

A Letter from the Publisher

Major TIME stories often involve a careful dialogue, and negotiation, between correspondents in the field and writers in the New York City office. But the partnership behind this week's cover story on political action committees was unusually close. Correspondent Evan Thomas, who suggested the story and reported it from Capitol Hill, and Associate Editor Walter Isaacson, who wrote it, were friends at Harvard a decade ago. Their paths recrossed in 1978, when both joined TIME as staff writers in New York. Then, again almost simultaneously, both transferred to TIME's Washington bureau. Isaacson returned to New York in 1981, and the two have collaborated since as reporter and writer on numerous articles, including last year's cover story on the politics of abortion and this year's profile of Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker.

Two months ago, when Thomas began thinking about a story on PACs, he flew to New York to discuss it with Isaacson. From his Washington perspective, Thomas was "struck by how many Congressmen seem to live in fear of PACs." Isaacson observed that "PACs have changed the nature of political campaigning—and of the legislative process." Once the project

was approved, they continued to talk by phone two or three times each day. While Thomas interviewed dozens of Congressmen, lobbyists and academics, each of TIME's U.S. bureaus filed extensive reports to Isaacson. "We used our normal system," says Senior Editor Stephen Smith, "and because of their friendship and long hours of planning, the story developed with unusual smoothness and coherence."

HUGH PATRICK BROWN



Thomas and Isaacson with PAC print-outs

tributed \$28,650 in 1981-82 to candidates for state and local office in Texas.

John A. Meyers

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Solidarity
POLAND
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TIME

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