

by the revelation that he himself has fallen for the temptations of the sexually diverse. The nihilos dominant in our culture inevitably draw two important conclusions from this exposure of the miscreant's "hypocrisy": (1) that his warnings are not to be taken seriously in the future, and that (2) the activity in question is really morally good.

The anti-hypocrite forces, however, have been allowed to get away with murder, for their conclusions do not follow at all. On the

contrary, the travails of Mr. X and the Rev. Swaggart more plausibly can lead to the opposite conclusion: that they were correct in calling attention to these perils, for even they have fallen for these intense temptations. Who better qualified than a drunkard to point out the perils of drink? So rather than dismiss Mr. X or Jimmy Swaggart, they should have been hailed as at least quasi-heroes for using their personal troubles as a groundwork to deliver warnings to the rest of us. And rather than betraying the moral principles they champion, these flawed knights should be seen as paying high tribute to the principles from which they sometimes stray in practice. Despite common assumptions, the moral principles themselves are certainly in no way discredited by their actions.

Let me put it in terms even the most simple-minded nihilos can understand. Suppose that

**The anti-hypocrite forces, however, have been allowed to get away with murder.**

Mr. Y has launched an impassioned crusade against wife-beating (all right, call it *spouse-beating*, if you insist). His crusade has been effective in alerting the country to these dangers. Then, an opponent of Y exposes him as a long-term wife-beater. Does that discredit the crusade? Does it make wife-beating any more morally correct? Certainly not; indeed, it only at-tests to the concern which Mr. Y has about wife-

beating as a moral evil, especially since he himself has been tainted by this sin. *Capice?* •

## Election Oddities by M.N.R.

There were several oddities in the November election that deserve to be noted:

### Claytie's Defeat

It's too bad about Claytie (Clayton Williams, conservative Republican candidate for governor of Texas). He was in many ways an attractive candidate: a conservative self-made millionaire from cowboy country in West Texas, pouring a lot of his own money into the campaign, and running against wise-cracking left-liberal Ann Richards, a candidate with "high negatives" in Texas. That he was

gaffe-prone was in many ways endearing, since most of the gaffes simply reflected the traditional cowboy culture that Claytie was proud to exemplify. His devotion to the much-despised redneck "Aggies" (his alma mater Texas A&M) reinforced that image.

But in the last two weeks of the race Claytie blew it, plummeting from far ahead in the polls to a narrow 2.5 percent defeat. Two self-inflicted wounds did it. First: the one time his handlers allowed Claytie to be interviewed, he volunteered—*without being asked*—that he had paid no federal income tax in 1986. Now there was nothing wrong with this, and it was easy for intelligent people to figure out the reason: business losses during a crippling oil-and-real-estate recession for the Southwest. But this was the issue needed for last-minute left-populist demagoguery by Richards, who milked the issue for all it was worth in the last days of the campaign, thundering that "1986 was a tough year for teachers and pipe fitters too...but they paid their taxes." (Not if they suffered heavy business losses, Ann.)

Second, was the infamous incident spread far and wide on TV, where in the course of a joint appearance, Richards stuck out her hand for Claytie to shake, and he refused, saying "You're a liar." Richards's lady-like (and devastating) response: "Oh, I'm sorry, Clayton." To make matters worse, it was clear on TV that this was not just a gaffe of the moment, that Claytie had carefully staged this rebuff, all the while grinning his unpleasantly wolfish grin.

Claytie, Claytie, I hope you learn from this expensive experience. Learn, first, never to volunteer answers to unasked questions. But, above all, Claytie, remember the best in cowboy culture is Gary Cooper or Duke Wayne. This is the culture that all Texans, and especially West Texans, admire and try to live up to. And Coop and Duke would never, never insult a woman in person in that fashion. By your actions, Claytie, you acted not like Duke but more like the *villains* in the old cowboy movies. You broke faith with your own cultural base. Next time you run, if you do, try to think: what would Duke have done in such-and-such a situation?

## The Hightower Ouster

But more important than the flamboyant and closely-watched gubernatorial race in Texas was the stunning ouster from the post of Agricultural Commissioner of Texas of the dangerous far-left populist Jim Hightower. Hard-leftist Hightower has had the menacing knack of turning every seemingly obscure political post into an effective organizing base for leftism. In 1982, Hightower defeated the conservative Democratic incumbent, and turned the previously somnolent and inoffensive Agriculture Department into a hard-driving left-

environmentalist thorn in the side of Texas enterprise. Pummeling his conservative opposition, the abrasive Hightower habitually denounced "the bankers, bullies, big boys and bastards" who supposedly constituted his opposition. In 1986, Hightower was reelected in a landslide, leading the state Democratic ticket.

