

How to be popular

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The two chains filed for protection under Chapter 11 of the U.S. bankruptcy law. They can continue normal operations while negotiators work out how debts will be paid and what, if anything, should be sold.

Editorialists have had a field day denouncing Campeau for one of the most spectacular American financial flops. Unlike the multibillion-dollar failure of hundreds of U.S. Savings and Loan companies, Americans were not to blame.

U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills has made it no secret "hat she plans to get tough in the next round of international trade talks.

At a recent press conference on the U.S. approach to this year's negotiations, Hills said she is determined to wipe out agricultural subsidies within 10 years.

Just hours later, it was revealed that the U.S. had made a massive wheat sale to the Soviet Union with the help of an unexpectedly high subsidy of \$20.50 (U.S.) per tonne. The subsidy is expected to drive down the world price for wheat and make it more difficult for the Canadian Wheat Board to find a market for Canadian wheat.

Of course, Hills said the U.S. would not "unilaterally disarm" in the trade war. It looks like she will go into the negotiations armed to the teeth.

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What will help is her unquestioned loyalty to her leader since entering Parliament. While Mr. Chretien may have to answer questions about leaving Parliament when John Turner needed him most, and Mr. Martin may have to answer for remaining out of politics until his leadership intentions were obvious, Ms Copps will face no such queries.

GIVES APPROVAL

Even those who think she over-shouted a bit as a member of the rat pack will acknowledge that the Commons, following the 1984 election, would have been a very dull place without this group. The dispirited 40-member Liberal caucus needed all the help it could

get; without the pack attacking the Mulroney government every day, the Grits might well have sunk into oblivion.

A rather strident approach was called for then.

There's another area in which Ms Copps might have an easier time than other candidates and that's in Quebec. She has no trouble with the Meech Lake accord, as it stands, and she might well be the only candidate who can go into that province and talk about the "distinct society" without convoluted explanations about how the accord should be changed.

It won't guarantee that Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa will turn his considerable political machine loose to help her win - he's still try-

ing to get Mr. Peterson, another Meech supporter, to run - but it will certainly mean she won't have to fight the provincial Grits. And, who knows, if other candidates trip over the accord - which is very easy when trying to say different things in different parts of the country - the premier might be tempted to come to her aid.

This is not to suggest that Ms Copps herself won't trip over the accord. In English Canada, her support for the controversial deal could raise all sorts of problems - but at least her position is clear.

She may be far from a front-runner, but Ms Copps is going to be worth watching over the next five months. You can bet that both Mr. Chretien and Mr. Martin will be watching.

RESULTS!

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