

## CHAPTER 9

### 1998 NEW MEXICO'S THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT RACE

BY LONNA ATKESON AND ANTHONY C. COVENY

The Third Congressional District of New Mexico encompasses the northern part of the state. The voting population is heterogeneous with about 35 percent of the population Hispanic, 55 percent Anglo, and the remaining 10 percent American Indian.<sup>1</sup> The district is heavily Democratic with nearly three-fifths (59 percent) of registered voters identifying themselves as Democratic and slightly over one-fourth (28 percent) registering as Republican.<sup>2</sup> Because the district is largely rural, many areas of the district are experiencing high unemployment. The overall unemployment rate in rural New Mexico is about 8.8 percent.

#### BACKGROUND FOR THE 1998 ELECTION

Given these characteristics, it was surprising that the Republicans were able to win the seat in a 1997 special election. Since its inception in 1982, the Third Congressional seat had always been held by a Democrat (Bill Richardson) and always by safe margins. In 1996, Richardson easily beat the Republican candidate Bill Redmond (67.2% to 30.5%). But in early 1997, Richardson resigned to take a post at the United Nations, creating the need for a special election. This unique election environment allowed for a party turnover, with Republican Bill Redmond winning the seat with 43 percent of the vote. Three factors were key to his special election success: first, a weak Democratic candidate with high negatives who was believed to have manipulated the nomination process (candidates were chosen through party chairs and not in a traditional primary setting); second, low voter turnout (35 percent);<sup>3</sup> and third, Green Party candidate Carol A. Miller received 17 percent of the vote.<sup>4</sup> Carol Miller's candidacy gave an

additional choice to traditional Democratic voters who had difficulty supporting the party nominee.

Republicans were ecstatic and Democrats were dumbfounded by the special election outcome. Given the strong Democratic bent of the district and its traditional Democratic hegemony, the Third Congressional District of New Mexico was a prize that the Republicans wanted to keep and the Democrats wanted back. This made the district a top priority for both parties in 1998 and led to a heated general election contest. The partisan change in the district also drew in a number of interest groups doing candidate/election advocacy and several groups engaging in independent expenditure campaigns. All in all, the interest group and party television and radio advertising combined exceeded candidate spending by \$112,000. Interest groups and the parties were also key players in an on-going ground war to mobilize their constituencies. Both spending and mobilization by these players were crucial in influencing the dynamics of the campaign, what issues voters considered and how the candidates responded.

### **CANDIDATES AND THEIR CAMPAIGNS**

By the beginning of 1998, the two main contenders for the Democratic nomination were Tom Udall, New Mexico's Attorney General, and Eric Serna, who lost to Bill Redmond in the 1997 special election. In the June primary, Udall received 44 percent of the primary vote compared with Serna's 36 percent. Meanwhile incumbent Bill Redmond and Green Party candidate Carol Miller ran unchallenged for their party's nomination.

Given the three candidate general election race and Miller's reputation for taking Democratic votes in the special election, the Udall campaign's primary strategy was to woo back Democratic voters.<sup>5</sup> Udall's campaign therefore centered around traditional Democratic issues including social security, education, jobs, veterans' benefits, and health care. Udall also

emphasized his record as attorney general on issues like drugs, drunk driving, pollution, tobacco, and child welfare.

Incumbent candidate Bill Redmond attempted to use his eighteen-month record to enhance his electoral chances. The Redmond campaign had to get out their base of support on election day, as well as persuade many Democratic voters to again cross over and either vote for Bill Redmond or vote for Green Party candidate Carol Miller. In order to solidify and motivate his base, Redmond talked about traditional Republican issues like taxes, while attacking Attorney General Tom Udall's record on crime. To encourage Democratic defection, Redmond also focused on traditional Democratic issues and his congressional record on jobs and education. For example, he took credit for bringing five thousand new jobs to Northern New Mexico and assisting in creating a program that provided the federal government's surplus computers to schools. Redmond also worked hard throughout his term to gain passage of a land grant bill that would specifically help many Hispanic Northern New Mexicans. Last, Redmond engaged in traditional incumbent activities like town meetings and communicating with key constituencies in the district.

