



What Do Trump Republicans, Progressive Democrats and others in Between **Have in Common?**

Bipartisan Praise for “Washington’s Last Salon”

For four decades, the American Council for Capital Formation (ACCF) and its affiliate the ACCF Center for Policy Research have hosted monthly “Economic Policy Evenings” while Congress is in session. Washington’s leading policymakers, the media and members of the business community are invited to these intimate events to build relationships and promote provocative dialogue on leading policy issues from diverse perspectives. Congressional participants range from Trump Republicans to Progressive Democrats; journalists cover the spectrum from *The New York Times* and NPR to *The Wall Street Journal* and Fox News; and the business community is represented by corporate executives, trade association leaders, investors and entrepreneurs. It is a unique forum that former Senator Joe Lieberman appropriately coined as **“Washington’s Last Salon.”**



“An oasis from Washington’s partisan bickering.” —*The Hill*

“Citizens take heart, there is civil discourse, but behind the scenes.” —*Barron’s Magazine*

“Away from the cameras and grandstanding, participants discuss the issues of the day and on occasion help steer economic policy.”
—*The Economist*

“The guests lean back, their legs forming a double chorus-line of polished brogues and tasselled loafers. Senator Joe Lieberman of Connecticut calls the gathering “Washington’s last salon”. Mark Bloomfield, the host, jokes that it ought to be “Washington’s last saloon” to honour George Bush’s Texans.

This is the monthly dinner of the American Council for Capital Formation... away from the cameras and grandstanding to discuss the issues of the day and, on occasion, help steer economic policy.”
—*The Economist, March 3rd 2001*

Engaging Policymakers & the Media “Washington’s Last Salon”



Big Names on Menu at Washington Dinner

BY BOB CUSACK, MANAGING EDITOR • SEPTEMBER 11, 2013

Lawmakers, business leaders and journalists will gather next week for a milestone dinner conversation that became a Washington tradition more than three decades ago.

The bipartisan, off-the-record gatherings have been described as an oasis from Washington’s partisan bickering. Members of Congress freely talk, sometimes criticizing their own party leaders and engaging in vigorous discussions on a range of policy issues.

Tuesday’s event, which will be held on Capitol Hill, will be the 200th dinner since the concept was hatched in 1982. They have occurred over five administrations, and amid wars and scandals.

The American Council for Capital Formation (ACCF), a nonpartisan business-backed nonprofit and think tank that advocates pro-growth policies, hosts the dinners.

Over the years, powerful players from both sides of the aisle have attended,

including Al Gore, Dick Cheney, Dan Quayle, John Kerry, Chuck Hagel, Eric Cantor, Jim DeMint, Charles Schumer, Darrell Issa, Barney Frank, Paul Ryan and Ben Bernanke.

More than 395 members of Congress have attended at least one of the feasts. Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) and Rep. Hal Rogers (R-Ky.) were at the initial dinner on July 21, 1982.

Many journalists have attended the events, including Bob Schieffer, Cokie Roberts, Andrea Mitchell, Howard Fineman, Al Hunt, the late Bob Novak and editors and reporters from The Hill.

ACCF President and CEO Mark Bloomfield, who has moderated every dinner, said, “There is a certain chemistry that allows [members] to be frank.”

He notes that long-winded speeches and political talking points aren’t allowed, adding that he seeks to foster a back-and-forth discussion...



1. Former Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole (R-KS) and ACCF Founder Charls Walker 2. Former House Speaker Tip O'Neill (D-MA) 3. ACCF Economic Policy Advisor Margo Thornton and Former House Ways & Means Chairman Bill Archer (R-TX) 4. Former House Majority Leader Dick Armey (R-TX) and ACCF President and CEO Mark Bloomfield 5. Charls Walker and former Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) 6. Mark Bloomfield and former Chairman, Federal Reserve Ben Bernanke (this is the new photo) 7. Deputy Secretary of Energy Dan Brouillette 8. Rep. Sander Levin (D-MI), Mark Bloomfield, Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI) and Mexican Ambassador Gerónimo Gutiérrez 9. Congressman Mike Pompeo (R-CA) 10. Congressman Tom Price (R-GA) 11. Rep. Terri Sewell (D-GA) 12. Mark Bloomfield and Energy Secretary Rick Perry 13. CNN's Chief Political Analyst Gloria Borger, Sen. Ben Cardin (D-MD), Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) 14. Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR)

What Washington's leading policymakers and the media say about “Washington's Last Salon”



“Mark Bloomfield’s salon dinners are a delight. I’ve never been to one where I didn’t learn a lot on economic policy — from people in business, members of Congress or even fellow journalists. I highly recommend.”

