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October 25, 1993

The Mayor of our Nation's Capital today is a lady by the name of Sharon Pratt Kelly. She is a right well educated lady and one that has had considerable experience in the economic sector of the metropolitan area. The crime situation is so bad at the present time that she has decided that as Mayor of our Nation's Capital she should have the right to call out the National Guard. The National Guard, as she proposes, would take over certain duties that are now performed by the police department such as directing traffic and other matters, leaving the 3,900 members of the Metropolitan Police Department in a position to prevent and solve crimes. The President has hesitated about giving her this right and I am glad that this is his position. All she is asking for is the same right as the 50 states since their Governors have the right in emergencies to call out the National Guard. Our new President is hesitating because once it goes around the country that the National Guard is patrolling the streets of Washington, D.C. this will reduce the number of tourists by at least half and instead of billions of dollars coming in from the tourists, the amount will be in the small millions. We have over 22 million tourists a year coming to our Nation's Capital, and they spend plenty of money.

A number of the members of the City Council here in Washington are against the Mayor's proposal and this, along with the fear that it may prevent people from coming is just enough to cause our new President to hesitate in granting this authority.

October 26, 1993

The election in Canada yesterday may bring about a delay in the vote on NAFTA

which was previously set for November 17. The Canadian Liberals captured nearly all of the seats in the House of Commons and the Conservative Party that controlled 155 seats won only two seats--almost completely wiping out the Party and here we had a lady just recently elected as Prime Minister. She is Kim Campbell and now with only two seats left, of course, goes out. Her successor is the leader of Canada's Liberal Party and all during the campaign he indicated that there would be a re-adjustment in the terms of NAFTA if his party was elected. This, of course, will delay the vote in the House and could even go so far as to bring about a delay that would mean the vote would not take place until next year. This election was really an upset as far as our country is concerned and may be just enough to defeat NAFTA.

October 29, 1993

In the Senate today we have a man by the name of Packwood from the State of Oregon. He, in his last race for reelection, was almost defeated by a House Member and during that campaign and since, many rumors have floated around that he has mistreated a great many women on his staff and women who visited his office from the State of Oregon. It reached the point where it had to be referred to the Ethics Committee in the Senate and the Committee, out of respect for one of their Members, started a delaying process which would never have brought about a conclusion. Then, suddenly Senator Packwood announced that he, for a period of years, had kept a personal diary and in his diary there were one or two entries charging one of the Leaders on the Democrat side in the Senate with having relations with too many women and other very secret matters along this line. He has attorneys representing him and when this matter of the

diaries was brought out, the Ethics panel immediately issued a subpoena for the diaries. Then, Packwood disclosed the fact that a great portion of his diaries pertained to individual Members in the Senate and that it should not be released.

I know nothing about Packwood's diaries but if the diaries are like Packwood, they are simply items where he has reminisced somewhat. In fact, even though he has attorneys and the Ethics panel has decided to broaden the inquiry, Packwood needs to go and see a psychiatrist. There is something wrong with this man and they might as well find out in the beginning as to whether or not he is mentally competent. Every move he has made in the last three weeks clearly indicate confusion.

Another terrific California fire has displaced 25,000 people and destroyed over 600 beautiful homes. This happens in the state of California from time to time and especially, as Louise tells me, since they have had no rain in that portion of the state of any consequence since April.

Another Continuing Resolution had to be adopted yesterday in the House due to a filibuster in the Senate over grazing fees that are a part of the Interior Appropriations Bill. All thirteen of our bills are now either signed into law or on the President's desk with the exception of Defense which was held hostage a long time ago and Interior which is now in the grazing fee filibuster. Leon Panetta, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, had a meeting with me this week and I explained to him that the White House should get into this thing and get it over with. There is an article in today's Washington newspaper entitled "Showdown on Grazing Fees" and apparently Secretary Babbitt, after another cloture vote on the filibuster failed has

finally decided to act.

November 2, 1993

The three major legislative proposals now before the Congress are NAFTA, health care reform legislation and campaign limits for both House and Senate under a general campaign legislative proposal. NAFTA may pass, but it is behind at this time in the House. Health care reform legislation will not be voted on until next year and unless we have campaign reform legislation we are certainly going to end up with fixed terms for both the House and the Senate.

This is the second day of the debate in the Senate with the subject being the release by Senator Packwood to the Ethics Committee of his diary. It seems that he has kept a diary mainly in longhand and he, on more than one occasion before the Ethics Committee and in the Senate chamber by speech, has stated that his diary names names of other Members in some of their escapades and that portions of his diary should never be released. We are now down to the constitutional question as to the validity of a subpoena forcing the man charged with either an indictment or charges that could bring about a removal from the Senate and this is really a close constitutional question. In fact, if interpreted correctly, I believe the Supreme Court would hold that you could not force Packwood to turn over his diary. The debate will continue today and then the Senate will vote as to whether or not he must obey the subpoena and turn over the diary to the Ethics Committee.

The space shuttle Columbia and its 7-member medical research crew landed yesterday morning at Edwards Air Force Base, California after 14 days in space.

This is the longest flight in shuttle history. The landing was a perfect one and about an hour later the crew was taken directly off the shuttle and onto a vehicle that rolled up to its hatch. The project scientist in charge of the crew said that the crew had to remain prone on stretchers to preserve affects of weightlessness for continuing medical studies. Columbia logged 5.8 million miles and circled earth 225 times during its journey which began October 18. This mission exceeded by nearly five hours a previous shuttle flight record set by a crew aboard Columbia last year. Columbia again had damage to thermal barriers around engine heat shields and to its protective tiles with problems that have occurred before and will continue to be investigated according to NASA.

The fires have settled down in California, but over 600 homes were destroyed and thousands of acres of land completely burned over.

For years now a great many people in this country have wondered just what would happen to the Estate of Doris Duke when she died. The tobacco heiress died last week at the age of 80 and willed most of her \$1.2 billion estate to charity. More than \$1 billion of her various investments will be used to create the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation which will endow causes Duke supported such as the arts, the environment, disease research and the prevention of cruelty to animals. The foundation may become one of the largest in our country even up to the well endowed Rockefeller and Ford Foundations. In her will, Doris Duke directed that the foundation be operated by a Board of trustees, two of whom she named in her will. Also in her will, she directed that the loan she made to Imelda Marcos of \$5 million be repaid. Doris Duke

was named the richest girl in the world when in 1925 at age 13 she inherited the fortune of her father who had founded the American Tobacco Company. During most of her life she was in the gossip columns because of her many romances and her lifestyle. This ends a guessing game that has continued by foundations and individuals in this country for many years and I guess the directive under the terms of her will establish a foundation which will now produce benefits for a great many people in this country.

