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COMMENTARY: The Governors

FOOLING SOME OF THE PEOPLE SOME OF THE TIME

by Dick Behn

This past year has not been kind to many of the nation's governors. Scandals, political backbiting, and budget deficits have deflated a large portion of the statehouse residents. Although a large crop of Democratic governors was elected to office on the basis of raised expectations, a lot of them have come to adopt Jerry Brown's notion of "lowered expectations" out of necessity if not belief.

Though Democrats outnumber Republicans by a margin of 36-13, it's a dubious honor to be a governor these days. How dubious was demonstrated by Colorado's Gov. Richard Lamm last February when he berated Colorado journalists for not greeting his introduction with a standing ovation. Since his election in 1974, Lamm has been touted as one of the "new breed" of Democratic governors. After his February outburst, Colorado residents suspected they had detected a new breed of arrogance. Like others of the new breed who have found that electing a Democratic legislature is easier than dealing with one, Lamm has had difficulty fulfilling his campaign promises.

New England is representative of the rest of the country in that regard. Gov. Philip Noel(D) won his last election with 78 percent of the vote. By conventional political arithmetic, Noel should be a shoo-in to succeed Sen. John Pastore(D), but time and difficulties with public employee unions have had a corrosive effect on his gubernatorial popularity. Legislators were unhappy with the governor in the last session and a remark interpreted as a racial slur forced Noel's removal as chairman of the Democratic platform committee.

In Massachusetts, Gov. Michael Dukakis(D), who has won fame for riding public transportation and his other frugal ways, has not won the appreciation of public employees for his similar frugality with them. Dukakis is bright and compulsively scrupulous; these qualities are often interpreted as self-inflated importance and insensitivity. Dukakis has developed something of a knack for alienating the legislature; he has a lamentable talent for

performing silly stupidities like nixing the appointment of a well-respected legislator to an executive department position after the legislator's resignation had already been released to his hometown press. Dukakis' decision to reject federal highway safety funds may have been justified but it infuriated not only the state legislature but also his own cabinet and the entire state congressional delegation. In the end, Dukakis was forced to do what most observers thought he was incapable of doing: back down. Integrity is a virtue and being pigheaded may even be a virtue at times. But Dukakis demonstrated the virtue of neither when he appointed to the state's Supreme Court a man rejected by the bar association screening panel ---whose decisions Dukakis had solemnly sworn to respect in his gubernatorial campaign. The governor's leadership has so unnerved the legislature's Democratic leadership that they are sure to find a candidate to oppose him in the 1978 primary. After promising not to raise taxes and then raising them, Dukakis may be in deep trouble.

Next door to Rhode Island and Massachusetts, Connecticut Gov. Ella Grasso appears to be surviving a bit more gracefully by playing the role of political "mom" to the hilt. Even she has long since evaporated the reservoir of support she had among public employees and exhausted her political capital in the Democratic legislature. Her relations have not deteriorated to the extent that neighbor Gov. Hugh Carey's have in New York. Carey's poor legislative relations with the Democratic Assembly led to the first override of a gubernatorial veto in this century. Carey's problems have been compounded by the fiscal difficulties of both New York State and New York City as well as the indictment of his chosen chairman of the state Democratic Committee, Patrick Cunningham, and Carey's attempted ouster of Special Prosecutor Maurice Nadjari, who was investigating Cunningham.

Gubernatorial problems are perhaps worst in the Northeast, but they are not unknown elsewhere in the country. In Alabama, while Gov.

George Wallace has concentrated on running for President, Federal Judge Frank Johnson has concentrated on running the state. Often called the "real governor" of the state, Johnson has handed down numerous rulings to reform state mental health, prison, and property tax programs. As State Senate President pro tempore Joe Fine has observed, Wallace "isn't interested in solving the problems. He just lets the courts take over."

