

take its rightful place as a full participant in the European and Western marketplace. It is critical that in the future, Slovakia be admitted to NATO, as it now shares 87 percent of its borders with this Western security alliance. It is vital to American interests that this new democracy of 5 million people strategically located in the very heart of Europe succeeds as it makes the difficult transition from socialism to free enterprise.

With the popular election of Rudy Schuster as president, Slovakia has a golden opportunity to prosper and set an example for other former Soviet bloc countries. The Slovaks have survived domination by other people, monarchies, other countries, communism, and Hitler. These resilient people have waited a long time to elect their own president.

How pleased I am, as the grandson of a Slovak immigrant, to congratulate my friend and a great leader on the occasion of his inauguration, the Honorable Rudy Schuster, the first popularly elected president of the Slovak Republic. June 15 will be a great day for those who respect and promote democracy, for without intervention, without the pain and the agony that we have seen in other parts of the world recently, the people of Slovakia have demonstrated that even those who have been the most oppressed can never have the spirit of freedom and self-determination permanently separated from their souls.

PAUL HARVEY'S LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, later this week this House will take up the explosive issue of youth violence and guns.

I would like to read from a column by Paul Harvey. I quote:

For the life of me, I cannot understand what could have gone wrong in Littleton, Colorado. If only the parents had kept their children away from guns, we wouldn't have had such a tragedy.

Yeah, it must have been the guns. It couldn't have been because half of our children are being raised in broken homes. It couldn't have been because our children get to spend an average of 30 seconds in meaningful conversation with their parents each day. After all, we give our children quality time.

It couldn't have been because we treat our children as pets and our pets as children. It couldn't have been because we place our children in day care centers where they learn their socialization skills from their peers under the law of the jungle while employees who have no vested interest in the children look on and make certain that no blood is spilled.

It couldn't have been because we allow our children to watch, on aver-

age, 7 hours of television every day, filled with the glorification of sex and violence that is not fit for adult consumption. It couldn't have been because we allow our children to enter into virtual worlds in which, to win the game, one must kill as many opponents as possible in the most sadistic way possible.

It couldn't have been because we sterilized and contracepted our families down to sizes so small that the children that we do have are so spoiled with material things that they come to equate the receiving of material with love. It couldn't have been because our children, who historically have been seen as a blessing from God, are now being viewed as either a mistake created when contraception fails or inconveniences that parents try to raise in their spare time.

□ 1900

It could not have been because our Nation has become the world leader in developing a culture of death in which 20 to 30 million babies have been killed by abortion. It could not have been because we give 2-year prison sentences to children who kill their newborns. It could not have been because our school systems teach children that they are nothing but glorified apes who have evolutionized out of some primordial soup of mud by teaching them that evolution is a fact and by handing out condoms as if they were candy.

It could not have been because we teach our children that there are no laws of morality that transcend us; that everything is relative and that actions do not have consequences. What the heck. The President gets away with it. Nah, it must have been the guns, closed quote.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. REYNOLDS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, campaign finance reform is once again being painted as the solution to political corruption in Washington. Indeed, that is a problem, but today's reformers hardly offer a solution. The real problem is that government has too much influence over our economy and lives, creating tremendous incentive to protect one's own interest by investing in politicians.

The problem is not a lack of Federal laws or rules regulating campaign spending. Therefore, more laws will not help. We hardly suffer from too much freedom. Any effort to solve the campaign finance problem with more laws will only make things worse by further undermining the principles of liberty and private property ownership.

There is tremendous incentive for every special interest group to influence government. Every individual, bank or corporation that does business with government invests plenty in in-

fluencing government. Lobbyists spend over \$100 million per month trying to influence Congress. Taxpayers' dollars are endlessly spent by bureaucrats in their effort to convince Congress to protect their own empires. Government has tremendous influence over the economy and financial markets through interest rate controls, contracts, regulations, loans and grants. Corporations and others are forced to participate in the process out of greed, as well as self defense, since that is the way the system works.

Equalizing competition and balancing powers such as between labor and business is a common practice. As long as this system remains in place, the incentive to buy influence will continue.

