considered in reallocation calculations under VERA. The programs removed would include: Readjustment counseling and treatment, counseling and psychiatric care for the mentally ill, drug and alcohol related programs, programs for the homeless, PTSD programs, spinal cord injury programs, AIDS programs and geriatric and extended care programs.

In a memorandum prepared for me by the Congressional Research Service on this legislation, it estimates that this bill would result in an additional 5–6% of veterans in the northeast becoming eligible for free health care. That translates to approximately 75,000 additional veterans for New York alone. CRS also estimates that if 20% of these veterans seek to use VA services, a conservative assumption, it would result in an increased caseload for both VISN #2 and #3 of 15–20%. This would force a recomputation of VERA distributions, and result in more VA health care funds remaining in northern urban areas.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation which will help ensure that all veterans receive equal opportunity to the health care which they have earned, regardless of where they have chosen to live.

H.R. 24

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CRITERIA FOR REQUIRED COPAYMENT FOR MEDICAL CARE PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) EXCEPTION BASED ON PRIOR CATASTROPHIC HEALTH CARE EXPENSES.—Subsection (a) of section 1722 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''or'' at the end of paragraph (2);

(2) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (3) and inserting ''; or''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(4) the veteran's expenses for medical care (as defined in section 213 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) for the previous year are in excess of 7½ percent of the veteran's adjusted gross income for the previous year (as determined for purposes of the personal income tax under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986).''.

(b) ADJUSTMENT IN INCOME THRESHOLDS FOR VETERANS RESIDING IN SMSAS.—Subsection (b) of such section is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) The amounts in effect for purposes of this subsection for any calendar year shall be increased by 20 percent for any veteran who resides in a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA), as defined by the Bureau of the Census.''.

(c) AMENDMENTS WITHIN EXISTING RESOURCES.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out the amendments made by this section for fiscal years 2000 and 2001 within the amount of funds otherwise available (or programmed to be available) for medical care for the Department of Veterans Affairs for those fiscal years.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on January 1, 2000.

SEC. 2. SERVICES FOR MENTALLY ILL VETERANS.

(a) MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE ON CARE OF SEVERELY CHRONICALLY MENTALLY ILL VETERANS.—Section 7321 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting ''and members of the general public with expertise in the care of the chronically mentally ill'' in the second sentence after ''chronically mentally ill''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(e) The Secretary shall determine the terms of service and (for members appointed from the general public) the pay and allowances of the members of the committee, except that a term of service may not exceed five years. The Secretary may reappoint any member for additional terms of service.''.

(b) CENTERS FOR MENTAL ILLNESS RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND CLINICAL ACTIVITIES.—Paragraph (3) of section 7320(b) of such title is amended to read as follows:

''(3) The Secretary shall designate at least one center under this section in each service network region of the Veterans Health Association.''.

SEC. 3. ALLOCATION OF MEDICAL CARE RESOURCES FOR THE DEPARTMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—(1) Chapter 81 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 8116 the following new section:

''§ 8117. Allocation of medical care resources

''In applying the plan for the allocation of health care resources (including personnel and funds) known as the Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation system, developed by the Secretary pursuant to the requirements of section 429 of Public Law 104–204 (110 Stat. 2929) and submitted to Congress in March 1997, the Secretary shall exclude from consideration in the determination of the allocation of such resources the following (resources for which shall be allocated in such manner as the Secretary determines to be appropriate):

''(1) Programs to provide readjustment counseling and treatment.

''(2) Programs to provide counseling and treatment (including psychiatric care) for the mentally ill.

''(3) Programs relating to drug and alcohol abuse and dependence.

''(4) Programs for the homeless.

''(5) Programs relating to post-traumatic stress disorder.

''(6) Programs relating to spinal cord dysfunction.

''(7) Programs relating to AIDS.

''(8) Programs relating to geriatric and extended care.''.

(2) The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 8116 the following new item:

''8117. Allocation of medical care resources.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 8117 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall apply with respect to the allocation of resources for each fiscal year after fiscal year 1999.

COMMENDING THE CITY OF ARROYO, PUERTO RICO ON ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the special relationship between the city of Arroyo, Puerto Rico, and the United States. December 25, 1998, will mark the centennial Christmas celebrated with the United States.

In the summer of 1898, American troops landed in the city of Arroyo, Puerto Rico, to help free the Puerto Ricans from Spanish colonialism. General John Rutter Brooke and his troops spent Christmas in Arroyo that year, and that event marked the beginning of a close and lasting relationship between the people of the city of Arroyo and the United States. To memorialize General Brooke, there is a city street named in his honor.

The city of Arroyo resembles many typical U.S. small towns, with its ''Main Street USA''. This central street, running north-south through the town, is named Calle Morse, after Samuel Morse, the inventor of the Morse code. He came to Arroyo to visit his daughter, who resided at the Enriqueta estate, and was present when the first telegraph line was installed in Puerto Rico in 1858. The city of Arroyo has the esteem of being the first location in Puerto Rico to send a telegraph, welcoming Puerto Rico to the age of telecommunications.

The historical homes which line Main Street in Arroyo are fashioned after southern American styles of architecture, and the citizens of Arroyo are very proud of this feature of Main Street. The old U.S. customshouse in town has been well-preserved and today is an important center of the city's culture, serving as a museum which traces the historical connections with the United States.

The town of Arroyo has taken an active role in defending the United States. From the First World War, to the Second World War, to the war in Korea, and to Vietnam, to Desert Storm, young men from Arroyo have answered the call to duty, and brave soldiers such as Virgilio Sanchez in Korea and Raul Serrano in Vietnam, have heroically given their lives in these wars.

This year marks the 100th Christmas anniversary since that first Christmas that the U.S. officially spent in Arroyo. The town did their best to make General Brooke and his troops feel welcome, having to spend Christmas away from their immediate families. To commemorate this special Christmas celebration, students of welding at a local vocational technical school have crafted iron ornaments that will be placed throughout Main Street in recognition of the city's unique relationship with the United States. These beautiful handmade ornaments will be lighted on Christmas Eve, 1998, in remembrance of this joyous occasion.

I commend the people of the city of Arroyo, Puerto Rico, for their special relationship with the United States and congratulate them on their 100th Christmas anniversary.

UNDERLYING THE IMPEACHMENT CRISIS—HISTORY: THE WAY WE SEE IT

HON. JESSE L. JACKSON, JR.

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, Republicans say the underlying issue is not about sex, it's about perjury and obstruction of justice. Democrats say the underlying issue is

about sex—a private consensual sexual relationship—and the President lied about it, possibly committing perjury in the process. But since lying about sex is not an act that involved using his official position against the state, as Nixon did, Democrats say Clinton's sins do not reach the Constitutional standard for impeachment.

