

By James M. Naughton

WASHINGTON. The veteran sat alone. Puffing at a cigarette. Sipping at a Coca-Cola. Alone with his crippled back and his injured ego. He had just made a weekend fool of himself on the stage of a strip joint in Boston with Fanne Foxe, the Tidal Basin Bombshell. Now it was Monday, and he sat on a sofa, alone in the cloakroom of the House of Representatives of the United States, as a few yards away, on the House floor, the Democratic caucus was deciding to divest his Ways and Means Committee of its traditional power to assign new Democratic members to standing committees. He looked older than 65.

Les AuCoin entered the cloakroom, looking for a cup of coffee, black, no sugar. He was tall, erect, trim. With his smooth face, tortoise-frame glasses, modishly long, dark hair and alert, quizzical look, he might have been mistaken for a new legislative assistant; at 32, he was a shade too old to be mistaken for a page. He was a Representative-elect. Barely a month earlier, on Nov. 5, 1974, the citizens of the First Congressional District of Oregon had departed from a tradition as old as the state: For the first time in 81 years they sent a Democrat to Congress.

Les AuCoin recognized Wilbur D. Mills sitting there on the sofa. He smiled, said hello, accepted an invitation to sit down.

"It's terrible, what lengths the press will go to today," said the veteran. "If they think they've got something to nibble on, they won't hesitate to sensationalize it."

The freshman, once a reporter for The Portland Oregonian, could not think of anything to say.

Where, the veteran wondered, did the freshman come from. Oregon? The calculation could be almost sensed forming in Wilbur Mills's mind: Oregon was also the home state of Al Ullman, the second-ranking Democrat on Ways and Means, the man on whom Mills was counting to save for the committee the power to make Democratic assignments. "Well, young man, you just stick with Al and me on this vote," the old man said. "You'll see. We'll win."

They lost. Ullman lost the debate. Mills suffered a further loss of face. The very next day, he entered the Bethesda Naval Medical Center as an alcoholic. Within weeks, he gave up the chairmanship of Ways and Means. Later, on a scrap of paper that would become part of a stack of notes as the raw material for a journal on the education of a Congressional freshman, AuCoin would record the encounter:

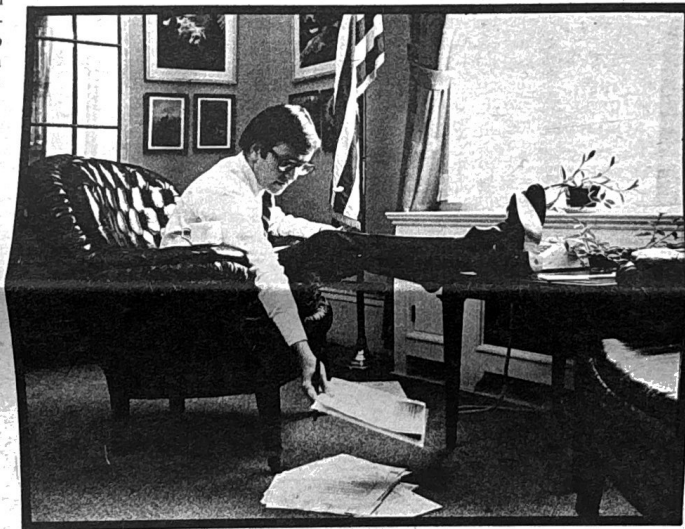
"I'll never forget that moment. One of the fabled leaders of the House, who always 'had the votes,' reduced to asking a totally unknown freshman for help. I felt the most awful sense

James M. Naughton is a Washington correspondent of The New York Times.

The New York Times Magazine / August 31, 1975

# The lost innocence of Congressman AuCoin

The class of '75 rode into Washington on white steeds, believing Congress would govern. It hasn't happened. Maybe, AuCoin has come to believe, it never should.



Les AuCoin in his Capitol Hill office. The discoveries did not come easily.

of human wreckage. I was watching the destruction of a Congressional giant."

It had seemed, in the beginning, as if the freshmen who joined the House in 1975 came looking for Congressional giants to destroy. They came to change the system, to reform it, to "make it work," to energize it with their youth and vigor and candor and liberality and ideas, and, above all, their raw nerve. There were 86 of them, 70 Democrats and 16 Republicans, serving for the first time in the House—nearly one-fifth the full House of 435, an extraordinarily large and powerful bloc of first-terms.

They were by no means a monolith. Some, such as John W. Jenrette Jr. of South Carolina, had been schooled in state legislatures; others, like Berkeley Bedell, a wealthy, 54-year-old fishing-tackle manufacturer from Iowa, were new to public office. There were individualists: Larry Pressler tried to re-

fuse 10 per cent of his \$42,500 salary; when the Federal Government insisted on paying it in full, he arranged to send a tithe to his home state of South Dakota. Edward P. Beard carried a one-inch black paintbrush in an inside coat pocket of his \$55 suit as a constant reminder of his blue-collar origins as a \$9,000-a-year house painter in Rhode Island. Edward W. Pattison of upstate New York, carrying post-Watergate morality to a logical end, placed two separate guest books in his Capitol Hill reception room—one for constituents, another for lobbyists—and made the lobbyists sign. Millicent Fenwick, a New Jersey grandmother of eight whose net worth was listed last year at \$5-million, told anecdotes about Bertrand Russell, with whom she used to argue, and smoked a pipe. The freshman class was diverse enough to include a Southern Jew, a member of the John Birch Society, a Shakespeare scholar from Texas.

