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# **CHOOSING THE PRESIDENT**

**PUBLISHED BY**

The League of Women Voters  
of the United States  
1730 M Street, N.W.  
Washington, D. C. 20036

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# **PART ONE:**

# **The Process**

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# PART ONE • The Process

## I ON CHOOSING THE PRESIDENT

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The president of the United States is probably the most important elected official in the world. The U.S. Constitution, political realities, and historical precedents combine to give him a position in our system of government unmatched by that of executives in other democratic countries. Indeed, even executives in nondemocratic countries may not be as strong. They must give considerable attention to the possibility of overthrow, while the American president rests secure in the knowledge that his power is based upon consent.

Over the years, the powers of the president as outlined in the Constitution have been fully utilized and even expanded by occupants of the office. The president has thus emerged as the chief political figure in the United States, despite the checks and balances implied by the separation of powers and the federal system. With a system of election that makes him the head of his political party and independent of the other branches of government, the president has usually won his battles with Congress, with the Supreme Court and with the states.

Twentieth-century demands on government have further encouraged this trend. The president directly commands the large military forces of the nation and the major part of a vast civil bureaucracy. In addition, he is expected to develop and push for legislation in areas of national concern, to serve as a symbol of the nation united and even to establish and maintain trends in national morals and mores. Historically the key figure in American foreign policy, the president has, particularly over the past forty years, increased his influence in domestic policy as well. Whether he is negotiating a disarmament treaty, instituting wage controls, talking to the moon, or commending an athlete, the president's actions touch the life of every person in America. The choosing of a president, then, is clearly of great significance to every American, whether or not he or she participates in the process.

Television broadcasts of the national party conventions draw millions of people into the excitement of nominating presidential and vice presidential candidates. Some watch these proceedings only as spectators, as curious outsiders. Others feel the personal involvement that comes from understanding the nominating process and/or having participated in it.

Only if one knows how political parties function and how they fit in the governmental structure can one understand fully how a presi-

dential candidate becomes his party's official nominee. It helps, too, to know a few details about how the national conventions operate or how they are organized, how delegates are chosen, how the convention actually nominates the candidates. In this multimedia age it is also important to be aware of campaign techniques, strategies and costs. Finally, the expansion of the franchise since the last presidential election suggests an even greater need to understand all phases of the election process, so that the individual can more clearly perceive how to be effective—how to have his voice heard in the choosing.

A president is elected only once every four years, but the *process* of electing him never really stops; it simply moves from one phase to another. Phase One, which could be called the preliminaries, extends roughly three years—from the presidential inauguration on January 20 to January 1 of the next presidential election year. This is the time for future presidential contenders to try to make a good legislative record, to become well-known, to develop pockets of political strength, and to gain political commitments and endorsements. Phase Two begins with the election year and extends to the national conventions. Contenders now decide whether to actually become candidates, which primaries to enter. Delegates to the national conventions are selected during this period and candidates attempt to gain the support of as many as possible from every state. Phase Three covers the week or so that each national convention is actually in session. This can be a week of high drama as candidates for president and vice-president are actually nominated. Losing contenders at the convention may close ranks behind the winner, choose to sit out the election or occasionally lead secession and perhaps third-party movements of their own. Phase Four, the presidential campaign, extends from summer to early November. Phase Five encompasses the election itself, the formalization of the results and the inauguration.

The presidential election does not take place in a vacuum but within the context of an existing political framework. In the United States that framework is provided by a system of institutionalized political parties and by a large and ever-changing electorate. Most presidential candidates are nominated by political parties, campaign as partisans, and are assisted to election by parties. At every stage in the election process the voter is called upon to make choices. He must assess the records of the various contenders, often express his preference in a precinct caucus or a primary, evaluate the convention choices, and vote on election day. Many citizens will also campaign on behalf of their choice in primary and election campaigns.

Part I describes the political framework for presidential elections: first the political parties; then the voters; the five phases of the election process follow. Part Two supplies the facts, figures, and details which correspond to each topic discussed in Part One.

## II THE POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

# Political Parties

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There has always been a close connection between the American presidency and the political parties. The need to select an independent national executive was the chief impetus behind the rise of national parties, and once the parties were established, they continued to shape the process whereby presidents were chosen.<sup>1</sup>

### The Role of Political Parties

Political parties perform a number of basic functions in a populous democratic country. Seen from the viewpoint of the voter, parties help to clarify issues, to relate candidates to these issues and generally to simplify the choices the citizen must make in elections. In addition, parties give some coherence to government and give the citizen a basis for judging the acts of that government. Without parties, the citizen would have to find his way through a confusing maze of issues, candidates, and government actions. Seen from the viewpoint of political leaders, parties are the means whereby supporters are identified and mobilized behind candidates and programs. To use a familiar conception, parties are "brokers" which help to translate the wishes of people into government policy.

The American Constitution predates the rise of political parties; the document therefore makes no mention of them. Although now regulated by federal and state law, they have developed entirely as extra-constitutional bodies. As early as the 1790s, parties began to control the electoral college system and soon were exercising influence on all elections. Today, most federal and state office-holders, and many local ones as well, are chosen on a partisan basis. Despite this long history of party control of American politics, a popular belief in the desirability of being "nonpartisan" persists, based in part on an association (sometimes correct) of parties with "spoils" and corruption. As a result, candidates for office, including presidential candidates, often assume a somewhat nonpartisan pose. Still, no actual "independent" candidate since George Washington has been elected president, and the presidential role as party leader is widely accepted.

From the very beginning, American politics has been dominated

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<sup>1</sup>The standard work on American political parties is V. O. Key, Jr., *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups*, 5th ed. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1964).

by two major parties. However, the makeup of these parties has changed considerably over the years as some groups have defected from one party to another and new groups have had to be incorporated into the parties. The Democratic Republicans of the Jefferson era were succeeded by the Democrats of Jackson's time and that party continues in existence today. The Federalists were followed by the Whigs, and the remnants of these groups, as well as new groups, were incorporated into the Republican Party under Lincoln. For over one hundred years now, the Democratic and Republican parties have regularly contested national elections.

The dominance of the two-party (rather than a multi-party) system, most scholars feel, stems from the need to choose a single national executive; the "winner-take-all" system for other American elections;<sup>2</sup> and consensus among Americans on certain fundamentals such as the validity of constitutional structure and procedure, the importance of guaranteeing minority rights while exercising majority rule, the acceptance of the capitalistic system in its broadest terms, and the ways in which authority shall be exercised and changes in the system shall be made (i.e., the rules of the game). Although this consensus is constantly shifting in terms of the *specific* principles and policies it includes, it does mean that both parties can include in their ranks and appeal to virtually all segments of American society while moving always toward an ever-changing point of equilibrium between extremes of either right or left.

This party "dualism in a moving consensus"<sup>3</sup> contributes to American political stability by encouraging moderation rather than extremism in politics. It also affects the party system itself. "Third" or "minor" parties are discouraged because the major parties are so accommodating that the minor party cannot develop much of a following. With only a small following, they cannot compete successfully in a winner-take-all system. Third parties have become important only when the major parties seemed to be neglecting some important popular demand. The Republican Party itself arose because of the inability of the Whigs and Democrats to handle the slavery question, and George Wallace has capitalized on popular discontent regarding Big Government and Law and Order (see the discussion in Part Two). The very moderation of the parties leads, of course, to some ineffectiveness in the carrying

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<sup>2</sup> The "winner-take-all" system means that the candidate or party receiving the most votes supplies *all* the representation, that is, wins everything if only by a few votes. This is in contrast to "proportional" representation systems, once widespread in Europe, in which all parties receiving votes are assigned legislative seats (or portions thereof) in proportion to their percentage of the popular vote.

<sup>3</sup> This concept and the above analysis are taken from V. O. Key's *Parties, Politics, and Pressure Groups*, pp. 222-227. For a full discussion of the process of consensus formation and maintenance, see Key's *Public Opinion and American Democracy*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), pp. 27-53.

out of programs, a weakness increased by the essentially federal nature of party organization.

## Political Party Structure

The structure of the official party organization has been likened to a layer cake rather than to a chain of command—not a common layer cake but an imposing wedding cake with at least four, sometimes five, distinct geographical tiers. The precincts are the bottom layer. And at the top, instead of figures of the bride and groom, stands the figure of the chairman of the national committee of his party.

The titular heads of the parties are the president and the defeated nominee of the other party. But their positions are of varying importance in party organization. Some presidential candidates have had little influence during the four years following their defeat at the polls.<sup>4</sup>

As in a wedding cake, each tier of the party's organization is dependent on the layer below it. In addition, however, each tier, from precinct to national committee, has its special responsibility within its geographical area in the elections. A common cause, not a chain of command, elicits the necessary cooperation.

The following outline is a skeleton of the structure of the official organization of the two major political parties. The actual situation is far less tidy. Aside from the national committee, each party does not have a complete working organization at each level, except during election campaigns. In some precincts in some very large cities, even in some counties, no full organization exists for either of the major parties.

Each of these political layers, especially those not in the limelight during the nominating conventions, plays a vital role in choosing the nominees for, and in electing, the president and vice-president.

**THE PRECINCT**, a neighborhood of hundreds of voters, is the basic unit in the political structure and the first theater of operation for party workers. The approximately 175,000 such units are headed by precinct captains or committeemen. They may be chosen at caucuses, at direct primary elections or in the general election; or they may be appointed by higher party officials. This precinct executive is the only direct link between voters in the precinct and the professional political group. Through his block workers and other aides, he is the party organization person who knows a great deal about the individual voters in his precinct and has substantial direct influence on them. Through him the working members of the party at the precinct level, if they

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<sup>4</sup> For an interesting description of post-1960 election events touching upon Nixon's claim to the titular leadership of the Republican party, see Paul T. David, "The Political Changes of 1960-61" in *The Presidential Election and Transition 1960-61* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1961) pp. 327-28.

work hard in the party and are articulate at the right time and place, may make their voices heard in the selection of delegates.

**THE COUNTY COMMITTEE**, the party tier just above the precinct (in larger cities, just above the ward or district, which is composed of several precincts), is a unit of major significance in the party machinery. It consists of precinct executives or of alternates chosen by them. There are approximately 3,200 counties in the United States, and as a functioning political entity the county has greater reality than the congressional district. Major decisions in the selection of congressional district delegates to the national conventions are often made at county level.<sup>5</sup> County committees are tied into the state organization through the county chairmen who direct the precinct chairmen in getting out the vote.

**THE STATE COMMITTEE** or State Central Committee forms the tier above the county committee. The state committeeman is an important party figure. The authority and composition of state committees are usually spelled out in state law. They range in size from a handful of people to hundreds of members. Methods of selection differ widely from state to state. The chief function of state committees is to conduct campaigns through their officers and agents and to help in governing the party. They may also influence the choice of delegates to the national conventions,<sup>6</sup> whatever the official selection process may be. In some cases the state committee still actually selects some delegates. Where states have conventions to select delegates, the state committee wields great influence. Even in states which select delegates via the primary method, control of the state committee may be extremely important.

**THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE** is the top layer of party organization. This has representatives, at least one man and one woman, from each state and is of prime importance in the choosing of a president. Its chairman is a top-ranking professional politician. Its powers and duties are dictated by the national convention. (Section II contains details on membership, the responsibilities of the national chairman, and the powers and duties of the national committee.)

"Kingpin of the national organization,"<sup>7</sup> the national committee chairman is theoretically elected by the national committee. In practice he is designated, immediately after the national convention, by the party's presidential candidate.

National committee members may be described as top politicians

<sup>5</sup> Paul T. David, Malcolm Moos, Ralph M. Goldman, *Presidential Nominating Politics in 1952* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1954) p. 165.

<sup>6</sup> With the current movement toward reform in both major parties (discussed at length in Chapter V) the role of the state committee is likely to undergo considerable change which cannot be evaluated at this time.

<sup>7</sup> Key, *Parties, Politics, and Pressure Groups*, p. 319.

in their states. Although the national conventions must formally approve, they are in effect selected by the states, by a variety of methods. Two of the most common ways are election by the state convention and election by the state's delegates to the national convention. In a number of states, committee members are elected by the voters in the primary, and some state committees appoint the national members. They are usually wealthy, because membership on the national committee is costly in both time and money. The men are often lawyers or businessmen. Many combine experience in law, business, and politics.

The national committeeman may be the unquestioned statewide party leader or his power may emanate from a concentrated geographical area in the state. He may be a "right-hand man" of the party leader, or he may be receiving his reward for his generous contribution of money or for years of party service or distinction.

National committeewomen usually have been state or county vice-chairmen of their parties. Up to now, they have enjoyed "very little power in their state parties. The national committeewomen are as important as any women in the parties, but of very little importance at all by comparison with the male party leaders."<sup>8</sup> This situation may well change as a result of recent efforts in both parties to increase women's participation.

Apart from the regular structure of the political parties, each party also has a Senate Campaign Committee and a Congressional Campaign Committee, selected in each new Congress at conferences of party members. The work of these committees is to raise funds and help in the campaigns of candidates for the Senate and the House of Representatives. Differences in the constituencies and in the election timetables frequently create enmity between these committees and the national committees.

### Auxiliary Political Groups

In addition to the regular party organization in the United States, there are a large number of auxiliary political groups outside the formal party structure which supplement the work of the regular party. Such groups come in several varieties. There are those which appeal to special segments of the party membership—the National Federation of Republican Women and the Young Democrats, for example. Some groups are splinter groups or factions within the parties and may represent dissatisfaction with the regular leadership. The California Democratic Clubs, for instance, represented mostly former supporters of

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<sup>8</sup> Cornelius P. Cotter and Bernard C. Hennessy, *Politics Without Power, The National Party Committees* (New York: Atherton Press, 1964), p. 59.

Adlai Stevenson opposed to the more traditional regular party leadership of Assembly Speaker Jesse Unruh. Such defections have been common in American politics.<sup>9</sup> At campaign time specialized volunteer groups arise, to work for a particular presidential candidate. Such groups as Citizens for Eisenhower-Nixon, Lawyers for Johnson-Humphrey, or Democrats for Nixon are formed to raise money, supply volunteers for party work, appeal to special groups, and the like. They are open to all comers, and attract into active membership many people not interested in purely party work. These auxiliary groups make important contributions to party work; at the same time they illustrate the fragmented nature of American party organization.

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<sup>9</sup> See Frank J. Sorauf, *Party Politics in America* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1968), pp. 72-74.



### III THE POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

## The Voters

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The efforts of the political parties and related political groups are all pointed toward one objective—to bring to the polls on election day voters who will support their candidates. These voters, referred to collectively as the electorate, form the second major part of the political framework for American presidential elections.

### The Expansion of the Suffrage

The founding fathers did not have universal adult suffrage in mind as the power base of government, even though they were opposed to arbitrary rule and had faith in popular sovereignty. In fact, with few exceptions the earliest years of our democracy gave the vote exclusively to white males who “had a stake in society” (owned property). By 1850, however, almost all of the states had extended the right to vote at least to all adult free males. Gradually, by constitutional amendment, and by federal and state law, the base of democracy has widened and the country has moved steadily in the direction of universal adult suffrage.<sup>1</sup>

Since general voting qualifications were left to the states by the Federal Constitution, the amending process has often been employed to expand the electorate. States still set voting qualifications but they may not deny the franchise because of race (Fifteenth Amendment) or sex (Nineteenth Amendment). The most recently passed amendment, the Twenty-Sixth, provides that anyone 18 years of age or over may not be denied the vote on the grounds of age. In addition, the Seventeenth Amendment allowed everyone to vote directly for United States senators for the first time, the Twenty-Third allowed residents of the District of Columbia to vote for president, and the Twenty-Fourth banned the poll tax as a requirement for voting. These constitutional changes, together with early action by the states abolishing the initial property restrictions, have had the effect of extending the franchise to every segment of the population.

Each of these changes to broaden the democratic base was controversial when proposed. Those who could already vote commonly argued that the group in question was either incompetent by nature

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<sup>1</sup> The close connection between democracy and voting is seen in the words “suffrage” and “franchise.” “Suffrage” (from a Latin word) means assent while “franchise” (Old French) means freedom.

to judge political matters or was "not ready" for political participation. In addition, many party leaders have been less than enthusiastic about suffrage expansion if they could not foresee gaining the support of a large portion of the newly-enfranchised group. These facts are well illustrated by the struggle for the 18-year-old vote. It can hardly be denied, given America's vast educational and communications progress, that the modern 18 year-old is "smart" enough to vote rationally. Still, opponents argued that youth would vote frivolously or that they should concentrate on their school work, not politics. Many Democratic and Republican party leaders dragged their feet because they could not predict whether their own parties would gain or lose by the move.

They were unwilling to wage a political fight just to increase the size of the electorate. Besides, unlike being black or being a woman, being 18 years old is a purely temporary condition, so many young people failed to demand a right which would soon be theirs anyway. With all these forces for no-change, the Twenty-Sixth Amendment, like other suffrage expansions, came well after it could have been justified on purely logical grounds.

### Voting Turnout and Procedural Problems

Being *eligible* to vote, of course, is not the same as voting. Despite enfranchisement of people on a *group* basis, many *individuals* still do not vote. More people vote in presidential elections than in any other American election, yet even here the turnout rarely exceeds 65% of the voting-age population and is often lower. Since voting has never been compulsory in the United States, either in law or in fact, turnout depends on a wide range of motivational factors, such as one's sense of civic responsibility, one's estimate of the effectiveness of government, and even one's feelings of economic and physical safety. All evidence indicates that voting increases with socioeconomic status; the higher status seems to bring with it a greater sense of the duties of a citizen and the relevance of government to solving problems.<sup>2</sup> Lower-income groups turn out heavily only when they are well organized and conscious of some special threat to their interests. Generally, newly-enfranchised groups tend to vote less than others. Both women and blacks have only recently begun to recognize their full potential as voting groups, and 18-year-olds may not reach this point for some time.

Motivation is put to the test in yet another important way: through procedural road blocks on the way to the voting booth. American history has seen many examples of voting eligibility being given with one hand and taken away with the other by cumbersome voting procedures. Most states have at one time or another adopted the practice

<sup>2</sup> Probably the best work on voting is still Angus Campbell, *et al.*, *The American Voter* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1960).

of requiring registration in advance of voting and many of the procedural problems have occurred at this stage. Depending on the state, a prospective voter might have been required to prove a lengthy residence in the state and voting precinct, to produce proof of having paid poll taxes for several years, to pass a long and complicated "literacy" test, or even to convince the registrar of his good moral character. Should the voter have cleared these hurdles, he could still find on election day a long line at the polling place and a long and confusing ballot in the voting booth. Despite the barriers raised by procedures, persons with very high motivation would still vote. Those with somewhat less motivation, or those for whom voting involved risks, however, would be discouraged, and voting turnout would suffer. Not surprisingly, voting turnout has been lowest in the Deep South where income levels have been the lowest, registration procedures the most cumbersome, and racial discrimination the most obvious.

Some of these obstacles to voting remain today, but there has been some progress in eliminating them in recent years. After the Twenty-Fourth Amendment in 1964 banned poll taxes in federal elections, the U.S. Supreme Court completed the task by declaring them unconstitutional for state elections as well. Even more comprehensive are the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Amendments to it in 1970. The original act banned literacy tests in states (or parts of states) with low voting turnout, a provision aimed at some Southern states which had used tests for purposes of racial discrimination. The 1970 Amendments ban any "test or device" designed to examine the qualifications of a prospective voter in any elections in the country. This ban will apply at least until 1975.

The 1970 Amendments also attack the problem of residence requirements in presidential elections: they limit the states to 30-day residence rules and require them to permit a citizen who has recently moved to vote absentee for president and vice president if he cannot meet the residence requirement at his new address.<sup>3</sup> Earlier federal legislation had made absentee registration and voting a little easier—for military and civilian government personnel outside the United States (1955) and then for all civilians overseas (1968). New laws in 1957 and 1960 authorized use of federal examiners and referees to ensure fairness in registration and voting generally.

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<sup>3</sup> Not all states have fully complied with the Voting Rights Act Amendments. For one good discussion of this problem see "The Voting Rights Act: Unfinished Business for 1972" by Richard G. Smolka in the *National Civic Review*, January 1972. In addition, as we go to press, the Supreme Court has handed down a decision declaring durational residence requirements unconstitutional in all elections (national, state and local). The Court said that although bona fide residence is still a legitimate qualification, length of residence is not. Election officials may, under the new ruling, continue to close registration books 30 days before an election in order to prepare for the election and investigate for fraud.