That is the essence of the arguments we heard presented by members of the House Judiciary Committee and members on the floor of the Congress who voted, along partisan party lines, to impeach President Clinton. That is what the current Republicans and Democrats are saying. What will history say?

Underlying the Clinton impeachment is neither sex, nor lying, nor perjury, but American history itself. Essentially the same economic and political forces that drove the presidential impeachment process against Andrew Johnson in 1868 are driving the impeachment process 130 years later. There has been a ''role reversal''—the Republicans of 1998 were the Democrats of 1868 and I will show how their roles reversed—but the underlying issue is essentially the same; reconstruction. Our nation's first effort at economic reconstruction after the Civil War was at issue in 1868, our nation's second effort at economic reconstruction after the Civil War, beginning with Brown in 1954, is at issue in 1998.

The end of the Civil War and the adoption of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution on December 18, 1865 ended legal slavery. Slavery, the Democratic Party, its geography and its ideology were all defeated. But Lincoln's assassination five days after Appomattox denied him and the Republican Party the opportunity to pursue a ''Big Federal Government'' policy of economic reconstruction and political enfranchisement for all Americans, leaving no American behind.

When legal slavery ended, there were nine million people in the old Confederacy, which was led by the party of Thomas Jefferson. Then, the Democratic Party defined itself in exclusive terms—as slave holders with private property rights, which were protected legally by ''states' rights'' governments. Four million of the southerners were uneducated and untrained former slaves who needed to be educated, trained and brought into the economic mainstream and politically enfranchised with the right and ability to vote. That didn't include poor and working class whites who had similar needs and had been exploited, manipulated, misused and politically diverted through a focus on social issues (then, perpetuating the fear of interracial marriage and sex) by the slave owners to preserve and protect the southern economic system of elite special interests.

Just eight years earlier, in 1857, in the Dred Scott decision, the Court had ruled that blacks had no rights that a white man must respect and that Congress could not outlaw slavery anywhere in the U.S. The Confederacy—its economy, religion, family, social customs, mores and politics—was based and built on the institution of slavery. The Civil War ended slavery, but there were still two outstanding problems: (1) How to bring four million former slaves into the economic mainstream? And (2) How to politically enfranchise them? That was the goal of the First Reconstruction and its goal has never been realized and those twin problems have never been completely fixed! One-hundred-and-thirty-two historically black colleges and universities were founded in this context.

It was a massive Federal government commitment to educate the newly freed slaves—who were nearly half the population of the eleven former confederate states—not a commitment by those states to educate them. This Federal commitment to educate the newly freed slaves was determined to be central to a new black middle-class that could then lift themselves or take advantage of opportunities in the general economy. Northern Republican Federal troops were occupying the South after the Civil War because they could not depend on the Democratic South to enforce federal laws. With regard to education, it was the only way the Federal Government could prevent racial discrimination and ensure that educated blacks had an equal opportunity of getting hired after they were educated and trained.

Lincoln fought to preserve the Union and to end slavery. He defeated the southern slave forces militarily at a national cost of 620,000 lives and was prepared to reconstruct the nation with a Republican program of inclusion and political enfranchisement. ''Former'' Democratic Confederates opposed and resisted the ''Big Centralized Republican Federal Government'' and wanted ''the government off of their states' backs'' so they could go back to a legal system (''States' Rights'') that protected their economic interests (the ability to own slaves).

The identification of Lincoln and the Republican Party with ending slavery and commencing reconstruction led southern Democrats to refer to Lincoln as the Black President and the Republican Party as the Black Republican Party. Blacks, after Lincoln's assassination, remained loyal to the Republican Party until 1936, Franklin Delano Roosevelt's second term. The New Deal appealed to black economic interests. Roosevelt defined a new more inclusive Democratic Party by offering an economic agenda that appealed to every American. The political history of African Americans shows that their loyalty follows reconstructive efforts.

Senator Andrew Johnson was a Tennessee Democrat who had refused to join his fellow southern Democratic Confederates and stayed with the northern Unionists. Lincoln's concern about preserving and reunifying the nation following the war led our first Republican President to reward Johnson's loyalty by nominating him for Vice President in the 1864 campaign.

After Lincoln's assassination, President Johnson focused on putting the Union back together, but lacked the Republican commitment to build a ''more perfect Union'' for all Americans. Unlike Lincoln and the Republicans, he was willing to preserve the Union by leaving some Americans behind, sacrificing the rights and interests of the former slaves. As a result, angry northern Radical Republicans investigated a vulnerable Johnson—who was not unlike Bill Clinton in terms of his personal foibles—to try to come up with an excuse to impeach him. It was a partisan Republican attack on a Democratic President in order to preserve undertaking the Republicans' First Reconstruction program.

The struggle between these radical progressive northern Republicans and these radical conservative southern Democrats (Dixiecrats) continued following the Civil War, and finally came to a head in the 1876 presidential election and Tilden-Hayes Compromise of 1877—which ended reconstruction. Rutherford B. Hayes, a Republican, was finally elected President by one vote in the House in exchange for pulling out Federal troops protecting the newly freed slaves in the South, and agreeing to appoint conservative Dixiecrats to the Supreme Court. The Dixiecrats, with the help of new ''black laws'' of discrimination, psychological intimidation, physical violence and murder, were now on their way back to power in the South.

By 1896, the Supreme Court appointments resulted in Plessy, which ushered in Jim Crow, and by 1901 the first Congressional Black Caucus was completedly eliminated from Congress, not to return for three decades.

It is the same elitist southern forces and their continuing anti-Federal government ideology—except today they are called Republicans—who want, this time, not to preserve but undo the nation's effort at reconstruction, a Second Reconstruction begun in 1954 with Brown—the desegregation of all aspects of American life, from public facilities to private corporate behavior—and continued with the 1964 Civil Rights Act and 1965 Voting Rights Act, affirmative action and majority-minority political districts. The southern Democratic Party, with the legacy of the Confederacy, generally found itself on the wrong side of history again in the 1960s. Governors George Wallace of Alabama, Lester Maddox of Georgia and Orville Faubus of Arkansas were all Democrats from Dixie. Renowed segregationists like Senator Richard Russell of Georgia and Congressman Howard Smith from Virginia were Democrats. Today's Senators STROM THURMOND of South Carolina and RICHARD SHELBY of Alabama were originally Dixiecrats, but are now Republicans.

Today's conservative southern-based Republicans' target is Second Reconstruction, especially the ''liberalism'' of Democratic President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, but also ultimately including many of the ''Big Government'' economic programs of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal. The real underlying dynamic of this impeachment proceeding is not the removal of Bill Clinton, but the removal of the social and economic programs of the New Deal and the Second Reconstruction of the Great Society, a weakening of the Big Federal Government generally, and the destruction of liberalism as a viable political ideology in particular.

