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ABSTRACT

This unit is designed to help secondary social studies students learn about national political party conventions. It is arranged into 15 class sessions and contains two case studies. Each class session explores a political subject related to national conventions, such as the American party system, the primary process, elections, selection of delegates, compromises, candidate selection, delegate responsibility, and coalitions. Topics of the class sessions are identification of leadership potential, presidential ambition, the decision to become a candidate, political plotting, primaries, delegate and candidate characteristics, purposes and events of a national party convention, the decision-making process, convention activities, and colorful past conventions. The 15th class session directs the students to consolidate information from preceding sessions and write a 200 word statement discussing the pros or cons of the convention system. Each class session presents background information and suggests student activities such as art work, class discussions, oral reports, research reports, question answering, and readings. The case studies of the 1976 Democratic and Republican conventions emphasize the historical importance of each gathering and highlight unconventional aspects and personal maneuvering. A listing of presidential candidates from 1856-1968 and a glossary of terms are included in the document. (Author/DB)

The University of Chicago
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SLOGANS AND STANDARD BEARERS— THE NATIONAL PARTY CONVENTIONS

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THE DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN CONVENTIONS, 1976

CASE STUDY
by
JANE BURTON

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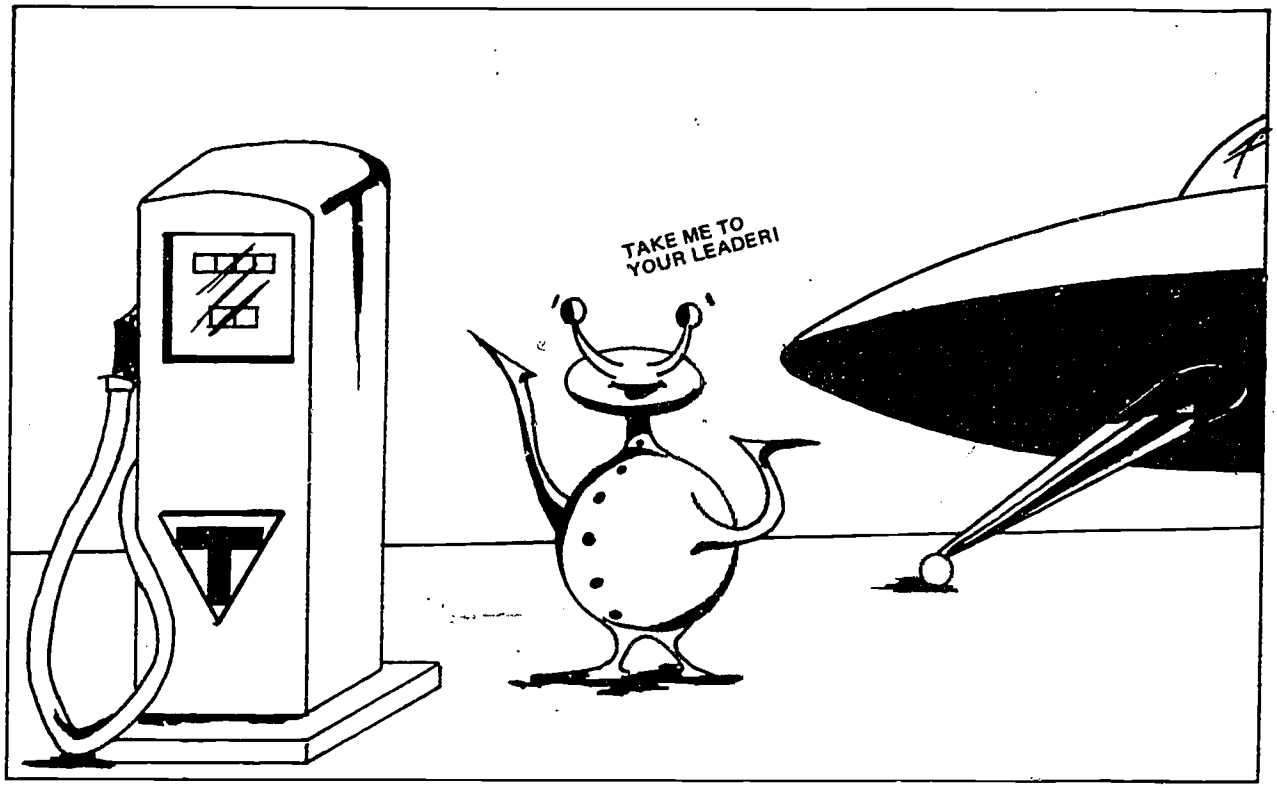
Class Session One: Take Me to Your Leader



Identifying Leaders

The opening cartoon is typical of many pictures and jokes on the theme of a visit to earth by an advance contingent of Martians. The line is always the same, "Take me to your leader!"

Your leader? Every group and every society has leaders. Some are selected by informal processes. They are the people with good ideas, good organizational skills, and the ability to make friends and influence people who attract others to them. There are natural leaders in almost every situation even though no formalized process exists for selecting them.

Let's perform an experiment to see who some of the possible leaders in your school might be:

1. If you wanted to persuade your teacher that he should assign no homework for tonight, which two people in your class would you choose to speak in favor of this idea?
2. If you wanted to convince the principal of your school to schedule a weekly pep assembly during the football (or basketball) season, which two students would you choose to present this idea?
3. If you wanted to convince the cafeteria manager of your school that hamburgers should be served daily, which two students would you choose to speak out for daily hamburgers?

Write the names of the people you would select for each of these tasks on a piece of paper. Compare your choices with those of your classmates. Are there certain people that most of you agree would be selected? If so, you have identified the leaders to whom you and your classmates would tend to turn to when there was a job to be done.

Selecting Leaders

Although every society needs leaders, methods of selecting leaders have varied over time and from group to group. In earlier, more primitive days, the leader of a tribe was probably the one who could defeat his peers in hand-to-hand com-

bat. In more complex societies, customs and tradition have played a major role in the selection of leaders.

Consider one society where religious custom dictates the method of choosing a leader. The Dalai Lama, spiritual leader of the Tibetan people, is chosen in an unusual way. Upon the death of the divine man holding that position, the wise men of the country seek a new ruler, one who will be the reborn soul, or reincarnation, of the departed one. They watch a holy lake in Tibet for the appearance of the face of the new Dalai Lama. Then a careful search is conducted among babies born at the proper time for the face that most closely matches the one seen on the lake. When the child is located, he is taken by the wise men to be trained as the new religious leader. The Dalai Lama comes to the throne very young and reigns as spiritual leader until his death, when once more the holy lake is consulted for a vision of the face of a new Dalai Lama.

When the common form of government in most European societies was the monarchy, the selection of a new leader was simple. The new ruler was almost always the eldest son of the dead king; his succession to the throne was an established fact. Even today, in countries with constitutional monarchies, leadership descends from father to son or from father or mother to son or daughter. This is true no matter where the heir to the throne may be at the time of the monarch's death. Elizabeth, eldest daughter and heir of George VI of England, learned of her father's death while she was on a state visit to Kenya. She was the first English monarch to be outside Great Britain at the time of her succession to the throne. Crowned "Queen of the realm and of her other realms and territories, head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith," at coronation ceremonies in 1953, Elizabeth II has served as Britain's queen since then. Now, her eldest son Charles is being groomed for his role as England's future king.

What about the process of selecting leaders in a dictatorship? After the death of Joseph Stalin, Soviet dictator from 1929 to 1953, the world anxiously waited to see which of the many "heirs" to his power would rise to the top leadership position. Evenutally Nikita Khrushchev, by a process unknown to the outside world, emerged as dictator. Supplanted in 1964 by Leonid Brezhnev and Alexi Kosygin, Khrushchev now lives a solitary life in his home outside of Moscow. Events in 1968 in Czechoslovakia have given rise to speculation that the present leaders of the U.S.S.R. may be perched on shaky seats. How will new leaders be selected? The process remains a mystery to all except those within the inner circle of the Kremlin.

In a republic like the United States, procedures for selecting national leaders are defined openly by law and common practice. For the past 170 years, the responsibility for selecting candidates for president and vice-president has been a function of political parties. It was not always so. When the first electors from ten original states that had ratified the U.S. Constitution met at Federal Hall in New York City in 1789 to select our first president, there were no political parties. The electors wanted to choose the man best fitted to lead the infant nation. They were more concerned with questions of character than they were with political viewpoints. George Washington received 1 vote from each of the 69 electors and was thus the unanimous choice for president.

During Washington's eight-year period of executive leadership, political groups developed within the government. One group headed by Alexander Hamilton and John Quincy Adams favored a strong central government. Another group, made up of followers of Thomas Jefferson, worked for a more decentralized government. By the election of 1796, those who favored a strong central government, the Federalists, held a congressional caucus to discuss policy, plans, and procedures. They pledged their support to the election of Adams and Charles Pinckney. The anti-Federalists who favored a weaker central government also met. They agreed to support Jefferson. Thus political parties were born. Ever since, party candidates for these national positions have competed with each other every four years with surprising regularity for the honor of election to the presidency of the United States.

The Constitution did not provide for these congressional caucuses or for the political parties that emerged from the caucus process. A system of political parties developed, however, because such a system seemed uniquely suited to the needs of the infant democracy. Today, millions of Americans watch their television sets during hot summer evenings every four years while the major parties

go through the complicated process of selecting candidates for the offices of president and vice-president.

Choosing a President

The choosing of a president is a process that begins long before the date of the national party conventions. The process can be divided into ten steps or stages set forth in *Choosing the President*, prepared by the League of Women Voters of the United States (1968):

1. Emergence into the public view of candidates for nomination during the year or two before the national conventions.
2. Pre-convention campaigns for nomination aimed at capturing delegate votes at the national convention.
3. Presidential preference primaries in some states.
4. Choice of delegates to the national conventions by presidential primaries, state or district conventions, state committees or a combination of these methods.
5. National party conventions during the summer of the election year, providing party nominees for president and vice-president.
6. Campaigns by nominees of the parties during the summer and fall for votes at the November general election.
7. Election by voters of party's presidential electors in each of the fifty states on the Tuesday after the first Monday of November every four years.
8. Casting of votes for president and vice-president on Monday following the second Wednesday in December in each state capital by slate of electors elected in November.
9. Formal election of the president and the vice-president on January 6 of the year following the election year.
10. Inauguration of the president-elect and vice-president-elect on January 20.

During the next few weeks, we will be discussing the first five stages of this ten-stage process. Our major topics of study will be the emergence of contenders for the nominations, the selection of the delegates to the national party conventions, the convention itself, and alternative methods of selecting candidates for the important offices of president and vice-president.

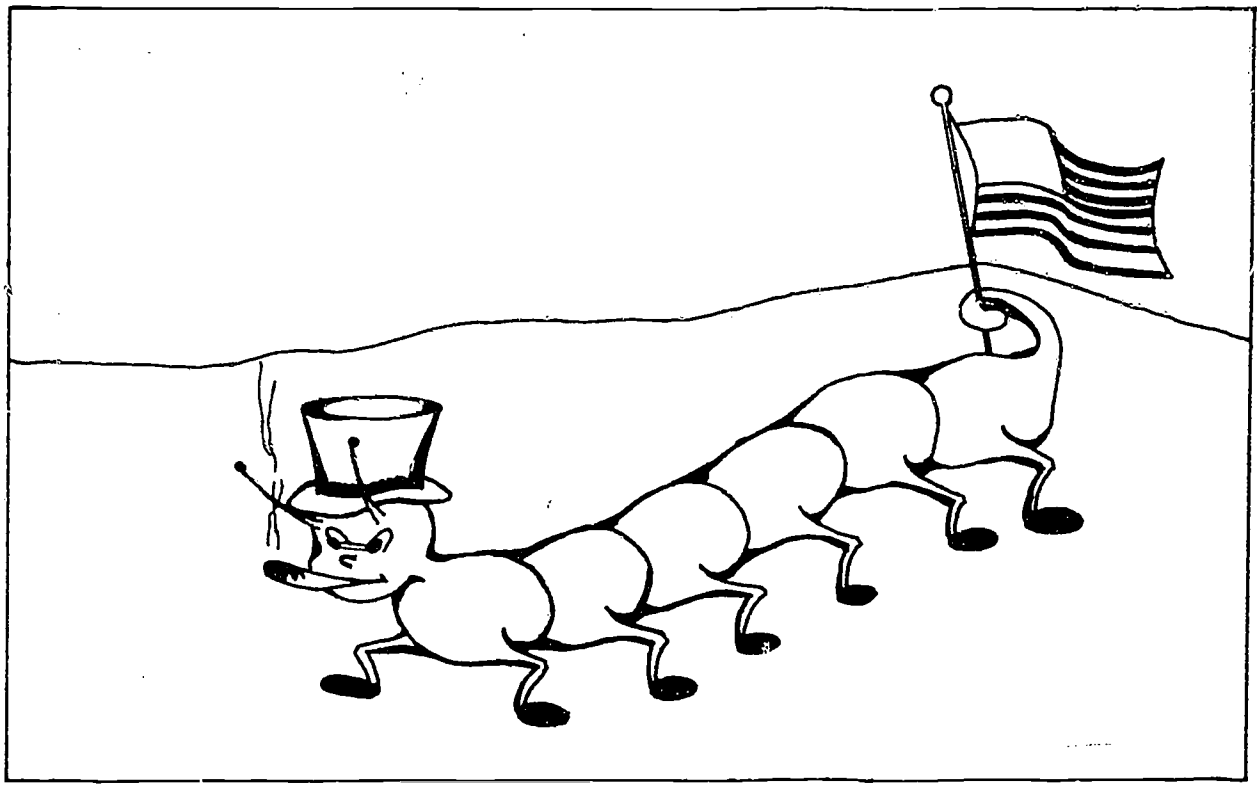
Student Assignments

To help you gain some beginning knowledge about the leadership selection processes of different groups and about political parties in the United States, you will need to do some preliminary research. Here are ten short research activities. Your teacher will assign one of these to you as homework for tonight.

1. Find out how leaders are chosen in one of the primitive societies still in existence today. Some suggested societies are the Arctic Eskimo, the Arunta of New Zealand, the aborigines of Melville Island.
2. Investigate the relationship between the monarch and the government in one of these constitutional monarchies: Great Britain, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Denmark. Is the monarch the leader of the government?
3. Select one of these famous historical leaders and find out how he or she came to power: Julius Caesar, Charlemagne, Elizabeth I, Montezuma.
4. Report on the process by which a new Pope is selected by the Roman Catholic College of Cardinals. Compare his selection with that of the Dalai Lama.
5. Select one of these well-known leaders of recent dictatorships and find out how he rose to power: Mussolini, Stalin, Hitler.
6. Use your history book or an encyclopedia to find out about the different factions that developed during George Washington's second term of office. What was the position of each group?
7. List the first 16 presidents of the United States and the political parties to which each belonged. Which party elected the most presidents during that period? Which two parties are no longer in existence?
8. William Henry Harrison, John Tyler, Zachary Taylor, and Millard Fillmore all belonged to the Whig Party. Find out when this party was formed and when it ceased to function as a major political force in the United States.

9. The Republican Party first ran a candidate for president in 1856. Find out how and why the Republican Party was formed.
10. Various men have tried to form third parties at different times throughout America's history. Find out about one of these men and the party he formed: Theodore Roosevelt (Bull Moose Party), Robert LaFollette (Progressive Party), Eugene Debs (Socialist Party), Henry Wallace (Progressive Party), Strom Thurmond (States Rights Party or Dixiecrats).

Class Session Two: The Presidential Bug



The Bug Bites

When a man first decides that he wants to be president, he is said to have been bitten by the presidential bug. From this bite, he may come down with a rare malady, White House fever.

What makes a man want to become president of the United States? To paraphrase Shakespeare: Some are born with presidential ambitions, some achieve presidential ambitions, and some have presidential ambitions thrust upon them.[1]

Some are born with presidential ambitions, or so it seems. Estes Kefauver wrote in a schoolmate's autograph book when both were 16 that his ambition was "to be president." Nelson Rockefeller, a press release stated, was first stirred with presidential hopes when he was taken as a young boy to visit former president Theodore Roosevelt in his New York home. News commentators, admiring young Joseph Kennedy's poignant performance in greeting mourners accompanying the body of his father Sen. Robert Kennedy to Washington, made the prediction that Joseph and his brother Robert Jr. might someday be high on the list of political slatemakers. Young Jay Rockefeller, now running for state office in West Virginia, has captured the eye of many who see the Rockefeller name as synonymous with presidential hopefuls.

Some men have presidential ambitions thrust upon them, no matter how hard they resist. Zachary Taylor refused a letter telling him of his nomination to the presidency because it was sent with postage due. Horatio Seymour, during the Democratic convention of 1868, refused the nomination emphatically. Late one evening, after a long series of ballots failed to bring agreement on a candidate, Seymour's friends presented his name once more in nomination. Seymour rushed forward to withdraw his name, but was restrained by his supporters and taken bodily from the hall. The delegates hurriedly nominated him and the convention then adjourned. Before Seymour could refuse,

[1] "Some are born to greatness, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them." *Twelfth Night*, William Shakespeare.

the convention had disbanded, delegates were on their way home, and he was the Democratic nominee! Charles Evans Hughes, secure in his position of Chief Justice of the United States, refused presidential offers for years until 1916 when he resigned from the bench and accepted the Republican nomination to run against Woodrow Wilson.

Some men achieve presidential ambitions. Certainly this is what happens to many a man who has been successful in lesser political office. Certain positions almost guarantee a man consideration as a presidential candidate. A successful governor of a large state, whose executive experience often parallels that needed for the presidency, almost always merits attention. Franklin Roosevelt, at the age of 25, is said to have confided to a friend, "Anyone who is governor of New York has a good chance to be president with any luck." In addition, many U.S. senators, particularly those who have chaired important committees or headed important investigations, are also contenders for their party's nomination.

Styles in Presidential Candidates

Styles in presidential candidates have changed over the years. An astute observer of the political scene in 1826 might have said that a potential candidate must be a resident of one of the original 13 states, a founding father, a learned man. Andrew Jackson confounded that bit of expertise by being elected the seventh president in 1828. A rough and tough frontiersman, Jackson is said to have read only one book in his entire life. On the day of his inauguration, Jackson walked to the Capitol surrounded by mobs of admirers from his home state of Tennessee. After Jackson, the presidency returned to a native of one of the original states, Martin Van Buren of New York. But the next three elected presidents—Harrison, Polk, and Taylor—were all men from "western" states.

Study carefully the information on the charts that follow showing the presidential nominees of the Republican and Democratic parties from 1868 to 1900. Can you discover a new style in presidential leaders during this period after the Civil War?

Republican Candidates
1868-1900

YEAR	CANDIDATE	STATE	CANDIDATE'S BACKGROUND
1868	Ulysses S. Grant*	Illinois	Civil War general
1872	Ulysses S. Grant*		
1876	Rutherford Hayes*	Ohio	Civil War general Congressman
1880	James Garfield*	Ohio	Civil War general Senator
1884	James Blaine	Maine	Newspaper editor Congressman (Speaker of the House)
1888	Benjamin Harrison*	Indiana	Civil War general Senator
1892	Benjamin Harrison		
1896	William McKinley*	Ohio	Civil War major Governor
1900	William McKinley*		

Democratic Candidates
1868-1900

1868	Horatio Seymour	New York	Governor
1872	Horace Greeley	New York	Newspaper publisher
1876	Samuel Tilden	New York	Governor
1880	Winfield Hancock	Pennsylvania	Civil War general
1884	Grover Cleveland*	New York	Governor
1888	Grover Cleveland		
1892	Grover Cleveland*		
1896	William J. Bryan	Nebraska	Congressman
1900	William J. Bryan		

* *Indicates successful election to the presidency.*

Did you notice that these candidates have some things in common? Use the information on that chart to write a one-paragraph description of a typical contender for the nomination during these years. Include in your description such factors as region of the country from which he came, political or military experience.

Check your description to see if it agrees with that of Robert Bendiner on candidates of that time:

> "...a man with his eye on the White House must be a bearded veteran of the Union forces, probably a general... He must be from the North or the Midwest, and he should be reasonably but not conspicuously educated."[2]

[2] Bendiner, Robert. *White House Fever.* pp. 6-7

Since 1900, presidential candidates have not represented such a uniform tradition. They have ranged from judges (Alton B. Parker and Charles Evans Hughes) and professors (Woodrow Wilson) to businessmen (Herbert Hoover and Wendell Willkie) and generals (Dwight D. Eisenhower). Of course, among the group, there have been an abundance of governors and senators.

The Buildup

Once the presidential bug has bitten the potential candidate, he sounds out political leaders or is sounded out by them. He works to demonstrate his popularity with the people. He may write (or have written for him) an article or two for national magazines. He will welcome invitations to appear on television. Interested friends may start a "Citizens Committee for . . ." as a vehicle for interesting others in his candidacy. All these actions represent trial balloons, maneuvers designed to find out if the candidacy of the man in question finds favor with more than a small circle of friends.

During this buildup, the candidate must select a posture and find a suitable reply to the question that he will be asked frequently: "Are you a candidate for the presidential nomination?" Tradition in America is that a man must not try too hard for the nomination, neither must he hang back or act coy. He must be interested but not too interested, aggressive but not too aggressive, open but not too forward in his manner and his strategy.

Robert Bendiner lists several possible poses that a candidate may adopt in response to questions about his presidential intentions:

> Much better, then, to answer the direct question with one of the standard dodges. The simplest is the Pontine, or Cross-the-Bridge Gambit. "I am not a candidate at this time," the candidate says, "and I have no organization." Picking up the almost imperceptible emphasis on "time," the reporter inevitably plunges on to ask whether his pleased victim is implying that he will be a candidate at some point in the future. And just as inevitably, the candidate replies: "We will cross that bridge when we come to it."
>
> Another tack is the Response Humble, which goes something like this: "Fortunately our party has many good potential candidates. Whether I'm considered among them is up to others to decide, not myself."
>
> Then there is the Response Dutiful: "My job is now governor of New York (or Ohio or South Dakota). We have our own problems here, and I intend to concentrate on them. I have no other plans."
>
> The choice of response is one of the earliest questions of strategy.[3]

The bug and the buildup—both are important factors in the initial stages of the approach to the presidency. First, a man must have been bitten. He must really want to be president or at least think that he has presidential capabilities at the present or in the future. Then he must use every means at his command to build up interest in his candidacy. When this has been done, he is then ready to consider carefully that all-important question: to run or not to run.

Student Assignment

How do you learn best? Some students like to present their knowledge visually, some by writing reports, some by reading and reporting orally to the class. Choose your favorite method of learning and then select from the appropriate group here an activity for your homework assignment:

Group One—Presenting Knowledge Visually

1. Interesting words and phrases often crop up in political discussions. Draw a cartoon illustrating one of these: the presidential bug, White House Fever, hat in the ring, trial balloon.
2. Make a picture chart showing styles in presidential candidates: Founding Father, Western Frontiersman, Civil War Hero, etc.
3. Make a poster showing presidential candidates with similar backgrounds. Some possible themes for this poster might be Founding Fathers, Western Heroes, Civil War Generals, Governors of New York, Famous Midwesterners, Senators All.

