

## CHAPTER —✦ TEN ✦—

**B**ob returned to his office, told Catherine what had taken place, returned several phone calls, and then left for Adamsville. Maria met him at the door, obviously excited. “Oh, Bob, wait until you hear the local news. They are giving you the credit for the passing of HB 160. You are famous.”

Bob smiled. “Famous with some, but infamous with a lot of others. It isn’t every day that you make several million enemies. I can’t help feeling a little sad about that. Yet I would do it again.”

Maria answered the phone and said, “Your mother wants to talk to you.”

Hannah said, “Son, I know you must be feeling a little numb and shaken up. I am sure you will be getting some unpleasant phone calls and a lot of hate mail. Don’t be discouraged. All that counts is that you did what God wanted you to do. He has used you as His man, and no human honor can equal that. So have no regrets about what you have given

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up. In a few years hundreds of little boys and girls will be experiencing the joys of life because of that law that was passed today. Nothing you could have done in Washington would have been more important than that."

"Thanks, Mom. That was just what I needed to hear. I feel better."

Bob hung up and turned to Maria. "Honey, we may get some nasty phone calls. I'll take them tonight, and tomorrow I will get us an unlisted number. Let them call the offices. Catherine and Virginia will know how to handle them."

On his way to the law office the next morning, Bob picked up the Kansas City and St. Louis papers as well as the Adamsville daily. The wire services carried only a brief announcement that HB 160 had passed the Missouri Senate and was expected to be signed into law by the Governor. However, one St. Louis paper, and the Adamsville paper, had lengthy accounts of the Senate action, and quoted extensively from Bob's speech. Both papers referred to it as the "Drums of Moloch" speech, and gave Bob credit for turning the tide in favor of the bill.

The phone started ringing about 8 o'clock, and when Virginia arrived at nine, Bob said, "Please screen my calls. If a call is about HB 160, take the message for me. Otherwise I will get nothing done today."

Virginia was tied up with the telephone the rest of the day. Bob told Sherman, "I am sorry to bring all this down upon our law office."

Sherman said, "Don't worry about it, Bob. In the first place, this kind of publicity never hurts a law firm. We may pick up some good clients from this. In the second place, you did the right thing yesterday and I am proud of you. I don't care if it does cause us some trouble."

About two thirds of the calls were from people who

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avored Bob's position, and Virginia took their names and addresses for Bob's political mailing list. On a separate list, she kept the names and addresses of those unfavorable callers who were willing to give that information. Bob planned extensive use of direct mail in his campaign for re-election, and the most effective mailing lists were those oriented to important issues.

When Bob returned to Jefferson City on Monday morning, he found Catherine opening a stack of mail. She said, "The phone rang all day Friday and has kept it up this morning. Both the calls and the letters are running about 2 to 1 in your favor. I am getting a lot of names for your mailing list, but at least half of them are outside your district."

"We can sort them out later. Even those outside the district can be helpful if I have to send out a fund raising letter."

Catherine nodded. "If the anti-calls and letters are any guide, you will need all the financial help you can get. Most of them are vowing to see that you are defeated, including giving money to your opponent, whoever he may be. And that is just the nicest thing they are saying about you."

Bob laughed. "Well, as Harry Truman said, if you can't stand the heat, stay out of the kitchen. I am afraid I built a really hot fire this time, and I admit that it makes me a little uncomfortable. But I am glad I did it. If I had just sat there and said nothing and HB 160 had been defeated, I would be ashamed to hold up my head. However, I am sorry that you are having to take all this heat and abuse."

"Don't waste any time worrying about me," Catherine replied. "I have been in politics too long to have a thin skin. The only time I feel any regret is when I think of all you gave up for this. But knowing you as I do, I realize that you had to do what you did. Incidentally, Senator Fairfield called and wants to get together with you. He has someone he wants you

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to meet.”

“Tell him I am available any time this week that suits his convenience.”

When the Senate adjourned that afternoon, Richard Fairfield came over to Bob’s desk. “I got your message from Catherine and I have set up our meeting for Wednesday at 5 p.m. at my office. I don’t want to spring any surprises on you. The person I want you to meet is Shirley Russo. She works for the Republican National Committee. I asked her to come out here to talk to you about switching parties. Now, Bob, I know that is a shocker, but keep an open mind. She is a real sharp gal and I want you to hear what she has to say. At the very least, you will learn a little more about national politics.”

Bob raised his hands in mock horror. “Richard, you are talking blasphemy to a good Democrat like me. But I will be there on Wednesday and I promise to listen.”