Whether these conservative anti-Federal government Republicans are successful or not will be determined by history. There will be a few pro-impeachment Democrats thrown in for good measure because, politically, they must factor in the old Democratic forces in the South, now controlled by the Republicans. The Republican impeachment strategy can only be measured by future elections. Will the American people be lead astray again by the Republicans' new sex diversion or will a strong political leader be able to get them to focus on their real economic interests of full employment, comprehensive and universal health

care, affordable housing and a quality public education? History—not President Clinton or the current crop of Democrats and Republicans— will render that judgment!

Today, the political, ideological and geographical roots of the anti-reconstruction and anti-more-perfect-union effort is in the South, though its tentacles have spread beyond the South. This Republican impeachment effort allows us to look at the roots, dynamic and current political structure of this post-Civil War and Current conservative political movement. One-hundred-and-thirty-three years after the ''Great Quake,'' the impeachment of President Clinton is a mere tremor in the on-going struggle to reconstruct America.

Begin with the Judiciary Committee. Ten of the eighteen Republican members of the Judiciary Committee are ultra-conservatives from former Confederate states. In the middle of the impeachment hearings, one of them, BOB BARR of Georgia, was exposed for having recently spoken before a white supremist group.

Move on to the House Republican leadership. The outgoing Speaker is Newt Gingrich (R–GA), whose history is laced with not-so-subtle new racial code words, and the Speaker-elect is BOB LIVINGSTON (R–LA). Their styles are different, but their substance is essentially the same. Both abdicated their leadership roles in the impeachment crisis only to have another southern conservative, Rep. TOM ''The Hammer'' DELAY (R–TX), fill the void. He, through intimidation, forced Republicans, not to vote against censure, but to vote with their party on a procedural vote—which, in essence, is a vote to kill a vote of conscience for censure of the President's private behavior.

In addition, call the roll of House leadership and committee chairmanships in the 105th Congress: RICHARD ARMEY (TX), Majority Leader; BILL ARCHER (TX), Ways & Means; BOB LIVINGSTON (LA), Appropriations; FLOYD SPENCE (SC), National Security; THOMAS BLILEY (VA), Commerce; PORTER GOSS (FL), Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

In the 105th Republican-controlled Senate: TRENT LOTT (MS), Senate Majority Leader; STROM THURMOND (SC), President Pro Tem (3rd in line to be President), Chairman, Armed Services; JESSE HELMS (NC), Senate Foreign Relations; JOHN WARNER (VA), Rules; RICHARD SHELBY (AL), Select Committee on Intelligence. Today in Congress there are more people arguing on behalf of States rights than there are people arguing on behalf of building a more perfect union. That is why fighting against racial injustice cannot be relegated to a department of the government. That is why several of the nation's top journalists have chosen to focus on what TRENT LOTT (R–MS) and BOB BARR (R–GA) do with their political spare time, including speaking before and having memberships in certain southern political organizations. The institutional nature of our historic problem requires eternal vigilance on many fronts and in every election.

The presiding officer at an impeachment trial in the Senate will be U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist, the ultimate conservative states' righter. Nominated to the Court by Nixon and elevated to Chief Justice by Reagan, this intellectually gifted conservative, while clerking for Justice Robert H. Jackson between 1952 and 1953, wrote a memorandum arguing in favor of upholding the ''separate but equal'' doctrine of Plessy versus Ferguson in preparation for the 1954 decision on Brown. As a conservative Phoenix lawyer, he appeared as a witness before the Phoenix City Council in opposition to a public accommodations ordinance and took part in a program of challenging African American voters at the polls.

From 1969 until 1971, he served as assistant attorney general for the Office of Legal Counsel. In that position, he supported executive authority to order wiretapping and surveillance without a court order, no-knock entry by the police, preventive detention and abolishing the exclusionary rule, that is, a rule to dismiss evidence gathered in an illegal way.

As a member of the Burger Court, Rehnquist played a crucial role in reviving the debate regarding the relationship between government and the states. The consequences of Rehnquist's state-centered federalism surfaced dramatically in the area of individual rights. Since the 1960s, the Court had held that nearly every provision in the Bill of Rights applies to the states through the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Rehnquist voiced his disagreement with such a method of determining the constitutional requirements of state action, particularly in the context of criminal proceedings, urging a return to an earlier approach whereby the states were not required to comply with the Bill of Rights but only to treat individuals with ''fundamental fairness.''

Likewise, Rehnquist narrowly construed the Fourteenth Amendment's mandate to the states not to deny any person the equal protection of the laws. He contended that all that the framers of the Fourteenth Amendment hoped to achieve with the Equal Protection Clause was to prevent the states from treating black and white citizens differently. The most important value for Rehnquist is his state-centered federalism, followed by private property and individual rights. In other words, his current views are consistent with the core of the states' rights legal philosophy a century-and-a-half-ago, where the individual right to own property (slaves) was to be protected by a states' rights government! (Source: *The Oxford Companion To The Supreme Court)*

To capture a new political base, Republicans abandoned the essence of Lincoln and decided to go after Dixie, using social issues as cover for their narrow economic interests. Barry Goldwater launched this modern conservative anti-Federal government movement with his 1964 presidential campaign. Ronald Reagan picked it up and sent the same signal by launching his southern campaign from Philadelphia, Mississippi in 1980, in the name of states' rights, where two Jews and a Black were murdered, in the name of states' rights, fighting for the right to vote. Now Republicans want to complete Mr. GINGRICH's 1994 ''Revolution of Devolution'' by defeating and eliminating the twin evil forces of ''liberalism'' and ''Big Government'' in the 2000 election.

The Republicans know that, based on the information they have gathered, if the President is impeached in the House, he will not be convicted in the Senate. They don't want him convicted and out of office, with President Al Gore given two years to solidify his hold on the White House. They want an impeached, but not convicted, President twisting in the wind for two years leading up to the 2000 election. This is a continuation of the November 3, 1998, strategy of the Republican hard liners to motivate and build their conservative ''social values'' political base as a diversion from economic justice issues. The Republicans will not allow censure because that would allow Democrats to say that they took some action against the President for his immoral actions, which would take away their ''social-moral'' issue for 2000 campaign.

What the Republicans want out of this impeachment crisis is a ''family values'' issue for the 2000 presidential campaign. They want to say that Clinton's sexual misconduct is the result of the ''decadent values'' of the 1960's and liberalism generally. In other words, in some form, the Lewinsky matter will become a Republican ''wedge issue'' in the 2000 campaign. The fact that African Americans are so closely identified with both President Clinton and liberal ''Big Government'' programs fits perfectly with their consistent use of race to divide the electorate in presidential campaigns. They can send the subliminal race signal while publicly denying they are using race as an issue in the campaign,

The Republican goal in 2000 is to use this strategy to retain control of the House and Senate and to gain control of the White House. They can then appoint hardcore right wing conservatives to the Supreme Court after 2001. Remember, Kenneth Starr's ambition before being sullied by the Lewinsky affair was to be appointed to the Supreme Court.