Group Two—Presenting Knowledge Through Short Reports

1. Find out about the Democratic convention of 1868 and write a short report about the circumstances of Seymour's nomination.
2. Several men have received their party's nomination a second time even though they were the losing candidate for the presidency after their nomination. Select one of these "two-timers" and write a report telling about his background and

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

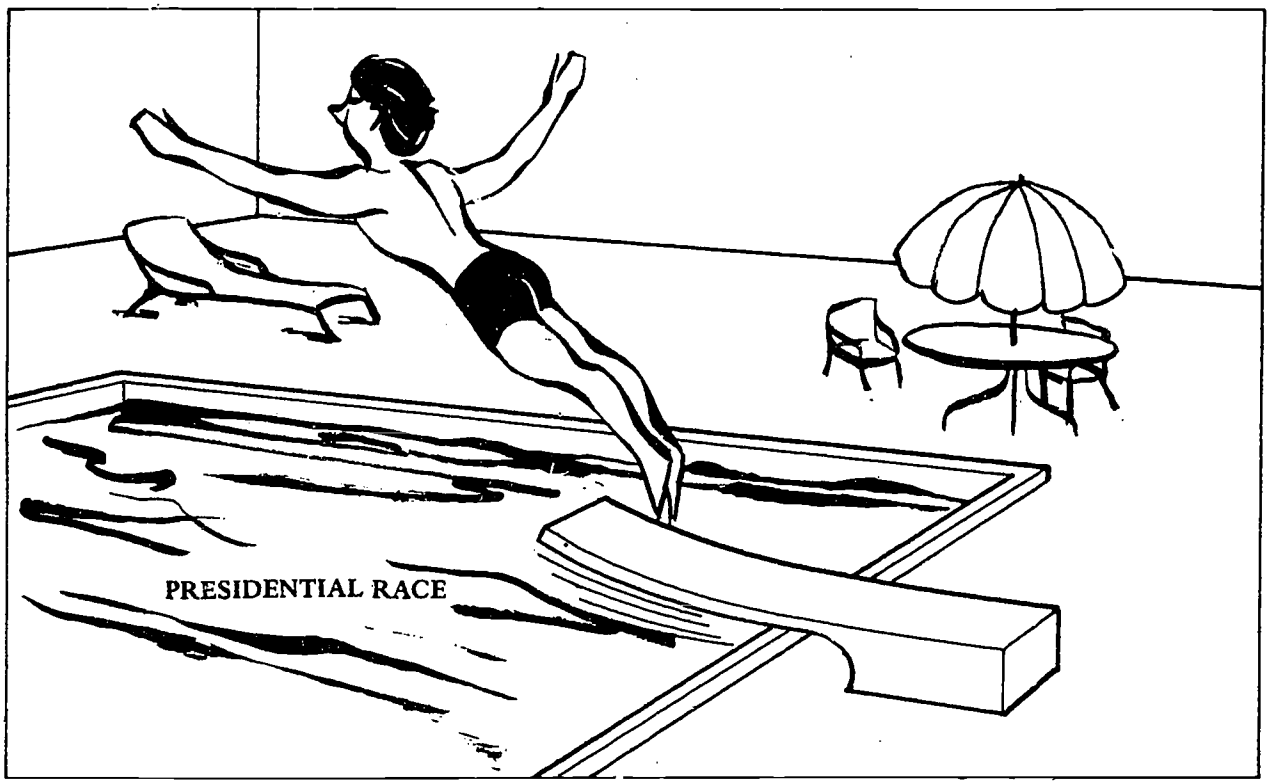
the circumstances that gave them their second nomination: William Jennings Bryan, Thomas E. Dewey, Adlai Stevenson, Richard Nixon.

3. Do some research on famous families in American history, families about whom it might be said, "To be born with the name is to be born with the desire to serve the public." Select one of these families and find out how many members have been elected to public office: Adams, Harrison, Lodge, Roosevelt, Stevenson, Kennedy, Rockefeller.

Group Three—Presenting Knowledge Orally

1. Find out the names of the governors of New York who have been nominated for the presidency. Report these names to the class with your explanation of why New York governors have been popular as presidential contenders.
2. Virginia has been called the mother state of presidents. Find out if this statement is true and report to the class the names of presidential nominees born in Virginia.
3. Civil War General William Tecumseh Sherman made an oft-quoted statement about his presidential ambitions. Find the statement and report to your class on the circumstances under which it was made.
4. Taboos in politics are often broken as times change and circumstances demand new tactics. Find out and report to your class the names of these presidential firsts: the first westerner to be nominated for the presidency, the first Californian, the first Catholic, the first Negro, the first woman.

Class Session Three: To Run or Not To Run



The 1960 Hopefuls

As Dwight D. Eisenhower's second term passed midpoint, the Republicans were faced with a problem, the Democrats with a promise. Republican leaders throughout the country searched for candidates who could don the mantle of presidential leadership. Democratic hopefuls stirred with the suspicion that, without the general as a candidate, the Republicans could be defeated in 1960.

All that the Constitution requires of a president is that he be 35 years of age and a natural born citizen. Millions of Americans fulfilled these requirements. Yet, by late 1959, only seven men—five Democrats and two Republicans—figured in the pre-election discussions of the two parties. All of these men had been bitten by the presidential bug. All had been in the public eye, and their names and reputations were well known. All faced that most difficult decision—to run or not to run for the presidential nomination.

Student Assignment

The seven readings listed here are taken from *The Making of a President 1960* by Theodore H. White. Each reading describes in detail the background of a potential candidate, his reasons for seeking the nomination, his political strength, and the political strategy he selected:

1. Hubert H. Humphrey, pages 41-49
2. Stuart Symington, pages 49-56
3. Lyndon B. Johnson, pages 56-60
4. Adlai Stevenson, pages 60-63
5. John F. Kennedy, pages 63-73
6. Richard M. Nixon, pages 77-80
7. Nelson Rockefeller, pages 80-94

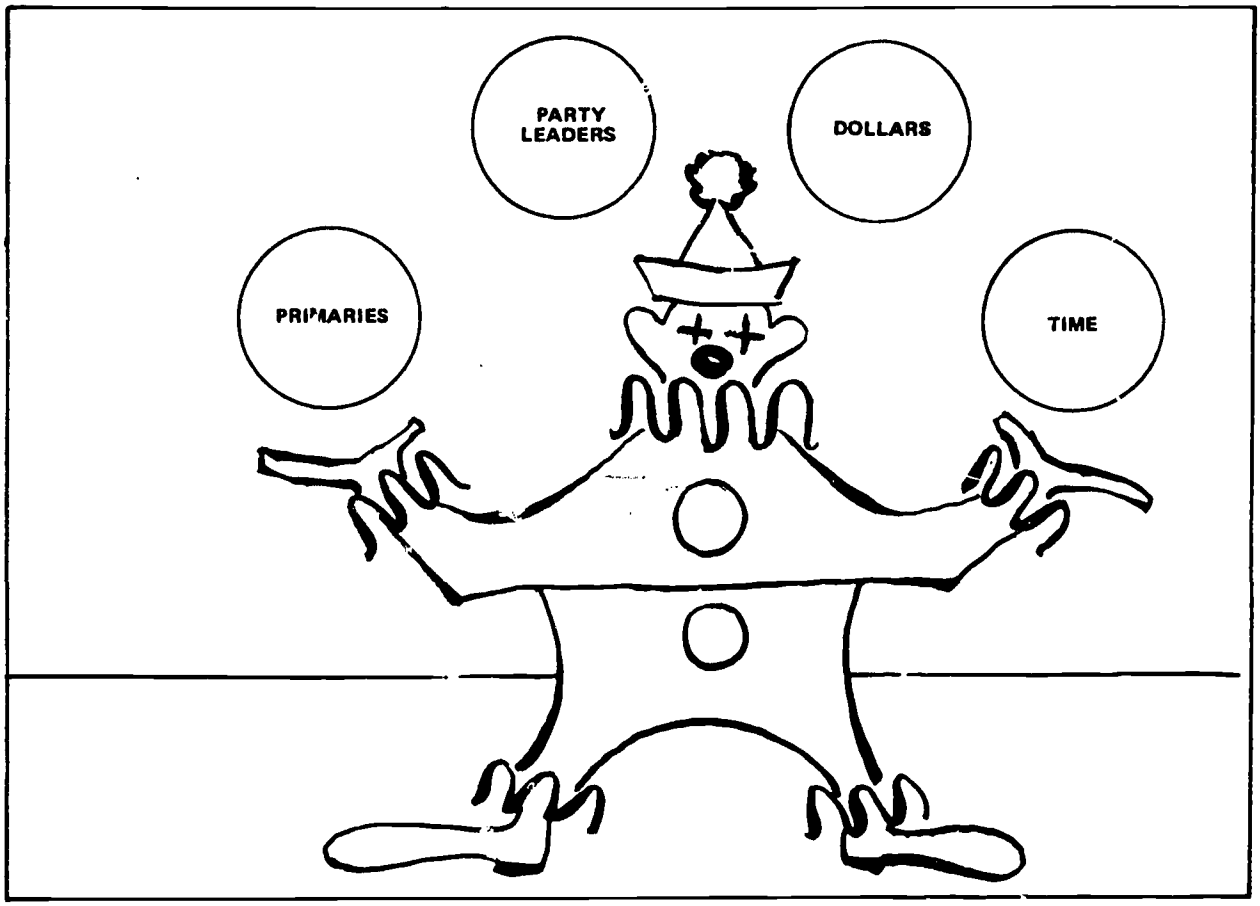
Your teacher will assign one of these readings to you. You may also wish to read pages 38-41 and 74-77 to obtain background on the political situation of the two parties in 1959. After reading the selection, answer these questions about the man featured in your assignment:

1. What was his political background?
2. What type of experience did he have?

3. With what national issues had he been associated?
4. What political support did he have outside his own state?
5. What financial resources could he expect to have available to him in his campaign for the nomination?
6. Who were his political advisors?
7. What political reasoning did he follow in making his decision as to whether to run?
8. What political strategy did he select as a way of gaining public and party support?

The answers to these questions will be explored in the next class discussion. At that time, you will also find out from your classmates the information they have obtained about the six men that you did not read about.

Class Session Four: Plots, Plans and Politics



Sharing Information

Today, you will hear from students who have read about the candidates of 1959, of the plans and strategies of each man as he made his decision to seek the nomination of his party. As each group of students reports, fill in the information requested on the chart on the next page so that you will have a complete picture of the resources and strategies of each of the candidates

Class Discussion

Now that you have some background about all of the candidates, study the information on your chart. Are you prepared to discuss these questions with your classmates?

1. Which of the candidates had the support of party leaders?
2. How can a candidate for the nomination gain the support of these leaders?
3. Which had ample financial resources?
4. Do you agree with the statement: "Only a rich man can afford to run for the presidency"?
5. How can candidates raise the necessary funds to finance their campaigns for the nomination?
6. Which of the candidates seemed to be more popular with the public than with the party leaders?
7. How can a candidate gain the support of the public?
8. Evaluate the resources of each man. Which men do you think had sufficient resources (party support, public support, and money) to ensure possible success of his campaign for the nomination? Which candidates do you think made the decision to run without having sufficient resources?

CANDIDATES OF 1960: SUMMARY CHART

Candidate	Party Support	Public Support	Finances	Strategy Selected
Humphrey				
Symington				
Johnson				
Stephen				
Kennedy				
Nixon				
Rockefeller				

Presidential contenders are often classified by these common phrases: front runner, compromise candidate, favorite son. Do you know what these terms mean? On the basis of the information you have shared about the seven contenders for the party nominations in 1960, which of these candidates would you say were front runners? Which were possible compromise candidates? Which were favorite sons?

Student Assignment

For your homework assignment, read the sketch below about an imaginary presidential contender. Become as familiar as possible with this man for he will figure prominently in our next class activity.

Senator Samuel B. Second

Increasing attention has been paid in the last several weeks to the presidential aspirations of Senator Samuel B. Second of Illinois. Party leaders of the Americana Party have noted that Senator Second may be a possible "dark horse" in the upcoming party convention. Although he has not as yet thrown his hat into the ring, political reporters have predicted that he will shortly take this step.

As the senator dreams of a presidential nomination coming his way, he knows that the 118 votes of the Illinois delegation will be in his pocket. He can be sure of being his state's favorite son, at least on the first ballot or two. He knows also that he is popular in Illinois, having won his 1966 campaign for re-election by an overwhelming majority.

Television and news magazines have given his recent activities prominent attention. As a member of the Armed Services Committee, he headed the study on revisions in the draft law and made a strong plea that the draft be scrapped in favor of a well-trained volunteer army. A few months ago, on a visit to Vietnam, he distinguished himself by grabbing an M-16 rifle and firing away at the enemy during a surprise attack on the army camp he was visiting.

Illinois has both an agricultural and an industrial base; the senator has friends in both camps. He has maintained the support of the powerful farm lobbies by consistently voting for higher farm price supports. He has attracted the support of labor leaders by opposing a national open shop law. Although the senator has no special appeal to minority groups, he ran well in the Negro wards of Chicago in 1966.

Senator Second is aware that the Americana party's convention is headed for a possible deadlock. Two party favorites have squared off as front runners. Governor John Rocklin of New York has the support of most of the party liberals and the big city politicos. Senator Ronald Stuart of California is the obvious choice of the southern and farm delegations.

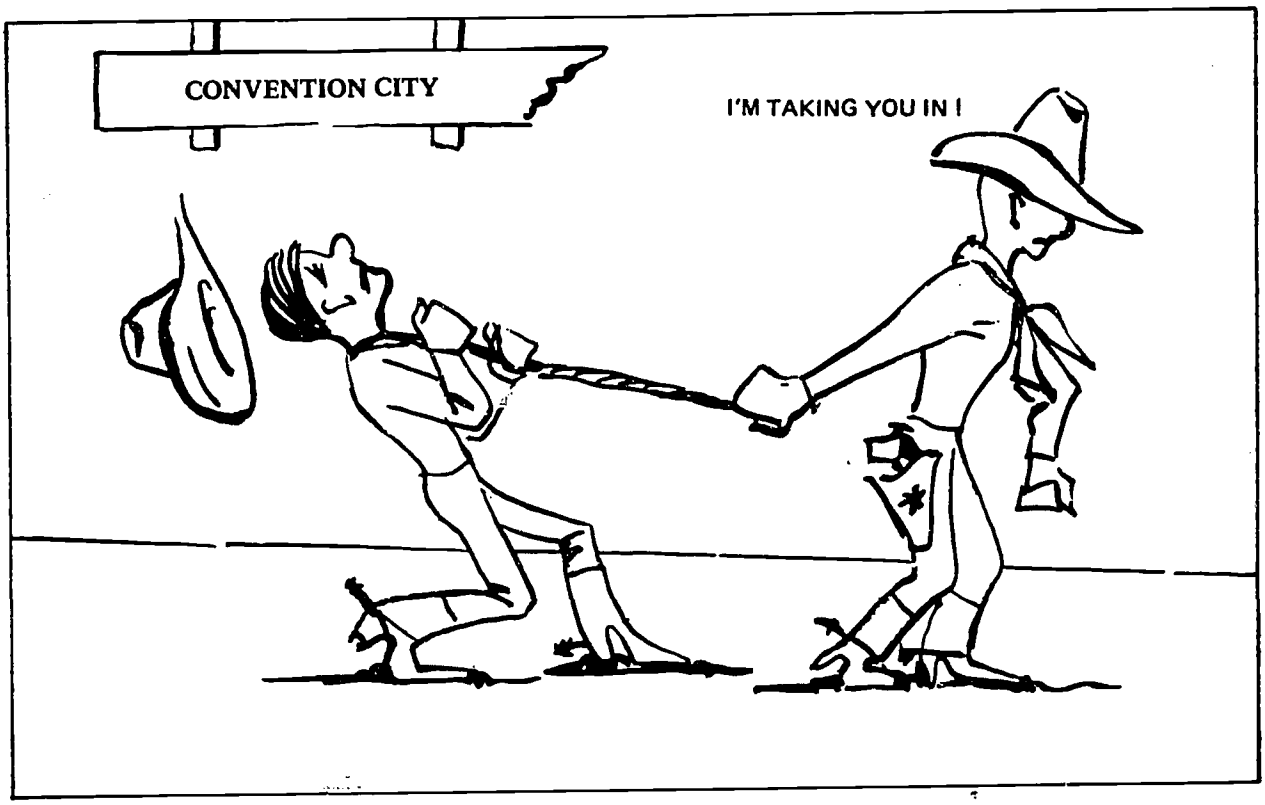
With 118 delegates already pledged to him Sam Second must expand his support into other states if he is to nurture his presidential possibilities. There are 49 other states from which he can pick up delegates. In some states, delegates must be won through the primary; in other states, they are selected at district and state conventions. Of course, the senator wants to concentrate his efforts where the delegate hunting will be best.

Senator Second has called a meeting of his political advisers to help him plan a strategy for adding to his delegate strength. He feels that if he can obtain a nucleus of 300 delegate votes before the convention, he will have a solid base from which to operate, should a deadlock occur. As one of Senator Second's closest advisers, you will be asked your opinion on these and other important questions relating to his drive for the nomination:

1. What should Senator Second respond when he is asked if he is a candidate for the Americana party's nomination?
2. From what nearby states can he expect to get support?
3. Should he enter any of the presidential primaries?
4. Which national issues should he stress?
5. From what groups might he obtain financial support?
6. What arguments could he use with supporters of Rocklin or Stuart to interest them in supporting him should a deadlock occur at the convention?

Jot down your answers to the questions so that you will be ready to give political advice to the senator.

Class Session Five: Wanted-Dead or Alive



Planning a Strategy

Today, Senator Samuel B. Second will select a strategy to use in pushing his drive as a presidential hopeful. Although the senator knows that most of the delegates favor either Governor John Rocklin or Senator Stuart, he hopes to emerge as a compromise candidate should the convention become deadlocked.

Your teacher will assign you to a group of five students. Each group will have as its task the development of a strategy for Senator Second. Remember that his goal is to enlarge his delegate support from a certain 118 to a core group of 300 delegates.

You will have 15 minutes with your group to plan a strategy. Select one person to record the ideas of the group members; the recorder will also be asked to report to the class at the end of the 15-minute period on the strategy developed by your group. The information on the plans of the seven contenders for the 1960 nominations, which you have just finished discussing, should be helpful to you in devising a strategy for Senator Second.

Primary Decision

One of the most important decisions a potential candidate for the nomination must make is whether to enter the presidential primaries where such elections are held. Fourteen states have presidential primaries: California, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. In some of these states, all of the delegates to the convention are chosen through the primary; in others, only a part of the state's delegation is chosen in this way. The impact of the primary may affect a candidate in more far-reaching ways than the mere accumulation of delegates. The eye of the nation is upon the primaries. Woe be unto the man who performs poorly!

In 1968, of the two Republican contenders for the nomination, Richard Nixon chose to enter the primaries and Nelson Rockefeller did not. Democratic contenders Eugene McCarthy and Robert Kennedy[1], entered the primaries, while Hubert Humphrey did not. In 1964, with the Democratic nomination assured for President Johnson, it was among the Republican contenders–Henry Cabot Lodge, Richard Nixon, Nelson Rockefeller, and Barry Goldwater–that the primaries were a major factor. And in 1960, two Democratic candidates–John F. Kennedy and Hubert Humphrey–battled it out in the early primaries.

Student Assignment

The readings listed here are taken from two books by Theodore H. White, *The Making of a President 1960,* and *The Making of a President 1964:*

The Making of a President 1960

1. Wisconsin, pages 95 - 114
2. West Virginia, pages 114 - 135

The Making of a President 1964

1. New Hampshire, pages 123 - 139
2. Oregon, pages 139 - 143
3. California, pages 143 - 159

Your teacher will assign one of these readings to you. Read the selection assigned and answer these questions:

1. Who were the contending candidates in the primary?
2. What were the issues?
3. What strategy did each candidate employ?
4. Which candidate won? Why?
5. What happened to the defeated candidate?

[1] It was after Robert Kennedy's successful race in the California primary that he was tragically assassinated.

Class Session Six: Peter Pro and Charlie Con

Primary Elections

Wisconsin adopted the direct election of party delegates to national conventions in 1905. Oregon followed Wisconsin by introducing the presidential preference primary in 1910. Within six years, by 1916, the presidential primary was the rule in more than half of the 48 states. Enthusiasm for this direct voice in the selection of presidential candidates died down in the 1930's and some of the states repealed their presidential primary laws. A revival occurred in the 1940's followed by another decline. Two states have repealed their primary laws since 1956.

The debate on the value of the presidential preference primary has always been a hot one. Read the statements here of two presidential candidates–Senator Peter Pro, who would like to see this type of primary made mandatory in all the states, and Governor Charlie Con, who can't wait to see this type of primary repealed by all states.

Peter Pro

The presidential primary was a real step forward in the process of making elections more democratic. It has provided a way for candidates who are not popular with the party bosses to take their candidacy to the people. Without the primary, men like myself would never be considered by the party's political kingmakers. Now the people make the choice and I am willing to take my case to the people.

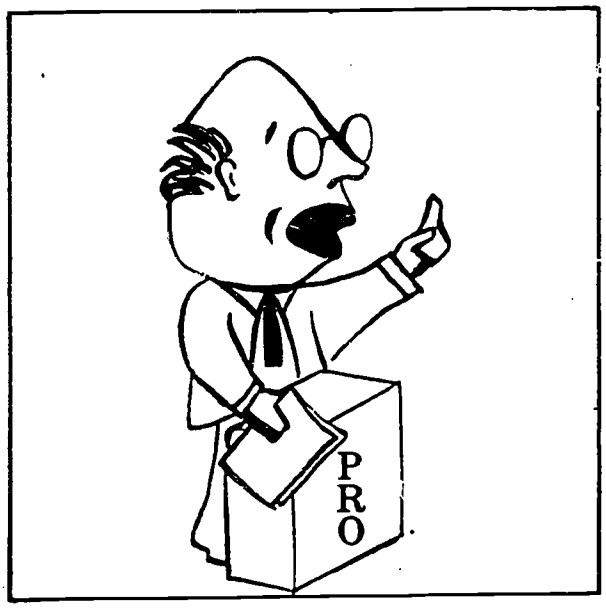
More than that, by running in the primaries, presidential candidates must state their positions on the vital issues of the campaign. I feel I owe it to the voters to clarify my positions on these issues. The political dialogue that occurs during a series of primary battles is a great educational experience for all Americans.

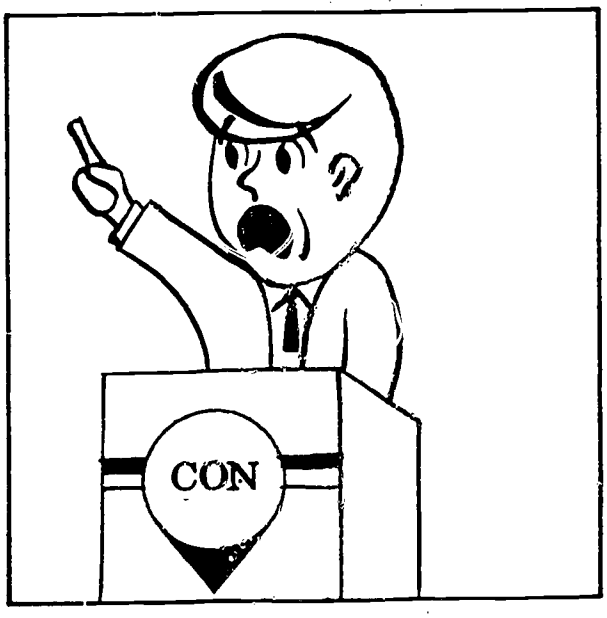
Mediocrity is unmasked in a primary. Candidates must put before the public their qualifications for the highest office in the land. An incompetent man is soon unmasked. The candidates who succeed are those who have ability and who demonstrate that they merit consideration.

The delegates I win in the primary give me prestige in the eyes of the party's political leaders. I am able to prove that the people support me and that they want me as their candidate. Without this support, I would never be considered a serious contender. I think every state should be required to hold a presidential primary so that the people can speak.

Charlie Con

Harry Truman called the primary just a lot of "eyewash" and I couldn't agree with him more. The primary is no test of my national appeal. All too often, only a few of the contenders are represented so the people don't really have a complete choice. What is more, the publicity given to a primary defeat means that





good men may be knocked out of the running after only one primary attempt.

