September 26, 1981

point on, Brand's standard rejoinder to any criticism was to accuse its maker of racism.

Meanwhile, in newspaper advertisements and a massive letter-writing campaign, the Brand team pulled out its trump card: the accusation that Caso was a front man for the United Farm Workers. Valley Texans ought to have known better than to believe it. The United Farm Workers in Texas is a union in name only. It has yet to sign a contract with a single grower, and its primary goals have been to provide much-needed legal and social services to its small membership. In fact, labor organization is almost nonexistent in the Valley. Of the light industries that have recently moved into the area and expanded the region's economy from its agricultural base, none are unionized. But the mere threat of a union incursion was enough to frighten many Anglos, whose only associations with organized labor hark back to the socialism of the 1930s.

Self-proclaimed champion of the moral minority's right to maintain the status quo against a racist hoard of Mexican-American unionists, Brand limped to victory with a narrow margin of 882 votes. Caso actually led by a similar margin until the 4,901 absentee votes were counted, many of them cast by "winter Texans," who live in trailer parks in the Valley during the winter months and return to their homes in Michigan, Wisconsin and other northern states in the spring. Their participation added the final irony to the Mayor's charges of "outsider" influence in the election.

A Federal grand jury is investigating charges of civil rights violations by the city in connection with the police beatings, and the famous videotapes are being reviewed in Washington by the Justice Department. The question posed by the irregularities is: Why did the department refuse to send marshals to monitor the election? As an editorial in The Wall Street Journal pointed out, here was an election that raised issues concerning the protection of minority groups' voting rights; yet, on the eve of the McAllen runoff, Justice Department officials were in Mobile, Alabama, attempting to reopen a case there. We agree with The Journal that debate about the renewal of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 must focus on protecting against abuses at the voting booth. McAllen would have been the perfect place for the Justice Department to renew enforcement of the original intentions of the act. In the absence of such an effort, George Powell of Texas Rural Legal Aid has filed a class-action suit, on behalf of McAllen's Mexican-Americans, against Brand and the city, accusing them of having violated the Voting Rights Act and the Constitution during the elections.

As for Mayor Brand, he and the patron system epitomizes may be on their way out. The Mayor faces a divided city and an aroused Mexican-American populace that will forge a stronger political organization in the years ahead. A bid by Brand's own patron, Governor Clements, to give him statewide political recognition was recently quashed. Despite—or was it because of?—the police-brutality scandal in McAllen, Clements nominated Brand to the State Board of Corrections. The Texas Senate rejected the nomination in deference to the Senator representing McAllen, Hector Urribe.

ESTABLISHMENT DOVECOTE

The Non-Selling Of Détente

KATRINA VANDEN HEUVEL

The record of the American Committee on East-West Accord, the most important pro-détente group in the United States, tells us a great deal about the ineffectiveness of pro-détente politics today. Despite its large and influential membership, its substantial funding and the vigorous role it plays in Washington politics, the committee, founded in 1974, has yet to achieve its first success. Indeed, it has seen the hard-line views of its archival, the Committee on the Present Danger, become official American policy.

The American Committee's long losing streak has caused considerable soul-searching among its illustrious board of directors and members. At the general meeting last June, a dissident group questioned the committee's traditionally elitist politics and called for an effort to reach a larger constituency. In any event, the committee's failure to advance the cause of détente demonstrates once again that foreign policy is too important to be left to the foreign-policy establishment.

Originally called the Committee on U.S.-Soviet Relations, the American Committee on East-West Accord was created as a conventional lobbying group. Registered under the Federal Regulation of Lobbying Act, its sole purpose was to push for policies already being followed by the Nixon Administration. But by 1975, the committee was confronted with the prospect of a different American policy toward the Soviet Union. The Ford Administration was unwilling or unable to pursue détente with former President Richard Nixon's vigor, while hard-line opposition was growing in Congress and a national election loomed.

Apparently sensing a crisis ahead, the committee published in January 1975 a full-page "declaration of purpose" in The Washington Post, which sought "to assure the President, the Congress and the American people at large that a growing constituency supports improved relations with the Soviet Union." The reference to "a growing constituency" was mostly rhetorical; then, as now, the committee's most cherished constituency was the Washington establishment.