Green Party candidate Carol Miller had little money to support her candidacy. Her strategy was largely to play up her outsider status and point fingers at the other two candidates for being traditional politicians. In debates with the other two candidates held all over Northern New Mexico and on public television, Miller focused on her credentials as a political activist and as an average voter in touch with the community.

### **MONEY IN THE CAMPAIGN**

The competitiveness of the election helped Redmond and Udall raise significant amounts of money. In a stark break from precedent, Udall, the Democratic challenger, raised more

money than the incumbent Republican, spending over \$200,000 more than Redmond (see Figure 9-1). Nevertheless, the \$1.35 million that Redmond received far out-distanced his prior fund raising. The possibility that he could win as the incumbent enabled him to attract nearly twenty times the financial backing he received in his 1996 challenge to Bill Richardson (in 1996, Redmond received only \$235 in PAC contributions). Both candidates aired numerous television and radio ads, commissioned polls, ran phone banks, and engaged in direct mail tactics.

The origin of the campaign funds received by the candidates shines additional light on the nature of the election, with both receiving money from traditional Democratic and Republican sources. Redmond had the financial backing of banking institutions (American Bankers Association, Mortgage Bankers Association, Nationsbank), agriculture and livestock (Dairy Farmers of America, National Cattlemen's Beef Association), the NRA (and Gun Owners of America), oil companies (Exxon, Occidental Petroleum Corporation), and medical organizations (AMA, American Dental). Udall, by contrast, received money from teachers' organizations (NEA, American Federation of Teachers), labor (United Transportation Union, Laborer's Political League, AFL-CIO), government employee unions (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees) and environmental groups (New Mexico Conservation Voters Alliance, Sierra Club).

Another distinction lies in the proportion of money each received from individuals, PACs and other committees. While Redmond received nearly 50 percent of his funds from PACs and other committees, Udall received over 75 percent of his campaign money from individuals (see Figure 9-2). Udall's individual contributions were collected through fundraising events, mailings and personal solicitations.<sup>6</sup> Several high profile actors and political figures, including

Robert Redford and Hillary Clinton made themselves available to the Udall campaign for fundraising events.

Udall's large war chest enabled his campaign to stay "on message" throughout the general election and respond to assaults by Redmond and the Republican Party. Given that the main objective of the Udall campaign was to woo back disgruntled Democrats its ability to stay "on message" was seen as a top campaign priority. At the same time, ample funding permitted the campaign to respond directly to attacks by creating comparative spots, or positive spots about Udall. For example, when the Republican Party attacked Udall's crime-fighting record as attorney general, the Udall campaign fought back by airing an endorsement ad that highlighted police organizations.

### **BEYOND THE CANDIDATES: THE ROLE OF INTEREST GROUPS**

Several interest groups and the political parties played an active role in this campaign. Interest groups that were pro-Redmond and/or anti-Udall included the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), which worked through a branch organization called The Coalition: Americans Working for Real Change, the Christian Coalition, and the National Rifle Association (NRA). Interest groups that were anti-Redmond and/or pro-Udall included the League of Conservation Voters (LCV), the New Mexico AFL-CIO, Planned Parenthood, the New Mexico National Organization of Women, the Sierra Club, People for the American Way, the Central Albuquerque United Auto Workers, and Neighbor to Neighbor. Many of these groups engaged in multiple strategies in order to both persuade voters and to get out the vote. Most groups did not run traditional independent expenditure campaigns, but ran issue advocacy campaigns that included get-out-the-vote efforts. Table 9-1 is a listing of all the groups and their campaign activities.