In such company, Les AuCoin would

have seemed pedestrian <sup>was he not,</sup> in most respects, typical <sup>of the group,</sup> as a whole. He had served <sup>for years</sup> in the Oregon Legislature, <sup>the last two</sup> as majority leader of the House. He was not the youngest (that distinction belonged to Tom Downey of Long Island, who turned 26 a few days after being sworn in), nor the most liberal (Ned Pattison of New York or perhaps Toby Moffett of Connecticut seemed to be). AuCoin was, however, about at median age for the freshman class. He was liberal—his first involvement in politics was as a supporter of the anti-war Presidential candidacy of Eugene McCarthy in 1968. And with his background in journalism, his deep, radio-announcer's voice and his ability to parse his thoughts as if whole paragraphs had taken shape in his mind, he was able to articulate the quality the freshmen had in common: their readiness to lead.

Nearly all of them had made a campaign issue of Congressional reform. They had, as Andrew Maguire of New Jersey was fond of saying, "run against Congress." They were prepared to fight the seniority system, to open up the dark recesses of the legislative process, to restore the Congress to its proper constitutional rank as a co-equal branch of Government, to stanch the systemic corruption that seemed to be the price of a bloated Presidency. "Congress is notorious for its lack of will," Les AuCoin had said in a campaign position paper advocating national land-use planning, a goal the 93d Congress had formally declined to adopt. "What's needed today in order to assure that the right steps are taken soon enough is political leadership, leadership that is willing to take some political risks if necessary in order to face the issue, and face it honestly." The voters, thought the freshmen, had mounted them on white steeds. They would gallop into the capital just in the nick of time. Congress would govern.

It has not happened. Maybe it never will. Maybe, freshmen like Les AuCoin are beginning to believe, it never should.

George James

After a series of early procedural upheavals in the House that the freshmen Democrats either instigated or assured, the 94th Congress lapsed into its traditional pattern of spasmodic productivity, rampant inefficiency, Hydra-headed parochialism. The two-to-one Democratic majorities that were supposed to produce a veto-proof Congress and legislative rule failed to override a quick succession of Presidential vetoes. The brave promises by Democratic leaders that Congress would write an energy program for the nation produced neither a program nor agreement on what it should contain. Senior liberal Democrats took to grouching privately that the first-termers were "too far out"—"a bunch of wooden-headed goddamn ideologues," as one committee chairman put it. Freshmen began quarreling openly with the Democratic hierarchy on the Hill, lamenting the lack of forceful, arm-twisting. (Continued on Page 24)

# Congressman

Continued from Page 9

party-line leadership — the kind of leadership their own reform efforts had helped undo in the interests of democracy. Six months after he took pity on the crumbling old baron in the cloak-room, AuCoin sat in the coffee shop of a Washington hotel and spoke of "one of the most oppressive feelings of futility I've ever had."

The House had just voted to adopt an energy program that the White House called, appropriately enough, a "marshmallow." The measure was shorn of any of the gasoline taxes that had been proposed as a way of fostering fuel conservation while providing revenue to finance a search for alternate sources of energy. The bill's penalties on automakers who produced gas-gulping engines were diluted to the point of obsequiousness. AuCoin wondered aloud about the 14-hour days, the weekends at work and "what this is adding up to when you wind up holding an empty bag on the most important piece of legislation we've considered."

What happened in those six months to frustrate the dragon-slayers of the House of Representatives? Reality happened. Two entries in AuCoin's diary illustrate the process.

The first entry is for Jan. 15, the day President Ford delivered his first State of the Union address:

"When the President arrived, with the Vice President and the Speaker [of the House] sitting behind him and the chamber filled with members of Congress, the Cabinet and the Judiciary, it was hard to believe that the assembled leadership of the country was in that room at that same moment. I finally began to realize that I was included too...

"The major feeling I had for Jerry Ford was pity. He reminded me of a man who was in over his head, stumbling along, unsure of himself and trying manfully not to show it. He seemed self-conscious, and whenever he tried to be emphatic it seemed contrived because, I supposed, he was so uncertain of himself and his job he didn't really feel emphatic about anything."

The second entry was made two months later:

"During one particularly chaotic and confusing debate I sat down beside Lud Ashley, the Democrat from Ohio, and said, 'Lud, I've become an ad-

vocate of a strong Presidency.' Ashley exploded with laughter and told me I was learning quickly."

