

Newsletter of

THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT

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Edited by MICHAEL HARRINGTON

Electoral victory and full employment challenge

By MICHAEL HARRINGTON

If anyone had any doubts about the existence of politically active social classes in the United States, they should have been dispelled on election day. Jimmy Carter owes his victory to a coalition of trade unionists, blue-collar workers, blacks and Hispanics (particularly the Chicanos in the Southwest), lower-income voters, liberals, city dwellers and the like. The only exceptional element in his majority is to be found in the presence of a larger number of white Southerners than would have been the case for any non-Southern Democrat. And Ford's vote was just as classic: a coalition of *Fortune* 500 executives (85 percent of whom said they would vote for him), a good portion of the suburban middle class, and small town voters in the West and Midwest.

One concern unites Carter's majority: full employment. Every grouping that came out for Carter—most emphatically including the ex-Wallaceites who supported a Southern Democrat on grounds of regional pride—has a stake in a full employment economy. Indeed, the Nixon-Ford bungling of the economy brought these people together behind a candidate who was unknown to most of them until only a few months ago. It is the current fashion to lament the lack of issues in the campaign—only the voters did not see it that way. Personality certainly played a role last month—I suspect that on balance, that factor helped out the known and steady character, Ford, and cut down on the majority for the maverick outsider, Carter—but the two camps were not organized around that consideration. The cutting edge was the question of the economy, and the voters rightly understood that it involved an ideological issue. The majority chose the man who talked constantly about putting America back to work.

Moreover, in the aftermath of the election, the trade unions, one of the most important elements in the Carter coalition, are asking for one, and only one, quid pro quo from the new President: full employment legislation. The AFL-CIO leadership, the *New York Times* reports, is putting all of its "special interest" items on the back burner in order to go all out on the full employment issue. That is not only right from labor's point of view; it coincides with the fundamental self-interest of most of those who voted for Carter.

Politically the moment is opportune for a mass democratic Left offensive for Carter's most prominent campaign pledge.

But isn't that an example of the moderation, the

timid reformism, to which socialists working as Democrats are driven? To think so is to have a profound illusion about American capitalism in 1976-1977: that full employment is an easy demand for it to accede to. The evidence says that this, in fact, is a radical demand. Indeed, if the democratic Left could help—or, if necessary, push—Carter to fulfilling it, that would be one of

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Carter's 'narrow' win: media-made illusion

By JIM CHAPIN

Those who depend on the mass media for their information have received two essentially false images of the results on November 2. The first is that Carter's victory was narrow and disappointing; the second that the turnout was surprisingly high. Both these images are simply the results of false expectations raised by the media themselves. Wide publicity given to polls showing Carter with a lead of over 30 points, although those who took the polls cautioned that their polls had little to do with the likely behavior of the electorate on a real election day, contributed to the image of an ineffective Carter steadily losing support while widespread stories of extreme apathy made a turnout lower than that of 1972 seem high.

Put in the perspective of the real history of the American presidency instead of a short-lived and short-memoried media, the relative weakness of the turnout and the relative strength of Carter's showing would have been immediately visible. The turnout was the fourth lowest in American history since the beginning of competitive two-party politics in 1840 (only 1920, 1924 and 1948 were lower). Carter's percentage of the vote was 5 percent above the Democratic average for President 1948-1972; was sixth highest among all Democratic showings since the Civil War (exceeded only by FDR's four elections and 1964); made him the third Democrat in history to win an absolute majority of the popular vote against an incumbent President (the only other two were Jackson and FDR); and was very close to the median percentage for the winner in all Presidential elections (in the 38 elections between 1824-1972, 18 winners received a smaller vote than Carter).

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A socialist's dilemma: balancing the near and the far

by IRVING HOWE

Citing personal examples usually makes us suspicious in discussions of social policy, since we are never sure how relevant they are to larger issues. Yet without some awareness of the actual experiences of human beings, our discussions can become dry, even dead. So I want to cite two recent experiences of mine, small ones but pointing to important issues.