Two interest groups stand out for special attention because of their large, extensive and costly campaigns. These are the AFL-CIO and the LCV. Both groups used television as a medium to communicate their message about the candidates to the public. Both groups believed they had an opportunity to make a difference and influence the outcome of the election in the 3<sup>rd</sup> CD through constituency persuasion and mobilization. Each group, however, took a different approach. The AFL-CIO engaged in the more modern issue advocacy campaign, while the LCV engaged in a negative anti-Redmond independent expenditure campaign.

#### **THE AFL-CIO'S CAMPAIGN**

The AFL-CIO ran two television “issue ad” spots, spending more than any other interest group, totaling \$183,380. These commercials were shown a total of 427 times. The first commercial focused on tax cuts that were paid for by raiding the Social Security trust fund and the second commercial focused on HMOs. Both ads had tag lines indicating voters should “call” their representative. Although neither of these ads directly relates to union issues, both social security and health care are issues of general importance to union members. These commercials appeared fairly early in the campaign between September 10 and October 9 and were meant to influence the issue agenda during the campaign. According to Matthew Taylor, state AFL-CIO Field Director, the ads were shown early in order to “kick up some interest in the campaign.”<sup>7</sup> The Udall Campaign felt that the social security ad was the most beneficial because it was “on message” with their overall campaign theme.<sup>8</sup> Although the health care ad was also in keeping with traditional Democratic issues, it was less effective, according to the Udall campaign, because of the district’s poor nature that makes health insurance a luxury that many voters do not have.

The AFL-CIO of New Mexico also produced three colorful direct mail pieces. The topics covered were health care, education and a reminder that Tom Udall was the pro-labor candidate. In addition to these direct mail pieces from the New Mexico AFL-CIO, local chapters also produced their own mail and leaflets for distribution to local members.<sup>9</sup> The AFL-CIO performed direct education of its members and their families with door-to-door outreach, phone banks and work site leaflets.<sup>10</sup> Finally, the AFL-CIO made a direct contribution to the Udall campaign of \$10,000.

#### **THE LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS**

The League of Conservation Voters (LCV) ran an independent expenditure campaign. As part of this effort they ran a thirty-second anti-Redmond ad that showed 138 times. The LCV was second in television spending with \$129,645. According to LCV project director, Gregory Green, Redmond was on the LCV's Dirty Dozen list for his votes against approving the San Juan River for consideration as an American Heritage river and for his vote to postpone the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's clean air standards for four more years. The ad was shown early in the campaign, from October 1 through October 11, and the last week of the campaign. Initially, the ad displayed a saguaro cactus in its opening scene; unfortunately for the LCV, this cactus does not grow in New Mexico. Although this mistake was embarrassing to the LCV, and was corrected immediately, it generated a great deal of media attention for the ad and the LCV. The ad received newspaper coverage in approximately 18 New Mexico newspapers and also some television news coverage.

Despite the embarrassing faux pas, the LCV felt their ads effectively got New Mexico voters thinking about the candidates' position on environmental issues. A poll taken at the end of the election found 46 percent of voters recalled the ad.<sup>11</sup> According to LCV pollsters, "The

Charge about Redmond's anti-environment record was the strongest single charge against Redmond, creating serious doubts for 32 percent of voters. In contrast, the environment was the second strongest positive message for Udall, trailing only education."<sup>12</sup> Compared to earlier polling this was a marked change in attitudes toward Redmond and Udall.<sup>13</sup>

The LCV also spent money on direct mail, phone banks, person-to-person persuasion and get-out-the-vote efforts. Its main strategy was to return the Democratic base to Udall and to reduce Green Party candidate Carol Miller's vote.<sup>14</sup> In keeping with this strategy, the LCV sent out letters signed by a state representative in both English and Spanish appealing to voters to vote against Redmond and for Udall. The LCV also targeted New Mexico Senate District 25 for special treatment (i.e. more phone calls, more canvassing) because many of Miller's votes were found there and voters in that district were seen as potentially persuadable.<sup>15</sup> Overall, LCV spent more on this House race than any other House race across the country with expenditures totaling \$252,000.<sup>16</sup>

