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MEREDITH



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Politics '80

The Constitution of the United States, Part I.

by Cindy Rinker

The word "un-constitutional" is and has been thrown around often in the U.S. court system. Judges and juries are being forced to determine whether something goes against the principles of the constitution or not. Yet how many people know and-or understand what lies within the Constitution of the United States?

The original written constitution consists of a Preamble and seven Articles. The Preamble is the section most familiar to many people. It begins "We the People," and is a statement of goals -- "to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty."

Article I deals mostly with congress and is the longest in the constitution. It makes up more than half of the original

document and is divided into ten sections. Section one grants "all legislative powers" of the national government to a congress consisting of a House of Representatives and a Senate. Sections four through seven deal with the election, organization and procedure of the congress, annual sessions, ineligibility of members of congress for other government offices, and a presidential veto. Section eight is the most important statement of the jurisdiction and authority of the national government; it is a list of the powers congress may exercise. Specific prohibitions on the power of the national government are listed in section nine, and section ten is a list of limits of the state government to interfere in federal areas.

As one can see the constitution is the basis of the government of the U.S. What may at first appear to be a jumble of long detailed descriptions, is in fact a group



of clear statements meant to be understood by the people. In the next two issue of The TWIG, Politics '80 will outline the other six Articles of the Constitution and also the Amendments that have been proposed and passed, these including the Bill of Rights.

Trouble on the Southern flank

by Patrick Garrity

Mr. Garrity is Associate Editor with Public Research, Syndicated

The hostage crisis, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and now the Iran-Iraq war have taught Americans a general and a particular lesson: In general, these crises have crudely reminded Americans that the world is more inclined to the exercise and more susceptible to the imposition of raw force than our policy makers would like to believe; in particular, these occurrences have demonstrated to Americans our need and our inability to project power abroad, in peacetime as well as in war.

If we must learn these lessons half way round the globe, however, we must apply them much nearer home. For if the United States is to project political and military power in defense of its vital interests abroad (e.g., in the Middle East), it must have security in this hemisphere. We can no longer afford to neglect the growing threats to this security, or to absolve them with wishes for a better world than the one we got.

For example, Cuba has become a major advance Soviet military base in the Western Hemisphere. It is capable of threatening the heavily-travelled trade routes through the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, routes which are crucial to the United States. If the United States were to become militarily involved outside this hemisphere, Cuba--only 90 miles off the Florida coast--would present a serious strategic problem for American security.

The Castro regime also provides the Soviets with a nucleus around which political and economic interests hostile to the United States can be organized. Several Caribbean diplomats have informed Washington that "the Cubans are all over the place in the Caribbean" while "the U.S. is nowhere to be found." Jamaica and Grenada have increasingly taken a pro-Castro, anti-American stance; St. Lucia, Martinique, and Dominica are reportedly under growing pressure from Cuban-backed subversives.

Castro's support of leftist guerrillas in the Caribbean has caused State Department officials to express their concern about "concentric circles of potential trouble." This 1980s version of the domino theory holds that Cuban instigated unrest and upheaval on these smaller islands may spread to such larger Caribbean nations as Haiti and the Dominican Republic, along with the American commonwealth of Puerto Rico, where terrorists supported by Cuba have already made numerous attacks on American military personnel.

The obvious goal of this process would be to eliminate American military and political influence in the Caribbean basin. In the past few years, the United States has agreed to relinquish its military bases near the Panama Canal, including the Galeta Island submarine tracking station, and the naval facility in Barbados. The remaining American bases in Puerto Rico and Guantanamo have been the targets of a Castro-led propaganda campaign.

Panama's Omar Torrijos now supports Castro's demand for American withdrawal from Guantanamo, as does Mexican President Lopez Portillo. That enclave may thus become the next major symbol of U.S. "colonialism" in the hemisphere.

Cuban and soviet agitation in the Caribbean not only threatens America's "third border," it also provides a base for threatening the Panama Canal, Central America, and the Mexican oil fields. The unifying of the three Sandinista factions prior to the Nicaraguan revolution was reportedly achieved at an Havana meeting with Castro. Soviet-made arms were airlifted to the Sandinistas through Cuba in supply planes from Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. Virtually every Latin American leftist organization (many of which have been supported by Cuba and the USSR) sent observers or volunteers to Nicaragua. And in the wake of the Sandinista victory, there has been an upsurge in terrorist activity along the Caribbean basin--most notably in El Salvador and Colombia, where several embassies have been seized as part of a broader pattern of anti-government disturbances.

In South America, the Carter Administration's policies have estranged the United States from its traditional allies, while weakening American influence. After disputes over the Beagle Channel and conflicting Antarctic claims nearly led to war between Chile and Argentina in 1978, the two antagonists--once American allies--turned to other powers for assistance. Argentina expanded its economic relations with the Soviet Union, received several high-level Soviet military delegations, and, finally, refused to support the American grain embargo against the USSR. Chile, in turn, signed a number of trade and economic agreements with the People's Republic of China. The Sino-Soviet dispute may thus be extended at some future date to the Western Hemisphere by two right-wing dictatorships ostracized by Washington.

Brazil is the geopolitical
(Continued on Page 8)



I voted in Tuesday's election, but, like most people I know, some of the candidates I voted for were defeated. Besides being disappointed, I have become victim of the notion that maybe my vote really doesn't count anyway. I know that my feeling is silly and that if everyone felt that way, our system of democracy would be worthless.

What concerns me most at this point, however, is not the lack of influence I feel on the national level, but the lack of influence I sometimes feel here at Meredith. Of course, I know that we as students are constantly being encouraged to participate. We are told that our opinions are valued. We are allowed to vote on legislation. For example, on Friday, October 31, a representative group of the student body passed legislation changing closing hours from midnight to 1 a.m. on Sunday-Thursday nights, among other issues. But the student body vote does not a law make. The legislation must now be read before and approved by the Student Life Committee and a subcommittee of SLC. Next, the legislation must be signed and approved by the Dean of Students and the Vice President for Student Development. If deemed to be of major significance, the legislation must be finally approved by the president of the college. At any one of these stages, the legislation may be defeated. For this specific piece of legislation, I have no reason to believe that the student vote will not carry, but in this system of checks and approvals, where does the power of the student lie?

At least in the area of passing legislation the student is allowed to place her vote, but there are other issues in which the average student has no real voice. What role does the student play in a professor's receiving tenure? It seems to me that, in the past, tenure has been granted or withheld on the basis of personal relationship of the faculty member with the chairman of the department rather than his ability and interests. We students know which professors teach well. We are not looking for easy courses but courses in which we are stimulated to learn. We know which professors are interested in us, those who have time for us, are available to us if we need them, and can communicate with us. We also know who those professors are who are genuinely concerned with Meredith both now and in the future. Why, then, are we not given the opportunity to voice our opinions, formed from experience, when a professor comes up for tenure? At the minimum, why are we not told when and why a professor does not receive tenure? We as concerned students have the right to ask these questions and to expect answers.

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The TWIG needs photographers for both part-time and full-time help. Anyone interested in taking pictures and-or developing, please contact Sonya Ammons (821-7031) or Deborah Bartlett (821-7027).