The reformers argue only that the fault is those who are trying to influence government and not the fault of the members who yield to the pressure of the system that generates the abuse. This allows Members of Congress to avoid assuming responsibility for their own acts and instead places the blame on those who exert pressure on Congress through the political process, which is a basic right bestowed on all Americans.

The reformers' argument is to stop us before we capitulate and before we capitulate to the special interest groups. Politicians unable to accept this responsibility clamor for a system that diminishes the need for politicians to persuade individuals and groups to donate money to their campaigns. Instead of persuasion, they endorse coercing taxpayers to finance campaigns. This only changes the special interest groups that control government policy. Instead of voluntary groups making their own decisions with their own money, politicians and bureaucrats dictate how political campaigns will be financed and run.

Not only will politicians and bureaucrats gain influence over elections, other nondeservers will benefit. Clearly incumbents will greatly benefit by more controls over campaign spending, a benefit to which the reformers will never admit.

The quasi two-party system will become more entrenched by limiting the huge expenditures required to oust an incumbent. Alternative choices and third party candidates will be further handicapped if all the reforms proposed are passed. The media become a big winner. Their influence grows as the private money is regulated. It becomes more difficult to refute media propaganda, both print and electronic, when directed against a candidate if funds are limited. The wealthy gain a significant edge since it is clear candidates can spend unlimited personal funds in elections. This is a big boost for the independently wealthy candidates over the average challenger who needs to raise and spend large funds to compete.

Celebrities will gain an even greater benefit than they already enjoy. Celebrity status is money in the bank, and

by limiting the resources to counter-balance this advantage works against the noncelebrity who might be an issue-oriented challenger. The current reform effort ignores the legitimate and moral Political Action Committees that exist only for good reasons and do not ask for any special benefit from government.

More regulation of political speech through control of private money without addressing the subject of influential government only drives the money underground, further giving a select group an advantage over the honest candidate who only wants smaller government.

True, reform probably is not possible without changing the role of government, which now exists to regulate, tax, subsidize and show preferential treatment.

Only changing the nature of government will eliminate the motive for so many to invest so much in the political process, but we should not make a bad situation worse by passing more laws. We should demand disclosure so voters can decide if their representatives in Congress are duly influenced or unduly influenced, but the best thing we could do is to encourage competition, which will be made worse if the reformers have their way.

The majority of Americans are turned off with the system and do not vote because they do not believe they have a real choice. Signature requirements, filing fees and rules written by the two major parties make it virtually impossible for alternative parties to compete if not independently rich or a celebrity. We should change these obstructive rules to encourage the majority of Americans who now sit out the elections to participate in the electoral process.

Campaign finance reform is once again being painted as the solution to political corruption in Washington. Indeed, that is a problem, but today's reformers hardly offer a solution. The real problem is that government has too much influence over our economy and lives, creating a tremendous incentive to protect one's own interests by "investing" in politicians. The problem is not a lack of federal laws, or rules regulating campaign spending, therefore more laws won't help. We hardly suffer from too much freedom. Any effort to solve the campaign finance problem with more laws will only make things worse by further undermining the principles of liberty and private property ownership.

The reformers are sincere in their effort to curtail special interest influence on government, but this cannot be done while ignoring the control government has assumed over our lives and economy. Current reforms address only the symptoms while the root cause of the problem is ignored. Since reform efforts involve regulating political speech through control of political money, personal liberty is compromised. Tough enforcement of spending rules will merely drive the influence underground since the stakes are too high and much is to be gained by exerting influence over government—legal or not. The more open and legal campaign expenditures are,

with disclosure, the easier it is for voters to know who's buying influence from whom.

There's tremendous incentive for every special interest group to influence government. Every individual, bank or corporation that does business with government invests plenty in influencing government. Lobbyists spend over a hundred million dollars per month trying to influence Congress. Taxpayers dollars are endlessly spent by bureaucrats in their effort to convince Congress to protect their own empires. Government has tremendous influence over the economy, and financial markets through interest rate controls, contracts, regulations, loans, and grants. Corporations and others are "forced" to participate in the process out of greed as well as self defense—since that's the way the system works. Equalizing competition and balancing power such as between labor and business is a common practice. As long as this system remains in place, the incentive to buy influence will continue.