Of course, tobacco no longer can establish tremendous amounts such as the Duke fortune, but there is still considerable money behind a great many tobacco companies in this country.

November 3, 1993

For two days now, the Senate has debated the Ethics Committee's demand for the release of Bob Byrd's diary. Last night on a roll call vote of 94 to 6, the Senate voted to authorize the Ethics Committee to go to court to enforce a broad subpoena for the personal diary of Packwood. During the debate, Robert C. Byrd (D-W.V.), the Senate's President Pro tempore, stunned his colleagues by announcing that Packwood was doing damage to the Senate and saying he should have resigned. I listened to Byrd on television and he said that even though none of the Senators are completely pure or without flaws, but when those flaws damage the institution of the Senate, it is time to have the grace to go. He pointed and he meant that Senator Packwood should resign his seat in the Senate. Since Packwood, of course, will not resign, he must take the consequences, according to Byrd, and other speakers. Under the Constitution, Packwood might have been alright with his diary, but

he himself produced sections out of the diary to the Ethics Committee and therefore I believe, under constitutional law, he takes himself out from under the protection of the provision whereby you cannot force a defendant to testify against himself.

Yesterday's elections really had a number of upsets. In Virginia, George Allen, the Republican candidate for Governor defeated the present Attorney General, Mary Sue Terry. Allen is a Republican and the son of the famous Washington Redskins coach who died about three years ago. Allen served for one term in the House with us and under the redistricting that was required following the 1990 census, his seat was eliminated. He then started out as a candidate for Governor on the Republican side and was given no chance for election.

New York City Mayor David N. Dinkins made every move possible to retain his seat, but was defeated for reelection by a Republican, Robert W. Giuliani. The pollsters really called the races close this time because they had this one neck and neck.

In New Jersey, Governor Jim Florio who served with us in the House for a number of years, was defeated by Republican Christine Todd Whitman after his fight to survive after enacting the largest tax increase in the state's history. Whitman, by the way, almost defeated Bill Bradley, one of New Jersey's Senators in 1990. She came within 51% to 48% of going to the Senate. Lautenberg is the other New Jersey Senator who is up for re-election next year and admits that he will have a close race.

In Kentucky we had a number of upsets for county and city offices. Warren County

for the first time has a Republican County Judge Executive and in Owensboro, the present Republican County Judge Executive was re-elected. In Bullitt County, a Republican State Representative beat the sitting Democrat in the County Judge Executive's race.

Generally speaking, all over the Country there were upsets and a great many of them can be traced, I think, to a certain extent back to the policies of our new Administration here in Washington. I believe that in every state and in every city the new President campaigned in a Republican won. He was not invited to campaign in Virginia so that one cannot be placed at his doorstep.

Too many irons in the fire, too much television, too much publicity, and a great many other matters that are not well planned are present today here in our Nation's Capital and unless something happens, it may get worse.

Our Parliamentarian, William Brown, is a very wealthy man. Some of the most valuable land in the State of Virginia is owned by his family and this election, his wife decided to run as a Delegate to the House in the State of Virginia. Thousands of dollars were spent, but she was overwhelmingly defeated.

November 8, 1993

Somalia now warns us to keep our troops off of the streets. We are in Somalia with food, drugs, and all kinds of supplies to help starving people and now they demand we keep our troops off the streets. Today, we will vote on a Resolution which provides that all of our troops are to be withdrawn from Somalia by March 1, 1994. It may be that we will want to withdraw our troops prior to that time.

This man Perot is really something. Now a billionaire and spending quite a bit of his own money to get his message out against NAFTA, he has come up with information which appears in today's newspapers to the effect that he has been targeted for assassination by a Mafia-like group working to pass the North American Free Trade Agreement. He spoke to 3,000 people at an anti-NAFTA message meeting in Tampa, Florida this weekend and informed the group that the FBI had relayed information that the unidentified Pro-NAFTA organization had recruited six Cubans to kill him. This possibly would take affect at the Tampa meeting or at his debate here in Washington with Vice President Gore. A federal law enforcement source said last night that Perot's comments appeared to be based on third-hand information passed to the FBI by an anonymous telephone tipster. The source added that the Justice Department was unaware of any threat against Perot by any pro-NAFTA organization. Just before his large meetings are to take place and especially back during the days when he was running for President and withdrew, he has all kinds of rumors that he circulates. In withdrawing in his race for President, he said he had learned that a "Republican dirty tricks" squad had wiretapped his Dallas business office and was planning to disrupt his daughter's wedding and smear her with a fixed photo. Nothing ever appeared along this line and this, of course, is very similar to his recent statement concerning an assassination attempt.

A one-debate meeting has now been arranged between Perot and Vice President Gore to take place here in Washington tomorrow night. I am of the opinion that it would probably have been a little better to have selected someone other than the Vice President for this particular debate.

Perot can lose nothing but gain considerably if he, with his one-line jabs, prevails. Just to think that this man is a graduate of Annapolis and is a billionaire. In 1960 he was a millionaire and has now gone into the billionaire category.

Even with Somalia and Perot, we did have information released this weekend which may be of some validity and especially from the standpoint of the health of our people. A team of scientists this past weekend presented a radically new theory about the cause of Alzheimer's disease which turns the high stakes research field upside down and offers a possibility that most cases of the devastating disease may be prevented or cured with something as simple as a daily pill. Leaders in the field said that they were impressed with the theory but they cautioned against reading too much into the new theory because it differed so markedly from prevailing views.

According to the team of scientists the new work focuses on an entirely different hallmark of Alzheimers' brains--protein deposits called neurofibrillary tangles that lie within, rather than on affected brain cells. It builds on research reported by the team of scientists that people who carry a gene called Apo E 4 are more likely to get Alzheimers than are individuals who carry slightly different versions of the gene Apo E-3 or Apo 2.

To say the least it would require years to continue this type of research and at the same time it might be possible when we consider our E-4 to correct what's wrong by adding something that is not there. Somewhat similar to giving Vitemin C to treat scurvy.

Everything helps and Alzheimer's is now costing the people in this Country some \$90 billion a year so I hope that this release of the new theory may bring about something that will be of assistance to the National Institutes of Health at this time.

