

# opinion

## Youth support of Reagan rising

By Maxwell Glen and Cody Shearer

WASHINGTON — "It's remarkable," said Sen. Paul Laxalt (R-Nev.), Ronald Reagan's best friend in Congress. "It's a fascination phenomenon," added Richard Wirthlin, the president's personal pollster.

What's the excitement all about? Top Republican strategists, charged with mapping Ronald Reagan's re-election campaign, have discovered unprecedented support for the president in recent months among young Americans. Wirthlin conducted soundings recently to locate the fragments of the Reagan coalition and learned that Americans between the ages of 18 and 34 are much more enthusiastic about the 72-year-old Republican than they were in 1980.

Young voters, of course, have always been a weak spot for Reagan. In 1980, 25-to-34-year-olds gave him 48 percent of their votes while 18-to-24-year-olds gave him only 46 percent (Reagan received 51 percent of the popular vote against Jimmy Carter.)

More recently, exit polls conducted by NBC News after last November's congressional elections revealed that young Americans voted their concerns about the president's handling of the arms race, environmental protection and women's issues.

Yet Wirthlin's surveys, conducted as late as two weeks ago, indicate a massive change of heart. More than 50 percent of the 25-to-34-year olds now back the president, up three points from 1980. Moreover, 56 percent of the 18-to-24-year-olds now stand with Reagan, a boost

of 11 points. It seems that the older he gets, the better he looks. In an interview, both Wirthlin and Laxalt said the turnaround, though surprising, was a natural product of economic recovery. As economic indicators continue to rise, younger families will find fewer reasons to doubt the incumbent.

A second factor may be that young voters continue to lack a good alternative. As long as Democratic contenders remain lackluster in style or substance, Reagan is sure to reap many votes by default.

Yet the key issue, Wirthlin and Laxalt admit, probably transcends an issue-by-issue analysis. Instead, Reagan's new-found support can better be traced to a respect that many young voters have discovered in themselves and the presidency. For many members of the baby-boom generation, weaned in the less-than-proud shadows of Watergate and Vietnam, the Reagan era has brought a first ever period of patriotism, refreshing even to the most hard-boiled cynic. This naturally translates into personal pride and has undeniable political benefits. "Our people in uniform tell me how much prouder they are to serve today," said Laxalt in an interview. "That certainly has to go through society as well."

Reagan also presents a formidable image that young voters realize has been sadly lacking in national leaders. Like it or not, he has been singly successful in managing Congress, building coalitions and disarming his detractors. He has, despite the many cat calls about a movie star president, restored a respect to his office and hence its constituents. Support for Reagan, then, is merely quid pro quo.

## Disarmament needs 'flexible' reductions

By Dick West

WASHINGTON — Speculation is rife over what new instructions President Reagan may have given U.S. disarmament negotiators at the START talks in Geneva.

But you don't need a highly placed leak to be in on the know. With a little gumption, you can figure it out for yourself. Or at least make an educated guess.

Start with the latest buzz phrase in American disarmament circles — "build-down." In the unlikely event I am paraphrasing this correctly, it would oblige the United States and Russia to dismantle an existing missile for every new one they put on the firing line.

At last count, we were up to double build-down. And climbing.

I look for someone to advocate a triple build-down, followed by a quadruple build-down. This additional subtraction, or divided multiplication, would continue until the talks were back to zero option, which is where they began.

At that point, perhaps the build-down could be tied in with a freeze-thaw.

Thus far, the nuclear freeze movement has gotten nowhere that I am aware of. The reason may be its lack of flexibility.

As it now stands, the freeze would hold the number of nuclear weapons at current levels, and that would be that. To make disarmament acceptable to the Soviets, I'm convinced the build-down, whether in duplicate, triplicate or at whatever magnitude, must be accompanied by a freeze-thaw.

If, for example, the next treaty called for a double freeze-thaw, that would mean two old missiles would be melted for every one that is newly frozen.