The 1975 declaration was signed by an eminent group that reflects the committee's elitist but also diverse composition. (David Rockefeller once asked the committee's co-directors, "How in the hell did you get all these people together?") It extends from right-wing Republicans to left-liberal Democrats, from corporate chairmen to college professors. Intellectuals such as John Kenneth Galbraith, Wassily Leon-

Katrina vanden Heuvel, a Nation intern, is working on a study of victims of the McCarthy years.
tief, Stanley Hoffman and Fred Warner Neal are joined by present or former corporate chiefs such as Donald Kendall of PepsiCo, Armand Hammer of Occidental Petroleum and Robert Schmidt of Control Data, as well as by former U.S. ambassadors such as George Kennan, to promote the cause of American-Soviet détente.

The board of directors, which meets occasionally to discuss new programs, funding and membership, is no less diverse. It includes eight businessmen, one current and one former university president, five other academics, three former ambassadors, a retired admiral, the general counsel of the United Automobile Workers and the former publisher of Newsday. Schmidt, a blunt-speaking businessman, is the committee’s president; Galbraith, Kendall and Kennan serve as co-chairmen.

The respective rosters of eminent names associated with the American Committee and the anti-détente Committee on the Present Danger show how the American elite have been divided on the question of relations with the Soviet Union for decades. But whatever their views on international politics, the corporate members of the American Committee also have an obvious profit motive. For example, Kendall, a charter member of the executive board, was a Nixon Republican, and PepsiCo was one of the first companies to enter the Soviet market. But while some of its critics consider the committee a “trade association,” its 1979-80 financial statement indicates that corporate contributions provided a minor portion of its $191,699 operating budget.

In 1977, as the controversy over détente loomed larger, the committee transformed itself from a registered lobby into a tax-exempt, educational organization. For that reason, and also in hopes that the omission of the word “Soviet” would make it easier to raise funds, the committee changed to its present name. The organization also “broadened its perspective” (a move that may have been prompted by the formation of the Committee on the Present Danger a year earlier), and promised to launch a “national public educational” campaign. But the committee’s record since 1977 shows that it has changed very little from its days as a Washington lobby.

Individual members still promote pro-détente views on television, on radio and in opinion articles for major newspapers. The committee did produce a powerful twenty-four-minute pro-SALT film, Survival or Suicide, which The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists said “should be seen by every schoolchild in the country.” Although aired more than 800 times in the United States, the film was, director Carl Marcy admits, a direct response to an anti-SALT film already in circulation and not part of a new public-opinion strategy. Other projects continue to be aimed at a relatively narrow audience—a bimonthly newsletter, East/West Outlook (formerly Just for the Press), which is sent to 5,000 recipients, mostly in government, media and business, and two short books on U.S.-Soviet relations. A third volume, on U.S.-Soviet military relations, is being planned. Presumably, like the previous two books, it will convey the committee’s key message: the need for a sober, business-like relationship with the Soviet Union, in the “commonsense” vernacular of the policy elite.

The “commonsense” of SALT II as an alternative to nuclear holocaust has been the committee’s greatest losing cause of the 1970s and 1980s. The committee’s leaders went all out for the treaty, testifying before the Senate, organizing petition drives directed at “prominent Americans,” lobbying the Carter White House and State Department, and buying pro-SALT ads in both The Washington Post and The New York Times. All to no avail.

The defeat of the treaty produced an uncharacteristically radical proposal that originated, however, as the personal initiative of committee co-chairman Kennan. Accepting the Albert Einstein Peace Award in May, he called for a 50 percent reduction in both the American and Soviet nuclear arsenals. At its general meeting in June, the committee voted unanimously, with surprisingly little discussion, to endorse the proposal. What more conservative members actually think of it isn’t clear. (In a recent telephone interview, Armand Hammer called the proposal “unrealistic.”)

The committee’s one effort to shape public opinion, rather than to rescue lost policies, is an innovative plan for a “Military Nonintervention Pact.” The scheme was the committee’s response to the anti-détente fallout of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Conceived by Arthur Cox, a former Central Intelligence Agency analyst who is the committee’s policy consultant, the pact would ban the direct or indirect use of American or Soviet combat forces in Africa, the Middle East, and South and Southeast Asia. A $100,000 campaign has been launched to promote the idea. Thus far, it has received some attention in the press, though virtually none from people in power.

But the basic impulse of the committee’s staff, the majority of its directors and, probably, most of its members remains steadfastly elitist. Part of the problem may lie with the permanent staff. Marcy, its director since the beginning, was chief of staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for eighteen years, and while his professional experience makes him an adept lobbyist, he is less comfortable with grass-roots politics. Jeanne Mattison, the committee’s co-director since 1977, was a television and stage actress until 1967 and then publicity director for several public-interest groups.