The Les AuCoin who had been "bitten by those great notions of Congressional Government," and who had expected a fumbling, lackluster President to make it all the easier to establish, had come to articulate the unexpected second thoughts of the first-termers. The diary entry continued:

"I meant it. The effort must not stop to strengthen Congress and make it stand on its own two feet in being a meaningful partner in the setting of public policy. Surely, it must never be allowed to drift back to the days when it was content to hand over its powers, year after year, to the Presidency. But however much it is reformed and structurally strengthened, the House will always be made up of 435 members who'll be ever-hesitant to resist a parochial interest and, in an increasingly political age, will be tempted to engage in showmanship.

"A committee of 435 cannot run the country—and an intensely political committee of 435 egos surely cannot. No one dislikes the policies of the last seven years of G.O.P. Administrations more than I do. But the way to change that is to recapture the White House rather than attempt to make Congress something which, inherently, it cannot be. Sooner or later the Democrats will again control the White House. We will have won a hollow victory if we have structurally weakened what still is the best instrument for leadership in this country."

What AuCoin had learned in the time between the two entries was that the Congress never was intended to be efficient, never was capable of speaking with a single voice on most matters. It was not an easy discovery to have made.

**T**he horn-blowers, the back-slappers, the exhausted, exhilarated and in some cases drunken volunteers had all left. Les and Susan AuCoin were alone in the Portland hotel long after the returns were in that night of Nov. 5. It was something to savor. The first Democrat ever elected in the First District, AuCoin had won elections before, to the Oregon House in 1970 and 1972, but this was different. He sat



**BERGDORF GOODMAN**  
754 FIFTH AVENUE • ON THE PLAZA • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019



## The Bergdorf Christmas Book

For discriminating Santas everywhere — a legendary Christmas present begins with a browse through the fashion finds and festive gift ideas in the fabled Bergdorf Catalog. And since there's no place like your home for holiday shopping — have us send. Available mid-October at \$2 (refundable with first purchase). 754 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10019

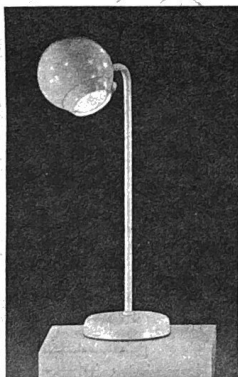
## Introducing "Sweet Pea." A piddling \$29.50.

This illogical 15" desk lamp is the offspring of the controversial marriage of our "Olive Oyl" lamp and "Popeye" Kovacs.

He takes after his father (somewatt). Very bright headed. (A special mini-reflector bulb included, accounts for that.) And very active. The head swivels every-which-way.

He has his mother's colorful personality however. In Brown. Yellow. Orange. White. Or Black. And tough. With an epoxy finish.

We definitely don't mind if you sort of adopt our "Sweet Pea." (We've got lots more at home.)



Show me more. Enclosed is \$1 for your catalog showing over 200 contemporary lighting devices.

I want to adopt a "Sweet Pea." Send him colored \_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is \$29.50 plus \$2.50 parcel post. I won't forget N.Y.C. or state sales tax if I am a resident.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**GEORGE KOVACS**

Dept. T-396, 831 Madison Avenue, (69th St.), New York, New York 10021

with his wife most of the night, talking — as his diary records his hour of victory — of how "we were really in the situation in the country where some critical choices were going to have to be made, most of which probably aren't going to be very popular." So much was unsettled: how to cope with the rest of the world after Indochina, how to revive the economy without reigniting inflation, how to provide sufficient energy without rapping the nation's resources. It was a time for idealists, thinkers, futurists, and Les AuCoin was gratified to note, as the tide swept across the country from East to West that night, how large the Democratic majority would be in the House and how full it would be of freshmen. He remembers thinking of the "potential for structural change in the House" and of the enormity of what he would be undertaking, with others. "[It was] something that kind of took my breath away. . . ."

There were 30 freshmen at that first day-long course conducted late in November by the Democratic Study Group, a moderate-to-liberal coalition of House members. The first-termers were told to keep publicity statements brief, how many Congressional calendars and envelopes they could get, why it was impolitic to seek kickbacks from paid employees, when they could get cheapest rates on long-distance telephone lines. Mostly they were told about getting re-elected. Thomas S. Foley of Washington: "You're all joining a new club now. It's called the incumbency club." Bob Bergland of Minnesota: "I spent my first two years in this place getting re-elected." Charles G. Rose 3d of North Carolina: "You're going to make mistakes, but if you don't make too many of them you'll be back in 1976."

AuCoin was "disappointed" with the briefing. But he rationalized that the emphasis on Congressional self-interest was meant to put the freshmen at their ease in their first collective meeting in Washington, that there was among them "a certain degree of healthy paranoia: Am I going to be here? Everyone hears about the flash-in-the-pan, the two-year Congressman. Am I going to be one of those? So to hear some ideas about things other members have done to prepare to do the job effectively, to communicate effectively, probably gave them a sense of possibility." Still, he felt "it would have been far better to look at



Making it: AuCoin with Ways and Means Chairman Ullman, left. A few "kind words" helped in getting committee assignments.

some of the key, gut-busting issues we're going to be facing."

