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Author(s)	Allan Francovich
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What is it that makes Ozark boy Bill Clinton a tarbaby candidate that every tattered piece of newsprint allegation sticks to while a Ronald Reagan or George bush remain teflon candidates?

How can Clinton's peccadilloes sexual or mercantile be viewed as serious character flaws when millions lost their savings and their homes savings and loan banks were looted by a white collar mob that included Jeb Bush, and a Justice nominated to the Supreme Court had his sexual behaviour debated and excepted, those same sassy ways that would have gotten him lynched if he talked like that to a white woman in the old south and would still get him some jail time today in any small town in the U.S.A.

Ross Perot is from East Texas where for the first 100 years of Texas history the Texas Dixiecrat party machine was rooted in Texan southern drawl populism. Until 1932 there were socialists running for the governor in Texas and there was a real maverick - Maury Maverick, mayor of the oldest city in Texas San Antonio. Texas politics has always been Maverick politics.

There is a spectre haunting American politics. In this another election year the spectre is again spooking the Democratic party as it has in every presidential election since 1972.

The spectre is American grass roots populism. It has haunted American politics for over hundred and fifty years ever since Andrew Jackson lawyered and fought his way out of North Carolina, Kentucky and Tennessee, cutting down the British army in 1814 in New Orleans getting himself elected President having a rip snorting whisky drinking inauguration still remembered because frontiersmen stomped mud on the White house floors and clambered out of windows after they had emptied their whisky jugs.

Harold Rosenberg a distinguished American art critic has defined the history of American art and culture as a struggle between Redcoats and Coonskins, the cosmopolites and the rubes. American politics since Franklin Roosevelt and victory in Second World War pacified a raucous energetic country can be seen as the struggle between two separate bunches of small town lawyers and two consortia of big time attorneys.

Since 1972 when George McGovern briefly took over the party, populism has particularly haunted the Democrats. In 1972 a crucial junction when for the first time in thirty years there could have been a choice not an echo, after obtaining the nomination through a politics of insurgency McGovern's campaign was stopped dead in a week by a single startling revelation. McGovern had won the nomination fair and square but without relying on the centers of party power.

McGovern had rebuilt the party from nothing in South Dakota one of the most Republican of States. When the Dakotas had not been run by Republicans the states had been ruled by the non partisan

league a broad populist alliance and even had socialist city mayors. McGovern knew you built from the ground up. McGovern rebuilt the party using the old ways of the methodist circuit riding preachers. McGovern was pushed along the road to losing the election because of a stab in the back. If you are not part of one of the Republican or democrat groups prescribed solution you are part of the problem. If you do not play their way, they first try to put the bit in your mouth and if they cannot well then things start sticking to you.

Every Democratic candidate since McGovern including the successful Jimmy Carter has harnessed this the populist energy. But the spectre must never be let loose because in a democracy if it should win it would have the right to run the country.

A good part of Clinton's key staff people are veterans of the McGovern and Eugene McCarthy insurgencies. Clinton himself and his wife worked in the McGovern campaign in California. They, however, are seasoned pros and have manuvoeured in an extremely adroit way, but they cannot be allowed to succeed without becoming indebted to the regular party bosses. Use populism or lose but do not let it loose.

There are two kinds of hill billies in the United States the Appalachian L'il Abner types and the less known Arkansas Ozark hicks. In New York, Washington, Boston, Los Angeles Bill Clinton is a hill billy gone pro. No one wants to let him get away with that because in a country where the attitudes to politicians is best summoned up by a lawyers joke:

"What are five thousand lawyers on the bottom of the Potomac river with concrete blocks tied around their feet?

A good start"

The prospect is that real insurgency could grab the levers of power.

We must remember that the American economy is a command economy with the federal budget and the manner in which it is distributed into social services or defence acting as the commands. The stakes are high, the spoils substantial and the consequences could be awesome. It is fear that rules and Clinton could have stick 'em messages on him until the day he loses.

I have known George Stephanopoulos, Clinton's campaign manager for several years and know some of the key funders of the campaign so we can arrange access I believe easily.