Primaries waste the time, energy, health, and financial resources of the presidential contenders. I should be concentrating on national issues. Why then should I spend my time running from state to state, shaking hands, kissing babies, and eating chicken dinners.

Primaries commit delegates to one candidate months before the convention. No allowance is made for changes in political events that may require changes in party strategies.

What's more, primaries aren't even democratic. Less than 10 percent of the voters in many states vote in primary elections. It's about time we did away with these foolish primary fights and went back to careful selection of delegates at district and state party meetings.

Student Assignment

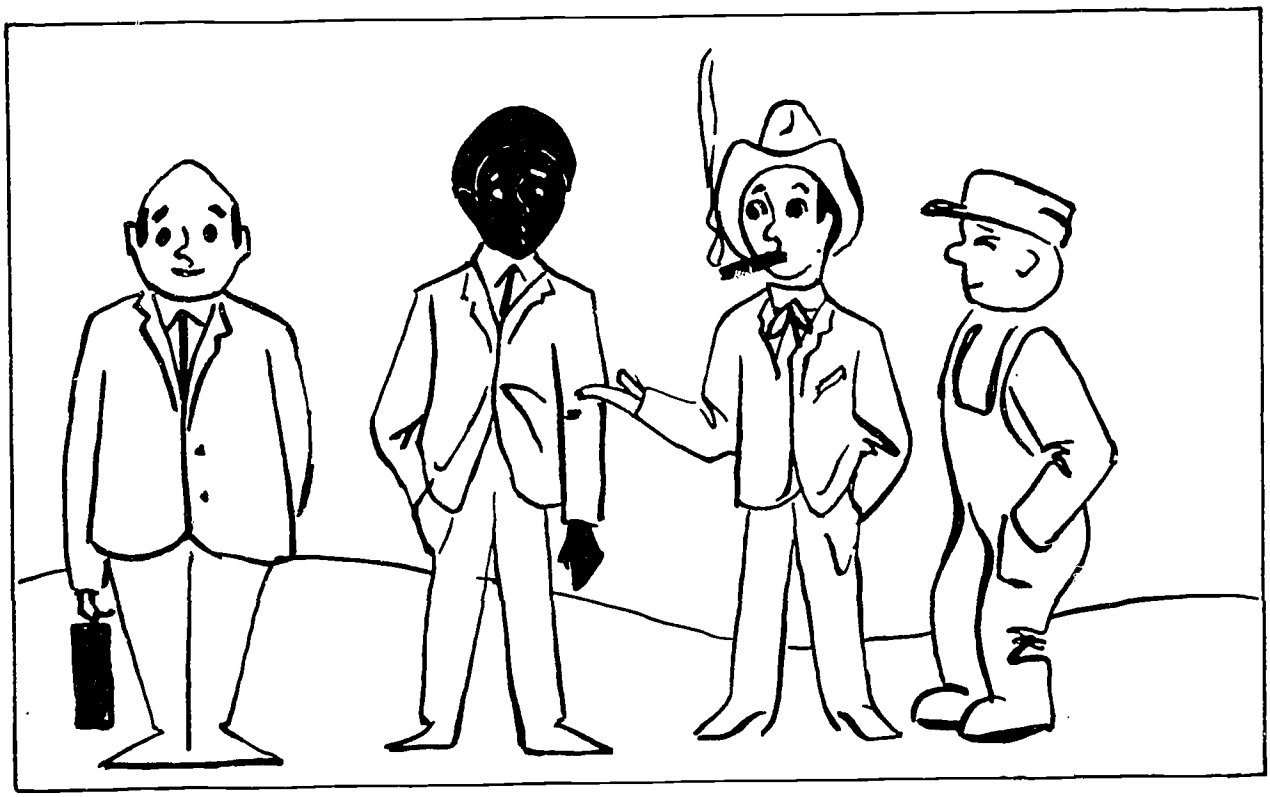
On a separate piece of paper, list the arguments of Peter Pro and Charlie Con for and against presidential preference primaries. With whom do you agree? Pretend to be a candidate for the presidential nomination and write a 100-word essay on one of these topics: "Presidential primaries should be held in every state," or "Presidential primaries should be abolished." Your teacher will give you an opportunity, when you have finished your essay, to share your ideas with your classmates.

Additional Research

Primary elections have sometimes been as exciting as general elections. You may wish to do some additional research on the primary. One of these topics would make an interesting individual research project:

1. Study the history of the presidential preference primary and report to your class.
2. Find out how many Illinois delegates to the Republican and Democratic national conventions were selected through the primary in 1968.
3. A funny thing happened in the primaries while those men were on their way to the White House. Choose one of the men and find out what happened to him in the primary listed after his name: Willkie (Wisconsin, 1944); Stassen (Oregon, 1948); Kefauver (California, 1956).

Class Session Seven: Come Look Us Over



The Gavel Sounds

Imagine yourself at a national political convention. Small groups of delegates are beginning to file into the gaily decorated hall. The conversation level rises higher and higher as the merits of contending candidates are voiced. The fever of politics is high. The convention will soon begin.

The next few days will be memorable ones for the candidates, the delegates, and the officers of the national committee. A presidential candidate will be chosen—but not without a sprinkling of tears, much hoopla, and a generous dose of wheeling and dealing.

Political commentators across the land will scrutinize and analyze every action of the convention body. Newspaper readers and television viewers will be bombarded with details of social gatherings, closed caucuses, and convention procedures. The attention of millions of Americans will center for the next several days on the convention and its happenings.

Now the hall has filled. In the front of the auditorium the delegates are seated by states. Each state delegation is equipped with a microphone and a colorful state banner. As the officers of the convention move forward on the platform, the attention of the delegates focuses upon the front of the hall. The temporary chairman approaches the microphone and the sound of the gavel is heard.

Delegates All

The convention hall is a sea of faces. Here are the legally chosen delegates of the national convention. Who are these people? What groups do they represent?

The Brookings Institute published a study of convention delegates based on information from two questionnaires sent to 1948 convention delegates, a 1952 study, and observations of the 1960 conventions.[1] This study gave the following composite picture of the delegates to the 1948 convention:

[1] David, Goldman, and Bain; *The Politics of National Party Conventions*, Brookings Institute.

	DEMOCRATS	REPUBLICANS
Religion		
Catholic	27.5%	6.1%
Jewish	6.1%	.7%
Education		
Post-graduate training	34.3%	34.0%
Elementary school only	5.3%	3.2%
Income Per Year		
Over $50,000	4.0%	9.4%
Under $3,500	9.3%	6.3%
Occupation		
Business	23.4%	25.8%
Farming	6.6%	7.5%
Union members	9.7%	2.7%

(Source: *Hats in the Ring* by Malcolm Moos and Stephen Hess. Random House, New York, 1968)

Women and Negroes are not represented as delegates in proportion to their representation in the national population. The Republicans in 1952 had 129 women delegates and 260 alternates. The Democrats had 203 women delegates and 322 women alternates. That same year about 2.6 percent of the voting strength in the Republican convention was held by blacks compared with 1.5 percent in the Democratic convention.

Convention delegates vary in the length and intensity of their political experience. Of the delegates to the 1948 conventions, 80 percent had regularly attended state and county party meetings. Approximately 60 percent of the delegates from both parties were or had been state party officers. Somewhat less than half of the delegates—40 percent in each of the 1952 conventions—were "repeaters," having served at least once at earlier conventions.

Office holders of the national and state governments are well represented. Thirty-two state governors were members of delegations in 1952 and 1956; most of these served as chairmen of their state delegations. A total of 49 of the 96 U.S. Senators were delegates in 1956, with 10 of these serving as delegation chairmen. About 27 percent of the House membership served as delegates or alternates in 1956.

By comparison with convention delegates at the turn of the century, the Brookings Institute report concludes that "the delegates of 1948, 1952, and 1956 were measurably better educated, less boss-ridden, better adjusted to the requirements of an open political system, and generally more trustworthy in all respects than the delegates of 1900."

Writing in *The Atlantic* (November 1968), Elizabeth B. Drew describes the delegates to the 1964 and 1968 conventions:

> Both conventions, for example, overrepresent the wealthy. Delegates must come on their own time and at their own expense and it can be costly. The Citizens Research Foundation of Princeton, New Jersey, a nonpartisan group specializing in political finance, polled the delegates to the 1964 convention and concluded that the average cost of attending was $455.00. Moreover, several states also require delegates to make political contributions; this year, Iowa's delegates were required to chip in $250.00. Only a few state organizations try to provide for the costs of less affluent delegates. The foundation also found that 30% of the 1964 Democratic delegates had incomes of $25,000 or more. The median incomes of delegates to both conventions in 1964 was estimated at about $18,000 for the Democrats, $20,000 for the Republicans. Both under-represent blacks. Two percent of the Republican delegates to the 1968 convention were Negroes; 6 percent of the Democrats were. A study made by the Ripon Society, a group of young moderate Republicans, showed that the 1968 Republican Convention was one of comfortable, middle-aged, middle-class, white Protestant Americans."[2]

The Path to Convention Hall

How did these affluent, above-average Americans reach convention hall? Delegates are chosen in one of two ways: by election in a state primary or by selection at state and district conventions. In 1968, voters of 14 states and the District of Columbia selected all or some of their delegates through primary elections. Alabama is not included in this list of 14 because, although Democratic delegates are chosen in the primary, Republican delegates are selected at a state convention. Delegates from the other 35 states are selected at state and district conventions or are chosen by the state party committee.

The different states present many variations of these two systems of delegate selection. The chart here shows how delegates to the national party conventions were chosen by each state in 1968:

STATE	METHOD OF SELECTION
Alabama	Democrats at primary Republicans at state convention
Alaska	State convention

[2] Elizabeth B. Drew, "Campaign 1968: The Parties" *The Atlantic*, November 1968, p. 33.

Arizona	State committee meeting at state convention
Arkansas	State committee
California	Preferential presidential primary
Colorado	State and district conventions
Connecticut	Democrats at state convention Republicans at state and district conventions
Delaware	State convention
District of Columbia	Primary election
Florida	Presidential primary
Georgia	Democrats by state committee Republicans at state and district conventions
Hawaii	State convention
Idaho	State convention
Illinois	State convention for at-large delegates Preferential presidential primary for District delegates
Indiana	State and district conventions for all delegates
Iowa	State convention
Kansas	State and district conventions
Kentucky	Democrats at state convention Republicans at state and district conventions
Louisiana	Democrats by state central committee Republicans at state and district conventions
Maine	Democrats at state convention Republicans at state and district conventions
Maryland	State convention
Massachusetts	Preferential presidential primary
Michigan	State and district conventions
Minnesota	State and district conventions
Mississippi	State convention
Missouri	State and district conventions
Montana	State convention
Nebraska	Preferential presidential primary
Nevada	State convention
New Hampshire	Preferential presidential primary
New Jersey	Preferential presidential primary
New Mexico	State convention
New York	State convention or state committee for at-large delegates Primary election for district delegates
North Carolina	Democrats at state convention Republicans at state and district conventions
North Dakota	State convention
Ohio	Preferential presidential primary
Oklahoma	State and district conventions
Oregon	Preferential presidential primary
Pennsylvania	State comilttee for at-large delegates Preferential presidential primary for election of district delegates
Rhode Island	State convention
South Carolina	State convention
South Dakota	Preferential presidential primary
Tennessee	State and/or district conventions
Texas	State convention
Utah	State convention
Vermont	State convention
Virginia	Democrats at state convention Republicans at state and district conventions
Washington	State convention
West Virginia	Preferential presidential primary
Wisconsin	Preferential presidential primary
Wyoming	State convention
Canal Zone	Democrats only at territorial convention
Puerto Rico	Commonwealth convention
Virgin Islands	Democrats at territorial convention Republicans by territorial committee[3]

It is somewhat easier for Democratic party stalwarts to achieve delegate status than it is for Republicans. Each Republican delegate has one full vote; the Democrats, by contrast, permit fractional voting with some delegates casting only a part of a vote. The practice of fractional voting has greatly enlarged the size of Democratic conventions. When the Republicans convened in Miami Beach on Aug. 5, 1968, a total of 2,666 delegates and alternates with 1,333 votes, were members of the convention. The Democrats, assembling on August 26 in Chicago, had 5,611 delegates and alternates with 2,622 votes.

[3] Information listed above taken from *Choosing a President*, League of Women Voters, pp. 72-74.

Delegate Profiles

Serving at a national party convention is for most delegates a fascinating and exhilarating experience. Delegate status is a prized reward for faithful service to the party at the state and local levels. At the convention, delegates have the opportunity to hobnob with the party greats and, incidentally, to partake of the sightseeing and nightlife benefits of an excursion to a large city.

Are there different reasons why delegates choose to serve? These profiles of imaginary delegates may give you a more personal view of the different types of people who serve as delegates.

Raymond W. Pierce, a member of the Colorado delegation, was chosen by his party at their state convention. Mr. Pierce, age 52, is the vice-president of a large mining corporation in the western part of the state. He has been active in party politics since his college days. Mr. Pierce has shown continued interest in control of ore imports from abroad and in lower corporation taxes. His company approves of his political activity and encourages him to pursue these interests.

Mrs. J. W. Hastings, a 45-year-old housewife and a delegate from California, began her party activity at the precinct level over 15 years ago. At that time, she was interested in specific reforms in county government and worked to elect three reform candidates. Within recent years, Mrs. Hastings has devoted a large portion of her free time to organizing women within the party. This was her first national convention.

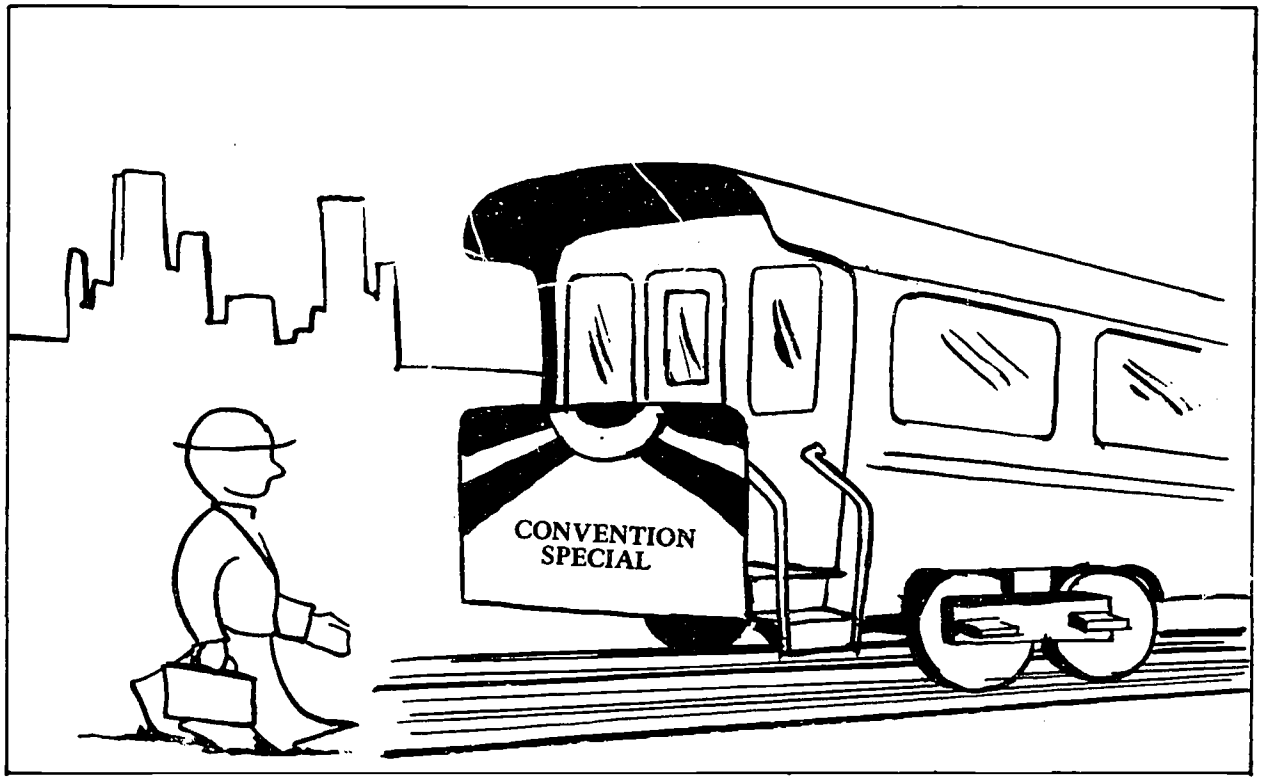
Sen. Thomas Ames is the head of his state delegation from South Carolina. The senator has attended many conventions and wields powerful influence in his own and other southern delegations. He has in the past led conservative blocs of delegates who have united to prevent the nomination of more liberal candidates. He is a key figure in the party and in the convention.

Robert Adams, a delegate from Pennsylvania, has been extremely unhappy with his party's position on civil rights. Although not previously active in party politics, Adams, a lawyer, campaigned vigorously with a group of young liberals who backed a particular presidential candidate. Their election was a blow to the organized party machine in his district.

Student Assignment

Your teacher will assign each of you a state. Write a short profile of an imaginary delegate from that state. Tell how this delegate was chosen and what special interests he or she represents. Be sure the biographical information in your profile is consistent with the picture of delegates given in today's reading.

Class Session Eight: The Boys They Left Behind



The Outsiders

It all started at a cocktail party, the annual winter fund-raising effort of the Rich Township Democratic Organization.[1] When Precinct Captain Ralph Gretchen came to sell Democrat George Bernstein a ticket to the December 1967 event, Bernstein voiced his dissatisfaction with party activities in the township. "What is the stand of the organization on the war in Vietnam?" he asked. "I can no longer support the organization if it supports the war." Gretchen said that no one had raised that issue at a party meeting as yet, and he encouraged Bernstein to attend the monthly organization meetings and voice his views.

George Bernstein did not attend the cocktail party. Two other Democrats—Dr. Jerome Kharasch and Stanley Rosen, a Democratic precinct captain—did. They were disappointed by the small turnout. Some, they discovered, like Bernstein, had stayed away because they were not pleased with the party's support of President Lyndon Johnson and the war in Vietnam.

Kharasch and Rosen called a meeting of Democrats they felt would be sympathetic to open discussion of such issues as the war. At that meeting, it was decided to start a new group, Democrats for Free Debate on Vietnam. The new group would work for discussion of issues within the Democratic party organization and would try to help people become informed on all sides of the Vietnam question. Some in the group, at this early stage, hoped to swing the township organization toward an anti-war stand and support of a presidential candidate other than Lyndon Johnson. The Democrats for Free Debate circulated the following statement of purpose:

DEMOCRATS FOR FREE DEBATE ON VIETNAM

We, the undersigned supporters of the Democratic Party, do here voice our concern about the American position in Vietnam. We call in this statement for the following general approaches:

[1] Rich Township, one of five townships in the Fourth congressional District, is located 30 miles south of Chicago. Included in the township are the villages of Park Forest, Olympia Fields, and Flossmoor and the towns of Richton Park and Matteson.

First, to call for an informed discussion of the Vietnam issue at a time of threat to our world image as a free and viable nation and most important to our national survival.

Second, we call for the development of a local level program that will provide full information and facts on Vietnam to the members of the Democratic Party and to the interested public.

This statement is circulated in response to the increasingly hostile reaction towards dissent and free discussion by the leaders of our national Party. This hostility, anger, frustration, and defensiveness at the highest levels of our government has resulted in:

–Overt well publicized efforts aimed at ridiculing or shutting off informed discussion and patriotic debate.

–Irrational, confusing and emotional speechmaking on the Vietnam issue. This has communicated to the electorate a dangerous indecision and irrationality at the policy making level. We feel that this has damaged our Party morally and politically.

WE THEREFORE REQUEST THAT THE RICH TOWNSHIP DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATION TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS IMMEDIATELY:

1. Conduct and sponsor public meetings, forums or hearings which permit all interested Democrats to voice their opinions and sentiments concerning the War in Vietnam.

Such discussions should include all questions and issues pertinent to the situation, including alternatives to our present foreign policy.

2. That the leadership of the Rich Township Democratic Organization transmit to the Democratic Party Leadership at all levels our anxiety and concern for a free, open and continuing discussion of all important issues concerning Vietnam.

We are Democrats because our Party has stood for a certain body of progressive social and humanitarian principles over the years. We believe that our Party has the strength and ability to handle an honest and open discussion on this crucial issue.

We are all Democrats. We are not of one mind as to the solution to the problems in Vietnam. We are unanimous in agreeing that we, as a party, have an obligation to hear all proposals and to urge upon our leaders those that seem appropriate.

Members of the group went into action. The U.S. State Department was contacted for information on the official government position. A public meeting was planned to discuss the war and to impress party leaders with the size and commitment of the Democratic anti-war group. In January, more than 100 people crowded into the Park Forest Village Hall to hear a panel of four speakers give their views on the war.

Democratic Township Committeeman Francis J. Lynch was visited to see if he would schedule a debate on the war at one of the regular township organization meetings. Lynch agreed to this, although he was not enthusiastic about the activities of the Democrats for Free Debate; his only stipulation was that both debaters at the meeting must be Democrats. The debate was held in February. Many of the regular Democrats sat quietly in their seats throughout the meeting. Like Lynch, they had no desire to split the party over the issue of the war.

As March approached, leaders of the Free Debate group became more and more convinced that they would need to take some action outside of the regular party organization. They learned that an anti-war group had formed in nearby Bremen Township. A meeting of the Rich and Bremen irregulars was held. The issue: Should anti-war Democrats seek to place "peace" candidates on the Democratic primary ballot for the positions of delegate and alternate to the Democratic national convention?

Committeeman Lynch was approached again. What would he do to influence the party choice of delegates and alternates? Lynch frankly told the group that Rich Township was small and had little influence in the congressional district on the selection of convention delegates. The regular party organization in the district, he said, would put up delegates who supported Lyndon Johnson.

There seemed to be no way to influence the party. The Bremen and Rich Democrats decided to officially organize as Fourth Congressional District Democrats for New Direction. The new organization would select delegates and alternates and circulate petitions to get their names on the June 18 primary ballot. Two men agreed to run as delegates–Dr. Jerome Kharasch and David Meade, religious editor of the *Chicago Daily News*. Alternates were Rev. David Bumbaugh, a local area

Unitarian minister, and Mary Elkuss, former Democratic committeewoman for Rich Township.

All did not go smoothly for the new group. Stan Rosen was asked by the regular Rich Township Democratic Organization to resign from his position as precinct captain. When Rosen refused, he was replaced by a more "loyal" Democrat. Once the petitions had been circulated and properly filed in Springfield and David Meade was officially a candidate for delegate, he was asked by the Chicago Daily News to take a leave-of-absence until the election was over.

The candidates caucused to decide whom to support for the Democratic presidential nomination. By this time, Eugene McCarthy was campaigning in the New Hampshire primary on the peace issue. No question about it--McCarthy was the man. Then came three events that stunned Democrats throughout the country: McCarthy won a sweeping victory in New Hampshire, President Lyndon Johnson announced that he would not be a candidate for re-election, and Senator Robert Kennedy entered the presidential race. Dr. Kharasch decided to support Kennedy; the group split, some to work for Kharasch and Kennedy, others to work for Meade and McCarthy.

Getting delegate and alternate names on the primary ballot was one accomplishment; electing them was a task of larger magnitude. The Democrats for New Direction set up a precinct organization and started to campaign. Undermanned, they were heartened by the stream of high school and college students who came out to work for McCarthy. Rich Central and Rich East High School Students for McCarthy went out with precinct lists to map the area. They knocked on doors, distributed campaign literature, and collected the names of possible supporters. The delegates and alternates spoke at coffees and neighborhood meetings. Everything seemed to be going well; two weeks before the primary everyone was primed for final precinct efforts.

