

In the red

Politics prevent restraints on spending

Members of Congress seem to be planning to leave Washington in droves this election year. Almost 50 representatives and six senators have announced they won't run for re-election. While some are simply getting old and others have been plagued with scandal, a growing number of Congress members simply are fed up with the frustration.

Among the last group is Sen. Warren Rudman of New Hampshire. Regarded by his peers as one of the most influential and effective senators of the last decade, the Republican said in a Time magazine interview he was tired of the "inability of Congress to accomplish a great deal."

Rudman, perhaps best known for his efforts on the 1985 Gramm-Rudman-Hollings budget law to reduce the federal deficit, said what is needed most in our gridlocked Congress is some accountability.

He is right. As voters get steamed over minuscule messes such as the House banking scandal, the country faces nothing short of ruin from out-of-control spending.

Americans realize this situation cannot continue, but no one wants to see his or her particular programs cut, and even fewer want to pay for programs through higher taxes. The masses play their fiddles, and their country is burning down around them.

While both Republicans and Democrats know what must be done to shore up America's economy, they also know that their opposing party would crucify them if they were to take those painful but necessary first steps.

"Everybody knows what to do," Rudman said. "We know how to do it. We're always afraid to do it."

Rudman has said that America would be better served if the government were controlled by a single party, be it the Democrats or the Republicans. Interparty bickering has stagnated the system, and America's penchant to vote for a Democratic Congress and Republican president feeds this frustrating status quo.

That simply must not continue. Rudman told Time that Congress was about to lead America into an era of annual deficits of \$400 to \$500 billion, which he said would "truly wreck the country."

Rudman foresees a day before the turn of the century when solvent foreign governments will be able to dictate terms to a loan-hungry United States. It is a frightening future Rudman has tried to avert by spreading his word, but few seem to be listening.

So the senator is packing up, leaving the infighting and do-nothings behind. We hope that as he fades out of the public life, his colleagues in Washington think about what he has said.

"We've got to take some political risks and risk some political careers... the country is at stake, and we ought to do it."

Abortion lobby deceives public

Kappie Weber's recent letter ("Gag rule 'appalling,' disregards women's health," DN, April 7) suggested an attempt by President Bush to deceive the public about the Title X regulations. Randy Moody of Planned Parenthood stated in an April 1 Lincoln Star article that "Bush has misled the press and the public" with his guidelines on the Title X regulations.

Their claims of deception by President Bush on the Title X regulations are laughable coming from two abortion-rights activists whose organizations have been at the forefront of deception regarding the Title X regulations.

The abortion lobby skillfully crafted (and the media uncritically accepted) the term "gag rule" as a "hot-button" word to divert attention away from the intent of the regulations, which was merely to return Title X to its original design of providing pre-pregnancy family planning services — not abortion counseling and referral. Thus, no "gag" exists because preg-

nant women are outside the scope of this government program.

The abortion lobby's claim that the regulations violated the exercise of free speech was not only incorrect but hypocritical when you consider that its efforts to change the regulations would require Title X recipients to counsel on and refer for abortion, which would equate to forced speech.

Finally, the abortion lobby's pinnacle of deception and irresponsibility was its claim that the regulations deny women information when their lives or health are in danger. The truth is that the regulations not only allow, but require, referral to specialized medical care for medical conditions that may complicate pregnancy.

It's the height of arrogance and hypocrisy for the abortion lobby falsely to accuse President Bush of deception of Title X when it has led the way in deceiving the public on this issue.

Shirley Bauer
Lincoln

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KIRK ROSENBAUM

Employment search traumatic

"Job" has never been one of my favorite words. There is a good deal of ugliness and anxiety packed in those three letters, and even the best of jobs usually ends in resentment and confusion.

Yet a job was what I was in search of last week, a temporary position to help stave off my accumulating bills. Normally, I avoid jobs like gunfire or jury duty, but this time I really needed one. Especially since my plasma had been rejected by a nurse who nervously told me, "Uhh... I don't think we can use this."