November 9, 1993

Each day we read stories about Senator Packwood of Oregon and he, of course, still refuses to turn over his diary to the Ethics Committee. A number of my friends have been kidding me considerably about the Packwood diary because they know that for 40 years now I have kept a Journal. I have a good Journal and one of these days will have to decide just what I should do about passing this Journal along either to my family or to sell it. Someone in the I.R.S. could place a value on this Journal that would simply mean my family would have to go to the bank and borrow money to pay the Federal Estate Tax. When I first arrived as a Member of Congress our Federal Estate Tax exemption was only \$60,000 and after working for several years to get it up to \$1 million we finally succeeded in bringing this figure up to \$600,000. This would take care of my Journals and this is a problem that I will have to do something about before too long.

In "The Washington Times" today there is a little article entitled "Diarist writes on." This article is as follows:

"Despite the headlines that diaries have been making lately, the king of journals, Rep. William H. Natcher, Kentucky Democrat, writes serenely on in his magnum opus.

Since Jan. 6, 1954, he has jotted down his private thoughts

every day the House is in session. That has resulted in 55 bound volumes of 300 pages each, writes Thomas Galvin of Congressional Quarterly.

There's no point asking to read excerpts of Mr. Natcher's journal. The 83-year-old lawmaker politely refuses all requests for a peek. He plans to leave the journal to his children when he dies.

He is also unlikely to face a subpoena to relinquish it. His reputation for rectitude is unparalleled, and the notion that he would run afoul of an ethics inquiry would strike his colleagues as ludicrous."

The Congressional Quarterly has written a story about my Journal and this is the source for the little "Times" article.

In speaking of Journals, Leonard Bernstein, one of the great pianists who rose to fame as Music Director of the New York Philharmonic left his papers and memorabilia to the Library of Congress. This move was concurred in by the members of his family and some people in this Country call him the most important American classical musician of the 20th Century. He certainly was one of the best known and most widely admired. The materials in this collection certainly connect with several areas in which the Library of Congress has become one of the field's leading research resources including American musical theater, American classical composers and 20th Century music. The Bernstein manuscripts will

join those by Mozart, Brahms, Copland, Hindemith and dozens of other composers. In the future, those in the Library of Congress say if you have a personal computer you will be able to access the Bernstein collection.

We have been advised by leaders in Somalia to keep our troops off of the streets and the military in Haiti tells us to stay out. We simply should come out of both countries and just let them float around for awhile.

Al Gore will debate Ross Perot tonight and this is one debate that will not be complimentary as far as Gore is concerned. Under no circumstances should he have accepted and the President should never have asked him to debate with this man Perot. It would have been much better for someone else in the White House to take Perot on and if not in the White House, then let our old friend, the President of one or two motor companies, Lee Iacocca take him on. Lee Iacocca speaks the same kind of language and is on the other side without any question.

On the front page of "The Washington Post" today is a story entitled "How the White House Runs and Stumbles." One of the White House aides was quoted as having said "we have had too many near death experiences here in the White House this year and we have gotta figure out a system so people's hearts aren't stopping in sheer terror all the time." I could not agree more with this statement. Our new President as I have said before, is a very bright man. He has a wonderful memory, but he certainly is taking on issues that hurt him every day and on "Meet the Press" Sunday when he appeared, the stories then followed that polls indicated that more than 70% of

Americans think the Nation is going in the wrong direction. In answer to one of the questions on "Meet the Press" the President said that he thought in a way it might be his fault since he goes from one thing to another. He did say that there are certain accomplishments that were not written about by the media and that the White House simply lacks a powerful Chief of Staff able to direct the flow of events, respond quickly to them, and impose order. Instead, authority is diffused, spread out among White House Chief of Staff Thomas F. "Mac" McLarty, two key senior advisors, David R. Gergen and George Stephanopoulos and a galaxy of others playing key roles on certain issues. Gergen himself said recently that in comparing the Kennedy White House with the Clinton operation is to compare the operation to a basketball team. He went on to say that everybody goes running down the court and anybody can shoot.

In the Capitol building we have the Ernest Petinaud Room and it was named after my old friend Ernest S. Petinaud who died yesterday at the age of 88. A little story appeared in the Washington newspaper concerning our old friend and it is as follows:

"Ernest S. Petinaud, 88, who retired in 1973 as head waiter of the House of Representatives restaurant, died Nov. 8 at Washington Hospital Center of injuries suffered Nov. 4 in a fire at his house in Washington.

Mr. Petinaud was a native of Jamaica. He came to this country and settled in Washington in the mid-1920s, finding work initially at the House restaurant as a busboy. From 1930 to 1938,

he was a steward on ships sailing the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes. He returned to the House restaurant as a waiter and was made maitre d' in 1962.

He was a Mason and Shriner. He was a member of the Scottish Rite and Plymouth Congregational Church in Washington.

His wife, Jeannette Petinaud, died in 1988. He leaves no immediate survivors."

November 12, 1993

The Walt Disney organization has finally put together thousands of acres of land in Virginia which will include, according to the operators of the Walt Disney Company, painful, disturbing and agonizing exhibits of slavery, American Indian life, and the Vietnam war. This is very unlike the Walt Disney operations in California and Florida, and the proposed park will include a 3,000-acre tract of land in Prince William County near Haymarket, about 30 miles from Washington. The representative of the company was by subterfuge and change of name, able to make purchases of land and get it together before the people really knew what was going to be located on this particular 3,000-acre tract.

Now, the people in that vicinity are very much disturbed about having 30,000 visitors a day to attend such a park. It seems that we always have a controversy when any move is made along this line because most of the time the District of Columbia gets into it one way or the other

and this, of course, makes it worse.

During the past week, an article was written about the John F. Kennedy assassination and this article, although it did not absolutely leave the theory that one man fired the two shots that killed John F. Kennedy and wounded the Governor of Texas, stated that certain sounds were recorded and testimony was received by the Warren Commission that still leaves considerable doubt that Lee Harvey Oswald was the sole participant as far as the murder is concerned. In my Journal from time to time and especially in the very beginning, I have facts which simply considered alone are not sufficient for the final report issued by the Warren Commission. This article is as follows:

"Murdered by the Mob?"

"Thirty years have passed since President Kennedy's assassination. Yet, strangely, we know with a high degree of confidence little more than we knew within 30 hours of the murder: Lee Harvey Oswald did it. That is -- or ought to be -- beyond doubt. But there remains the troubling question on which reasonable people can differ: alone or in behalf of others?

