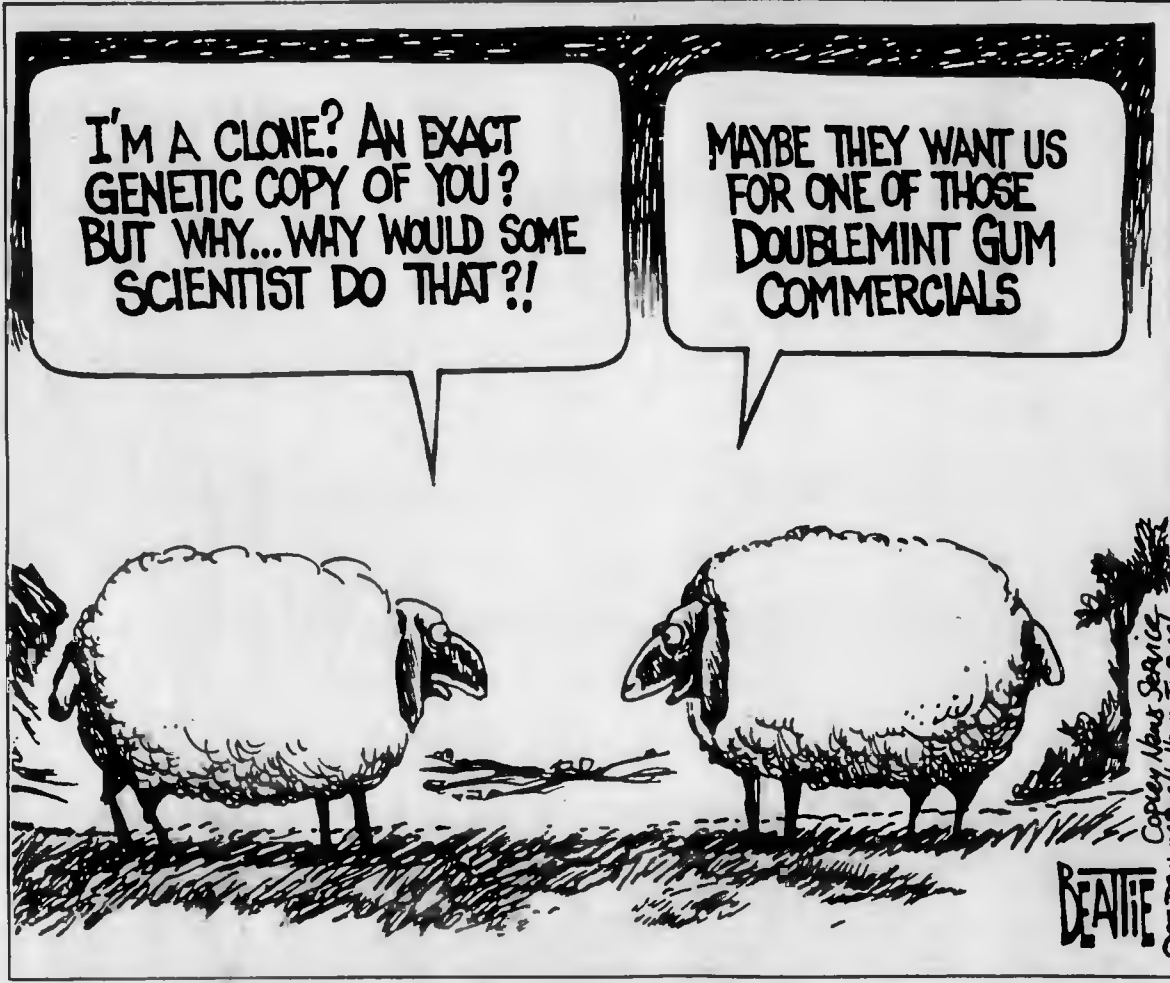


# Viewpoints



## Republican presidential choices

A few weeks ago, after former Senator Bill Bradley's visit to North Carolina, I wrote about the line-up of possible Democratic presidential candidates in the year 2000. Since then, some folks have told me that I owed the Republican candidates equal space.