On the national scene, Democrats were absorbed by the primary battles between Kennedy and McCarthy. Kennedy took Indiana, McCarthy rolled back in Oregon. Then came California, the last big presidential primary, and a victory for Kennedy. But as Robert Kennedy left a victory celebration in a hotel ballroom after thanking his cheering supporters for their work, he was shot by an assassin. The next day he died.

Eugene McCarthy suspended all campaign effort. The Rich Township McCarthy supporters followed suit. The plans for all-out precinct work were abandoned. What did it matter anyway--no one really cared any more.

Then, a few days before the primary, the Democrats for New Direction regrouped. Kharasch again allied himself with the McCarthy cause. The day before the primary, the high school students were out in force, blanketing the area with campaign literature for the McCarthy delegates. The vital door-to-door campaigning could not be conducted at this late date, but everyone hoped for the best. Now everything was in the hands of the voters.

Maybe nobody really expected to win; after all, as they say, you "can't fight city hall." The regular organization had resources that no group of outsiders could hope to muster. As the election eve returns came in, it was obvious that the delegates and alternates chosen by the district party organization had won. In all of the townships except one, the regulars had carried the township. What about Rich Township? There the McCarthy forces won handily, scoring twice as many votes as the regular candidates. On their home ground, the Democrats for Free Debate had made their point.

Individual McCarthy supporters continued their work for the senator. Letters were written to Illinois convention delegates urging support; telegrams were sent to influential national leaders and party bosses. The defeat of the minority plank on Vietnam and the nomination of Hubert Humphrey left the McCarthy supporters, like their leader, without enthusiasm for the coming election.

The Aftermath

Those who had worked to elect McCarthy delegates in the Fourth Congressional District met in October to discuss their role in the coming election. Some members of the group would reluctantly support Humphrey; others had decided to sit this election out. The group as a whole refused to endorse any presidential candidate, deciding to support only those state Democrats who stood for peace. They agreed to meet after the election to consider the future. The choice lies between a return to the regular organization or a continuing effort as an independent Democratic group. What will the outsiders do? At this point, no one knows.

In late October, the Rich Township Democratic Organization held another fund-raising affair, a dinner dance at a local country club. George Bernstein did not attend. For that matter, this time neither did Stan Rosen nor Jerome Kharasch.

The National Convention

"Excuse me," said a bewildered convention guest during the first day of his visit, "but what does all this have to do with electing a president?" Certainly the first few days of a national convention seem to casual observers to be only unnecessary preliminaries, wasted time while everyone waits for the real business of the convention—the nomination of a candidate—to get underway.

The national convention, however, accomplishes other things besides the nomination of candidates. Few people understand the importance of these other functions of the convention. This short statement, taken from the League of Women Voters publication, *Choosing a President*, may help to clarify what a national party convention does:

> The national convention is the national party. It is at the heart of the national party system. Neither Congress nor the Constitution created it nor have they any control over it. The national convention is the basic element of the national party apparatus, and its decisions are binding more by consent than by sanction. It is a native political phenomenon. Party government for the nation as a whole could not exist without the national convention.
>
> The national convention makes a very special contribution to the American political system by serving as a channel for advancement to the office of the presidency, independent of the Congress. The two-party system, and ultimately the national conventions, make it possible for men of different backgrounds, experiences and ideals to seek or attain the nominations for the presidency and the vice-presidency. This fact alone deeply affects the character of American politics and government.
>
> The national convention serves four distinct purposes:
>
> 1) *Nominates candidates for President and Vice-President*, its principal and most obvious task. Occasionally the primary purpose of the convention has been almost completely achieved before the convention meets: the nomination of President Johnson at the Democratic Convention in 1964 is one recent example.
> 2) *Writes a platform* which broadly states the party's program. Unity in issues is stressed, and party conflicts are ignored whenever possible. Platforms are election implements, but are not binding on the elected candidates once they are in office . . . .
> 3) *Serves as a national rally* to start the campaign for electing its candidates. Its purpose is to unite the party nationally behind the candidates the party hopes to elect by healing the wounds left by the battles among factions supporting different men for nomination and to consolidate its resources for an all-out election fight.
> 4) *Is a governing body for its party.* Through the national committee it provides national leadership and continuity from one convention to the next; it determines party policy and procedure for the next convention. Without it, political party structure and function would not exist as they do today.[2]

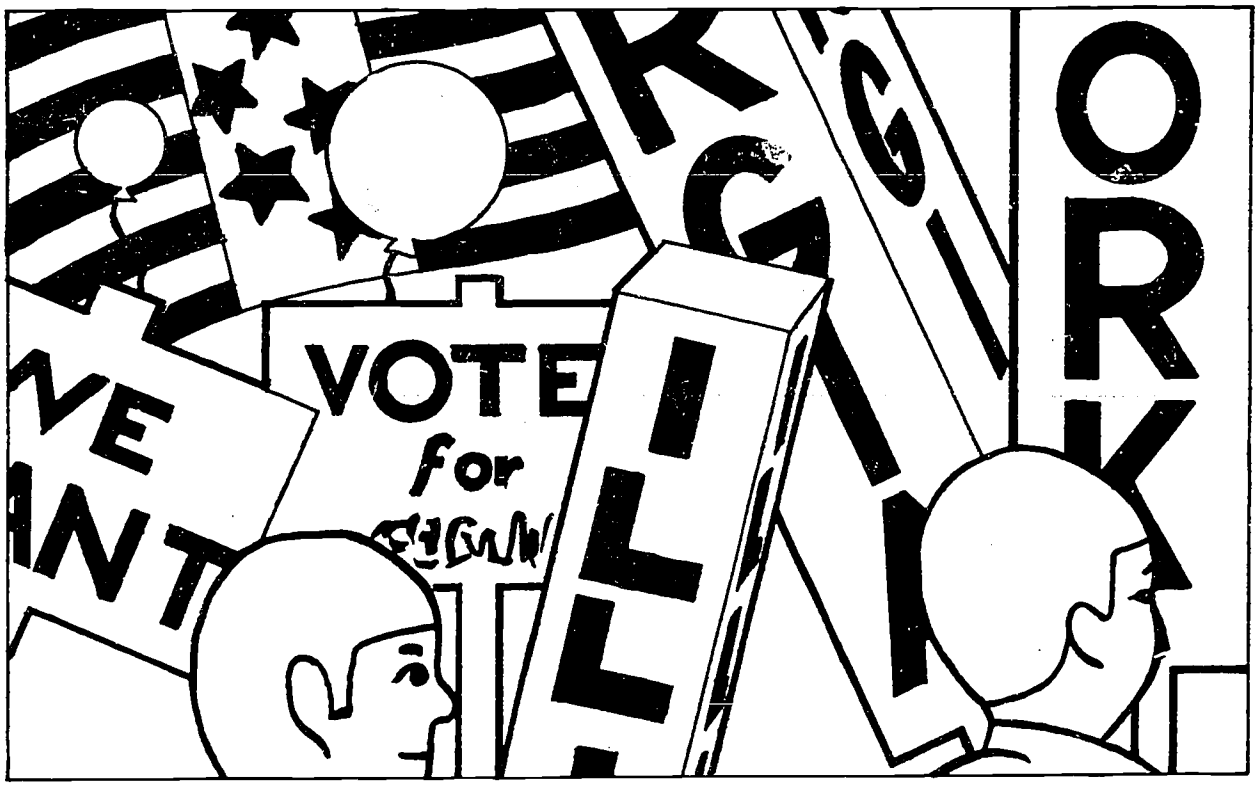
Student Assignment

Different purposes of the national party convention are important to different people. Demonstrate the importance of different purposes by writing a one-paragraph description of each of the four purposes of the convention from the point of view of the person with that purpose:

1. Nominates a candidate—from the point of view of a delegate to the convention.
2. Writes a platform—from the point of view of a congressman running for re-election.
3. Serves as a national rally—from the point of view of the party's presidential candidate.
4. Is a governing body for the party—from the point of view of a member of the National Committee.

[2] *Choosing A President*, League of Women Voters, 1968; pp. 18-19.

Class Session Nine: Routine and Reaction



Behind the Scenes

While public attention is centered on the prominent contenders for party nominations, other party stalwarts are hard at work behind the scenes. Months before the convention date, the members of the national party committee began to make arrangements for the big event. Since 1848, when the Democrats first set up a national committee, these bodies have served to govern the parties between conventions. The national party committee functions to encourage the advancement of the party; to assist all party candidates in general district, state, and territorial elections; to maintain a national party headquarters; and to raise money to finance the work of the party.

The national committees in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries consisted of one national committeeman from every state and territory. In 1920, after women were given the right to vote, the committees added a committeewoman from each state and territory. Since 1952, the Republicans have also included as members the state chairman of every state that went Republican in the last presidential election, that has a majority of Republicans in its congressional delegation, or that has a Republican governor. The Democratic National Committee in 1968 numbered 110 members and the Republican National Committee 145.

One of the first tasks of the national committee is the selection of a convention city. Major cities, hoping for profits from the visit of thousands of delegates, offer funds to defray convention expenses. The national committee then weighs these bids as well as such other factors as auditorium facilities, hotel accommodations, transportation, and space for the news media. Political considerations are also important. The committee which chooses the site must consider its effect on the chances of the different contenders. Certainly Adlai Stevenson's nomination in 1952 was facilitated by his opportunity to address the convention

early in the week as the host governor of the convention state.

The work of the national committee is directed by the national party chairman. He is elected by the committee and is usually the choice of the president or the party's last presidential nominee. The chairman issues the call for the convention by sending out letters to all county chairmen notifying them of the date of the convention and the number of delegates for each state.

Once the convention call has been issued, the national committee gets down to work. Through working subcommittees, members supervise the remodeling and decorating of the convention hall, set up the communication system within the hall, make hotel reservations, rent buses and limousines for delegates and dignitaries, issue press credentials, and hire a corps of musicians and guest entertainers. The national committee also compiles the list of delegates chosen in each state, rules on any disputed results, allots guest tickets to state organizations, and names a temporary chairman for the convention.

Opening Events

Early events at a national convention seem to an outside observer to be of little interest. It is this initial business, however, that sets the climate of the convention. At the first session, delegates confirm the national committee's choice of a temporary chairman and approve the membership of four important convention committees—permanent organization, rules, credentials, and platform. The members of these committees have been at work for several days before the delegates arrive; their confirmation is a routine matter.

The convention's first fireworks are touched off by the keynote address. This oration, delivered by the temporary chairman, follows a traditional pattern—to praise the party and to view with alarm the opposition party. A rousing keynote speech works up a fine sense of unity among the delegates and gives everyone a feeling of optimism about the party's chances for election victory.

The party's elder statesmen usually make an appearance before the delegates early in the convention as do many of the candidates for state offices. With television cameras trained on convention events, no party can resist the temptation to give contenders for lesser office some free publicity.

Convention Committees

Finally, the committees are ready to report. Chairmen for these committees are selected well ahead of time by the national committee. The chart here summarizes the four standing convention committees:

COMMITTEE	FUNCTION	MEMBERSHIP
Permanent Organization	Recommends a set of permanent officers for the convention (permanent chairman, secretary sergeant-at-arms, chief tally clerk, parliamentarian, etc.)	All committees are composed of two representatives—a man and a woman—from each state and territorial delegation.
Rules of Order of Business	Reports to the convention a set of rules for its operation and establishes voting procedures.	
Credentials	Examines credentials of the delegates and hears challenges on the right of delegations to sit; lists the permanent roll of approved delegates.	
Resolutions and Platform	Drafts and presents a platform to the convention.	

Floor Fights and Furor

At almost every convention a contest or two develops over the recommendations of one or more of the standing committees. Because each state has equal committee representation, the states with a majority in delegate votes can be outvoted in committee. Committee voting results thus can be overturned when they reach the full convention. The resolution of committee conflicts by the full convention often indicates which candidate for the nomination is in control of the convention.

The first committee to report, Permanent Organization, most often has its selection of permanent officers approved without question. It is traditional to name as permanent chairman a congressional leader experienced in parliamentary and convention procedures. The chairman has great power over the conduct of the convention. Therefore, it is important that he be neutral with respect to contending candidates.

Convention rules as recommended by the Rules Committee are also quickly accepted. However, disputes can break out. For more than a century the Democratic party operated with a two-thirds rule requiring the nominee to have the votes of two-thirds of the delegates. Southern states thereby enjoyed a virtual veto power over Democratic nominations. In 1936, President Franklin Roosevelt, riding on the crest of unparalleled national popularity, forced the convention to amend its rules to require a simple majority. Another exciting rules fight broke out at the Democratic convention of 1948. A senator from Michigan proposed that every state delegation pledge itself that the party's nominees would appear on the state ballot in November. This "Loyalty Oath" was designed to prevent a southern bolt from the party. In 1956, the Democrats returned to this concept when they adopted a rule to remove any national committeeman who failed to support the ticket actively. Again, in 1968, a dispute over rules occurred when the convention upheld a Rules Committee recommendation that delegations no longer be bound by the unit rule.

Credentials fights are more common. The two best-known disputes over delegate credentials have both concerned a Taft. In 1912, the managers of Theodore Roosevelt's bid for renomination cried "Foul" when the Credentials Committee ruled against some 50 Roosevelt delegates in favor of men pledged to incumbent President William Howard Taft. Had Roosevelt won this credentials dispute, he and not Taft would have been the Republican nominee. Forty years later, in 1952, Taft's son, Sen. Robert Taft of Ohio, found himself in a credentials fight of a similarly bitter nature. Charged with "stealing" 68 delegates from Texas, Louisiana, and Georgia, Taft had the support of the Credentials Committee which recommended the seating of his delegates. Taft muddied his position by agreeing to split the contested delegations with his rival, Dwight Eisenhower. Enraged by the thought of a deal, the convention overruled the committee and seated the Eisenhower delegates. It became clear early in the week that Taft could not carry the convention and his bid for the nomination was thereby undermined.

The final committee report, the long recitation of the party platform is ordinarily accepted by a quick "aye" vote. After all, the committee has been at work for weeks on the platform. Hearings have been held and representatives of every viewpoint have made proposals. Compromises have been worked out within the committee. The final version of the platform has more significance to groups within the party than to the general public. The platform tells which forces within the party are predominant, which blocs have succeeded in forcing through their views.

When a fight over the platform occurs, it is often an indication of a divided party. The strong civil rights stand of the 1948 Democratic Convention alienated the southern delegations. The chairman of the Alabama delegation made this announcement: "We will proceed to walk out of this convention and return to Alabama—I am also authorized by the Chairman of the State of Mississippi to say to you at this time in this Convention, that in the face of the platform adopted, the delegation from Mississippi could not be true to the people of that great state if they did not join in this walkout and therefore they join us and we bid you goodbye."

The 1968 Democratic convention featured a bitter fight over the plank on the war in Vietnam. The platform committee had labored to produce a compromise plank acceptable to both doves and hawks. Dissatisfied by this compromise, those who opposed the war submitted to the convention a minority plank asking for an end to the bombing of North Vietnam and a gradual withdrawal of American troops. After presentations were made by the supporters of both planks, balloting began. By a vote of 1567¾ to 1041½, the minority plank was defeated.

Norman Mailer described the scene on the convention floor after the vote:

"But the floor would not rest. The New York and California delegations began to sing 'We Shall Overcome.' Quickly, the platform was passed; still the New York delegation sang. Now Wisconsin stood on its seats. The rear of the floor booed the front of the floor. A few hundred posters, STOP THE WAR, quickly printed a few hours earlier for this occation, were held up. Defeated delegates yelled 'Stop the War' . . . The convention recessed. Still the New York Delegation sang 'We Shall Overcome,' standing on their seats. The convention band across the way tried to drown them out. It

played in ever-increasing volume, 'We Got a Lot of Living To Do.'

"The managers of the convention turned the New York microphones down, and amplified the public address system for the band. So on the floor of the convention, the doves were drowned in hostile sound, but on the television sets, the reception was the opposite, for the networks had put their own microphones under the voices of the delegates, and they sang in force across the continent. Thus a few thousand people on the floor and the gallery heard little of the doves—all the rest of America heard them well."[1]

Student Assignment

For your next class you will be asked to do three things:

1. Select one of the four standing convention committees and write a short explanation for an elementary school student describing the importance of this committee's work.
2. Study the Delegate Profile that you wrote for Class Session Seven. In the next class you will play the part of this delegate at a convention session of the Americana party. Be sure you are sufficiently familiar with your delegate so that you will be able to remain in character at the convention session.
3. Read the information given in Class Session Ten about the issue before the Americana Party for decision.

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[1] Norman Mailer, "Miami and Chicago," *Harper's Magazine*, November 1968, pp. 107-108.

Class Session Ten: Delegates and Decisions

The Issue

Democratic selection of delegates is an issue that has divided the Americana party for many years. Northern liberals, sympathetic to the plight of disenfranchised blacks in southern states, have maintained that the delegation selection process in these states is tightly controlled by white supremists. Southern leaders, angered by these charges, have insisted that delegate selection is the function of the state party machinery.

The dramatic appearance of the Alabama Active Freedom party at the 1964 convention pointed up this issue. Denied the right to representation in the regular Americana party organization, Negroes in Alabama had risked their lives to register black voters and to build a new party organization. Sixty-eight delegates and alternates came to the 1964 convention as representatives of the Freedom party; among that number were four white civil rights Alabamans. For three days, the Credentials Committee heard the statements of both the regular Americana delegates from Alabama and the Freedom delegates and the arguments of supporters of one or the other group. The regular Americana delegation had been legally selected by the procedures set down in Alabama laws, yet justice seemed to be on the side of the black Alabamans who had been denied representation in the party. Finally a compromise was reached: two of the Freedom delegates were seated as delegates-at-large with full rights to vote, and at the convention of 1968 and thereafter, no delegations would be seated from states where the party process deprived citizens of their right to vote by reason of their race or color.

Most southern states had, as a result, revised their delegate selection process to provide for the inclusion of a few Negroes in the delegation. South Carolina alone had seated an all-white delegation to the 1968 convention. A second delegation from South Carolina had been sent to the convention by the Free State Democrats. Once more, the issue of which of two groups really represented all the people of a state was before the Credentials Committee.

The Candidates

Governor John Rocklin of New York had taken an early stand favoring the demand of the Free State Democrats to be seated. Rocklin, a liberal, hoped that a victory on this issue would swing delegates into his camp and ensure his nomination.

Much of California Senator Ronald Stuart's support for the nomination lay in the South. Stuart had at first attempted to avoid speaking out on this issue but, after many southern delegates had threatened to switch to another candidate, Stuart had backed the seating of the Democratic Regulars.

Supporters of Senator Samuel B. Second of Illinois had urged him to stay clear of this fight in order not to antagonize either side. Senator Second had appeared before the Credentials Committee to appeal for a compromise that would not divide the party.

The Compromise

The Credentials Committee, by majority vote, decided to recommend this compromise to the convention: the 28 votes of South Carolina were to be divided between the Democratic regulars and the Free State Democrats with each group seating one-half of their members. Two minority reports were also to be presented to the convention. One, backed by northern liberals, would seat the entire Free State delegation; the other, supported by southern conservatives would seat the regular Democrats.

Members of the convention are ready to debate the first minority resolution:

> "Resolved that this convention seat as the legal delegation from the state of South Carolina the 28 members of the Free State Democratic delegation."

Delegate Strength

The chart here shows the states represented at the Americana party convention. Each delegation's

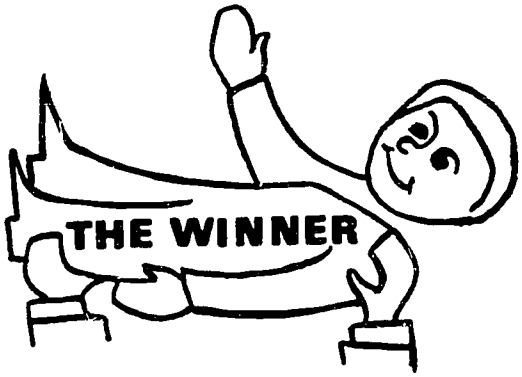
total vote is shown next to the state's name. The candidate preferred by the majority of the state delegation is also shown:

STATE	DELEGATE STRENGTH	PREFERRED CANDIDATE
Alabama	32	Stuart
Alaska	22	Uncommitted
Arkansas	33	Stuart
California	174	Rocklin
Connecticut	44	Rocklin
Delaware	22	Uncommitted
District of Columbia	23	Uncommitted
Florida	63	Stuart
Georgia	43	Stuart
Hawaii	26	Uncommitted
Idaho	25	Uncommitted
Illinois	118	Second
Indiana	63	Second
Iowa	46	Second
Kansas	38	Stuart
Kentucky	46	Stuart
Louisiana	36	Stuart
Maryland	49	Stuart
Massachusetts	72	Rocklin
Michigan	96	Uncommitted
Minnesota	52	Second
Mississippi	24	Stuart
Missouri	60	Stuart
Nebraska	23	Stuart
New Jersey	82	Rocklin
New Mexico	26	Stuart
New York	190	Rocklin
North Carolina	59	Stuart
Ohio	115	Rocklin
Oklahoma	41	Stuart
Pennsylvania	130	Rocklin
Rhode Island	27	Rocklin
Tennessee	51	Stuart
Texas	105	Stuart
Utah	26	Stuart
Virginia	54	Stuart
Washington	47	Rocklin
Wisconsin	57	Second

Student Assignment

1. Did the vote on the minority resolution give you any clues as to who the nominee of the Americana party will be? Write a short essay telling who will be nominated and giving reasons for your choice.
2. The local newspaper is interested in your activities as a delegate. Write a news release telling about your experiences at the convention.
3. Write a short essay telling why an all-white delegation from a southern state is not a bona fide delegation.
4. Comment on this statement: "Party unity at any price."
5. Write a diary account of one day in the life of a convention delegate.

Class Session Eleven: Convention Climax



Pressures and Promises

From the time a convention delegate is selected in the early spring until the climax of the convention, the delegates are under constant pressure to support particular candidates. J. Duane Squires of New Hampshire, a delegate to the 1952 Republican convention, wrote this account of his pre-convention experiences:

"For many days in June I received an average of 40 letters in each mail delivery. These came from all over the country; from pressure groups asking endorsement of their platform proposals; from sponsors of the various candidates urging each one of us to back his candidate; from assorted crackpots of all persuasions . . . and from the candidates themselves. For example, Candidate Taft mailed each delegate a handsomely framed photograph of himself, to say nothing of a "Bob Taft" necktie. Special groups in Chicago sent shopping cards for use in certain of the big stores; courtesy cards for the horse race track in the city; invitations to night clubs, famed eating establishments, and sporting goods stores. I made an endeavor to organize and file my mail and it fills today a cardboard carton two feet in length."[1]

> No delegate arrives in the convention city unheralded. Delegations are met at airports and train stations by enthusiastic supporters of the party's leading candidates. Brass bands and cheerleaders whoop it up for their man. Colorful campaign hats and favors are forced upon the delegates as they whisk through the mobs on the way to their hotels.
>
> Within minutes after delegates have checked into hotels, preliminary conferences and meetings begin. Each state has a headquarters where the state delegation meets to caucus and debate. Competing candidates are invited to appear to state their case. Delegates are buttonholed in hotel lobbies and restaurants. The heat is on; everyone is seeking their support.
>
> The candidates' managers work day and night. As Robert Bendiner states: "Managers and their aides receive a steady stream of delegates at their headquarters and send out missionaries to various state caucuses, which are going on all over town; they breakfast, lunch, dine and drink with influential state chairmen and overlook no chance to woo a doubtful delegation with smiles and soft soap. Most important, they court leading members of the Favorite Son delegations, which will break up soon after the first ballot, and the unit-rule delegations, which can deliver twice the result for half the effort."[2]

Bendiner describes in detail the efforts of candidates and their managers during the early convention days:

> To pry a delegate loose from a prior committment, however, or to get him committed when he is still on the fence, frequently requires something in the way of bait. It should be said at once, to the disappointment of sensation seekers, that the bait is never money. Indeed, the conventions are remarkably free of the coarser forms of bribery. What is considered fair and all but inevitable is that those who identify themselves with the cause of a particular candidate will share in the triumph of that cause. A nominee who goes on to the Presidency is entitled, after all, to have among his subordinates men of the same kidney. And if they are reasonably qualified, who is to say that they helped him to win out of personal ambition rather than political sympathy.
>
> Whatever the ethics of the matter, every convention is full of deals and rumors of deals. Sometimes the rumors are baseless, though exciting, but when a particular candidate wins in November, his timely supporters usually wind up well represented in his administration. (It is almost a tradition that his campaign manager becomes Postmaster General, although no one pretends there is any connection between delivering the vote and delivering the mail). . .
>
> Aside from the hope of reward, delegates can be won over by argument. On the most rarified level, they may be persuaded that the nomination of a particular candidate is best for the country. At the middle level, they may be persuaded that he could make the best campaign

[1] Malcolm Moos and Stephen Hess, *Hats in the Ring*, p. 117.