When the Warren Commission issued its report in September 1964, I had no such doubts. I'd worked with members of the commission staff when I'd been a prosecutor at the Justice Department under Robert Kennedy, and I recognized the marks of their craftsmanship. I accepted their conclusion that '[A]ll the investigative agencies and resources of the United States' had uncovered

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'no credible evidence' of a conspiracy. Nor was I troubled by the doubts raised by an increasing number of critics, led by Mark Lane, who often distorted and omitted evidence to make their arguments.

When the Church Committee in the mid-'70s revealed that the CIA had plotted with the Mafia to kill Fidel Castro in the early '60s, I remained only an interested observer. Yet the CIA, it appeared, had withheld this information from the Warren Commission despite a presidential directive to all government agencies to cooperate.

When the House of Representatives created the Select Committee on Assassinations in September 1976, my interest was only mildly piqued. When Rep. Louis Stokes, the committee's chairman, asked me to become chief counsel, I accepted, but only after we agreed that the investigation would be run professionally, letting the facts, not preconceived theories, write our final conclusions. I told Stokes that while I would keep my mind open, my personal belief was that Oswald had acted alone.

But after two years of investigation, we found ourselves differing sharply from the Warren Commission on the central question. We had found seemingly irrefutable scientific evidence of two shooters in Dealey Plaza. And we had found that the most plausible explanation for the murder of Oswald by Jack Ruby was that Ruby had stalked him on behalf of organized crime, trying to reach

him on at least three occasions in the 48 hours before he silenced him forever. The evidence had to be faced; it was probable that the president had been killed as the result of a conspiracy.

The wheels of history make parallel tracks. The work of the Select Committee now has its own Mark Lane, Gerald Posner, a New York attorney and author of 'Case Closed,' a much-touted defense of the lone-gunman thesis. Like Lane, Posner often distorts the evidence by selective citation and by striking omissions. While Posner is not as disdainful of the truth as Lane, his book is a mirror image of Lane's 'Rush to Judgement.' Still, his book provides a convenient checklist for what we know and do not know about the assassination.

We know, for example, how JFK was killed. Like the Warren Commission, the Select Committee determined that Oswald had fired the crucial shots, and we felt sure that his first missed, his second wounded Kennedy and Gov. John Connally and his third killed the president. But we had a major departure: According to the acoustics analysis and witness testimony, a fourth shot, which missed, was fired from the area known as the grassy knoll.

Since it played a major, though not determinative, role in favor of conspiracy, the fourth shot caused quite a stir in 1978. Posner writes

that we had 'flip-flopped' at the end of our investigation, but in fact we maintained an open mind throughout, preparing alternative final resolutions.

Posner also falls for the myth that our shot-from-the-grassy-knoll finding was based solely on the acoustic evidence (a Dictabelt recorded from a motorcycle policeman's open mike). We also relied on the compelling testimony of witnesses who said they heard a shot from the right front of the president's limousine. Uncritically, Posner is impressed by the numbers: More than twice as many witnesses (46 to 20) heard shots from the Texas School Book Depository as from the grassy knoll. But what else would you expect if three shots came from the depository and only one from the knoll -- which was less than .7 of a second apart from the third shot fired from the depository?

We concentrated on individual witnesses and weighed the testimony of each by the same factors: where they were, how well they perceived what they'd heard and whether they had a motive to lie. For example, the ideal witness in terms of these criteria was Paul Landis, a Secret Service agent who was riding the right running board of the following car. Significantly, Landis was positioned between the book depository and the grassy knoll; he heard shots that came from both directions, and he had no motive to lie.

Posner knows about Landis; he quotes him as a credible witness on the timing of the first shot.

You would think that he would also accept him on the direction of the third shot, even though Landis's testimony is inconsistent with Posner's thesis. Yet he ignores this aspect of Landis's testimony as he does the testimony of others. Clearly, Posner picks and chooses his witnesses on the basis of their consistency with the thesis he wants to prove.

Aware of how unsettling our finding was, we recommended a follow-up acoustics study. In 1982, the Committee on Ballistic Acoustics (known for its chairman, Norman F. Ramsey of Harvard, as the Ramsey Panel) issued a report that rejected the results -- though not the scientific reasoning -- of our acoustical analysis. The Ramsey Panel preferred to rely on the work of Steve Barber, an assassination buff from Ohio who obtained a copy of the crucial Dictabelt from an insert in Gallery magazine. Two Dallas police channels can be heard on the Dictabelt, and Barber detected 'crosstalk' between the two -- specifically, the words of Sheriff Bill Decker a minute after the assassination: 'Hold everything secure...' According to the Ramsey Panel's reconstruction of the timing of the two channels, the four 'events' we thought were shots occurred after the Decker 'crosstalk.' Thus, they could not be interpreted as the sounds of the assassination.

There is, however, a serious problem with the work of the Ramsey Panel. If you discount the evidence of a shot from the grassy knoll on

its line of analysis, you must also discount the evidence of all four shots, which appear as a sequence of spikes occurring at precise intervals on the Dictabelt. Were they simply static, random noise?

In 1979, I had little doubt about the scientific validity of the acoustics evidence, but the Ramsey report gave me pause. Yet I am inclined to stand by our study. The correlations we were able to make between the timing of the sound impressions on the Dictabelt and the visual evidence of the shots on Abraham Zapruder's film of the shooting and other data are too close to be coincidence. In addition, another critic, Gary Mack of Dallas, has since made another study of 'crosstalk' on the Dictabelt; he finds 'crosstalk' by Sgt. S.Q. Bellah that demonstrates that the four spikes came before the Decker comments. Obviously, the acoustical evidence now cuts in both directions; our conclusions cannot be simply rejected out of hand. Apparently Posner is unaware of Mack's study, as he does not analyze it.

Once confronted with credible scientific and other evidence of a conspiracy, we felt an obligation in 1978 to try to come to grips with it. We found insufficient evidence to believe that any agency of the United States government was engaged in a plot to kill the president. This conclusion has stood the test of time, despite the paranoid belief -- reflected most noticeably in Oliver Stone's "JFK" that the CIA somehow had a hand in the assassinations.

We also made the judgment that the Soviets themselves had no part in the president's murder. One of the more difficult tasks we faced was to assess the bona fides of KGB defector Yuri Nosenko. The Warren Commission knew about him but did not make his defection public in 1964. Nosenko, who claimed to have been Oswald's case officer, met secretly with the committee at CIA headquarters. We decided that Nosenko had actually been sent by the KGB to assure the U.S. government of Soviet innocence in the assassination.