Many reformers recognize this and either like the system or believe that it's futile to bring about changes and argue that curtailing influence is the only option left even if it involves compromising political speech through regulating political money.

It's naive to believe stricter rules will make a difference. If enough honorable men and women served in Congress and resisted the temptation to be influenced by any special interest group, of course this whole discussion would be unnecessary. Because Members do yield to the pressure, the reformers believe that more rules regulating political speech will solve the problem.

The reformers argue that it's only the fault of those trying to influence government and not the fault of the Members who yield to the pressure or the system that generates the abuse. This allows Members of Congress to avoid assuming responsibility for their own acts and instead places the blame on those who exert pressure on Congress through the political process which is a basic right bestowed on all Americans. The reformer's argument is "stop us before we capitulate to the special interest groups."

Politicians unable to accept this responsibility clamor for a system that diminishes the need for politicians to *persuade* individuals and groups to donate money to their campaign. Instead of persuasion they endorse coercing taxpayers to finance campaigns. This only changes the special interest groups that control government policy. Instead of voluntary groups making their own decisions with their own money, politicians and bureaucrats dictate how political campaigns will be financed.

Not only will politicians and bureaucrats gain influence over elections, other nondeservers will benefit. Clearly, incumbents will greatly benefit by more controls over campaign spending—a benefit to which the reformers will never admit.

The quasi-two party system will become more entrenched by limiting the huge expenditures required to oust an incumbent. Alternative choices and third-party candidates will be further handicapped if all the reforms proposed are passed. They will never qualify for equal treatment since all campaign laws are written by Republicans and Democrats. The same will be true when it comes to divvying up taxpayer's money for elections.

The media becomes a big winner. Their influence grows as private money is regulated.

It becomes more difficult to refute media propaganda, both print and electronic, when directed against a candidate if funds are limited. Campaigns are more likely to reflect the conventional wisdom and candidates will strive to avoid media attacks by accommodating their views.

The wealthy gain a significant edge since it's clear candidates can spend unlimited personal funds in elections. This is a big boast for the independently wealthy candidates over the average challenger who needs to raise and spend large funds to compete.

Celebrities will gain even a greater benefit than they already enjoy. Celebrity status is money in the bank and by limiting the resources to counter-balance this advantage, works against the non-celebrity who might be an issue-oriented challenger.

This current reform effort ignores the legitimate and moral Political Action Committees that exist only for good reasons and do not ask for any special benefit from government. The immoral Political Action Committees that work only to rip-off the taxpayers by getting benefits from government may deserve our condemnation but not the heavy hand of government anxious to control this group along with all the others. The reformers see no difference between the two and are willing to violate all personal liberty. Since more regulating doesn't address the basic problem of influential government, now out of control, neither groups deserves more coercive government rules. All the rules in the world can't prevent Members from yielding to political pressure of the groups that donate to their campaigns. Regulation cannot instill character.

More regulation of political speech through control of private money, without addressing the subject of influential government only drives the money underground, further giving a select group an advantage over the honest candidate who only wants smaller government.

True reform probably is not possible without changing the role of government, which now exists to regulate, tax, subsidize, and show preferential treatment. Only changing the nature of government will eliminate the motive for so many to invest so much in the political process. But we should not make a bad situation worse by passing more bad laws.

We should demand disclosure so voters can decide if their Representatives in Congress are unduly influenced. But the best thing we could do is to encourage competition, which will be made worse if the reformers have their way. The majority of Americans are turned off with the system and don't vote because they don't believe they have a real choice. Signature requirements, filing fees, and rules written by the two major parties make it virtually impossible for alternative parties to compete if not independently rich or a celebrity. We should change these obstructive rules to encourage the majority of Americans, who now sit out the elections, to participate in the electoral process. Restricting political money and speech will only further hamper competition and discourage citizens from voting.

THERE ARE HEROES IN OUR MIDST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) is recognized for 5 minutes.