For Gov. Dan Walker (D-Ill.) arrogance and a political tightrope act caught him off balance this year. According to the Chicago Tribune's Michael Kilian, "Abraham Lincoln was right and Gov. Dan Walker was wrong. You can't fool all of the people all of the time---not even a majority of those willing to vote in party primary. Dan Walker was defeated in (Illinois') gubernatorial primary for the same reason he was elected in 1972. He broke all the rules. Not only the unwritten "gentleman's code of political competition that even Mayor Daley's ward bosses ascribe to, but the irresistible, inescapable dynamics of Illinois politics. It caught up to him. In a volatile swing state with a suspicious, self-centered electorate, you cannot be loved by both Republican conservatives and Democratic liberals ---by both Big Labor and Big Business---for very long."

Not all the politicians with the gubernatorial blues are Democrats. Gov. Jay Hammond (R-Alaska) is out of favor with Republicans who disapprove of his controlled growth policies. Gov. Arch Moore (R-West Virginia) was acquitted of extortion charges this spring. Gov. Mills Godwin (R-Va.) and Gov. Meldrim Thomson (R-N.H.) have had more than their share of legislative problems; such difficulties have even struck Gov. Robert Bennett's Republican-dominated legislature. Gov. James Holshouser (R-N.C.) and Gov. Christopher Bond (R-Mo.) have been unable to control their own state's delegations to the Republican National Convention.

Still, because there are so many more of them, the problems of Democratic governors (some of which are outlined below) are more notable. There are 16 governorships at stake this year. Six are controlled by Republi-

cans. Three of those will be vacated by the GOP incumbent and could easily be lost to the Democrats: North Carolina, Washington, and West Virginia. Still, John Spellman in Washington and Cecil Underwood in West Virginia are quality moderates, and one of two able administrators in Gov. Holshouser's cabinet may win the nomination in North Carolina. Although Tarheel Republicans are trying to keep their gubernatorial race out of the presidential limelight, Spellman and Underwood could easily be caught in the undertow of a Ronald Reagan nomination. Although Indiana Gov. Otis Bowen (R) and Missouri Gov. Bond are solid favorites to win reelection, their leads could dissolve in a Reagan blood-bath. In New Hampshire, Gov. Thomson and Granite State politics defy prediction.

Two other states where progressive Republicans have good chances---Illinois with James Thompson and Delaware with Pete du Pont ---could bury the GOP if Reagan is nominated. In three Midwest and Rocky Mountain states---North Dakota, Montana, and Utah---Republicans have opportunities in close contests that will remain basically unaffected by the presidential race, regardless of the nominee. In two other states, Vermont and Rhode Island, the GOP has uphill chances to win the governorship. Although both state's voters have shown their ability to split tickets in the past, they may need compelling reasons to do so if Reagan is nominated. Only in Arkansas is the GOP already consigned to the political graveyard. The rundown:

ARKANSAS: The dilemma of Arkansas Republicans was aptly summarized by an editorial in the Arkansas Gazette just before that state's recent primary: Nothing illustrates any better the current political bankruptcy of both the Republican Party in Arkansas and its old arch-rival, Orval Faubus, than the report that its leaders talked to him about running for governor this year on their ticket, and that he considered doing so. Whither indeed, have we drifted, that the Republican progeny of Winthrop Rockefeller (who ousted the segregationist Faubus from the governor's office) would be reduced to treating with Old Orv as

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their last, best hope, and that he would be reduced to treating with them?...There could have been no more ignominious end to (the GOP's) reform heritage than to have been plastered this year trying to install Faubus again." Instead, the GOP had the forgettable distinction of choosing between Joseph "I-am-not-a-kook" Weston and businessman Leon Griffith. The Republican establishment rallied to nominate Griffith over newspaper publisher Weston, whose libelous antics frighten what's left of the GOP. (On the subject of Weston, the Arkansas Gazette noted: "A politician branded as a rat in the Sharp Citizen can count himself lucky, for that's about as mild as Weston gets in his criticism of officials he feels have violated the public trust.") Arkansas politics promise to be rather dull this year and the gubernatorial race will be no exception. Gov David Pryor(D) was elected with 65.6 percent of the vote in 1974 and should do even better this year. The election seems merely a warmup for Pryor's 1978 senatorial campaign when Sen. John McClellan(D) will retire. McClellan, who was almost upset by Pryor in 1972, backed a gubernatorial primary opponent of the governor without much success. The GOP's likely Senate aspirant in 1978, U.S.Rep. John Paul Hammerschmidt(R) has a similarly dull campaign ahead of himself. Having thrown the political book at Hammer-schmidt in 1974, the Democrats failed to nominate an opponent this year.

