Reflections on Election Surprises
November 30, 1994 by: Phyllis Schlafly

Prior to the November landslide election, the media told us repeatedly that all incumbents were an endangered species because Americans were angry at those in office. It turned out that only Democratic incumbents were at risk; not a single Republican incumbent in the Senate, House, or Governor's chair was defeated.

Voter anger was obviously directed at Big Government, wasteful spending, and arrogant over-regulation of people and their businesses. That's a very healthy sign, not something to worry about.

For two years prior to the November election, we were told that Health Care was the biggest issue, that it would prove to be the silver bullet for the Democrats and the death knell for Republican candidates if a bill failed to pass Congress. Wrong again. The three Democratic candidates who made Health Care the centerpiece of their campaigns all bit the dust: Harris Wofford in Pennsylvania (the one who made it a national issue), Jim Cooper in Tennessee (the premier promoter of the fraud called "Managed Competition"), and Sheila McGuire of Iowa (a member of Hillary Rodham Clinton's Health Care Task Force, who was defeated by a pro-life Republican who had never before held public office).

Prior to the November election, the media told us repeatedly that pro-abortion- choice was the preferred position for political candidates, and that an anti-abortion position was a millstone around the necks of would-be public officials. Wrong again. Not a single Republican pro-life incumbent was defeated, and only two Democratic pro-life incumbents were defeated, but they were replaced by Republican challengers who are even more pro-life.

For two years before the November election, we were told that 1992 was the Year of the Woman and would usher in a new era in politics with many winning women candidates. Of course, the promoters of that slogan didn't mean just any women; they meant only feminist women.

Since the 1994 election, we don't hear about the Year of the Woman any more because many of those freshman (excuse me, freshperson) feminists were defeated. Most feminist challengers of both parties were defeated, too.

Tn 1994, the voters turned to a different kind of woman. The voters are sending six new conservative pro life Republican women to Congress, and it is likely that they will make a real difference. One of them, Linda Smith of Washington, won the Republican nomination for Congress with more than 30,000 write-in votes, a feat that should make the Guinness Book of World Records.

The voters nixed all eight feminists who ran for Governor in the November election. In Illinois, the Democratic feminist candidate for Governor, Dawn Clark Netsch, had plenty of

qualifications and experience, but her feminism proved such a drag on the state ticket that the Democrats lost control of the Illinois House for the first time in years.

Pro-lifers scored a net gain of 40 seats in the House and six in the Senate. Arlen Specter's announcement that he is running for the Republican nomination for President on a pro-abortion-choice platform looks like a plunge into the past.

In Michigan and Ohio, the Democratic candidates for Governor used their publicity during the week preceding the election to advertise themselves as the only pro-choice candidate. This ploy backfired in both states. It induced Democratic regulars to cross over and swell the majority for the Republican candidates for Governor.

The big political action committee formed for the sole purpose of electing pro- abortion liberal Democratic feminist women, Emily's List, merely broke even in the 1994 election, despite the millions of dollars it raised and spent this year. It won five of its races and lost five.

The three-way race for Governor in Pennsylvania contains a big lesson for the GOP. Peg Luksik, who launched an independent candidacy after Republicans nominated a pro-abortion candidate for Governor, garnered a remarkable 13 percent of the vote. The pro-abortion Republican was elected Governor anyway, but the 13 percent defection hangs like a sword of Damocles that threatens Republicans nationwide if they dare to nominate a pro-abortion candidate for President in 1996.

The question now is, will the Republicans who control both Houses of Congress for the first time in 42 years fulfill their mandate to roll back Big Government, or will it be business as usual, with the insiders of both parties running the show? Will the new Republican majority reduce Congressional salaries, perks, pensions and staff, or will the taste of power be too tempting to make such dramatic changes?

Will Republicans repeal the tax increase that Clinton rammed through by just one vote? Will they repeal the crime bill that was Christmas-treed with so many handouts?

We hope the Congress fulfills its 1994 election mandate.