I now believe that assessment was wrong. In 1992, I met former KGB head Vadim Bakatin, who was in Chicago on a trade mission. He was accompanied by Oleg D. Kalugin, a former KGB general, who was a colonel in the KGB in 1964 assigned to New York City. Both of them told me that Nosenko exaggerated and lied about his knowledge of Oswald (Posner uncritically accepts the testimony of Nosenko), but nonetheless he was a bona fide defector. Indeed, Kalugin told me that in 1964 he had been given a contract to try to kill Nosenko.

We also felt assured that the denials of the Cuban government -- voiced personally by Castro when we visited Havana -- were truthful. Our interest in Cubans, both pro- and anti-Castro, was sustained by our suspicions that Oswald was associated with them in one way or another; when a Cuban exile living in Dallas, Silvia Odio, said Oswald visited her home in October 1963

accompanied by two Latin men familiar with the anti-Castro movement, we believed her. (Posner unjustifiably casts aspersions on Odio's sanity as well as credibility.)

Yet I was not as convinced of Castro's candor when he dismissed reports (for which we had highly sensitive corroboration) that Oswald, when he appeared at the Cuban consulate in Mexico City in September, 1963, had threatened JFK's life. Similarly, we found no distinct sign of a plot to kill the president by Cuban exiles, though they had a clear motive of revenge in the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs disaster.

What we finally determined was that if a plot was afoot in Dealey Plaza, the most likely members were elements of the Mafia. Several items of evidence -- then, but more so now -- point in that direction:

°Oswald's underworld ties in Louisiana were significant, especially via his uncle, Charles 'Dutz' Murret. Murret worked for Sam Saia, a gambler, 'the most powerful operator of illegal handbooks' in New Orleans, according to the Metropolitan Crime Commission, and a lieutenant of Carlos Marcello, whose Louisiana Mafia family was one of the most powerful in the country in 1963. Testimony is also available today that when Oswald was living in New Orleans in 1963, he worked for Saia -- as a runner at Felix Oyster House, one of Saia's French Quarter bookmaking parlors.

John H. Davis, the biographer of the Guggenheim and Kennedy families, interviewed Joseph Hauser, a witness in a federal criminal investigation of Marcello, for his study of Marcello, 'Mafia Kingfish.' Hauser reconstructed for Davis a statement Marcello made to him:

Oswald? I used to know his (expletive) family. His uncle he work for me. The kid work for me to. He worked for Sam outta his place downtown...The feds came...askin' about him, but my people didn't tell 'em nothin'. Like we never heard of the guy...

Posner not only ignores this entirely, but discounts the Murret connection to Marcello. He also dismisses Oswald's relationship to Marcello flunky David W. Ferrie, a quizzical character who served as an investigator for the mobster's lawyer, G. Wray Gill. In fact, Posner squarely denies that Oswald, as a teenager, served under Ferrie in the Civil Air Patrol in New Orleans. We believed the air patrol link on the strength of witness testimony. 'Case Closed' is least persuasive here.

All through his book, Posner uses our investigation when it serves his purpose but disregards it when it runs counter to his thesis. When we deemed unreliable the statement of a secretary who said she saw Oswald at meetings in New Orleans 'on several occasions,' Posner invokes our report; but when we were inclined to believe witnesses who said they saw Oswald and Ferrie

together at a voter registration drive in Clinton, La., in the summer of 1963, he rejects our assessment.

°It is difficult to dispute the underworld pedigree of Jack Ruby, though the Warren Commission did it in 1964. Posner similarly ignores Ruby's ties to Joseph Civello, the organized crime boss in Dallas. His relationship with Joseph Campisi, the No. 2 man in the mob in Dallas, is even more difficult to ignore. In fact, Campisi and Ruby were close friends; they had dinner together at Campisi's restaurant, the Egyptian Lounge, on the night before the assassination. After Ruby was jailed for killing Oswald, Campisi regularly visited him.

The select committee thought Campisi's connection to Marcello was telling: he told us, for example, that every year at Christmas he sent 260 pounds of Italian sausage to Marcello, a sort of Mafia tribute. We also learned that he called New Orleans up to 20 times a day. Associations do not prove conspiracy, but when you have other evidence of conspiracy, they make its possible contours more plausible.

°Then there is John Rosselli, whose body was found floating in an oil drum off Miami in August 1976. He was one of the Mafia figures who had plotted with the CIA to kill Castro, and he had recently testified before the Church Committee. His Senate testimony was secret, but he had told his story to columnist

Jack Anderson: A Cuban exile hit team had been caught in Havana, and in the bargain for their freedom, an unusual deal was struck. Castro and Santo Trafficante, the mob boss of pre-Castro Cuba, formed an alliance to kill Kennedy. The assassination itself, Roselli said, had been the work of Cubans working for Trafficante, and Oswald had been recruited as a decoy. Oswald may have fired, but the fatal shot came from the right front at close range. Not all aspects of the Roselli story need be credited to see it in elements of inside knowledge. It must be analyzed; it cannot be ignored.

Posner includes Rosselli in a list of 'unnatural' deaths, noting only that he was a 'Mafia liaison with the CIA in its effort to assassinate Castro.' If, in fact, Rosselli was slain for talking to the Church Committee, as seems likely, and if his murder was ordered by Trafficante, as also appears to be the case, his death is not so easily dismissed.

Finally, there is the testimony of Frank Ragano, one of Trafficante's former lawyers, who reports that Trafficante, shortly before he died in 1987 following a heart operation, in sort of a 'deathbed confession' told Ragano, 'Carlos (expletive) up. We should have not killed Giovanni (John). We should have killed Bobby.' While reasons can be marshalled to disbelieve Ragano (and Posner does so), I am inclined -- based on hours of conversation with him -- to credit the basic outlines of his story.

For 30 years, arguments about the JFK assassination have most often centered on proving a point, not finding out the truth. Albeit, belatedly, President Clinton recently appointed four of the five members of the Assassinations Review Board, in keeping with a statute that calls for releasing all of the official documents. I urge those who care to read the original documents, not second-hand accounts of them. The key is not to close a case that cannot yet be closed, but to keep an open mind."