Republicans, with Dixie as its geo-political and theological center, in control of the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the Federal government, could turn the clock back to a twenty-first century version of the States' Rights days of the 1850s and the 1896 ''separate but equal'' days of Plesssy versus Ferguson—not a return to slavery, but a return to the days when equal opportunity for all is twisted and converted to equal opportunity for a limited few.

By putting impeachment in the legislative rather than the judicial branch of government, the framers of the Constitution deliberately made it a political-legal affair. Republicans have done in 1998, what Democrats did in 1868. They have use the political-legal nature of the impeachment process to turn it into a political-political affair to further their anti-Big Government aims.

Clinton launched a dialogue to talk about race, but the real race dialogue is what will happen to economic reconstruction in 2001 if the reactionary Republican strategy works. Clinton has worked hard to separate the race dialogue from the economic dialogue—joining with the Republicans in 1997, and ignoring his strongest liberal supporters today, to cut a budget deal to ''balance the budget'' with conservative Republicans. That deal assures that there will not be enough money to fix our historic problem or build a bridge to the future for Americans left behind. He has reduced his own defense to a personal defense instead of a defense of history.

Republicans are trying to impeach reconstruction. The President's reckless behavior

played into the political hands of Dixie's history-driven religiously-based self-righteous politics of advancing it's own lost cause.

To whom much is given, much is required. The President was not elected to be our pastor, priest, rabbi or imam. He was elected to protect our constitutional rights. All Presidents are public servants, not perfect servants. His error of private behavior and poor public judgment played perfectly into Dixie's regional politics to undermine a century-and-a-quarter of economic progress for all. President Clinton risked all of that history of social and economic progress by lying about an issue of personal satisfaction. He has not committed treason as defined by the Constitution as an impeachable offense. His "teason" is against the cause of building a more perfect union.

After economic and socially conservative Presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter (and economic conservative, but more liberal socially), Reagan and Bush, a moderate-to-conservative southern Democrat, President Clinton, has helped to prepare an economic bridge which would allow us to again begin to work on some of the unfinished and unreconstructed tasks of the Civil War. The Monica Lewinsky affair has now reduced the defense of that agenda to a defense of him.

On December 19, 1998, Republicans are trying to impeach Social Security (privatize it), affirmative action, Medicare, Medicaid, a clean environment, women's freedom to choose, Supreme Court justices who believe in equal protection under the law for all Americans, public education for all over vouchers for some, universal and comprehensive health coverage over medical savings accounts for the few, affordable housing for all, versus mansions for a select few.

Something deeper in history than sex, lying and perjury is at issue here—just as something deeper in history than the removal of a cabinet secretary was at stake in 1868. At stake in 1868 was the First Reconstruction. At stake in 1998 is the Second Reconstruction. The struggle taking place in Congress and nationally today is between those political forces who want to build a more perfect union for all Americans, leaving no American behind, and those who want to return an elitist economic program of more perfect "States' Rights" for the few. That is what underlies the impeachment crisis.

[From the Washington Post, Dec. 13, 1998]

130 YEARS AGO, PARALLELS UP TO A BOILING POINT

(By Peter Carlson)

The president was a Southern Democrat who'd risen from the class scorned as "white trash." His personal life inspired widespread snickering. The Republicans who controlled Congress detested him. They investigated every aspect of his life and then voted to impeach him. With his fate in the hands of a few moderates, he hired a claque of lawyers skilled in nitpicking and pettifoggery.

The president was, of course, Andrew Johnson. The year was 1868. When news of Johnson's impeachment reached Philadelphia, Republicans celebrated by firing a 50-gun salute while Democrats threatened to send scores of armed men to defy Congress. In 1868, unlike 1998, Americans were not blase about impeachment. Passions ran high, at least at the beginning. The issue was not sex—or even perjury. It was far more incendiary. On paper, the question was whether the president could fire the secretary of war without the consent of Congress. In reality, it was a battle over Reconstruction—over the fate of former Confederates and former slaves.

Wild rumors spread: Johnson would use the Army to stay in power. Confederates were marching toward Washington to help him. The Houston Telegraph reported that the War Department had been burned, the secretary wounded in battle. The Louisville Democrat asked readers: "Are you ready once more to take up the musket?" Many Americans were ready to fight. Iowa's governor, who supported impeachment, cabled his state's congressional delegation: "100,000 Iowans are ready to maintain the integrity of the Union." On the same day, a man from Terre Haute cabled Johnson: "Indiana will sustain you with 100,000 of her brave, stalwart and tried men."

For a while, it seemed that America was on the verge of a second Civil War. But soon things settled into a spectacle more familiar to today's impeachment watchers—one part drama, one part farce and many, many parts legal hairsplitting, windy speechifying and mind-numbing tedium.

THE SECRETARY OF WAR

"I am in favor of the official death of Andrew Johnson," an Indiana congressman said during the House debate on impeachment. "I am not surprised that one who began his presidential career in drunkenness should end it in crime."

Other congressmen were almost as nasty. One said the president was stained with "the filth of treason." Another called him a "despicable, besotted, traitorous man."

The only American president ever impeached was a tailor by trade. He grew up dirt poor in Raleigh, N.C., and didn't learn to read until he married and his bride tutored him. He opened a tailor shop in Tennessee and drifted into politics. He had a gift for oratorical invective—populist volleys directed at the Southern planter elite. He was elected state legislator, then congressman, then governor, then senator.

In 1860, when Abraham Lincoln was elected president and Southern states began seceding from the Union, Sen. Johnson returned to Tennessee to campaign against secession. He wasn't opposed to slavery—he owned a few slaves himself—but he was loyal to the Union. When Tennessee joined the Confederacy, Johnson returned to Washington. On the way, he was nearly lynched by a rebel mob in Lynchburg, Va.

The only Southern senator who stayed with the Union, he was a hero in the North—"the greatest man of the age," said the New York Times. In 1864, Lincoln chose him as his vice presidential running mate. Feeling a tad sick on inauguration day in 1865, Johnson fortified himself with whiskey—too much whiskey. Visibly soused, he delivered an incoherent speech, and forever after his enemies mocked him as a drunk.

When Lincoln was assassinated, Johnson inherited the task of reuniting the nation. He was determined to bring the South back into the Union as quickly as possible. Under his rules, the rebel states merely had to end slavery and pledge loyalty and they could send representatives to Congress. In December 1865—only eight months after the war's end at Appomattox—those representatives arrived. Chosen in whites-only elections, they included the Confederate vice president, six members of the Confederate Cabinet and four Confederate generals.