The local LCV chapter also actively supported Udall. They did one mailing that communicated their endorsement of Udall and sent out 4,800 absentee ballot request forms.<sup>17</sup> They also sponsored a fund raiser for Tom Udall, which he attended, that raised about \$4,000.<sup>18</sup> In addition, they conducted a volunteer get-out-the-vote drive and paid the half time salary of a single staff member in Udall's campaign.<sup>19</sup>

#### **OTHER GROUPS' CONTRIBUTIONS**

The National Association of Manufactures (NAM) did one commercial, mostly on cable, costing \$3,315. The group tagline on this commercial, however, was not NAM, but The Coalition: Americans Working for Real Change. This commercial was pro-Redmond and focused on his support of families and lowering taxes. NAM ran 310 ads from October 12

through November 3. The Coalition: Americans Working for Real Change also sent out a pro-Redmond mailer that focused on Redmond's record on taxes, education, social security and health care. Besides NAM the People for the American Way were the only other group to buy television time. These pro-Democratic ads ran October 6 through October 13 and at the end of the campaign from October 29 through November 2.

In addition to those groups running television ads, the NRA engaged in radio ads that named all three of New Mexico's Republican congressmen.<sup>20</sup> This standard Charleton Heston ad played all over the country with slight modifications to accurately identify local Republican candidates. The NRA ads ran late in the campaign from October 26 through November 2. According to FEC records, the NRA's pro-Redmond independent expenditure campaign spent \$40,640. The NRA also delivered funds directly to the Redmond campaign, making donations totaling \$5,950 in 1997, for the special election, and \$8900 in 1998. In addition to the NRA, the Association of Builders and Contractors also purchased radio time. Their ad was also pro-incumbent Redmond and pointed out how the New Mexico Congressional delegation helped keep New Mexico tax- and business-friendly, which supports job creation. They spent \$8,480 and ran 97 ads between October 15 and October 21

Beyond the radio and television ads, several interest groups actively engaged in issue advocacy and get-out-the-vote efforts via direct mail, phone banking, and person-to-person contact. The Sierra Club, for example, sponsored a grass roots literature drop and a direct mail campaign that compared Redmond and Udall on environmental issues. They mailed 25,000 pieces of mail to voters who appeared on lists provided by local environmental groups.<sup>21</sup> They also sponsored a press conference in front of New Mexico's capitol. This, however, was not covered well by the local media. The Sierra Club organizers believed that this was due to the

fact that their press conference corresponded with Hillary Clinton's visit to New Mexico. The simultaneous scheduling of both events shows that the candidate campaign and the interest group were not coordinating their campaign efforts. The Sierra Club also made a direct contribution to the Udall campaign of \$3,500.<sup>22</sup>

Several other groups also used direct mail. The United Auto Workers mailed an anti-Redmond piece on senior issues. The National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare also sent out direct mail supporting Udall. They also endorsed Udall at a press conference attended by the local media. Neighbor to Neighbor, a Washington based public interest group that focuses on domestic human rights and economic justice, also sent out about 10,000 anti-Redmond pieces costing about \$5,000, focusing on health care and HMOs.<sup>23</sup> According to Shelley Moskowitz, a Neighbor to Neighbor representative, they targeted the Redmond-Udall race because they felt that the large Hispanic population in the Third Congressional District was not well represented by the incumbent candidate.<sup>24</sup> They spent an additional \$20,000 on voter registration drives, a Spanish language public service announcement on Spanish radio, a sound truck and phone banks that included volunteers and paid personnel.<sup>25</sup> These activities were targeted in areas of low voter turnout in the cities of Española and Santa Fe as well as a number of Native American Pueblos.

