

# Washington Whispers



Doubling up. Gramm juggles two campaigns.

## Follow the money

**F**ederal Election Commission records show that two contributions intended for Republican Phil Gramm's Senate re-election bid wound up instead with his presidential campaign. The political action committee of Sprint, the long-distance telephone company, gave \$1,000 in February to Gramm's Dallas-based Senate campaign. Two months later, the American Medical Association donated \$2,000 to the same fund. But when Gramm's team filed its FEC report, it listed both contributions as having been made to the Texas senator's Washington-based presidential campaign. A Sprint spokeswoman points out that in a February 21 letter, the company tried to make its intentions clear when it told a Gramm fund-raiser that its PAC bylaws do not permit presidential campaign donations. The AMA also gives only to congressional races. The law says that candidates running for more than one federal office simultaneously are not allowed to commingle separate campaign funds. Penalties vary but could run \$10,000 per infraction if a campaign knowingly breaks the law. A Gramm spokesman acknowledges that there may have been an error. "If there have been mistakes," he says, "we will correct them."

## Is Dole warming up to Hollywood?

Less than a year after he attacked the movie industry for poor taste and indecency, **Sen. Bob Dole** was prepared to deliver a conciliatory speech in Hollywood on the morning of its most important celebration—the presentation of the Oscars at the Academy Awards. Dole, who last week clinched the Republican presidential nomination, was tentatively set to speak to Hollywood executives at **Rupert Murdoch's** Twentieth Century Fox studios. Insiders say that in his prepared text, he intended to laud the motion picture academy for this year's nominees for best picture, particularly *Apollo 13* and *Braveheart*. Dole hoped to score political points by contrasting his opposition to government involvement in Hollywood's internal affairs with **President Clinton's** more intrusive views. The Kansas senator also planned to speak out against the V-chip, which can screen out violent TV programs. But last week, Dole's handlers canceled the speech because the timing was "wrong," according to one source familiar with the preparations. **Michele Davis**, an official of Dole's campaign in California—which holds its primary this week—insisted the speech was "one of 10 things" under consideration for his stopover in the state but that the senator decided to return to Washington earlier than expected. Davis added that Dole intends to address the Hollywood issue "further on down the road."



### CAMPAIGN CLOUT

To court female voters, the Democratic National Committee has for the first time included a women's group—EMILY's List—on the steering committee of its national coordinated campaign team. Founded in 1985, EMILY's List is a partisan political action committee that backs women candidates who support abortion rights in Senate, House and gubernatorial races. As a member of the DNC's top committee for the co-

ordinated campaign team, it will help set overall campaign strategy and guide the allocation of resources at the state level. In the past, the DNC's 14-year-old coordinated campaign team has included representatives of the presidential candidate, state parties and traditional constituencies like organized labor but never a women's group. The DNC's steering committee is an "evolving" group that will add other organizations throughout the year. EMILY's List will be heavily involved in about a dozen states in a women's get-out-the-vote effort similar to its 1994 women's vote program in California.

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### RESETTLING SCORES

■ Despite assurances in August from Attorney General Janet Reno that there will be no new influx of Cuban refugees, the Clinton administration is now taking what could be the first step toward resettling in the United States all 22,000 Cubans remaining at Guantánamo Bay. The Justice Department's Community Relations Service recently asked the Office of Refugee Resettlement at the Department of Health and Human Services to analyze the cost of moving 15,000 Cubans out of Guantánamo to the United States — approximately the same number of Cubans who do not meet guidelines for "humanitarian parole," according to a government source. The finding: It would cost \$14.5 million. The CRS, which is responsible for resettling both Cuban and Haitian refugees from Guantánamo to this country, denies that the analysis focused only on Cubans, stressing that they are "just looking at different costs."

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### PLAYING A WEAK HAND

While the Republicans relish having Watergate bulldog Sen. **Fred Thompson**, a former prosecutor, leading the charge when the Governmental Affairs Committee opens hearings soon on questionable Democratic fund-raising, there is apparently another reason that GOP

leaders tapped this particular committee—the Democratic side is relatively weak. If, as once considered, the Commerce Committee was fielding the high-profile hearings, the Democratic team would have included such scrappy senators as **John Kerry** of Massachusetts, **John Breaux** of Louisiana and **Ernest Hollings** of South Carolina. Instead, **John Glenn**, considered a political softy, will be the senior Democrat on the panel, which also includes the relatively unassertive **Daniel Akaka** of Hawaii and incoming freshmen **Max Cleland** of Georgia and **Dick Durbin** of Illinois. **Joseph Lieberman** of Connecticut is probably the most outspoken among the Democrats, but he has little allegiance to the Clinton administration. One possible wild card: **Carl Levin**, former head of Detroit's public defender office, who could emerge as the only strong voice in the Democrats' corner.

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### INSIDE POLITICS

Here's another example of how Washington really works in an election year. When Montana's **Max Baucus**, considered by many Republicans to be the most vulnerable of the seven Democratic senators on the ballot in November, filed for re-election last week, he pointedly defended his decision last year to reverse course and support the balanced-budget amendment. The three-term senator insisted that his change of heart had nothing to do with this year's election. Perhaps. In any case, Baucus strategists argued in an internal memo that his flip-flop could work to the senator's advantage if he used it to deflect questions on what they called one of his "most dangerous" vulnerabilities: his vote in favor of a tax increase in 1993. The memo also noted that aides would be testing "possible responses" to issues such as his support for congressional pay raises. A

Baucus spokesman says the memo was created in anticipation of "gross distortions" from the GOP.



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### READY FOR PRIME TIME?

A bipartisan group may soon ask the Federal Communications Commission to hold hearings on a controversial proposal that would provide free television time for major presidential candidates. The organization, which includes dozens of political and media figures, such as former CBS anchorman **Walter Cronkite**, would move one step closer to its goal if the FCC, in its hearings, accepted one critical argument: that its concept of free TV time for candidates constitutes a "news event." If the FCC decides it does—and there are strong

indications that it may—minor candidates then could be prevented from demanding the right to equal time. Two possible formats are under discussion. One would give each candidate half-hour broadcasts—on September 15 and October 27. The other would provide the candidates with two to five minutes of free time on alternate nights during the last month of the campaign.