On Dec. 2, the Democratic caucus voted on whether to let the Ways and Means Committee continue making assignments of new members to standing legislative panels. "It voted with Ways and Means," AuCoin noted in his journal. "No one could cite a single example of Ways and Means abusing its power." Besides, Al Ullman was running Ways and Means, and Al would surely take care of his fellow Oregonians. AuCoin wanted to be seated on the two committees whose work would most directly affect the forestry and fishing industries of his district: the Committee on Banking, Currency and Housing and the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries.

But the caucus voted to transfer the assignment power to the House Democratic Steering and Policy Committee, and AuCoin had to go after the assignments he wanted in another time-honored fashion. He lobbied. He went directly from Washington to Kansas City, where the Democratic party was holding a national mini-convention. "Momentous events took place there"—the drafting of a party charter, a schism between party reformers and organized labor over the draft—but "I confess that I was almost oblivious to these developments," he wrote in the journal. He spent the whole time traveling from one state delegation to another on the convention floor, buttonholing members of the Steering and

Policy Committee, explaining why he had to be a member of the two committees to serve his district's interests. He emphasized the high unemployment in the wood products industry of Oregon and how he might make a contribution to reducing the joblessness by helping draft legislation to spur home construction. He got Ullman to put in friendly words with members of Steering and Policy. He talked to House Speaker Carl B. Albert and to the majority leader, Thomas P. O'Neill Jr., and he "crossed my fingers like hell."

On Dec. 14, AuCoin got a telephone call at Harvard University, where he was one of a dozen freshmen chosen to take part in a Congressional orientation program. He would be on both committees. Pragmatism worked.

Not that idealism was abandoned. Freshmen were supposed to be easily intimidated, heedful of the sage advice of the late Speaker Sam Rayburn: "You'll never be defeated for something you didn't say." These freshmen were something else. They took risks eagerly, with flair. They lined up behind the candidacy of Phillip Burton, an activist liberal from California who was considered pushy by House establishmentarians, for chairman of the Democratic caucus. With their help, Burton won. They announced, with stunning audacity, that any committee chairman who wanted them to vote to retain him in his party leadership post would have to tell them why he deserved their support. The chairmen grumbled and



Actual Photograph

## The Luxury Residence with the Nautical Flair!

Just two blocks west of the Atlantic Ocean overlooking the marinas and yacht clubs on the Shrewsbury River, the Channel Club Tower Condominium combines the stimulating pace of waterfront activity with the elegance of gracious living.

Limited to 222 spacious suites, the Tower offers every possible amenity for your comfort, security and convenience. 24-hour doorman service . . . private health clubs for men and woman . . . heated swimming pool . . . illuminated tennis courts . . . private balconies . . . social and game rooms . . . and much more. Only 1 hour from New York. Immediate occupancy. From \$43,300.

**Channel Club Tower**  
Channel Drive  
Monmouth Beach, N.J. 07750  
(201) 229-2828

Call collect, or send the coupon for free brochure.

These are the lowest prices at which these units have been offered since February 28, 1975. Persons purchasing these new units may be entitled to substantial tax benefits under recently enacted tax credit law, subject to rules and regulations to be issued by the Internal Revenue Service. If you qualify, it may be as much as \$2,000 against personal taxes due on 1975 tax returns.

Sponsored by A-S Development, Inc.

I'm interested in learning more about the Channel Club Tower, please send me your brochure:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ TM 8-31

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

DIRECTIONS: Garden State Pkwy. exit 117 (Keyport) to Rt. 36 east and south to Monmouth Beach, right on Central Avenue.

This advertisement is not an offering, which may only be made by a formal prospectus NY-345.

appeared — a few defiantly, most with a galling humility — to be examined by the upstarts. In the vote on committee chairmanships by the House Democratic caucus, the freshmen provided the margins by which three of the more unremittingly autocratic chairmen were deposed: W. R. Poage of Texas from Agriculture's chair, F. Edward Hébert of Louisiana from Armed Services, and Wright Patman of Texas from Banking, Currency and Housing.

Some freshmen accepted the risk of reprisal with a certain panache. When the first-termers accepted President Ford's invitation to a White House meeting (they arrived at the Executive Mansion in car pools, to demonstrate willingness to conserve fuel), Gladys Spellman of Maryland listened to Mr. Ford complain of a lackadaisical pace in Congress and told the President he was all wet. The President conceded that it had been no different when he was Republican leader of the House. When the conservative majority on the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee seemed on the verge of approving a White House request for \$300-million in military assistance to South Vietnam, Toby Moffett of Connecticut appeared before the panel members to declare that they were compounding "the shame and disgrace of our past Indochina involvement." Moffett, Robert Carr of Michigan, George Miller of California and Ned Pattison of New York petitioned for a House Democratic caucus and pushed through a resolution deploring continued support of the Thieu regime. When the House leadership tried to stave off an amendment that would demand an end to the oil depletion allowance, a long-standing "oil-industry" tax writeoff, the freshmen provided the margin of victory for a resolution directing that the amendment be brought to the House floor. And the story is told that when freshman Berkley Bedell of Iowa met the acerbic, dictatorial chairman of the House Administration Committee, Wayne Hays of Ohio, Bedell said, "Everybody tells me you're an S.O.B. Are you?"