A member of my family, a very old man, recently had to go to the hospital for an operation. This man had been a worker all his life, a presser in the dress trade, and through sacrifice and self-denial he had accumulated some modest savings. That sum of money in the bank represents congealed blood, congealed sweat. A few decades ago, if he had to go to the hospital, he would have had to use up about half his savings—and the result, for his survival, would have been catastrophic. Now, because of Medicare or Medicaid, the costs of his hospitalization were very small. Whatever time is left to him can be made easier by using his savings for daily life.

I thought about this incident while reading exposés in the papers about corruption in Medicare/Medicaid—mostly rip-offs by doctors. Then I read articles by columnists, especially reactionary snobs like William Buckley, attacking government programs and using corruption as an argument against national health insurance. Now, corruption is shameful; it should be brought to an end; proper legislation and controls can certainly reduce the amount of it, if not eradicate it entirely. But that the flaws and abuses of health insurance should be used as an argument against it; that the old and threadbare slogans about private medical care should be trotted out after the exposure of how some doctors were cheating—this simply infuriated me. For no one writing about this matter took the trouble to remember that old man, a retired worker with a small amount of savings, who would have been left dead broke under the old ways. And that old man stands for thousands, millions, of others.

This is open season for attacks on welfare state measures. Scoundrels on the Right, often comfortable in their inherited wealth, bleat about "government interference." Interference? Yes, between the masses of old people and the wretchedness they would face if there were no Medicare or Medicaid. The welfare state measures that we have are clearly inadequate and often misused; but let us remember the relief they bring to helpless people, the aid they give to suffering people.

A few weeks ago I had to be in Detroit for a lecture. On a Saturday afternoon I drove through the streets, appalled and terrified at what I saw: a *deserted city*, no one on the streets, block after block of rotting abandoned buildings. The "inner city," a euphemism for ghetto, has been abandoned to the blacks; the whites, or many of them, have fled to the suburbs; and the blacks can rot in the decaying shell of a once great city, without the resources to transform or the ability

to leave it. To this plight America has been brought, not only in Detroit but in a growing number of other cities, by its racism. This racism leads it to accept the decay of Detroit and Newark and Gary and other places because it will not provide sufficient help to its black citizens. But it's not only racism, it's also a mean-spirited reaction against the welfare state. Detroit is a horrifying emblem of what other cities may become.

During my visit there I met an old friend, whom I had known years back in a left-wing group. I have no reason to think he is any less humane than I am. He pooh-pooed the idea of hoping for a change of national administration which *might* bring a little help to the cities. Inadequate, he said; and I agreed that, yes, it would be inadequate, but still, perhaps something. No, he said, the issue was clear: socialism or barbarism, the slogan he had been using all his life. Well, in a general, ultimate sense I agree with that. But what about right now? Might not even a moderate growth or improvement in the welfare state—an increase of federal funds to the cities, federally sponsored work programs that would put the jobless to work at improving the cities—might that not bring *some* help to the people suffering there? Was the job of the socialist just to stand in his righteousness, and say, follow me or perish?

Our path in America is hard and crooked. We have to join with everyone, in or out of the Democratic Party, in or out of the trade unions, who is ready to fight for a little more now: better health care, new housing programs etc. All of these things affect, immediately, the lives of millions—like the old man in my family who needs to go to the hospital, like a Detroit mother who needs a better place in which to shelter her children. Not to respond to such needs today is to suffer from ideological callousness. Yet we also have to say, that, yes, these things are inadequate, they patch up an unjust and rotten society, they don't begin to apply our vast national resources to our vast human needs.

To say both kinds of things, to say them at the same time, to keep a balance between the near and the far—that is what it means to be a socialist in America. Pretty hard. But what better task?

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Socialist notes: campaigns & coalitions

ORGANIZERS—Belated thanks and kudos to Carl Shier for his work in setting up the successful DSOC reception at the American Political Science Association in Chicago. Alerted by Nancy Lieber that APSA was featuring Mike Harrington and Paul Sweezy discussing the future of American socialism, Carl got to work lining up facilities, mailing to a large list and generally promoting the meeting and reception. The results: more than 500 people at the Harrington-Sweezy session; a good crowd at the reception; wide distribution of the NEWSLETTER and other DSOC literature; some new members; and a tremendous boost for everyone's spirits about the appeal of democratic socialism. As Vice Chair Shier points out, we can organize similar events at professional and academic meetings all over the country, using active members in the associations as a base. It's all part of that expanding socialist presence . . .