Under a double speed-up delay, the schedule would be revised as follows:

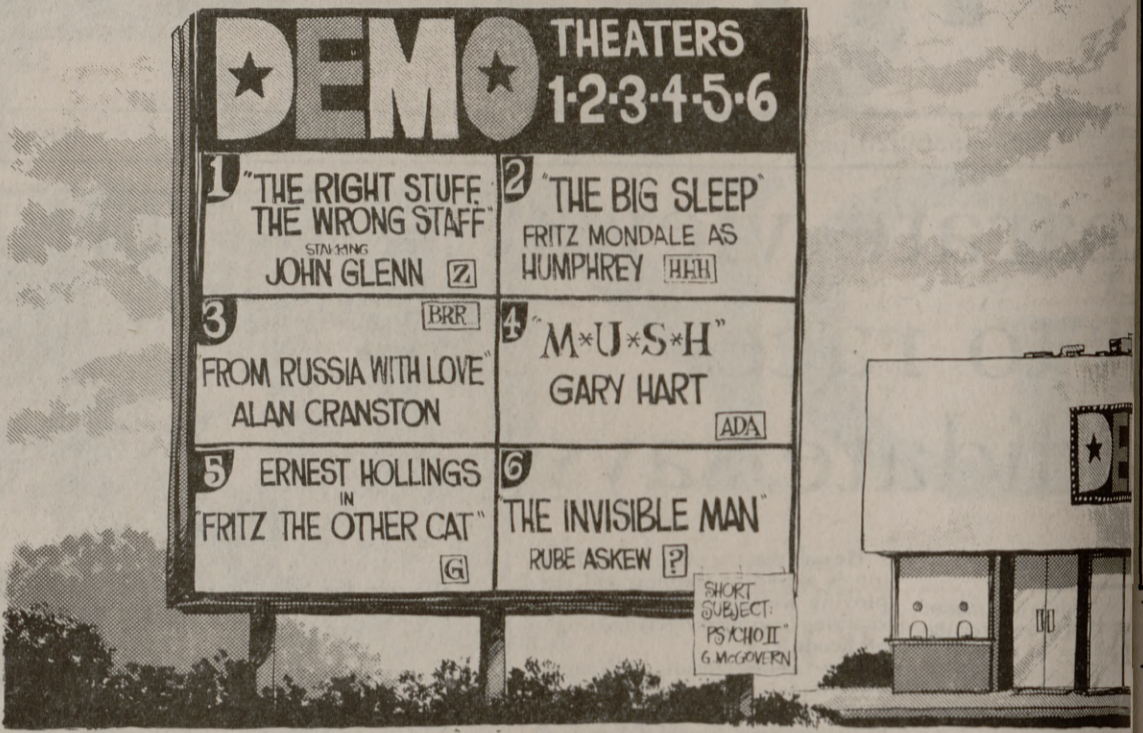
Some of the missiles would be deployed as early as November; but for every missiles whose deployment in speeded up, the deployment of two others would be delayed until January, February, June or July.

Note, however, that December is only the month when deployment of new missiles in Western Europe is scheduled to begin. Emphasis on "begin."

What Reagan does in speed up the target date for beginning the deployment but delay the target date for finishing the deployment.

I can just see Soviet officials frantically groping around for some way to counter that play.

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## Timing for 'donations' vital as issue supported

By Art Buchwald

Dear Sir,  
I am a lobbyist representing 500 of the leading polluters in the United States. I would like to contribute money to the political campaigns of several of the members of the House Subcommittee on Acid Snow. Should I give them money before a particular anti-pollution bill up for a vote, or after?—Rich But Perplexed

Dear Rich But Perplexed,  
The best time to donate to an incumbent's political campaign is when there is no legislation pending. In that way the pol can accept the money from a special interest group with a clear conscience, and then support your cause at a later date when you really need him (her?).

Dear Sir,  
I represent a small political action committee interested in keeping out Honduran-made tent poles. We can't afford to finance every candidate running for office this year. How do we make an impact with our limited funds?—Poor But Proud.

Dear PBP,  
Every PAC organization faces a similar problem. Your best bet is to finance the campaigns of the chairpersons of crucial committees involved with tent poles, leaving enough money aside to donate to

the present administration's committee to re-elect the president. Be sure and specify to the treasurer of the political party that the money is being given, not to keep communist tent poles out of Honduras, but Honduran tent poles out of the United States.