DELAWARE: Gov. Sherman Tribbitt(D) appeals to voters who don't want a governor to do anything. Doing things badly or not doing them at all is what Tribbitt does best. Although that approach may not accomplish much in state government, it does avoid generating antagonism from large blocks of voters. So despite Tribbitt's record of inept leadership, patronage mishandling, lottery failure, fiscal gamesmanship, and prison uproar, there's probably some value that voters see in the incumbent governor. Nevertheless, Tribbitt couldn't have asked for a more formidable Republican opponent. Whereas Tribbitt defeated a battle-scarred Gov. Russell Peterson(R) in 1972 with only 52 percent of the vote, U.S.Rep. Pierre "Pete" du Pont won reelection with 63 and 60 percent of the vote respectively in the last two elections. Du Pont's candidacy disposed of the persistent problem of Lt. Gov. Eugene Bookhammer when the latter dropped out of the gubernatorial race in May. Former State Auditor George Washington Cripps has also quit the GOP race in favor of a run on the American Party ticket. Articulate and progressive, du Pont is the favorite so long as voters don't get too fond of Tribbitt's weaknesses.

ILLINOIS: If Ronald Reagan is nominated as the GOP's candidate for President, 1976

could bear an uncomfortable resemblance to 1964 for Illinois Republicans. In that year, Sen. Barry Goldwater(R) dragged Charles Percy down to defeat in the gubernatorial race. The same thing might happen this year to former U.S.Attorney James Thompson, who might have been better off if Gov. Dan Walker(D) had not been knocked out of the race by Secretary of State Michael Howlett in the Democratic primary. Thompson is probably strengthened, however, by the decision of Walker not to make a third-party race and thus keep his own Democratic ambitions alive. A Walker candidacy would have cut into Thompson's margins in the Chicago suburbs and downstate areas where he needs to do well to counteract the Daley machine in Cook County. Daley certainly has an interest in keeping out of the governorship the man who has given his Democratic allies nightmares of prison life; the recent death of former Gov. Otto Kerner, who was prosecuted and jailed by Thompson, may reopen old wounds among Kerner partisans, but they are likely to be Democratic voters in any case. Despite his popularity, Howlett has done nothing to inspire voter confidence in his leadership capabilities; memories of the \$15,000 retainer he received from a Chicago steel firm will linger in the public mind. In the fall campaign, Thompson will obviously be the "quality" candidate, but the GOP attorney will be running not so much against Howlett as against Daley and perhaps against Sen. Adlai Stevenson(D), who is Daley's choice for vice president.

INDIANA: This state may have some of the closest races in the country this year. Although Republicans acknowledge that they face some stiff contests, they also feel confident that they will emerge the winners. Since coattails still operate in Indiana politics, a lot of Hoosier faith is focused on the candidates at the head of the GOP ticket: Gov. Otis Bowen and former Indianapolis Mayor Richard Lugar, now opposing Sen. Vance Hartke. Enmity from the bitter Democratic senatorial primary and Hartke's reputation as a turkey should help the Republicans in the Senate race. In the gubernatorial faceoff, Gov. Bowen's stolid, solid, small country doctor image should be a strong campaign asset. The Democratic candidate, Secretary of State Larry Conrad, is an able, personable campaigner who will benefit from strong labor support. Pre-primary polls showed him trailing Bowen, whose lack of flamboyance may turn out to be more of an advantage than Conrad's charisma. While Bowen is remembered for a tax reorganization which boosted the sales tax and lowered the property tax level in the state, Conrad is still vaguely remembered as the subject of a "master plan" for his own political ambitions reportedly written by state employ-

ees on state time several years ago. Although Conrad does not excite the rancor within the Democratic Party that Hartke does, his popularity within the party is not as universal as his 64 percent victory over two formidable adversaries would indicate.