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Marcy and Mattison reject a broad-based approach. "The committee was really put together," Mattison explained, "with the thought that if you had credible, knowledgeable people, who were influential as well, that was the best voice to speak about détente with. . . . Better than a demonstration in the street, which could be referred to as a grass-roots approach."

Since 1977, the committee's "invitation-only" membership has grown from 130 to 250. Many liberals joined after Ronald Reagan's Presidential victory, including Robert McNamara, Jacob Javits, George McGovern, Frank Church, Dick Clark, Hodding Carter 3d and Leonard Woodcock. However, no new effort has been made to recruit among ordinary citizens and groups that share the committee's goals. Mattison insists that its roster of notables gives the committee "credibility and legitimacy when we go talk to senators and members of the Administration."

The committee has clearly had difficulty adjusting to its new and unwanted role as an opponent of official policy. As Neal, a founder and executive vice president, explained recently, "The committee was organized to support a policy of the United States, the policy of U.S.-Soviet détente. It's one thing to support a policy of the government and another thing to oppose it. It's . . . more gutsy to oppose it, and more difficult."

At the general meeting last June, board members such as William Attwood, former publisher of Newsday, and Stephen F. Cohen, a professor of politics at Princeton University, committee member Seth Tillman, a spokesman for George McGovern's Americans for Common Sense, as well as Anne Zill, a representative of Stewart Mott's Fund for Constitutional Government, urged the committee to become more activist and grass-roots oriented. They called for an emergency national conference on détente, a coalition with other advocacy groups with similar foreign policy goals and more direct involvement in political campaigns.

This proposed strategy is resisted by Marcy, Mattison, Schmidt and probably most corporate committee members, who prefer "bipartisanship" and traditional lobbying tactics. Indeed, the prevailing view seems to be that the best tactic is a conciliatory line, even toward the cold-warriors Reagan Administration. In a memorandum written shortly before Reagan's inauguration, the committee staff and several of the more cautious members insisted that outright opposition would be counterproductive: "It is important that we stick with bipartisanship . . . and . . . hold firm on matters of principle, but always assume a conciliatory attitude." What will the committee do if the Reagan Administration's actions begin to match its strident rhetoric? "We will say so," Mattison replies, "with all the force we have and all the dignity of the committee and its membership."

But "dignity" won't be enough. The committee's influential members have not been able to stop the rush toward a second cold war, and without public opinion behind them, they won't be able to put détente together again. Despite polls over the years showing substantial public support for improved U.S.-Soviet relations, and despite the potentially life-or-death issues at stake, détente seems to be a lost cause. This is due not so much to international events as to a failure of political leadership. So long as the American Committee on East-West Accord continues on its low-key, elitist course, it is not likely to provide that leadership.}

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**Opposition**

(Continued From Front Cover)

torship of Ayatollah Khomeini. Rajavi studied political science at Teheran University, was trained in Palestinian camps in the late 1960s and returned to Iran to face arrest, torture and six years of imprisonment. Alone of the founding members of the Mujahedeen, he was spared execution as a result of a campaign of international appeals to the Shah.

The organization Rajavi heads, the People's Mujahedeen, was founded in 1965 by dissident Moslem radicals who rejected the conventional political tactics of Mehdi Bazargan and other Moslem opponents of the Shah. Influenced by the revolutionary doctrines of the late 1960s, they tried in vain to win over Bazargan by offering him translations of Mao Zedong.

In 1971, they started guerrilla activities, and over the next eight years approximately eighty members were killed and about 800 were imprisoned. Their targets were government officials and buildings as well as some U.S. military personnel living in the country. Although they survived, they were severely weakened. In 1975, a "Marxist-Leninist" faction, now known as Peikar (Combat), broke away, denouncing religion as "a petty-bourgeois deviation," and in the last years of the Shah's rule the Mujahedeen had only a skeletal organization outside the jails. They played a marginal role in the revolution, and when Rajavi was released in December 1978, he had to rebuild the movement from the ground up.

The Mujahedeen did, however, have one important asset, which they used to rally support from young people disillusioned with the Ayatollah: they were Moslems who had demonstrated their heroism against the Shah, yet they were independent of Khomeini. Rajavi told me how he was allowed to meet the Ayatollah on one occasion. Khomeini spent fifteen minutes expressing his affection for the Mu-
jahedeen but requested that they accept his leadership. Ra-

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