New Mexico's National Organization for Women sent out two anti-Redmond pieces. These leaflets were not approved by the National NOW offices, but were sponsored and paid for by local NOW activists.<sup>26</sup> The first mailer contrasted his support for funding 9 new B-2 bombers with his vote against "vital funding for new breast cancer research."<sup>27</sup> Redmond took this attack very personally and responded with a letter from his wife that discussed the loss of his mother to breast cancer when he was 12. In his response, he indicated that he only opposed the

legislation described by New Mexico NOW because he favored another bill that gave even more money to breast cancer research. The second leaflet discussed Redmond's votes to cut legal aid to abused women.

Planned Parenthood of New Mexico (PPNM) engaged in two independent expenditure campaigns, one pro-Udall the other anti-Redmond. These independent expenditures were financed by the Planned Parenthood National Federation as one of six targeted races in the country where Planned Parenthood felt it could make a difference. Although financed by the national organization, all ads were approved and implemented at the state level. According to Michelle Featheringill, President and CEO of PPNM, it did several direct mail pieces as well as voter identification, voter persuasion and GOTV effort. The direct mail pieces compared Redmond's and Udall's views on women's issues including abortion, contraception, family planning, and medical decisions. Featheringill believed "these were issues people would vote on. They will cross party lines—especially women voters." For this reason, the PPNM targeted all women who had voted in the last election (regardless of party).<sup>28</sup> These mailings were followed by a phone call (utilizing paid staff) urging these women to vote pro-choice.<sup>29</sup> Their total spending was \$46,478 (\$25,508 pro-Udall and \$20,970 anti-Redmond). According to Featheringill, the efforts of PPNM paid-off; "a concerted effort, with that targeted a group, has to have an impact—absolutely, without a doubt."<sup>30</sup>

Overall, the bulk of interest group activity favored Udall. Of the 14 groups we followed during the campaign only 4 were pro-Redmond. The other 10 often did both anti-Redmond and pro-Udall pieces.

While interest groups feel good about their roles in the campaign and about getting out their message to voters, candidates and their campaigns seem more ambivalent. The problem

lies in the message sent by interest groups. Interest groups have a narrow agenda, while campaigns are trying to build a coalition. Ads and activities from interest groups sometimes do not reinforce the most important campaign themes. At times ads can be so off-message that they drive some voters away. For example, Terry Brunner, New Mexico Democratic Party Campaign Coordinator, mentioned an early ad done by an environmental group that focused on the reintroduction of the Mexican grey wolf to southern New Mexico.<sup>31</sup> Many ranchers in the area were opposed to the reintroduction and, therefore, calling attention to the issue could only hurt Democratic candidates. Sometimes groups are on-message resonating with the issues that candidates want to focus on, other times groups are off-message producing ads that may ultimately injure the candidate they want to help. Because of their limited agenda groups do not necessarily consider the bigger picture, but are more focused on representing their issue agenda and their constituents.

### **BEYOND THE CANDIDATES: THE ROLE OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES**

Like interest groups, the political parties also played a role in the New Mexico election. Both political parties indicated that they did not explicitly discuss or directly correlate their campaign themes with the candidates.<sup>32</sup> However both political parties indicated that such discussions were completely unnecessary because they knew their candidates and easily maintained consistent principles with them.<sup>33</sup>

The Republican Party of New Mexico invested a large amount of capital from hard and soft money sources into the Redmond-Udall race. **[Did they do this in part because of the interest group imbalance?]** Republican ads played early and often beginning prior to Labor Day and going through election day. Both the New Mexico Republican Party and the Republican National Committee (RNC) aired numerous ads, with the RNC spending \$45,170 on

television ads and the Republican Party of New Mexico spending \$288,465 (551 were on network television and 1,440 were on cable). The RNC did both pro-Redmond and anti-Udall ads. As part of their national endeavor to elect Republicans, dubbed “Operation Breakout,” the RNC ran an ad critical of Udall’s support of Goals 2000, a federal program that provides grants for school programs and reforms. The RNC also ran pro-Redmond ads that covered his education record and bringing jobs to the district. Both issues were consistent with the Redmond campaign agenda.