MISSOURI: In terms of statewide strength, the Missouri Republican Party has perhaps the strongest potential ticket in the nation. Led by Gov. Christopher "Kit" Bond and Attorney General John Danforth, who is seeking a Senate seat, the ticket is complemented by an unusually able group of moderate Republican candidates for Congress. Moderate Republicans are furious that the unparalleled opportunities for victory by Bond, Danforth et al could be ruined by a Reagan presidential candidacy which would be a proverbial kick in the GOP head for the old Missouri mule. Bond is lucky that the Democrats' strongest potential opponent, State Auditor George W. Lehr, stayed out of the race. The Democratic frontrunner is State Senate President pro tempore William J. Cason, a reformed alcoholic who is trying to make a less-than-subtle issue of Bond's inherited wealth by using the slogan, "Elect a man who knows how to work for a living." Cason is weak in the St. Louis area, however, where former Jackson County Prosecutor Joseph P. Teasdale (D) has picked up strong support from Democratic leaders. Cason balances Teasdale's St. Louis support with his own union backing and can point to Teasdale's disappointing 20 percent finish in the 1972 gubernatorial primary. Given Bond's record of government reorganization and barring a GOP presidential disaster, Bond should win. Even so, Bond admits the rewards are limited: "There are times when I can't even get the heat turned on in this office. There's no substitute for being in what is supposed to be an all-powerful position as governor and finding out you really don't have much power."

MONTANA: With the retirement of Sen. Mike Mansfield (D), the expected retirement of Sen. Lee Metcalf (D) in 1978, and the financial difficulties of Gov. Thomas Judge (D), Montana politics is in a state of flux---a state that the GOP should but may not be able to take advantage of. Judge, who disclosed April 20 that he had not reported \$94,000 in contributions and \$81,000 in expenses from his 1972 gubernatorial campaign, decided to seek reelection rather than challenge U.S. Rep. John Melcher (D) for Mansfield's Senate seat. Lt. Gov. Bill Christiansen (D) decided neither to challenge Judge nor to run for reelection, thus avoiding another possible primary. So the Democrats, although vulnerable, have not bloodied themselves prematurely. The GOP candidate for governor, Attorney General Robert L. Woodahl (R), won his primary with a disappointing 57 percent of the vote against an opponent that he had almost totally ignored. Woodahl

has been the foremost critic of Judge's 1972 campaign financing and is expected to continue to attack Judge for his refusal to disclose his income tax returns. Woodahl's primary problems may have stemmed from Democratic crossovers, his opponent's "religious" appeal, or voter annoyance with his aggressive pursuit of Judge's campaign problems. Judge has a reputation as a slick politician, but the Watergate issue may put him on the skids.

NEW HAMPSHIRE: The names change slightly from election to election but basically the scenario for New Hampshire biennial gubernatorial elections remains the same: Cheered on by anti-tax conservatives and the Manchester Union-Leader, Gov. Meldrim Thomson (R) confronts and defeats a Republican moderate in the primary. This year, the moderate is Gerard Zeiller, a former Senate staffer and state official under former Gov. Walter Peterson (R). After narrowly defeating the moderate Republican, Thomson then goes on to narrowly defeat the conservative winner of the Democratic primary, who has won because two liberals have split up their segment of the vote. This year, the conservative Democrat is former Hillsborough County Commissioner James A. Connor; the liberals are the same ones who ran two years ago, former state legislators Harry V. Spanos and Hugh Gallen. One difference this year is that Zeiller has not been associated with pro-tax positions although, like Spanos, he refuses to rule out the necessity for imposition of a broad-based tax. Gallen has an opportunity this year because he's taken the anti-tax pledge this time; Connor has trouble because his campaign is disorganized. Connor probably would provide the most formidable challenge to Thomson by cutting into his strength in the Manchester area. Democrats may also be strengthened by strong congressional campaigns from U.S. Rep. Norman D'Amours (D) and Joseph Grandmaison, a former campaign manager turned challenger to U.S. Rep. James Cleveland (R-2nd). Outside of the usual gruesome editorials denouncing him in the Manchester Union-Leader, Zeiller has failed to attract much press attention for his primary campaign. Meanwhile, according to the Concord Monitor's Tom Ferriter, Thomson has mellowed his usually cantankerous disposition and begun to act surprisingly benevolent for a malevolent man. Commented Democrat Connor: "He'll start behaving himself now. He'll stop running all over the country and stay home. He'll be a good boy."

