



ZANE B. WILLIAMS

Earl (at a UW graduation ceremony): 'Good government is never uncompromising. Good politics, for ideologues, must always be.'

**EARL**

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sense of the future. We live, think, spend and plan only in the short term. And we are reinforced by the mass media, which have short memories, little interest in complexity or detail and an overwhelming fascination with the immediate moment.

In the business world, this truncated vision is evident in the American obsession with quarterly profits at the expense of the long-term strategic planning and investment that have driven the Japanese economic miracle. In politics, campaign professionals such as those handling Reagan have perfected the art of peddling symbol over substance, promises over performance and short-term gratification at the expense of long-term security.

This is politics at its worst, but also, unfortunately, it is politics at its winningest. Such "good politics" must always be at war with good government, because good government, as I understand it and have tried to practice it through the years, cares for the future.

The "good politics" of giving back the state treasury surplus during the Dreyfus administration had left Wisconsin with the second-largest state deficit in the nation when I took office. We cured it immediately, even though doing so required the politically painful measure of raising taxes. We also addressed the hemorrhaging unemployment insurance fund, the depleted transportation fund and a cash-flow mess that had been created when accounting measures were used to avoid the necessary tax increase.

With our financial problems under control, we had freedom to think and act on the future—the future of employment and the business economy, the future of agriculture, the future of public education, the future of the university system and the future of the natural environment.

We also had time and freedom to improve the quality and fairness of our tax structure and our institutions of government, making them more

equitable to women and more open to minorities.

Gov. Tommy Thompson, when he took office, inherited a state that was stronger in every way and had established important directions for a prosperous future. For the most part, he has made good use of the strengths and new institutions he inherited. What we left him was a legacy of good government; I would not have had it any other way.

**OBSTACLES**

But I am left to ponder why good government did not translate into good politics for me when it came time for reelection. The programs I instituted seemed to have been good politics for legislators—they passed virtually every major initiative I offered them, including some that were potentially volatile and unpopular.

Obviously, what was good government in the Capitol was not necessarily good politics for Tony Earl. Without belaboring the events of a year ago, let me identify some phenomena—in addition to short-term thinking—that I believe have become political obstacles for an elected official who seeks to practice good government.

The first is ideology. Performance means nothing to voters for whom the only good government is government by the "other" party. Though an increasing number of voters describe themselves as independents, many thousands never stray from the political faith they are born to.

In the eyes of these voters, anyone from the "other" political party is incapable of good government. This was certainly true in my case when it came to members of the business community. Even my most strenuous efforts to promote economic development failed to overcome their ideological predisposition. Most business people voted as they usually do—Republican—and some ideological Democrats who disliked my dealings with business probably stayed at home.

Good government is never un-

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**Concerned about War?**

Military interventions are more than mere adventures. They are the cutting edge of a foreign policy rushing us to annihilation. We can no longer tolerate the enormous social and economic costs to us, our families, our nation and the people of the world.

**We join the Vietnam Veterans Against the War in a call to remember the consequences on Veterans Day, November 11, at 6:30 p.m. Please come to the State Capitol. Bring a flower.**

- Wisconsin Community Fund • Nukewatch • Good N' Loud Music • Jane Kinney Florist • Ronlies • A New Leaf • Sentry Floral Shops/Sun Prairie • Prairie Flower and Gifts • Sentry Foods Inc. Cottage Grove Rd. • Sentry Foods Inc. E. Washington Ave. • Shar's Floral • G. Heileman Brewery • H & M Distributors • Victor's Coffee • Union Cab Co. • Wisconsin Greens • Women's International League for Peace and Freedom • Madison Draft Resistance Coalition • Vets Helping Vets Inc.

At 8:30 p.m. The Rousers and Paul Black and the Flip Kings in a benefit concert at Turner Hall, 21 S. Butler St.

**An Invitation to the Madison Community Veterans Day Memorial Ceremony**

Capitol Rotunda  
6:30-7:15 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov 11 1987

Please bring a flower.

Sponsored by Vietnam Veterans Against the War



## EARL

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compromising. Good politics, for ideologues, must always be.

A second obstacle is single-issue politics. To those for whom a single issue is overriding, the overall accomplishments of an officeholder mean nothing if he or she is wrong on the issue. These voters can be organized to work hard and effectively for those office seekers who share their view, and against those who do not.

Single-issue adherents had no shortage of issues to use to rally the support of like-minded folks against my candidacy. Whether it was abortion, Indian treaty rights or a prison in Milwaukee, the ammunition was plentiful. My stands on these and other issues were too unambiguous to offer protection against single-issue attacks.

### STYLE OVER SUBSTANCE

A third, and persistent, obstacle is the

lack of public interest and media interest in the issues. Most people say they prefer to "vote for the man (or woman)" rather than the party. But how do they get information about the candidates?

There is plenty of blame to go around for the phenomenon of the uninformed voter. Some of it lies with the candidates themselves, who excite too little interest in their campaigns. Some of it lies with the voters, whose predilections often run to cynicism ("It won't make any difference anyway") or blind faith in the system ("It'll all work out for the best"). And some of it lies with the media.

Few voters pay much attention to the campaign literature candidates issue about themselves; they know it's self-serving. The most frequently cited source of information about candidates and issues is television. Television is very good for some candidates, like John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan, and very bad for others, such as

**'People want better schools, but not graduation requirements. They want pay equity for men and women, but not comparable worth. They want clean air, but not auto emission inspections. They want the books balanced, but they don't want their taxes raised or their services cut or public payrolls frozen.'**

Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter. Too often, style is prized over substance.

Despite its best intentions, television has limitations. Only a little time can be devoted to any story, and the candidate who wants to go into detail about a complicated issue has to compete with far more immediate and visual stories in the tight evening news slot. Thus there is a growing tendency for political campaigns and in some cases political leadership to be built around easily digestible themes that play well on television.

The pencil press provides a better opportunity for the voter to learn about the candidates and issues, but, unfortunately, an ever smaller number of voters rely on newspapers and magazines as their principle source of information. Newspapers themselves are aware of this, and it seems to me their response has been to try to become more like TV—brief, bland and oriented to the catchy issue.

All of this is a liability to a "good

# Baby love.

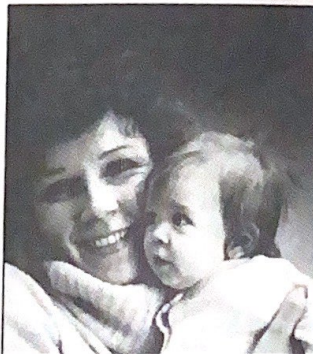
It comes long before the child is born. The love for your new baby.

It grows as the child grows within.

With it grows the need to care for, to protect that child.

With it grows the need for reassurance that everything possible is done to make your child's birth as safe as possible, as healthy as possible.

The reassurance thousands of mothers-to-be have found



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