I toyed with the idea of participating in a Harris Labs study but decided against it. It's not that I'm vehemently opposed to filling my system with unpredictable chemicals, mind you. It's just that such studies remind me of that Stephen King novel in which college students are experimented upon and end up going insane and gnawing their own flesh.

As an alternative, I visited one of those employment agencies that charge a nominal fee for finding people jobs they never really wanted in the first place. They gave me a five-page application and a chair at a table with half a dozen other hopefuls.

The first section was a list of every job known to man and instructions for the applicant to circle the ones he had held. My list was not too impressive — ditch digging, unloading meat trucks, removing asbestos, etc. As an afterthought I added arc welding and over-the-road truck driving. Maybe a few exaggerations and bald-faced lies would make my application sparkle among a bunch of deadbeats.

The obligatory criminal record section was next. Usually, it is best to answer "No" when asked about felony convictions and act offended that your integrity was even questioned. However, I was surrounded by sinister-looking characters who were watching me carefully. Their arms were covered with crude tattoos, undoubtedly the work of artistically inclined cellmates.

So I answered "Yes" and gave each of my fellow applicants a knowing nod.

The rest of the process involved similar questions. By leaving out lengthy gaps of unemployment, firings and inevitable clashes with management figures, I had a fairly impressive application. I turned it in with confidence and then sat down to wait my turn.

Certainly after all that screening I



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would be given a prestigious and well-paying position. Now that the recession is receding, new jobs are opening up by the thousands. Granted, most of them require a minimal level of intelligence and motor skills, like bouncers or Lincoln police officers.

Then there are jobs for which there are far too many applicants (Mike Tyson's dance instructor, for instance.)

Finally, there are do-nothing jobs, like Maytag repairmen, University Regents and domestic-policy advisers in the Bush White House. These are those "not-what-you-know-but-who-you-know" jobs we've all heard about.

One debatably attractive position is the recent vacancy at the head of the Gambino crime family. Since John Gotti was relieved of his executive duties, an extensive search for a replacement has begun. All applicants must be familiar with mob-related statutes and keep off the telephone at all times. Perks include lawyers, guns, money and a bulletproof limousine.

Even if you don't land this position, don't get discouraged. New openings within the Cosa Nostra crop up suddenly and violently. And if you don't catch on with the Mafia, there is a position available as director of the Low-Level Waste Compact right here in Nebraska. The pay and perks are even better than those of a mob boss, but without the risk factor.

So don't pay any attention to

newspaper headlines and network anchors — the job market is booming. The university is looking for a new vice chancellor, the Democrats are searching for a decent front-runner and the Russians soon will be seeking a new president. Executive-level vacancies also are expected soon in Libya and Iraq.

Therefore, I had reason to be encouraged, especially when the beautiful secretary at the employment agency approached me with a smile, saying, "I found you the job you've been looking for — something appropriate for your talents."

My mind raced. Was she going to make me a captain of industry? Sam Walton's replacement? One of the Neville Brothers?

Or maybe she was just going to tell me to forget about working and take me home to fix us dinner while we sipped good wine and listened to her stereo. Her paycheck would support us both as we embarked on a lengthy and mutually destructive relationship. For the first time in weeks my future looked bright.

Imagine my horrible disappointment when she handed me a hard hat and instructions to report to a local dog-food factory that needed somebody to clean out their protein vat.

"They'll give you your boots and gloves when you get there," she said, still smiling. "Lunch will be provided."

I mumbled my appreciation and wandered out to my car with a poorly drawn map and orders to meet somebody named Guido at Loading Dock 2.

Would Karl Marx have participated in such obvious worker exploitation? Probably not. But Marx never had a mean-spirited landlord, either, and his mother probably bought him his groceries.

When I arrived at Loading Dock 2, Guido handed me a shovel and a pair of hip-waders. How had I arrived at this? It was then that Guido left to find the jackhammer and I ran out to my car and sped off down the alley. What would Walt Whitman think of me?

I didn't care. Just looking for a job had been a horrible experience that I probably shouldn't share with readers of a family newspaper. Needless to say, I won't do anymore job hunting until I've fully recovered from this trauma. Unless of course, the Gambino thing comes through.

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