NORTH CAROLINA: Under the best of circumstances, North Carolina Republicans would have trouble winning the governorship this year. Far from the best of circumstances surround the Republican Party this year. Governors in this state are limited to one term so Gov. James Holshouser cannot seek reelection. Even if

he could, the party he represents has largely been cut from underneath him during the past three months by Reagan backers in the state. Holshouser's status in the party has fallen to such an extent that the prospect of his election as a delegate to the Republican National Convention was threatened. In a recent editorial on the proposed selection of anti-ERA leader Phyllis Schlafy as the keynote speaker at the Republican state convention, the Charlotte Observer said: "Phyllis Schlafy? Well, the state of the North Carolina Republican Party does get curiozier and curiozier. What kind of critter has it become...But if the Democrats are a party of unruly and obstreperous partisans, the Republicans---in North Carolina at least---seem to have become a party of schizophrania." It took the best of circumstances to elect Holshouser governor in 1972, but since then, the GOP has been repeatedly split between the Holshouser-Ford and Helms-Reagan factions of the party. Ford's defeat in the North Carolina presidential primary wounded Holshouser's prospects for a 1978 primary battle against Sen. Jesse Helms(R). Thus far, the four GOP candidates for governor have remained neutral in the Ford-Reagan squabbles. Because the GOP primary occurs on the second day of the Republican National Convention in August, there is some hope that the gubernatorial candidate may be able to salvage some party unity. Two of the three frontrunners, however, are former members of the Holshouser Administration: Human Resources Secretary David T. Flaherty and Transportation Secretary Jacob F. Alexander. The other contender is the Rev. Coy C. Privette, whose gained polish and name recognition through his involvement in Baptist church politics and statewide morality campaigns. Flaherty is the current frontrunner but it's strictly a three-way race. The leading Democrat is Lt. Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr., who is the most liberal of the three Democrats given a chance at winning the nomination. Although Hunt has advocated a strong lieutenant governor and a weakened governorship in the past, he has reversed his position now that he is seeking the top office himself. Democrats seeking a more fiscally conservative, business-oriented candidate are likely to favor either George Wood or Edward M. O'Herron, Jr. A strong GOP ticket---perhaps including black Republican Asa Spaulding for secretary of state---may help the Republicans, but it is a long way back from the disastrous defeats they suffered in 1974.

NORTH DAKOTA: The GOP's top priority in this state is the eviction of Gov. Arthur A. Link (D) from the governor's office. Other political considerations---such as the selection of national convention delegates at the July state convention---are likely to take a back seat to the party unity necessary to

accomplish this task. Since North Dakota voters have become accomplished ticket-splitters in recent years, the GOP will be able to concentrate on that objective without undue anxiety over the impact of the top of the ticket. State Public Service Commissioner Richard A. Elkin is considered the frontrunner for the Republican gubernatorial nomination with State Sen. Robert Melland close behind and State Rep. Robert F. Reimers, who ran unsuccessfully in 1968, as a third possible choice. The chief target of the GOP will probably be Link's leadership style and the lack thereof. Link's vacillation and procrastination have been particularly evident on gas and coal development issues. The GOP hopes to be able to take advantage of Democratic disunity on the subject---even if former Democratic State Chairman James Jungroth does not run as an environmentalist independent (as he did in the 1974 Senate race). Two other independent candidacies---one by the American Party and one by the Teamster business agent in Minot should cancel each other's effect in the fall. Although Link has the edge of incumbency, Republicans are hungry for an upset after 16 years of Democratic leadership under Link and former Gov. William Guy(D).