Northern congressmen were incensed. Asked Sen. Ben Wade of Ohio: Did any nation in history ever welcome "traitors" into its Congress as equals? "Would a man who was not utterly insane advocate such a thing?"

Congress refused to seat the Southern delegations. Johnson was outraged. It was the beginning of the long battle that led to impeachment.

When the Republican-dominated Congress passed a bill giving full citizenship rights to blacks, Johnson vetoed it. When Congress passed a bill funding a Freedmen's Bureau to assist former slaves, Johnson vetoed it. When Congress passed a bill allowing blacks in the District of Columbia to vote, Johnson vetoed it.

In the South, the all-white "Johnson governments" passed laws denying blacks the right to vote or buy property or own firearms. Angry Republicans asked: Are we losing in peace what we won in war?

But Johnson wasn't interested in the problems of former slaves. He wanted only to reunite the country. He was for union in 1860, he said, and he was still for union in 1866. He broke with the Republicans and toured the country campaigning against them.

His strategy backfired. Republicans won big in the election of 1866. Emboldened, they started investigating Johnson, spreading rumors that he had conspired with the men who killed Lincoln. Over his veto, they enacted a Reconstruction Bill that dissolved the "Johnson governments" and put the South under military rule.

That law gave Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, who ran the military, a great deal of power over Reconstruction. Stanton was allied with the Republicans. To keep him in office, Congress passed the Tenure of Office Act, which barred the president from firing Cabinet secretaries without the consent of the Senate. Johnson asked for Stanton's resignation. Stanton refused. Johnson asked the Senate to fire him. The Senate refused. Johnson fired him anyway but Stanton refused to leave, barricading himself in his office.

Johnson's treasury secretary warned the president that he could be impeached if he persisted in removing Stanton.

"Impeach and be damned," Johnson replied.

THE SHOW

Slowly, painfully, Thaddeus Stevens, the aged, sickly leader of the House Republicans, shuffled into the hushed Senate chamber on Feb. 25, 1868, followed by a group of congressmen.

"We appear before you," Stevens said, "and in the name of the House of Representatives and all the people of the United States, do impeach Andrew Johnson, president of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors."

Clubfooted, gaunt and grim-faced, Stevens, 76, was an avid abolitionist who had spent the war urging Lincoln to crush the Confederates mercilessly, even if "their whole country is to be laid waste." The rebels hated him so much they detoured on their way to Gettysburg just to burn down his Pennsylvania ironworks. After the war, he lived in sin with his black housekeeper and didn't much care who gossiped about it. He sponsored the impeachment bill, and after it passed, 126–47, the House named him to the committee that would prosecute the president in the Senate.

The smart money was betting on conviction. Acquittal, the New York Times reported, "is looked upon as simply impossible,

unless some new and startling development takes place.''

The president hired five crafty lawyers, including his attorney general, and paid them each $2,000 out of his own pocket. They opted to stall. On March 13, they asked for another 40 days to prepare their case.

''Forty days!'' roared Rep. Ben Butler, the former Union general who was serving with Stevens as a prosecutor. ''As long as it took God to destroy the world by a flood!''

Butler wanted to start the trial immediately. The Senate compromised, scheduling the case for March 30.

When that day arrived, Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase presided over the Senate, which was stuffed with 150 extra chairs to accommodate House members. The President did not appear—nor was he expected—but the galleries were packed, mostly with well-dressed women who had connections to senators, who each got four gallery tickets, or to congressmen, who each got two.

''Congressmen appear to be very good judges of female beauty,'' the Washington Star reported. ''We looked and looked in vain for a dozen plain-looking women in the galleries.''

Butler delivered the prosecution's opening statement. He started slowly, droning on about this unique historical moment, but soon he was orating grandiloquently: ''By murder most foul he succeeded to the presidency and is the elect of an assassin to that high office!''

After a few hours, Butler's audience began to wilt but Butler kept going. He was still chugging along on April Fool's Day, when wags in the press gallery amused themselves by sending notes, purportedly from women in the galleries, to the congressmen on the floor, and then snickering as they read the congressmen's replies.

When Butler finally finished his opening statement, he began calling witnesses who had observed the attempt to remove Stanton from office. The scene they described barely rose above farce: Gen. Lorenzo Thomas, the new appointee as secretary, went to Stanton's office and ordered him to leave. Stanton refused and ordered Thomas to leave. Thomas refused. Back and forth it went, each man ordering the other to leave, until finally Stanton poured two stiff shots of whiskey and the dueling secretaries sat down for a friendly chat.

One witness, a Delaware buddy of Thomas, recalled his efforts to buck up the general during this historic confrontation: ''Said I to him. 'General, the eyes of Delaware are upon you.' ''

The senators burst out laughing.

Next, Butler summoned several newspaper reporters to testify about the president's speeches during the 1866 campaign. The reporters confirmed that the president had indeed said many nasty things about his Republican congressional enemies. To Butler, this was proof that Johnson was subverting the power of Congress. To most observers, it was proof of nothing more than politics as usual.

Tedium was setting in. Many hours were spent in the reading of legal documents and senatorial speechifying. ''Spectators found the proceedings rather uninteresting,'' the Star reported. Rep. James Garfield was equally bored: ''This trial has developed, in the most remarkable manner, the insane love of speaking among public men,'' the congressman wrote in a letter. ''We are wading knee deep in words, words, words . . . and are but little more than half across the turbid stream.''

Newspaper editorialists began complaining about the lack of public interest in the impeachment controversy. The Baltimore Gazette lamented that ''the greatest act known to the Constitution—the trial of a President of the United States'' was inspiring ''less interest in the public mind than the report of a prize fight.''

Johnson could have enlivened things by appearing at his trial but he never did. He also refused to make any public comment on impeachment. Privately, he contemptuously referred to the proceedings as ''the show.''

Behind the scenes, the president was wooing moderate Republican senators by appointing officials whom they supported and by sending signals that he would stop obstructing Reconstruction. ''The president,'' the Chicago Tribune reported, ''has been on his good behavior.''

Finally, at the end of April, both sides began to sum up their cases. The ailing Thaddeus Stevens, who spent most of the trial huddled under a blanket, rose on wobbly legs to make his final statement. The case was about Reconstruction, he said, about how the president had usurped congressional power and helped to create new Confederate governments in the South. Stevens denounced Johnson as a ''wretched man'' and a ''pettifogging political trickster,'' but then his strength gave out and he had to sit down and let Butler read the rest of his speech.

The next day, while another prosecutor was delivering a long summation, British novelist Anthony Trollope fell asleep in the gallery, much to the amusement of the press corps.