Despite the progress which has been made, much remains to be done before the problem of registration procedures is solved. For example, the ban on literacy tests is not permanent and residence rules for college students need clarification. All in all, in our mobile society registration problems touch great numbers of people. To streamline the process a number of proposals have been made to establish universal voter registration systems.

One proposed plan (sponsored by Senator Gale McGee, D-Wyo.), would set up a new agency within the U.S. Census Bureau to administer a registration-by-mail program. States would get back the cost of processing the mail applications and would get other monetary inducements to accept federal voting standards. Other proposals include attaching voter registration forms to federal income tax mailings, and setting up a door-to-door voter registration drive by federal registrars. Backers of these proposals say that a higher voting turnout would result. Opponents are chiefly concerned over expense and the possibility of fraud. Clearly, the United States has not yet experienced its last controversy over suffrage requirements.

## Voting Behavior

Why people vote as they do has always been of interest to scholars, to candidates and to political practitioners such as the people who conduct polls or manage campaigns. Analysis of voting statistics and public opinion polls offer some tentative answers.

Party affiliation has long been regarded as the major factor determining votes in presidential elections, but there is recent evidence that party identification is declining. The belief that it is good to be an "independent voter" has been a popular one in the United States, even though independents dilute their voting effectiveness in many states because they have no voice in the process of nominating candidates. Being independent, rather than a party "captive," in an election would appear to be a reasonable way to preserve one's ability to vote on the basis of the man or the issue. However, past evidence indicates that persons who describe themselves as independents before an election are likely to be ill-informed on political issues and may not vote at all.<sup>4</sup> This likelihood is decreasing, however, as informed young people swell the independent ranks.

The overwhelming majority of voters do not very often think in terms of "liberal" and "conservative." They respond instead to particular

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<sup>4</sup> There are a number of studies which include research on this subject, and reach similar conclusions. Among the best known are *The American Voter* by Angus Campbell, *et al.* (see especially pages 143-145), Lester W. Milbrath's *Political Participation* (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1965) and *The Voter Decides* by Angus Campbell, Gerald Gurin and Warren Miller (Evanston: Peterson and Company, 1954).

issues, especially those that can be readily translated into bread-and-butter terms. The personal qualities of candidates also influences voting behavior heavily, sometimes overriding the pull of party and issues. President Eisenhower's electoral victories have been widely interpreted as an outstanding example. Long-term factors such as ethnic background, occupation and income are always important, and religion has had a role in some American elections.

This knowledge merely enables us to forecast political trends and group voting patterns broadly over a period of years. It does not allow us either to foretell winners in every election or to predict the voting behavior of an *individual*.

## IV PHASE ONE

# The Preliminaries

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The three and one-half years or so which elapse between actual presidential campaigns are not a respite from presidential politics at all but simply preliminaries to the main event. The political events which occur during this preliminary period will vary, depending upon whether the persons involved are members of the in-party (the party which controls the presidency) or the out-party (or parties).<sup>1</sup> However, all parties and all prospective candidates have to do three essential things in this period: establish a record that will make candidacy possible, develop a power base from which a candidacy can be launched, and devise strategy to get the convention delegates necessary for nomination.

### In-Party Preliminaries

The decisions of all prospective candidates in the in-party are heavily affected by the fact that a member of their party is in the White House. Incumbent presidents in the twentieth century have been hard to defeat in an election, and it is nearly impossible to wrest the nomination from them if they want it. Some who disagree strongly with presidential policies may choose to assume a "maverick" role and challenge the president as Senator Eugene McCarthy did in 1968 and as Congressmen Paul McCloskey and John Ashbrook are doing in 1972. Presidential supporters, however, must suspend their presidential hopes and may be caught unprepared later as Vice-President Humphrey was when President Johnson decided not to seek reelection in 1968.

Whether the president seeks reelection or not, it is his presidential record that the in-party will carry into the next campaign. From a political standpoint then, a president must build a legislative, executive, and diplomatic record that will stand his party in good stead later. Policy promises must be kept and political commitments fulfilled. Especially important to the in-party is the midterm election in which all House seats and a third of the Senate seats are filled. Historically, the in-party loses congressional seats in the midterm election. If losses are too heavy they will be interpreted as a repudiation of the president and his policies, so he has to work to minimize losses and maintain

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<sup>1</sup> Some of the best material available on the preliminary period is in the three books by Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President, 1960, 1964, 1968* (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1961, 1965, 1969).

party morale. As the presidential election year approaches, he must pay even more attention to the likely political impact of his actions.

The presidency is the best power base from which to launch a candidacy. If the incumbent does not seek reelection, other candidates must use whatever sources of strength they have. In modern times, the vice-presidency seems to be a good spot for gaining a nomination but not a particularly good one for winning an election. A vice-president has the advantage of executive experience and presidential support but he is stuck with the presidential record for better or worse. Since disunity in the in-party is usually fatal, he must stand with the record and perhaps fall with it, as Vice-President Humphrey did in 1968. Governors, senators and perhaps a former candidate may also come to the fore if a president steps down.

If a president decides to seek another term, his strategy during the preliminary period will be simple: maintain party harmony and make sure he controls enough party machinery to ensure that the convention will be a mere formality, renominating him by acclamation and stoutly endorsing his policies. Other decisions, such as whether to "dump" an incumbent vice-president, come at a later stage. If a president steps down, other contenders will have many decisions to make: when to announce the candidacy, how heavily to lean on the president in winning delegates, how to use presidential primaries, etc. In 1968 Senator Robert Kennedy tried to win nomination through the primary route; Senator McCarthy mounted an extensive "grass roots" campaign effort; Vice-President Humphrey worked behind the scenes with presidential support. By and large, in-party strategies are determined by circumstances, the most important of which is the position taken by the incumbent president.

### Out-Party Preliminaries

Presidential contenders in the out-party (or parties) are in a position quite different from that of their in-party counterparts and may even have an advantage if the president does not seek reelection. Since they have not been responsible for broad legislative programs, executive actions or diplomatic initiatives, they can criticize presidential efforts in all areas. Even if the out-party controls the Congress, an individual aspirant cannot be held to account because the out-party does not develop a broad legislative program of its own, responding instead to presidential actions. To be sure, a presidential hopeful must build a creditable *individual* record, but this can be (and often is) more in the nature of promises than accomplishments. A governor or a mayor who is a contender will have a record, of course, and given the modern problems of states and cities, it may not work in his favor. (No former

governor has been elected since Franklin D. Roosevelt and only two have received nomination.) In any case, the same record which may make it hard for a candidate to win the election may make it easier for him to gain a nomination. Senator Goldwater's experiences in 1964 would probably be a case in point.

To build a record at all, an out-party aspirant needs a power base. Although candidacies are sometimes launched from appointive positions (Mr. Eisenhower in 1952) or private law practices (Mr. Nixon in 1968), an elective office is considered best. A party's "titular leader" (most recent losing presidential candidate) will probably try to gain such a position as soon as possible. Mr. Humphrey sought and obtained his old Senate seat from Minnesota at the first opportunity, and Governor Wallace won reelection as governor of Alabama. Because of the power and prestige of the position and the modern importance of international affairs, the U.S. Senate seems to be a good spot for men of presidential ambition. In each of the last three elections, senators have figured prominently in the race for party nomination. Two have been nominated and one elected, and three former senators later won nominations from different positions, with two being elected. Governors, representatives and military leaders all seem less likely as presidential prospects today.

The strategy of out-party contenders is shaped by the financial backing each has, the condition of the in-party, and changing national and international events. Contenders first try to build a favorable image in the party and the country by frequent public speeches or appearances at party functions. If prospects seem bright and financial backing emerges, this period of active "noncandidacy" will be followed by a formal announcement. Front-runners usually wait later to announce while others who have further to go may announce their intentions very early. Some contenders, usually front-runners, will use a middle-of-the-road appeal to broaden their base of support while others will look to particular groups for support. Whether or not to make a vigorous attack on the presidential record is always an important question, the choice usually being dictated by the contender's past record in this regard and by the current popularity of the president. Some contenders may not engage in preliminary campaigning at all but will wait to be "drafted." These "drafts" are rarely genuine but matters of strategy instead.<sup>2</sup> The final strategy decision centers on how to handle building delegate strength for the nominating convention. At this point, some of the earlier hopefuls will withdraw because they have failed to get money or other support in the preliminary stages, and the field will be left to those with the most serious chances of success.

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<sup>2</sup> For one account of this, see Walter Johnson, *How We Drafted Adlai Stevenson* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955).



## The Media in the Preliminaries

The mass media, particularly television and the national newspapers and magazines, play an important role in the preliminary stage of presidential elections.<sup>3</sup> They can create a front-runner by giving him exposure or by declaring that he is the front-runner. If they do not take his candidacy seriously, it will be much harder for a contender to win financial backers and early delegate commitments. If the president is a candidate, he can always have media space, including television time, for his pronouncements. In recent years, the out-party has tried, with only limited success, to get free television time to answer presidential statements made in broadcasts—broadcasts which were nonpolitical to the president but not to his critics. On the other hand, the president must endure more of the slings and arrows of media commentators than the out-party candidates.

Charges of bias in the media are common and come from all sides. One of Vice-President Agnew's first "official" acts was to denounce the media for its handling of President Nixon's program, and Governor Wallace has regularly complained that the media distort his views. Media spokesmen have typically replied that they cover the news as news, however embarrassing this may be to anyone politically.

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<sup>3</sup> For one study, see Edward W. Chester, *Radio, Television, and American Politics* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1969).

## V PHASE TWO

# Delegate Selection and Preference Primaries

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The fact is that to be elected president, a person need not be nominated by a political party at all; he must simply meet constitutional requirements and receive the vote of a majority of the electors. However the practice is that since the 1790s, when political parties gained control of the presidential nomination and election process, every winning candidate has been the specific nominee of a major party.<sup>1</sup> Over the years, the parties have used a number of devices in nominating their candidates for the presidential office.

### Methods of Presidential Nomination

To some extent, methods of making presidential nominations have paralleled those used for making other political nominations. In general, the pattern has been to move from procedures which involved only a few people in the party to procedures which allowed the nomination to be influenced by more people. Thus, in the beginning, political candidates were nominated in "caucuses," small gatherings of party leaders, a pattern still followed in Great Britain. The presidential nominations were made in "legislative caucuses" of members of the party already in Congress.

During the Jacksonian period, the parties began to shift to the convention method. Candidates were still picked by relatively small party in-groups, but the members of this in-group of nominators were no longer self-chosen; now they were "delegates" selected by a variety of methods in the states. Presidential candidates were chosen in national conventions composed of delegations from all states.<sup>2</sup> Like the caucus before it, the convention was subject to the charge of being undemocratic. A few insiders, especially "boss-led" delegations, might

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<sup>1</sup> Nominating procedures add to the difficulties of minor parties in trying to win presidential elections. The procedures are regulated by state law and the major parties are obviously influential in writing these laws. As a result, minor party candidates usually have difficulty getting electors committed to them on the election ballot: petitions with large numbers of signatures are generally required and are difficult to obtain. Write-in votes are usually permitted at election time, but it is nearly impossible to win this way.

<sup>2</sup> The connection between Jackson and the national convention was not incidental. He had strong grass roots support but little in Washington. Jacksonian supporters thus fought for the convention as a way of getting their man nominated.

manipulate the convention and arrive at a nomination not popular with the party rank and file. Although this seems to have happened rarely at the presidential level, the charge had enough validity that the states began to shift to a direct-primary method of nomination around the turn of the twentieth century.

Under the direct-primary system, candidates were nominated directly by the party voters without any middlemen, delegates or otherwise.<sup>3</sup> The method gained popularity and has now been adopted in all states for most state offices. But the president and vice-president continued to be nominated in national conventions, practically the only major officeholders in the United States still nominated by convention. An important concession was made to the direct primary, however, when a number of states adopted "presidential primaries" where voters could choose delegates to the national conventions, express a preference as to the candidate they would like to see nominated, or sometimes do both. The delegate selection was still subject to behind-the-scenes control and has remained a problem for both parties.

### Delegate Selection and Party Reform

Methods of choosing delegates to national conventions vary from state to state, but three basic methods are used. Some delegates, as just indicated, are chosen in direct primaries with all party voters participating. Others are chosen in state or district conventions whose delegates have been selected at meetings on the ward, township, precinct or county level. Still others are chosen by district or state party committees. Some states use only one of these methods while others use a combination of the three.

The national parties, through their national conventions and national committees, make rules for delegate selection which are then spelled out in state law. Given the federal nature of American parties, however, the national parties cannot *dictate* rules to the state parties. If a national party rule either conflicts with state law, or is simply not included in it, the state parties cannot be forced to comply. The only weapon the national parties have is the pressure they can apply by challenging the right of the state party to participate in the national convention (see Chapter VI). As a result, delegates in many states have in the past been selected with only scant regard for democratic principles. Charges of "bossism" have often been well-founded: a group in control of the party machinery in the state could choose a national convention delegation to its liking, however unrepresentative of the state the dele-

<sup>3</sup> Primaries may be "closed" or "open." In the former, only those who demonstrate their identification with the party may vote while in the latter the voter may cast a ballot in any primary (though not more than one). In many states, those who decline to identify with a major party are not eligible to vote in any primary.

gation might be. Delegates were often chosen without written party rules, important meetings were held at odd places and at irregular hours, and many delegates were simply selected by the state committee, often far in advance of the conventions. Should the opposition still manage to select a delegate, he might be bound by a "unit rule" committing all members of the delegation to vote the way the majority voted. The usual defense for this tactic was that the state would benefit because the state delegation could act as a bloc and so maximize its influence. The upshot was that women, young people, and racial minorities were poorly represented at national conventions. The Democrats found that in 1968 convention delegates were "predominantly white, male, middle-aged, and at least middle class."<sup>4</sup>

The delegate selection situation gained national attention at the Democratic Party's national convention in 1968. Delegates opposed to the incumbent Democratic administration charged that the convention had been rigged to nominate Vice-President Humphrey. The monolithic nature of some of the delegations, especially those of Texas and Illinois, seemed to give some credence to the charges. At any rate, the convention voted to establish a commission to study party reform, especially delegate selection procedures.

Under the chairmanship of Senator George McGovern (D-S.D.), the Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection held hearings and worked throughout 1969 to come up with a series of "guidelines" for reform, later endorsed by the Democratic National Committee.<sup>5</sup> All the reforms were intended to make the process of delegate selection more democratic by broadening the base of the party and opening up the process to more people. Among other changes, the new party rules: (1) require written party rules for delegate selection and party meetings at regular times, in public places, and only after adequate public notice; (2) ban proxy votes, unit rules, ex-officio designation of delegates, and mandatory financial assessments of national convention delegates; (3) encourage more participation by and representation for young people, women, and racial minorities; (4) limit the number of delegates selected by party committees to 10 percent and by state conventions to 25 percent with all delegates to be selected in the calendar year of the convention.

The Democratic National Committee considers the guidelines binding on state delegations in 1972, but since the national party cannot

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<sup>4</sup> *Mandate for Reform*, A Report of the Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection to the Democratic National Committee, April 1970, p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> A complete list of the commission guidelines is included in Part Two. For a discussion of the commission's work and its results, see Andrew J. Glass and Jonathan Cottin, "Democratic Reform Drive Falter as Spotlight Shifts to Presidential Race," *National Journal*, June 19, 1971, pp. 1293-1304.

order changes in state parties which may require changes in state law, it is likely that some states will not be in compliance with the guidelines by the time of the national convention. The McGovern Commission, now under the chairmanship of Rep. Donald M. Fraser, remains in existence and is trying, with the help of the Democratic National Committee and at least one independent organization (Center for Political Reform), to enforce the guidelines. States which are not in compliance by convention time and which have not convinced the commission that they made "all feasible efforts" to comply face the possibility that the credentials of their delegation will be challenged.<sup>6</sup> Overall, however, it appears that the delegate selection process in the Democratic Party in 1972 will be more democratic than ever before.

The Republican national convention was not so stormy as its Democratic counterpart in 1968, but it did authorize a "Delegates and Organizations Committee" to study the subject of party reform.<sup>7</sup> In 1971, the committee produced a series of recommendations to the state parties which the national convention must approve in 1972 before they become effective as rules. The suggested reforms are similar to those of the McGovern Commission, encouraging broader participation by all groups and a generally more open process of delegate selection. Since the reforms are recommendations rather than requirements, they must be approved by the national convention before they are binding on the states.

Democratic efforts at party reform will be tested this year; Republican reform will not be tested until the party becomes the out-party without a clear favorite for the nomination. Losing candidates have generally found party reform a more interesting subject than winning candidates.

### Delegate Selection and Presidential Preference

An important result of the movement for party reform is the adoption of presidential primaries in eight more states than in 1968. In presidential primaries, voters either choose delegates to the national conventions, express a preference for the candidate they would like to see nominated, or do both. Of the 24 states (including the District of Columbia) with some type of primary, 22 will allow voters to express a preference for president, 19 directly and 3 indirectly through the

<sup>6</sup> *Mandate for Reform* (p. 37) defines "all feasible efforts" as meaning that the state party has "held hearings, introduced bills, worked for their enactment, and amended its rules in every necessary way short of exposing the Party or its members to legal sanctions."

<sup>7</sup> See Part Two for a list of recommendations dealing with delegate selection. The committee has been chaired by Mrs. M. Stanley Ginn.

delegates selected. Sixty-seven percent of the votes cast at the 1972 Democratic Convention will have been chosen in primaries; the comparable figure for 1968 was 40.5 percent.<sup>8</sup> At the 1972 Republican Convention 58.9% of the delegates will have been chosen in primaries.

Nineteen states allow the voter to pick at least some convention delegates; 10 of these bind the delegates to support the primary winner, usually for the first ballot at the convention. In 5 states delegates selected by caucus or convention must support the presidential preference primary winner (see Part II for state-by-state listing of primaries and delegate selection methods). The binding of delegates by law to a candidate has always been opposed by some party leaders on the grounds that the delegation could not gain maximum advantage for the state if its hands were tied. The possibility of "boss-led" delegations has been enough of a reality, however, that the trend in state legislation seems to be toward binding delegations.

In over half the primary states, the presidential candidates themselves choose whether or not to enter the primary; in the others, a state official enters the names of all persons thought to be serious candidates and they must file affidavits to have their names taken off the ballot if they so choose.<sup>9</sup> The latter method, adopted by a number of the newer primary states, is intended to prevent candidates from using primaries for their own strategic advantage—the common practice up to now. Traditionally, presidential candidates have stayed out of primaries where a loss might hurt their chances and entered those where a victory might prove a point. An outstanding example was the 1960 West Virginia primary, entered by Senator John Kennedy to prove that a Catholic candidate could win votes in a largely non-Catholic state. His victory there practically assured his nomination. Despite the recent trend, primary results will continue to be fragmentary and ambiguous; less than half the states have primaries and not all candidates will enter all the primaries that exist. In recent elections, however, conventions have tended to shun "dark horses" in favor of candidates who have demonstrated popular support in the primaries. Since nine of the nation's ten most populous states (Texas is the exception) now have primaries of some kind, it will be difficult in the future for candidates to avoid facing voters before the conventions. And on the eve of the onslaught of the New Hampshire, Florida and Illinois primaries, political columnists were already beginning to speculate about the possibility of a single national primary.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *The New York Times*, Feb. 9, 1972.

<sup>9</sup> In Oregon, candidates cannot remove their names from the ballot at all.

<sup>10</sup> See Marquis Childs, "Windfall for Nixon," *The Washington Post*, February 19, 1972, and Clayton Fritchey, "A Single Primary Instead of Fifty," *The Washington Post*, March 4, 1972.

## Delegate Selection and Nonprimary States

In spite of the increased emphasis on primaries in 1972, over half the states will still select national convention delegates in other ways. Although there has been considerable variation in the exact method (see the earlier discussion of delegate selection and party reform and the state-by-state listing of selection methods in Part II), all of them have been criticized at one time or another for not allowing enough popular participation in the selection process.