In Boston, Julius Bernstein, another of our vice chairs, and Mike Schippiani, a younger DSOC activist, are spearheading a Massachusetts coalition for full employment. They've lined up an impressive list of trade unionists, community and religious activists in support of full employment, and right now their plans center on a December 8 full employment conference in Boston. Future plans include full employment teach-ins and keeping up the pressure on local Congress members.

Out in Los Angeles, Burt Wilson, another of our top-notch organizers is involving many DSOC members in his consumer campaigns. Regular NEWSLETTER readers know how Burt organized CAUSE (the Campaign Against Utility Service Exploitation). ARCO had come up with a scheme to make consumers pay a utility surcharge to finance its explorations for natural gas in Alaska; with imaginative tactics, CAUSE beat ARCO on that one. More recently, CAUSE defeated a telephone company proposal to charge for directory assistance. All of this has led to Burt's increasing prominence in the pages of the Los Angeles *Times* and throughout Southern California. Over the summer, Taxpayers United for Freedom (TUFF), a home owners' group, asked his help in organizing a tax protest in the San Fernando Valley. In taking on the task, Burt explained that he would work on the tax protest but he also wanted to pose alternative ways of raising money for government services. Those alternatives—a state bank, a state insurance company and publicly owned utilities didn't please some of the conservative homeowners who asked Burt to leave TUFF. He did, but in the process he got more attention for what the L.A. *Times* called his "almost socialistic" proposals. The upshot of it all, according to Burt, is that the local Left has picked up on those ideas (which are popular with tenants and reform Democrats) and is carrying them to a wider audience . . .

CAMPAIGNING—On all levels and around the country, DSOC'ers were active in the recent campaign. Nancy Shier and Steve Silbiger worked on Carter's staff in Illinois, and numerous trade unionists worked in the

political effort there and elsewhere. Ben Ross put together a voter registration drive in Cambridge, Mass. which enrolled 4,000 new voters who proved helpful in electing Sandra Graham, a black reform candidate for the state legislature . . . Mike Harrington traversed eight states, and in each one of them spoke on behalf of the Carter-Mondale ticket; on the day before the election, he debated Socialist Workers Party candidate Peter Camejo before a Queens College audience, and according to several reports persuaded dubious students to vote Democratic . . . Also in the closing days of the campaign, Los Angeles comrades leafleted a Eugene McCarthy rally with copies of the October NEWSLETTER urging a vote for Carter without illusions . . . In Michigan and Colorado, DSOC'ers used their state Democratic conventions as an opportunity to spread the word by setting up literature tables and distributing NEWSLETTERS, and in Portland, Oregon, DSOC'ers purchased a greeting in the annual Democratic Party journal, thus spreading the word about our socialist presence. In Rhode Island, Paul McNeil won the Democratic nomination to run against the State Senate minority leader. Paul lost but is now part of a reform majority on the Democratic district committee.

MISCELLANY — A good program idea for a local meeting: show a film. "The Inheritance" was a big hit at the youth conference; it's a good focus for a discussion of working class solidarity and activism. It's available for a \$10 rental fee from the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers, 15 Union Square, New York, N.Y. 10003. Another highly recommended film, "Union Maids," deals with women who helped organize the CIO. It rents for \$50 from New Day Films, P.O. Box 315, Franklin Lakes, N.J. 07417 . . . Interested in socialist education? Several DSOC groups have held successful study and discussion groups. In Houston, a group has met to discuss Mike Harrington's *Socialism* with different members taking turns leading the discussion; in New York, David Bensman has organized a group along the same principles reading Harrington's *Twilight of Capitalism* and James O'Connor's *Fiscal Crisis of the State*. A less ambitious (and therefore easier to organize) study group might meet around a discussion of articles from *Dissent* instead of entire books. If you've tried something that works, on socialist education, let's hear about it . . .

FUN AND FUNDS — Washington D.C. socialists pulled off a very successful fund-raiser this fall in honor of national Vice Chair Victor Reuther. More than 175 people attended the affair; both Vic (whose excellent book *The Brothers Reuther* should be read by all) and Mike Harrington spoke. The party was written up in the *Washington Star*, and the general consensus was that everyone had a good time. The local's treasury was replenished by the event, and the organizers sent a very generous contribution to help the national office get through current tough times . . .