Then the defense began its summation, and the president's lawyers more than earned their $2,000 fees. They quibbled about the definition of ''high crimes and misdemeanors'' and concluded that the president's actions did not rise to that level. They said the Tenure of Office Act was unconstitutional. They said that violating that act couldn't be an impeachable offense because the act hadn't been passed when the Constitution was adopted. Finally, in a delightful demonstration of the art of legal hairsplitting, they claimed that Johnson could not be convicted of removing Stanton from office but only of attempting to remove Stanton from office. After all, Stanton had never left his office—he was still barricaded in his suite at the War Department.

As the speakers droned on, the Washington Star tracked the daily fluctuations in the betting action. On May 2, the odds were 3 to 1 for conviction. On May 5, the odds were 2 to 1 for acquittal. The next day, the paper reported: ''Today impeachment stock is as unaccountably up as it was unaccountably down yesterday. The bulls have it.''

On May 6, as prosecutor John Bingham prepared to deliver the final summation of the trial, a false rumor swept the galleries that Sen. James Grimes had died. Grimes was a Johnson backer, and Republicans in the galleries began to sing gleefully: ''Old Grimes is dead, that bad old man.''

Justice Chase gaveled for order and then Bingham began his speech. It was a full-blown barn-burner. ''We stand this day pleading for the violated majesty of the law, by the graves of half a million martyred hero-patriots who made death beautiful by the sacrifice of themselves for their country.''

After much florid rhetoric, he spoke the last words of the trial: ''Before man and God, he is guilty!''

Now it was time to decide the question—except the senators insisted on discussing the matter in secret sessions for a few days.

Finally, on May 16, 1868, they were ready to vote.

CLOSE CALL

The galleries and the Senate floor were packed but the room was absolutely silent as Chief Justice Chase called the roll. Conviction required a two-thirds majority, which meant 36 of the 54 senators, and everyone knew that the vote would be close.

''Mr. Senator Anthony, how say you?'' Chase asked.

''Guilty,'' said Henry Anthony, a Rhode Island Republican.

''Mr. Senator Bayard, how say you?''

''Not guilty,'' said James Bayard, a Delaware Democrat.

Those votes were no surprise. Anthony and Bayard, like most of the senators, had already announced their opinions. There were 35 certain votes for conviction and three undecided. The first of the undecided was William Pitt Fessenden, a Republican from Maine.

''Mr. Senator Fessenden, how say you?'' Chase asked.

''Not guilty.''

Across the country, crowds packed newspaper offices to get news of each vote as it came over the telegraph. In the White House, Johnson also learned of each vote by a separate telegram.

The next undecided voter was Sen. Joseph Fowler. He was from Tennessee, Johnson's home state, but he was a Republican who'd frequently voted against the president.

''Mr. Senator Fowler, how say you?''

Fowler mumbled something that sounded like ''guilty.''

''Did the court hear his answer?'' a senator called out.

Chase asked the question again.

''Not guilty,'' Fowler shouted.

Now it all came down to Edmund G. Ross. A Kansas Republican, Ross was new in office, having replaced a senator who had committed suicide in 1866. Ross disliked Johnson and voted against his Reconstruction policies. He'd been seen as a certain vote for conviction until he sided with Johnson supporters on some procedural motions. Since then, he'd been bombarded by mail demanding that he vote to convict. But he worried that conviction would damage the presidency forever. During the vote, he sat at his desk, nervously ripping papers into strips. When his name was called, he stood up and the strips fell to the floor.

''Mr. Senator Ross, how say you?''

''Not guilty.''

It was over. The president was saved by a single vote. His lawyers sprinted to the White House to bring him the news. Johnson wept with joy. He called for whiskey, poured shots for his lawyers, and they celebrated with a silent toast.

Back in the Capitol, the senators elbowed their way through a rowdy crowd. ''Fessenden, you villainous traitor!'' somebody yelled. Fessenden said nothing and kept moving.

Too ill to walk, Thaddeus Stevens was carried from the chamber in a chair. Seething with rage, he glared down at the crowd. Someone asked him what had happened.

''The country,'' he screamed, ''is going to the Devil!''

[From the Washington Post, Nov. 18, 1998]

THE MAN BEHIND THE VOTES

(By Joseph A. Califano, Jr.)

The president most responsible for the Democratic victories in 1998 is the stealth president whom Democrats are loath to mention: Lyndon Johnson.

In March of 1965, when racial tension was high and taking a pro-civil rights stand was sure to put the solid South (and much of the North) in political play, President Johnson addressed a joint session of Congress to propose the Voting Rights Act. Flying in the face of polls that showed his position was hurting his popularity, he said that ensuring everyone the right to vote was an act of obedience to the oath that the president and Congress take before ''God to support and defend the Constitution.'' Looking members on the floor straight in the eye, he closed by intoning the battle hymn of the civil rights movement, ''And we shall overcome.'' One southern congressman seated next to White House counsel Harry McPherson exclaimed in shocked surprise, ''God damn!''

That summer, with Johnson hovering over it, Congress passed the Voting Rights Act. The president was so excited that he rushed over to the Capitol to have a few celebratory drinks with Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield and Republican Minority leader Everett Dirksen. The next day LBJ pressed Martin Luther King Jr. and other black leaders to turn their energy to registering black voters.

LBJ planned every detail of the signing ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda. He wanted ''a section for special people I can invite,'' such as Rosa Parks (the 42-year-old black seamstress who refused to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery) and Vivian Malone (the first black woman admitted to the University of Alabama, in 1963). He told me to get ''a table so people can say, 'This is the table on which LBJ signed the Voting Rights Bill.' ''

He was exuberant as he drove with me and other staffers up to Capitol Hill for the signing. Riding in the presidential limo he spoke of a new day, ''If, if, if, if,'' he said, ''the Negro leaders get their people to register and vote.''

I rarely saw him happier than on that day. For years after that, he fretted that too many black leaders were more interested in a rousing speech or demonstration full of sound bites and action for the TV cameras than in marshaling the voting power of their people.

Well, if he was looking down on us on Nov. 3—and I'm sure he was up there counting votes—he saw his dream come true. Without the heavy black turnout, the Democrats would not have held their own in the Senate, picked up seats in the House and moved into more state houses. In Georgia, the black share of the total vote rose 10 points to 29 percent, helping to elect a Democratic governor and the state's first black attorney general.

In Maryland, that share rose eight points to 21 percent, saving the unpopular Gov. Parris Glendening from defeat. The black vote in South Carolina kept Fritz Hollings in his Senate seat, defeated Lauch Faircloth in North Carolina and ensured Chuck Schumer's victory over Al D'Amato in New York.

Here and there across the country, the black vote provided the margin of victory for democratic governors and congressmen—and where Republicans such as the Bush brothers attracted large percentages of Hispanic and black voters, helped roll up majorities with national implications.