November 19, 1993

On Wednesday of this week the House passed the North American Free Trade Agreements legislation on a roll call vote of 234 to 200. I voted against this bill and I was positive that it would pass. A week ago the bill would have gone down, but in the meantime President Clinton kept his office open and remained on the phone for days and had a great many Members in the House come down to visit with him on this legislation. He made a number of promises for projects and programs which he may not be able to carry out. This is the only way that he secured enough votes to pass this legislation. As Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, I was advised almost on the hour of the promises that he was making because a number of the Members would either call me on the telephone or stop by and visit with me asking my support of the commitments and the promises that they had received to vote for this legislation. The President gained the support of more than two-thirds of the 175 House Republicans and slightly more than 100 Democrats to pass NAFTA. The size of the vote of 34 majority was more than was expected, but those against NAFTA were not

surprised when they found out just what was being promised. Bridges, buildings, roads, change in control of certain agriculture programs and a great many other matters that were discussed, but never agreed upon were on the table. The labor organizations in this Country are simply furious because they believe we will lose hundreds of thousands of jobs as a result of NAFTA. The President, after the vote was announced, flew to the West Coast where a meeting is being held with representatives of Canada, China, and other countries. The new Prime Minister of Canada announced last night that he could not accept NAFTA unless there were four or five major changes brought about and this was generally known in the House before we voted. All of the promises and what was taking place diminish this victory and the President is simply furious.

Yesterday he said that he, up to this time, as a new President, had done more than any other President for the past 20 years, but that he was receiving no credit from that "damn, knee-jerk press." He then continued his statement by saying "...and you can print that if you want to." That statement, along with the statement he made just before the vote on NAFTA to the effect that if any Democrat opponent used this as a major political plank in his campaign for reelection against a Republican who voted for NAFTA, then he, the President, would go into the district and defeat the Representative, was still just too much. I like the new President and I am still wondering who is advising him at this time.

Now that the vote is over, when I am walking through the Speaker's Lobby, the newspaper reporters that are shoving and pushing in the lobby stop me and want to know if I intend to carry out the commitments made by President Clinton. In one

of our little daily "poop" sheets, "CQ's Congressional Monitor" on page 4 today, we find a little article entitled "Clinton May Have Exceeded His Line of Credit on NAFTA." This article goes on to say that the Appropriations Committee, according to the message from some of its Members, will not serve as a rubber stamp on some of the legislation and Committee Appropriations Chairman Bill Natcher, D-Ky. would not comment on how those costly presidential promises may fare in his Committee. He did say, the article went on to state, that eight of the 13 so-called "College of Cardinals" on the Committee on Appropriations voted against NAFTA. Natcher, himself, voted against NAFTA and that apparently the Members who received the promises must now start out trying to collect. The article is correct about the earning and receiving of the projects and I am delighted that all during the skirmish for votes to pass this legislation the President, or no one from the White House called me requesting that I go along with the President if he made certain commitments to get certain votes. I voted right, and if I had to vote again this morning at 10 o'clock, I would still vote "no."

November 21, 1993

Here we are on Sunday, November 21 in session, hoping to adjourn either late tomorrow night or sometime during the day on Tuesday. We start this afternoon at 2 o'clock with the legislation that makes the District of Columbia the 51st state. New Columbia is the name that they give here in Washington for the new state and it may pass in the House, but it has no chance whatsoever in the Senate. The Senate will never give the District of Columbia two Senators with less than 11 square miles of land and less than 600,000 people. Each five or ten years efforts are made to make

this the 51st state, but up to this time it has always failed miserably.

During the past several days that we have been running almost around the clock, we have finally passed the Brady Bill. This bill provides for a five-day waiting period on the purchase of weapons and passed in the House by a very narrow vote. The Senate then decided to have a filibuster and it was hours later that they finally agreed to accept the five-day waiting period whereby those that wanted to buy weapons could be carefully investigated before the sale was made, but a time limit was fixed for the legislation of only four years. In other words for a four-year period, a five-day waiting period will prevail and this, of course, does not suit the National Rifle Association at all. This is their first major failure in the last 20 years.

This bill is called the Brady bill since it is named after Jim Brady who was the press secretary for Ronald Reagan and the man who was severely injured when Reagan was shot. Brady and his wife have traveled all around the country since the shooting, hoping to curtail the sale of weapons and this past weekend a number of events were held celebrating almost the entire victory of the legislation.

We have a schedule to complete between now and adjournment of this, the First Session of the 103rd Congress. We have a number of suspensions left and then we have the Department of Environmental Protection Act, legislation concerning freedom of access to clinic entrances, a number of bills pertaining to punishment for young criminal offenders, campaign spending limits, lobby reform, unemployment compensation program extension conference report and the rescissions bill which also includes the Gore report and the

promises made to the new Members designated as the Penny-Stenholm proposals.

During this past weekend, Senator Packwood of Oregon was on and off of a decision to resign from the Senate. He is still considering resigning rather than to face the ethics committee in the Senate on charges of complaints from a great many women and other matters which may be more serious.

President Clinton left Washington immediately after NAFTA passed and landed at Seattle, Washington for a meeting with the heads of a number of countries concerning the Asia-Pacific economic cooperation forum. China was very much in attendance with the President of that country there and so far, according to the media, our proposals to the Chinese especially were given a very cool reception.

Edward J. Rollins is a Republican consultant and very close confidant of a number of Republican leaders in this country at the present time. He is called upon to manage campaigns and to give advice to Republicans in elections more than any one other individual around at this time. He managed the campaign of the lady who won on the Republican ticket for Governor in New Jersey and then after the election was over proudly boasted of the fact that at his request a little over \$500,000 was used to suppress African-American vote turnout which improved the chances of the Governor-elect Christine Todd Whitman. This really brought on an uproar since it pertained to the expenditure of a lot of money to keep people from voting. It reached the point where a Federal grand jury was immediately called and Rollins appeared and after thinking it over swore before the grand jury that everything he was was a lie. He said that he was just

bragging and lying and that since making his statement he had seriously considered suicide. This did not take place, of course, but he really made a serious mistake. Not enough to set aside the election, but enough to really destroy himself and to place the Republican party in New Jersey in just about the situation that the Democrat party has been operating under for a number of years. This state is known now as the one in our 50 states that can be purchased and the one that has more mafia control than any other state in the union.

November 24, 1993

Another one of the President's White House Assistants is leaving. Howard Paster, the chief Congressional Lobbyist for the President and is the second senior assistant departure in a White House which for weeks now has been very much unorganized. Paster, who had worked in public relations before joining the Clinton White House said his departure is due solely to his desire to spend more time with his family. I understand that the President was very unhappy with Paster's assistance and advice and this must apply to a great many of them in the White House because when you sit down and go over what has transpired during the calendar year of 1993 by way of legislation, the President has from time to time received poor advice, but has finally stumbled through on a number of real important projects and programs that have been pending for years. With the exception of the Brady Bill, which is keeping the Senate in session, we have had a right good year when you consider the fact that all thirteen appropriations bills, which is the budget for Fiscal Year 1994, have been signed into law.