In response to this criticism, a number of the Democratic Party's McGovern Commission guidelines for reform are aimed specifically at those states which do not use the primary method. The commission requires that at least 75 percent of the delegates be elected in open meetings at the precinct, congressional district or other regional level rather than at state conventions. All such meetings must be scheduled well in advance, held in easily accessible places and be well publicized, so that any registered Democrat is encouraged to participate. These new practices combine to relocate much of the power over delegate selection formerly held by state party leaders.

By all evidence, these party reforms have already been quite effective in opening up the process to wider participation. In 1968, for example, a small group of Democratic Party leaders selected Arizona's national convention delegates in a private meeting. *Time* magazine reports that this year, by contrast, over 35,000 Democrats participated in the legislative district meetings which are the first step in choosing Arizona's delegates. Similarly, in Iowa, "45,000 Democrats cared enough to venture out in a January blizzard to attend 2,600 precinct caucuses and make their preferences known at the base of the selection pyramid."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> *Time*, March 6, 1972 p. 42.

## VI PHASE THREE

# The National Conventions

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In the summer of every presidential election year, the results of months of convention and primary work as well as the months or even years of candidate activities culminate in the national conventions of the two major parties. Well in advance of the meeting date, the national committees select an American city for the convention site. Local pride and the prospect of increased business induce many cities to lobby for the honor, and the national committees make their selections on the basis of convenience, available accommodations and sometimes political considerations. In 1972, the Democratic Convention will meet on July 10 in Miami Beach, Florida; the Republican Convention convenes August 21 in San Diego, California. The thousands of delegates, political leaders, newsmen and tourists at work and play make convention weeks American festivals, but they are festivals with a serious purpose.<sup>1</sup>

### The Functions of National Conventions

National conventions have no actual legal standing and only represent the particular sentiments of the political party holding the convention. State laws regulate the process of delegate selection but the conventions themselves are largely unregulated by state and federal law. They make their own rules and are the supreme authority over other parts of the national parties, including the national committees. They have few ways to enforce their mandates, however, short of denying admittance to a violator at a future convention, and must depend largely on voluntary compliance. Compliance is usually forthcoming, at least to a large degree, because without the work done by the national conventions, there could be no true national parties.

The convention performs four major functions for the party:

**It nominates candidates for President and Vice-President.** The nominees can usually depend on having their names and/or a slate of electors pledged to them on the November election ballot in all the states, a luxury not easy for a minor party to come by. Though formal nomination is not a *legal* requirement it is a practical necessity brought on by the development of a mass electorate. Although candidates could

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<sup>1</sup> One of the best works on national party conventions is Paul T. David, Ralph M. Goldman, and Richard C. Bain, *The Politics of National Party Conventions* (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1960).



nominated in a national primary (see previous chapter), there are those who believe that this method of nomination would rob the conventions of their most important function and weaken the national parties by weakening their chief binding force.

The convention **adopts a national party platform**. Although the platform is certainly not binding on all members of the party, it does establish a certain tone and direction behind which most party members may rally, at least during the election and serves a number of other purposes (see the section later in this chapter on officers, credentials, rules and platforms). After the election, presidents, congressmen, and senators interpret the platform to suit their own needs and philosophies.

The national convention **governs the party**. Policies and procedures for the next convention are determined and study groups such as the McGovern Commission on Party Reform may be appointed. Each state's nomination for national committeemen and committeewomen must be approved by the national convention. The party is thus provided with a new national committee to tend to party affairs for the next four years.

Lastly, the national convention **serves as a campaign rally**. The outbursts against the opposition serve as the first shots of the election campaign and help to build morale among the rank and file. The hoopla which surrounds the conventions helps to heal wounds which may have been opened in the factional struggle over the nomination. The national conventions have never been mere business meetings at which candidates were nominated—but national party “happenings” with a variety of functions.

## The Gathering of the Delegates

A convention city on the eve of convention is a hubbub of activity and expectancy. The delegates have been selected and are on their way, large delegations from distant states often traveling together. They may have held a meeting before leaving and have chosen a delegation chairman, vice-chairman and secretary, or they may wait until they reach the convention city to organize and elect their leadership. Delegates in the past have usually been upper middle class, college educated, professional or managerial, and to some degree, professional politicians. This profile is changing as both parties now try to bring more young people, women and members of racial minority groups into their ranks (see Chapter V). Frequently, the delegates are politicians on the local or state level only and are not well-known figures in their states. They may even have had only a limited previous connection with members of their own delegation.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Richard C. Bain, *Convention Decisions and Voting Records* (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1960), p. 4.

Within minutes after delegates have checked in at hotels, the preliminary conferences and caucuses start. Each state has its own headquarters and calls its delegation together. Some are closed caucuses while others are open to the presidential contenders and their representatives. Meeting at the same time are representatives of the major pressure groups—labor, business, agriculture, professional groups, religious groups, citizen groups—who hope to influence delegates in the choice of candidates and in the content of the party platform. Most of these groups will already have testified at earlier hearings of the platform committees. Television cameras, microphones and amplifiers are everywhere in evidence in the convention hall as the party's national chairman steps to the podium to open the proceedings. The hall and its galleries are filled as delegates, alternates and visitors take their seats in the places assigned by the national committee. With a burst of drama—banners, emblems, music, and party fervor—the convention begins.

### Convention Size

The national parties have earlier decided two basic questions about convention size: how many people, voting delegates or otherwise, will be admitted to the convention in an official capacity and how the total number will be apportioned among the states. The allocation of delegates to the national conventions is determined by each party's national committee under authority granted at the last convention and is announced early in the presidential election year.

Critics have often complained that the thousands of people in attendance at conventions make meaningful deliberation impossible. They have recommended smaller conventions with fewer delegate votes and fewer alternates (i.e., substitute delegates who step in if an official delegate cannot fulfill his function for any reason). Most party leaders have argued, however, that there must be enough delegate votes to be representative of the nation as a whole. In addition, if the number of persons attending conventions were drastically reduced, it would reduce the number of faithful party workers that could be rewarded with a trip to the national convention.<sup>3</sup> These considerations have kept the national conventions large. In 1972, some 5,000 persons will attend the Democratic National Convention—3,016 voting delegates, 84 delegates who will not have complete votes, and 1,897 alternates. The Republican National Convention will be smaller with 1,346 voting dele-

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<sup>3</sup> Rewarded only in the sense of being designated as delegates since in most states delegates must pay for their own transportation to and from the conventions as well as expenses while there.

ates and a like number of alternates for a total number of nearly 2,700 persons.<sup>4</sup>

In apportioning delegate votes to the states, the national parties have been generally guided by two considerations: the population of the state and the voting strength of the party in the state. Population has been loosely recognized by basing much of a state's delegate allocation on its number of electoral votes (senators plus representatives); voting strength has been recognized by giving "bonus" delegates to the states where the party has recently done well.

Critics claim that this method gives small states too much power, since even the smallest states have three electoral votes. Others complain that the system of bonus votes may discourage the building of the party in areas where it has been weak, because these areas are under-represented at the convention. Responding to these somewhat contradictory criticisms, the Democrats have altered their delegate allocation procedure for 1972. The Rules Commission, a "party reform" study group set up by the 1968 convention and chaired by Congressman James O'Hara, recommended reducing the portion of the delegation based on electoral votes to half and allocating the remaining half according to Democratic vote in the past three presidential elections. The Democratic National Committee, however, finally decided to base 53% of their 1972 convention votes on the electoral college and 47% on areas where the party has done well in recent presidential elections.

The Republicans will again base their state allocations on the electoral-college-plus-bonus-votes system. Some two-thirds of the delegate votes will be based upon congressional districts while the remainder will be "delegates-at-large."

By and large, the number of convention delegate votes in both parties in 1972 will correspond to the actual number of delegates. In the past, this has not been true, because "fractional voting" has been permitted. Under this system, a delegate might have not one whole vote but half a vote or even a fifth of a vote. Both parties have now eliminated fractional voting as such. However, the Democrats in 1972 will allow a minimum delegation of 20 people, even for states which do not have 20 delegate votes so that their number of delegates and delegate votes will not exactly correspond.

During the convention, the importance of the delegates varies in proportion to the strength of the various presidential contenders and the unity within the party. If one contender is out front with a large number of assured delegate votes, as is usually the case when an incumbent president seeks renomination, the delegates play a passive role of consent during the convention. If it is a tight race, the delegates

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<sup>4</sup> See Part II for complete delegate allocations.

play the decisive role. If in addition to having a front-running candidate the convention produces little disagreement over platform matters, it is likely to be a quiet one.

## Officers, Credentials, Rules, and Platforms

Much of the important work of each convention is done by its four standing committees, which report to the convention as a whole before the nominating process begins. They are the committees on Permanent Organization, Credentials, Rules and Order of Business, and Resolutions and Platform. The *Permanent Organization Committee* recommends a set of permanent officers, including the permanent chairman, for the convention. The *Credentials Committee* examines the credentials of delegates, hears challenges to credentials and lists the permanent roll of bona fide delegates. The *Rules Committee* reports to the convention a set of rules for its operation and establishes the voting procedure. The *Resolutions and Platform Committee* drafts and presents the proposed party platform. The work of all committees must be approved by the full convention.

Under the authority of the National Committee, chairmen of these committees have been selected well ahead of time so that they may begin work before the convention meets. State delegations also designate state representatives on the committees in advance of the convention. In the Republican Party, each delegation has equal representation on the committees, but at the Democratic National Convention in 1972, committee membership will reflect the varying size of the delegations. This change was made upon the recommendation of the O'Hara Commission and reflected the belief that state equality on the committees was as unrepresentative as state equality in the convention would be.

When the convention begins, the national chairman soon yields the gavel to a temporary chairman picked in advance by the National Committee. He presides while housekeeping matters are taken care of and then yields to the permanent chairman, who presides during the platform debates and the nominating activities. Instead of being elected by the convention, the permanent chairman has come to be chosen ahead of the convention by consultation between the national chairman and other party leaders, including presidential contenders. The convention merely ratifies the choice after it is presented by the Permanent Organization Committee. Since fairness to all contending factions by the presiding officer is a must if the convention is not to be disrupted, men of stature and moderate temperament are chosen. Present and former Speakers of the House of Representatives are especially favored.

The first highlight of the national convention is the famous "keynote address," usually given by the temporary chairman. This bit of political

atory ranks almost with the State of the Union messages and commencement addresses as pieces of Americana. The speaker traditionally points to the past glories of the party, stresses the failures of the opposition, and promises even greater things in the future. Sometimes boring and usually exaggerated, the keynote speech may occasionally reach dramatic heights. Few can forget the 1956 Democratic Convention when the late Frank Clement, then a young governor from Tennessee, denounced the Eisenhower administration by raising his arms to the heavens and intoning in Bible Belt fashion, "How long, Oh Lord, how long?"

The serious business of the convention begins with the acceptance of delegate credentials and convention rules. Credentials battles to determine who are the bona fide delegates to the convention are not uncommon, for a nomination may hang in the balance. The National Committee and the Credentials Committee try to iron out all disputes in advance, but the national convention has the final word and floor fights over credentials sometimes occur. Victory for one faction in a credentials battle may be a tip-off to the eventual nominee. A classic illustration occurred in 1952 at the Republican convention when the seating of certain Eisenhower delegates rather than delegates committed to Senator Robert Taft of Ohio signaled that Eisenhower would be the eventual winner.

Rules may also be a matter of controversy because they affect the present and future strength of factions within the party. For many years, for example, the Democratic Party required a two-thirds vote of the convention for nomination, a requirement that gave veto power to the Southern bloc. In 1936, harmony prevailed at the Democratic convention, since Franklin Roosevelt would obviously be easily renominated. The convention seized this opportunity to abolish the two-thirds rule (in favor of a majority) at a moment when no faction would be immediately affected.

If there are to be any fireworks at a convention, they will certainly appear when the Platform Committee presents its report. The significance of the platform does not lie in the fact that it will bind the nominees to a program. As noted earlier, those elected to office will interpret the platform to suit themselves. The platform is significant, first, because, like credentials, it may be an indication of who will be able to control the nomination. In the 1964 Republican convention, for example, conservatives controlled the Platform Committee and submitted a platform completely to the liking of the front-running contender, conservative Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona. Liberal Republicans attempted to amend the platform on the floor but failed on practically every point. From that point on, it was clear that Goldwater would be easily nominated. A platform may also serve a symbolic purpose, exposing discontents within a party and providing an occasion

for debate which allows dissidents to vent their grievances. An outstanding illustration: the special time devoted to debate over the Vietnam War at the 1968 Democratic convention. The platform still reflected a fairly "hawkish" view of the war but "doves" had been able to score a number of points. All in all, then, platform debate is far more than a useless activity.

## The Nomination of the President

While debates over housekeeping matters and the platform are going on, delegations will caucus and recaucus, presidential hopefuls and their spokesmen will try to build up their delegate strength, promises will be made and perhaps bargains struck.<sup>5</sup> With the final platform plank completed, however, attention will turn to the convention's chief purpose, the nomination of the president.

A candidate's name is placed in nomination by a prominent supporter during a roll call of the states. In past conventions, the states have been called alphabetically with top-of-the-alphabet states yielding to states prepared to nominate a front-running candidate. In 1972, the Democrats will determine the order of nomination by lot, and a Republican study group (the Delegates and Organizations Committee, hereafter referred to as the DO Committee) has recommended this practice for the Republican Party in the future. After candidates have been nominated there has traditionally been a demonstration in behalf of each, plus a series of seconding speeches. This entire procedure has been something of a farce, with demonstrations far from spontaneous (participants have been hired in some cases) and much too long and seconding speeches long-winded and repetitious. To make the entire scene more businesslike (and more appealing to a television audience), the Democrats in 1972 will limit to fifteen minutes the total time for a candidate's nomination and seconding speeches. This will include any spontaneous demonstrations, and planned demonstrations will be banned. The DO Committee recommended similar time limits to the Republican Party and suggested that demonstrations be allowed only for "serious" candidates.

To further speed up the nominating process, both parties have looked at the problem of "favorite sons," candidates who enter the race only to preserve their state's bargaining power and whose names are put in nomination merely as a courtesy. The Democrats will require that a candidate establish substantial support in three or more states by a petition method before his name may be placed in nomination. The Republican DO Committee recommended that evidence of delegate

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<sup>5</sup> The candidates operate by phone or through representatives. It has traditionally been considered bad form for candidates to appear at the convention hall before nominations are made.

support from five states be required to establish one as a serious candidate. Both parties, then, are attempting to take much of the sham out of the convention.

After all candidates have been placed in nomination, there is another roll call of states to determine the nominee. Here again, the conventions have in the past proceeded alphabetically, beginning with Alabama. This meant that states later in the alphabet would always be in a better position than earlier states to gain increased power and prestige by providing the votes that put a candidate over the top. Accordingly, a new Democratic procedure, also recommended for the Republicans, will determine the first state by lot and proceed alphabetically from that point. In addition, dilatory actions of the past, such as flowery speeches by the chairman of a delegation when he announces his state's vote or the polling of each member of a delegation, will be discouraged. States may pass when their turn comes and vote at the end of the roll call or switch their votes before the final tally is announced. These measures are sometimes engaged in as tactical maneuvers or to get on a bandwagon for the winning candidate. In both parties now, a majority vote is sufficient to nominate. If no candidate receives a majority on the first ballot, the roll is called again until someone does receive a majority. Recent nominations in both parties have been decided on the first ballot.

To assure that the nomination reflects the will of the entire convention, the Democrats in 1972 have abolished "unit voting" and will not enforce delegate instruction. Previously, a majority of one in a delegation could swing an entire delegation's voting strength behind a particular candidate, but this will no longer be permitted. Also, all delegates will be permitted by the party to vote as they wish, even if they were chosen in binding state primaries. The Democratic position is that even if state law binds a delegate to vote for a primary winner, the Party will not enforce the law for the state: each individual delegate must decide for himself the extent of his obligation to vote for a particular candidate.<sup>6</sup>

While the roll call of states edges along in a close ballot, millions of people all over the country mark convention tally sheets or follow closely the tallies of radio and television. When a particular state declares for a candidate and carries him to victory, pandemonium breaks loose in the convention hall. It is a difficult feat to finish calling the roll.

## The Final Tasks of the Convention

There are two more tasks facing the convention before the delegates can head for home. First, a vice-president must be nominated. He

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<sup>6</sup> *Fact*, a publication of the Democratic National Committee, October 29, 1971.

is officially nominated in a state roll call as is the president, but the procedure is less suspenseful in his case. Traditionally, the wishes of the presidential nominee are honored in the choice of a running mate. His choice will be known to all by roll call time so that the nomination is a formality only and is sometimes done by acclamation. Occasionally there is some grumbling from delegates and even less often a battle for the nomination, as in 1956 at the Democratic convention, when presidential nominee Stevenson threw the vice-presidential nomination open to the convention.

Since the vice-presidency has long been considered an unimportant office, the selection of a nominee has usually been largely a matter of balancing the election ticket for maximum vote-getting potential. So it was that Democratic nominee John F. Kennedy had few qualms about picking the more conservative Lyndon Johnson as his running mate in 1960. This does not mean, of course, that the persons thus selected are necessarily incompetent. Indeed, American vice-presidents who have succeeded to the presidency in this century have performed with distinction. At any rate, recent presidential nominees have tended to look for governmental as well as purely political qualifications in their nominees.

The final big moment for the convention is the acceptance speech by the presidential nominee. Before 1936, delegations were sent to inform a candidate of his nomination and he did not go to the convention. In that year, however, Franklin Roosevelt flew to Chicago to accept the nomination personally and all candidates have done so since. The acceptance speech sets the tone for the coming election and is, in a sense, a campaign speech, although candidates usually do not begin formal campaigning until Labor Day. In 1964, when Senator Goldwater, throwing down the gauntlet to those who had attempted to condemn "extremism" at the convention, proclaimed that "extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice," he was signaling that he did not intend to moderate his views during the coming campaign as conservative candidates had often done. Nor did he.

## Television at the National Conventions

Radio and television have removed much of the secret, "smoke filled room" atmosphere from the national conventions. Television, especially, with its live coverage of events in and around the convention hall and convention city, have brought the national conventions into millions of homes. For many people, the most memorable events of the convention have not been keynote speeches but the wry humor of David Brinkley, the bitter reporting of Walter Cronkite at the 1968 Democratic convention, or the vision of John Chancellor being arrested on the floor of the 1964 Republican convention.



So complete is television coverage of the conventions that the activities of newsmen may overshadow the delegates themselves. A popular television correspondent has noted that at the Republican convention in San Francisco in 1964, the Republican Party issued 3,983 badges to representatives of broadcast journalism (editorial and technical) to report on the activities of only 2,616 party delegates and alternates.<sup>7</sup> To many critics, this is a case of the tail wagging the dog. They complain that the television networks often cut away from convention proceedings (such as seconding speeches) to present what is essentially their own material—interviews, specials, reports from hotels, and the like. In addition, there is the question of television bias. Charges of bias reached a new high at the Democratic convention in 1968 when NBC and CBS, both feeling that their reporters were being too roughly handled by convention authorities and Chicago police, openly criticized the way the convention was being run. Walter Cronkite's remarks were especially caustic, leading to a few demands that the networks be restricted in the future to covering official convention proceedings.

The issue, if there is an issue, remains unsettled for 1972. Both NBC and CBS will again provide live prime-time coverage of the conventions while ABC will provide spot coverage and specials. Television reporters and their roving cameras may be restricted in their movements in the convention hall, or possibly even banned from the floor entirely. Nonetheless, both parties will probably again schedule their most important events at a time when television viewing is likely to be at its peak. It may be inconvenient for politicians to trip over TV cables and hide from cameras, but TV coverage adds up to a plus for the voter. The careful viewer is likely to know as much as or more than the delegates themselves about what is going on at the convention. Like the football watcher, he has the advantage of the instant replay and the behind-the-scenes interview. Undoubtedly, more Americans are aware of how a president is nominated than ever before.

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<sup>7</sup> Robert MacNeil, *The People Machine: The Influence of Television on American Politics* (New York: Harper, 1968), p. 95.

