

# PERIODICALS

*Reviews of articles from periodicals and specialized journals here and abroad*

<b>POLITICS &amp; GOVERNMENT</b> 11	<b>RELIGION &amp; PHILOSOPHY</b> 30
<b>FOREIGN POLICY &amp; DEFENSE</b> 15	<b>SCIENCE &amp; TECHNOLOGY</b> 31
<b>ECONOMICS, LABOR &amp; BUSINESS</b> 20	<b>RESOURCES &amp; ENVIRONMENT</b> 35
<b>SOCIETY</b> 23	<b>ARTS &amp; LETTERS</b> 36
<b>PRESS &amp; TELEVISION</b> 26	<b>OTHER NATIONS</b> 40

---

## **POLITICS & GOVERNMENT**

---

### *Elections on the Auction Block?*

"When Money Talks, Is It Democracy?"  
by Mark Green, in *The Nation* (Sept. 15, 1984), P.O. Box 1953, Marion, Ohio 43305.

Since 1974, political action committees (PACs) funded by business, labor, and single-interest groups have multiplied like rabbits. But after early public alarm over the prospect of such committees "buying" elections, a pro-PAC backlash set in. PACs, it was said, are not really so bad. Green, president of the Democracy Project, a Washington advocacy group, contends that the critics were right.

PAC defenders point out that such groups contribute less than 25 percent of all the money spent in House and Senate election campaigns—or just \$83 million in the 1982 elections. True, says Green, but "PAC money, like snow in the mountains, gathers at the peaks." Committee chairmen and other powerful senators and representatives rake in the most cash (the House Appropriations Committee chairman collected 75 percent of his 1982 contributions from PACs), and incumbents fare much better than challengers (43 percent of the money in the 1982 campaign treasuries of the incumbent legislators came from PACs).

Green rejects the notion that most PAC donations (average amount: \$600) are not large enough to make a difference. He notes that there are plenty of committees that give the maximum: \$5,000 for the candidate's primary campaign, \$5,000 for his general election campaign. Most politicians would find such a sum "memorable," Green says.

Can a member of Congress be swayed by a few thousand dollars? Green quotes Representative Tom Downey (D.-N.Y.): "You can't buy a Congressman for \$5,000, but you can buy his vote." On issues of no great concern to constituents (e.g., whether to subsidize the widget industry), a generous campaign contribution may make a difference. As for the argument that PAC donations are not inducements to future votes but mere "rewards" for a prior record, Green asks: "Then why do so many PACs cross-examine candidates . . . about their positions on pending matters?"

Some PAC apologists maintain that donors often stand on opposite sides of issues and thus cancel each other out. But which PACs represent