Shortly after the President was inaugurated, they asked me to come down and talk

to him one day which I did and I had great hopes that he would get a few men or women on his staff who know politics and at least know how to deal with the Congress. So far, including Gergen who he obtained from "U.S. News and World Report" he is still in need of one or more people who have had considerable experience to help advise him, not only in regard to the legislative program, but as to the many campaign promises that were made and just when they should be brought out for action. In going back to Paster for just a minute, I understand that he would like to be Baseball Commissioner, but my guess is that with his record in the White House this is something that will not take place.

I would not be surprised to see one or two of the Cabinet Members resign at the end of this year because the Gore report and some of the other parts of the President's program will be almost impossible to carry out in the future. For instance, in defense you should go so far and no further at this time with world conditions like they are and turning back to defense for an additional \$10 or \$15 billion is a thing of the past.

The Penny-Kasich crowd really got a lesson last week even though the vote was 213 to 219. This should cause the advisors to the President to take another good look at just where we are going from the standpoint of the deficit and the necessary money that we need for health, education and for the defense of our Country.

The House has finally adjourned on a pro forma basis and we will return on January 25. The Senate was expected to go out with no more roll call votes until next year, but a few of the Senators started traveling to the warmer climates and a few

decided to go home where they were confronted with the Brady Bill. Now they are back in Washington again today in session and probably will be there again next week. The Brady bill following the crime bill is just a little too much for a whole lot of people in this Country and I understand that a few of the Senators received considerable advice when they returned home during the past few days. This is the reason why the Senate Republicans have backed up, maintaining that the Conference Report does not include the agreement that was made between the two parties and Dole and his crowd would like to see the Brady bill just disappear.

I will go to Ohio this weekend to be with Celeste and her family for Thanksgiving and then I will return to Washington and clean off my desk and go on down home.

November 29, 1993

The media is now assessing the First Session of the 103rd Congress and so far, agrees on a number of bills which will produce results for our people and probably will help President Clinton with his ratings under the many polls that are being taken. The media maintains that the following bills were important and will produce results.

First, we have the Family Leave legislation which gave President Clinton his first victory when it passed and here we have a guarantee to workers up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for medical emergencies and births.

Next, we have Voter Registration. This required the breaking of a Republican filibuster in the Senate and then the bill passed which directs states to provide voter registration forms in motor vehicle offices, mili-

tary recruiting stations and welfare offices.

Next, we have Economic Stimulus which by the way, was defeated by the Senate Republicans. This is the legislation that I succeeded in passing as Chairman of the Appropriations Committee in two bills, without too much trouble.

Next, we have the Budget Deficit which passed by the narrowest of margins with Congress approving the President's plan to reduce the budget deficit by \$496 billion and raise individual and corporate income taxes, gasoline taxes and medicare and social security taxes by about \$220 billion over the next five-year period.

NAFTA passed and will start on January 1, 1994 and will, according to the legislation gradually abolish nearly all trade barriers between the United States, Mexico, and Canada. This one I voted against.

Next, we have a change in education credits under the National Service Act. The plan is the first of President Clinton's campaign promises to be enacted into law and is intended to encourage volunteerism and create a corps of volunteers who would get living allowances and up to \$10,000 in education grants.

Next, we have a bill that will have to be worked out in conference and which pertains to campaign finance. The House passed the bill that includes voluntary limits on campaign spending and the first public financing of Congressional campaigns.

Next, we have our old friend the Civil Servants Act with the legislation that passed lifting many restrictions on political activities by Federal employees.

Next, we have the Supercollider which, inspite of the President's wholehearted support for the program was terminated by Congress with this \$11 billion project about one-fifth complete.

Next, we have the crime bill which passed just before the Brady bill and we have \$23 billion which would bring about an additional 100,000 police officers on the city streets and in addition, build a network of high security regional prisons and create more boot camps for young offenders.

Then, we have the Brady Bill calling for a five-day waiting period to buy a handgun. Finally, the House and the Senate compromised on the length of the legislation and the bill was signed into law.

Congress again approved an amendment restricting federal payments for abortions in a slightly different form with rape and incest added, and the President signed the bill after the Senate receded in the Conference.

Next, we have a new Mining Law which as it passed the House would charge an additional 8% royalty on revenue from mining on public land in 12 western states and eliminate the ability to take title. It would also tighten environmental controls on miners and force them to repair any damage they do. A conference will work out the final details on this bill.

Next, and last according to the media, we have the grazing fee legislation which finally got out from under a filibuster in the Senate and Congress abandoned its effort to increase grazing fees and impose other range overhauls on Federal land. The Administration, by Executive Order, will fix the fees

and regulate the use of the water control portion of the legislation.

These are the important pieces of legislation, according to the media, for the First Session of the 103rd Congress.

Today, in 1952, President Eisenhower was in South Korea carrying out his promise to bring the war to a close. He did so, and even though it has cost us billions of dollars to maintain forces in South Korea, at least the North Koreans have not taken over the Country and we notified them again last week that we will not agree to any nuclear weapons being constructed in their country. If so, we advised we will take the necessary action.

January 24, 1994

When Congress adjourned the First Session of the 103rd Congress I returned to Kentucky.

During the time I was in Kentucky, we had the most bitter winter we have had since the year 1951 and it was simply horrible. It reached the point where you could not get out of the house and had to be careful about hot water, your heat, and food. This went on for days.

During this period of time our former Speaker, Tip O'Neill who served for ten consecutive years as Speaker of the House died. A little over 1,000 people attended his funeral which was addressed by Ted Kennedy, Joe Kennedy, and others.

Another man who was well known in this Country died during this period of time and he was Dr. Norman Vincent Peale. I listened to one of his records played back last Sunday, and it was magnificent.

This was probably the most awful Christmas I have ever spent during my lifetime, but at least all in my family are well and we finally won a lawsuit pending over a drive-in theater property that has been going on now for over seven years. I hope we can go all the way now and set up at least 20 acres of land which will produce benefits for all of the Natchers.

I finally arrived back in Washington the day before the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday and this week have been like all of the other people in the District of Columbia with the exception of today--housebound. At least I had hot water and all of the heat necessary during the week. Walking back and forth in a building housing over 900 people with the little store in the basement selling out every day, was almost too much. I feel good and I am back at work and realize and understand full well that tomorrow is the anniversary of that date that Virginia and I had trouble in about two feet of snow driving out of New Stanton, Pennsylvania to make the roll call vote, which is mandatory under the Rules of the House, for the Second Session of a Congress. Tomorrow is that day and after spending 40 years without missing a vote or a day, I certainly want to be present tomorrow.