## VII PHASE FOUR

# The Campaign

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By Labor Day of a presidential election year, both candidates and voters will be campaign-weary. The candidates will have been campaigning in one way or another for four years, and will be nearly exhausted by recent efforts in primaries and state conventions. The voters will have been exposed to literally millions of bits of political information and exhortation. Yet both candidates and voters must gird themselves for the final effort, the specific presidential campaign which extends from Labor Day to Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

### Campaign Organization

The principal purpose of a presidential campaign is to woo voters by appealing to as many kinds of people as possible in as many different ways as possible. To do this with a potential electorate of more than a hundred million people is a staggering task that demands good organization, adequate manpower, and large amounts of money. The day of the "front-porch campaign" is apparently over. In 1860, Abraham Lincoln won the election for the Republican Party without leaving Springfield, Illinois or making a single speech. One hundred years later, Republican nominee Richard Nixon traveled 65,000 miles, made 212 speeches and visited all 50 states. He lost.

A modern presidential campaign is big business, but unlike a modern corporate enterprise it is not structured along neat bureaucratic lines. A presidential campaign, in the words of campaign finance specialist Herbert E. Alexander, is a "multimillion dollar operation run by an amazing assemblage of amateurs and professionals, family and friends, specialists, job seekers, old hands and new faces, party bureaucrats, statesmen, and hangers-on."<sup>1</sup>

There are essentially three organizational elements in a presidential campaign: the candidate's personal organization which was assembled during the preliminary and primary phases of the campaign, the regular party organization headed by the National Committee, and the volunteer citizens groups which spring up before and after the conventions. A large part of the success of a campaign depends upon how well

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<sup>1</sup> "Financing the Parties and Campaigns," in *The Presidential Election and Transition, 1960-61* (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1961), p. 126.

these elements are utilized. These organizations need not be meshed in any particular way, but one point is essential: the presidential nominee must have the final word on all matters, and his choice for campaign manager, whether he is also the national chairman or not, must be the boss of the campaign. Divided leadership usually means lack of leadership and electoral disaster.

Since the work of volunteer groups is nearly always separate from the other campaign organizations, the real organizational question concerns the relationship between the candidate's own operation and the National Committee. Either a "unified" or a "dual" organization may be developed.<sup>2</sup> A unified organization requires a melding of command between the candidate's personal team and the regular National Committee members and staff. This means that the responsibility for decision-making and the implementation of decisions must be assigned, and the campaign manager must assume the leadership with tact and firmness so as to minimize discontent among National Committee people who may have been given a secondary role. This is a tough assignment for any campaign manager. James Farley was able to do it for Roosevelt in 1932, and Robert Kennedy accomplished much the same thing in 1960. The Kennedy organization was an efficient family team which was able to work well with the Democratic National Committee headed by Senator Henry Jackson (D-Wash.). The unified organization was purposely left unstructured, and the National Committee was given great freedom to work in any way it could to win the election. Its facilities were meshed with those of Kennedy's campaign team and its greatly increased staff ended up reporting to both Jackson and Robert Kennedy. There were points of confusion and moments of adjustment, but it was a successful meld on the whole.

A dual organization probably produces a less effective and responsible organization but may be necessary in some situations. The candidate may feel that the National Committee lacks leadership with enough campaign expertise or staff to activate the far-flung operation needed to sell him to the voters. The National Committee, which theoretically has as one of its tasks the management of the presidential campaign, may, in that case, not play a policymaking role at all. In 1952, for example, Adlai Stevenson maintained his campaign headquarters in Springfield, Illinois to break with the "Truman image" while the Democratic National Committee operated in something of a vacuum in Washington. Richard Nixon's organizational set-up was similar in 1960, but by 1968 Nixon had been able to develop a more unified approach. The 1968 campaign was efficiently directed from New York

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<sup>2</sup> The concepts are borrowed from Daniel M. Ogden, Jr., and Arthur L. Peterson, *Electing the President*, Rev. ed. (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1968), p. 96.

by John Mitchell while the Republican National Committee under Ray Bliss accepted a secondary role.

Volunteer groups in a presidential campaign are of two kinds. First are the party-affiliated groups such as Young Democrats or Republicans, State Federation of Republican or Democratic Women, and local or district Democratic or Republican Clubs. They are organizationally separate from the parties but dovetail their work with the regular organization. A second type is the "Citizens for John Doe Club." Such groups spring to life in every presidential campaign and are kept organizationally distinct for several reasons. They provide a way for volunteers to work for the national ticket without working for all party candidates. They may also provide a special way to appeal to specific groups, such as ethnic minorities. In 1960, for example, some 200 local-level Viva Kennedy Clubs were organized in the 21 states with concentrations of Spanish-speaking citizens. In addition, national volunteer committees once provided a way for the party to expand its financial base, since each such committee could raise and spend the statutory financial maximum (see the discussion of campaign finance later in this chapter). Both parties also receive help in the form of money and manpower from the major pressure groups such as labor, business, and agriculture. No party can depend upon complete support from any interest group however. Labor unions, for example, have long been a prime source of support for the Democratic Party, but their efforts were divided in 1968 when many rank-and-file union members overrode their national leadership to work for Governor Wallace. American business, often thought of as being pro-Republican, also makes contributions to the Democrats.

## Campaign Strategy

In many respects, a presidential campaign is similar to a military campaign. The objective is to win the battle without winning it in such a way that the war is lost. A presidential candidate must win an election, but he must be in a position to govern the nation afterward. This basic fact affects all political campaigns and prevents the short-run search for votes from becoming an end in itself. A *successful* presidential campaign, to use a military metaphor again, is one in which there is full knowledge of the "lay of the land," which will provide the context for the campaign. Within this context, winning strategy and tactics must be developed.

There are several basic realities of American politics which every presidential candidate (and his advisers and managers) must take into account in developing strategy and tactics to win votes.

First of all, the bulk of the American electorate is found near the center of the ideological spectrum; it rejects extremes of left and right

on most issues. Winning candidates must know where the center is on particular issues and frame their appeals to fall somewhere near it. The center is always shifting, of course, and today's extreme may be tomorrow's moderation, so the candidate must have a proper sense of timing.<sup>3</sup>

Secondly, the majority of voters will have already made up their minds by the end of the national conventions. The evidence indicates that only a minority of voters, rarely more than one-third and often much less, are still uncommitted during presidential campaigns.<sup>4</sup> This does not mean that campaigns are not worthwhile. Even if only ten percent of the voters are uncommitted, this represents millions of votes, quite enough to decide an election. In any case, a campaign has to do more than (perhaps) convert the opposition, activate the apathetic, and convince the doubtful; it also serves to "reinforce the faithful."<sup>5</sup> In other words, the candidate must not allow voters already committed to him to slip to the opposition through neglect.

With the above realities in mind, the campaign manager must make certain strategic decisions. Voters respond basically to three aspects of a campaign: parties, personalities, and issues. The decision must be made whether to stress one of these elements rather than another or how much stress should be given to each. A Democratic candidate may wish to emphasize his party affiliation, inasmuch as Democrats now outnumber Republicans in voting registrations. If a candidate is regarded as having an especially warm personality, as President Eisenhower was, this may be the principal feature of the campaign. All candidates will talk about issues, of course, but they will use them as weapons, stressing issues on which their record is strong and avoiding as much as possible areas in which they may be vulnerable. Out-party candidates must decide whether to attack the in-party on all fronts or to agree with it on issues where the in-party record is popular. The in-party candidate, in turn, must decide whether to respond to opposition charges or to ignore them and talk about other matters. Finally, the possibility of regional variations in campaign appeals must be considered. Of course, the opposition and the news media will not allow a candidate complete freedom in choice of strategy. In the day of television, for example, it is hard for a candidate to say one thing in the North and another in the South. Still, he will have some latitude in arranging his campaign for maximum effect.

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<sup>3</sup> For a provocative discussion of the importance of the "center" in American politics, see Richard M. Scammon and Ben J. Wattenberg, *The Real Majority* (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1970).

<sup>4</sup> William H. Flanagan, *Political Behavior of the American Electorate* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1968), p. 99.

<sup>5</sup> These terms were first used in Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet, *The People's Choice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944).

## Campaign Tactics

With matters of strategy decided, the presidential campaign is faced with questions of tactics—the specific things to be done to win votes. The questions to be answered are virtually endless: where to campaign, how to use limited time, how much to spend on television and bumper stickers, whether to debate the opposition, etc. As might be expected, experts are in disagreement about successful campaign tactics.<sup>6</sup> There are, however, some “ways to win” which have a considerable following among political tacticians and may deserve the status of “rules,” it being clearly understood that all rules have exceptions and all must be adapted to fit particular situations:

**1 Go where the ducks are.** Time and money, to say nothing of the candidate's energies, are always limited in a campaign. These resources should be used where the returns in terms of votes will be the greatest. Thus the campaigning should be heaviest in states with large numbers of electoral votes and uncommitted voters, lightest in states with few electoral votes where the candidate is either very popular or unpopular. This tactic will not be popular with small states or with a candidate's own supporters in an area where they are a distinct minority, but it is a necessity. Richard Nixon's pledge in 1960 to visit all 50 states was widely regarded by politicians as unwise; it forced him to fly to Alaska late in the campaign rather than devoting his waning energies to more important urban states. Luckily for the modern candidate, television makes it possible for him to campaign in many places at once.

**2 Accentuate the positive.** Candidates who concentrate their fire on the shortcomings of their opponent rarely win. Voters seem to prefer a positive approach in which the candidate extols his own virtues, at least in moderation. In addition, criticizing an opponent too much gives that opponent extra exposure before the voters.

**3 Promise the voter something for his vote.** Voters like to feel that their lives will to some extent be improved if they vote for a certain candidate. A candidate who is too humble in his approach and admits that he will not be able to solve most problems will get good ratings on honesty and humility but few votes. It is not necessary to promise pie-in-the-sky, just some improvements. It may be argued that some problems are nearly insoluble and that the voters should be told this. It should be borne in mind, however, that voters discount all campaign promises rather heavily and do not really expect that

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<sup>6</sup> Among the many writings on successful campaigning, an especially interesting one is Stephen Shadegg, *How To Win An Election* (New York: Taplinger, 1964). Most of the rules discussed here are based on Shadegg's analysis.

all of them will be fulfilled, so a candidate who cannot even *promise* to improve things is especially suspect.

**4 Peak the campaign.** Most campaign experts feel that a certain momentum should be developed in a campaign, beginning with limited, low-key campaigning and building to a crescendo of activity as close to voting day as possible. This cresting can be programmed by judicious handling of money and manpower. For example, one rule of thumb might be that, of the campaign money available, one-fourth should be spent during the first half of the campaign and three-fourths during the second half. Speeches, policy papers, television commercials and bumper stickers can be gradually doled out to achieve a bandwagon effect. Other politicians, such as the late Robert Kennedy, have thought it better to go as hard as possible all the way. However, political realities usually force a "peaking" strategy even when it is not desired. Rarely is all the money needed for a campaign available at the beginning, for example, and workers are usually easier to mobilize as election day approaches.

The great difficulty with peaking a campaign is timing: if the peak comes the day *after* the election, it is obviously too late. This may have happened to Vice-President Humphrey in 1968 when he closed ground rapidly at the end but came up short. Given the disarray in the Democratic Party after the national convention, however, Humphrey could hardly have peaked his campaign earlier.

## The Media in Campaigning

An entire area which presents tactical problems to the presidential candidate is the proper use of the mass media, especially television. Although newspaper advertisements and radio are still used in presidential campaigns, television has become a far more important way of reaching the voter. In 1968, presidential campaigners spent \$14.6 million on television and \$5.7 million on radio.<sup>7</sup> Candidates now hire professional agencies to manage their television appearances much as corporations employ advertising agencies to market their products. The professionals design the scenarios, write the scripts, buy the air time, and advise on make-up to be worn.

There are five general ways that candidates may appear on television: special programs of varying length, short commercial spots, regular news programs, live telethons, and television "debates." Professionals disagree somewhat as to which method is most effective, and the choice of technique involves a certain amount of "keeping up with the Joneses," i.e., a technique used successfully by one agency is likely

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<sup>7</sup> David W. Adamany, "Money in American Politics: The Costs of Campaigning," *Vital Issues*, XXI (Oct. 1971).

to be quickly adopted by the others. (See Part II for a more detailed discussion of the role of the media in campaigning.)

According to some agency spokesmen,<sup>8</sup> the emphasis in 1972 will be on the "media event," which amounts to getting the candidate on the evening news by having him do something during the day which the networks will report—hold a press conference, issue a statement on some event of the day or tour a sewage treatment plant. The agencies will provide free taped excerpts ("electronic press releases") to local television stations.

Telethons are used by candidates either as fundraising devices or as question-answer sessions directly with the voter. Voters telephone their questions to the television station where the candidate answers them before a live camera, after they have been carefully screened by his representatives. The television "debate" has been in vogue since 1960 when John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon held four highly publicized and widely viewed debates on network television. Such debates are commonly considered beneficial to challengers who are not well known but less useful for well-known incumbents or front-runners. It is not always easy for a candidate to refuse to debate, however, because the opposition will make an issue out of his unwillingness to face the voters. To have debates between the major party candidates, Congress must temporarily suspend Section 315 of the Federal Communications Act which guarantees equal time for all candidates if the time is given freely by the networks. Otherwise, a host of minor candidates could claim a share of the debate. The only time the provision has been suspended was in 1960 to allow the Kennedy-Nixon debates. The incumbent Democrats did not demand its repeal in 1964 or 1968, and neither Goldwater nor Nixon pushed the matter.

## Campaign Finance

In 1952, the Democratic and Republican Parties combined spent a total of \$11.5 million in the presidential campaign. The amount rose steadily in each election year, reaching a new high of roughly \$46 million in 1968, including some \$9 million spent by George Wallace.

Although campaign cost figures appear to be astronomical, a few points can be made to put them into perspective. All indicators of the nation's economic health, such as gross national product and personal income, have also risen dramatically since World War II. Furthermore, campaign costs do not seem out of line with the spending which is done to sell private products in the United States. As David W. Adamany points out in a recent perceptive article on campaign costs, the national campaign bill for 1968 of some \$300 million may seem

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<sup>8</sup> See the discussion by Lewis W. Wolfson, "The Media Masters," *Potomac* (*The Washington Post*), Feb. 20, 1972, p. 13.



staggering until it is noted that one American corporation, Proctor and Gamble, had an advertising budget of \$275 million in the same year.<sup>9</sup> To look at the matter from another point of view, spending per voter in the 1968 presidential campaign was only about 50 cents.

In any case, campaign spending was increased for quite legitimate and even unavoidable reasons. Inflation, for example, a perennial American postwar problem, has had the same effect on campaign costs as on the cost of living in general. The changing nature of the parties has, at the same time, brought about a need for more campaigning. In the day of the "Solid South," the Democratic Party could cut its general election costs by taking that region pretty much for granted—and so, for that matter, could the Republican Party. Today, two-party competition has spread or is spreading over the entire United States and no state can really be neglected in campaign plans. In addition, the decline of big-city machines and courthouse rings necessitates more open (and costly) electioneering to get out the vote. Even the recent efforts at party reform which have taken place in both parties have an effect on costs, increasing the number of presidential primaries and the cost of winning delegates.

But the development of new campaign techniques has probably been the chief offender in pushing up election costs. Such expenses, of course, are "avoidable" in the sense that candidates could refuse to use expensive techniques. This is occasionally done by an imaginative candidate such as a recent (and successful) candidate for senator from Florida. He received lots of free publicity at little cost by walking over a good portion of the state to meet the voters. In a presidential campaign, however, such tactics are impractical, and most candidates feel that they must match whatever effort is made by the others or else lose the election. Television, polls and other computerized devices have become major campaign items which candidates can ignore only at great risk.

Just as worrisome as the high cost of campaigning is the possibility that "he who pays the piper will call the tune." Campaign contributors naturally want to give money to those candidates whose views are similar to their own, and can hardly be expected to be unconcerned about what the candidate will do in office. Candidates themselves may also feel some obligation toward the people who have supported their campaign.

One possible solution to this problem is to broaden the base of financial contributions so that political leaders can reward their financial backers and the public at the same time, because they would be the same people. Only a small minority of Americans, usually ten percent

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<sup>9</sup> "Money in American Politics: The Costs of Campaigning," *Vital Issues*, XXI (October, 1971).

or less, ever make a political contribution. A goodly portion of the giving to both major parties, ordinarily around 50 percent, is by persons who give over \$500. George Wallace seemed to have considerable success with small contributions in 1968, but the major parties, despite repeated efforts, have never been able to consistently finance their operations with "Dollars for Democrats" campaigns and the like. On the contrary, both parties must regularly call upon financial "angels"—people who give hundreds of thousands of dollars.

A presidential candidate finds it hard to depend upon small contributions because the money tends to come in dribbles and droplets during a campaign. Television programming, however, is best scheduled well ahead of time and must be paid for in advance, so the campaign managers prefer not to wait for small donations if they have a choice. In addition, voluntary small giving, if it ever becomes widespread, will probably be subject to severe ups and downs as voter interest in politics ebbs and flows. If small contributions were to lag as much as voting turnout sometimes does, both parties would be bankrupt if dependent on this support.

Apathy, suspicion of politics, and other factors have combined to prevent the establishment of any tradition of small, widespread political contributions. To get around some of these problems, there have been a number of proposals for procedures which would make it easier for all citizens to make political donations. For instance, one section of the Revenue Act of 1971 would allow taxpayers to earmark \$1.00 of their tax payment for the political party of their choice. This provision of the Act is not scheduled to take effect until January 1973, and bills have already been introduced in both Houses of Congress to repeal it. (Congress enacted a similar plan in 1966 and repealed it in 1967.) The opposition to this change seems to stem mostly from the fear that this would amount to an additional subsidy to parties which are already spending too much money. In other words, as long as laws which regulate the *private* raising and spending of funds seem ineffective, there is reluctance to use any *public* funds for campaigning. Besides, most taxpayers probably feel that the resulting drain on the Treasury would immediately be compensated for by higher taxes. The Revenue Act of 1971 further allows the tax payer, beginning with income earned in 1972, to take deductions or credits for political contributions up to \$50. The effectiveness of this measure in increasing small contributions remains to be seen.

Funds for presidential campaigns are now raised by a variety of methods. Fund-raising dinners costing \$100 or perhaps \$1,000 a plate are common, as are direct solicitations of gifts, the development of sustaining funds, and special collections such as membership in a "President's Club." Both parties have also used quota systems with some success, assigning amounts to state organizations for contributions

to the national level. Given the great variety in state organizations, however, and the uneasy relationship that sometimes exists between them and the national party, such efforts have not been uniformly successful. State organizations often prefer to raise and spend their own money, especially if the leadership is less than enthusiastic about the presidential nominee. National committees also try various methods of reaching small contributors but are hampered by the fact that presidential campaigns demand as much loyalty to an individual candidate as to a party.

Fund-raising is a problem between the parties as well as within them. Republicans have consistently outspent Democrats and the gap between the two parties has been increasing. In 1968, the Republican Party spent over twice as much as the Democrats and still managed to enter the 1972 campaign with several millions on hand; Democrats are still in debt from the 1968 campaign (due in part, perhaps, to costly primary battles).

The Republican Party has generally found greater favor than the Democrats with business groups and high-income individuals who have money to give. However, Democrats can usually depend on financial support from labor unions, and they have many business supporters as well. An additional weakness of Democratic fund-raising is the tendency of the party to fragment its efforts by working mainly through regular party committees. Republicans, on the other hand, have had great success with a unified financing effort spearheaded by the Republican National Finance Committee. In V. O. Key's words, "the businessmen raise the money and the politicians spend it."<sup>10</sup> For whatever reason, Republicans are regularly able to finance more lavish campaigns than Democrats.

The effect of all this on presidential campaigns is unclear. Despite the differences in their financial status, Democrats and Republicans have each won nine presidential elections in this century, and Democrats have won seven of the last ten. Even so, many elections are won by close margins and money may sometimes make a difference. Some observers have cited this as one factor in Vice-President Humphrey's defeat in 1968. Although his campaign finally began to move in the last weeks before the election, Humphrey was short of funds and had to cut back and even drop some planned television broadcasts.