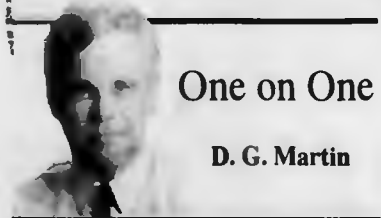
It is a harder job. There is no agreed-upon front-runner — no Republican Al Gore. On the other hand, while the Democrats have just a few serious prospects, the Republicans have too many possibilities to list here.

But we can talk about some of them. In North Carolina, of course, everybody's favorite Republican candidate for 2000 is Elizabeth Dole. She should be at the top of our discussion list. But I am going to discuss her chances at the end of this column.

Why? Well, all I can say is, read to the end and find out. North Carolina has no other obvious presidential contenders, but our neighbor Tennessee has at least two Republican potential challengers.

Former governor, Lamar Alexander, might look a lot more appealing in 2000 than he did in 1996 when he lost the moderate Republican primary vote to Bob Dole. Even then he was lots of people's second choice. After the close scrutiny that comes with a national campaign, he is still looking clean cut — at a time when people are looking for character.

Tennessee's other Republican possibility is Senator Fred Thompson. He is new to the Senate, but we got to know him in the Watergate hearings when he served as minority counsel and,



One on One  
D. G. Martin

more recently, as a pretty good movie actor. He is tough, straight-talking, persuasive — and comfortable in making the TV cameras work for him. He is going to handle the Senate's investigation of campaign finance abuses. If he does a good job on that project, watch out for his presidential campaign.

History question: If Alexander or Thompson ran against Al Gore, would it be the first time two major candidates for president came from the same state? (Answer: No, Lincoln and Douglas from Illinois in 1860 and Roosevelt and Dewey from New York in 1944.)

Another Southern possibility is George Bush. Not the former president, but his son, the popular governor of Texas. He has more personality than his dad — and while he hasn't yet had a lot of national exposure, name recognition will not be a problem.

History question: When was the last time a son of a president became president? (It only happened once before, when John Quincy Adams, son of John Adams, became president. President Benjamin Harrison was the grandson of William Henry Harrison.)

What about the other Republican 1996 candidates? Buchanan, Forbes, Gramm. What about Jack Kemp and Dan Quayle? Each deserves an entire column. To summarize though, I think they have had their chance.

There is an important factor to consider in sizing up the contenders. The Republicans are going to want to win — more than ever. Like the Democrats in 1992, the various power groups are going to be more willing to compromise their principles. If it takes a moderate to win, they will nominate a moderate — and there are plenty of attractive moderate Republican governors to choose from.

If being black or being a woman would give their candidate an edge, the Republicans will be ready to put aside their previous reluctance to consider anyone other than a white male.

So, does this mean Colin Powell might have a good chance? Maybe. But he may be too independent and too liberal. And he may have too much of a military sense of order and process to put up with all a presidential candidate (and president) has to do.

Would a Republican willingness to consider moderates and women open the door for Christy Whitman, the governor of New Jersey?

Maybe. But I think the most likely pick is our state's own favorite — Elizabeth Dole. She was the only Republican to run a successful national campaign last year. Her husband may have lost, but she won support all over the country.

When the Republicans start counting the votes that her candidacy would attract, I think they might just give her the nomination.

Then again, 2000 is a long way off and maybe it is a little too early. But it sure is fun, isn't it?

## Times have sure changed

A friendly preacher went to the hospital one night to see a sinner friend he had not been able to reach. The man, beginning to rally from surgery asked, "Why are the shades pulled?"

The minister answered, "I tasked the nurse to do that, Tom. You see, there is a fire across the street, and I don't want you to think the operation had been a failure."