—John Harwood, CNBC/
New York Times



“I always enjoy participating in the ACCF Economic Evening. This event allows for lively and interesting discussion in a venue conducive to bipartisan and bicameral dialogue. We need more of that.”

—Senator Ron Johnson (R-WI)
Chairman, Senate Committee
on Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs



“I’ve always enjoyed your events and appreciate your dedication to pro-growth economics. Thanks for all you do!”

—Speaker of the House Paul Ryan
(R-WI) Chairman, House Ways
& Means Comm.



“I remember coming to the first ACCF session in 1982 and have benefited from coming back periodically since. I am committed to ‘principled bipartisanship.’ The ACCF understands that key to enacting good public policy.”

—Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR)
Ranking Democratic Member,
Senate Finance Committee



“The ACCF Salon allows the opportunity to discuss important policy issues the way it should be done: by bringing together diverse opinion leaders for sociable, face-to-face conversation. What a welcome respite from today’s electronic banality.”

—Dan Brouillette,
Deputy Secretary of Energy



“One of few select DC events that I hold in high regard. It’s a unique opportunity to talk policy instead of politics and a true break from the political rhetoric in the Congress.”

—Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD)
Ranking Member of the
Senate Small Business &
Entrepreneurship Committee



“The ACCF dinners are a welcome relief from the partisan combat that is so endemic around here. Members who go like it. ... You can let your political guard down.”

— Representative Peter Welch
(D-VT) Chief Deputy Whip of
the House Democratic Caucus



“I always learn something new at the ACCF’s gatherings, which allow members on both sides of the aisle to form relationships with one another as well as with important thought leaders in the nation’s capital. The off-the-record format spurs friendly and frank debates on the policies of the day. In a very polarizing time, the ACCF provides a unique, bipartisan platform that is devoted to solving major policy problems facing the nation.”

—Bob Cusack, Editor in Chief, *The Hill*

The ACCF “Salons”

For nearly four decades, the American Council for Capital Formation (ACCF) and its affiliate the ACCF Center for Policy Research have hosted “economic policy evenings” almost every month Congress is in session. To quote former Senator Joseph Lieberman, “It’s Washington’s last salon.”

Barron’s comments: “Citizens take heart, there is civil discourse, but behind the scenes.”

The Hill reports: “An oasis from Washington’s partisan bickering.”

The Economist notes: “Away from the cameras and grandstanding, participants discuss the issues of the day and on occasion help steer economic policy.”

Unique in today’s partisan environment, “Washington’s Last Salon” gets [congressional bipartisan testimonials](#).

Each salon focuses on a timely topic: “Presidential candidates, populism and US economic policy;” “A conversation with Energy Secretary Rick Perry;” “Where goeth tax reform in 2017?;” “A conversation with EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt;” and “Renegotiating NAFTA with Mexican Ambassador Gerónimo Gutiérrez” are illustrative. The participants uniquely include Members of Congress (Progressive Democrats, Tea Party Republicans and all in between), journalists and the business community. To ensure a good conversation, questions on the topic of the day are shared in advance with the participants.

Mark Bloomfield, ACCF president and CEO, hosts the forums at The Florida House on Capitol Hill. It begins with a roundtable discussion at 6.30 p.m. – 8 p.m. (cocktails and hors d’oeuvres are served), then a brief break to get to know each other, followed by a seated dinner conversation at around 8:15 p.m.; and adjournment by 9:30 p.m. The ground rules are no “talking points”, no speeches and it’s off the record with nary a leak over close to four decades. Brief questions and responses among the participants makes it an informative and enjoyable evenings. Mark concludes the evening with some summary thoughts and in jest perhaps awards the “best” and “worst “performer.

