

Editorial

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Nobel campaigns Lobbyists taint Peace Prize

Is nothing of value — jobs, political offices, awards or whatever — free from the requirement that the winner campaign to get it? According to a recent article in The New Republic, not even the Nobel Peace Prize has escaped the effects of sophisticated lobbying.

This year's winner, Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel, has been the beneficiary of an intense campaign for his selection by several of his friends, the article says. The leaders of the campaign, New London, Conn., businessman Sigmund Strochlitz and Boston University President John Silber, combined flattering letters about Wiesel to the Nobel Committee with a dogged effort to get legislators in several countries to nominate Wiesel for the prize.

Silber, a colleague of Wiesel's at Boston, concentrated on publicizing Wiesel's work on account of victims of oppression around the globe. Strochlitz, the article says, was a bit more obnoxious. Although he denied doing any campaigning for Wiesel, The New Republic quotes an unnamed U.S. Senate staffer as saying, "Strochlitz would show up every winter and say it's time to write letters again." Another Senate aide said the campaign was "relentless and heavy-handed."

The efforts apparently were successful. The article says Strochlitz himself counted more than 50 senators and 140 House members, as well as 70 members of the West German Bundestag, who wrote the Nobel Committee with praise for Wiesel. And this

wasn't the first such campaign for a Nobel laureate. Former Japanese Prime Minister Eisaku Sato won the prize in 1974 for unclear reasons, the article says, but he hired a public relations firm to help his effort.

This isn't meant to suggest in any way that Wiesel didn't deserve the award. Wiesel has gone to the far corners of the world to meet with and expose the plight of those oppressed from both the left and the right. His plea that President Reagan not honor German war dead at Bitburg last year had the sincerity of one determined that genocide such as the Nazi Holocaust must never happen again.

Active campaigns by or on behalf of potential prize winners, however, leave a bad taste in one's mouth. It evokes the same gut feeling as modern political campaigns: The winner is not the most deserving for that year, but the one with the best P.R. campaign. Such an honor as the Nobel Peace Prize shouldn't require arm-twisting to get people to nominate someone or organizing a letter blitz to impress the committee. The person's actions alone should be sufficient.

Other Nobel winners — Mother Teresa, for example — didn't need sophisticated campaigns to win the award. That's the way it should be. As The New Republic says, "Nobody wants to think that the Mother Teresas of the world bid for earthy reward." But that's what it seems to take today to win the Nobel Peace Prize — and that seems to cheapen an award that should be free of taint.

U.S. child slavery

Newspaper delivery not worth the wages

Readers may have been shocked when they read in Tuesday's Lincoln Star about how India's Supreme Court formally freed 319 children from their jobs as unpaid laborers in carpet factories after a two-year legal battle by an anti-slavery organization.

Slavery and child labor are banned in India, but children were found working through a system of debt-bondage. Children were sold into work when their families contracted the children's labor in exchange for loans.

The Bonded Labor Liberation Front in India filed a petition. Part of it read, "Children of ages between 7 and 14 were made to do forced labor, branded like animals and tortured into submission."

What is happening in India may seem a bit extreme. Something of that nature would be unheard of in the United States. Yet child labor is not uncommon in the U.S., and one instance could be deemed as immoral as the situation in India. That job is

made up of 10- to 14-year olds. A job of which consumers and employers alike do not even give a second thought — the newspaper-delivery person.

Delivering papers is not easy; the hours are poor and the job risky. Look at our neighboring state of Iowa where two boys, 12-year-old Johnny Gosch and 13-year-old Eugene Martin are still missing. What kind of protection do these children really have?

An editorial in the Nov. 10 issue of the Wall Street Journal noted that newspaper persons "should be dependably safe and free from danger of kidnapping or sexual or other abuse; the work should be paid for squarely; and some reasonable limit should be put on the amount of time involved."

None of these points is met, not even in Lincoln, Neb.

If you read the story about the Indian children and found it appalling, take a look closer to home. The situation really is no better here, and things could be changed.



There goes a big, big man 'Big John' DeCamp's loss heads Best of the Ballot Box

Well, the votes are all in, the tabulations have been completed, and it is my pleasure to announce the winners of this year's "Best of the Ballot Box" awards. This prestigious award is reserved for the unexpected turns and the fascinating developments that made last Nov. 4 an election-night junkie's dream. Not since 1976, when we stayed up till 5 a.m. waiting for Oregon's six electoral votes to put Jimmy Carter over the top, has the first Tuesday after the first Monday given such a delightful array of colorful candidates. Here are my selections for the Pick of the Pack:

Best Election by a Local Constituency goes to Nebraska's 40th Legislative District for defeating Neligh Sen. and general source of embarrassment John DeCamp. From bathtub scandals to prom-queen contests, John has kept us all just a little on edge in recent years. I don't even know who beat him, but who cares? KLIN's Ron Dean will have to find another fatso to push around now, but that shouldn't be too hard. I'm available, Ron, and the Daily Nebraskan could sure use the publicity.