Another possible solution to the problems caused by high campaign costs is regulation of campaign spending. Such regulation has been plentiful at both the federal and state levels. Until recently, the major source of federal regulation has been the Corrupt Practices Act of 1925 which focused on three areas: (1) limitations on what could be spent, (2) limitations on what could be given, and (3) requirements

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<sup>10</sup> Key, *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups*, p. 500.

for public disclosure of giving and spending. The Corrupt Practices Act was amended numerous times but never substantially revised, and it was long-ignored by political campaigners. It limited a national political committee to spending no more than \$3 million in a presidential campaign, but set no limit on the number of committees that could be established, each of which could spend up to the limit. Individual contributions to candidates or committees were limited to \$5,000, but members of the same family could each be credited with a contribution of that amount. Certain groups such as labor unions, corporations, and national banks were forbidden to make political contributions, but such organizations could establish separate arms to raise funds. This aspect of the 1925 Act was retained in the new measure, so that groups such as the Committee on Political Education (COPE) which does the strictly political work for the AFL-CIO still function. Financial disclosure requirements, based on the idea that public knowledge of contributions is an important control, were only partially successful since reports were filed in a relatively obscure place (with the Clerk of the House of Representatives) and were not read by most citizens.

Thus the practice in most elections, including presidential, has been to raise as much money as possible and spend it at will, being careful to spread the amounts over the books so as to technically comply with the law. Even if the law was directly violated, there were no effective procedures for enforcement or prosecution. It is not surprising, then, that campaign spending has continued to rise despite ample laws on the books.

President Nixon recently signed the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1972, written partially in response to the failures of past legislation, which will be applicable to the 1972 presidential election. The major provisions:

1 Limits on total amounts spent by candidates and political committees (\$3,000,000 for the presidency) and on individual contribution to candidates (\$5,000 previously) have been repealed. Committees receiving or spending over \$1,000 do, however, have to submit reports of their contributions and expenditures. This provision includes those committees operating only within a single state or in the District of Columbia which were not covered under the old law.

2 All contributions over \$10 must be recorded and all over \$100 must be made public. "Anonymous" donations may not be accepted. In addition, all funds spent on behalf of a candidate will be counted as being spent by the candidate himself.

3 Candidates for president and vice-president may spend no more than \$50,000 of family funds on their campaigns. This provision is in reaction to recent complaints of candidates who spent large chunks of their personal fortunes in winning elections.

4 The new law applies to *all* elections for federal office—primaries, general elections, and runoff elections. The old law covered only general elections and ignored the fact that many candidates did their heaviest spending in primaries.

5 Political advertising expenditures per election are limited to ten cents per person of voting age—in the nation, state, or Congressional district, whichever is applicable. Of this, no more than six cents may be spent for broadcast advertising, i.e., radio and television. Amounts spent by a vice-presidential nominee are considered a part of presidential campaign costs.

6 Responsibility for enforcement will be shared by the U.S. comptroller general, the secretary of the Senate, and the clerk of the House of Representatives. A new Office of Federal Elections will also be set up in the General Accounting Office.

It is, of course, too early to say whether the new law will be more effective than its predecessors. Reporting requirements and enforcement procedures, which failed to deter campaign spending in the past, have been increased and strengthened. The major criticism of the new law has been that while it does deal with some aspects of broadcast and other advertising spending, it covers only money spent to buy air time or publishing space. It does not cover the rather substantial costs of producing material to be used; nor does it cover payments to pollsters, media experts, film-makers, and researchers. Other loopholes in this part of the law may well appear as time goes on. The new law takes a beginning step in the direction of reform but does not conquer the escalating problems of campaign finance.

Effective regulation of campaign spending is frustrated by the nature of American parties and politics. Both are decentralized, and in the absence of any one control center for campaign funds, regulation, and supervision the laws have had no great impact. In any event, the connection between money and winning elections—clear enough in general—is hard to demonstrate in particular cases.

## VIII PHASE FIVE

# The Election

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If the authors of the American Constitution could return today, they would probably be astonished to find that the president is still being elected indirectly, as they specified in 1787, by the electoral college system. The procedure for electing the president was one of the hastily-drawn compromises of the Philadelphia convention, and it hardly figured to stand the test of time so well. There were many opinions at the convention about how the president should be selected—by the people, by the states, by the Congress—and all these proposals were referred to a committee for study. Near the end of the convention, the committee reported out a plan which included something of all the proposals. The procedure adopted was a jerrybuilt piece of electoral machinery which has always been on the verge of breaking down. It has survived mostly because the political parties have been able to adapt it to the needs of an expanding electorate.<sup>1</sup>

### The Electoral College System

Though Tuesday after the first Monday in November is “election day” in the eyes of American voters, the president and vice-president are not technically elected until the following January when the votes of the “electoral college”<sup>2</sup> are opened and counted in the presence of Congress. Thus, the president is not elected directly by the voters in November but indirectly. Under the Constitution each state is authorized to choose electors for president and vice-president, the number always being the same as the combined number of U.S. senators and congressmen allotted to the state. With 100 senators and 435 congressmen in the United States, plus the three electors for the District of Columbia provided by the Twenty-Third Amendment, the total electoral college vote is 538.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> On the writing of the Constitution, see John P. Roche, “The Founding Fathers: A Reform Caucus in Action,” *The American Political Science Review*, (Dec. 1961), 799-816.

<sup>2</sup> An “elector” is simply a person who elects someone else. The term “college” refers to a decision-making group, as when the College of Cardinals selects a pope.

<sup>3</sup> For a comprehensive discussion of the development, operation, and pros and cons of the electoral college system, see League of Women Voters of the United States, *Who Should Elect the President*, Washington, D.C., May 1969.

Makeup and operation of the "college" itself is tightly defined by the Constitution, but the method of choosing electors is left to the states. In the beginning many states did not provide for popular election of the presidential electors. Today, however, electors are chosen by direct popular vote in every state—another illustration of the general trend toward democratizing the election process. Though there is no constitutional reason why states could not simply appoint electors today, such a proposal would undoubtedly not be well received by the voters because the country has moved too far down the road toward popular participation in the electoral process to move back to the original method.

In addition, with the political parties in control of presidential politics the function of the electoral college has changed drastically. Rather than having individuals seek to become electors and then vote for whomever they please for president, the parties have turned the process upside down by arranging slates of electors, all pledged to support the candidate nominated by the party. In over half the states, it is actually the names of the candidates rather than the electors that appear on the ballot; in the other states, both candidates and electors are identified. The victor in each state is determined by counting the votes for each slate of electors; the slate receiving the most votes, whether or not it is a majority of the votes cast, being declared elected.<sup>4</sup>

To be elected to the presidency a candidate must receive an absolute majority (270) of the electoral votes cast. If no candidate receives a majority, the House of Representatives picks the winner from the top three, each state delegation in the House casting only one vote, regardless of its size. Only two American elections have been decided this way.

The vice-president is elected by the same indirect, winner-take-all method which chooses the president, but the electors vote separately for the two offices. If no vice-presidential candidate receives a majority, the Senate picks the winner from the top two, each senator voting as an individual. The Senate has not made the choice since 1836.

## The Electoral College Pro and Con

The electoral college mechanism has not lacked for critics over the years. The recent reapportionment struggles in the states may have been one factor in rekindling interest in changing it. The basic objection is that the system clearly has the potential to frustrate the popular will in the selection of a president and vice-president. A candidate might not be elected even though he receives more popular votes than

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<sup>4</sup>Under a state law passed in 1969, Maine will choose one of its electors from each of its two Congressional Districts; the remaining two electors will be elected statewide.

his opponent, possibly even a majority. This happened in 1824 (when the election was thrown into the House), in 1876 (when there were disputed electors from several states), and in 1888. For even if the popular vote and electoral vote winners are the same, say the reformers, the electoral vote can be considered a distortion of public sentiment inasmuch as a candidate receiving only 55% of the nationwide popular vote is likely to be credited with a landslide victory. And the winner-take-all system means that millions of votes in every presidential election are cast for a candidate who, failing to carry a particular state, receives not a single *electoral* vote in that state for his *popular* votes. A minority, even a large one, becomes in effect no minority at all.

Critics of the system argue that the possibility of an election being thrown into the House of Representatives is hardly comforting either, since for such a decision each state has a single vote, a fact which moves the choice even farther from democratic control. The two occasions when it occurred (1800 and 1824) were marked by charges of "deals" and "corrupt" bargains. In any event, giving each state one vote regardless of the population it represents is hardly recognition of one-man-one-vote (nor does it truly represent even the choice of the states in their individual corporate capacities). And, since the Senate chooses the vice-president under these circumstances, it is possible for the country to be confronted with a president and vice-president of different parties. All in all, the critics see grave dangers in the electoral college system.

The defenders of the present set-up present three basic arguments. One is that any real change in the electoral college implies a fundamental change in the American federal system. The president, like senators and members of the House of Representatives, is chosen on the basis of the *states* as entities, not on the basis of population. This was the intention of the founding fathers and is an integral part of the American idea of a union of states. Claims that the electoral college distorts the popular vote are therefore considered to be irrelevant. Furthermore, the argument runs, casting a state's electoral vote as a block is reasonable, for the state is acting as a unit, not a collection of contending factions. Complaints about the electoral college would apply just as well to the Senate and, to some extent, the House. Supporters of the present system worry about where the dismantling of the federal system will stop.

The second argument made by defenders of the electoral college is that the present method serves American democracy well by supporting the two-party system and thwarting the rise of the splinter parties that have plagued many European democracies. The winner-take-all system means that minor parties get few electoral votes and a president who is the choice of the nation as a whole emerges. Nor do splinter groups find it easy to throw an election into the House. Other circum-



stances, not minor parties, were responsible on the two occasions when this occurred. Supporters feel strongly that if the electors fail to agree on a majority president, it is in keeping with the federal system that the House of Representatives, *voting as states*, make the selection.

The third argument asserts that the electoral college system allows for balanced representation between municipal and rural governments within states. For in those states in which urban political power tends to be minimized in state legislatures, potential political power is retained under the winner-take-all electoral college system.

### Proposals for Change

Discontent in many quarters with the electoral college has been stimulated in recent years by the Wallace third-party movement as well as by the Supreme Court one-man-one-vote ruling on legislative districting. A number of proposals for changing the way the president and vice-president are elected have been made. Most of the changes would require a constitutional amendment, even though states can change the way they choose electors by state law.

One set of proposals looks toward keeping the electoral vote system but eliminating its winner-take-all features. This shift could be brought about by choosing most electors on a congressional district basis, with only two electors per state chosen statewide. A 1969 Maine law provides for this method, and legislation has been considered in several other states. Alternatively, electors (as people) could be eliminated and the electoral votes of a state simply assigned to candidates on the basis of the popular vote they received. Constitutional amendments to that effect have been introduced in Congress but none have passed. These changes might eliminate some distortion of the popular vote, but they would not answer the complaint that the people do not elect the president directly.

A proposal now finding favor in the Congress and elsewhere is for a complete break with the electoral college system—a constitutional amendment providing for direct election of the president and vice-president. One of the most popular plans was introduced in 1969 by Senator Birch Bayh (D-Ill.). Under the Bayh plan, candidates for president and vice-president would be required to run together in each state and the District of Columbia, and voters would make their choices directly, without any intervening slate of electors. If any pair of candidates received 40% of the nation-wide popular vote, it would be declared elected; if no pair received that amount, there would be a runoff election between the two top pairs.

Direct election of the president along the lines of the Bayh plan would effectively bring the one-man-one-vote principle to presidential elections. In addition, according to its defenders, direct election would

help the two-party system and encourage broader citizen participation by making every vote count. Any dangers to the federal system, they argue, would be more than outweighed by the right of all the people of the United States to choose their two top elected officials directly. Opponents of direct election hold that this particular plan for change might necessitate the holding of two elections because of the runoff provision, thus making the presidential election process even more costly and drawn-out than it already is. Whatever the solution, it seems unlikely that the Congress—conscious of a newly enlarged electorate—will let the question drop.

## Election Day

A presidential election day is the consummation of the study, the planning and training, the grueling work and travel, the meeting and talking, the writing and speech-making, the persuading and financing, that have been done on behalf of and by the presidential candidates. It is their day of victory or of defeat.

For many hundreds of other people, it is a long, hard day that starts for some at five in the morning when precinct workers, organized to catch voters before they leave for work, nail VOTE signs along the streets and slip reminder sheets under the doors of "their voters." In some places, the polls open at 6 a.m. and a full complement of poll workers, officials, watchers, policemen must be on hand. Dozens of kinds of tasks, painstakingly planned, have been assigned to volunteers and regular party workers of all ages and talents. Party poll-watchers, message runners, drivers to take voters to the polls, teen-agers to electioneer, all ages to baby-sit, housebound mothers to telephone registered voters who have not appeared at the polls, Scouts to give out "I have voted" tags—all swing into action for a long, tiring, exciting day.

Voting is supervised by election judges representing both parties. These officials are paid a fee, usually a nominal one. Their work begins before the polls open and is far from over when the polls close. They are responsible for proper voting procedure, whether paper ballots or voting machines are used, and for the conduct of the polling places. They may cast the absentee ballots and help those whose physical disabilities entitle them to assistance in the voting booth. They count the votes and report the official returns.

For the candidate, election day is similar to opening night for a Broadway producer. Everything which can be done has been done or is being done by campaign workers. By tradition, a candidate does not campaign on election day nor even make public appearances other than to vote at his own polling place. As the day ends and the time for the polls to close approaches, the candidate, like millions of other

Americans, makes himself comfortable before the television set and waits for the election results to come in.

## Reporting the Results

At one time, election nights in America were important social events. Friends and neighbors gathered at the local store or in private homes and entertained each other with food, drink and conversation as the election results trickled in over telegraph wire or radio station. Spokesmen for candidates trailing in the early returns spoke bravely of trends which had not yet developed and reminded supporters to "wait for the downstate returns." The leading candidates said cautiously that it was "too early to tell yet" and continued to make gloomy predictions until it was time to claim victory and congratulate the opposition on a "clean campaign." Like Irish wakes, the vigil often went on until dawn.

Modern television has changed all this. The national networks now begin coverage of election returns before the polls close and continue until the result is known. The result is not usually long in coming. At one time, especially in rural areas, poll workers carefully counted paper ballots, inscribed the results on official sheets and transported the ballot box to the county seat where officials would finally give the results to newsmen. Today, voting machines are used in an increasing number of precincts and time-consuming ballot counting is no longer necessary. Once the polls have closed, election officials simply read the results off the back of a machine which counts each vote as it is cast. Nor does television wait for the results to be officially reported. They hire precinct watchers to read the results at the same time election officials do and report them to the networks over special telephone lines.<sup>5</sup> As a result, the television networks can flash results on the screen moments after the polls have closed.

Television not only reports results which have been tabulated; it also "projects" winners on the basis of a very few returns. The procedure is the same one long used by politicians in a less extensive and less scientific way. "Key" precincts, those whose returns usually closely parallel the complete returns for the state in question, are identified beforehand and information about them is fed into computers. When returns from these precincts come in, the computer compares them with the returns of other years from the same precinct and projects who the eventual winner in the state will be. If the information originally stored in the computer was incomplete or inaccurate, the predictions will, of course, be wrong; but, so far, the networks have a com-

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<sup>5</sup> The television networks and the wire services have now pooled their efforts in creating a National Election Service to report election results.

mendable record for accuracy. As a result, the modern viewer often “knows” who has carried a state thirty minutes after the polls have closed, even though less than five percent of the vote may have been tabulated. Very close elections cannot be called so quickly, and most of the network mistakes have come when the outcome was too hastily projected. On the whole, however, the projections have been accurate. There is no more “waiting for the downstate returns”; the computer has already taken such factors into account. In 1964, one network proclaimed President Johnson the winner over Senator Goldwater at 9:04 p.m., only a few hours after the first polls had closed. The 1968 election was much closer and was not projected until the morning after the election.

There has been criticism of television for “projecting” winners so swiftly, not only for spoiling election night parties but for actually influencing voters. Due to time differences in the United States, the networks have sometimes declared a winner before the polls had even closed in some parts of the country. Many people have felt that this might influence the outcome of a close election by discouraging people from voting when they thought their candidate had already lost. A Senate committee held hearings on the subject but dropped the matter when several studies showed that network projections had little or no effect.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to reporting the results and projecting winners, the television networks also analyze the results and explain what has happened in demographic, social and economic terms. Scholars have done this for years, of course, but not on election night. Computers are used to describe how the ethnic neighborhoods voted in Chicago, how a candidate is doing in farm areas, etc. The meaning of the election will be studied for years, but television, as usual, reports it first. In short, the viewer now knows as much about the outcome of the election before he retires on election night as it once took him weeks to find out.

## The Final Stages

When the final election results are in, the entire country knows who the next president and vice-president will be, but the outcome must still be formalized. In December, the electors who were chosen in November mark their ballots and mail them to Washington. When the Congress convenes in January, the ballots are opened before a joint session of the two houses and the official results announced. In nearly every American presidential election, this is a formality only. The election winner is already being referred to as the president-elect and has been preparing to assume office for weeks.

<sup>6</sup> MacNeil, *The People Machine*, pp. 121–22.

Presidential transitions are not easy for either the person leaving office or the person coming into it. A "lame duck" president must carry on with his duties even though his words carry less weight than they did before the election in domestic, political or international circles. It is considered bad form for the president-elect to offer policy advice during the transitional period, even though he will soon be responsible for his government's policies; an outgoing president does not usually seek his advice. The atmosphere of "suspended animation" which characterizes a presidential transition would probably cause some problems if a severe crisis should arise. For example, what should be the attitude of a president-elect should a nuclear confrontation with a foreign power develop in December? No one knows the answer because the country has been spared any such development, but the general attitude of presidents-elect has been that the country has only one president at a time, that the powers of the presidency do not come in stages but all at once. Today he is an ordinary citizen; tomorrow he is the most important elected official in the world.

At noon January 20 following a presidential election, the term of the preceding president ends and that of the incoming president begins.<sup>7</sup> At a formal inauguration ceremony, the Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court swears in the president and vice-president before members of Congress, government dignitaries, representatives of foreign governments, and a host of important well-wishers.<sup>8</sup> The new chief executive makes an inauguration speech and a parade usually follows. A new president has begun his duties and a new presidential election process has begun.

## Afterword

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This book has been written to explain the presidential nominating and election process; its rationale is the value of individual participation at any stage in this process. And yet some have always said "Why bother? What difference can I make?" and more seem to be saying it today than before.

Your relationship to the political process and the parties may be influenced by many factors—age, ideology, sex, education level, geo-

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<sup>7</sup> Before the adoption in 1933 of the Twentieth Amendment, presidents were inaugurated on March 4.

<sup>8</sup> In an emergency, a president may take the oath of office before any official authorized to administer oaths, even a notary public. After the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963, Lyndon Johnson was sworn in as president by Federal Judge Sarah Hughes in the presidential plane at the Dallas airport.

graphic location, economic status, occupation, family environment, etc. In fact, the state you live in may be one of the strongest influences on your ideas about political parties, since the states control their own party affairs and every state is different. In some, the party structure is loose enough so that an interested party member can have access to officeseeking or policymaking levels fairly quickly. In others, despite recent efforts for reform the party structure is still narrow and closed; a small group of people control and a novice must "pay his dues," proving his loyalty by hard work and dedication, before he has any impact. Though situations vary too much from state to state and from community to community to allow generalizations, they are changing fast, and all in ways that encourage individual participation.

The thing to do is start asking questions—find out who and where the party leaders are. Call them, volunteer your services, ask about times and places of meetings, ask your neighbors about what's politically what in your area, call the League of Women Voters. The only qualification necessary for political involvement is interest.

No presidential election has ever been, or is likely to be, decided by one vote, but it is a statistical cliché that more than once a shift of relatively few votes in the right states would have changed the outcome under the electoral college system. The most dramatic case in recent years was the 1960 election—when Nixon lost the presidential election by an average of only one vote per precinct.

The closer the balance between the parties in a state, the more important is the single vote and now that we are beginning to have a real two-party system throughout the country, the competition for each vote is growing in practically every state. Even if the outcome is almost a foregone conclusion, a vote cast in a losing cause is not a wasted vote. It can be politically worthwhile as a way to build or retain strength for the future. If, for instance, every southern Republican had stopped voting during the years of Democratic domination of the area, the modern Republican Party could never have developed as it has in recent years.

Nor is a candidate always judged by whether he actually wins or not, but by how much or how little. The 1968 New Hampshire primary is a case in point. Although Senator Eugene McCarthy was defeated by a write-in vote for President Johnson, the margin was so close that the results remain in our memories as a loss for Johnson.

Individual participation in the political process is essential to the whole concept of democratic government as it has developed through the American experience. Changes in all aspects of our political system—some of which have been described in this book—mean that in 1972 American government rests far more than ever before in our history on individual participation, on your participation, at every stage in the election process.