A little before five on Wednesday afternoon, Bob told Catherine “Good night” and walked down to Senator Fairfield’s third floor office. Shirley Russo was already there. She was a small, attractive woman in her early forties.

After the introductions she said, “Bob, Richard has probably told you that I live in Washington and work for the Republican National Committee. My husband works for the Department of Defense and both of my children are in college, so I am able to do some traveling for the National Committee. Richard has called us about you, but we had heard about you even before he called. There are few secrets in Washington. We had heard that David Mullins had been to see you about running for Congress, but that you had refused to cave-in on the abortion issue. That attracted some attention because it isn’t often you see that kind of a stand on principle, at least in our business. So when Richard called I was glad to come out here to talk to you.”

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Shirley continued, "I do the same work for the Republicans that David Mullins does for the Democrats. To get right to the point, we want you to switch parties, but we want you to do more than that. We want you to run for Congress on the Republican ticket."

Bob shook his head. "I can't believe what I am hearing. I am just an ordinary, small-town lawyer, but here in just the space of the last two months I have been asked to run for the high office of United States Congressman by both of the major political parties."

Richard interrupted. "Bob, you are a small-town lawyer, but you are not an ordinary, small-town lawyer."

"Ordinary or extra-ordinary, it still doesn't make sense for me to run for Congress as a Republican. In the first place, there are a lot of pro-life Republicans in our district who are much more deserving of the office than I am. In the second place, if I switched parties people would look upon me as an unprincipled turncoat and refuse to vote for me."

"I disagree, Bob," Shirley said. "Switching parties for the right reason does not show lack of principle. It shows that you place principle above blind loyalty. Back in Civil War times, many good Democrats switched parties because of the slavery issue. That didn't show lack of conviction. It proved that they had the courage to follow their honest convictions. Bob, you have that kind of conviction about abortion. And believe me, you will not be the only one who switches. This abortion issue is a vital, life and death matter, and more and more it is becoming a party issue. There are still many pro-life Democrats in public office, but they are a dying breed. Some of them will retire, some will be defeated, some will switch parties. If you remain a Democrat, your career will run into a dead end. You can go no higher than your present office, and, as the make-up of your party changes, you will be isolated

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and eventually defeated. We don't want that to happen because we think you have a lot to offer to your country, to your people, and also to the Republican party. So we want you to come over to our side."

"Still, Shirley, I do not see how I could be elected to Congress. My district is a Democratic district. Barbara Bickel is sure to get the Democratic nomination, and she is a smart politician and a skillful campaigner. I just can't see any Republican beating her, especially one who has just switched parties. And remember my term expires next year, so I would have to give up my seat in the state Senate in order to run for Congress."

Richard Fairfield said, "Bob, your district is not nearly as safe a Democratic district as it used to be and most people still think it is. Missouri's political complexion has undergone a vast change in the last 30 years or so. Party loyalties are not as strong as they used to be. If we could poll that district today, I would guess we would find about 30% who say that they are Democrats; about 20% who say they are Republicans; and about 50% who say they are Independents. Sure, as long as the incumbent congressman was running for re-election, it looked like a strong Democratic district. He did a good job for the district and they kept sending him back. But he is out of the picture now, so it is a whole new ball game. Remember, that district voted for the Republican candidate for president in 2 out of the last 3 elections."

"Okay, maybe a Republican does have a chance in my district," Bob replied. "I still don't see why you want me to be your candidate. Surely you have some attractive Republicans who would have a better chance than I."

Shirley said, "Bob, let me give you our thinking. From your voting record in the state Senate and from various speeches you have made, we believe that your principles are very close

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to those set out in our party platform. Even more important, we believe you can be trusted to stand by your honest convictions. Your college record and all that you have accomplished since college are evidence of your ability and intelligence. You are an outstanding speaker, you have personal charisma, you have an attractive family, and your record is free from any hint of scandal. In other words, you have everything it takes to make a good candidate. But I will be honest with you. The single most important reason why we want you is because you are black."

Bob frowned. "Of course, I suspected that, and it really bothers me. I don't want preferential treatment just because I am black. And I don't want my blackness to be capitalized on. I don't like the idea of being the Republican's 'token' black."

"Bob, I have watched you closely for nearly two and a half years, and I think I know you as well as anybody in the Senate. I can't imagine you being anybody's 'token' anything." Richard slapped his hand on his desk. "The very reason we want you is because you are not looking for preferential treatment. We want young, honest, capable leadership, regardless of race. The fact that you are black makes you doubly attractive to the Republicans, simply because we are weak with that part of the population and you could give us help. We want to be more sensitive to the interests of the black population. We want them to know that there is a place for them in the Republican Party. There is nothing wrong with that."