[2] Robert Bendiner, *White House Fever*, pp. 6-7

for the country and therefore bring the most help to state and local tickets—a cogent argument with state and district leaders. And on the lowest level, they may be persuaded simply that he is going to get nominated anyway and that it is heathier to be on the side of the winner early than late.

Dewey's manager, Herbert Brownell, was a master-mind at making the last of these appeals. At the 1948 convention, he held at least two press conferences a day at which he invariably beamed like a cat well stuffed with bird as he hinted strongly of delegations secretly committed. The master stroke came when Senator Edward Martin, of Pennsylvania, announced a day before the balloting that he would withdraw his own Favorite Son candidacy and place Dewey in nomination himself. Leaders of the Indiana, Massachusetts, and New Jersey delegations immediately fell into line rather than miss so promising a band wagon. It was charged by some of his fellow Pennsylvanians, however, that Martin had been pro-Dewey all the time and was only waiting for the signal that the strategic moment had come.[3]

The Next President

All week long, as committees are reporting and the other convention business is being carried on, delegates are conscious that these activities are mere preliminaries to the main event. Whatever else the convention may do, its real drama lies in the nomination of a presidential candidate. By the third day, the pace of the convention quickens and the excitement rises as the time for nominating speeches arrives.

Only 27 words were needed to nominate Abraham Lincoln in 1960. Norman Judd of Illinois rose and stated: "I desire on behalf of the delegation from Illinois to put in nomination as a candidate for the President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln of Illinois."

Eight years later when General Logan nominated Ulysses S. Grant, the speech was still a model of brevity: "In the name of the loyal citizens, soldiers and sailors of the United States of America, in the name of liberty, humanity and justice, in the name of the national union of the Republican Party, I nominate Ulysses S. Grant."

Since that time, nominating speeches have become more stylized and more studied. Some have made oratorical history. 'Among those that have rocked convention amphitheatres, Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll's was probably the most dazzling. 'Like an armed warrior,' it went in part, 'like a plumed knight, James G. Blaine marched down the halls of the American Congress and threw his shining lance full and fair against the brazen forehead of every traitor to his country and every maligner of his fair reputation.' To his supporters Blaine was thenceforth known as 'The Plumed Knight.'

"Another gem sure to be noted by convention enthusiasts is General Edward Stuyvesant Bragg's seconding speech for Grover Cleveland. Democrats of the state loved Cleveland for a number of reasons, Bragg said, but—and here he turned to face the Tammany Hall delegation—'they love him most for the enemies he has made.' It was a natural campaign slogan. Also among the classics was Franklin D. Roosevelt's windup in the Democratic convention of 1928: 'We offer one who has the will to win—who not only deserves success but commands it. Victory is his habit—The Happy Warrior, Alfred Smith.' "[4]

To this number of famous speeches must be added Senator Eugene McCarthy's plea to the Democratic convention of 1960 on behalf of Adlai E. Stevenson: "Do not reject this man who has made us all proud to be Democrats," said McCarthy. "Do not leave this prophet without honor in his own party." And, in the Democratic convention of 1968, few will forget Senator Abraham Ribicoff's nominating speech for George McGovern when he turned to face Chicago's Mayor Daley and decried "Gestapo tactics in the streets of Chicago."

Seconding speeches follow the nominating speeches. The choice of nominating and seconding speakers is carefully made; speakers are picked representing various groups to prove that the candidate has broad appeal. Carefully planned demonstrations follow—balloons and bands, pretty girls and partisans, chanting and singing, signs and banners. These demonstrations are carefully timed for the length of the clamor is supposed to indicate the degree of support for the candidate.

Now the balloting begins. The first ballot is often cluttered with votes for favorite sons. Everyone watches to see how wide the gap is between front runners and whether prior claims to votes are substantiated. If no candidate is nominated on the

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 84-86, 93.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 95.

first ballot, the activity on the floor of convention hall becomes frenzied. Campaign managers swing into action. Delegations hurriedly caucus. Aides scurry through the hall, pleading for votes and pressuring delegates to "get on the bandwagon." When, at last a majority for one candidate seems near, pandemonium erupts. The bobbling state standards give the clue that the convention is close to agreement. The delegation chairmen wave their banners and seek recognition in order to switch to the winner. A candidate has been nominated. Often, his chief rival, appears on the platform to urge a unanimous convention vote for "the next president of the United States."

Little more remains for the convention to do but select a vice-presidential running mate. The convention recesses so that the candidate and his managers can consider such factors as geography, religion, and political background in providing "a balanced ticket." The candidate's personal choice for vice-president is almost never rejected. Only once, at the Republican convention of 1920, did the delegates, irritated by the wheeling and dealing that led to Harding's nomination, show a streak of independence and pass over Harding's choice to nominate Calvin Coolidge of Massachusetts.

In his acceptance speech, the successful candidate seeks to bind up the wounds created by the previous convention in-fighting and to unify the party. With this speech, the candidate kicks off the drive for election. For delegates, who have been the center of attention, the spotlight has dimmed. Now all eyes are on the candidates. On to November!

Views and Reviews

A visiting British reporter representing the Manchester Guardian was quoted as being fascinated by "the doves wheeling in the tropic glare, the girls in kilts, the bands in shakos pounding impartially for every candidate, the radio singers whooping it up on top of the chairman's desk . . . the cinematic effects of mass and color, of grotesque shadows thrown against the human horizon, beyond the imagination of Hollywood."

When someone asked the reporter how American politics compared with English, he looked very surprised.

"Politics," he repeated. "Politics? How should I know? So far, I have seen everything here except politics."

Earlier, H. L. Mencken, famous literary critic and author, said: "A national convention is as fascinating as a revival or a hanging. It is vulgar, ugly, stupid and tedious, to be sure, and yet there suddenly comes a show so gaudy and hilarious, so melodramatic and obscene, so unimaginably exhilarating that one lives a glorious year in one hour."

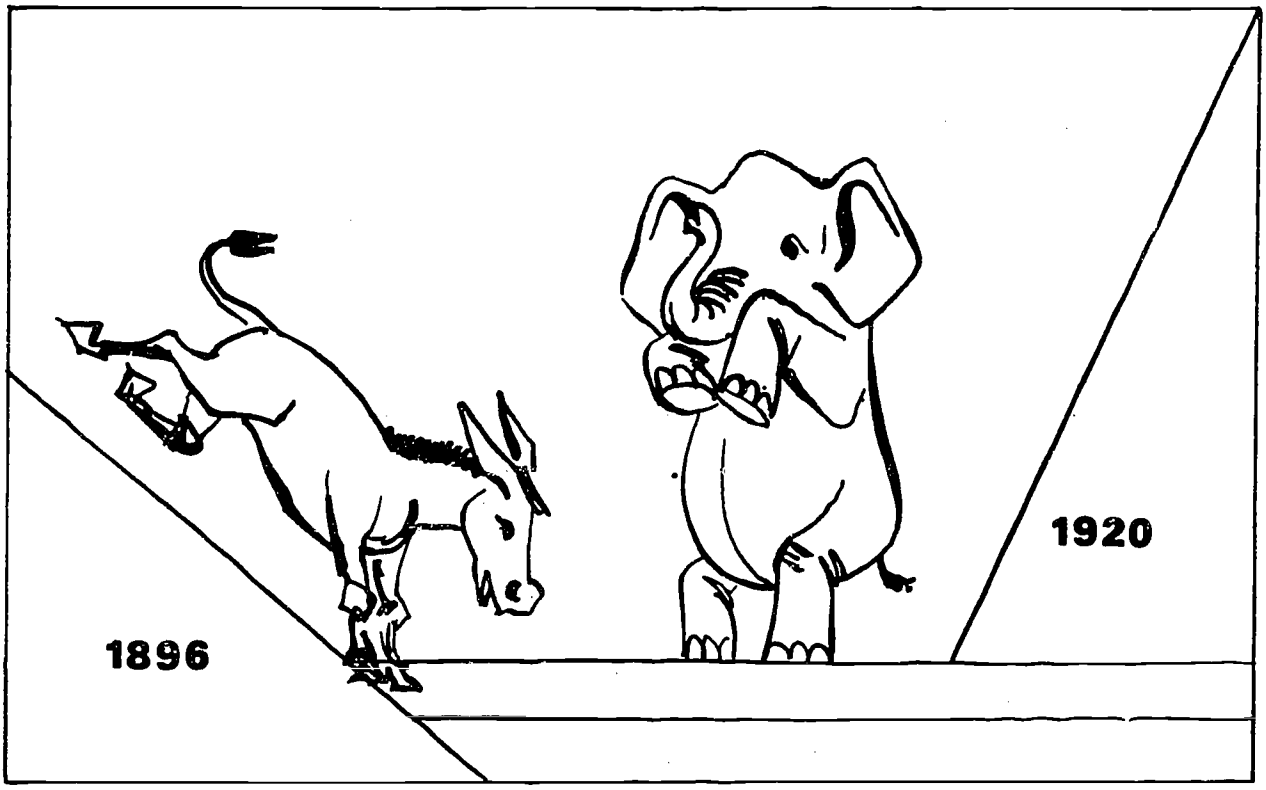
Dwight D. Eisenhower, our former president, had a harsher image of the 1964 Republican Convention when a prominent contender for the nomination was loudly booed from the floor: "In my opinion—and I think most Americans will agree—our Presidential nominating conventions have become a thoroughly disgraceful spectacle which can scarcely fail to appall our voters and create a bad image of our country abroad."

Student Assignment

Choose one of the following activities to do as homework:

1. The path from initial interest to nomination is an exciting one. Make a poster showing "The Path to the Nomination." Be sure to show these steps: Becoming Known, Winning Delegates, Being Nominated.
2. In the next class session you will read about some of the famous conventions that have taken place in Chicago. Find out about these other convention cities and the conventions held there: Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, St. Louis.
3. Select one of these famous conventions and find out what made it especially interesting: Republican convention of 1880, Republican convention of 1884, Democratic convention of 1912, Democratic convention of 1924, Republican convention of 1940, Republican convention of 1964.
4. Choose a particular presidential campaign and make a poster about the contenders. Include in your poster such information as their home state, their nickname, the cities in which they were nominated, campaign issues, slogans.
5. Draw a cartoon illustrating one of these political phrases: keynote address, split delegation, bandwagon, farm bloc, balanced ticket.

Class Session Twelve: Echoes of the Past



Convention City

For many years, Chicago has been a popular choice for political conventions. Its many hotels, restaurants, and meeting rooms provide ample space for the largest of political gatherings. Its central location, as well as an occasional political reason, make it a favorite convention site. It is the most equitable spot for westward and eastward traveling delegations to meet.

When the Democrats assembled in Chicago in August 1968, it was the twenty-fourth convention to convene in the "Windy City." The first convention held here was the republican convention of 1860 which nominated Abraham Lincoln. Since 1860, the Republicans have held 12 conventions here while the Democrats have met in Chicago 11 times.

Some of the most colorful and controversial political conventions of the last century have taken place in this high-spirited city. The spirit of the convention can, in these cases, be truly said to match the spirit of Chicago. Our readings today tell the stories of two famous Chicago conventions. Each is memorable because the people and events there became part of American political folklore.

The Cross of Gold: The Democratic Convention of 1896

"Free silver" was the issue that plagued the Democrats in 1896, but is was more than this issue that divided the party. The battle for the presidential nomination was, in reality, a battle for control of the party and for the poser to chart its future.

Eastern Democrats, members of the conservative industrial and financial establishment of the seaboard states, were tied to the gold standard and to the philosophy of sound money. The western and midwestern Democrats saw free silver coinage as an issue that would unite the Democrats and the Populists to give the party a new and victorious coalition. Convinced that they were the victims of a conspiracy designed by the moneyholders of Wall Street to keep them perpetual debtors, the free silver men believed that only by discarding the gold standard could their bondage be ended.

By July 1, 1896, a total of 33 of the 50 state and territorial Democratic conventions had declared for free silver. Neither they nor the gold men had a strong candidate. As the *New York World* stated: "The Silverites will be invincible if united and harmonious; but they have neither machine nor boss. The opportunity is here; the man is lacking."

Discussed as possible Democratic candidates were Congressman Richard Bland of Missouri; Governor Horace Boies of Iowa; Rebuplican Senator Henry Teller of Colorado, who had bolted his party to join the free silver Democrats; Senator Benjamin Tillman of South Carolina, a gold man; and William Jennings Bryan of Nebraska. "Silver Dick" Bland, a champion of the silver cause for many years, was the leading contender.

William Jennings Bryan, 36, was the most unlikely of the group. Bryan, belittled by his enemies as "the boy orator of the Platte," had served two undistinguished terms in Congress from 1890-1894. There his utterances on the floor were "more notable for fluency of expression than for grasp of his subject." Silver had given Bryan his great issue. He threw himself and his magnificent voice into the cause; he was perhaps the most popular free silver speaker in the West.

Bryan's confidence in himself was expressed early. At the Republican convention, in speaking to a delegate who was bolting to join the free silver cause, Bryan asked what the bolting delegates would do. "We're going to Chicago to nominate Senator Teller," replied the delegate. "You had better come and help us."

"I can't do it," responded Bryan. "I am going to be nominated at Chicago myself."

Other Democrats were not so enthusiastic about Bryan's chances. The influential Champ Clark of Missouri laughed at this young upstart's pretensions. Governor John Altgeld of Illinois, a dominant figure in the free silver ranks, inclined toward Richard Blane and thought Bryan too young and too opportunistic to lead the party.

When the convention got underway in Chicago on Tuesday, June 7, the silver men won the first skirmish by electing a silver chairman 586 to 349. Their immediate problem was to establish a firm two-thirds majority in the convention in order to nominate a candidate. The silver-dominated Credentials Committee assisted by increasing the delegations from all territories, unseating four gold men from Michigan and unseating the entire Nebraska gold delegation. The committee's decisions were upheld by the convention and, to great applause, William Jennings Bryan swept down the aisle with his delegation to take his seat.

The platform contained a free silver plank. A minority report called for continued support of the gold standard. Bryan, noted for his oratorical prowess in defending silver, was asked to be one of the speakers in the debate on the platform. The debate was long and bitter. Senator Tillman of South Carolina spoke for over an hour, calling silver a sectional issue and threatening revolt. His remarks were jeered by the delegates. Three other speakers followed Tillman until late in the evening, William Jennings Bryan came to the speaker's platform.

From his very first words, the audience reacted to Bryan as one man. Bryan's voice, unaided by such a modern invention as the loudspeaker, filled the hall with an eloquent plea for free silver. As Bryan spoke, he was fully aware that he had captivated the crowd. His words flowed on to a dramatic climax: "Having behind us the commercial interests and the laboring interests and the toiling masses, we shall answer their demands for a gold standard by saying to them, you shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns. You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold."

As these last phrases rang out, the audience went berserk. Delegates mobbed the great orator. As an anti-climax, the convention beat down the minority plank and accepted the platform 620 to 301. Free silver had won.

On July 10, the convention cast its first ballot for the presidential nomination. On this ballot, Bland led Bryan 235 votes to 137. The other votes were scattered among a number of candidates. Delegates pleaded with their delegation chairmen to switch to Bryan; leaders tried to hold the delegates to Bland. On the fifth ballot, Governor Altgeld bowed to the hysterical demands of the Illinois Bryan supporters and Illinois switched to Bryan. The stampede was on. State after State followed Illinois and Bryan was nominated.

The "cross of gold" which Bryan accused the eastern financiers of wishing to use had won for him his first presidential nomination.[1]

[1] Information in this reading taken from *Presidential Timber* by Herbert Eaton, pp. 155-179.

The Smoke-Filled Room: The Republican Convention of 1920

When the Republicans met in Chicago in 1920, the American people were little concerned with questions of national leadership. The war was over; it was time to relax. Walter Lippman caught the mood of the nation when he wrote, "The people are tired, tired of noise, tired of inconvenience, tired of greatness and longing for a place where the world is quiet and where all trouble seems dead leaves. . . ."

The mood of the people was no concern to Republican politicians. If anything, they welcomed the opportunity to choose a candidate without interference from the voters. Republican victory was in the air—Woodrow Wilson had been repudiated, the League of Nations was dead.

Two factions dominated the party. General Leonard Wood, a commander of Roosevelt's rough riders in the Spanish American War, was the candidate of the Roosevelt wing of the party. Governor Frank Lowden of Illinois, a brilliant executive whose leadership had attracted conservatives without alienating liberals, was the other front runner. The only genuine progressive candidate, Senator Hiram Johnson of California, was a third contender.

Nowhere among sophisticated political predictions did the name of Warren G. Harding appear. At 54, a first-term senator from Ohio, Harding was completely happy with his senatorial position. He might have served out his life as a contented member of the upper house had he not been allied with a lively Ohio politician, Harry M. Daugherty, who saw in Harding a chance for his own advancement as a political kingmaker.

Harding was a reluctant candidate for the nomination. He protested to Daugherty that he was unfit to be president but Daugherty assured him that the greatness of presidents was "largely an illusion of the people." Harding announced his candidacy in November of 1919 and embarked, at Daugherty's insistence, upon an extensive speaking tour to prove he was a serious candidate. Some party leaders were encouraging, but political attention was focused on front runners Lowden and Wood.

The Republican convention opened in Chicago on June 28, 1920. From the outset, it was clear that the senatorial leaders of the party were in control. The convention moved slowly toward the nominating process. In addition to Wood, Lowden, and Johnson, eight other men including Harding were placed in nomination. The first ballot proved what everyone had suspected all along—none of the front runners could win.

The convention settled down to a long series of ballots. Political strategists hopped back and forth between Wood and Lowden headquarters trying to get one man to give way to the other. Neither could win; neither would cede. Frantic party leaders sought a compromise. Hiram Johnson was offered the vice-presidency if he would withdraw as a presidential candidate, but refused.

On the night of July 11-12, senatorial leaders met, determined to unite on a candidate. Name after name was discussed and eliminated. One potential candidate had not been eliminated—Harding. He was weak; he could be managed. The word went out—the leaders would try to sell the convention on Harding.

As balloting resumed the next day, the leading candidates continued to battle for position. Senatorial leaders worked their way through delegations urging a switch to Harding. Finally, on the tenth ballot, Harding swept to victory. The man who felt himself unfit to be president was the Republican nominee.

Harry Daugherty is said to have predicted Harding's victory and the way it would come about. In February 1920 the *New York Times* reported Daugherty to have told a reporter: "I don't expect Senator Harding to be nominated on the first, second or third ballot, but I think that we can afford to take chances that at about eleven minutes after two, Friday morning of the convention, when fifteen or twenty weary men are sitting around a table, someone will say 'Who will we nominate?' At that decisive time, the friends of Harding will suggest him and we can well afford to abide by the result." Whether true or not, from this report and from the circumstances of Harding's selection originated the famous political tale that politicians in "a smoke filled room" had given Warren G. Harding the nomination.[2]

The Democratic Conventions

Newsmen David Brinkley and Chet Huntley in their supplement for the election year, *Huntley-*

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 259-278.

Brinkley Chronicle, presented these vignettes of activities at other Democratic conventions.[3]

1. It Doesn't Always Pay To Be Nice Dept. At the Democratic convention of 1912, it was a "sure thing" that James Beauchamp "Champ" Clark would win the nomination. Made gracious by his apparent victory, Clarke's floor manager granted William Jennings Bryan's request for unanimous consent to interrupt the fourteenth ballot to explain his vote. Bryan's speech against "the interests" turned the tide against Clark. Governor Woodrow Wilson, who had been on the verge of giving up, won the nomination.
2. A third term for FDR had been highly speculative. A fourth wasn't. The Vice-Presidential spot was different, however. In 1944, possibilities included Alben Barkley, then Senate majority leader; Vice-president Henry Wallace; and James Byrnes, Senator from South Carolina. (Senator Harry S. Truman, who eventually won, wasn't being mentioned for the job publicly at the time.) The wheeling and dealing was going on before the convention even began. Just how active it was can be seen from a question asked of Senator Carl Hatch of New Mexico by a convention delegate. Riding in a hotel elevator with Hatch, the delegate said, "Senator, wouldn't you call this the nicest Vice-Presidential convention you ever attended?"
3. By the time that 1944 convention was over, however, Henry Wallace didn't think it was so nice. He wasn't renominated for the Vice-Presidency. Here's the way it went:
   After President Roosevelt's acceptance speech, a roar went up demanding the renomination of Wallace for Vice-President. At this point, Wallace forces started shouting out the "Iowa Corn Song." Convention officials tried to signal the organist to stop playing, but the music kept up. It seems that Wallace supporters weren't going to let the convention adjourn until their man was renominated.
   Desperate measures were called for. A convention manager was on his way to the organ loft with an axe, when a voice was heard through the uproar. It was Senator Sam Jackson of Indiana, the convention chairman, shouting, "The chair hears a motion to recess until tomorrow." Over the protests of the Wallace supporters he barked, "The ayes have it!"
   Nominated for the Vice-Presidency the next day, Harry Truman called the White House home one year later.
4. Surely one of the most unusual happenings in convention history occurred in Philadelphia in July, 1948. Grabbing the mike from Chairman Sam Rayburn, perennial Committeewoman Mrs. Emma Guffey Miller said that she wanted to give President Truman a large Liberty Bell made of flowers. Suddenly, out from under the bell came a flock of white pigeons. (A florist's press agent, on whose behalf the bell was being presented, had designated them "birds of peace"). Bigwigs on the platform cringed before the flapping and fluttering, as the delegates below burst into roars of delight.
5. In 1960, Kennedy headquarters at the Biltmore in Los Angeles resembled a crackling, well-run communications center. Before the balloting, the JFK forces had placed direct-line telephones underneath the seats of friendly delegation chairmen in the convention hall, so that the chairmen could let them know exactly where pro-Kennedy salesmanship had to be applied. Also part of the headquarters setup was a message center for receiving notes and pinpointing the whereabouts of pivotal people. The elaborate liaison seems to have paid off; the Kennedy managers' pre-vote estimate came within one ballot of JFK's winning total.

[3] "Huntley-Brinkley Chronicle," *Chicago Sunday Sun-Times*, August 25, 1968, p. 5.