Electoral victory . . .

(Continued from page 1)

the greatest forward strides since the days of Kennedy and the early Johnson.

First of all, Carter will take office under ambiguous and difficult economic circumstances. *The Wall Street Journal* reports that a group of prestigious, mainstream Keynesian economists meeting in Washington in November agreed that the "pause" in the American economy is more serious than that. They see disturbing signs of slowdown in the strongest of the other Western economies, West Germany and Japan. At the same time, three other less favored capitalisms, Italy, Britain and France, are in more serious trouble. Experts note a considerable inflow of capital from Europe to the U.S. and attribute at least part of that development to fears of instability in other parts of the world.

The loans of Third World countries will also be

Energy futures

An unpublicized struggle is now underway within the federal bureaucracy over whether quick profits for energy developers are more important than your health.

Engineers pushing for rapid development of new energy sources want environmental standards written for new systems right away. Given a target date, they argue, they can meet it. Once plants are built, however, changes in environmental regulations will cause costly delays and may force complete shutdowns.

Interestingly enough, environmentally-minded officials in several agencies are resisting the push for quick action. They point out that new technologies are likely to produce pollutants we're not yet familiar with. Regulations written now may fail to limit the most dangerous emissions from these plants. From this point of view, cancer-causing substances are particularly worrisome. Little is known about them, they are almost never specifically regulated, and new technologies may emit far more of them than traditional pollutants.

Although most public attention has been focused on coal gassification, the next battle is likely to be over geothermal energy. Despite its popularity among the ecologically-minded, geothermal is quite dirty, and its sponsors are worried that environmental problems will prevent its growth. Last April, the Geothermal Advisory Committee, a government body representing commercial geothermal interests, asked the Environmental Protection Agency to set standards by the end of this year. EPA balked, and the fight was on.

So far, the environmentalist position has prevailed, but the powerful energy development interests have not yet brought their weight to bear. When they do, the fight will get rougher, and our health could be at stake. □

coming due. Many of these debts were contracted to pay for OPEC's higher oil prices in 1973-4 and many of them are owed to private banks. But because of the losses the Third World has suffered in the recent recession, some countries may fail to meet their obligations, a default which would backfire on American banks. And to make matters worse, domestic inflation remains a major factor while unemployment still hovers near the 8 percent mark by official, and understated, account.

Under such circumstances, the push for full employment must also be a fight for more serious and planned government intervention than is called for in the textbooks of established Keynesian doctrine. Many of the established Keynesians themselves understand this, which is why they have been attacking the Hawkins-Humphrey full employment bill. The chief ideologist in this effort, as the NEWSLETTER has reported previously, is Charles Schultze of the Brookings Institute.

In a new Brookings Institute study, Schultze very quietly takes a most radical step—to the right—in coping with these problems. When John Kennedy assumed office, the standard liberal economist's goal was to get joblessness down to 3 percent. The "interim" target was set at 4 percent. As often happens in these cases, 4 percent quickly became the target and anyone who kept on talking about 3 percent was viewed as uninformed, a bombthrower, or both. So "full employment" budgets—an analytic device permitting one to compare different years on the basis of a single economic standard—were based on 4 percent unemployment.

In the new book, Schultze sets 5 percent as the "full employment" standard. He thus gives liberal approbation to an argument put forward by the Republican minority on the Joint Economic Committee last winter: that "structural" factors, particularly the increasing participation of women and youth in the labor market, require that we increase the amount of joblessness which is considered tolerable and reasonable. This may seem to be an arcane point in economic theory. But if Schultze's casual revision of our basis of judging the economy's performance is accepted, almost one million people will be added to the reserve army of the unemployed which America needs to make the system work.

The Democratic platform and Carter himself are not committed to the Schultze view; they are pledged to the Hawkins-Humphrey goal of 3 percent "adult" unemployment, or, in plainer English, 4 percent unemployment. Everyone knows that the issue will not be decided by what is written on a sheet of paper, even a sheet of paper endorsed by the democratically elected representatives of the President-elect's own party. It will be decided by political struggle. That struggle is more radical than it seems because many moderate liberals will defect from the Humphrey-Hawkins goal and support the Right's radical revision.