RHODE ISLAND: For Republicans to win in Rhode Island, they usually have to match superior candidates with Democratic fratricide. In Cranston Mayor James Taft, the GOP has a superior candidate with a respected record in administering the state's second largest city. But Taft will not have the advantage of a Democratic gubernatorial primary in his uphill race against Lt. Gov. Joseph Garrahy, Jr., an amiable lightweight whose popularity stems in part from his lack of substantial accomplishment or responsibility which might have demonstrated leadership and thus made enemies. Garrahy's first major mistake in the campaign may have been his involvement in the selection of an endorsed candidate for lieutenant governor, a process which is guaranteed to cost him some Democratic friends. Garrahy also may find himself caught in some of the undertow from the stiff primaries expected between outgoing Gov. Philip Noel(D) and Senate Majority Leader John Hawkins for the Senate and between U.S.Rep. Edward P. Beard and Warwick Mayor Eugene J. McCaffrey, Jr., for the House. To win, Taft will have to tie Garrahy to Noel's unpopular decisions and difficulties with the state prison, the sales tax, and the economy. Taft will be hampered by the weakness of the Republican ticket outside of former Gov. John Chafee, who is making a second run for the Senate.

UTAH: Gov. Calvin Rampton(D) based his decision not to seek reelection on the Democrats' ability to hold the post if he stepped down. That reasoning may well turn out to be spe-

cious; top state Democrats declined the opportunity to run for governor. Instead, an assortment of five lesser-knowns are vying for that honor. The frontrunners are probably Salt Lake lawyers Scott M. Matheson and John Preston Creer although John H. Klas has organization support by virtue of his stint as state Democratic chairman. Both Ogden Mayor Stephen Derks and Logan Mayor Desmond L. Anderson are also seeking the Democratic nomination. The Republican nominee is equally unclear although Attorney General Vernon Romney, a staunch conservative, started the campaign as the logical GOP candidate. Romney's strained campaigning style has allowed State Sen. Dixie Leavitt to narrow Romney's lead with an aggressive campaign and Davis County Commissioner Stanley Smoot to take up any remaining slack. In both parties, the outcome will probably not be clear until votes are taken at July state conventions. A similar situation exists in the Republican contest for the Senate nomination against incumbent Frank Moss(D). Utahns have shown a considerable tendency to ticket-split at will in past elections so the effect of the national campaign will be muted, but the embarrassment of U.S. Rep. Allan Howe's recent arrest for allegedly soliciting a Salt Lake decoy-prostitute is bound to hurt the Democratic effort in the state.

VERMONT: An increasingly bitter Democratic primary may provide Republicans with an opportunity to slip a conservative Republican past a conservative Democrat and win back the governorship. Although House Majority Leader Richard A. Snelling(R) has long been perceived as a staunch conservative, he has attempted to moderate and soften his image, backtracking for example on his old advocacy of right-to-work legislation. While Snelling has mellowed and smoothed his past abrasive image, State Treasurer Stella B. Hackel(D) has not. Like several prominent Democrats in Vermont, Hackel is a former Republican whose tight fiscal policies have their admirers in both parties. She also has her critics in both parties---as she discovered when both former Gov. Philip Hoff(D) and Deane Davis(R) criticized her recent proposal to abolish the state's super agencies. Said Hoff: "This raises a question of how good a grasp Mrs. Hackel has on state government." Before the November showdown, Mrs. Hackel will have to defeat Lt. Gov. Brian Burns, known for his amiability, advocacy of public power, and sponsorship of the "Tooth Fairy" (child dental) legislation, and State Sen. Robert O'Brien. On the GOP side, Snelling will have to defeat William C. Craig, former chancellor of Vermont's state colleges. Craig won their first skirmish---a cow-milking contest---by a substantial margin, but is expected to lose the primary. Although Craig is capable and personable, he

lacks Snelling's firm base in the party.

WASHINGTON: The retirement of popular, progressive Gov. Dan Evans(R) gives Democrats their first opportunity to break the Republican grip on the statehouse since 1964. The Democrats' early leaders was a distinctly non-political maverick, former U.S. Atomic Energy Commission chairman Dixie Lee Ray. Both Republican and Democratic polls showed Ray, who also served as an assistant secretary of state from 1974-75, leading, but she has begun to slip this spring. Her nearest rival for the nomination in a crowded Democratic field is Seattle Mayor Wes Uhlman, whose battles with local unions have made him a controversial figure with organized labor and led to a recall drive last year. Ray's campaign, however, has been disorganized, and Republicans are confident that they have a good shot at retaining the governorship. The GOP itself faces a primary between King County Executive John Spellman and King County Assessor Harley Hoppe. Spellman, an Evans-type progressive, is leading the conservative Hoppe and appears to be gaining. That's a good sign for the GOP; a bad sign would be the nomination of Reagan. Evans countered the Goldwater landslide in 1964, but GOP leaders are not so sanguine about 1976.

