

position of Charlton Heston and Arthur Schlesinger Jr., that when fighting the Communists the end justifies the means and Kazan was right to cooperate with the lesser-evil House Un-American Activities Committee to expose the greater-evil Stalinist Russia. But this doesn't wash. Kazan could have used his famous *New York Times* ad not merely to attack the USSR but also to explain why it would be morally wrong to cooperate with HUAC.

Second, there is the more palatable position of Arthur Miller, who argued, in the spirit of Dalton Trumbo (see "Kazan and the Bad Times," March 22), that revulsion against the informers who helped validate the Congressional investigation should not be permitted to deflect attention from HUAC's depredations. Miller conceded that because of his own experience, he is "perhaps overly sensitive to any attempts to, in effect, obliterate an artist's name because of his morals or political actions."

Third, there is the position of the academy dissidents, who will either march outside the Oscar festivities or sit on their hands inside to protest honoring a man who in their eyes dishonored the profession by failing to fight back when it counted.

No one can gainsay the blacklisted their right to resent and denounce those who collaborated with their persecutors, but let me suggest a fourth stance: It is not the House Un-American Activities Committee, not Kazan and not the industry (none of whom behaved with honor) who ought to be at the center of our consciousness on Oscar night. The focus should be on those anonymous writers, directors and actors who resisted. They are the unsung heroes of the blacklist, and their song ought to be sung. If the academy wants to do the right thing, how about an Oscar for the hundreds of blacklistees who never made it back?

VICTOR NAVASKY

Why Not Elizabeth Dole

With an exploratory committee in place, Elizabeth Dole looks like she might be the first viable female candidate for President. She was recently named in *Parade* as a winner in the Ms. Foundation-inspired White House Project Ballot Box Initiative, a campaign to raise the visibility of female leaders, brought to you by the creators of Take Our Daughters to Work Day.

But before feminists start dancing in the streets, consider the Margaret Thatcher rule: A tough broad can lead a developed nation and do nothing to improve the status of women or children. Thatcher rose to power having cut the free milk program for schoolchildren, slashed welfare and gutted national healthcare. The only women she paved the way for were the Spice Girls.

Although Thatcher didn't distinguish herself as a feminist, she began as one of a mere fifteen female world leaders, according to Laura Liswood of Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, vice chairwoman of the Council of Women World Leaders. Liswood traveled the globe to interview these rare birds and reported that the United States ranked thirty-ninth (of 160 nations) in the proportion of elected positions held by women. With this ammunition, Liswood, Ms. Foundation president Marie Wilson and philanthropist and activist Barbara Lee created the White House Project. They hoped to raise awareness about women's

leadership and plow the way to the White House. But a funny thing happened on the way to Washington—feminism stayed home.

"We had to protect this project from the radical right," says Wilson. They feared that the F-word could marginalize issues at the top of women's agenda. "We chose a strategy that actually bet on democracy," says Wilson, "that actually bet on people believing in the issues [feminists] have carried—how we educate our children, healthcare for young and old, and Social Security."

But to publicize their initiative, the organizers eschewed grassroots activist networks (including the Feminist Majority and NOW) and focused on glossy mainstream media outlets. *Parade*, *People*, *Essence*, *Jane*, *Latina* and *Glamour* circulated a presidential ballot featuring twenty women identified by scholars as Commander in Chief material. Some candidates you might expect: Hillary Clinton, Christine Todd Whitman, Elizabeth Dole. Others you might not: Mae Jamison, Angela Oh, Claudia Kennedy, Judith Rodin. Obscurity was heightened by identifying the candidates only by name, brief career description and snapshot. Readers learned that Kennedy is a three-star Army general but not whether she supports abortions for servicewomen. "In choosing women for the ballot, we looked at leadership skills and a record of accomplishment," says the project's promotional material, "not positions on specific issues"—never mind that even Miss America contestants must have platforms. Thus, gender was the only thing the voters needed to know to cast a ballot for their favorite candidate.

Certainly, having as many women as men in office is a goal of feminism. But the idea of a women's movement heavy on visibility and light on politics is depressing—the same old boys' network with a couple of coifed red herrings in power suits added.

The White House Project illustrates a dilemma of modern feminism. There are those who believe that any woman who breaks the glass ceiling is good for those trying to peel themselves off the sticky floor. On the other side stand those who believe anyone we support for office should be pro-feminist—as in pro-choice, pro-welfare rights, pro-subsidized daycare, etc. A related dilemma involves the image female leaders choose to cultivate. Celinda Lake, a Washington-based Democratic pollster associated with the White House Project, argued that 1998 was a good year for women to win office, because the main issues were family values, the home, morality and trust. After all, aren't women trustworthy homemakers with impeccable virtue?

But women can't ride this quaint stereotype and fight it too. Now that Dole is on her way to running, feminists have to face the inherent conflict of voting for a woman whose politics are antithetical to feminism. Women do care about issues, and they vote for the candidates most likely to represent their values. Clinton is the first President elected with significant help from women, who chose him for his stand on choice, his proposed healthcare system, his support of the Violence Against Women Act and the Family and Medical Leave Act—and subsequently protested his capitulation on welfare and gay rights. Dole, no champion of women's issues, is unlikely to win support from the women who backed Clinton.

Also, Dole will have to win over the ultraright wing of her party. A New Hampshire GOP supporter told the *New York Times*, "I don't believe a woman ought to be in that particular place of

leadership...the Bible teaches us that a woman should not have authority over men.” To avoid alienating the right, Dole weakly supports only a few issues: tax “relief” and beefing up the military and the drug war. On the choice litmus test, she covers her bases. She is assertively antiabortion except in cases of rape, incest or the endangered life of the mother but stops short of advocating an overturn of *Roe v. Wade*.

Despite misgivings, the Ms. Foundation’s Wilson feels that Dole has opened the door for women to flood the election market and notes that Dole is “out there and for the first time no one giggled or is cynical.” Her candidacy might be a victory for PR campaigns like the White House Project, but her election would surely be a defeat for women. As for the world taking Mrs. Dole seriously: No one laughed at Mrs. Thatcher, either.

JENNIFER BAUMGARDNER AND AMELIA RICHARDS

Jennifer Baumgardner and Amelia Richards are writing a book about the state of feminism. Richards is on the advisory committee for the White House Project.