Charles Schultze is quite right in his criticisms of Hawkins-Humphrey if nothing else in the economy is changed. To achieve even 4 percent unemployment without inflation the government will have to adopt redistributive tax policies and an incomes policy aimed at the corporate rich. The larger dimensions of some of

these issues can be glimpsed right here and now, in the current debate over a tax cut.

To most people, the use of a tax cut to stimulate the economy is a liberal, even a Leftist, measure. It was, after all, first used in this country by Roosevelt, employed by Kennedy-Johnson and it has been regularly denounced by rightist simple minds. But one fact should give pause in this area: Gerald Ford is even more for a tax cut than Jimmy Carter. More often than not, tax cuts are a *conservative* way to stimulate the economy. The chief reason for the confusion in the United States is that the conservatives, per usual, have taken so long to figure out their own self-interest.

A tax cut effectively says that the market place, which is manipulated by advertising and the price fixing of giant oligopolies, should decide how the public monies will be spent. That means that they will be effectively channeled according to the priorities of the corporations which have already helped to promote the deterioration of urban areas in the Northeast and Midwest, the degradation of the environment, and the ruin of our rail systems among their most noteworthy achievements. As if that were not bad enough, the editorialists of the *Wall Street Journal*, those inveterate spiritualizers of greed, are demanding a special tax cut for the rich—more privileges for capital to combat a capital shortage that does not exist—and reduced spending.

The debate that took place during the opening days of the Kennedy Administration is about to be rerun.

More tax giveaways?

Can a program of tax incentives for business solve unemployment? Evidence compiled by the government indicates that business tax cuts and incentives are ineffective tools in creating jobs.

Last January the Commerce Department studied the job-creating abilities of three kinds of corporations: mature, innovative and young, high technology firms. For the mature companies studied (General Electric, Bethlehem Steel, duPont, General Foods, International Paper and Procter and Gamble), very few jobs were created for each dollar of company growth. Thus, between 1945 and 1974, these corporations grew at an annual rate of 7.8 percent but created new jobs at a rate of only 1.9 percent; jobs expanded 24 percent as fast as sales. What's more, the study notes, mature companies use technology to reduce jobs.

The innovative companies did better (jobs expanded 65 percent as fast as sales), and the young, high technology enterprises created jobs 98 percent as fast as they expanded sales. But the mature corporations are the great bulk of American industry, particularly in the depressed Northeast and Midwest. Since 1969, job creation by the mature companies, and even the innovative companies, has slowed down. Tax incentives are unlikely to reverse that trend, though, and may even lead to more labor-saving technology and job loss.

Then the conservative Keynesians fought for tax cuts, the liberal and labor Keynesians for increased, planned social spending. The conservatives won with consequences that still plague us. And this time, the battle will, I expect, be even more fierce.

On employment we will hear more in the coming days about specific training for unskilled workers than massive, Hawkins-Humphrey job creation efforts. Even worse, corporations may propose that once again they be paid to hire people and make money off them, an approach which further deepens the maldistribution of wealth. *Business Week* has already taken up those cudgels. When considering these alternatives, one might well hark back to the '60's when we discovered that job training unrelated to specific job creation was enormously wasteful and ineffective, and that it didn't make sense to bribe companies to hire people who would earn them a profit.

Convention's coming

The third convention of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee will be in Chicago, February 19, 20 and 21, 1977. A series of organization-wide discussion bulletins will be published prior to the convention; this discussion bulletin series is available to members and non-members at a cost of \$2.50.

The democratic Left should demand that Carter take his pledges and platform seriously. It should call for genuine full employment and planned social spending, particularly to save the rotting cities of the country and to provide decent health care for every citizen. That, I suggest, is under present political circumstances a radical demand *and* one which appeals to a majority of the American people. I am, in short, proposing a fight that we just might win.