The ACCF celebrated its 200th ACCF salon on September 17, 2013. Its first was on July 21, 1982. Since then, more than 400 Members of Congress, including more than 100 Senators have been there. Vice President Al Gore came as a Congressman, Vice President Dan Quayle was there as a Senator, and Speaker Paul Ryan participated twice in 2009. Many Democratic and GOP leaders of Congress are veterans, including Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch and former Chairman Ron Wyden, Senate Energy & Natural Resources Chair Lisa Murkowski, House Ways & Means Committee Chairman Kevin Brady, and House Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer. Ambassadors from countries as diverse as Nigeria and Denmark, as well as the European Commission, have been guests. Business participants run the gamut from venture capitalists to CEOs and senior management of Fortune 500 companies, as well as heads of major U.S. trade associations. Journalists have ranged from Paul Gigot and Fred Hiatt, the editors of the editorial pages, respectively of the *Wall Street Journal* and *Washington Post*, John Harwood (CNBC & *New York Times*) Fred Barnes (*Weekly Standard* and FOX).

The ACCF Economic Policy Salons are sponsored by the ACCF, a 501 (C) 6 organization and the ACCF Center for Policy Research, a 501(c)(3) organization. No honorarium is offered to any participant. The Center is the public policy think tank of the nonpartisan American Council for Capital Formation.

Al Gore and **Dick Cheney** graduated from Washington's Last Salon hosted by the ACCF and became future Vice Presidents of the United States.

Senator **Amy Klobuchar**, a Democratic 2020 presidential candidate, and Senator **Sherrod Brown**, an almost presidential candidate, are both veterans of Washington's Last Salon.

Dan Quayle participated in Washington's Last Salon as a congressman before becoming Vice President. His son, **Ben Quayle**, followed him later as a congressman. Both Senator **David Pryor** and, years later, his son Senator **Mark Pryor** attended. Senator **David Boren** and later his son Congressman **Dan Boren** are veterans of Washington's Last Salon.

Senate Democratic Leader **Chuck Schumer**, House Assistant Democratic Leader **James Clyburn**, Senate President Pro Tempore **Charles Grassley** and Senate Republican Whip **John Thune** have all participated in Washington's Last Salon.

House Chairmen **Richard Neal**, Ways and Means Committee; **Adam Schiff**, Select Committee on Intelligence; **Collin Peterson**, Agriculture Committee; **Jim McGovern**, Rules Committee; **Adam Smith**, Armed Services Committee and **Carolyn Maloney**, Joint Economic Committee have all spent time at Washington's Last Salon.

Forty members of **today's United States Senate [27 Republicans and 13 Democrats]** participate in Washington's last salon.

Senate Chairmen **Charles Grassley**, Finance Committee; **Michael Crapo**, Banking Committee; **Michael Enzi**, Budget Committee; **Lisa Murkowski**, Energy and Natural Resources Committee; **John Hoven**, Indian Affairs Committee; **Susan Collins**, Special Committee on Aging; **Ron Johnson**, Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee; **Richard Burr**, Special Committee on Intelligence; and **James Risch**, Foreign Relations Committee are all veterans of Washington's Last Salon

Almost **400** members of Congress have shared their thoughts on economic policy at Washington's Last Salon including **117 senators [75 Republicans and 42 Democrats]** and **279 congressmen [118 Democrats and 161 Republicans]**.

Two Secretaries of State, **John Kerry** and **Mike Pompeo**; two Secretaries of Defense, **Leon Panetta** and **Chuck Hagel**; the first Secretary of Homeland Security, **Tom Ridge**; one Secretary of Interior **Frank Keating**; one Secretary of Agriculture **Dan Glickman**; and two OMB Directors, **Leon Panetta** and **Alice Rivlin**, at one time in their career have shared their thoughts on economic policy at Washington's Last Salon.

Five former Chairmen of the President's Council of Economic Advisers—**Martin Feldstein**, **R. Glenn Hubbard**, **Harvey Rosen** and **Greg Mankiw** have been to Washington's Last Salon

One Federal Reserve Chairman, **Ben Bernanke**, and one Federal Reserve Vice-Chair, **Alice Rivlin**, have also participated in Washington's Last Salon.

The Editorial Page Editors of *The Washington Post* and the *Wall Street Journal*, **Fred Hiatt** and **Paul Gigot**, among numerous editorialists, beat reporters and well-known faces from CNN, Fox News, CNBC and more have joined us at Washington's Last Salon.

Ambassadors from **Austria**, **Brazil**, **Denmark**, **the European Union**, **Lithuania**, and **Mexico** have given their international perspectives at Washington's Last Salon.