The Republican Party was the first to air negative ads against Udall. John Dendahl, the New Mexico Republican Party Chair, believes that it is the primary responsibility of the party to do the negative comparative pieces, allowing the candidate to stay positive, or at least stay positive longer.<sup>34</sup> In the case of Udall, the Republicans believed that he had a dismal record as attorney general and aggressively formulated a strategy that would communicate that to the voters. The party also wanted to emphasize Redmond’s record and how much he had accomplished serving his constituency in his short 18-month term. Soft money was used from the RNC and the NRSC to fund the issue ads.<sup>35</sup> All ads were approved by the state party apparatus.<sup>36</sup> Soft money was also used to support down ticket candidates in the state of New Mexico providing an opportunity for Republican Party building.<sup>37</sup>

The national Democratic Party had much less money to put toward 1998 congressional campaigns than Republicans. Because the Democrats had less money and because the poll numbers throughout the campaign showed Udall in the lead, the Democratic Party did not feel the need to pump large sums of money into the race.<sup>38</sup> According to Fred Harris, Chairman of the New Mexico Democratic Party, “we never had a bad poll in this race.”<sup>39</sup> Indeed, Tom Udall was ahead in the polls from his clinching of the Democratic nomination to election day. Toward

the end of the campaign, from October 20 through November 2, the Democrats did, however, run one anti-Redmond television ad. This ad ran 197 times and cost the party \$129,816, less than one-third of the amount spent by Republicans. They also produced an anti-Redmond radio ad. Thus, the Democratic Party only ran issue ads against Redmond and no ads supporting Udall. The ads originated with the DNC and the DCCC, who provided the soft money necessary to purchase TV time.<sup>40</sup> All ads originating with the DNC and the DCCC passed the desks of Fred Harris and Terry Brunner (the campaign coordinator for the state party) for content approval. After approval, these ads and their funds went immediately to the vendors for implementation. Harris noted at least one specific case in the 3<sup>rd</sup> CD where an ad attacking Redmond was rejected for mis-representing his record and was sent back to the DNC for correction.<sup>41</sup> All party efforts in the state centered around assisting and electing candidates. The party did not engage in any other party building activities.

Overall, the Republican party spent nearly \$700,000 on the Redmond-Udall race,<sup>42</sup> while the Democratic Party spent about \$400,000 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> CD.<sup>43</sup> These monies reflect overall spending by the parties on the Northern New Mexico race. The money transferred to the state parties in Figure 9-3 reflect the total transfers to the state party. The DCCC transferred the largest amount of federal money to the state parties, followed by the RNC, the NRCC and finally the DNC. The NRCC, however, transferred the largest sum of non-federal money to the state parties, followed by the DCCC, the RNC, the NRSC, and finally the DNC. Most of these transfers were used to purchase issue ads.

In addition to television advertising, both the Republican and Democratic parties engaged in direct mail, phone banking, and extensive get-out-the-vote efforts. The Republicans mainly relied on direct mail sending out nearly one million pieces targeting Republicans and Democratic

voters not voting in primaries.<sup>44</sup> Direct mail pieces were consistent with the Redmond campaign message. Because the Republican Party used volunteers on their direct mail project they were able to use hard federal money to pay for the mailers.<sup>45</sup>

The Republicans adopted an interesting strategy in a three-part direct mail series. All were comparative pieces with part one focusing on education, part two on crime, and part three on the environment. The difference was that while most comparative pieces focused only on Redmond and Udall these pieces also included Carol Miller, the Green Party candidate. Both Redmond and Miller's positions were shown positively. The strategy was clearly to take votes away from Tom Udall. The Republican Party of New Mexico also sent out several pro-Redmond pieces. These focused on his record, social security, GOTV efforts, education, health care, and crime. The Republicans also mobilized their constituency with phone banks, encouraging voters to vote absentee. The Republicans also used recorded calls late in the election to encourage voting. Congressman Redmond, Republican Governor Gary Johnson, and New Mexico Senator Pete Domenici, a well-liked senator by both Democratic and Republican voters, made recorded calls.