Worst Election by a Local Constituency goes to Nebraska's 42nd Legislative District for its unfathomable re-election of North Platte Sen. and accused felon Jim Pappas. When things like this happen, I get real nervous over the "Nixon comeback" rumors. Pappas wrote a letter to the DN recently, and I managed to find one coherent subject-verb-object sentence in its 20 or so column inches. I guess literacy and integrity are far down on the North Platte priority list.

Best Leading Actress in the

Lost Cause goes to Democratic gubernatorial hopeful Helen Boosalis, who announced to her supporters at 11:55 p.m., "It's gonna be a long night, folks," then returned to the platform 25 minutes later to concede defeat. There was

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something about the emptying hall and the unanimous predictions of the news services that gave her the feeling no one was going to stick this one out till the Oregon votes came in.

Most Appropriate Shift of Power goes to the Massachusetts congressional district that elected Robert Kennedy's son, Joe III, to take the seat of retiring political institution Thomas "Tip" O'Neill. Vaughn Meader's 1962 mandate that all good citizens should vote for the Kennedy of their choice is once again ringing appropriate. Let's hope our insensitivity to the need for handgun control doesn't make yet another generation of Hyannis Port heroes an endangered species.

Most Exaggerated Election Result goes to the news media's unnecessary, superfluous, tautological, repetitious and redundant rehearsal of the Democrats' power coup in the U.S. Senate. In this hurried rush to predict the end of the Teflon Presidency, we have overlooked the fact that most of the new Democratic seats went to

Southern "Boll Weevils," who were elected largely because they said nothing against and not a little for the Gipper. There was no mandate from the people against the policies of the administration.

In a last blaze of rhetorical glory, Tip O'Neill proclaimed, "If there ever was a Reagan Revolution, it's over now!" Meet me after the 1988 elections, Tommy, and we'll talk.

Finally, the award for **Most Overlooked Election-Night Fact**. The governor's race was not a "squeaker." Kay Orr won, and she won (relatively) big. At least she did not win by 50.01 percent of the vote, as we were led to believe she should. The win was convincing enough to be projected by the TV networks and major news services less than three hours after the polls had closed.

Once again, the big loser is that most blatant example of neo-astrological non-news sensationalism, the pre-election poll. You sophisticates will excuse us common folk if we just vote our conscience and don't cooperate with your high-flutin' ways.

Well, now that's over and we can get on our two-year march for the White House. From Kemp to Cuomo; from either Dole to another Jackson; through Hart, Bumpers, Laxalt (Laxalt??), Robertson and even that guy from New Jersey that no one has ever heard of, it should be a grand and glorious struggle. I hear rumours that George Bush already has taken up residence in Iowa. What do they do for fun in the Soviet Union, anyway?

Sennett is campus minister with College-Career Christian Fellowship and a graduate student in philosophy.

American foreign policy at its apex: U.S. an international rescue squad

When Lyndon Johnson sent the Marines into the Dominican Republic in 1965, the official justification was to safeguard and evacuate endangered Americans. To no one's surprise, our boys stayed on a bit to put down a communist threat and install a friendly (and, mind you, a democratic) government. That is how we used to do things: When for traditional geopolitical reasons we needed to intervene, the rescue of Americans was a convenient pretext.

Rescue is a pretext no more. It has become an end in itself, a primary, obsessive end of American diplomacy. In the process, American foreign policy has become a slave to hostages. From the Vietnam POWs to the Mayaguez, from the Iranian to the TWA hostages, from Nicholas Daniloff to David Jacobson, American diplomacy has moved to

an astonishing degree from the traditional pursuit of national interest to the rescue of individuals. We have become an international rescue squad.

And now, with the McFarlane mission, the individualization of American

Charles Krauthammer



foreign policy reaches its apex. Iran has revealed that, in September, President Reagan sent Robert McFarlane and four others on a bizarre diplomatic mission to Tehran. According to the speaker of the Iranian parliament, they came bearing Irish passports, a Bible, a

cake in the shape of a key (it never reached its destination: hungry revolutionary guards polished it off at the airport) — and a planeload of weapons.

Which brings us to the bizarre part: the deal being discussed. In exchange for helping to "curb terrorism" and release American hostages held in Lebanon, the United States would help Iran to get spare parts for its war against Iraq. Now, nothing would be more destructive to American interests in the Persian Gulf than an Iranian victory over Iraq. And nothing prevents that outcome more than Iran's technological inferiority. The high-tech weapons bought by the Shah are on the shelf for lack of spare parts. Restoring the flow could be a crucial factor in helping Iran win the war.

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