome!  
www.tandonline.org

**Sacramento For Democracy**

Wednesday, December 3rd, 7:00pm  
Location: TBA  
Contact: (916) 326-5850  
www.SacramentoForDemocracy.org

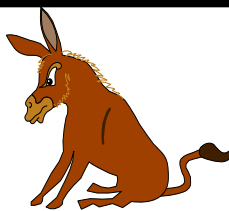
**T&C Annual Holiday Party**

Wed., December 14th, 7:00pm  
Carmichael Park Veterans Hall  
More Information Coming Soon!!!

**Daryl Pratt & Allison Eddington  
in Concert Benefiting UNICEF -  
Percussionists from Australia**

Saturday, December 17th, 7:30pm  
Sacramento Unitarian Church  
More Information Coming Soon!  
Contact: Fred Pratt 482-3018.

**Town & Country  
Democratic Club  
P.O. Box 1286  
Citrus Heights, CA 95611-1286**



Time Value Mail  
Address Correction Requested



**Reminder: Please find  
your ballot for the  
club's 2006 election of  
officers enclosed!!!!**