The Democrats canvassed voters for absentee ballots and did paid phone banking. The results paid off for the Democrats, who amassed approximately 6,000 more absentee ballots than usual.<sup>46</sup> Because their main goal was to get persuadables to vote, Democrats targeted precincts where their performance was 65 percent or above. Likely Democratic voters were also sent a letter in English and Spanish from former Congressman Bill Richardson that encouraged voters to vote Democratic and to vote as soon as possible. Enclosed with the letter was an application for an absentee ballot. A special letter from Hillary Clinton, that included an absentee ballot petition, was also sent out to women under 50 with an Hispanic surname. The Democrats had

pre-recorded calls from Hillary Clinton and from former Congressman Bill Richardson toward the end of the campaign to motivate voters to the polls. Targeted groups were those with a likelihood to vote Democratic; however, white men less than 40 years old were unlikely to get a call.

The Democratic Party of New Mexico also sent out several direct mail pieces. One was a comparison piece that focused on Medicare, Social Security and public education. Two focused mostly on Redmond's voting record with a final frame discussing Tom Udall. The first of these focused strictly on education suggesting that Bill Redmond's education record was a disaster for New Mexico's children and that Tom Udall would protect public education. The second focused on Congressman Redmond's poor record on social security, Medicaid, education and veterans' benefits. The last piece was strictly anti-Redmond arguing that Redmond talks out of both sides of his mouth, saying he will do one thing on education, social security and voting rights, but voting differently. All of these themes were consistent with candidate Udall's campaign message.

## CONCLUSION

Interestingly, most of the activities engaged in by the interest groups and by the political parties went unreported in the local media. Neither print nor television news covered the extensive ground war activities, which were a large part of the New Mexico 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District story. This was most likely due to the difficulty in following the ground war story. Reporters rely on information provided by others or that is accessible through the internet or that is available through public documents. The group war story, the direct mail and mobilization efforts, were not easily visible and therefore not reported.

It is hard to know the overall impact of non-candidate interest group and party soft money spending on the dynamics of the campaign and on the election outcomes. Candidate and party polls always showed Democratic candidate Udall in the lead and given the large Democratic bent of the district it was not surprising to see Udall win a majority of the vote. Nevertheless, the Republican Party and pro-Redmond interest group clearly made a difference. They were able to maintain the amount of support they received in the special election where turnout factors assisted Bill Redmond. This demonstrates the potential effectiveness of an aggressive party and interest group strategy.

Overall, the congressional race in New Mexico's third district was, for Democrats, about bringing home the base. Given the near 2-to-1 ratio of Democratic to Republican registered voters in the district, this was a sound strategy. The unknown in the race was Green Party candidate Carol Miller, who helped defeat the Democratic candidate in the special election eighteen months earlier, thereby allowing Bill Redmond to win the seat with a plurality vote. Therefore, the Udall campaign, the Democratic party and the pro-Udall interest groups all worked diligently to ensure that those supporters of Miller returned home to the Democratic candidate. They aggressively targeted likely Democratic voters. They also emphasized to their constituents that a Green vote was a vote for Republican Bill Redmond. Numerous letters to the editor mentioned this fact, and several prominent and key Green political activists in the community endorsed Udall over their own party candidate. This strategy ultimately gave Udall a majority of voters in the general election and reduced Miller's vote total to a mere 5 percent.

Redmond's campaign had a much harder task; it needed to persuade voters, not just get out the vote. According to the Udall campaign, this was a difficult task because its public opinion polls revealed that most voters identified firmly with one camp or another.<sup>47</sup> Redmond's

campaign, the Republican Party and pro-Redmond interest groups therefore ran strong anti-Udall ads and strong pro-Redmond ads. They also attempted to increase support for Green Party candidate Carol Miller. Ultimately, they were unsuccessful, although they did manage to maintain 43 percent of the vote, which is what Redmond received in the special election in May of 1997. In a district where the Republican candidate only received on average 31 percent of the vote, this is a large and significant increase that may have future consequences as this district continues to grow and change.

