



Karen Feld

It's another 'racket' in Washington

Dan Coates, the fellow who filled Dan Quayle's Indiana Senate seat when he was elected vice president, has subpoenaed his GOP colleagues and supporters to appear on Senatorial Court for an evening of tennis on Sept. 22.

"If tennis isn't your 'raquet,'" reads the subpoena, "ping pong and racquetball will be available, along with a buffet dinner."

The \$1,000-a-head "funraising" event is being held at the McLean Racquet and Health Club in the D.C. suburbs. Early entries include HUD Secretary Jack Kemp and Transportation Secretary Sam Skinner. They're very cleverly listed as "special guests." That's a new racket — since it's taboo for cabinet secretaries to lend their names to fundraising committees.

Another sign of glasnost: Soviet fishing vessels are anchored off the coast of Maine side by side with lobster fisherman. Theatre groups from Leningrad are performing for Maine vacationers, and Chernobyl youngsters are delighting in radiation-free vacations.

One of Vice President Dan Quayle's official early summer functions was to pick up the first salmon caught in Maine and to fly it back to Washington, where he presented it to George Bush. Don't laugh. Labeling this duty "official" will cost you — the taxpayer.

The Maine GOP invited the vice president to the state to help raise money for legislative races and is therefore responsible for a portion of the cost of the visit. But if the visit is deemed "official" rather than "political," then the taxpayers will cover the tab for airfare and other expenses. The Maine GOP is still waiting for the White House to determine the status of the visit.

It never hurts to receive a little help from friends in high places if you're hoping to represent the congressional district where the president's summer home is located.

President Bush, who's vacationing in Kennebunkport, Maine, until Sept. 3, is holding a \$1,000-per-couple fundraiser for former Rep. David Emery, who's running for his old seat. The open seat is considered on the most vulnerable in the country since Democratic Rep. Joe Brennan is retiring to run for governor, a job he previously held.

Bush is also hosting a \$1,000— head brunch for GOP governor Jack Mcker-nan. The event includes an opportunity for those who dish \$5,000 each to play golf with the president.

The Harper's Index is counting, as are the taxpayers. George Bush's now-famous line, "Read my lips," has appeared in The Washington Post 140 times since his inauguration. ... Transportation Secretary Sam Skinner commented on the "improved" condition of the Boston Harbor during a recent visit there. Gov. Michael Dukakis told the Bush supporter: "It looks the same way it did two years ago." The view from the opposing campaign trail is always different.

Sen. Wendell Ford of Kentucky shared some of his dad's advice with his Senate colleagues the other day: "My daddy told me when I was young: Lad, you are in politics. They will say things about you, Wendell, that will take your hide off. But always remember: When it grows back, you're tougher."

These are the "Capital Connections."