The Republican Conventions

These stories about Republican conventions are also taken from the *Huntley-Brinkley Chronicle*.[4]

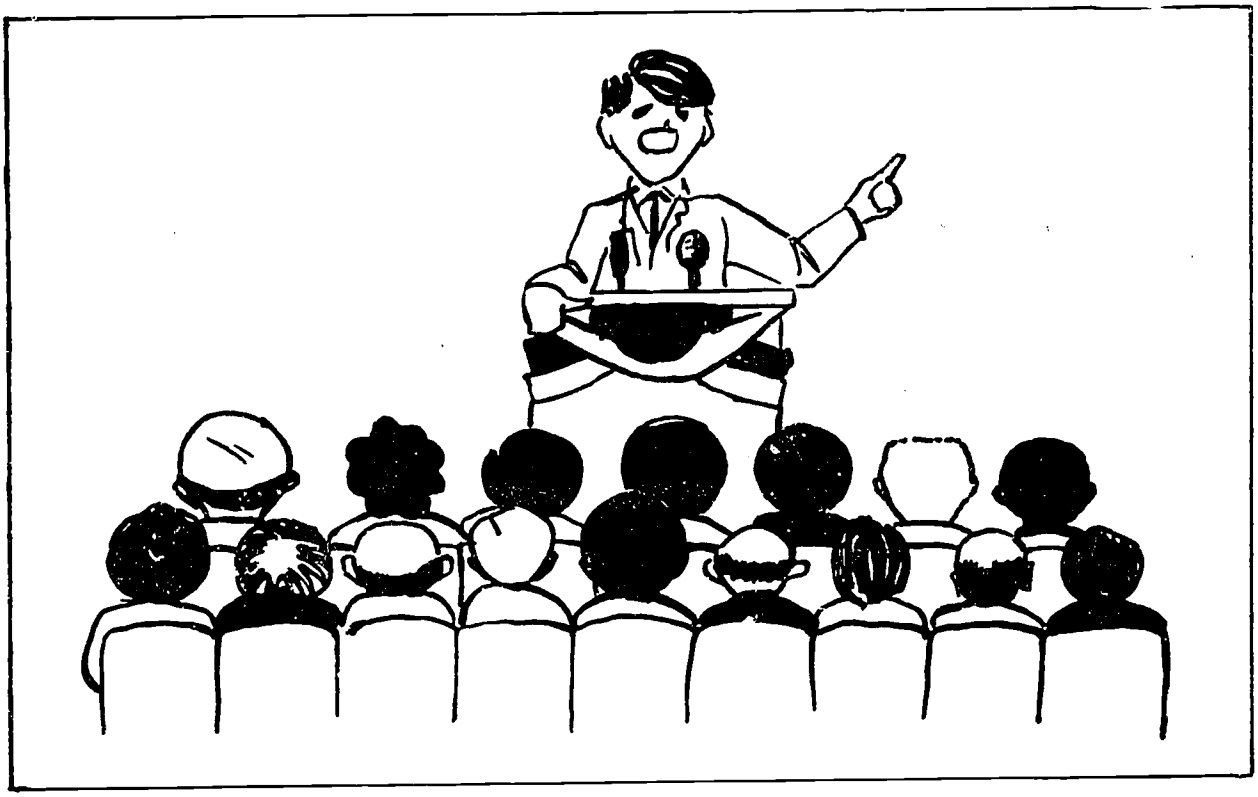
1. Reporting the 1856 Republican convention in Philadelphia, newspaperman Murat Halstead had this to say about John C. Fremont, who won the nomination: "The objectionable point in his personal appearance is that he parts his hair in the middle."
2. In 1860, when his nomination was in doubt, Abraham Lincoln wired the following to his campaign manager: "Make no bargains for me." The manager's reply: "Hell, we are here and he is not!" To get the nomination, the Lincoln forces needed the support of Simon Cameron, the Industrialist who headed the Pennsylvania delegation. So Cameron, who had visions of a job in the Cabinet, was told he'd get the post his little heart desired, and Lincoln won the delegation—and the nomination.
3. Does a gallery gone wild have any influence on delegates? Occasionally. Lincoln's cause in 1860 got a decided boost when Illinois Republican State Chairman Norman Judd, a railroad lawyer, talked his clients into letting

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

Lincoln supporters ride to the Chicago convention without charge. Judd used the freeloaders to pack the galleries.

4. Eighty years later, another Republican, Wendell Willkie, may have been helped by a vigorous cheering section in the gallery. "We want Willkie!" the chant began during the first days of the 1940 convention in Philadelphia. On the third to sixth ballots, the chant rocked the hall. Willkie was third on the first ballot, behind Dewey and Taft. By the time the sixth roll call had rolled around, he'd won the nomination.
5. When it looked as though Republican James G. Blaine would be nominated by acclamation in 1876, his opponents put off the vote by cutting a basement gas main, causing lights in the convention hall to go dead. Next day, enthusiasm for Blaine had died, too. Rutherford Hayes became the man of the hour.
6. At the start of the 1884 Republican convention, a newspaperman remarked, "I have reached the conclusion that if the nomination is to fall to either Blaine or (Chester A.) Arthur, it will go to that one who has in his service the abler workers in political jugglery and the greater adepts in trading for combinations.
7. In 1884 the Mugwumps bolted the Republican Party when Blaine, with better luck than he'd had in '76, won the nomination. The group name may have come from an Indian term meaning "big chief." Another definition had it that a Mugwump was a man with his mug on one side of the fence and his "wump" on the other.

Class Session Thirteen: A Man Who. . . . .



Alabama Yields

The credentials disputes are over, the platform adopted, the bands and pretty girls are lined up behind the scenes. All is ready for that electric moment, the roll call of the states to place candidates in nomination. The clerk solemnly calls the first state: "Alabama." Up to the convention floor microphone comes the chairman of the Alabama delegation: "Alabama yields to the great state of . . . . ."

Even as these words are being spoken, a carefully selected political figure goes to the rostrum and waits to be introduced. Then he begins to speak:

> "It is with great pleasure that I come before you to detail the accomplishments of a man who is known to you all. I present for nomination to the highest office of the land a man who . . . . ."

The words roll on, the speech builds to a climax, the restive supporters await the final pronouncement of the candidate's name.

Since 1832, candidates for the presidental nomination have waited outside the convention hall for the delegates to make their decision. The will of the convention determined their fate. But it was not always so.

Let The People Speak

Our first presidential candidates were not selected by the organized party processes accepted today. When political parties developed, they adopted their method of selecting candidates from procedures used in the legislatures of the various states. Party members of both houses of Congress met together in caucus to select their presidential candidate. Four presidents—Adams, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe—were nominated in this way.

The last of the congressional caucuses met in 1824 and chose William Harris Crawford of Georgia as their nominee. America had changed and grown since the adoption of the caucus method. The western states of Kentucky and Tennessee began to view the caucus as a technique for maintaining eastern control of the national government. Angered by Crawford's nomination, some of the state legislatures decided they were no

longer bound to honor the congressional choice. "Let the people speak," the state legislatures declared.

The Tennessee legislature placed Andrew Jackson in nomination on July 22, 1824, and other legislatures proposed their choices. Four candidates—Crawford, Jackson, John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts, and Henry Clay of Kentucky—competed for votes, each representing a different faction of the Democratic-Republican party.

Although Jackson received the largest percentage of the electoral votes, (39 percent) no one candidate received a majority. The House of Representatives was, by the Constitution, charged with the responsibility, in such circumstances, of selecting a president from among the three top contenders. Henry Clay, who ran fourth in electoral votes, threw his support to Adams, who was then selected as the sixth president of the United States. Front runner Andrew Jackson was thereby denied the presidency.

Jackson's supporters maintained that the caucus method of selecting nominees was undemocratic. They had lost in 1824, but they were determined to have victory in 1828. Nominated by a combination of state legislative caucuses, public meetings and irregular conventions of the people, Adams and Jackson squared off for another contest. The election of Andrew Jackson in 1828 signified the end of the congressional caucus.

A new system for nominating presidential candidates was devised a few years later by a party remembered only for this contribution to American political procedures. The Anti–Mason party, founded in 1827 in western New York state to oppose the growing power of the secret society of Masons, held a strategy meeting in 1830. On September 26, 1831, a total of 111 delegates met again in the Athenaeum in Baltimore to nominate William Wirt of Maryland as their presidential candidate for the 1832 election.

The Democrats noted this national convention with interest. Eight months later in May 1832, the "Republican Delegates from the Several States"* met in the Athenaeum to renominate Andrew Jackson. Adopted at this time was the convention procedure that a candidate must have two-thirds of the delegate votes to win the nomination. The anti-Jackson forces also held a national meeting and selected Henry Clay as their nominee.

In 1836 the Democrats met again in convention and nominated Jackson's political heir, Martin Van Buren, on the first ballot. The National Republicans, popularly known as Whigs, held no national convention. Four men were nominated in a series of state conventions to oppose Van Buren. His subsequent election verified the effectiveness of the national convention system.

Both the Democrats and the Whigs met in national convention in 1840—the Democrats to renominate Martin Van Buren and the Whigs to select William Henry Harrison. At the Whig convention, the unit rule was first adopted, whereby the chairman of the delegation casts all the delegate votes from his state for the candidate favored by the majority. In addition, one of the best remembered campaign slogans, "Tippicanoe and Tyler too," was used to help elect William Henry Harrison.

James R. Polk, nominated by the Democrats in 1844, was the first "dark horse" in convention history. The convention seemed deadlocked between Van Buren and Lewis Cass of Michigan. Polk received his first vote on the eighth ballot and was quickly nominated on the ninth ballot. The conventions of 1848 nominated Zachary Taylor as the Whig choice and Lewis Cass as the Democratic standard bearer. Both men were selected on the fourth ballot.

History's second "dark horse," Franklin Pierce, was chosen by the Democrats on the forty-ninth ballot after a convention deadlock between Lewis Cass and James Buchanan of Pennsylvania. The Whig front runner, Winfield Scott, managed to shake loose from an early deadlock with incumbent president, Millard Fillmore, to win the nomination on the fifty-third ballot.

A new party appeared on the political scene in 1856. The anti-slavery factions of the Whig and Free Soil Democratic parties joined together to form the Republican party. John C. Fremont, the first Republican nominee, was selected on the first ballot. The Democrats, divided over the slavery

* The Democratic Party was known officially as the Republican party, a name which came down from Jeffersonian days and popularly as the Democratic–Republican party. In early conventions, the names "Democrat" and "Republican" were used interchangeably. The name "Republican" was dropped in 1840 and the official name became the Democratic party.

issue, took seventeen ballots to nominate James Buchanan.

From 1832 to 1856, the national convention system flourished and effectively operated to select party nominees for the presidency. Delegate selection procedures and party rules were developed to ensure an orderly party organization. All seemed well—until the fateful election of 1860.

The Last Convention

Democratic delegates to the convention of 1860 were uneasy as they gathered in Charleston, South Carolina, to select their candidate. The country and the party were bitterly divided over the question of slavery in the territories. War had almost erupted in Kansas; an uneasy peace prevailed. Now two men—once personal friends and political allies, but now bitter enemies—held the power to unite or divide the party.

Stephen A. Douglas, the "Little Giant" from Illinois, had backed the anti-slavery Kansans who wished to see the state enter the Union as a free state. In 1854, he had introduced a bill which gave each new state the right to decide, upon entry to the Union, whether or not to permit slavery. Extremists on both sides of the slavery issue had rushed to Kansas. Federal troops had been ordered there by President James Buchanan to put down violence. The pro-slavery minority gained control of the state and rushed through a constitution which permitted slavery. Douglas, believing that a majority of the Kansans opposed slavery, had urged Congress to reject the state's admission.

Buchanan, aging and exhausted from the continuing dispute over slavery, strongly desired the adoption of the pre-slavery constitution. Only through this action, he believed, could civil war in Kansas be averted. Angered by Douglas' action, Buchanan managed to get Douglas read out of the party and stripped of the chairmanship of the committee on territories. Since that time, Buchanan had worked openly for the nomination of his vice-president, John C. Breckinridge.

In addition to this split between two powerful leaders in the party, the delegates assembled in Charleston were split between hawks and doves, northerners and southerners. Four distinct groups could be identified:

1. Northern hawks: openly hostile to slavery;
2. Northern doves: hostile to slavery but unwilling to force a split between the North and the South;
3. Southern hawks: openly favoring southern secession from the Union;
4. Southern doves: favoring slavery but convinced that the South's best interest still lay with the Union and the Democratic party.

All four groups were prepared to hold out for the nomination of a candidate favorable to their position.

Buchanan men controlled the platform committee. They sought to embarrass Douglas by forcing through a majority report recommending a congressional slave code that would permit slave owners to take slaves anywhere in the United States and be guaranteed protection by federal law. The southern hawks howled with glee! Now the federal government would have to protect slavery not only in the territories but also in the free states as well. Douglas and the doves were horrified. They urged the readoption of the 1856 platform which stated only that the Constitution permitted slavery and that the party upheld the Constitution.

After a long and acrimonious debate, delegates from Alabama walked out of the convention. Other southern delegations followed—Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina, Florida, Texas, and Georgia. The way was cleared for the remaining delegates to nominate Douglas. Now the Buchanan forces made their move. Convention chairman, Caleb Cushing of Massachusetts, a Buchanan man, declared the old party rule that a nominee must have two-thirds of the delegates votes was still in effect. That rule, Cushing declared, applied to the original number of delegates and not to the number remaining.

Ballot after ballot was taken. Douglas could only muster 58 percent of the delegate votes; the Buchanan men held firm. After 57 ballots, the convention adjourned without a nominee. Delegates agreed to reconvene in Baltimore in one month to try again.

In that month, Abraham Lincoln of Illinois was nominated by the Republicans, and John Bell of Tennessee was nominated by a group of independent moderates under the banner of the Constitutional Union party. When the Democrats met in Baltimore on June 18, Douglas supporters controlled the admissions committee. They refused to admit the delegates who had bolted the Charles-

ton convention and also denied admission to some regular party delegates from other southern states.

Moderate southerners and northerners alike rose to plead for party unity and the admission of the excluded delegates. The men hissed them down. When nothing seemed to move the controllers of the convention, the head of the Virginia delegation announced the withdrawal of his state. He was followed by most of the delegation from North Carolina, Tennessee, Maryland, and Kentucky. Then California, Oregon, and Massachusetts walked out. With only 13 states and 190 delegates left, Douglas was selected as the Democratic nominee.

The same day, the states that had withdrawn from the Democratic convention met at the Maryland Institute and nominated John C. Breckinridge. The Buchanan-Douglas enmity had left the Democrats uncompromisingly divided and had ensured the election of Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln's election signalled the secession of the southern states and the beginning of the bloody Civil War. In 1860, the convention process failed America—no leader who could govern all the people was put forward in this crucial time.

Recovery and Reassessment

Despite its failure in 1860, the convention process recovered and once more provided leaders with a mandate to govern. From 1864 to the present, 19 of the 26 Republican candidates were nominated on the first ballot, as were 17 of the 26 Democrats. Only four times—at the Democratic conventions of 1896, 1912, 1920, and 1924—were more than 10 ballots required to nominate a presidential candidate.

Although not every man nominated was the best man available, the men elected have been, in general, more than adequate. Five of our last 20 presidents have been leaders of unusual ability: Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, and John F. Kennedy. Ten others have led with moderate effectiveness: Rutherford B. Hayes, James Garfield, Chester Arthur, Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, William McKinley, William Howard Taft, Calvin Coolidge, Harry Truman, and Dwight Eisenhower. Only five men can be adjudged as failures: Andrew Johnson, U. S. Grant, Warren G. Harding, Herbert Hoover, and Lyndon B. Johnson. History may in time be kinder to the second President Johnson than his present-day critics are.

From 1824 to 1856, the convention system served America well. In 1860 it failed. By 1864, the system again functioned effectively and has continued to the present day to operate as a leadership selection process. Now, as once more America seems disunited and divided, critics of the convention are once more questioning its validity. But more about that later.

Student Activities

1. Write a short report on one of these "Also Rans" from the period before the Civil War: Henry Clay, Lewis Cass, Winfield Scott, John C. Fremont.
2. William Wirt ran as the Anti-Mason candidate in 1832. Find out how many votes he received, what states he carried, what happened to his party after that election.
3. Select one of these election years for study: 1836, 1840, 1844, 1848, 1852, 1856. Who were the candidates? What were the issues? Did the best man win?
4. Obtain some background information on the Republican party and report on its founding to your class.
5. Write a short essay commenting on this statement: A political leader should place party unity above principle.
6. Comment on this question: How would history be different if the newspapers on May 4, 1860, had carried this headline: "Democrats Unite Behind Douglas."
7. Write a short paper comparing the issues and men of the Democratic conventions of 1860 and 1968.

Class Session Fourteen: The Morning After

Time for a Change?

No sooner had the shouting died in Miami, scene of the 1968 Republican convention, than partisans of a new system for nominating presidential candidates opened fire on the convention system. David Brinkley (NBC News) called the system "boring and outdated" and suggested that each party nominate three men at convention and then allow party voters to choose the candidate from among these three through a national primary. Events in Chicago where the Democrats met did nothing to soften criticism of the convention system.

Strong arguments–pro and con–have been advanced over the years about the convention system. Today's assignment presents two views for your consideration. Both of the readings that follow attempt to answer the question: Is it time for a change?

The Breakdown of Political Conventions

Norman Cousins, editor of *Saturday Review*, made a strong attack on the national convention system in his editorial written for the September issue of this magazine.

The Breakdown of Political Conventions

With Hubert Humphrey's acceptance speech, the Democratic National Convention ended on a note of unity. But neither the final triumphant mood of that occasion nor the onrush since then of new political developments can obscure a long–overdue conclusion. The national political convention as we have known it is a messy, obsolete, and thoroughly unsatisfying way of selecting a candidate for the Presidency of the United States.

Just as the elector system gave way to the popular vote early in the nineteenth century, so the Presidential political conventions will have

to give way to nationwide Presidential primaries, for the political convention today is verging on breakdown.

A political convention cannot house two opposing philosophies of political selection. Part of the American people cannot be directly represented by the primary process while another part is made dependent upon the decisions of party chiefs. This does not necessarily mean that party chiefs are incapable of picking good Presidential candidates. The surprise is not that so few good men have emerged from this system over the years but that there have been so many. The greatest single imperative of the political leader is to find a man who can win in the most competitive game in the nation. This fact alone has caused many political bosses to swallow hard time and again in order to select men who can exercise some claim on the functioning allegiances of enough people. But the question here is not whether party bosses are capable or incapable of making responsible choices. The question is whether only some of the American people will have direct access to the nomination process.

A related and equally important question is whether the results of the primaries are to be genuine and authoritative or are to be merely advisory and indicative, with the ultimate power of actual selection remaining in the hands of the party leaders. Here, too, the conclusion is inescapable that the present system is unworkable and contrary to any purpose of principle of a free society.

Nor is the question of state prerogatives an issue here. Each state can have its own primary elections and offer its own nominees, but the primary process is an extension of the right to vote and therefore should be subject to national Constitutional standards.

Apart from all this, the political conventions are on the way to becoming, if they have not already become, a national liability of the grossest proportions. A political convention is bound to be a reflection of the men who run it. When the men who run it are cruel or vulgar or stupid, this fact will be on camera not just before America, but the entire world. One man alone at the Chicago convention—quite apart from the incredible amount of harm he did to the chances of the Democratic party in the coming election—damaged the U.S. incalculably in the world.

No one would have believed that a single American city political chief could have upstaged the Soviet leaders before world public opinion after the monstrous invasion of Czechoslovakia. But this is the undeniable effect of Mayor Daley's actions at the Chicago convention. It will take many months to assess fully the implications of the rampant police violence in front of the Hilton Hotel. No amount of provocation can excuse or explain the dramatically obvious fact that the police went berserk. They were acting not as police but as armed brutes given a hunting license against people. Mayor Daley claimed the police were only defending themselves. Yet what the nation saw was that the leaders of the demonstrators had linked their arms and were causing the young people to move back and were exhorting them to remain non-violent—and that it was at this moment that the police charged. Spectators on the sidewalk were attacked by the police and were pushed through store windows. Young people who were being thrust into the police wagons were clubbed by police who happened to be passing.

The authorized violence was in evidence shortly after the convention began. Strong-arm men, unidentified and refusing to identify themselves, knocked down delegates and newsmen or carried them out of the hall. No one questioned the need for full security measures to protect the candidates—not after two major assassinations in a few months. But it quickly developed that what was at work here was not so much a valid security effort as the intrusion of a personal Mafia-type operation.

All of it was on camera. None of it has to be interpreted. None of it can be glossed over or explained away. Mayor Daley has done serious harm to the historic character of the Democratic party. For almost a century, the Democratic party has sought to identify itself with a humanitarian philosophy and approach to life. But that image was hammered out of recognizable shape at the very forum that should be the highest experience of the life of the Democratic party.

No contrast could have been greater than that which was on camera between the persons of Richard Daley and Hubert Humphrey. But it is difficult to see how Hubert Humphrey can restore moral stature to the Democratic party before the nation and the world unless he explicitly disavows Richard Daley and uses all the prestige and influence of his position to separate Richard Daley from the Democratic party. The symbol of the political process for the young people of the country must not be the billy club but a willingness of those in authority to listen.

—N.C.

All this, however, is incidental to the central lesson, not just of Chicago but of the developing history of American Presidential election campaigns. The political convention as we have known it is no longer acceptable. It is in

sharp conflict with the growing importance of the primary election and will have to yield to it before it seriously disfigures both the democratic process and American society itself.

Saturday Review, September 14, 1968

The Monday Morning Quarterback

In the last chapter of their book, *Hats in the Ring*, Malcolm Moos and Steven Hess review the convention system and strongly support its continuation.

"An appraisal of the presidential convention must come to grips with two questions:

(1) Is the system representative?

(2) Does it produce the best possible candidates?

"There is, of course, a distinct difference between the decisions made in the nominating convention and in the general election. The convention is a party matter. It must be representative of the political party alone.

"A party doesn't reform; it is reformed. When abuses become gross, it is then forced to make changes. Through bitter experience, the parties have made adjustments in the distribution of convention votes to reflect a party's strength on a state, regional, and sectional basis. Yet at the 1956 Democratic convention the small state of Nevada had 11 delegates for every 25,000 votes cast in the state for Stevenson in 1952, while New York had fewer than one delegate per 25,000 votes. Changes are still needed, but at least we have corrected some of the worst abuses of malapportionment.

"However, in the important convention committees, each state, regardless of size or political leanings, has the same voice. The situation, in which an identical line-up of states in committee and on the convention floor can produce opposite results, encourages floor fights and is hardly a healthy condition for the parties. The solution would seem to be a revised representation on the committees to mirror the voting makeup of the full convention.

"Another facet of representation is the degree to which the delegates are representative of the party rank and file. Toward the end of the century, a Cook County, Illinois, political convention was made up of 723 delegates, of whom 17 had been tried for homicide, 46 had been in penitentiaries for homicide or other felonies, 84 were known to have criminal records, one-third were saloonkeepers, and several others were identified as gamblers or operators of houses of prostitution.

"Today the best studies on delegates to presidential conventions indicate that they have a higher than average income and educational level. If not typical of their constituents, at least they differ on the side of greater ability to meet the challenge of convention decisions.

"Assuming that all the delegates are of an exceptionally high competence, the manner in which they are selected is still of great importance—means rarely justify ends. Does the party rank and file have sufficient opportunity in the delegate-selection process? Is the process consistent with our democratic tradition?

"Commenting on the delegates to an early Democratic convention, the distinguished South Carolina statesman John C. Calhoun said: 'Instead, then, of being directly or fresh from the people, the delegates to the Baltimore convention will be delegates of delegates, and of course removed, in all cases, at least three, if not four degrees from the people. At each remove, the voice of the people will become less full and distinct, until at last it will be so faint and imperfect as not to be audible.'

"This condition later gave rise to the primary system of selecting convention delegates. Yet, while the primaries have failed to be the cure-all, we have been slow to admit their serious frailties. Few have dared to question whether the primary has fatal weakness for party responsibility.

"Fantastic claims were once made for primary elections. For example, in 1898, the noted economist John R. Commons argued that a primary-election law would 'increase the devotion to party and the acquiescence of the minority in the leadership of the majority.' Mustering the wisdom of hindsight, no experience with primaries suggests this. Rather, one is tempted to conclude that the primaries have almost the opposite effect.