that he was also chairman of the Democratic National Congressional Committee and his name was on the checks that had been contributed by the committee to the freshmen's campaigns last fall. Many of the speeches on Hays's behalf went something like this: Here is a man who has done such a good job as chairman of the campaign committee in getting money out to the candidates and providing other supporting services that got all of us here in larger numbers than we've had for who knows how long, and, therefore, we ought to re-elect him. AuCoin voted against Hays. Hays, he pointed out, wasn't being nominated for another term as campaign committee chairman, he was being nominated for another term as chairman of a committee on House administration, and

House vote on the foreign aid bill, a freshman Democrat from California sat down beside me, looking flushed and more than a little bit hassled. I knew that something was bothering him, and in a few minutes he told me what it was. He had 'taken a walk' on the foreign aid bill because he had campaigned against reckless American spending overseas, and, since the vote did not allow us to make a distinction between that kind of spending and, say, aid to Israel, which is popular in his district, he decided to just leave the floor. 'Les,' he said, 'I'm ashamed of myself, but I just didn't know how to handle that issue politically.' My advice to him was that politically and for his own peace of mind it simply isn't worth it to calculate how each vote will sell or be attacked in the next election. I told him I knew what he was going through but, having gone through four years in the Oregon Legislature, I had long since concluded that you can twist your mind into a pretzel with those kinds of political calculations. I told him the best advice I had ever heard was from Wayne Morse, who had said: 'The cardinal rule in politics is, one, to determine the facts and, two, to follow them wherever they lead.'

Wayne Morse was one of two Senators who voted against the Tonkin Gulf resolution that led to massive American involvement in the Vietnam war. He lost the next election. His advice has never been unduly popular in Congress.

**'The times call for hard decisions, but Congress is unwilling to take the risks.'**

"The fact that that wasn't challenged bothered me a great deal. I must say there were a number of freshmen who closed their eyes to that because they wanted to close their eyes to that. Their support was crucial. They voted politically, rather than on the basis of the principles of reform they've been espousing—all of us have been espousing—since coming here. I'm just disappointed."

One day in January, a grizzled House Democrat sat down beside AuCoin. "Let me give you the most important advice you'll get," the old member said. He leaned over, poked his elbow in AuCoin's side and said, "Use that frank. It's the best single way to make sure you stay here."

The franking privilege, the right to use the United States mail free, on public business, is frequently misused for political purposes as one of the most potent weapons of Congressional incumbency. Each member of Congress may use it as many as 40,000 times a month. AuCoin thanked the veteran for the advice. In his journal he wrote, "Sadly, I knew he was right."

A page from AuCoin's journal: "The afternoon after the

House vote on the foreign aid bill, a freshman Democrat from California sat down beside me, looking flushed and more than a little bit hassled. I knew that something was bothering him, and in a few minutes he told me what it was. He had 'taken a walk' on the foreign aid bill because he had campaigned against reckless American spending overseas, and, since the vote did not allow us to make a distinction between that kind of spending and, say, aid to Israel, which is popular in his district, he decided to just leave the floor. 'Les,' he said, 'I'm ashamed of myself, but I just didn't know how to handle that issue politically.' My advice to him was that politically and for his own peace of mind it simply isn't worth it to calculate how each vote will sell or be attacked in the next election. I told him I knew what he was going through but, having gone through four years in the Oregon Legislature, I had long since concluded that you can twist your mind into a pretzel with those kinds of political calculations. I told him the best advice I had ever heard was from Wayne Morse, who had said: 'The cardinal rule in politics is, one, to determine the facts and, two, to follow them wherever they lead.'

Wayne Morse was one of two Senators who voted against the Tonkin Gulf resolution that led to massive American involvement in the Vietnam war. He lost the next election. His advice has never been unduly popular in Congress.

On Feb. 5, the House agreed, by a margin of only 78 votes, to raise the ceiling on the Federal debt by \$36-billion to a total of \$531-billion. AuCoin stood on the House floor, squinting at the electronic tally board behind the press gallery where the green and red lights showed how the House members had voted. He was dumfounded. Liberals who had not hesitated to vote billions of dollars for jobs or housing or education programs had voted against raising the debt limitation as a political sop to their more conservative constituents. "The sheer hypocrisy is staggering," he wrote in his journal.

Congressional lobbying — another page from the journal: "An official of the Carpenters Union in Oregon came to my Washington office one afternoon and was upset that I had not cosponsored Jim Weaver's export bill. Several (Continued on Page 33)

**CABLE CAR CLOTHIERS**  
ROBERT KIRK, Ltd.  
San Francisco's British Goods Store Since 1919



**Embroidered Alligator Travel Nightshirt \$15**

This handsome, unusually comfortable, cool cotton-and-Dacron knit nightshirt, with the embroidered alligator, has set the highest standard for quality, comfort and good taste. Fully cut. Ideal for travel. Dries quickly. Navy with yellow trim or Yellow with navy trim. Sizes: S (34-36), M (38-40), L (42-44), XL (46-48).