Shirley said, "Bob, our party has been accused of ignoring the blacks. If that is true, then we want to correct it. We don't want the Republican Party to be lily white. I am sure you will agree that it is not good for the country for the political parties to split along racial lines. It certainly is not good for your people. The Democrats have had the black vote locked up for so long that they just take you for granted. They have little to of-

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fer but more welfare. You know what a dead end street that has been. We Republicans believe that the great need of our black population is economic betterment through the free enterprise system. What they need is better education and more opportunity. As the blacks take their rightful place intellectually and economically, they will also take their rightful place socially and culturally. Bob, I believe you are in basic agreement with what I have said. If your convictions are more in harmony with the Republican platform than with your party, why shouldn't you switch parties?"

Bob smiled. "I will admit that you have hit a sensitive point with me. My parents tell me that the blacks were making good progress economically during the 1940s and 1950s, until they were side-tracked by the Great Society in the mid 60s. Dad and Mom were Republicans until the Democrats took the lead on civil rights issues."

Shirley nodded. "I admit that the Republicans fumbled the ball on civil rights. It wasn't that we favored discrimination. We just didn't do enough to stop it. But if you could check the records, I think you will find that most Republicans did vote for the civil rights legislation, and often provided the winning margin. Anyway it is law now, and we support it. What we need now is not more laws, but more tolerance and respect in the hearts of individual Americans. And this is where Republican Congressman Robert M. Hill could have a tremendous impact."

"Just what do you mean?"

"As a Democrat you are limited to the Missouri Senate. Even if you went higher, you would still be just one of hundreds of black Democratic office holders, and, because of your stand on abortion, you would have little influence in the party. But as a Republican you would be very important to the party. People would listen to what you had to say. You would

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be in great demand as a speaker at party meetings and conventions. You would be on television as a party spokesman. In other words you would rise rapidly to a position of party leadership. All this means that you would have a great impact not only on blacks but also on all Americans. And from all that that I know about you, I am convinced that your influence will be for more tolerance and respect, and for greater harmony between the races. Bob, the Republican Party is wide open for honest, capable, conservative, black leaders. You will rise faster and be able to do more for your people and for your country as a Republican. I firmly believe that our first black president will be a Republican."

Bob laughed. "Surely you don't mean me."

Shirley was serious. "Well it surely is possible. We know that the Democrats are anxious to have a black on their national ticket, but are having a hard time finding one who would be acceptable to white voters, and still would be acceptable to a Democratic National Convention. I would like to see the Republicans beat them to it. And we might do it, because the black leader who would be acceptable to a Republican convention is the very kind that would be acceptable to white voters."

"What do you mean 'acceptable to white voters'? Are you talking about some kind of an 'Uncle Tom'?"

"By no means," Shirley replied, "I am talking about a black candidate who is in tune with main-stream America. As you know, Bob, most of the black leaders in this country have positioned themselves over on the extreme left. A good many of them are avowed Socialists. Some of them have expressed anti-American sentiments. Some have even endorsed terrorist organizations like the PLO. I shouldn't have used the term 'white voters'. What I really mean is main-stream American voters, which includes white, black, Hispanic, Asiatic, and all

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others. You must appeal to these voters in order to win a nationwide race, and this has been the Democrats' problem in getting one of their black leaders on their national ticket. But they are working on it; which is why they were so interested in you."

Richard leaned across his desk. "Bob, there is no doubt in my mind, that you would have a great future in the Republican Party — provided we can get you elected to Congress. That would be the first problem and probably the most difficult. You are right about Barbara Bickel. She will be a strong candidate. But she is considerably more liberal than the average voter in your congressional district. Your convictions are much closer to those of your district. Your job would be to get that across to the voters."

Shirley said, "Bob, you may not realize what an impact your speech in the Senate has had nationwide. At first, the big media tried to ignore it. But after the St. Louis paper broke the story, some of them had to pick it up. The right to life people are ecstatic. They will carry your speech in full in all of their publications, and, if they haven't already, they will be contacting you for pictures and interviews. Of course, the pro-abortion people are furious. You hit them where it really hurt. Their whole strategy has been to concentrate all attention on the woman. Like the priests of Moloch, they have tried to draw attention away from the baby. You exposed that strategy in rather dramatic fashion, to say the least. From now on, everywhere they go, they will have "Drums of Moloch" thrown in their faces. Frankly, Bob, if words could kill, we would be here today attending your funeral."

