

Memo of the Month

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.
September 30, 1975

Dear Colleague:

I am about to order again sets of souvenir cuff links, key chains, and bracelets to be used as a campaign souvenir during my election campaign next fall. It is infinitely superior to the one ordered in the House Office Supply Service, includes your own signature on the back of the cuff links, and is approximately the same price as the one in the Supply Service stock.

While the gesture may be a little flamboyant, I have often taken the cuff links off and made a present of them to anyone who admired them. As a gift for campaign workers, it is without parallel in its impact.

The cost to me for 200 cuff links, including the plastic presentation box and the signature is \$450 less a five percent discount on advanced payment. If you are interested, please contact me or my Executive Assistant, Charlotte Chillura (X-3531) before October 9. If you want to see the cuff links themselves, I would be glad to show them to you.

Sincerely,

LEO J. RYAN
Member of Congress

The Two Party Pork Barrel

by Walter Shapiro

The calm before the storm or the prelude to the dullest election in recent memory? Four months before the New Hampshire primary, it seems implausible that any Democrat would bother to walk to the polls on a freezing day in February to choose among faceless men like Jimmy Carter, Terry Sanford, Lloyd Bentsen, Morris Udall, Fred Harris and Henry Jackson. I'm convinced that there is no one in America—with the possible exception of David Broder—who would recognize them all in a crowded elevator. On the Republican side things are even more baffling. Ronald Reagan is about to challenge Jerry Ford, but it is difficult to imagine an issue on which they disagree. Actually, that's a slight exaggeration. The other day I heard Reagan denounce the federally imposed 55-mile-per-hour speed limit on his syndicated radio show.

Walter Shapiro is an editor of The Washington Monthly.

All this does not bode well for the scores of writers who dream of being the Theodore White of the 1976 campaign. My guess is that the major political book to come out of the 1976 presidential race will be on the Secret Service, not the candidates. Another hunch is that no one will get more than 14 per cent of the vote in any of the crowded Democratic primaries. Since, under new party rules, 15 per cent of the vote is needed to win delegates in a primary, we may be in for the ultimate in deadlocked conventions. The race for the Republican nomination will probably revolve around a series of stirring debates between Ford and Reagan over who is the better administrator. The end result? Things going on pretty much as they have. Ford will be elected to a full term and the voters will celebrate by giving him another Congress almost as overwhelmingly Democratic and liberal as the last. In short, four more years of four more years.