# PART TWO · Facts and Figures

## ON CHOOSING THE PRESIDENT

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### CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS RELATED TO THE PRESIDENCY

#### UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

#### ARTICLE II—THE PRESIDENT

Section 1. The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice-President, chosen for the same Term, be elected as follows:

Each state shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

The Congress may determine the Time of choosing the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Votes; which Day shall be the same throughout the United States.

#### AMENDMENT XII—PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS

The Electors shall meet in their respective states and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same state with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President, and of all persons voted for as Vice-President, and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate;—The President of the Senate shall, in presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted;—The person having the greatest number of votes for President, shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from each state having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the states, and a majority of all the states shall be necessary to a choice. And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before the fourth day of March<sup>1</sup> next following, then the Vice-President shall act as President,

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<sup>1</sup> By the 20th Amendment, adopted in 1933, the term of the President is to begin on the 20th of January.

as in the case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President.<sup>2</sup>—The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice-President, shall be the Vice-President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed, and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list, the Senate shall choose the Vice-President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States. [Ratified in 1804]

## AMENDMENT XX—LAME DUCK AMENDMENT

Section 3. If, at the time fixed for the beginning of the term of the President, the President elect shall have died, the Vice-President elect shall become President. If a President shall not have been chosen before the time fixed for the beginning of his term, or if the President elect shall have failed to qualify, then the Vice-President elect shall act as President until a President shall have qualified; and the Congress may by law provide for the case wherein neither a President elect nor a Vice President elect shall have qualified, declaring who shall then act as President, or the manner in which one who is to act shall be selected, and such person shall act accordingly until a President or Vice-President shall have qualified.

Section 4. The Congress may by law provide for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the House of Representatives may choose a President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them, and for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the Senate may choose a Vice-President whenever the right of choice shall have developed upon them. [Ratified in 1933]

## AMENDMENT XXIII—PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS FOR DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Section 1. The District constituting the seat of Government of the United States shall appoint in such manner as the Congress may direct:

A number of electors of President and Vice-President equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which the District would be entitled if it were a State, but in no event more than the least populous State; they shall be in addition to those appointed by the States, but they shall be considered, for the purposes of the election of President and Vice-President, to be electors appointed by a State; and they shall meet in the District and perform such duties as provided by the twelfth article of amendment. [Ratified in 1961]

## THE PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE IN THE CONSTITUTION

### Qualifications for Office

Natural-born citizen; 35 years old; 14 years a resident within the United States.

U.S. Constitution, Article II, Section 1. "No person except a natural-born citizen, or a citizen of the United States, at the time of the adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President; neither

<sup>2</sup> Under the 20th Amendment, Sec. 3, in case a President is not chosen before the time for beginning of his term, the Vice-President elect shall act as President until a President shall have qualified.



shall any person be eligible to that office who shall not have attained to the age of thirty-five years, and been fourteen years a resident within the United States.”

Amendment XII. “The electors shall meet in their respective states and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same state with themselves.”

### **Term of Office**

Four years, beginning on January 20 of the year following their election.

U.S. Constitution, Amendment XX, Section 1. “The terms of the President and Vice-President shall end at noon on the 20th day of January, and the terms of Senators and Representatives at noon on the 3rd day of January, of the years in which such terms would have ended if this article had not been ratified; and the terms of their successors shall then begin.”

No more than two terms or ten years.

U.S. Constitution, Amendment XXII. “No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President shall be elected to the office of the President more than once. But this Article shall not apply to any person holding the office of President when this Article was proposed by the Congress, and shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of President, or acting as President, during the term within which this Article becomes operative from holding the office of President or acting as President during the remainder of such term.” [Ratified in 1951]

### **Presidential Oath of Office**

U.S. Constitution, Article II, Section 1. “Before he enter on the execution of his office, he shall take the following oath or affirmation: ‘I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of the President of the United States, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States.’”

### **Salary**

#### ***President***

U.S. Constitution, Article II, Section 1. “The President shall, at stated times, receive for his services a compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive within that period any other emolument from the United States, or any of them.”

\$200,000 a year salary, taxable

\$50,000 a year expense allowance, taxable, to assist in defraying expenses resulting from his official duties

\$40,000 a year, nontaxable, may be expended for travel expenses and official entertainment

### **Ex-President**

- \$25,000 a year lifetime pension, free mailing privileges, free office space
- Up to \$65,000 a year for office help
- \$10,000 a year for widow

### **Vice-President**

- \$62,500 a year, taxable
- \$10,000 a year, taxable, for expenses

## **Duties and Powers**

### **President**

U.S. Constitution, Article II, Section 2. (1) "The President shall be commander in chief of the army and navy of the United States, and of the militia of the several States, when called into the actual service of the United States; he may require the opinion, in writing, of the principal officer in each of the executive departments, upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices, and he shall have power to grant reprieves and pardons for offenses against the United States, except in cases of impeachment."

Section 2. (2) "He shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the Supreme Court, and all other officers of the United States, whose appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by law: but the Congress may by law vest the appointment of such inferior officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the courts of law, or in the heads of departments."

Section 3. "He shall from time to time give to the Congress information of the state of the Union, and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary occasions, convene both Houses, or either of them, and in case of disagreement between them, with respect to the time of adjournment, he may adjourn them to such time as he shall think proper; he shall receive ambassadors and other public ministers; he shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed, and shall commission all the officers of the United States."

Section 4. "The President, Vice-President, and all civil officers of the United States, shall be removed from office on impeachment for, and conviction of, treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors."

### **Succession to the Presidency**

U.S. Constitution, Amendment XXV, Section 1. "In case of the removal of the President from office, or of his death or resignation, the Vice-President shall become President."

Section 2. "Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Vice-President, the President shall nominate a Vice-President who shall take office upon confirmation by a majority vote of both houses of Congress.

Section 3. "Whenever the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, and until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary, such powers and duties shall be discharged by the Vice-President as Acting President.

Section 4. "Whenever the Vice-President and a majority of either the principal officers of the Executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice-President shall immediately assume the powers and duties of the office as Acting President. Thereafter, when the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that no inability exists, he shall resume the powers and duties of his office unless the Vice-President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide transmit within four days to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office. Thereupon Congress shall decide the issue, assembling within forty-eight hours for that purpose if not in session. If the Congress, within twenty-one days after receipt of the latter written declaration, or, if Congress is not in session, within twenty-one days after Congress is required to assemble, determines by two-thirds vote of both houses that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice-President shall continue to discharge the same as Acting President; otherwise, the President shall resume the powers and duties of his office."

### **The Importance of the Vice-Presidency**

The choice of nominees for vice-president is overshadowed by the choice of nominees for president. However, presidential candidates and national conventions have increasingly recognized the awesome responsibility borne by the vice-president and have exercised greater care in his selection in recent decades. The Constitution provides that the vice-president shall become president in case of the removal of the president from office, which has never happened, or in case of his death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers and duties of the presidency. The facts of American history underline the importance of the vice-presidency. Eight times a vice-president has succeeded to the presidency when a president has died; four of these times the president has been assassinated.

**President****Vice-President**

	<b>DIED IN</b>	<b>AND WAS SUCCEEDED BY</b>
W. H. Harrison	1841	John Tyler
Zachary Taylor	1850	Millard Fillmore
Abraham Lincoln	1865	Andrew Johnson
James A. Garfield	1881	Chester A. Arthur
William McKinley	1901	Theodore Roosevelt
Warren G. Harding	1923	Calvin Coolidge
Franklin D. Roosevelt	1945	Harry S. Truman
John F. Kennedy	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson

Presidential succession has never yet gone beyond the vice presidency. By the Presidential Succession Act of 1948 as amended, the line of succession to the presidency is, reading top to bottom:

Vice-President	Secretary of the Interior
Speaker of the House	Secretary of Agriculture
President pro tempore of the Senate	Secretary of Commerce
Secretary of State	Secretary of Labor
Secretary of the Treasury	Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare
Secretary of Defense	Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
Attorney General	Secretary of Transportation
Postmaster General	

**Vacancies in the Vice-Presidency**

The office of the vice-president has been vacant 16 times, for a total of 37 years. Eight vice-presidents have left vacant the office they were elected to fill when they went to the White House on the death of a president. Seven vice-presidents have died in office.

<b>Vice-President</b>	<b>DIED IN</b>	<b>under President</b>
George Clinton	1812	James Madison—1st term
Elbridge Gerry	1814	James Madison—2nd term
William King	1853	Franklin Pierce
Henry Wilson	1875	Ulysses Grant
Thomas Hendricks	1885	Grover Cleveland
Garret A. Hobart	1899	William McKinley
James S. Sherman	1912	William Taft

One vice-president resigned: John Calhoun resigned in 1832 as vice-president under Andrew Jackson to become a U.S. Senator. He had been vice-president since 1825—under both Jackson and John Quincy Adams.

The assassination of President Kennedy in 1963 focused attention on the subject of presidential succession and on the fact that there was no constitutional provision for choosing another vice-president when a vice-president succeeded to the presidency, resigned or died. Accordingly, in 1965, Congress passed and sent to the states a constitutional amendment providing for continuity in the functions of the presidency in case of presidential disability and for filling a vacancy in the vice-presidency. The Twenty-Fifth Amendment was ratified and became a part of the Constitution in 1967.

## II THE POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

# The Political Parties

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### A CLOSER LOOK AT THIRD PARTIES

Although American politics has been dominated by two major parties, "third" or "minor" parties have also played an important role in the party system. The Republican Party was once a third party; the Populist Party shook both major parties to their foundations in the 1890s; and the American Party or "movement" led by Governor George Wallace of Alabama continues to cause concern among the leaders of both major national parties at the present time.

#### Types of Third Parties

There have been three basic types of third parties in the United States:

**Doctrinaire parties** These are groups which have small followings and are more concerned with spreading a doctrine or ideology than with winning elections. The fact that the major parties are broad and flexible in their programs robs such groups of any broad appeal they might have, and the "winner-take-all" election system makes it doubtful that they can elect anyone to the presidency. Still, running a presidential candidate is one way to spread a gospel and many groups do it. Doctrinaire groups with presidential candidates in recent years have included: Socialist, Constitution, Tax Cut, Prohibition, Peace and Freedom, National States Rights, etc.

**State-based parties** In a few states, there have been parties which were important at the state level but which did not compete for national office. By forming coalitions with or giving support to the major parties in the state, they can wield considerable influence. The best example is the Liberal Party in New York which is a regular factor in the outcome of elections in that state.

**Secessionist parties** These are parties which split off from one of the major parties and *do* attempt to elect candidates to national office. Twentieth-century examples would include the Populist Party, the various Progressive movements (Theodore Roosevelt, Robert LaFollette, Henry Wallace), and the American Party (George Wallace). The secessionist parties are undoubtedly the most important of American third parties.

#### The Role of Secessionist Parties

Secessionist third parties usually come into existence when there is a fairly widespread feeling in the country that the major parties are not responding to some basic need for change. Thus Democratic and Whig failures in the slavery crisis helped the rise of the Republican Party, and the Populist

Party was built upon Democratic and Republican inattention to the economic needs of the 1890s. Disgruntled leaders within a major party form their own organizations and try to defeat the major parties. In 1948, for example, both the Democratic left wing and right wing defected, the former following Henry Wallace and the Progressive Party while the latter rallied around J. Strom Thurmond and the States Rights Party. Sometimes the defections are permanent (as with the Republicans in the late 1850s) and sometimes temporary (as with Southern Democrats after 1948).

Secessionist third parties thus perform a creative role in American politics. They spotlight discontent and perhaps neglect in the major parties and help bring about policy changes. Most of the program of the Populist Party, for example, was subsequently passed into law. In addition, they sometimes help bring about changes in the parties by serving as a bridge for voters (and even leaders) moving from one party to another. Many former Republicans became Democrats after a brief period as Populists for example. The very performance of these functions, however, though it may help the country, usually destroys the third party as the major parties adjust, absorbing the platform and the voters of the third party. After periods of third party instability, then, the two party system is restored.

### The Wallace Movement

In 1968, George Wallace won more electoral votes than any third party candidate in a century. His case points up the possibilities as well as the problems of the third parties. By the 1960s both major parties had become committed to equal rights for blacks throughout the nation, a rather elaborate welfare system, and better treatment of criminal suspects. Many Americans, North and South, began to feel that these goals, laudable in themselves perhaps, were being achieved at the expense of middle-class Americans who sent their children to public schools, paid their taxes, and suffered from crime in the streets. Wallace promised to meet their needs, and he clearly struck a responsive chord. The Wallace strategy, of course, was to win enough electoral votes to deprive either major party of a majority in the Electoral College, thus throwing the election into the House of Representatives with him in the swing position to force concessions from the major parties on the issues of concern to his constituency.

The Wallace phenomenon points up the problems of third parties. Wallace had difficulty getting on the ballot in every state in 1968 and faced voter reluctance to "waste" votes on a third party. In addition, as Wallace appeared to be gaining popularity on what came to be called the "social issue," both major parties began to adjust by stressing *their* commitment to law and order.

In 1972 Wallace has shifted tactics in the preliminary rounds by entering a number of Democratic primaries. This move, while it temporarily abandons the third party label, still fulfills one function of the third party, in that by attracting the conservative votes of both major parties, Wallace has in effect forced them to shift somewhat on the social issue. When and if he reverts to the third party ticket strategy at a later point, his party may fulfill the "bridge" function of third parties by providing a way for Southern Democrats to move into the Republican Party.

## THE NATIONAL COMMITTEES OF THE MAJOR PARTIES

### Membership

#### *Composed of*

1 man and 1 woman from each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam.

The Democrats add the Canal Zone.

The Republicans add (since 1952) state party chairmen from predominantly Republican states.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Nominated by*

primary elections

state party conventions

state party committees

national convention delegates

#### *Elected by and responsible to the national convention*

In practice, state delegations propose to the convention the national committee members from the state. Ratification by convention is largely a formal gesture.

#### *Term*

4 years; members do not take office at the convention which confirms them; they serve from adjournment of that convention through the following convention.

Many national committee members serve for a number of years, some of them advancing to the national executive committee.

### Powers and Duties

#### *National Committee Business*

creating the necessary committees, such as the executive committee

settling contests for membership on the national committee

electing or appointing any additional officers

exercising power of removal of any member or officer

#### *Party Organization and Elections*

promoting, encouraging, and sponsoring party organization and elections

conducting the national campaign following the convention

promoting, aiding, and assisting in the election of all candidates for public office on the ticket of the Democratic or Republican party in all general elections in each state, territory, and district

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<sup>1</sup>These are states which cast their electoral votes for the Republican candidate for president at the last presidential election, or with a Republican majority in their representation in the Senate and the House of Representatives combined, or with a Republican governor. In 1964 the rules were amended to add the state chairman for the District of Columbia, if the District of Columbia casts its electoral votes for the Republican candidate for president.

maintaining party headquarters  
financing the work of the party

### ***National Convention***

setting the time and place and making all other arrangements for the national convention  
issuing the call to convention to the state committees after determining the apportionment of the delegates among states within the authority granted by the previous national convention  
nominating temporary officers of the convention

### **Role of National Chairman of the "Ins"**

The national committee theoretically elects the national chairman; in fact he is designated, ordinarily immediately after the national convention, by the party's presidential candidate.

#### ***Principal responsibilities***

manager of the presidential campaign  
director of party between elections  
fund raiser—year-round for national committee expenses and to pay off deficit from last campaign  
personal agent for the candidate or the president  
dispenser of patronage (applicants for patronage usually must clear through him)  
help to the president to hold the party line in Congress on important votes

### **Role of National Chairman of the "Outs"**

This chairman has different problems—he has to worry about keeping his job; he can try to operate as a party spokesman but he may be opposed by congressional leaders.

### **National Party Policy**

Between conventions, the national committee has no policy-making mandate. It does happen, of course, that the stated powers and duties of the national committee do often affect the substance of party policy.

In recent years, both parties have made attempts to solve this problem of policy-making:

From 1956 through the 1960 election the Democratic party had an advisory council of about 25 persons, which frequently advocated new policy lines. Congressional leaders were not members of this council partly perhaps because they did not want to be in the position of being led by a group close to the national committee. It was dissolved after the Kennedy victory.

In 1962 the Republican National Committee authorized the creation of an All-Republican Conference, a broadly representative advisory group, to help develop a positive image of the Republican party distinct from the Republican congressional image. The Republican party in Congress grumbled about this as had the Democratic party in Congress earlier about the



Democratic Advisory Council. The All-Republican Conference is no longer in existence.

This reflects in part the difference in electoral base between a presidential election and a congressional election and also the difference between the party inside-the-government (in this case the congressional leaders) and the party outside-the-government. Whether leadership of the party rests with its elected officials or with the formal party organization is frequently a source of conflict. Elected officials want to control party organization and, if they cannot, and party organization tries to control them, then the elected officials may want to destroy party organization.

# III THE POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

## The Voters

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### CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS EXPANDING THE SUFFRAGE

**Amendment XV.** Section 1. "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

**Amendment XVII.** Section 1. "The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, elected by the people thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote. The electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State Legislatures."

**Amendment XIX.** Section 1. "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

**Amendment XXIV.** Section 1. "The rights of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice-President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax."

**Amendment XXVI.** Section 1. "The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age."

### THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1970

The relevant portions of the Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1970 extend and expand the provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 in the following manner:

**Title I.** Extends to 1975 those provisions of the 1965 Act which deal with the sending of federal examiners and the requirement for federal approval of election law changes in those states and counties which (a) showed less than 50 percent of the persons of voting age registered or voting in the 1964 presidential election (changed to the 1968 election by the 1970 Amendments) and (b) used discriminatory tests or devices to deny the right to vote.

**Title II.** Extends to all the states the prohibition against use of "tests or devices" to deny any citizen the right to vote. "Tests or devices" are defined as including any demonstration of ability to read, write, understand, or interpret any matter; demonstration of any educational achievement or knowledge of any particular subject; possession of good moral character; and the voucher of another person.

Eliminates durational residence requirements of more than thirty days for elections for president and vice-president, and guarantees any citizen

who cannot meet this minimal requirement an absentee ballot for President and Vice President from his place of former residence.

**Title III.** Attempted to lower the voting age to 18 for federal, state and local elections. In the case of *Oregon v. Mitchell*, the Supreme Court ruled that this provision was constitutional and enforceable only in federal elections. Since that time, of course, the 26th Amendment to the Constitution has enfranchised 18 year-olds in all elections.