"What this means," Shirley continued, "is that the race between Barbara Bickel and Robert Hill would be the most sensational, the most closely watched, congressional race in the whole country. The pro-abortion people would leave no

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stone unturned. You are their public enemy number one. They would examine your past, present, and future with a fine-toothed comb. They would bring in big-named speakers from all over the country. They would slant the news coverage to favor your opponent. And they would pour in the money like you wouldn't believe. But the very fact that they would be so anxious to beat you, could work to your advantage. I believe we could count on over-kill. At some point, the people of your district would start resenting the unfairness of it all; they would resent the outside interference; and it would all work to your favor."

Shirley went on. "I don't want to leave the impression that you would be facing them all alone. You are a national hero to the right to life people. They do not have the abortion clinics and the fat cats to come up with the big money, but you would receive thousands of five and ten dollar gifts from people all over the country. And more important than the money, you would have hundreds of workers, mostly women, who would ring doorbells and dial telephones in your behalf. Dedicated workers like that are priceless. They will influence their family, their friends, and their neighbors in your behalf, and they will see that they get out and vote. Of course, the pro-abortion people will have the workers too, but they will not be as many or as dedicated as the pro-lifers. The abortion clinic operators and the intellectual elite will give the money but they will not ring the doorbells. The rank and file abortionists will do some work. But it is hard to find people who are that enthusiastic about killing babies."

Richard broke in. "Bob, I believe the right to life position will be a winner for those Republicans who stand their ground, and who have the ability to focus some of the attention on the baby. You have proven that you can do that. But, while we must not let them put us on the defensive about

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abortion, we must not let them make abortion the only issue in the election. You and Barbara differ on just about every important issue there is. For example, take the question of law and order. You have proven your concern for the victims of crime, and your belief that criminals must be dealt with fairly but firmly. Barbara has proven just the opposite. She voted against the death penalty. She introduced a bill that would have replaced our prisons with 'treatment centers'. She believes that crime is the fault of society, not the criminals. And take national defense. Did you know that Barbara has been active in various 'unilateral disarmament' groups since her college days? In all this she is out of step with the voters in your district, and it would be your job to make that known."

Bob said, "I can't understand these people who want to pamper hardened criminals. Our government is failing in its very first duty — to provide for the reasonable safety of its citizens. I believe in all of the freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights, but when people can't be secure in their own homes, and are afraid to walk the streets of our cities, we have already lost a good part of our freedom. As for national defense, I am always amazed by these people who think we can have peace through weakness. History has proven time and again how false that is."

Richard nodded vigorously. "See what an interesting race you would have against Barbara. But it would be tough. Don't get into it unless you have the stomach for a real battle."

Bob laughed. "Now you are trying to stir up my fighting spirit. But I must admit that I am somewhat intrigued by the whole idea. It would be an interesting race."

"And you could do a lot for a cause you believe in very deeply," Richard added. "Your race against Barbara would be seen all over this nation as a clear cut battle between abortion

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and life, and your victory would be a tremendous boost to the right to life movement, and would strengthen a lot of weak backs all over the country.”

Shirley said, “If you switch parties and run for Congress, I can promise you all the help from the National Committee that we can legally give. We can supply some technical help, some mailing lists, and some big time speakers of our own, maybe even the President himself. And keep this in mind, with all the publicity and attention this race would receive, if you win, you would go to Washington already famous. You would already be one of the best known Republicans in town, and already a power within the party. You would have an excellent chance to advance on up the ladder from Congress.”

Bob was silent for a moment. “You two have given me a lot to think about. When I walked in here I didn’t think there was much chance I would consider changing parties. But now I am not so sure. This will take a lot of thought and a lot of prayer, and a lot of discussion with my wife, my parents, my law partner, and perhaps one or two others. Shirley, I appreciate the trouble you have gone to coming out here to talk to me, and I appreciate the kind things both of you have said about me, and the attention you have shown.”

They stood up and Richard put his hand on Bob’s shoulder. “Young man you have a God-given talent for leadership that you need to use for your country. Because of this abortion issue, a powerful re-alignment is shaking the foundations of both major parties. But out of the turmoil arises a great opportunity for you. Your future is in the Republican Party. The time to act is now. The great Bard of Avon said it this way:

There is a tide in the affairs of men  
Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune;  
Omitted, all the voyage of their life

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Is bound in shallows and in miseries.  
On such a full sea are we now afloat,  
And we must take the current when it serves,  
Or lose our ventures.”