WEST VIRGINIA: Some West Virginia Republicans have the feeling that the governorship of their state is for sale this year. To them, spending \$1.7 million to win the Democratic gubernatorial nomination is obscene. West Virginia governors have not always been noted for their probity, but no one can claim Jay Rockefeller is in the race for the money. His own money was apparently well spent in the primary because he received 50 percent of the vote in an eight-way race that was expected to be much closer. Rockefeller lost some of his magical appeal when he lost to Gov. Arch Moore(R) in 1972---a race in which, by comparison, Moore spent only \$600,000. But Rockefeller has shed some of his carpetbagger image by sticking around the state instead of moving on. His determination to win this time is evidently rather strong; asked how much Rockefeller would spend on the general election campaign, an aide said "as much as it takes." Like Rockefeller, former Gov. Cecil H. Underwood, who is the Republican candidate, is a former college president who most recently made a living as a businessman. Underwood easily won the GOP primary after Moore was ruled ineligible for a third term. Although Moore and Underwood have had their past differences, the GOP is expected to unite behind the moderate former state executive. If the combined records of Underwood and Moore count in the public's mind, Underwood could win. If money and media count, then it will be awfully hard to deny Jay Rockefeller his governorship.

COMMENTARY: Vice Presidency

CHOOSING THE VICE PRESIDENT: ANOTHER VIEW

by Michael C. Maibach

In an article in the May 1 FORUM entitled "Choosing the Vice President," Minnesota GOP State Chairman Chuck Slocum discussed a proposal which would change the way the vice presidential nominee is chosen at the Republican National Convention. Although it is admitted that the present system has negative aspects, this writer finds that the Minnesota scheme would be no improvement. While it would perhaps cure some existing ills, it would engender some not currently extant by substantially changing the character of the process.

According to the Slocum piece, the plan would require each Republican presidential candidate to publicly present a list of four to six potential running mates to the Republican National Convention at least 120 days prior to the convention. During this period, the news media, students of public affairs, and the general public could become familiar with the personalities listed. At the convention, the list of the party's presidential nominee would become a ballot from which the delegates would choose the vice presidential nominee---with or without an indication of preference from the nominee himself. No other names could be added except those of unsuccessful presidential candidates with whom the public would already be familiar.

The impetus for this idea comes from the resignation of former Vice President Spiro Agnew and the withdrawal from the 1972 Democratic ticket of Missouri Sen. Thomas Eagleton. The Minnesota Plan holds that such occurrences might be avoided in the future by ending the practice of presidential nominees choosing their running mates privately during the frenzied atmosphere of the national convention where the power of reason is strained. That trap would be avoided by fostering public consideration of this important decision prior to the convention when a more dispassionate atmosphere might prevail.

While admitting that this new procedure might solve some of the problems mentioned above, it might not have prevented even the Agnew and Eagleton affairs. In the Agnew matter, one finds that he served as Vice President for five years before his case was adjudicated. In the Eagleton contretemps, it is clear that he had the opportunity to inform Sen. George McGovern of his psychological history and chose not to. Perhaps the 120-day grace period would have prevented the end result, but that alone does not justify changing a modus operandi which has served rather well on balance, especially when considering that:

1. The Minnesota Plan would truly change the character of the presidential primary system as well as that of the nominating convention. No longer would primary voters and local caucuses only weigh the attributes of the Republican presidential candidates. Their focus would surely be broadened and perhaps clouded by each candidate's list of acceptable running mates. Although it could be argued that these lists could add to the voters' assessment of each candidate vis-a-vis the candidate's ability to judge character as well as the kind of individuals that he/she would be comfortable working with, such an advantage is not worth gaining if the cost is a lost public focus on the presidential candidate.

2. Such lists might not reflect the real, unfettered choices of each candidate. Rather, each list could be primarily pragmatic or even opportunist. The persons enumerated might well be primarily from populous and/or strategically vital primary states. Men and women from small or "safe" states might be glossed over to the party's and nation's detriment. Finally, a list of this nature, while utilitarian in the short term, might leave a presidential nominee without his true choice upon nomination. This might deprive the candidate of the ability to run with a person who could best assist and advise him both as nominee and President. This plan could also work to exclude a woman or minority group member from the national ticket.