## IV PHASE ONE

# The Preliminaries

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### IN-PARTY LOSSES IN MID-TERM ELECTIONS

The party gaining the White House in presidential election years usually loses congressional seats, especially in the House of Representatives, in mid-term election years. The losses tend to be smaller when the presidential election was won by a narrow margin. Thus after President Kennedy's narrow victory in 1960, the Democrats lost only two House seats in 1962. The situation was similar in 1970. Before the election, there were 187 Republicans, 243 Democrats, and 5 vacancies in the House. After the mid-term election, there were 180 Republicans and 255 Democrats, a Democratic gain of 12 seats. The average gain recorded by the out-party in the twentieth century is 38 seats. Below are the results of mid-term elections since 1946:

Year	MEMBERS ELECTED			GAINS/LOSSES	
	Democrat	Republican	Misc.	Dem.	Rep.
1946	188	246	1	-55	+56
1950	234	199	2	-29	+28
1954	232	203	—	+19	-18
1958	283	154	—	+49	-47
1962	258	176	1	-4	+2
1966	248	187	—	-47	+47
1970	255	180	—	+12	-12

**POSITIONS HELD BY PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES SINCE 1900  
(Major Parties Only)**

Year	Incumbent President	Vice President	Governor	Senator	Cabinet	Law	Other
1968		Humphrey				Nixon*	
1964	Johnson*			Goldwater			
1960		Nixon		Kennedy*			
1956	Eisenhower*					Stevenson	
1952			Stevenson				Eisenhower* (Military)
1948	Truman*		Dewey				
1944	Roosevelt*		Dewey			Wilkie	
1940	Roosevelt*						
1936	Roosevelt*		Landon				
1932	Hoover		Roosevelt*				
1928			Smith		Hoover*		
1924	Coolidge*					Davis	
1920			Cox	Harding*			Hughes (Chief Justice)
1916	Wilson*						
1912	Taft		Wilson*				
1908					Taft*	Bryan	
1904	Roosevelt*						Parker (State Judge)
1900	McKinley*					Bryan	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	

\* Winner of election

PHASE TWO  
Delegate  
Preference

RESOLUTION OF THE

1872 Early non-unanimous

1796 Beginning and legislative sessions. Adams

1820 Federalism chosen in

1824 "Era of Republicanism" wins in

1824 Jackson Tennessee thrown

"corrupt

1828 Jackson election organization now in

1831 First Party more

1832 First Party as Jackson and

1839 William Wirt

1856 Fremont de

1860 Fremont

1860-1908

1910

1912

## V PHASE TWO

# Delegate Selection and Preference Primaries

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### EVOLUTION OF THE PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATING PROCESS

- 1789–1792** Early non-partisan system. George Washington twice elected unanimously with no formal nomination.
- 1796** Beginning of party control of political nominations generally and legislative caucus method of making presidential nominations. Adams is last Federalist to be elected.
- 1800–1820** Federalist and Democratic-Republican (Jeffersonian) nominees, chosen in legislative caucus, battle regularly in elections.
- 1820–1824** “Era of Good Feeling.” Monroe renominated by Democratic-Republicans by common consent with no formal action and wins in electoral college 231–1.
- 1824** Jackson defies legislative caucus and wins nomination of Tennessee legislature. Fails in election when presidential choice thrown into House of Representatives and Adams wins in “corrupt bargain.”
- 1828** Jackson again nominated by Tennessee legislature and wins election, signaling new era by gaining power as result of well-organized popular movement. Caucus method of nomination now in disrepute.
- 1831** First national party convention in modern sense held in Baltimore by Anti-Masonic Party. William Wirt nominated but Party fails to survive long.
- 1832** First Democratic national convention held in May in Baltimore as Jacksonian revolution continues. Jackson (for president) and Van Buren (for vice-president) nominated and elected.
- 1839** With convention method of nomination now becoming established, Whigs hold their first national convention. They elect two presidents but cannot survive the slavery turmoil.
- 1856** First Republican national convention held in June in Philadelphia as new major party emerges. Fremont is first presidential candidate.
- 1860** Republicans nominate first winning presidential candidate in Abraham Lincoln
- 1860–1908** Democratic and Republican national conventions dominate presidential nominations except for brief threat from Populists in 1890s.
- 1910** Oregon passes first presidential primary law as charges of bossism in conventions grow. Other states follow.
- 1912** First presidential election year with presidential primaries. New method allows Theodore Roosevelt to demonstrate popular support but Taft wins nomination.

**1968** Both parties concerned with party reform, especially delegate selection procedures. Committees authorized to study and report.

## DEMOCRATIC PARTY REFORM

The Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection (McGovern Commission) authorized by the 1968 Democratic National Convention adopted a series of "guidelines" divided into two categories: one *requires* certain actions by state parties and one *urges* action. The guidelines are considered binding on state parties in 1972.

### States Are Required To:

1. Adopt explicit written rules for delegate selection.
2. Adopt procedural rules for delegate selection that would:
  - a. Forbid proxy voting.
  - b. Forbid the unit rule and instructed delegations.
  - c. Require a quorum of not less than 40% at Party committee meetings.
  - d. Eliminate mandatory assessments of delegates to national conventions.
  - e. Limit participation fees to \$10 and petition requirements to no more than 1% of the standard used to measure Democratic strength.
  - f. Ensure party meetings on uniform dates, at uniform times, and in public places of easy access, except in rural areas.
  - g. Ensure adequate public notice of party meetings.
3. Seek a broad base of support for the party by:
  - a. Implementing existing anti-racial discrimination standards.
  - b. Encouraging representation of minorities, women, and young people in proportion to their numbers in the state.
  - c. Encouraging any Democrat 18 years of age or older to participate in party affairs.
4. Make the following changes in the delegate selection process:
  - a. Select alternates and delegates in the same manner.
  - b. Prohibit ex-officio delegates.
  - c. Choose all delegates in the year of the convention.
  - d. Select no more than 25% of the total delegation from state conventions and use an apportionment formula based on population or other standard measure of Democratic strength.
  - e. Apportion all but at-large delegates by population and Democratic voting strength, giving equal weight to each.
  - f. Select no more than 10% of the delegation by the state committee.

### States Are Urged To:

1. Remove all costs and fees in the delegate selection process.
2. Find ways to ease the financial burden on delegates and alternates.
3. Attempt to remove laws or practices such as annual registration, literacy tests, and the like which restrict participation in the delegate selection process.
4. Use party enrollment methods that give easy access to non-Democrats or unaffiliated voters.

5. Terminate all selection systems which permit party committees to select any part of the state delegation.
6. Adopt procedures which will provide for fair representation of minority views on presidential candidates.

## REPUBLICAN PARTY REFORM

The Delegates and Organizations Committee (DO Committee) authorized by the 1968 Republican National Convention issued a series of "recommendations" to state parties. To become binding, these recommendations must be accepted by the 1972 National Convention. The recommendations are:

1. All party meetings at the local level should be open meetings and all citizens who are qualified should be urged to attend.
2. Where the convention method is used for delegate selection, state and district conventions should be held on different days and in different communities.
3. Delegates and alternates should be elected in the same manner.
4. No delegate should be required to pay an assessment as a condition for serving as a delegate or alternate.
5. Only alternate delegates may vote for absent delegates and there should be no proxy voting.
6. There should be no ex-officio delegates.
7. Those selected by state delegations to serve on national convention committees should include one man, one woman, one person under 25, and one member of a minority ethnic group for each committee.
8. Each state should attempt to have equal representation of men and women in its delegation.
9. Each state delegation should include persons under 25 years of age in proportion to their numbers in the population of the state.
10. The Republican National Committee should assist states in their efforts to inform citizens on participation in the delegate selection process.

(Source: *Mandate for Reform: A Report of the Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection to the Democratic National Committee*, Washington, D.C., April 1971.)

(Source: *Progress Report, Delegates and Organizations Committee, Part II*, Republican National Committee, Washington, D.C., July 1971.)

## STATE PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARIES

State	Date	Type of Primary	Type of Presidential Preference*	Delegate Selection	Type of Commitment
Alabama	May 2	Open	Indirect	Yes	None
Arkansas	May 30	Closed	None	Yes	None
California	Jun. 6	Closed	Direct	Yes	Binding
Dist. of Col.	May 2	Closed	Direct	Yes	Binding
Florida	Mar. 14	Closed	Direct	Yes	Binding
Illinois	Mar. 21	Closed	Direct	Yes	None
Indiana	May 2	Closed	Direct	No	Binding
Maryland	May 16	Closed	Direct	Yes	Binding

State	Date	Type of Primary	Type of Presidential Preference*	Delegate Selection	Type of Commitment
Massachusetts	Apr. 25	Closed	Direct	Yes	Binding
Michigan	May 16	Closed	Direct	No	Binding
Nebraska	May 9	Closed	Direct	Yes	None
New Hampshire	Mar. 7	Closed	Direct	Yes	None
New Jersey	Jun. 6	Closed	Direct	Yes	None
New Mexico	Jun. 6	Closed	Direct	No	Binding
New York	Jun. 20	Closed	None	Yes	None
North Carolina	May 6	Closed	Direct	No	Binding
Ohio	May 2	Closed	Indirect	Yes	Binding
Oregon	May 23	Closed	Direct	Yes	Binding
Pennsylvania	Apr. 25	Closed	Direct	Yes	None
Rhode Island	May 23	Closed	Direct	Yes	Binding
South Dakota	Jun. 6	Closed	Indirect	Yes	Binding
Tennessee	May 4	Open	Direct	No	Binding
West Virginia	May 9	Closed	Direct	Yes	None
Wisconsin	Apr. 4	Open	Direct	Yes	Binding

\* An expression of presidential preference by a voter is considered "direct" if the voter can vote for a candidate whose name appears on the ballot; it is "indirect" if the voter expresses his preference only through delegates pledged to a candidate. Two states which choose delegates in primaries allow no expression of voter preference for candidates.

### METHOD OF DELEGATE SELECTION

State	Democrats	Republicans
Alabama	Primary, Delegate Convention	Primary
Alaska	State Convention	State Convention
Arizona	State Convention, District/County Caucuses	State Convention, District/ County Conventions
Arkansas	Primary, Delegate Convention	Primary, State Committee
California	Primary	Primary
Colorado	State Convention, District/County Conventions	State Convention and District/ County Caucuses
Connecticut	State Convention, District/ County Conventions	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses
Delaware	State Convention	State Convention
D.C.	Primary	Primary
Florida	Primary, State Committee, Delegate Convention	Primary
Georgia	District/County Convention Delegate Convention	State Convention, District/ County Conventions
Hawaii	State Convention	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses
Idaho	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses
Illinois	Primary, Delegate Convention	Primary, State Convention
Indiana	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses
Iowa	State Convention, District/ County Conventions	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses
Kansas	State Convention, District/ County Conventions	State Convention, District/ County Conventions



<b>State</b>	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Republicans</b>
Kentucky	State Convention, District/ County Conventions	State Convention, District/ County Conventions
Louisiana	District/County Conventions	State Convention, District/ County Conventions
Maine	State Convention	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses
Maryland	Primary, Delegate Convention	Primary, Delegate Convention
Massachusetts	Primary	Primary, State Committee
Michigan	State Convention, District/County Caucuses	State Convention District/County Caucuses
Minnesota	State Convention, District/ County Conventions	State Convention, District/ County Conventions
Mississippi	State Convention, District/ County Conventions	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses
Missouri	State Convention, District/ County Conventions	State Convention, District/ County Conventions
Montana	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses
Nebraska	Primary	Primary
Nevada	State Convention, Delegate District Caucuses	State Convention
New Hampshire	Primary	Primary
New Jersey	Primary	Primary
New Mexico	State Convention District Caucuses	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses
New York	Primary	Primary, State Committee
North Carolina	State Convention, District/ County Conventions	State Convention, District/ County Conventions
North Dakota	State Convention, District/ County Conventions	State Convention, District/ County Conventions
Ohio	Primary	Primary
Oklahoma	State Convention, District/ County Conventions	State Convention, District/ County Conventions
Oregon	Primary	Primary
Pennsylvania	Primary, State Committee	Primary, State Committee
Rhode Island	Primary	Primary
South Carolina	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses
South Dakota	Primary	Primary
Tennessee	State Convention, District/ County Conventions	State Convention, District/ County Conventions
Texas	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses
Utah	State Convention	State Convention
Vermont	State Convention	State Convention
Virginia	State Convention, District/ County Conventions	State Convention, District/ County Conventions
Washington	State Convention, District/ County Conventions	State Convention, District/ County Caucuses
West Virginia	Primary	Primary
Wisconsin	Primary	Primary
Wyoming	State Convention	State Convention
Canal Zone	Territorial Convention	
Puerto Rico	Commonwealth Convention	Commonwealth Convention
Virgin Islands	Delegate Convention	Delegate Convention

## VI PHASE THREE

# The National Conventions

### CONVENTION SIZE: DISTRIBUTION OF DELEGATE VOTES IN 1972

#### Democratic Party

1. The total number of convention votes will be 3016.
2. 1614 convention votes (53%) will be based on the electoral college, each state and the District of Columbia receiving three votes for each elector it has.
3. 1386 convention votes (47%) will be based on Democratic voting strength, each state and the District of Columbia receiving convention votes in proportion to the votes it cast for the Democratic presidential nominee in 1960, 1964, and 1968.
4. 16 convention votes are allotted to the territories: Canal Zone, 3; Guam, 3; Puerto Rico, 7; Virgin Islands, 3.
5. State nominees for national committeemen and committeewomen to be approved by the 1972 convention will be voting delegates to the 1972 convention. (Present committeemen and committeewomen not otherwise serving as 1972 delegates may attend the convention as delegates but may not vote.)
6. Each state, the District of Columbia, and each territory may select one alternate for each delegate up to 20, one alternate for every two delegates from 21 to 100, and 1 alternate for every three delegates over 100.
7. A state or the District of Columbia with less than 20 convention votes may select 20 delegates to cast the total votes.

#### Republican Party

1. The total number of convention votes will be 1346.
2. 488 convention votes will be delegates-at-large:
  - a. 4 for each state.
  - b. 2 additional for each Representative at Large in Congress
  - c. 9 for the District of Columbia, 5 for Puerto Rico, 3 for the Virgin Islands, 3 for Guam.
  - d. 6 "bonus" delegates for states meeting one of the following requirements:
    - cast its electoral vote for the Republican presidential nominee in 1968.
    - elected a Republican U.S. Senator in 1968 or 1970.
    - elected a Republican Governor in 1968 or 1970.
    - elected a Republican majority for the state's membership in the House of Representatives in 1968 or 1970.

3. 858 will be district delegates.
  - a. 1 for each Congressional District casting at least 4,000 votes for either the Republican presidential nominee in 1968 or the Republican nominee for Congress in 1970.
  - b. 1 additional for each Congressional District casting 12,500 votes per the above.
4. There is 1 alternate for each delegate to the 1972 convention.

## STATE-BY-STATE ALLOCATION OF DELEGATES TO 1972 NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

### DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION

### REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION

1972 Convention Vote	Maximum Number of Delegates	Maximum Number of Alternates	Maximum Size of Delegation	State	1972 Convention Vote	Delegates at Large	District Delegates	Maximum Size of Delegation*
37	37	29	66	Alabama	17	4	13	34
10	20	10	30	Alaska	12	12	0	24
25	25	23	48	Arizona	18	10	8	36
27	27	24	51	Arkansas	18	10	8	36
271	271	117	388	California	96	10	86	192
36	36	28	64	Colorado	20	10	10	40
51	51	36	87	Connecticut	22	10	12	44
13	20	13	33	Delaware	12	12	0	24
15	20	15	35	Dist. of Col.	9	9	0	18
81	81	51	132	Florida	40	10	30	80
53	53	31	90	Georgia	24	4	20	48
17	20	17	37	Hawaii	14	10	4	28
17	20	17	37	Idaho	14	10	4	28
170	170	84	254	Illinois	58	10	48	116
76	76	48	124	Indiana	32	10	22	64
46	46	33	79	Iowa	22	10	12	44
35	35	28	63	Kansas	20	10	10	40
47	47	34	81	Kentucky	24	10	14	48
44	44	32	76	Louisiana	20	4	16	40
20	20	20	40	Maine	8	4	4	16
53	53	37	90	Maryland	26	10	16	52
102	102	61	163	Massachusetts	34	10	24	68
132	132	71	203	Michigan	48	10	38	96
64	64	42	106	Minnesota	26	10	16	52
25	25	23	48	Mississippi	13	4	9	26
73	73	47	120	Missouri	30	10	20	60
17	20	17	37	Montana	14	10	4	28
24	24	22	46	Nebraska	16	10	6	32
11	20	11	31	Nevada	12	12	0	24
18	20	18	38	New Hampshire	14	10	4	28
109	109	63	172	New Jersey	40	10	30	80
18	20	18	38	New Mexico	14	10	4	28
278	278	120	398	New York	88	10	78	176
64	64	42	106	North Carolina	32	10	22	64
14	20	14	34	North Dakota	12	12	0	24
153	153	78	231	Ohio	56	10	46	112
39	39	30	69	Oklahoma	22	10	12	44
34	34	27	61	Oregon	18	10	8	36

**DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION****REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION**

1972 Convention Vote	Maximum Number of Delegates	Maximum Number of Alternates	Maximum Size of Delegation	State	1972 Convention Vote	Delegates at Large	District Delegates	Maximum Size of Delegation*
182	182	88	270	Pennsylvania	60	10	50	120
22	22	21	43	Rhode Island	8	4	4	16
32	32	26	58	South Carolina	22	10	12	44
17	20	17	37	South Dakota	14	10	4	28
49	49	35	84	Tennessee	26	10	16	52
130	130	70	200	Texas	52	4	48	104
19	20	19	39	Utah	14	10	4	28
12	20	12	32	Vermont	12	12	0	24
53	53	37	90	Virginia	30	10	20	60
52	52	36	88	Washington	24	10	14	48
35	35	28	63	West Virginia	18	10	8	36
67	67	44	111	Wisconsin	28	10	18	56
11	20	11	31	Wyoming	12	12	0	24
3	6	3	9	Canal Zone	—	—	—	—
3	6	3	9	Guam	3	3	0	6
7	14	7	21	Puerto Rico	5	5	0	10
3	6	3	9	Virgin Islands	3	3	0	6
<b>3016</b>	<b>3103</b>	<b>1897</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>1346</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>858</b>	<b>2692</b>

\* Each state delegation is allowed one alternate per delegate.

**CONVENTION COMMITTEES: A CLOSER LOOK**

Much of the preliminary work of the national conventions is done by four major committees: Permanent Organization, Rules and Order of Business, Credentials, and Resolutions and Platform.

**Membership**

The Democrats and Republicans will have different methods of determining membership on the standing committees in 1972. The Republicans will retain their practice of having one man and one woman from each state delegation on each committee while the Democrats will follow a new procedure of giving greater committee representation to the larger delegations. The Democratic change came upon the recommendation of the Rules Commission as endorsed by the Democratic National Committee. The Commission, chaired by Congressman James O'Hara (D-Mich.), was authorized by the 1968 Democratic Convention as a part of its move for party reform. Under the new rules, the membership of each committee will total 150. Each state will have one member with the remaining 95 to be apportioned according to size of the delegation. (For example, California and New York will have 9 members each on the committees while Delaware will have one.) The Democrats have also decided that all committee deliberations and votes will be open to the public and press. In both parties, the committees select their own permanent chairmen and only delegates, not alternates, may sit on committees.

**Functions**

The Permanent Organization Committee recommends a set of permanent

officers for the convention, the most important of which is the Permanent Chairman. Because his power as presiding officer may be crucial in the factional disputes that develop on the floor, the committee attempts to select persons of moderate temperament who are likely to encounter the least opposition from the contending groups. Present and former Speakers of the House of Representatives have been especially favored.

The Credentials Committee examines the credentials of the delegates, hears challenges to delegates, and makes up a permanent list of bona fide convention delegates. (The National Committee will have prepared a temporary list.) When two delegations both claim legal rights to the same convention seats, their dispute, in the form of briefs, is heard by the national committee. The Credentials Committee may attend these hearings but has no vote in the decision. However, either of the delegations may appeal the national committee ruling to the Credentials Committee which may then overrule the national committee. Further appeal is possible since a majority report and a minority report from the Credentials Committee may go to the convention floor. Each side is given time to present its case to the entire convention, after which the convention votes on the contesting reports by roll call. A convention may or may not allow contested delegates to vote before their contest is finally settled.

The Rules Committee reports to the convention a set of rules for its operation and establishes the voting procedure. The work of this committee is often routine but occasionally it considers a significant item as in 1936 when the Democratic Party finally decided to abolish its "two-thirds rule," a requirement of long standing that a candidate could not be nominated unless he received two-thirds of the convention vote.

The Resolutions and Platform Committee drafts and presents a platform to the convention. Actually, platform deliberations begin long before a convention meets. Party meetings discuss proposals months ahead and study committees prepare drafts. Incumbent presidents seeking renomination are usually in a position to have the platform written substantially as they wish, although they may face a fight on the convention floor from opposition groups. Out-party candidates may appoint representatives to a drafting subcommittee of the Platform Committee, and occasionally several candidates for the nomination will work together in ironing out opposing platform proposals before the convention meets. The finished product tries to reconcile all points of view or, at least, to offend no one faction too greatly.

Party platforms often speak very directly and firmly on settled issues or those on which the party has long had a stand. However, since party unity on issues is an important goal of the platform, it tends to be less specific, even ambiguous, on issues currently in conflict within the party or between the parties. Platforms do show the general direction of movement desired by the dominant elements of the party but ordinarily leave much room for discretion after the election is over. A national convention has no power to bind its nominees or the nominees for Congress to specific courses of action. Once elected, the president (or congressional leaders for the out-party) become the government and decide, as a practical matter, what the platform of the party is.