- 
1. Brian Sanderoff, "GOP slips into Democrats' turf," *The Santa Fe New Mexican*, 20 April 1997, p. A1.
  2. New Mexico Secretary of State, Election Bureau Data, 29 October 1998.
  3. New Mexico Secretary of State, Election Bureau Data.
  4. See articles in the *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 14 May 1997.
  5. Sean Rankin, Finance Director Udall campaign, interview by author, Santa Fe, New Mexico, November 5, 1998.
  6. Sean Rankin, Finance Direction, Udall Campaign, email communication by author, April 9, 1999.
  7. Matthew Taylor, New Mexico AFL-CIO Field Director, telephone interview by author, April 12, 1999.
  8. Rankin, interview, November 5, 1998.
  9. Taylor, interview.
  10. Ibid.
  11. Betsy Loyless, Staff Member, League of Conservation Voters, telephone interview by author, March 16, 1999.
  12. Internal Memo, "The Environment in the 1998 Elections," from Green and Associates to the League of Conservation Voters, November 4, 1998.
  13. Gregory Green, LCV Independent Expenditure Campaign Director, telephone interview by author, November 23, 1998.
  14. This was a conscious effort by the LCV according to the independent campaign director, Gregory Green, telephone interview by author, November 23, 1998.
  15. Green, interview.

---

16. This total comes from Bestsy Loyless, Staff Member, League of Conservation Voters, March 16, 1999. This is the total the organization spent on this campaign including early polls and administrative expenses. The FEC report indicated they spent \$239,051.

17. Linda Taylor, Local LCV Director, telephone interview by author, November 10, 1998.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. We covered 8 radio stations in the Albuquerque/Santa Fe market. These included KPEK (contemporary-rock), KTBL (country), KBUL (country), KKOB (AM talk radio), KKOB FM (adult contemporary rock 70s & 80s), KRST (country), KNML (AM sports), KHTL (AM hot-talk), and KMGA (adult contemporary rock, 70s & 80s).

21. Kathy Crist, Sierra Club Representative, telephone interview by author, December 15, 1998.

22. This includes \$3,000 for the general election and \$500 for the preceding primary.

23. Shelly Moskowitz Neighbor to Neighbor Representative, telephone interview by author, April 12, 1999.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

26. Linda Berg, NOW Political Director, telephone interview by author, April 12, 1999.

27. New Mexico National Organization for Women leaflet.

28. "We take the voter who is on the fence and motivate that voter to get out and vote." Michelle Featheringill, President and CEO of PPNM, interview by author, April 13, 1999.

29. Featheringill, interview.

30. Ibid.

31. Terry Brunner, New Mexico Democratic Party Campaign Coordinator, telephone interview by author, November 9, 1998.

32. John Dendahl, New Mexico Republican Party Chair, interview with author, Santa Fe, New Mexico, April 2, 1999. Fred Harris, New Mexico Democratic Party Chair, interview by author, Albuquerque, New Mexico, April 1, 1999. Brunner, interview.

33. Ibid.

34. Dendahl, interview.

35. Kevin Moomaw, New Mexico Republican Party Executive Director, telephone interview by author, April 6, 1999.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. Brunner, interview.

---

39. Harris, interview.

40. Brunner, interview.

41. Harris, interview.

42. Moomaw, interview.

43. Brunner, interview.

44. Dendahl, interview and Moomaw, interview.

45. Moomaw, interview.

46. According to Sean Rankin, Finance Director of the Udall Campaign, the increase in absentee ballots was based on a comparison with the 1996 general election. The comparison consisted of a close examination of targeted counties and voting patterns of those with an inconsistent voting history, email communication, 9 April 1999.

47. Sean Rankin, Finance Director, Udall Campaign, interview by author, Santa Fe, New Mexico, November 5, 1998.