Those of you who read my articles know that I was extremely fond of my grandfather. He influenced my life greatly. However, he wasn't responsible for my stubbornness, neither was he responsible for my being hardheaded. He had a great sense of humor, which I claim. His sermons were long, but never dull. You didn't nod or go to sleep when he was preaching. He hugged the little children, but he didn't hug the ladies. Grandma wouldn't let him.

Praying was his speciality. The last time the family had a reunion, over my objection, my aunts and uncles insisted that he bless the food. I warned them what was going to happen. They said no way was he going to give a long prayer. They didn't know him like I did. Even though he was 85 at the time, I knew he wasn't going to mess around when he started dealing with the Lord. His prayer started at noon; he said amen 45 minutes later. He blessed everyone in America, went overseas and then came back to get anyone he might have missed. The children were crying, the dogs were barking and the ants had eaten most of the food when we got to it.

Grandpa was kind to young preachers. He often would take them under his wing and train them the way they ought to go. A young preacher, at Grandpa's urging, was to give a special sermon at the evening prayer meeting. The young buck spent all Sunday afternoon practicing. By the time he was to speak, he was so hoarse that he could barely speak above a whisper. He asked Grandpa what



A View from the Country  
Raz Autry

to do to relieve it. "Get some brandy and pour a little in a glass and fill the rest of the glass with water. Take it into the pulpit and as you preach, just sip it a little at intervals and your voice will clear up."

After the sermon ended, the young preacher asked Grandpa how he liked his sermon.

Without cracking a smile he said, "Well, in all candor, I didn't."

"You didn't, why didn't you?" Then Grandpa answered: "I have my reasons. In the first place, I didn't say put a cherry in it. Secondly, I said sip it - not gulp it. Thirdly, the Sermon on the Mount was not preached in New York City. Fourthly, there are 10 commandments, not 14. And in the fifth place, when David killed the giant Goliath, he used a sling and a stone - he didn't stomp his insides out."

Times have really changed since my grandfather's day. Children did what they were told to do. When I would go for a visit, I knew I would be in for a treat. My grandmother, who was a large lady,

would make big cookies just for me. After she had taken them from the oven, which was fired with what was called "stove wood" — meaning anything which would burn — she would place me on her lap and sing songs. I didn't appreciate the songs then, because I was too busy eating those big round cookies. Now those memories are precious to me.

Even though I was enjoying myself, I knew Grandpa had some work in mind. Sure enough, at daylight he would call me and say he had a treat for me. My treat was to be on one end of what was commonly called a "crosscut saw." One person on each end was trying to cut down a sweetgum tree. He used the wood to make biscuit trays. I never did ask him if he sold any. If so, it was the only money he got from our labor. Preaching didn't pay very well in those days. A chicken, ham or tub of lard went to the most powerful preachers. If the length of a sermon was the judge, my grandfather should have received the whole hog.

My parting thought... Grandpa said that you can't agree with some men without angering them. One of his cases in point was the agnostic whom he defined as "a man who loudly declares that he knows nothing and abuses you if you believe him."

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## Letters Cloning: our fears

To the Editor:

While cloning is definitely a big deal scientifically, it should not be a big deal ethically. Cloning is just another method of giving birth. Period.

All this talk about recreating another Hitler or Einstein is baloney.

While genetic characteristics such as height, hair color or sexual orientation may mirror the original, the thoughts and ideas of a clone will not. They are unique to each person. We have nothing to fear. I think one day we will look back and laugh at what all the fuss was about.

Bill Stosine  
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Iowa City, Iowa 52240

## We welcome your letters

Letters to the editor are encouraged and welcomed. Writers should keep letters as short as possible. Names, addresses and telephone numbers should be included and all letters must be signed. Names will be printed, however, other information will be kept confidential. We reserve the right to edit letters for good taste and brevity. Letters should be received by *The News-Journal* by noon on the Tuesday of the publication week. Due to space limitations, we will only print three letters a month from an individual.