## VII PHASE FOUR

# The Campaign

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### TELEVISION CAMPAIGNING: A CLOSER EVALUATION

As the television set has become increasingly commonplace in American households, the television screen has loomed ever larger as a vehicle for political campaigning. In 1956, the first general election year in which television saturation was complete throughout the United States, all parties combined spent just under \$6½ million for television broadcasts; by 1968, this figure had risen to \$27 million. More money is spent for television in state-wide political races than in local and even congressional elections, and more money is spent on the presidential campaign than on any other single race. Not only is television used more today for campaigning; it is also used more skillfully. Candidates are no longer advised only by ex-newspapermen or part-time public relations people but by media "specialists." Professional advertising agencies which once sold only commercial products will now accept the task of selling a president as well, and many agencies—good, bad, and indifferent—have sprung up which specialize in political campaigning. Television campaigning has clearly become a major part of American politics in general and presidential politics in particular.

#### Television Techniques: Image and Reality

A candidate may use television to appeal for votes in one or all of these five ways. He may appear in: (1) feature programs produced by his agency and ranging in length from 15 minutes to an hour; (2) a telethon with viewers phoning in questions which he answers before a live camera; (3) short commercial spots, much like product commercials; (4) television "debates" with his opponent; (5) regularly-scheduled programs such as news broadcasts or talk shows. The first three methods call upon the candidate to purchase air time, while the last two methods provide him with free exposure. All television broadcasts, it must be remembered, are, in the eyes of the candidate and his media specialists, ways of obtaining votes. Each broadcast must thus present the candidate in the best light possible. Inevitably, each method used involves certain elements of flimflam, i.e., the image presented to the viewer accords with reality to varying degrees.

The "feature" programs produced today, for example, go far beyond the very early approach of having the candidate make a speech or parading notables on screen to endorse the candidate. Instead, they are lavishly produced and skillfully filmed, presenting a larger-than-life figure saying and doing all the right things in all the right settings. A documentary approach is often used to trace the candidate's life story or follow him on a trip to foreign countries or big-city ghettos. When the candidate appears "live," as in the question-answer sessions, the events are usually carefully staged. The phone calls are monitored and the questions screened and even "summarized" to give the candidate an opportunity to make all his best points.

In 1968 Mr. Nixon had a series of television sessions in different parts of the country in which he was questioned by panels of "citizens." The panelists could ask any question they wished, but any really hostile questioning was unlikely since the panelists had been chosen after careful screening by local Republican committees, a procedure unlikely to produce a typical set of questioners.

The commercial spot is the method most subject to the flimflam charge. Such commercials obviously appeal to the voter's emotions rather than his intellect since there is no time—only 30 seconds perhaps—to develop rational arguments or even specific points. All the Madison Avenue skill which daily sells deodorant and detergent is employed to "sell" a candidate. A view of litter-strewn beaches is combined with a candidate's pledge to clean them up, or rioting students are the background for statements on the need for law and order. The celebrated 1964 Democratic spot (later withdrawn) which identified Senator Goldwater with the atomic bombing of little girls picking daisies was only an extreme point in what has always been the general tendency. Each commercial is designed to provoke the kind of "gut" reaction from the viewer that will induce him to cast the proper vote.

Even the television debate, considered by many Americans as the best way of arriving at truth, involves considerable sham. A candidate who does not feel he will benefit from debating a lesser-known opponent will agree to do so in principle and then tie the matter up in negotiations on details. Congress may cooperate with a reluctant debater by neglecting to suspend the "equal time" provision of the Federal Communications Act (Section 315), thus forcing the networks to either cancel their debate plans or open the door to vegetarians and prohibitionists who have presidential candidates. The provision was suspended in 1960 for the Kennedy-Nixon debates but not in 1964 or 1968. If debates are held, the candidates may virtually ignore the questions and speak to the points they wish to emphasize, as John F. Kennedy did in 1960.

Regular television programs are also subject to candidate manipulation. Candidates do and say things in a way that is most likely to appear newsworthy, timing "pseudo-events" such as press conferences so as to make the evening news programs. Television stations may not even have to film the events themselves since the candidate's media men often provide properly-edited tapes ("electronic press releases"). As evidence mounts that news programs have more impact than commercials, use of such techniques can be expected to increase.<sup>1</sup> Nor is there any reason to expect that the last television technique has been discovered.

### Television Campaigning: Pro and Con

Predictably, the growth of television campaigning has been accompanied by criticism. One complaint has been that the high cost of air time increases greatly the cost of campaigning and puts the poorer candidate at a disad-

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<sup>1</sup>Evidence on the point is limited, but one study of a Michigan gubernatorial election did show this to be the case. Cited in Wolfson, "The Media Masters," *Potomac* (*The Washington Post*), p. 13.

vantage, especially in primaries. In the 1960 West Virginia primary, for example, Senator John F. Kennedy's financial superiority over Senator Humphrey was clearly a factor in the former's victory. Senator Humphrey, to cite one case, actually held a telethon in which the phone calls were *not* screened because he lacked the money for the usual production. The result was a shambles as he spent considerable time fending off crank calls or requests for information about West Virginia hunting licenses. Senator Robert Kennedy defended himself against charges that he was buying primaries in 1968 by pointing to the amounts that could be saved if television time were free to candidates. To try to deal with the problem, President Nixon recently signed into law a bill limiting broadcast spending to six cents per person of voting age in any constituency in any federal election, including primaries (see Chapter VII). This will probably alleviate, but not eliminate, the problem.

Probably a more important criticism of television campaigning is that it is a threat to democracy because it is possible for voters to be brainwashed into accepting image rather than reality, and campaigns will be battles between advertising agencies rather than tests of men and issues. This was the central theme of a popular book which decried the "selling of the president" from the vantage point of an insider in the 1969 Nixon campaign.<sup>2</sup> If much of a presidential campaign is stage-managed, the reasoning goes, voters will never see the "real" candidate or hear discussion of the "real" issues. They will be led Pied-Piper fashion to support the slickest electronic candidate, regardless of the shallowness of his appeal.

The danger of television campaigning assumes frightening proportions to some critics when seen in the light of computer technology. Television commercials of whatever sort are increasingly based on survey research. Voters are polled as to what issues trouble them, what their attitudes are on certain issues, and how they respond to candidates. This material is then used to design a campaign which will appeal to the voter's interests or even exploit his fears. Some forward-looking politicians have even recommended the development of a kind of "people machine," a giant computer which would store all information gathered from such sources as opinion surveys and election statistics, then produce advice at the press of a button.<sup>3</sup> When this stage is reached, say the critics, American politicians will no longer be leading but simply responding to the prejudices of a computerized electorate.

Media specialists defend their work on a number of grounds. They contend, on the one hand, that television is overrated, that it is only one campaign tool. On the other hand, they say even if it is influential, political advertising serves the same purpose as commercial advertising—to inform the viewer of the products that are available to him. The viewer accepts the fact that the information is biased in favor of the product and makes the necessary adjustments in his thinking. Skeptics doubt this, feeling that the voter does not have enough defenses against the soft-sell and that, in any case, the

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<sup>2</sup> Joe McGinniss, *The Selling of the President*, 1968 (New York: Trident Press, 1969).

<sup>3</sup> See MacNeil, *The People Machine*, pp. 219–21.



media specialists are busily trying to stay ahead of whatever defenses he has. Occasionally, the professionals are candid about this. Says one media specialist: "Damned right we don't explain. We don't educate, we motivate. That's our job. We're not teachers, we're political managers. We're trying to win."<sup>4</sup>

### The Task for the Voter

The truth about television campaigning, as is so often the case, is probably hiding somewhere between the extremes of praise and denunciation. Packaged candidates and computerized voters in every election would obviously be something of a blow to rational democratic government. On the other hand, every new electioneering device which has appeared in America—the political party, the stump speech, the campaign button, radio—has been denounced by many as an insult to the voter, a barrier to the "pure" expression of voter sentiment, and a threat to democracy. We have learned to live with each of these devices as we probably shall have to learn to live with television and even "people machines." Nor have the results always seemed very damaging. The advent of the organized party did not, as predicted, signal the rush of scoundrels into office, and the quality of government does not seem to have declined in the age of television. This in itself is evidence that the voter is not as gullible as many of his leaders think him to be.

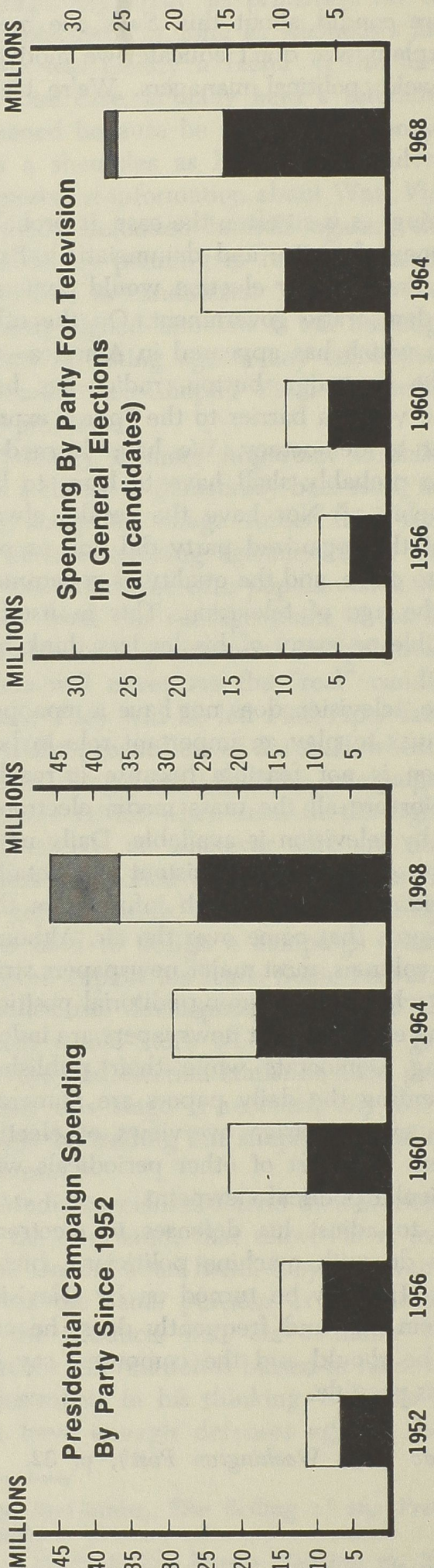
Although it is an important influence, television does not have a monopoly on the voter's attentions. Radio continues to play an important role in both rural and urban areas where television is not feasible because it reaches either too few or too many people. Nor are all the mass media electronic; a wealth of information not provided by television is available. Daily newspapers, especially the large metropolitan dailies, give consistent and detailed coverage to issues and elections, providing the voter with information that is in more permanent form than the words that come over the air. Although there are often charges of bias in news columns, most major newspapers strive for non-partisan reporting and analysis while still assuming editorial positions and endorsing candidates. There is some evidence that newspapers are indeed bipartisan—reporters more often being Democrats while their publishers are likely to be Republican. Supplementing the daily papers are numerous weekly newsmagazines which provide often incisive overviews of election candidates and issues. In addition there is a host of other periodicals with smaller circulations which adopt a particular political viewpoint.

The task for the modern voter is to adjust his defenses to electronic deception just as he has managed to do with machine politicians, biased newspapers, and soothing radio voices. He may be turned on by television commercials, but he can also turn them off—and frequently does; he can refuse to act as the ad agencies say he should and the computers say he must—and he has. It is not easy, but it is possible.

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<sup>4</sup> Wolfson, "The Media Masters," *Potomac* (*The Washington Post*), p. 32.

**CAMPAIGN SPENDING**



Year	Democrats	Republicans	Other	Total
1952	4.5	6.6	—	11.1
1956	5.5	8.9	—	14.4
1960	10.5	11.3	—	21.8
1964	11.9	17.1	—	29.0
1968	11.6	25.4	9.0	46.0

\* Small spending by minor parties not included

All figures in millions

Source: Daniel M. Ogden, Jr. and Arthur L. Peterson, *Electing the President* (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1968).

Source: *Nomination and Election of the President and Vice President of the United States*, compiled by Richard D. Hupman, Senate Library and Robert L. Thornton, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress under the direction of Francis R. Valco, Secretary of the Senate, January 1972.

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## VIII PHASE FIVE

# The Election

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### SIGNIFICANT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

With the electoral college system it is possible for a candidate to be elected by a majority of the electoral votes, even though he may not have had a majority of the popular votes throughout the nation (majority means one more than half). Elected without majorities of popular votes:

John Quincy Adams in 1825 (election decided by House of Representatives)

Rutherford B. Hayes in 1876 (election decided by congressional electoral commission)

Benjamin Harrison in 1888

Elected without popular majorities, but with popular pluralities (the most votes) in a field of more than two candidates:<sup>1</sup>

James K. Polk in 1844	James A. Garfield in 1880	Woodrow Wilson in 1916
Zachary Taylor in 1848	Grover Cleveland in 1884	Harry S. Truman in 1948
James Buchanan in 1856	Grover Cleveland in 1892	John F. Kennedy in 1960
Abraham Lincoln in 1860	Woodrow Wilson in 1912	Richard M. Nixon in 1968

**The Closest Presidential Election in 76 Years** In 1960 Kennedy's official plurality after recounts was 118,263 votes in a record 68 million plus. A total of 224,931 voters did not mark their ballots for president. His plurality percentage was by the thinnest margin—less than one half of 1 percent. The electoral votes were 303 for Kennedy; 219 for Nixon; 15 for Senator Harry Byrd (from electors in Mississippi, Alabama and Oklahoma). Kennedy won seven states by less than 1 percent of the popular vote in each. These seven states had a total of 77 electoral votes—much more than enough to swing the election to him. (Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico.) Five additional states gave Kennedy all their electoral votes (87) with a less than 2 percent plurality of popular vote. (Michigan, Nevada, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas.) Altogether these 12 states with a less than 2 percent popular plurality have a total electoral vote of 164, far more than half the electoral votes Kennedy received to win the election.

**All-time Electoral Vote Record** Since 1900 only two Democratic Presidents, Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Lyndon Baines Johnson, have received an absolute majority of the popular vote. In 1936 Roosevelt reached an all-time record of 98.5 percent of the electoral vote with a substantial 59 percent of the popular vote. Johnson in 1964 won 90 percent of the electoral vote with 61 percent of the popular vote.

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<sup>1</sup> Examples of third party presidential nominees in this century who have received electoral votes are: in 1912 Theodore Roosevelt, the Progressive (Bull Moose) Party—88 electoral votes; in 1924 Robert M. LaFollette, Progressive—13 electoral votes; in 1948 J. Strom Thurmond, States' Rights Party (Dixiecrat)—39 electoral votes; in 1968 George Wallace, American Independent Party—46 electoral votes.



Benjamin Harrison (R)	Cleveland (D)	233	168	5,439,853	5,540,309	Mar. 4, 1889	Levi P. Morton
Grover Cleveland (D)	Benjamin Harrison (R)	277	145	5,556,918	5,176,108	Mar. 4, 1893	Adlai E. Stevenson
William McKinley (R)	Bryan (D)	271	176	7,104,779	6,502,925	Mar. 4, 1897	Garret A. Hobart
"	"	292	155	7,207,923	6,358,133	Mar. 4, 1901	Theodore Roosevelt
T. Roosevelt (R)						Sept. 14, 1901	
"	Parker (D)	336	140	7,623,486	5,077,911	Mar. 4, 1905	Charles W. Fairbanks
William H. Taft (R)	Bryan (D)	321	162	7,678,908	6,409,104	Mar. 4, 1909	James S. Sherman
Woodrow Wilson (D)	T. Roosevelt (R)	435	88	6,293,454	3,484,980	Mar. 4, 1913	Thomas R. Marshall
"	Hughes (R)	277	254	9,129,606	8,538,221	Mar. 4, 1917	"
Warren G. Harding (R)	Cox (D)	404	127	16,152,200	9,147,353	Mar. 4, 1921	Calvin Coolidge
Calvin Coolidge (R)						Aug. 3, 1923	
"	Davis (D)	382	136	15,725,016	8,386,503	Mar. 4, 1925	Charles G. Dawes
Herbert Hoover (R)	Smith (D)	444	87	21,391,381	15,016,443	Mar. 4, 1929	Charles Curtis
F. D. Roosevelt (D)	Hoover (R)	472	59	22,821,857	15,761,841	Mar. 4, 1933	John N. Garner
"	Landon (R)	523	8	27,751,597	16,679,583	Jan. 20, 1937	"
"	Willkie (R)	449	82	27,244,160	22,305,198	Jan. 20, 1941	Henry A. Wallace
"	Dewey (R)	432	99	25,602,504	22,006,285	Jan. 20, 1945	Harry S. Truman
Harry S. Truman (D)						Apr. 12, 1945	
"	Dewey (R)	303	189	24,105,695	21,969,170	Jan. 20, 1949	Alben W. Barkley
Dwight D. Eisenhower (R)	Stevenson (D)	442	89	33,778,963	27,314,992	Jan. 20, 1953	Richard M. Nixon
"	"	457	73	35,581,003	25,738,765	Jan. 20, 1957	"
John F. Kennedy (D)	Nixon (R)	303	219	34,227,096	34,107,646	Jan. 20, 1961	Lyndon B. Johnson
Lyndon B. Johnson (D)						Nov. 22, 1963	
Richard M. Nixon (R)	Barry M. Goldwater (R)	486	52	42,825,463	27,146,969	Jan. 20, 1965	Hubert H. Humphrey
"	Hubert H. Humphrey (D)	301	191	31,785,480	31,275,166	Jan. 20, 1969	Spiro T. Agnew

Source: "Statistics of the Presidential and Congressional Election of November 3, 1964" (corrected to August 15, 1965), compiled from official sources by Benjamin J. Guthrie under direction of Clerk of the House of Representatives. (Source for 1968 data: *America Votes 8*, compiled and edited by Richard M. Scammon. Governmental Affairs Institute, Washington, D.C.)

Key to abbreviations: (D) Democrat; (DP) Democrat-Popular; (D-R) Democrat-Republican; (D-LR) Democratic-Liberal Republican; (F) Federalist; (N-R) National Republican; (R) Republican; (W) Whig.

1 Where no opponent is given, the Vice President succeeded to the presidency upon the death of the President.

2 Electoral votes for other candidates disregarded.

3 There being no choice for President by the people, the election devolved upon the House of Representatives, Jefferson was chosen by the vote of 10 States, to 4 for Burr, and 2 blank.

4 No choice for President having been made by the people, the election devolved upon the House of Representatives and John Quincy Adams was elected, receiving the votes of 13 States to 7 for Andrew Jackson and 4 for William H. Crawford.

5 By resolution of the House, 3 votes cast for Horace Greeley were not counted.

6 The electoral votes of 4 States were disputed. Congress referred the matter to the Electoral Commission which gave the decision to Hayes.

## ELECTORAL VOTE BY STATE, 1968 AND 1972

Total: 538 Needed to Elect: 270

State	1972	1968	State	1972	1968
California	45	40	Connecticut	8	8
New York	41	43	Colorado	7	6
Pennsylvania	27	29	Kansas	7	7
Illinois	26	26	Mississippi	7	7
Texas	26	25	West Virginia	6	7
Ohio	25	26	Arkansas	6	6
Michigan	21	21	Arizona	6	5
New Jersey	17	17	Oregon	6	6
Florida	17	14	Nebraska	5	5
Massachusetts	14	14	Maine	4	4
North Carolina	13	13	New Hampshire	4	4
Indiana	13	13	Rhode Island	4	4
Virginia	12	12	South Dakota	4	4
Georgia	12	12	Montana	4	4
Missouri	12	12	Idaho	4	4
Wisconsin	11	12	Utah	4	4
Tennessee	10	11	New Mexico	4	4
Maryland	10	10	Hawaii	4	4
Louisiana	10	10	Alaska	3	3
Minnesota	10	10	Nevada	3	3
Alabama	9	10	Wyoming	3	3
Washington	9	9	North Dakota	3	4
Kentucky	9	9	Vermont	3	3
South Carolina	8	8	Delaware	3	3
Iowa	8	9	District of Columbia	3	3
Oklahoma	8	8			

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Missouri	12	12	Idaho	4	4
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Louisiana	10	10	Alaska	4	4
Minnesota	10	10	Nevada	3	3
Alabama	9	10	Wyoming	3	3
Washington	9	9	North Dakota	3	3
Kentucky	9	9	Vermont	3	4
South Carolina	8	8	Delaware	3	3
Iowa	8	9	District of Columbia	3	3
Oklahoma	8	8			

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