January 25, 1994

On the front page of "The Washington Post" today there is an article entitled "Polishing Congress' Tarnished Image." The article pertains to a visit by an Ohio Congressman who, by the way, is new from Marietta, Ohio, by the name of Ted Strickland. Apparently during the recess period, he traveled into Illinois and went to the middle school where a class is named after and is promoted by one of our more senior members. This senior Member is Phil Crane and upon asking a question of the class, the new Member was

informed that not a single member of the class wanted to be elected to Congress. The article went on to state that the "Post" survey showed an approval rating of 29%.

A number of years ago in one of my races the Crane family decided to get into the race in November and within a matter of hours, events developed that could not be sustained by the Republican National Committee and they notified Mr. and Mrs. Phil Crane that they were attempting to get on the tailgate of the wrong wagon. This is how it goes, regardless of the fact that I have been here 40 years, never missed a vote, never missed a day, and have never accepted a campaign contribution. Once in awhile this appears, but not real often.

This past week the Roll Call newspaper set forth right clearly that one Member, two years ago, spent \$4 million and another Member spent next to nothing the same November, \$20.16. This was for registered mail to the Kentucky Registry of Elections and must be made. This is the total amount I spent in the November election and once in awhile they will set it forth so that the people can see that at least one Member has never accepted campaign contributions, does not intend to accept any, and survived the election without any difficulty.

January 27, 1994

The night before last President Clinton delivered his State of the Union message. A beautiful booklet was passed out prior to the Joint Session and it was entitled "The State of The Union.

So far, President Clinton has not vetoed any bill. The question now is which comes first; the health care legislation, crime, or welfare reform. There are a number of Members in the United States Senate who are

who are demanding that the crime bill passed in the House last year be fully enacted before we go into health care legislation. One of the leadership along this line is Senator Moynihan of the State of New York. Within a minute after the State of the Union message was delivered, Senator Dole answered the President and outlined in detail the exact measures which the President said he would veto unless it covered every American. One of the major matters, of course, is where is the money coming from.

I remember back when President Bush was in the White House and he on one occasion said "Read My Lips." There will be no tax increase. This was said on a number of occasions and of course it was not carried out. Along with tax increases, we had to fight back in those days, of course, with the deficit which is a problem still today. Instead of \$420 billion plus as a deficit, the President said that the figure was in the neighborhood now of \$190 billion and he reached in his pocket, pulled out his pen and said that unless every American is covered with health insurance, he would veto the bill. He may have to change his mind on this because I am still of the opinion that the smart way to bring this type of legislation out is to bring out a vehicle starting the program and then add to it as we go along. Back in the old days if you had said to President Roosevelt that medicare would not go onto Social Security until 1964 or 1965, he probably would have smiled a little and said that medicare would not be necessary. It became necessary and Wilbur Cohen, the man I believe knew more about Social Security back in those days warned the Congress and the President that some type of addition would have to be made down through the years, but it would be much better to do so after the social security program had been enacted and started under-way.

The President delivered the most vigorous speech that he has delivered to the Congress or to any audience since he has been President and certainly his standing was expected to increase but some of our friends did not believe it would go as high as 60% approval rating. I have attended a great many Joint Sessions and I have never seen a more partisan reception or one where the Republican Party refused on five or six occasions to stand when it would have been proper in applauding the President. On one or two occasions I remember when the Republican Party would not stand at all on most issues under discussion. This, of course, was very noticeable on television and is one of the many speeches that is presented to the Congress that every and all portions are televised. Again, the advisor about the veto pen made a mistake, but we will get by and I hope we don't have to live with this statement for longer than the present calendar year.

January 28, 1994

From time to time I place articles in my journal which are very complimentary and in order to be fair, I also have in this journal articles that I did not write. One that appeared this past week is entitled, "A Paragon of Virtue Still Toils." This article is as follows:

"The process of selecting a school district superintendent seems, by its very nature, to draw the attention of all citizens in a community.

Yet when faced with selecting the best candidates for election to Congress and the White House, citizens seem unwilling to scrutinize character and previous experience.

The bottom line in most of these races comes down to who can outspend and outpromise the other candidate or make the opponent look so bad -- through questionable accusations -- that voters end up casting ballots for the lesser of two evils.

Thankfully, those motivations have stayed out of most school board selections of superintendents. But AASA's members are one step away from the local politics, creating a genuine politics of education.

The trick for superintendents is how to keep the board happy and watch after the education and welfare of the young people of the community.

Above Reproach

Politicians can and do make outrageous statements -- campaign proclamations such as 'I support Senator Eagleton 1,000 percent,' or 'Read my lips, no new taxes.' Anything to win the job qualifies a candidate or his or her media and polling advisers to say or do anything they please.

In the school administrative profession, real stature and demonstrated success -- unrelated to TV images or whistle-stop tours -- are the career anchors sought by local school communities in need of effective district leadership.

Unfortunately, politicians can and do use AASA members in

petty and serious ways to achieve their ends. They may care not one whit about your career or the teachers, parents, and youngsters you serve; their only goal is to win. It's discouraging and disgusting, leaves a district's reputation tarnished, and perhaps fatally harms the goals you have set for the system.

Politics doesn't have to be that way. We at AASA know a member of the House of Representatives who takes not a dime of campaign contributions and whose name is above reproach. He is Rep. William H. Natcher, who has represented western Kentucky for more than 40 years. He cares deeply not only about his reputation -- he has never missed a House roll call vote in all his 40 years -- but about the nation's public schools. You can always count on him to be there for children and families in need.

As chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, Natcher holds one of the most powerful positions on Capitol Hill. He also chairs the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education. All federal funds flowing from Washington to local schools (except for school lunch program funds), come by way of Natcher's subcommittee.

He knows politics and can read the political "tea leaves" that surround the elective process. His chief staff member

for education told a number of us from the Committee for Education Funding (a 20-year-old coalition to which AASA belongs) that fiscal year 1994, the money year that began Oct. 1, would not be 'a banner year' for education.

Public Respect

In the end, of course, he was right on target. The Clinton administration tried to push through an economic investment package with nearly \$1 billion in new money for education, but the Republicans in the Senate stopped him dead in his tracks.

Now we're singing the same old refrain: 'This is going to be a tough year.'

We in the education community are grateful for William Natcher. We wish there were more like him in Congress -- legislators dedicated to their constituents (not the powerful with money) and devoted to the well-being of children and their education.

That's a platform you'd think all self-respecting politicians could run on, if they have respect for the public who's doing the voting."