Mail Orders: Cable Car/Robert Kirk, Ltd.  
No. 150 Post St., S.F. Ca. 94108  
(415) 397-7733 070831

Qty. Colour Size

Check  Cable Car Charge

Charge:  M/C  B/A

Bank Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_  Please send catalogue

Add \$1.85 Ship. Hdg.; 6 1/2% Tax in Ca.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**LUCK  
LUCK  
TALISMAN  
OF LUCK\***  
ANCIENT -  
MYSTICAL

... uniquely created from research into codices of the British Museum

**King Solomon's Jewel** — a fortune charm and talisman. "I assure thee that this is the true way to succeed . . . Created according to the ancient manuscripts with a special formula attributed to King Solomon, circa 930 B.C. The symbol on the medallion drawn from King Solomon himself representing his jinn VALAC was used to uncover hidden treasure and to bring fortune and wealth. The letters on the perimeter were Anglicized in the mid 16th Century. The jewels and riches of Solomon were allegedly obtained by magical powers. With genuine antique patina, this pentacle can be worn as ancient jewelry or displayed in the office. A gift to him or her, a seal of good fortune and prosperity. A talisman of business success and financial gain.

With piece à more detailed monograph covering background, legend, uses, and source material.

**Specifications:** 2" in diameter, individually struck in solid bronze in accordance with the ancient directive, 2.5 ounces, hand patinated to an accurate antique finish with matching 24" chain. Hamilton finish. German spring lock.

**IMMEDIATELY DELIVERED** in black and gold box, lined in soft red velvet

Gift card enclosed if you wish.

**Price:** \$22.00 plus \$1.00 shipping, handling and insurance each. (Mass residents please add 3% sales tax) If you are not fully satisfied, you may naturally return for a prompt refund. Send check, BankAmericard or Master Charge number to: (include expiration date and Interbank Number)

**International Museum Replicas:**

P.O. Box 1993-B, Boston, MA 02105

If you prefer, Telephone Toll Free 800-221-2456;

or in New York City call 212-944-7749

\*Designs Reg. U.S. Copyright Office.

Work of art.

FOR HIM  
FOR HER





Continued from Page 28

members of the Northwest delegation had discussed possible legislation curtailing log exports for a number of weeks. I had not had time to study the Weaver bill and had an indefinable feeling that if I cosponsored it I would wish I hadn't. I told the union official that I simply didn't know what was in the bill, that I had asked Weaver to hold off a week or two until I could study it but couldn't get him to do so, and that, finally, I simply refused to cosponsor legislation I hadn't read.

"The union official couldn't understand. First he implied that I might be flirting with the Weyerhaeuser Company. Then he reminded me that the Carpenters had supported me in the campaign. Finally he said a 'friend' would not have to study the bill but would take another 'friend's' word that it was good legislation. I told him that while it was conceivable I might cosponsor the bill later, after studying it, I took no one's support with strings attached and that the day would not come when 'friends' legislated for me. After he left, I mused over the 'friends' remark. I had never set eyes on him until I had arrived in Washington."

It was about mid-afternoon on June 4 that it dawned on Les AuCoin. The entire Democratic side of the House of Repre-

sentatives sat in frozen silence. The electronic tote board had just registered the defeat of the bill that the Democrats had said would provide 900,000 jobs for the unemployed. The Republicans, including the President, who had vetoed it, had said it was unnecessary, would not take hold until next year and would, therefore, be inflationary. The bill had been a central element of the heralded Democratic program to revive the economy from Capitol Hill. By five votes, the Democrats had failed to enact the measure over Ford's veto. The Republican minority had cheered.

"That was the moment," said AuCoin, "when it hit home that all the confident talk of 'Congressional Government' had been an empty hope."

If there were any lingering doubts, they were dispelled on June 11, when the House emasculated the energy conservation bill that emerged from Al Ullman's Ways and Means Committee. There was no consensus in the country on how to save fuel; there was, therefore, none in the Congress. No one, it seemed, wanted to pay more for gasoline, and the House did not want to make the electorate do so.

The House had not been able to create economic policy over the President's veto; now it could not create an energy policy at all. "By day's end," AuCoin wrote in his



AuCoin and family on election night, 1974. In the ensuing months, "practicing idealist" became "idealistic pragmatist."