The Voting Rights Act is not the only thing Democrats can thank LBJ for. Johnson captured for the Democratic Party issues that were decisively important in this election. He got Congress to pass the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which for the first time told the people they could look to the federal government for help in local school districts. It is his Medicare that Democrats promised to protect from conservative Republican sledgehammers. LBJ was the president who ratcheted up Social Security payments to lift more than 2 million Americans above the poverty line.

Together Medicare and Social Security have changed the nature of growing old in America and freed millions of baby boomers to buy homes and send their kids to college rather than spend the money to help their aging parents. The Great Society's Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, Motor Vehicle Pollution, Solid Waste Disposal and Highway Beautification acts have given Democrats a lock on environmental issues.

LBJ was also the president who created the unified budget to include Social Security, which helped produce a balanced budget in fiscal year 1969. Without that budget system, President Clinton would not be able to claim credit for producing the first balanced budget in 30 years.

As exit polls showed, the Democratic command of the terrain of education, health care, Social Security, the economy and the environment—and the growth of the minority vote—paved the road to electoral success in 1998.

With the demise of Newt Gingrich, many Republicans think it's time to mute his libelous assault on the Great Society programs he loved to hate. Isn't it also time for Democrats to come out of the closet and recognize the legacy of the president who opened the polls to minorities and established federal beachheads in education, health care and the environment. After all, it's the Democrats' promise to protect these beachheads and forge forward that accounts for much of their success this November and offers their best chance to retain the White House and recapture the House of Representatives in 2000.

The writer was President Lyndon Johnson's special assistant for domestic affairs.

[From the Washington Post, Dec. 11, 1998]

BARR SPOKE TO WHITE SUPREMACY GROUP

(By Thomas B. Edsal)

A spokesman for Rep. Robert L. Barr Jr. (R–Ga.) acknowledged yesterday that Barr was a keynote speaker earlier this year at a meeting of the Council of Conservative Citizens, an organization promoting views that interracial marriage amounts to white genocide and that Abraham Lincoln was elected by socialists and communists.

Barr spoke at the organization's semiannual convention on June 6 in Charleston, S.C. His presence was cited by Harvard law professor Alan M. Dershowitz, who testified against the impeachment of President Clinton at a hearing of the House Judiciary Committee. Barr, the most outspoken proponent of impeachment in the House, serves on the committee.

''Congressman Barr, who was fully aware of this organization's racist and antisemitic agenda, not only gave the keynote address to the CCC's national board, but even allowed himself to be photographed literally embracing one of their national directors,'' Dershowitz wrote Judiciary Committee Chairman Henry J. Hyde (R–Ill.) last week.

In a letter to Hyde responding to Dershowitz, Barr declared that Dershowitz's ''accusations are unfounded and deplorable.''

Asked to comment on the views of the council, Brad Alexander, Barr's spokesman, said Barr is working full time on impeachment, and ''he is not going to take time away from it to respond to groundless attacks by Professor Dershowitz.''

In the letter to Hyde, Barr counterattacked, accusing Dershowitz of ''condoning the use of racism in court, most notably in the O.J. Simpson case,'' in which Dershowitz served as part of the defense team.

The World Wide Web site of the Council of Conservative Citizens is dominated by material portraying the ''white race'' as under siege. A council columnist described only as ''H. Millard'' writes:

''Take 10 bottles of milk to represent all humans on earth. Nine of them will be chocolate and only one white. Now mix all those bottles together and you have gotten rid of that troublesome bottle of white milk. There too is the way to get rid of the world of whites. Convince them to mix their few genes with the genes of the many. Genocide via the bedroom chamber is as long lasting as genocide via war.''

LOTT'S ODD FRIENDS

(By Colbert I. King)

When the Senate convenes in January, its first order of business should be to review Majority Leader Trent Lott's fitness to serve as guiding light of the world's most deliberative body. You heard it right. Before the senior senator from Mississippi sits in judgment of anybody, most of all the president, Lott's colleagues ought to pass fresh judgment on him.

The need for a closer look arises from recent articles by Port reporter Thomas Edsall on Georgia Republican Rep. Robert Barr's keynote address to the Council of Conservative Citizens, a white ''racialist'' group that, among other things, publishes anti-black screeds capable of making bigots weak in the knees with delight. And Barr isn't alone. Lott and the council have kept company, too.

Barr's link with the council was first disclosed by Harvard Law Prof. Alan Dershowitz during the House Judiciary Committee's impeachment hearing. Barr initially screamed like a stuck pig, claiming he knew nothing about the council's alleged racist and antisemitic agenda. He only schmoozed it up with council members at their meeting, said Barr, because the group enjoyed the blessings of other big-name southern conservatives, including Trent Lott, whom the council presses to the bosom as one of its own.

Lott, now at the peak of his GOP legislative career and recognizing a banana peel when he sees one, demonstrated the public relations smoothness that helped get him where he is today by swiftly denying through a spokesman any council membership. Lott has ''no firsthand knowledge of the group's views,'' said the spokesman. Would that those words had been uttered under oath.

No sooner had Lott freed himself from the group than the head of the council's national capital branch, Mark Cerr, embraced the senator as an active member who had spoken to the group in the past. And guess what? The Post next produced a copy of the group's newsletter, Citizens Informer, with who else but Lott on the front page delivering a suck-up speech to a council gathering in Greenwood, Miss., in 1992. Lott told those staunch proponents of preserving the white race from immigration, intermarriage and ''the dark forces'' that are overwhelming America that the council ''stand[s] for the right principles and the right philosophy.''

Lott spokesman John Czwartacki told me this week that the '92 event was just another case of a politician delivering a stump speech to a local group of unknown political

pedigree—no big deal. What's more, after being confronted with evidence of the 1992 speech and the group's views, Lott renounced the council and said he won't truck with the likes of them now or henceforth forevermore.

Well, not so fast.

If, as it is now being argued in Lott's behalf, the majority leader is not comfortable with xenophobic, race-baiting bigots, when did he first grow suspicious and really start keeping his distance from the group? Because contrary to claims that he participated in the council event in '92 because he didn't know any better, they seem to have been keeping company for some time.

On my desk is a copy of a page from the 1997 Citizens Informer with a smiling Trent Lott pictured meeting in his Washington office with council national officers William D. Lord Jr., president Tom Dover and CEO Gordon Lee Baum. Lord and Baum were also in the '92 photo. And who is Lord? The Post reports Lord was a regional organizer for the southern-based segregationist Citizen Councils. In the '60s, white Citizen Council members shared the Ku Klux Klan's views on civil rights but tended to speak and dress better and not slink around after dark in white hoods.

So much could be said about the Council of Conservative Citizens. But let's let Citizens Informer, the group's Web site and its other document speak for themselves:

''Given what has come out in the press about Mr. Clinton's alleged [sexual] preferences, and his apparent belief that oral sex is not sex one wonders if perhaps Mr. Clinton isn't America's first liberal black president. . . . His beliefs are actually a result of his inner black culture. Call him an Oreo turned inside out'' (H. Millard, 1998).