"Of the 18 presidential primaries held in 1956, the two declared candidates in the Democratic party sought a direct contest only in Minnesota, California, and Florida. And the true rank-and-file sentiment was blurred in two of these states—by the possibility of cross-voting in Minnesota, and by the peculiar situation in Florida, where thousands who regularly vote Republican in national elections are registered as Democrats in order to have a voice in state political affairs.

"Too often primaries have been used not positively as a measure of men, but negatively to eliminate opponents. An unusual instance of this was a 1952 scheme aimed at cutting down the strength of Eisenhower in the Oregon presidential primary. Some followers of Taft, without his consent, filed Wayne Morse in the primary, also without Morse's consent. This created a ridiculous situation in which Senator Morse was compelled to barnstorm about the state urging voters *not* to vote for him. It reportedly cost Morse $10,000 to campaign against himself.

"The ineffectiveness of the primaries is shown by the dismal record of primary winners at the conventions. Teddy Roosevelt had an impressive string of victories in 1912, but lost the nomination. Senator Albert Cummins in 1916 and Senator Hiram Johnson in 1920, came out on top of the primaries but trailed badly at the Republican conventions. Furthermore, the candidates to run in the most primaries in recent years, Harold Stassen and Estes Kefauver, also ran out of steam by the final ballot.

"Moreover, there is something degrading and wasteful about a future president running in and out of soda fountains, beauty parlors, and chain stores, flushing votes after the fashion of a county commissioner working over his own precinct.

"The alternative to primaries is, of course, the older system of selecting delegates by the convention. Based on the assumption that those who do the work and take the interest in party affairs should choose the delegates, the convention method makes it more difficult for the casually interested to participate in the selection of delegates. Yet it does not exclude them, for one need only inquire to discover the extent to which most political organizations are 'open shops.' Only an active citizenry can reverse Arthur Krock's observation that 'state conventions can be boss-ruled more easily than state primaries, and often are.'

"Abandoning the selection of delegates by convention has an adverse effect upon the organizational vitality of a minority party. This cannot be taken lightly; if the function of the party out of power is to develop leadership for that day when it is brought to power, it is important to encourage the best means to preserve its vitality. And the convention, not the primary, seems particularly useful in this respect.

"Some of the confusion about presidential primaries today is that they occur at different times and without any unifying force. Would this be eliminated by a national primary? Thomas Dewey, twice a presidential nominee, thinks this would just compound the problem:

> ... Who could possibly run in ten or twenty primaries, to say nothing of (fifty)? Nobody could stand the physical strain of such a widespread travel and continuous speaking.
>
> Moreover, no candidate could possibly devote himself so exclusively to the pursuit of the Presidency unless he were either very wealthy or unemployed. Certainly, no one holding responsible office either in the Congress or as a Governor of a state could ever again be nominated for President under such a system.
>
> The expense would also be prohibitive. The cost to each candidate would run into many millions of dollars and if such sums could be raised, which I doubt, their expenditure would create a public revulsion.

"A national primary too would deprive our political parties of their greatest deliberative function. For the national convention brings the party rank and file and leadership into an interaction that is important in the competition for the mind of the party as well as for its body. Certainly the convention is essential to carbonate organizational efforts, particularly in the lean years, when a party may be fated to be out of power for several elections. It must not be overlooked that the convention serves as a meeting ground for the 'business agents' of a vast nationwide organization. Although this may have nothing to do with selecting candidates, the opportunity for leaders from all parts of the country to come together, exchange information, and write party policy, is a valuable contribution that the convention makes to our political life.

"Broadly, then, we answer affirmatively the question, 'Is the presidential nominating system representative?' Changes have raised the caliber of the delegate and the equity of the apportionment. Changes are still very much needed to tighten primary laws that weaken party responsibility and to encourage the rank and file to participate in the selection of delegates by the local convention method.

"Whether the convention produces the best possible candidate is difficult to assess because there is often a great deal of difference between a

candidate and a president. Candidates with unexceptional records have turned into extremely adequate presidents. A system that relies heavily in picking candidates on factors that are unrelated to ability has managed to come up with a very high percentage of able men. Even the 'also rans' have generally had an unmistakable luster, as seen when the losing candidates since 1916 pass in review: Charles Evans Hughes . . . James M. Cox . . . John W. Davis . . . Alfred E. Smith . . . Herbert Hoover . . . Alfred Landon. . . Wendell Willkie. . . Thomas E. Dewey. . . Adlai E. Stevenson.

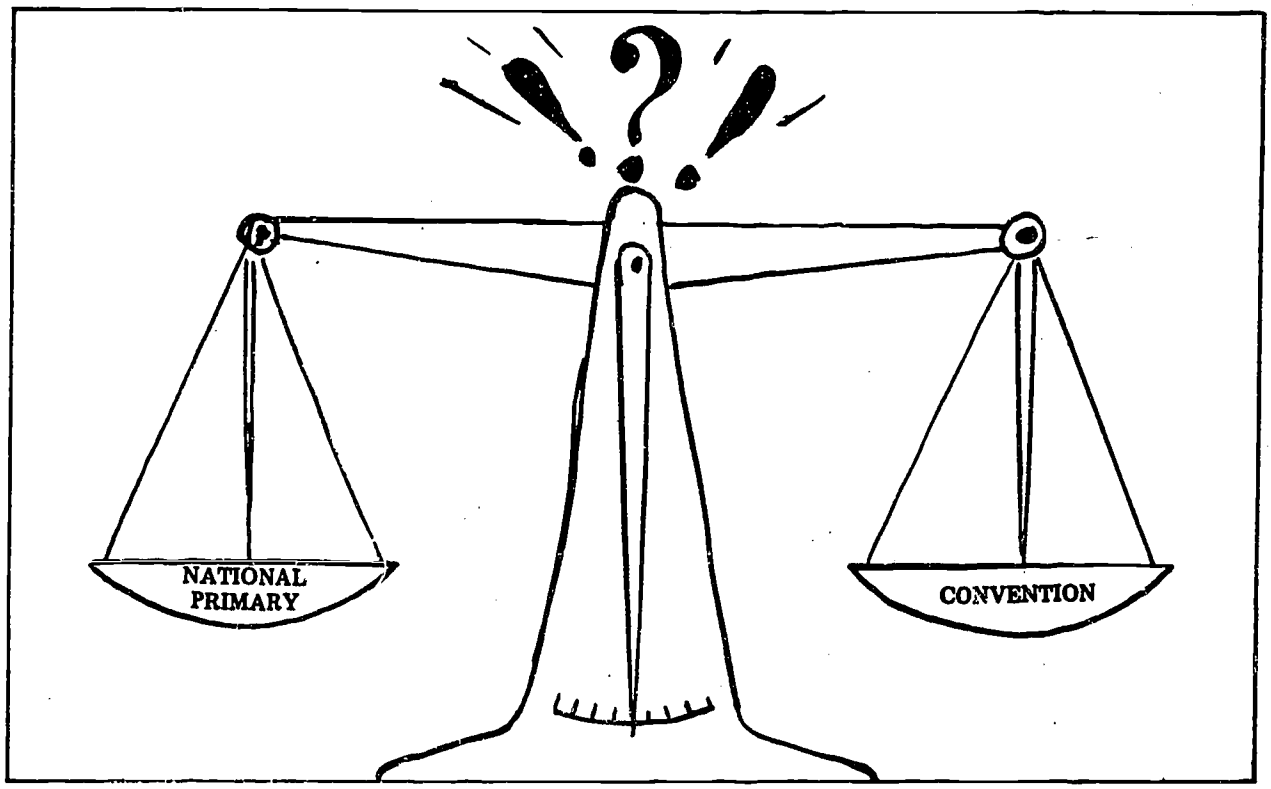
"The inescapable conclusion is that the national presidential nominating system has proved itself because it has met the basic political test—it works. It gives the United States an orderly method of leadership succession. . . .There are, of course, also those who believe that democratic decisions should be made by uprighteous Univac; that we can build into our political system some kind of institution that will mirror every nuance of public opinion. The nominating convention is clearly not such a mechanism. It is made up of men and women; of human virtue and error. Yet through this fallible machinery, the American people are given a free choice for president. When the campaign heat cools, the brickbats stop flying, the smoke lifts, we can be sure that the nation will unite behind its chief executive. This is the greatest tribute we can pay the presidential nominating system."[1]

Student Assignment

1. List the arguments Norman Cousins gives for a national primary.
2. List the arguments Moos and Hess give in favor of continuing the convention system.
3. Write separate one-paragraph statements telling how you would stand on the question if you were one of the following men:
   a. chairman of the Democratic Party in Cook County
   b. a delegate to the convention chosen at a district meeting
   c. a delegate to the convention elected in a primary
   d. the supporter of a losing candidate who did not receive the party's nomination at convention
   e. an independent voter

[1] Malcolm Moos and Steven Hess, *Hats in the Ring*, pp. 162-168, 171.

Class Session Fifteen: You Be the Judge



Discussing the Issue

Your teacher will assign you to a group of five students. Each group will discuss the question: Should the national convention system be discarded in favor of a national primary? Select one member of your group to serve as a recorder. That person will also have the responsibility of reporting the ideas of your group to the total class.

The questions are suggested for discussion in your small group session:

1. What arguments can you give to support the idea that the convention system should be maintained?
2. What arguments can you give to support the idea of a national primary?
3. How do you think a national primary will affect party responsibility?
4. Comment on the statement: Those who do the work and take the interest in party affairs should be the ones to nominate the delegates and select the candidates.
5. Comment on this statement: The primary process is an extension of the right to vote and should be subject to national laws.
6. Can you think of other alternate solutions to this problem?
7. Should the convention system be changed? Be sure that you can give reasons for your group's answer to this question.

Student Assignment

The bug and the buildup, the delegate and the drive, the convention and the candidate-- we have finished our study of the national convention process as a vehicle for selecting leaders in our country. As a concluding activity each student will be asked to write a 200-word statement on one of these topics:

The convention system has served America well.

The convention system should be changed.

Be sure to include in your statement facts and examples taken from our study to substantiate your point of view.

APPENDIX:

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

FROM

1856 to 1968

CONVENTION DICTIONARY

YEAR	PARTY	CANDIDATE	NICKNAME	STATE	AGE WHEN NOMINATED	BALLOT	PLACE	BACKGROUND
1856	R	John C. Frémont	The Pathfinder	California	43	12th	Philadelphia	Army Officer Explorer U.S. senator
	D	James Buchanan*	Old Fogey	Pennsylvania	65	17th	Cincinnati	Diplomat Secretary of State Member, House of Representatives State legislator
1860	R	Abraham Lincoln*	The Rail Splitter Honest Abe	Illinois	51	3rd	Chicago	Member, House of Representatives Lawyer State legislator
	D	Stephen A. Douglas	The Little Giant	Illinois	47	59th	Baltimore (57 ballots Charleston)	U.S. senator Member, House of Representatives Lawyer
1864	R	Abraham Lincoln*	The Rail Splitter	Illinois	55	1st	Baltimore	President
	D	George McClellan	Little Mac	New Jersey	38	1st	Chicago	Engineer Army general
1868	R	U. S. Grant*	Hero of Appomatox	Illinois	46	1st	Chicago	Army general
	D	Horatio Seymour	–	New York	58	22nd	New York	Lawyer Governor
1872	R	U. S. Grant*	Hero of Appomatox	Illinois	50	1st	Philadelphia	Incumbent President
	D	Horace Greeley	Old White Hat	New York	61	1st	Baltimore	Reporter Member, House of Representatives Editor
1876	R	Rutherford B. Hayes*	Old 8 to 7	Ohio	54	7th	Cincinnati	Lawyer Member, House of Representatives Army general Governor
	D	Samuel J. Tilden	The Great Forecloser	New York	62	2nd	St. Louis	Lawyer State legislator Governor
1880	R	James A. Garfield*	Canal Boy	Ohio	49	36th	Chicago	Lawyer General Member, House of Representatives
	D	Winfield S. Hancock	Superb Hancock	Pennsylvania	56	2nd	Cincinnati	Army general
1884	R	James G. Blaine	Plumed Knight	Maine	54	44th	Chicago	Teacher-editor Speaker, House of Representatives Secretary of State
	D	Grover Cleveland*	Hangman of Buffalo	New York	47	2nd	Chicago	Lawyer Mayor Governor
1888	R	Benjamin Harrison*	Kid Glove	Ohio	55	8th	Chicago	Lawyer Army general U.S. senator
	D	Grover Cleveland	Hangman	New York	51	1st	St. Louis	Incumbent President
1892	R	Benjamin Harrison	Kid Glove Harrison	Ohio	59	1st	Minneapolis	Incumbent President
	D	Grover Cleveland*	Hangman of Buffalo	New York	55	1st	Chicago	Former President

*Elected

1896	R	William McKinley*	Idol of Ohio	Ohio	53	1st	St. Louis	Lawyer Army major Member, House of Representatives
	D	Wm. Jennings Bryan	Great Commoner	Nebraska	36	5th	Chicago	Lawyer Member, House of Representatives
1900	R	William McKinley*	Idol of Ohio	Ohio	57	1st	Philadelphia	Incumbent President
	D	Wm. Jennings Bryan	Great Commoner	Nebraska	40	1st	Kansas City	Lawyer
1904	R	Theodore Roosevelt*	Hero of San Juan Hill	New York	46	1st	Chicago	Governor Incumbent President
	D	Alton B. Parker	Gold Candidate	New York	52	1st	St. Louis	Judge
1908	R	William Howard Taft*	–	Ohio	51	1st	Chicago	Solicitor general Judge Secretary of War
	D	Wm. Jennings Bryan	Great Commoner	Nebraska	48	1st	Denver	Lawyer
1912	R	William Howard Taft	–	Ohio	55	1st	Chicago	Incumbent President
	D	Woodrow Wilson*	Professor	New Jersey	56	46th	Baltimore	Professor University president Governor
1916	R	Charles Evans Hughes	–	New York	54	3rd	Chicago	Governor Supreme Court justice
	D	Woodrow Wilson*	Professor	New Jersey	60	1st	St. Louis	Incumbent President
1920	R	Warren G. Harding*	–	Ohio	55	10th	Chicago	Publisher and editor U.S. senator
	D	James Cox	–	Ohio	50	44th	San Francisco	Publisher Governor
1924	R	Calvin Coolidge*	Silent Cal	Massachusetts	52	1st	Cleveland	Lawyer Governor Vice-President Incumbent President
	D	John W. Davis	–	West Virginia	51	103rd	New York	Member, House of Representatives Solicitor general
1928	R	Herbert Hoover*	Chief	California	54	1st	Kansas City	Engineer Secretary of Commerce
	D	Alfred E. Smith	Happy Warrior	New York	55	1st	Houston	State Legislator Governor
1932	R	Herbert Hoover	Chief	California	58	1st	Chicago	Incumbent President
	D	Franklin D. Roosevelt*	F.D.R.	New York	50	4th	Chicago	Lawyer Assistant Secretary of the Navy Governor
1936	R	Alfred Landon	Kansas Coolidge	Kansas	45	1st	Cleveland	Businessman Governor
	D	Franklin D. Roosevelt*	F.D.R.	New York	54	1st	Philadelphia	Incumbent President
1940	R	Wendell Willkie	Barefoot Boy from Wall Street	New York	48	6th	Philadelphia	Businessman Lawyer
	D	Franklin D. Roosevelt*	F.D.R.	New York	58	1st	Chicago	Incumbent President
1944	R	Thomas E. Dewey	–	New York	42	1st	Chicago	Lawyer District attorney Governor
	D	Franklin D. Roosevelt*	F.D.R.	New York	62	1st	Chicago	Incumbent President

*Elected

1948	R	Thomas E. Dewey	–	New York	46	3rd	Philadelphia	Lawyer
	D	Harry S. Truman*	Man from Independence	Missouri	64	1st	Philadelphia	Senator Vice-President Incumbent President
1952	R	Dwight D. Eisenhower*	Ike	New York	62	1st	Chicago	General University president
	D	Adlai E. Stevenson	–	Illinois	52	3rd	Chicago	Lawyer Governor
1956	R	Dwight D. Eisenhower*	Ike	New York	66	1st	San Francisco	Incumbent President
	D	Adlai E. Stevenson	–	Illinois	56	1st	Chicago	Lawyer
1960	R	Richard M. Nixon	–	California	47	1st	Chicago	Lawyer Member, House of Representatives Vice-President
	D	John F. Kennedy*	–	Massachusetts	42	1st	San Francisco	Author Member, House of Representatives Senator
1964	R	Barry Goldwater	–	Arizona		1st	San Francisco	Businessman Senator
	D	Lyndon B. Johnson*	–	Texas	56	1st	Atlantic City	Member, House of Representatives Senator Vice-President Incumbent President
1968	R	Richard M. Nixon*	–	New York	55	1st	Miami	Lawyer
	D	Hubert H. Humphrey	–	Minnesota	57	1st	Chicago	Lawyer Mayor Senator Vice-President

*Elected

THE DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN CONVENTIONS, 1976

A Case Study

By Jane Burton

It was a warm, sunny Sunday in July in New York City. The humidity hinted at possible showers later in the day, but mid-morning found 2000 people gathered in front of the Seventh Avenue entrance of the Americana Hotel. They were there to welcome Jimmy Carter, who was arriving from his hometown of Plains, Georgia, population 680.

Just three years before, Carter had been so little known outside of Georgia that he had stumped panelists on "What's My Line," but this Sunday nobody was asking "Jimmy Who?". In nineteen months of campaigning in 31 primaries across the country, he had won most of the primaries and had the Democratic nomination for President of the United States virtually assured. He was arriving in New York City with nearly 300 more votes than the 1505 he needed to win the nomination.

When Carter arrived at the hotel, he greeted his followers with the broad smile that was to become the feature of his face favored by every political cartoonist. He was ushered through the crowd by Secret Service men who were now assigned to protect him throughout the coming campaign. He and his family went immediately to the 21st floor of the hotel. Other guests at the Americana who might be curious to see where he was staying would find that the elevator was wired to automatically pass floor 21. Only a privileged few of the 350 staff members and volunteers working in the Carter sixth floor command center would have the orange pass necessary to get past the guards posted at the stair entrances from floors 20 and 22. In his four room suite, Jimmy Carter would watch most of the convention on television. He would follow the tradition that a victorious candidate does not appear at the convention until he gives his acceptance speech.

How had this man gained the nomination? How had he become the first person, except for an incumbent* President, to have the nomination virtually guaranteed before the balloting

*See Glossary

had ever taken place?

HOW CARTER CAPTURED THE NOMINATION

Jimmy Carter won partly because of the changing nature of Presidential politics. H. L. Mencken once said that party conventions were a combination of chess game and circus. The "chess game" was played by tough minded power brokers* making decisions behind the scenes while out on the convention floor the "circus" was carried on by delegates marching in the aisles with placards, balloons and songs promoting their candidates.

Most of this had changed by 1976. The powerful leaders of the party could no longer dictate to the convention. The presidential primary elections, which were first started in a few states in the early 1900's, had spread until well over one half of the delegates to the national convention were chosen by this method. The primaries had therefore become an avenue to the Presidency. They made it possible for a candidate who was not the choice of the party leaders to win.

Jimmy Carter made good use of this opportunity. He had been bitten by the Presidential bug while serving as Governor of Georgia. According to Georgia law he was forbidden to succeed himself. When Jimmy Carter's term ended in January 1975, he threw his hat in the ring for the Presidential nomination. His plan was to enter every primary and caucus* in all the states that had them.

The Democrats had recently reformed their election rules to include proportional representation. In previous years, a candidate who came in first in a primary could claim all the votes of that state. Now, the new rules would mean that even if Carter did not come in first, he could pick up some delegate strength. By entering every primary he hoped to accumulate enough votes to bring him close to the 1505, needed to capture the nomination.

During 1975 Jimmy Carter spent 265 days on the road making speeches and going up to thousands of people saying, "Hello, I'm Jimmy Carter, and I want to be President." His Georgia peanut farm and other holdings afforded him the time and money to be able to do this intensive campaigning. It was not until January 1976, that the polls began to rate him as a major contender; but as the convention drew closer, it became apparent that his months of campaigning had been effective. He had come in first in 17 primaries and second in eight. His nearest opponent had won only four first places and one second. Twelve Democrats had started this race, but by June 1976 Jimmy Carter had gone from a dark horse* candidate to front runner. He had campaigned longer

*See Glossary

and harder than any of the others. His campaign staff was well organized, and he seemed to have great voter appeal. He was arriving in New York City as the uncontested winner of the primaries.

The "circus" would still be held on the convention floor, but the game of chess had already been decided before the convention. Jimmy Carter had won this contest for power in the primaries without the backing of most of the powerful leaders of the Democratic party. Indeed, some of them were coming to this convention to get their first good look at the man who would be their standard bearer* in 1976.

THE BIG APPLE GETS POLISHED

New York City is sometimes called "The Big Apple". Like many American cities, it has had great problems in recent years. There is pollution, unemployment, crowding, crime, and in 1975 the city had nearly gone bankrupt. It had to borrow money from the Federal Government in order to pay its policemen, firemen, teachers and other city employees. Nevertheless the city leaders spent over six million dollars on the Democratic convention. They gave the convention the use of Madison Square Garden rent free. One hundred city buses took the delegates back and forth from their hotels to the convention, and "Welcome Visitor" signs were visible everywhere. The flags of 50 states fluttered along a thirty block stretch of Fifth Avenue, and sanitation workers had labored overtime for six Sundays to sweep the streets from Chinatown to Times Square. The Big Apple was well polished.

Over 5000 delegates or alternates and 4000 journalists would come to the convention. They would spend many dollars in restaurants and hotels, but the leaders of the city hoped to get something beside money from the visitors. They hoped the politicians and the public would be reminded that American cities were great population centers and were worth saving. They wanted the next President and Congress to do something about urban problems, and they put their best foot forward. It was generally agreed at the end of the convention that the city fathers had succeeded. When Mayor Abraham Beame appeared on the platform on the last day of the convention, the Texas delegation began a spontaneous cheer for New York which was enthusiastically taken up by all delegations.

THE CONVENTION BEGINS

At a little after 8 PM on Monday evening, July 12, the convention was brought to order

*See Glossary

by the Democratic National Chairman, Robert Strauss. He sounded the party battle cry:

> "Our Party, I am happy to report, is organized, vibrant, forward looking, and hell-bent on victory."

Strauss' statement reflected the confidence that this time the Democrats would not repeat the mistakes they had made in recent conventions. The Democrats had been out of office for eight years, and their past defeats were caused largely because they had been a divided party. We have read of the problems of the 1968 convention,[1] and in 1972 there had been so much wrangling on the convention floor that the scheduling of speakers had been a disaster. The 1972 candidate, George McGovern, had not been able to give his acceptance speech until 2:48 A.M. when most Americans were asleep. This year the Democrats wanted to avoid those mistakes. Party conflicts over rules, platform planks* and credentials would hopefully be settled in negotiations instead of in time consuming and bitter discussions. Strauss was determined to make the best use of the free prime time on television that the coverage of the conventions afforded. Aisles on the convention floor had even been constructed too narrow to permit parading by delegations. In fact demonstrations were forbidden, and many young men and women wearing blue blazers were stationed around the floor to urge delegates to take their seats and help keep the convention moving on schedule.

COALITIONS AND AMERICAN POLITICAL PARTIES

From the Keynote Address through the acceptance speech by Carter, unity was the goal of this convention. If the Democrats could unite and avoid the divisions of the recent past, it was felt they could win in November. But how could a party with so many factions* achieve unity? How could a party composed of liberals* like Representative Bella Abzug and conservatives* like Senator John Stennis be able to agree on a platform that all would endorse and then enthusiastically support? They would do it by demonstrating the genius of American politics which is the capacity to compromise and accomodate many points of view. When issues arose that threatened to divide the convention, opponents would get together and try to find a compromise solution that would be acceptable to each side.