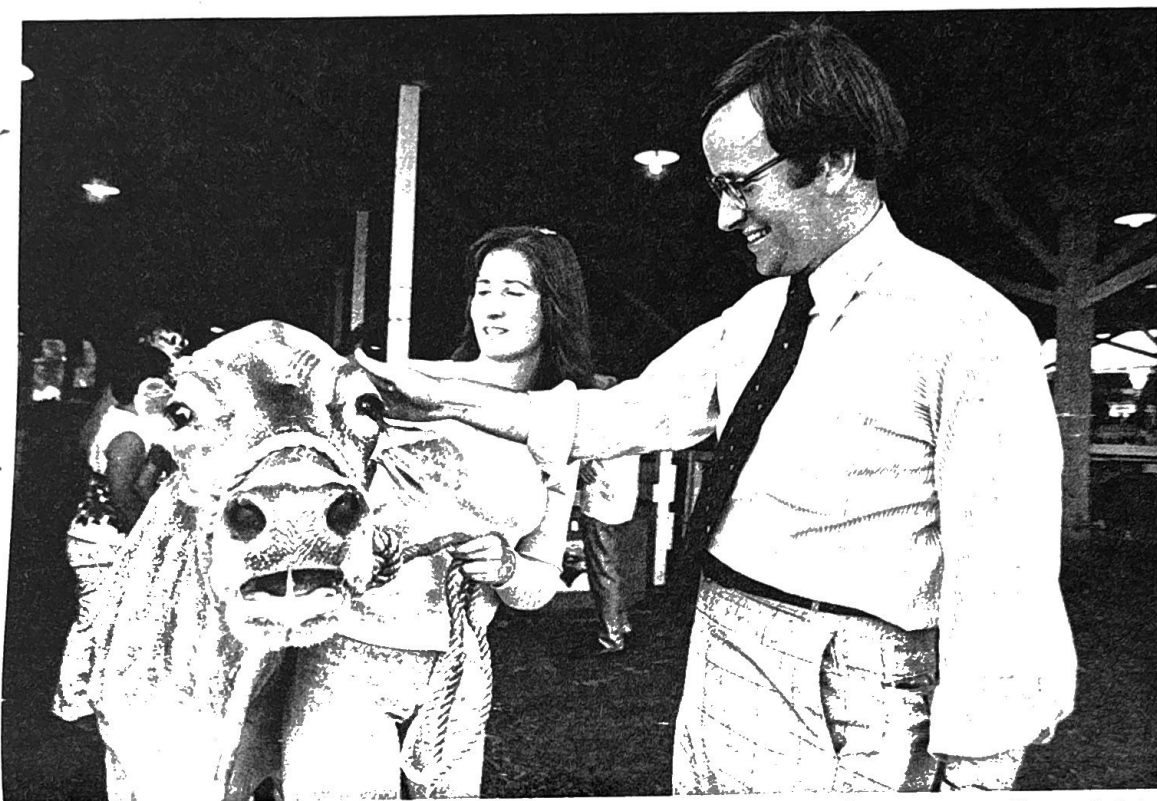
journal, "I had the deepest sense of futility. The times call for hard decisions, but Congress is unwilling to take the political risks that meaningful solutions require." He had voted for the Ways and Means energy program—not because he liked it ("I don't like it at all," he told his constituents in a column circulated to newspapers in his district)—but because the choice came down to the Ways and Means proposition or none whatever.

There was to be yet another keen frustration for AuCoin, a more personal one. Since February, he had been among the principal architects of the Emergency Middle-

Income Housing Act of 1975. The measure provided for Federal subsidizing of 400,000 home mortgages at 6 or 7 per cent, with the Government paying the difference between that rate and the market rate of 9 per cent or so. The objective was to create jobs by stimulating construction. It was a costly way to go about reducing unemployment—the tab would be more than \$1-billion. But coming as he did from a state with a timber-based economy and a district where unemployment of 20 per cent was common, AuCoin saw the bill as a vehicle to help his district and the national economy at the same time.

AuCoin was able to prevail in the Housing Subcommittee against those who sought to aim the assistance at low-income families (such families would not be likely to purchase homes during a recession, he argued), as well as against urban legislators who wanted to channel the subsidies to high-cost housing or to dwellings offered for resale (either change, he objected, would minimize the impact on unemployment). Privately, he disparaged the proposed amendments as parochial in viewpoint. What he did not seem to concede was the parochialism in his own approach designed as it was to obtain special benefit for the construction-oriented economy of his own district. Les AuCoin was acquiring the selective blindness of the practical man.

In the full committee, AuCoin suffered a setback when 45 per cent of the subsidy money was allocated to existing housing units available for purchase, but he recouped somewhat when the panel had a change of heart and the figure was reduced to 30 per cent. It fell to him to offer the committee's amendments on the House floor, and to participate in resolving the differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill. The proceedings in the joint conference committee were enough to confirm him in his opposition to closed meetings of legislators. As he wrote in



Representative AuCoin at an Oregon county fair. A Congressional freshman spends his first two years getting re-elected.

his journal, "the conversation turned on statements like, 'We'll give you this if you'll give us that.' There's a slim line between hammering out a compromise and plain horse-trading. It was also a

chial fetishes of individual Senators or Representatives could influence the conference." On one incidental item in the bill, the conferees almost had to accept an extension of a deadline for communities to qualify for Federal flood insurance in flood-prone areas "because two Senators had a number of communities which had not complied with Housing and Urban Development requirements in advance of deadline. . . . It bothered me that such narrow parochial issues could come so close to influencing a conference."