''Life Magazine, the glossy photo album of folksy liberals, has been enlarging depraved miscreants like John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King into national heroes for decades'' (1998).

''The most important issue facing us is the continued existence of our people, the European derived descendants of the founders of the American nation. As immigration fills our country with aliens, we risk being disposed and, ultimately displaced entirely'' (1995).

''A Formal Protest of the [Arthur] Ashe Statue unveiling ceremony will be held on the site of a Confederate Fortification with Battle Flags. . . . Those with confederate battle flags will assemble behind the statue. . . . Come early and dress formal (coat and tie) No racial slurs please'' (Richmond Chapter, June 30, 1996).

''Black rule in South Africa a total failure.'' ''The increase of crime and barbarism in South Africa is nothing more than the emergence of the African ethos, so long submerged by strong pre-deKlerk National Party governments'' (Citizens Informer, Winter, 1997–98).

''The Jews' motto is 'never forget, and never forgive.' One can't agree with the way they've turned spite into welfare billions for themselves, but the 'never forget' part is very sound'' (''A Southern View,'' Citizens Informer, 1997).

''Our liberal establishment is using the media of television to promote racial intimacy and miscegenation. . . . all of the news teams on the major networks have black and white newscasters of opposite sexes'' (Citizens Informer, 1998).

And as for Trent Lott's view of the council before the Citizens Informer article appeared in Edsall's story? A 1995 council promotional mailer quotes Lott: ''America needs a national organization to mobilize conservative, patriotic citizens to help protect our flag, Constitution and other symbols of freedom.''

Trent Lott's column regularly appears in the Informer newsletter (including its most recent issue in 1998) along with the publication's offensive racial columns and articles. However, Lott's spokesman said it would be wrong to associate his boss's noncontroversial and businesslike column, which is widely distributed, with the repugnant views and materials published by the council. Fair enough.

But has Lott kept his distance from the council—or are the ties long-running and cozy? And if the relationship is ended, when did he do it, and how clean is the break? Before hearing the case against Bill Clinton, the Senate and the country need to hear Republican majority leader Trent Lott's case for himself.

[From the Los Angeles Times, Dec. 21, 1998]

GOP IN SOUTH SEES A CIVIL WAR IT CAN WIN

(By Earl Ofari Hutchinson)

''RACISTS LEAD THE IMPEACHMENT BATTLE TO PUNISH CLINTON FOR HIS SOCIAL PROGRAMS AND CIVIL RIGHTS STANDS.''

Rep. Bob Barr of Georgia gives us an answer to why so many House Republicans defy public opinion, ignore the advice of GOP governors, reject the advice of party moderates in the Senate and are willing to paralyze the government to nail President Clinton. Barr says that they are fighting a civil war.

Since November 1997, Barr has been the point man for Southern Republicans in calling for Bill Clinton's head. This isn't the usual conservative political rage at a politician they regard as a corrupt, immoral, big-spending, big-government Democrat.

Barr, who represents the mostly white, conservative, suburban 7th District in Georgia, is a big booster of the Council of Conservative Citizens. This is the outfit that issued ''A Call to White Americans,'' has denounced blacks as intellectually inferior, champions the Confederate flag and maintains tight ties to Klansman David Duke.

In House speeches, Barr has slammed the Congressional Black Caucus, opposed hate crime laws and spending on social programs. His Web page is linked to the pages of the most extreme right-wing groups in the nation. His campaign against Clinton is part of the Republican Party's Southern strategy to roll back the civil rights gains and eliminate the social programs of the 1960s.

Although Barr is one of the most extreme GOP race-baiters in Congress, he has got the political muscle to push the South's vendetta. Southern Republicans control 82 out of 228 Republican House seats, by far the largest single bloc in Congress. Clinton's victory in 1992 temporarily derailed the Southern bloc's plan to gut civil rights and social programs. Southern Republicans watched as more than 85% of African Americans voted for Clinton in 1992 and 1996 and provided the swing vote for many Democrats in congressional and state races this November. African Americans regard Clinton more favorably than Jesse Jackson or Louis Farrakhan.

The Southern bloc is distressed that the Congressional Black Caucus has been Clinton's biggest defender against the GOP assault and dismayed that far more African Americans than whites oppose impeachment. These Republicans are disgusted that Clinton has appointed more blacks to high administrative offices than any other president, supported minority redistricting in the South, called for tougher action against church burnings and convened the first-ever White House conference to push for tougher penalties to combat hate crimes.

Barr and his cohorts are enraged that Clinton is the first president since Lyndon Johnson to empanel a commission to talk seriously about racial problems and supported the U.S. Sentencing Commission's recommendations to ''equalize'' the disproportionate drug sentences given to minority offenders. They are affronted that Clinton increased funding for job and education programs, made numerous high-profile appearances at black churches, conferences and ceremonies on school integration in the South and opposed the anti-affirmative action Proposition 209 in California. They are distressed that Clinton is the first president to travel to and support economic initiatives in Caribbean and sub-saharan African nations.

The faster the Southern Republicans rush to dump Clinton, the greater his popularity will be among African Americans. Many blacks see impeachment as a thinly disguised attempt to hammer the president for acting and speaking out on black causes, and as a backdoor power grab for the White House in the year 2000—and they're right. But as long as Southern Republicans control such a huge block of congressional votes, they believe that impeachment is the civil war they can win.

Earl Ofari Hutchinson is the author of ''The Crisis in Black and Black'' (Middle Passage Press, 1998)

TRIBUTE TO SACRAMENTO COUNTY ASSESSOR ROGER FONG

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to rise today in tribute to one of Sacramento County's most outstanding public servants, County Assessor Roger Fong. Today, as Mr. Fong celebrates his retirement, I ask all of my colleagues to join with me in saluting a great citizen, husband, and father.

As a native of Sacramento, Roger attended public schools in the area. After his exemplary service in the United States Navy, he graduated from California State University, Sacramento in 1956 with a degree in Business Administration.

Roger began his career in the Assessor's office in 1960. For the next 26 years, he held nearly every promotional position in that office. Then, in 1986 he was elected Assessor, a position to which he was returned in 1990 and 1994 by sizeable margins.

During Roger's tenure as Assessor, he has focussed on bringing technological advancements to his office of 156 employees and a budget of over $12 million annually. He and his staff have maintained current ownership data and property value on more than 380,000 parcels in Sacramento County with a combined value in excess of $53 billion.

Roger's leadership in the Assessor's office has earned him statewide recognition. In just the past 12 years, his professional tasks have grown immensely as our county's assessment roll has nearly doubled, as has the staff workload.