

## **MISTAKES WERE MADE!**

By William Nicoson

A friend of mine who rarely passes out bouquets offered kind words about my last column on the Democratic primaries. He said the column gave him new information. Another gentle reader, however, informed The Reston Times that in two instances my information was erroneous. It occurred to me that maybe my wrong information was my friend's new information.

The gentle reader pointed out that my reference to "former Congresswoman Carol Moseley-Braun" should have been to "Carol Mosley-Braun" as "former senator from Illinois." Absolutely right, but at least I had the tiny consolation of correctly spelling her name.

The gentle reader also pointed out that Senator Tom Harkin endorsed Howard Dean, not Richard Gephardt. We all remember the TV reruns of a defeated Howard Dean in Iowa, shouting out the litany of states to which he planned to carry his campaign. In the left background of the video frame stood a smiling Tom Harkin, apparently cheering on the cheer leader. How could I have suppressed this vision, confusing Gephardt with Dean?

Perhaps because Harkin hailed from Iowa, a neighboring state of Missouri. Missouri is home to Richard Gephardt who might have expected a nod from his neighbor. I ignored the irony that Harkin reached out instead to the former Governor of Vermont, far afield from the fields of the plain states, when Dean seemed to have the upper hand. Chances are the failure to enlist Harkin's support contributed to Gephardt's decision to leave the race.

This suggests that endorsements may not help candidates very much but may offer substantial pain to a candidate who loses an endorsement expected by reason of geography, shared service, common positions on major issues or simple friendship.

Gephardt, by the way, may well be chosen as the Democratic candidate for Vice President. Assuming John Kerry to be the likely Democratic candidate for President, he must have valued Gephardt's endorsement just before the delegate-rich Michigan primary where labor's support was vital. Of all the candidates, Gephardt has been closest to union leaders. This may, at last, be one endorsement that will determine a nominee.

I hope and expect readers of columns published in The Reston Times will continue to correct mistakes and inspire fresh perceptions.

*William Nicoson's Contrarian Corner column appears in The Reston Times on the first Wednesday of every month.*