"Ten days after the bill reached Mr. Ford's desk, the President vetoed it. The following day, June 25, the House failed to override. The measure that was the principal focus of AuCoin's first months in Congress had become a victim of the tussle between the White House and Capitol Hill.

On July 31, the day before Congress recessed for a month, the freshmen realized that the House would not

complete action on a comprehensive energy package before going on vacation. Frustrated and angered by the leadership's evident failure to make a promise to work until the energy issue was re-

two senior Democrats, John D. Dingell of Michigan and John E. Moss of California. The senior members counseled patience. Even if the House stayed on to complete action on energy, they reasoned, the measure still had to go to the Senate and to Mr. Ford, who likely would veto it. Any political heat the freshmen might encounter at home during the recess, the elders said, would be forgotten by the end of the year, after the ultimate adoption of a sound energy program.

One Indiana freshman blurted out that the party leaders had broken faith with the first-termers. AuCoin joined in, declaring that many freshmen would be more confident of the leaders if they demonstrated an understanding of the public's declining estimate of the Congress. He alluded to opinion polls showing that Congressional popularity had sunk back to its pre-Watergate depths, and said that to recess without taking action on energy—but after enacting a measure giving Senators and Represent-

tatives a cost-of-living pay increase—would be "disaster." The meeting ended abruptly and inconclusively when the participants were summoned to the House floor for a vote. Walking to the floor, AuCoin recalled the arguments. Senior Democrats had advanced a few days earlier in pushing for approval of the pay raise: A reasonable electorate would understand that the members had not had a salary increase in six years, during which time the cost of living had risen 47.5 per cent.

"Sometimes," AuCoin entered in his journal, "the establishment on the Hill reminds me of the court of Louis XIV."

Later that same night, House Speaker Carl Albert stood, gavel in hand, in apparent bewilderment as points of order were raised one after another in a parliamentary dispute over the embargo on United States arms sales to Turkey. A very senior conservative Southern Democrat leaned over to whisper to AuCoin, "It would be nice to have a real Speaker." Albert rubbed his flushed face. "Look at him," said the Southern conservative. "He's completely lost."

As the wrangling went on into the night, Ray J. Madden, the 83-year-old Democratic chairman of the House Rules

Committee, took the floor to make an arm-waving speech in which he called the Turks "a bunch of cutthroats" and said that he attended a good

Turkey. AuCoin, whose opposition to renewed arms sales to Ankara was prompted by Turkey's illegal use of American weapons to invade Cyprus, squirmed with embarrassment as Madden spoke. Bob Krueger, a Texas freshman, plunked down in a seat next to him and said, "Les, I don't know whether to laugh or cry." Later, recalling that moment, AuCoin wrote that Krueger had "said it all. After giving up 10 months of one's life working nearly seven days a week to get [to Congress] you expect to work in a thoughtful and serious place. Watching this midnight spectacle was enough to break a man's heart."

**T**he House of Representatives that recessed Aug. 1 and returns to work this week may have been invigorated by the freshmen, but it was not remade in their image. Politics intruded. Ambition intervened. Tradition prevailed. If anything, it was the freshmen who changed

most, from practicing idealists to idealistic pragmatists.

A few hours before the recess began, AuCoin sat on the House floor in conversation with Barbara Jordan, the Texas sophomore whose performance last year in the House impeachment inquiry helped to create the impression, however shortlived, that the House was as eloquent as the nation had always hoped it might be. AuCoin was startled to find that Miss Jordan was no more confident than he of the usefulness of the 94th Congress.

AuCoin went home to Oregon and wondered about his initiation. "Now that it's August," he wrote in his journal, "and seven full months are behind me—months of deep frustration as well as moments of exhilaration—I try now and then in the central Oregon sun to sort it out. Has it been worth it? Barbara Jordan's comment about usefulness is at the heart of the question. Certainly there are plenty of things to discourage you. On any given day in Congress one can see pettiness, expedience, selfishness, crassness, opportunism, cruelty, demagoguery and assorted other evils. Living with heavy doses of each of these and dealing with the slowness with which change occurs, it's easy to wonder how useful you really are."

numerous examples of individual courage, she said, and individual inspiration and moments of genuine greatness each day."

He decided, on balance, that the frustrations were sufferable. For one thing, AuCoin likes legislating. He relishes the small triumphs—blocking the transfer of an environmental laboratory from his district, adding his amendments to housing legislation, engaging in debate with political peers. He wrote that the freshman class had made his first months in Congress worthwhile. "While issues sometimes divide us, we have been united in our determination to make the process more effective, more responsive to issues and more accountable." He still hopes the freshmen can help make Congress a stronger partner to the White House. "What it boils down to," he concluded, "is that I'm fascinated with the Congress—for what it is, but, more important, for what it can be."

Les AuCoin is still in his first term, but no longer a freshman. He has discovered that Congress may legislate but it shall not govern. ■