Dear Friend,  
I am running for the presidential nomination and am having a terrible time collecting money at this stage of the game. Do you have any suggestions?—The Best Man

Dear Best Man,  
Have you ever thought of giving a \$1,000-a-plate dinner to honor your wife's mother? Or holding a \$10,000-a-person cocktail party at the Playboy Mansion to explain where you stand on pine tar? Or sponsoring a punk rock concert at the Los Angeles Coliseum for Kids who want to grow up in a better world? If you can't raise a lousy \$25 million for a primary campaign, how are you going to find the hundreds of billions of dollars the country will need in the next four years to balance the budget?

Dear Sir,  
I would like to give money to a candidate, but I want to make sure he knows I gave it. When is the best time to make a political contribution?—Good Citizen

Dear G.C.,

Timing is everything when it comes to giving to a candidate. The common wisdom is that "late money talks louder than early money." That is in a close race when the person in office gets more desperate as the money becomes a lot more important candidate than it was at the beginning of his/her campaign. Therefore, if you are out until the last week and then suddenly hand your man a check, he will remember you a lot more fondly than if you stuffed a thousand dollars in his pocket months ago when his campaign was in doldrums.

Dear Mr. B,  
I used to give a lot of money to certain political party and I was invited to many social functions, including White House. This year I had some very business setbacks and have been unable to donate anything. I seem to have been dropped from all parties that I used to be invited to. Is there any connection between a person's social life in Washington and how much he gives to the party of his choice?—Tapped Out

Dear Tapped Out,  
I don't know where you got that idea. Politicians never allow money to be part in friendship. You were dropped from everyone's list because people found you boring.

## Reagan seeks conservatives; Soviet action still debated

by Helen Thomas  
United Press International

WASHINGTON — President Reagan is going out of his way to mend fences with conservatives, a political faction he believes he needs if he decides to run again.

He has held the line on ousting James Watt as interior secretary and he is in effect the only one who can ask for his resignation. Watt stirred up a storm of protest when he said he had on his advisory committee "a black, a woman, two Jews and a cripple."

Watt's supporters in conservative ranks rallied to his side, and Reagan himself was inclined to shrug off the remark as unfortunate and to permit him to retain his seat in the Cabinet.

The president is proud to call himself a conservative, and he believes he was elected to turn the country to the right. He has put conservatives in charge of many government agencies with a view of shaving the federal government's involvement.

For two years he has tried to destroy the Legal Services Corp., an anathema to conservatives that gives legal assistance to the poor, by failing to name members of the board or provide adequate funding.

Reagan also has tried to change the U.S. Civil Rights Commission to reflect the views of conservatives against quotas and busing as well as limiting the jurisdiction of the panel.

Most pleasing of all to his conservative constituency, the president has kept up a steady drumbeat of harsh rhetoric against the Soviet Union, referring to the Kremlin as the "evil empire" and drawing the line between the two systems as a "struggle between freedom and totalitarianism, between what is right and what is wrong."

He said he believes that American conservatives are uniquely equipped to present the world the proper vision of America.

But he has angered some conservative leaders like Richard Viguerie who have sharply criticized him for not taking tougher action against the Soviets for shooting down the Korean airliner. Viguerie said Reagan "had his moment of truth" in dealing with the Soviets and he blinked, backed away and refused to engage the Soviets in any kind of serious activity.

Viguerie wanted Reagan to close U.S. ports to the Soviet government and to recall the U.S. ambassador to Moscow. He also would have canceled all sports, cultural and scientific

agreements with the Soviets and suspended arms negotiations with them.

But for others who remember the cold war and the dangers from East-West tensions, dangers that have been magnified by the growing nuclear superpower arsenals, the

prospect of slamming the door on the Soviets may seem self-defeating.

Each president in the past few decades understood the difficulty of dealing with the Kremlin and of the need to the East bloc from reaching the confrontation. Each has tried to keep the lines of communication open considering the alternative.

## Slouch

by Jim Egan



... We have to look at it for the educational value that it's providing us. Now we have learned by the self-discovery method that we should never mix the red stuff with the yellow stuff.

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