3. Such a listing method, especially if not also adopted by the Democratic Party, could be very deleterious to the GOP's chances for success in the general election. The Minnesota Plan would take precious flexibility away from the presidential nominee in what is now his personal choice of a running mate who could add the most to the quality and balance of the GOP's ticket in light of the Democrats' ticket. The present system offers almost total flexibility in this regard.

4. The Minnesota Plan would also alter the character of the vice presidential selection process as an agency of intra-party compromise.

5. Lastly, the Republican Party can and should nominate for President an individual whose wisdom and political judgement it trusts. Surely, all serious candidates privately and thoughtfully consider the many possible vice presidential choices available as they travel throughout the country and talk to its leaders

Further, any politician who has the ability to capture this party's nomination should be the best judge of those attributes need in a vice presidential running mate.

The Minnesota Plan, while well-intentioned, would serve to egregiously politicize the question of the vice presidential nomination. It would limit the ability of the party's nominee to win in November. And it has

Ripon in the News

● In a projection of delegate allegiances the week before the California primary, the Ripon Society predicted that Ford would win the Republican nomination regardless of the outcome of that election. Commenting on Ripon's tally, the New York Times' Christopher Lydon wrote, "One measure of the squirming closeness of the Ford-Reagan race for the Republican nomination is that journalistic rooters for either side are only a few handfuls of convention votes apart in their latest projections of victory. Human Events, the conservative weekly, now counts 1,156 delegate votes for Ronald Reagan, just 26 more than will be needed to nominate. The Ripon Society, which calls itself the "national progressive Republican organization," responded late last week with its own state-by-state count of 1,161 first-ballot votes for President Ford---foreseeing, that is, a mere 31-vote cushion for the Ripon favorite."

● In an editorial on "The Reagan Challenge," the New York Times noted, "In endorsing President Ford last week, the Ripon Society, made up of younger, progressive Republicans, called attention to a third factor that works in Mr. Reagan's favor. Republicans have refused to adopt reforms in delegate selection that would apportion delegates in strict accordance with population and that would divide delegates in primary states in proportion to each candidate's popular vote. As a result, the state Republican Parties in the South and West where Mr. Reagan is strong are over-represented."

● Columnist William F. Buckley, Jr., who has contented himself recently by suggesting that President Ford get out of the presidential race and leave the GOP to Ronald Reagan, wrote recently, "Who cares, really, about the Republican Party? Its soul is the property of the Ripon Society, and a few of the older

the potential of limiting the range of choice open to the party's presidential nominee. ■

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members of the Council on Foreign Relations. If Reagan ran on an independent ticket for President, he would get a higher percentage of the vote than the Republican Party would get led by any other American, with the possible exception of John Connally."

● Commenting on the impact of the possible nomination of Ronald Reagan on the Republican Party, CBS commentator Eric Sevareid referred to the Ripon FORUM's editorial suggesting that a Reagan nomination would "McGovernize" the GOP: "McGovern opposed and busted up the Democratic Party's establishment, so called---its official structure of existing party leaders most everywhere, from counties to Congress. The Ripons seem to think the structure could not be pulled together again following a Reagan nomination, that Reagan, like McGovern, represents a narrow, doctrinal base. And if McGovern was seen by millions as some sort of hippy freak in '72, they argue, Reagan will be painted as the wicked witch of the West."

In Memoriam: Clifford D. Fleming

For 12 years, the Ripon FORUM and other Ripon Society publications have been published by Fleming & Son in Somerville, Massachusetts. During that time, Clifford D. Fleming adjusted to the eccentricities and unpredictable work habits of close to a dozen Ripon staff members. They in turn learned how inadequately Cliff's pseudo-gruff exterior masked a heart of gold. The Ripon publications have changed over the years, but Cliff's patience never did. You could always tell Cliff's friends from the other customers because they were the ones Cliff yelled at. Cliff yelled at a lot of people; they'll miss him. "The boss" died suddenly June 11 in York, Maine.

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