

American looks better rocking on the porch than he (or she) does trudging through the mud buck-naked with spotlights turned on (another way to describe participation in the current presidential nominating process)?

Raise the limits on individual giving to campaigns from \$1,000 to \$5,000. The well-intentioned \$1,000 limit, placed into the federal law after Watergate, was meant to reduce the influence of money in politics. As with many federal laws, it has done just the opposite. For example, to raise \$10 million in 1995 for my campaign, I attended 250 fund-raising events. This took about 70 percent of my time. I became unusually well acquainted with a great many good Americans capable of giving \$1,000 (who probably represent a cross section of one percent of all the people in the country). Wouldn't I have been a better candidate—and the country better off had I been elected—if I had spent more time traveling around America and visiting our allies abroad? (I actually did this during 1994, when I was not meeting nice people who could give \$1,000.)

Remove the state spending limits. This is step two in the crusade to deal with the phenomenon of the zillionaire in politics. Think of it this way: Say the fifth-grade teacher organizes a contest for class president with water pistols as the weapon of choice; then some kid arrives with a machine gun. Either take away the new kid's machine gun (Bill Bradley suggests a constitutional amendment to limit what individuals can spend on their own campaigns) or give the rest of the fifth graders the freedom to raise and spend enough money to buy their own machine guns. In one week just before the New Hampshire primary, Steve Forbes bought 700 ads on one Boston television station in one week, most of them negative advertising against Dole (plus a few gentler ads against me). Forbes, let us remember, spent almost no time raising his money and had no limits on what he spent per state. The rest of us did. If New Hampshire is most of the ballgame in the presidential primaries, why shouldn't we be permitted to defend ourselves even if we use up all the money the government allows us to spend during the entire campaign?

Deregulate the election process. The Federal Election Commission is full of competent people trying to do their jobs (several of whom are about to audit my campaign, which, if everything works out perfectly, will only take only about three years. I am not kidding). The campaigns are grossly overregulated. Of the \$10 million our campaign raised during 1995, about \$1 million went for accountants and lawyers for compliance with the federal rules. Is it really necessary, for example, for the federal government to decide that a candidate's campaign T-shirts need not bear the "Paid for by . . ." disclaimer? Fewer rules and full disclosure should be the bywords here.

Start the coverage earlier. From the moment the networks began to cover the campaign (this year it was not until late January), you could feel the lift. As a candidate, you can also feel the collapse. I cannot help but think that there are ways—even many months out—to relate the day's news about, say, the failure of the Hartford school system's private-management contract to what the presidential candidates say about how schools should be run.

Spread it out. At a breakfast in Washington in November, I said this to my friends in the news media: "If you guys were sports-writers, you would arrive during the last quarter of the Final Four championship game and claim you had covered the entire basketball season." You can imagine how many friends I made with this statement, but I was right. By my count, the news

media covered the presidential race aggressively for just 21 days, from the Iowa caucus on February 10 until the South Carolina primary on March 2. Most of what went before consisted of asking people like me, "Why are you behind Bob Dole 72-3 in the polls?" at a time when everyone knew Dole and no one had ever heard of me. After South Carolina, the most frequently asked question was, "When are you going to get out?" So, most of us did. Let us hope the national political writers never decide to become umpires. The World Series wouldn't last more than one inning.

Now, in defense of the media, it is hard to cover a 21-day wild rollercoaster ride, which is what the nominating process has become: 38 primaries in 25 days. Let's change this: Let Iowa and New Hampshire go it alone in February. Then, require all the other states to hold their primaries on the second Tuesday of March, April, or May. This would give winners a chance to capitalize on successes, voters a chance to digest new faces, and candidates a chance to actually meet voters. What do you think would have happened this year if after the surprising New Hampshire primary (Buchanan winning, Dole stumbling, me surging, Forbes falling) there had been three weeks to campaign before a March 12 primary in a bunch of states? Then another month until another set of primaries? Lots more interesting—and lots more conducive to sound judgment by the voters, too.

Create a new C-SPAN channel to cover the country outside Washington. Chief executives from outside Washington sometimes make the best chief executives in the country. Why not a cable channel devoted entirely to Michigan governor John Engler's charter schools, San Antonio county executive Cyndi Krier's crime program, Milwaukee's school-choice program? Give these leaders as much C-SPAN face-time as members of Congress. This will give the public more exposure to state and local politicians who might then have a better chance of winning national office.

Let the candidates speak more often for themselves. Praise the media here. C-SPAN's Road to the White House on Sunday nights set the pace. I was astonished how many told me they saw C-SPAN's 50-minute coverage in July of my walk across New Hampshire. The New York Times printed excerpts from candidates' speeches, even some very long excerpts. The networks all showed unedited stump speeches of the major candidates.

Find the good and praise it. These were always the words of my friend the late Alex Haley. I can find the good easily about this process, even with its flaws. During the last year I walked across New Hampshire meeting several hundred people a day, spent 80 days in Iowa in maybe 200 meetings that ranged from 20 to 300 people, and had at least 50 meetings in Florida with the delegates to the Presidency III straw poll. During most of these meetings I was little known and unencumbered by news media. At least the news media presence was so small it did not disrupt the flow of the session.

I remember wishing time after time that anybody who had any sense of cynicism about our presidential selection process could be with me, as a fly on the wall—because they could not be cynical after hearing and seeing and feeling what I saw. The audience always listened carefully. Their questions went straight to the heart of what kind of country we could have, of our jobs, our schools, our neighborhoods, and our families. In meeting after meeting, I came away certain that this is a nation hungry for a vision contest, not one willing to tolerate a trivial presidential election. There is a great market in the American electorate for a full-fledged discussion about what kind of country we can have in the year 2000 and beyond.

The reason to make certain we have a properly functioning presidential nominating process is that the presidency itself is our most important institution as we go into the new century, and the debate about who should be that president is our most useful national discussion.

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#### HONORING THE DRY HOLLOW VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 14, 1996

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I am taking this opportunity to applaud the invaluable services provided by the Dry Hollow Volunteer Fire Department. These brave, civic-minded people give freely of their time so that we may all feel safer at night.

Few realize the depth of training and hard work that goes into being a volunteer firefighter. To quote one of my local volunteers, "These fireman must have an overwhelming desire to do for others while expecting nothing in return."

Preparation includes twice-monthly training programs in which they have live drills, study the latest videos featuring the latest in firefighting tactics, as well as attend seminars where they can obtain the knowledge they need to save lives. Within a year of becoming a volunteer firefighter, most attend the Tennessee Fire Training School in Murfreesboro where they undergo further, intensified training.

When the residents of my district go to bed at night, they know that should disaster strike and their home catch fire, well-trained and qualified volunteer fire departments are ready and willing to give so graciously and generously of themselves. This peace of mind should not be taken for granted.

By selflessly giving of themselves, they ensure a safer future for us all. We owe these volunteer fire departments a debt of gratitude for their service and sacrifice.

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#### MEDICAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

HON. MAC COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 14, 1996

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the Georgia State Senate recently adopted a resolution that encourages the Congress of the United States to enact health care reform measures that include Medical Savings Accounts [MSA's]. State legislators realize that MSA's will eliminate barriers to health insurance and increase access for millions of Americans. For the record I submit a copy of the resolution adopted by the Georgia State Senate on March 5, 1996.

#### A RESOLUTION

Encouraging the Congress of the United States to enact legislation to provide for medical savings accounts; and for other purposes.

Whereas, it is estimated 37 million Americans are without health insurance, many while between jobs, and more are underinsured because of the effects of rising health