[1] Slogans and Standard Bearers - The National Party Conventions pages 22-24

*See Glossary

CONSTRUCTING THE PLATFORM - THE WOMEN'S ISSUE

One issue that was a threat to party unity was the question of women's rights. According to Jane McMichael, director of the Women's Caucus, women made up only 34% of the delegates to the 1976 convention. This was a decline from the 40% female representation in 1972. Women activists were concerned about this decline in political power. They demanded that the rules committee "require" that 50% of the delegates at the 1980 Convention be women.

Carter and many other Democrats did not want to "require" the 1980 convention to have 50% women delegates. To "require" a certain number of women delegates was the same as setting a quota, and quotas are not part of the American democratic tradition. It is a democratic ideal that the best person should win a political contest regardless of race, religion, sex or ethnic* background. Yet it was true that women had not fully shared in power in the past, and some felt the only way to correct this inequity was to require 50% representation. They threatened to take this issue to the convention floor; and such a fight, seen by the nation on television, could seriously damage party unity.

In order to avoid this conflict, Jimmy Carter met with the Women's Caucus and persuaded them to substitute the word "promote" for "require". In return, he accomodated the feminists* by promising that he would work for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. He also promised to increase the number of women in high government office, if he were elected President. Compromise and accomodation had worked their wonders. The women's issue would not divide the Democrats in 1976.

Many issues were thus negotiated instead of becoming bitter disputes. It was as if the Democrats, tired of their own party's strife and perhaps the larger divisions created in the nation by Watergate* and the Vietnam war, had decided to smooth over differences and have a united party. In fact, the convention ran so smoothly that some feared it would be dull, and that the public would not watch a convention on television that did not have elements of conflict in its proceedings. Newsmen, hungry for controversy, seemed to search for dissidents* to interview but without much success.

THE NOMINATION

The convention proceeded smoothly, and on Wednesday evening the balloting for the

*See Glossary

Presidential candidate began. The states were called in alphabetical order to cast their votes, and by the time Ohio was reached, Carter had officially become the Democratic nominee for President. The T.V. cameras focused on members of Carter's family who were seated with other notables in the honored guests' section of Madison Square Garden. Carter was shown receiving the good news via television in the quiet of his hotel suite.

Tired delegates went back to their hotels that night to get some sleep and await the next and final day of the convention. Then they would find out who was to be Vice-President and hear the acceptance speeches of both candidates.

THE CHOICE OF VICE PRESIDENT

Though there had been no doubt about who would be the Democratic nominee for President, public interest had been aroused by the question of who would be the Vice-Presidential candidate. Since the convention was so solidly behind Carter — his choice for Vice-President would be accepted by the delegates. In The Making of the President-1972, T. H. White says:

> "In the Vice-Presidency lies all the potential power of the Presidency itself— yet the choice is the most perfunctory and generally the most thoughtless in the entire American political system."

Carter did not intend to make a "hasty" decision on Vice-President. He said that he would pick a candidate for his ability to serve as President, his philosophical compatibility, and the geographic balance the candidate would bring to the Democratic ticket. He announced the names of seven possible candidates that he had studied and interviewed, but he kept the convention in suspense by refusing to announce his choice until after he had been formally nominated.

Since Carter was the first son of the old Confederacy to be nominated by a major political party since the Civil War, a Vice-President from the north was needed to balance the ticket. The Democrats could not appear to favor the South, for the South supplied only 170 of the 270 electoral votes needed to win. He chose Senator Mondale of Minnesota.

In this final selection of Walter Mondale, a northern liberal Senator, Carter demonstrated again his willingness to accomodate different points of view. He made it clear that there was room on his bandwagon* for many factions.*

CARTER'S POPULIST APPEAL

An interested audience, both in Madison Square Garden and across the country awaited

*See Glossary

the acceptance speech of Jimmy Carter. Chairman Strauss had succeeded so well in keeping the convention moving along that there was time to spare before the acceptance speeches began. Someone tossed a red, white and blue volley ball into the air and before long there was a fifty state volleyball game in progress. Here and there a sign calling for "Total Amnesty for War Resisters" or "The Right To Life" of the anti-abortionists bobbed among the myriad green banners naming Carter and Mondale.

At last, a way was made through the crowd, and Carter appeared before a jubilant convention. They cheered the man who had been able to unite the party and waited for his acceptance speech which would set the tone and reveal the strategy for the campaign to come. The opening sentence was "My name is Jimmy Carter, and I'm running for President to lead our nation back to greatness." He proceeded to speak from a populist* viewpoint. He said:

> "We've been without leadership too long. It's time for the people to run the government and not the other way around."

Since Carter had never held office in Washington D.C. and since he was not presently in any government position, he could present himself as a man of the people—apart from the recent scandals and failures of the national government. He blamed the Ford administration for "leaving the old, the sick without means, impoverished students, all cities with crisis ridden administrations, environment despoiled by industry, blacks, Puerto Ricans assembled before the door of American prosperity." He indicated that as President he would open the door to those presently left out of the good life. He promised to streamline the bureaucracy* in Washington in order to have a government more responsive to the people's needs. He promised tax reform, a reduced rate of unemployment, comprehensive health insurance and a more efficient system of justice that would not let "the big-shot crooks get away." New York City's leaders were delighted to hear him pledge help to the cities. Most of Carter's speech concerned itself with domestic affairs. Very little mention was made of foreign relations. This signaled the strategy of the campaign to come. The Democrats would attack the Republicans on domestic issues as yet unsolved instead of foreign affairs where the Republicans could claim several notable achievements in recent years.

Carter's appeal also included a strong emphasis on restoring morality to public office. Watergate and subsequent scandals had shaken the American people, and Carter saw that what the public most wanted was a candidate who could convince them that he could indeed "lead our nation back to greatness." Carter could claim to be such a man. His public and private record appeared to be of the highest moral character. He came from a family in the South noted for its courageous stand against racism.* He was the only man in his town to refuse to join the White

*See Glossary

Citizens Council, formed to resist the Supreme Court ordered integration of schools. He described himself a "born again Christian" and often spoke of love, explaining in his acceptance speech that "love must be aggressively translated into simple justice." He ended his speech by offering "an America busy being born—not busy dying."

Wild applause greeted Carter's last words. The convention was on its feet cheering so loudly that one could barely hear Peter Duchin's orchestra playing the Carter campaign song, "Why Not the Best?". Delegates hoped or were convinced that they had a candidate who would win in November and have a chance to fulfill the promises he had made.

THE REPUBLICATION CONVENTION
1976

THE UNCONVENTIONAL CONVENTION

The day after Carter won the Democratic nomination, President Jerry Ford called him and said:

> "Congratulations, Jimmy! I watched a bit of the program last night. I look forward to a good contest this fall. I think we can keep it at a high level. We'll give the American people a choice."

When President Ford called Carter he was not certain that he would be the Republican nominee to run against Carter. The Republicans were going to their national convention on August 16th in Kansas City unsure of who would come out the winner. Both President Ford and Ronald Reagan, former Governor of California, had almost enough of the 1130 votes needed to win the nomination. They had nearly split the delegates between them, but neither man was the clear winner. This was quite unprecedented.

In the normal course of events, an incumbent* President with the power and publicity of the White House behind him would have no trouble in getting the nomination. But these were not normal times. Gerald Ford was the first appointed President in the history of the United States. He had never run for office before a constitutency* larger than the Grand Rapids, Michigan Congressional District that he once represented. Then in 1974, he had been appointed Vice-President by Richard Nixon to replace Spiro Agnew, who had resigned that office after his indictment in a bribery case. Shortly after this, Nixon himself resigned in disgrace over the Watergate Affair, and

*See Glossary

Ford became President. Ford's electoral claim on the office was therefore very weak.

Ronald Reagan, who was very popular with the conservative right wing of the Republican Party, decided to challenge Ford for the nomination. The rules for choosing delegates to the 1976 convention had resulted in a large representation from the more conservative southern and western states. With these conservative delegates backing him, Reagan felt he had a good chance to beat Ford.

Conservatives felt that many actions of our government, such as those concerning abortion, busing, foreign policy, were steps backward, not forward and did not conform to the traditional Republican philosophy. They wanted to elect a President who would work to reverse some of these policies. Reagan was their candidate.

In the early primaries of New Hampshire, Florida, and Illinois, President Ford won; and it appeared that Reagan might have to withdraw. However, Reagan made two important changes in his campaign style when he got to North Carolina. In this primary, he turned to a heavy use of television, and he began to strongly attack Ford's performance as President. These tactics proved successful, and the result was a victory that kept his campaign alive.

There followed a series of important Reagan victories. In Texas he stunned the Ford camp by sweeping all 100 delegates. In Indiana he proved he had strength in Northern industrial states, and in the Nebraska primary he showed that he had strong support in the farm belt. But for all of Reagan's gains, he did not get enough delegates to assure his nomination at the convention.

Then several weeks before the convention, Reagan startled the party by making public his choice for Vice-President. He chose Senator Richard Schweiker of Pennsylvania, who was one of the Senate's most liberal Republicans. Since Reagan's strength was concentrated in the South and the West, by choosing the Pennsylvania senator, he hoped to shake loose some votes from the northern liberal wing of the party. Reagan's action shocked and angered many of his more conservative backers, but few of them actually deserted him.

By announcing his choice of the Vice-President before the convention, Reagan got a lot of publicity, but it did not seem to make a marked difference in his support. Just before the convention was to begin, the New York Times delegate count showed that Ford had 1119, or 11 short of the 1130 needed. Reagan had 1,034 or 96 short, and there were still 106 uncommitted delegates who had not made up their minds on how to vote.

THE UNCOMMITTED DELEGATES

Ordinarily, an uncommitted delegate gets little attention. But in this election the few uncommitted delegates had the power to give the election to either Ford or Reagan. Therefore,

they were pursued by both sides. There were friendly phone calls from the candidates to dine or have cocktails with him. One obscure delegate might get more of the President's time in one day than would be given in an entire to an ambassador from a middle sized country.

Because the contest was so close, emotions ran high. Each side could see victory ahead, and the thought of losing became intolerable. The Reagan camp charged that Ford was using his high office to obtain favors for delegates in return for their votes. An Illinois delegate claimed that a Reagan supporter had tried to bribe her to vote for Reagan. This charge and other similar ones were not proven and were soon forgotten. If Unity had been the theme of the Democratic Convention, then disunity was fast becoming the theme of the Republican convention. As the convention opened in Kansas City, many Republicans feared the party was so split that whoever won the nomination would not have the loyal backing of the other faction* needed to win against Carter.

THE CANDIDATES ARRIVE IN KANSAS CITY

It is said that when a New Yorker was asked "What do you think of Kansas City?", he replied, "I never think of Kansas City." The city fathers were anxious to avoid this possibility. Here in America's heartland, surrounded by green fields of corn "as high as an elephant's eye", Kansas City had been undergoing a 5.3 million dollar face lifting in the last four years. Once it had been a one cabin starting point for the Santa Fe and Oregon trails, but now it boasted of freeways, shopping centers, art museums, and hotel complexes that could compare with the best. Even in 1900, when the Democrats had held their convention here, there had been dust in the streets with an occasional tumbleweed blowing past the steers and cowboys. But in 1976, the only cattle most delegates would see would be served up in some Kansas city's fashionable steak restaurants.

The convention was held in the new Kemper Arena, a 23 million dollar structure normally used by the Kansas City Kings of the National Basketball Association. It would host the more than 17,000 convention goers within the facilities equal to those in New York City. Indeed, television viewers would note little difference between the layout in the Kemper Arena and that in Madison Square Garden. A speakers' rostrum was flanked by large rectangular boxes with seats and writing desks for the scores of reporters. Spread out on the floor below the rostrum would be the convention's 2259 delegates—seated by states.

Breaking tradition, Ford had come to town early. Usually the incumbent President would wait until after he had been nominated and then fly to the convention city to make his acceptance

*See Glossary

speech. But as we have said, this was not a usual convention. Ford and fifty-nine members of his White House staff came to Kansas City the Sunday before the convention and set up a political "White House" in two floors of the Crown Center Hotel. Adjacent to Ford's hotel suite was the President's office, complete with Presidential seal, the American flag and photo displays showing him and his family with various world leaders. Here he would direct the tense fight to hold his delegate strength and try to gain the additional votes that would give him a first ballot victory.

Reagan, too, reached Kansas City early–settling into his suite in the Alameda Hotel. His strategy was to try to stop Ford from going over the top on the first ballot. The President's failure to do so would be a damaging psychological blow to his campaign and Reagan hoped to then be able to swing the convention in his favor.

Reagan's campaign manager directed the operation from a 50-foot trailer outside the Kemper Arena. Phone connections went to every state delegation and carefully prepared charts on how each delegate was expected to vote would be followed to note any change.

THE CONVENTION BEGINS

On Monday night the convention opened, and the Keynote Speech was given by Senator Howard Baker of Tennessee, a Vice Presidential hopeful. He spoke openly about the issue embarrassing the Republicans–the Watergate Scandal. He said that Watergate was in the past, and that the Republicans had "cleaned house". He stressed the success of the Ford administration in reducing the rate of inflation and pointed out that the country was at peace. As all keynote speakers at previous conventions, he predicted a victory for his party in the November election.

While Baker and others gave speeches, the backers of Ford and Reagan were maneuvering behind the scenes to try to strengthen their forces for a showdown on a rules vote that would take place the next day.

THE AMENDMENT 16-C

The Reagan backers had introduced an amendment to the rules of the convention which would require all candidates to name their vice-presidential running mate before the convention voted for the presidential nominee. This amendment, 16C, would force Ford to announce his choice by Wednesday morning. Of course, Reagan had already announced his choice several weeks before, but Ford had followed the tradition of waiting until after the nomination for President was decided. Reagan hoped that whomever Ford would choose might offend someone of his followers, and

that forcing Ford to announce his choice might result in a gain in delegates for Reagan.

Ford's supporters knew that the vote on 16C wouid be seen as a test of Ford's strength; and that if he lost this vote, it might start a stampede toward Reagan in the balloting for the nomination. Tuesday's rules vote therefore became a showdown vote—one which could decide the final choice of the party's nominee.

THE SHOWDOWN VOTE

On Tuesday evening the atmosphere of the convention was so supercharged with the competition between Ford and Reagan that even their wives became involved. When either Nancy Reagan or Betty Ford appeared in the arena, it set off a cheering contest on the two sides. On the convention floor, Vice-President Rockefeller grabbed a Reagan sign that someone had been waving in his face, and a Reagan backer ran over and ripped out the phone wires connecting the N.Y. delegation with the Ford command center. These incidents occurred as the delegates were listening to speeches for and against Amendment 16C. Finally it was time to vote.

As the roll call began, both sides were nervous about the possible switching of votes by the delegates pledged to them. Reagan picked up an early lead for 16C in the southern and western territory, but as the large northern states started voting, Ford began to close the gap. The final count was 1,180 voting with Ford against the amendment, 1,069 for Reagan's amendment. and 10 abstentions. Ford's convention floor manager Senator Robert Griffin of Michigan, yelled, "That did it! That's it! That's it!" The defeat of Amendment 16C proved that Ford commanded a majority of votes on the convention floor and would be the likely winner of the nomination for President when the voting took place the next day. The seven grueling months of struggle between the Ford and Reagan forces were finally coming to an end.

THE REPUBLICAN PLATFORM

After Amendment 16C was defeated, the convention turned its attention to the business of final agreement on the party platform. Party platforms are not contracts between the party and the electorate. Some have called them "throwaway" documents because they are rarely referred to after the election. But platforms are an important barometer of each party's intellectual and political mood. They point out the general direction of political leadership.

The Republican and Democratic platforms pointed down two very different paths. The preamble to the Democratic platform had promised government involvement. "We do pledge a

government that will be committed to a fairer distribution of wealth, income and power." In contrast, the Republican preamble promised to reduce government involvement. It said: "The Democrats' platform repeats the same thing on every page–more government, more spending, more inflation. Compare. This Republican platform says exactly the opposite–less government, less spending, less inflation."

American voters were being offered one of the most clear-cut choices in recent memory between the Democratic and Republican platforms. The Democrats favored a "comprehensive national health insurance system with universal and mandatory* coverage." The Republicans opposed national health insurance and advocated insurance by private companies.

The Republicans opposed forced busing for integration; the Democrats accepted it as a "judicial tool of last resort."

The Republicans supported an amendment to the constitution to permit the states to prohibit abortion; the Democrats did not.

The Republicans denounced government sponsored public work programs, while the Democrats pledged the government to "reduce adult unemployment to 3% within four years."

The Republicans urged the development and construction of expensive new military weapons; the Democrats recommended a go slow policy on military expenditures.

In many other areas the two parties were at odds. The Republican document was clearly conservative and reflected the influence that Ronald Reagan and his followers had in shaping the party platform. Whether or not Reagan won the nomination, he had affected the direction of the Republican campaign.

FORD GETS THE NOMINATION

On Wednesday night, when Ronald Reagan's name was placed in nomination, one of the longest convention demonstrations in this century erupted. For a full 44 minutes his followers waved banners, cheered, snake danced through the narrow crowded aisles and blew long plastic horns that had been supplied to his delegates. These horns were bellowing their resistance to the nomination of Gerald Ford; but one Mississippi delegate was quoted as saying, "Sounds like an old cow who needs milkin' bad". It was the final tribute that the stubborn and deeply disappointed backers of Reagan paid to the doomed candidacy of their nominee. They could make noise and temporarily resist the efforts of the convention chairman to restore order, but they did not have

*See Glossary

enough votes to elect their man, and they knew it. When the time for voting came, Gerald Ford won on the first ballot 1,187 to 1,070.

Though Ford had won the nomination, he could not hope to win the election in November without the help of the Reaganites. Nearly one-half of the delegates had worked for Reagan and against Ford. Now Ford's biggest task was to heal the wounds. As soon as he was officially nominated on Wednesday night, Gerald Ford traveled across town to speak to the defeated Reagan. "Governor, it was a great fight" he said graciously as the two met in Reagan's hotel. "You've done a tremendous job. I just wish I had some of your talents and your tremendous organization." The next day Reagan appeared on the rostrum of the convention to congratulate President Ford on his victory and pledge his support.

FORD PICKS A VICE PRESIDENT

There have been unverified reports that if Ronald Reagan had wanted it, he could have had the Vice-Presidential nomination. That would have been the easiest way to heal the breach resulting from this close contest. But Reagan had said many times that he would be President and was not interested in the Vice-Presidency, and so Ford had to look elsewhere. He knew he had to choose someone who would appeal to the conservative backers of Reagan without at the same time offending his more liberal supporters in the Republican Party.

He also needed a good campaigner for the November election, which promised to be long and difficult to win. Not only was the Republican party split, but the national opinion polls in August were showing that the voters favored Carter over either Reagan or Ford.

Ford's choice was announced on Thursday, the final day of the convention. He had chosen Senator Robert Dole of Kansas, Temporary Chairman of the convention. Dole was a conservative, a forceful campaigner, and a midwesterner who could be expected to attract the farm vote. He had been a supporter of a constitutional amendment to prohibit abortion, and Republican leaders expected him to attract votes from Democrats who were upset with Carter's stand against such an amendment. The Dole candidacy was routinely approved by the convention and the delegates awaited the final acceptance speeches that would mark the end of the 1976 convention.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE MEDIA

Before Gerald Ford gave his acceptance speech there was a fifteen minute film praising his character and achievements while in the White House. A large portion of the more than 115

millions television sets in the U.S.A. were tuned into the final night of the Republication convention. Ford's managers were making good use of the free television exposure given to candidates during political conventions. They were well aware that television has become an increasingly important part of the political decision making process.

More than a century ago when Presidential candidate Abe Lincoln debated Stephen A. Douglas, their audience was limited to the acre or two of spectators that could hear their voices. It wasn't until around 1920, that loudspeakers were available to send voices over larger areas. The first radio broadcast of a political convention was in 1924 in Madison Square Garden when the delegates went through 103 ballots sending out over static filled airways the words "Al-a-bam-a casts twenty fo' votes for. . . Oscar W. . . Underwood." Today millions of voters can see and hear the election process from their living rooms. Delegates have become aware that should they be unruly or asleep in their chairs, that fact might be picked up by the roving television camera and beamed back to their home town. Candidates know that television publicity is especially influential because it reaches so many people. Convention chairman try to schedule all important speeches for prime viewing time, and the old fashioned demonstrations in the aisles bring chills instead of thrills to the man trying to keep the schedule.

It has been said that politicians are more guarded and self-conscious because of the giant audiences, and as a result the conventions are less colorful or interesting. Both parties have television consultants who prepare the commercials for the parties and advise on such matters as the use of teleprompters, wardrobes and make-up. On the other hand, television coverage tests the candidates and allows the American people to judge better their views and personalities.

Covering the national conventions is considered the olympics of television journalism. NBC and CBS each spent around ten million dollars for facilities, transmission and man power. Neither network hoped to recover much more than one third of this expense in advertising, but according to one NBC executive, it is done because "We owe it to the country and to the general understanding of the political process to let the Democrats and Republicans put on their full show once every four years."

FORD'S ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

The Republican convention was coming to an end. The orchestra played "Hail to the Chief" and Gerald Ford appeared on the speakers' rostrum to accept the nomination with a speech that he hoped would inspire the delegates and the millions of television viewers to back him in November.

It was a fighting speech that directed the party's passions away from their inner angers and toward the fight against the Democrats. First he listed the accomplishments of his term of office. "From August of 1974 to August of 1976, the record shows steady upward progress toward prosperity, peace and public trust. It is a record I am proud to run on." Then he identified himself with those who were dissatisfied with the performance of the Congress which had a Democratic majority. "I want a change in Washington, too," Ford said. "After 22 years of majority misrule, I want a new Congress."

Since the Democrats held the majority in Congress, it was plain that the Republican campaign strategy would be to blame some failures of the federal government on the Congress. He asked for help against this "vote hungry, free spending Congressional majority" and claimed that he had vetoed many of their proposals because he was "against the big tax spender and for the little tax payer."

Then Ford brought the delegates to their feet cheering, as he said "This year the issues are on our side, and I'm ready and eager to go before the American people and debate the issues face to face with Jimmy Carter." There had not been any debates between Presidential candidates since the Nixon-Kennedy encounters in 1960. Those four debates were credited with having given Kennedy the election victory, and in the years following, candidates had shied away from risking so much on a few television debates. Now in the Bicentennial year, these two great conventions were ending up with candidates confident and willing to debate each other in front of the American people. Jimmy Carter wired his acceptance immediately. The democratic process was alive and well in the United States of America.

PARTIAL GLOSSARY

Incumbent	The person, a Congressman, Senator or a President, still holding office at the time of election
Power-Brokers	Selected leaders who hold positions of power in the political party
Caucus	Usually a closed meeting of a committee, a group of leaders or of a special interest group
Standard Bearer	A Presidential candidate who heads the list of candidates of his party
Dissidents	The opposition or dissenters
Jumping on the Bandwagon	A custom at national party conventions by which state delegations hurry to cast their ballots for the candidate who appears to be the obvious winner
Factions	Splinter groups in the party
A mandate	The promises made by the candidate and accepted in the party platform at the convention
Bureaucracy	The governmental officials
Racism	A pronounced dislike for a particular race. Usually used to denote dislike for minorities of color
Planks	Special resolutions in the party platforms, pertaining to particular issues
Liberals	A term usually used for people favoring governmental help for the poor, the aged and the minorities
Conservatives	A term usually used for people favoring a balanced budget on all governmental levels and spending of public monies within fiscal responsibility
Populist	Usually people who favor help for small farmers, lower taxes and restrictions on big banks
Watergate	Generally the term refers to a series of scandals that took place during the second term of President Richard Nixon.