## Exit Texas's Great Left Hope.

Business groups have been trying to strike back for years, but with little success. The Republican governor, the Texas Farm Bureau and the chemical industry tried to strip the Commissioner of his authority to regulate agriculture, and even to make the Commissioner an appointed rather than elective post. When these measures failed, Governor Clement and the Farm Bureau even tried to liquidate the entire Department (wouldn't *that* have been great?), leaving Hightower with an elected post heading a non-existent agency. The Texas Farm Bureau even succeeded in getting U.S. Agriculture Secretary Clayton Yeutter to inspire a Department of Justice investigation of Hightower's department, one of the most poorly-kept secrets in Texas politics.

But none of these measures succeeded in crippling Hightower, so it was clear that there was only one route available: the seemingly impossible task of defeating the

highly popular Hightower in the 1990 election. The task was entrusted to little-known State Rep. Rick Perry, who the previous year had jumped parties from Democrat to Republican in order to oppose Hightower.

Only one week before the November 6 election, Hightower had maintained a large, double-digit margin in the polls. But then came a magnificently negative television campaign by the Perry forces. (Note: there is nothing that liberal media pundits like less than a tough, negative campaign, because that might mean that the voting masses might learn some home truths about their ruling politicians: they might learn that the Emperor has no clothes.) Three widely distributed TV ads pointed out the ongoing Department of Justice/FBI investigation; superimposed Hightower's face onto the image of a burner of the American flag, with a voice asking, "Does this man represent your values?"; and, last but not least, stressed Hightower's endorsement of Jesse Jackson for president in 1988.

The complacent Hightower forces were caught flatfooted, and Perry squeaked in to victory by a one percent margin. Exit Texas's Great Left Hope, and it couldn't have happened to a more deserving guy.

## The Boschwitz Defeat

The only actual dislodgment of an incumbent Senator was the upset of millionaire liberal Republican Rudy Boschwitz of Minnesota by leftist political science professor Paul Wellstone.

Boschwitz, one of the Israeli lobby's staunchest supporters in Congress, was comfortably ahead, when his supporters blew it by sending a letter to Jewish leaders, denouncing Wellstone for not being a good enough Jew.

This was a strange twist indeed. Minnesota, which, as one wag put it, "has more lakes than Jews," found two Jewish candidates running for U.S. Senate. In the at-

mosphere, *to whom* did the Boschwitz people think they were appealing? Wellstone had married a Baptist, and their kids were not being brought up as Jews, but how many orthodox Jewish voters did the Boschwitz people suppose would be swayed by this absurd appeal? In the event, the Jewish recipients of the letter were offended, and the Christian masses of Minnesota were offended still more. Exit Rudy.

At least learn to pick your spots, guys. This tactic could work (and has been successfully used) in New York City, but not in the Gopher State. (One year, a New York Post reporter named William Haddad ran for high political office in Manhattan; he was attacked by his opponents as being an "Arab"—apparently a lethal disqualification for office in New York — and his supporters vainly tried to correct the record by pointing out that he was a Sephardic Jew.)

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## Who's a Socialist?

The Socialist Party is back, electing ex-Brooklynite Bernie Sanders as Congressman from Vermont, over the liberal Republican Peter Smith. Well, bully: first, because any defeat of a liberal Republican is a good in itself, and second, because at least Sanders is honest enough to proclaim his socialist views openly. That's more than can be said for the left-liberal Democracy. On election night,

Paul Wellstone and Bernie Sanders were both greeted by the media, and Wellstone was hard-put to distinguish his own views from Sanders', saying only that he was not a socialist. It would be nice if Left Democracy doffed their sheep's clothing and marched into the light with Sanders. Everyone knows that the once-powerful Socialist Bloc in Eastern Europe has fallen apart and is scrambling to find its way back to capitalism and private enterprise; only in America (to repeat the maudlin Harry Golden cliché), is socialism getting ever stronger. But would the American masses really troop to an open Socialist banner?

## Decline of the LP

Despite its unbroken string of defeats, the Libertarian Party has long been able to boast that it is "America's Third Largest Party." Not any more, if we measure size by the political bottom line of victories. Once again, the LP

won nothing nowhere; its most "winnable" candidate for the Idaho House, into whose race the National LP poured a lot of money, wound up with only 16 percent of the vote. But as Eric Rittberg, head of the rapidly growing Republican Liberty Caucus, points out, in terms of victories, the LP is now "America's Sixth Largest Party" (behind the Alaska Independence Party, the Connecticut Party, and the Socialists). A proud boast after twenty years of effort? •

## The Kulturkampf Corner by The Old Curmudgeon

Now it's board games that have fallen under the "insensitivity" hammer! Parker Brothers, venerable producer of board games, was denounced recently by the head of the U.S. Small Business Administration, left-Republican Susan Engeleiter. It seems that their new game, "Careers for Girls," for girls ages 8-12, lists six "careers" for the young players to select, and La Engeleiter detects a strong sexist "wrong message to young girls." For among the careers are such outlandish activities as "school-teacher" and "supermom", and there is not a single listing for "astronaut" or "business executive." Furthermore, kvetches La Engeleiter, "there are no careers requiring physical daring or strength." All in all, she complains, the game shows an "insensitivity (there it is again!) to modern realities."