Does this mean that the democratic Left should be born-again as Jimmy Carterites? Not at all. The NEWSLETTER editors advocated a vote for Carter without illusions. We were disturbed during the campaign by some of his super orthodox budget-balancing talk, by various formulations on the role of private health insurers in a national system of health care, and by the meeting at the 21 Club where the candidate seemed to be telling the industrialists not to be too frightened by his tax reform rhetoric. It *could* be that Carter will not fulfill his promises to the people and the party. Events of recent years should have convinced anyone that a certain cynicism in these matters helps one stay alive.

But Carter *could* go in the direction charted at the New York Convention and that is the possibility that the democratic Left should fight to make real right now. There is no point in conceding defeat in advance, particularly when publications like *Business Week* are disturbed by the prospects of our success. These matters will not be determined by political psychoanalysts or by academic economists hurling statistics at one another. They will be decided by social forces in political motion. The forces that elected Jimmy Carter must mobilize to make him—if I can borrow and paraphrase his own rhetoric—as good as he said he would be.

Media illusion . . .

(Continued from page 1)

Among post-World War II Presidential elections Carter's performance was actually superior to four of eight. Of the eight elections, four were landslides and four were close. The landslides can be accounted for by either Dwight Eisenhower or an "extremist" from a divided out-party opposing an incumbent President (1964, 1972); the results of the other four suggest that the opinion of the American voting public, absent "disrupting" factors, is really quite closely divided. Carter did better than Truman in 1948, Kennedy in 1960 and Nixon in 1968.

In addition to the pattern of close elections that appears in recent American politics, it is possible to observe a regular eight-year cycle since 1952: one party wins Presidency closely, loses slightly in off-year elections, holds Presidency by a landslide, loses badly in off-year elections, loses Presidency closely, and starts the cycle for the other party. Carter fits the pattern.

Media commentary on the result had other weaknesses as well. Sectional and ethno-cultural impacts on the vote were greatly overstated. The impression of an

extreme sectional result came from the electoral college and the visual impact of the maps showing Carter sweeping South and East and Ford the West. In fact, this was one of the least sectional elections in our history in terms of the popular vote: only 1960 and the pre-Civil War Democratic-Whig elections of 1836-52 showed as little sectional variance. Similarly, the strong focus on the ethnic and religious vote missed the fact that such differences (in statistical terms) "explained" less of the vote than in any other election in American history: the Protestant-Catholic vote difference was the lowest since Presidential polling began in 1936, and probably the lowest in American history (1920 and 1924 the only possible exceptions). Carter actually ran worse among Jews (outside New York City) than McGovern, worse than any Democrat in 50 years.

What the commentators missed is that Carter's gains and losses among ethnic groups were strongly structured along class lines. His great strength among white Protestants was largely the result of a gain among poorer ones (so that a majority of the Southern whites voted against Carter while he got a majority of the Southern Baptists, poorer as a group than Methodists, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians), and his weakness

The Watergate landfill

by JIM CHAPIN

It has been increasingly obvious for the last decade or so that the voters have voted in different ways for different offices (the technical term for this is office-specific electoral disaggregation). Decisions for executive positions (Presidents, Governors, Mayors) are made ideologically while the same voters have seen legislative positions as oriented to constituent service or local interest-group aggregation. As a result, legislative positions have become safe for most incumbents, more particularly Democratic incumbents (since many Republican politicians still seem to have an almost puritanical feeling that it is illegitimate to represent any interest but big business). This has also made any projection from the results of legislative elections up to ideological positions like President or Mayor very precarious.

The most interesting aspect of this election was the radical difference between the elections for Senate and for the House. The House, to quote one commentator, showed that the "Watergate landslide has become the Watergate landfill." Only a dozen incumbents were defeated, and the Republicans fared disastrously, not gaining back anything of the "expected" return of seats from 1974. But in the Senate, 14 of the 33 seats up changed hands, and no less than nine incumbents were defeated. What's going on? It seems that the voters' disaggregation of electoral choice has become even more specific. Perhaps they have become sophisticated enough to realize that the modern Senate has become a media-oriented collection of prima donnas and publicity hogs. Ap-

parently the voters are treating Senate seats neither ideologically nor as service positions, but as a place for showmen and actors. We can expect more Moynihans and Hayakawas.

On the face of it, there were no dramatic shifts in the Congress as a result of the elections. But the continuance of two important trends needs to be emphasized: first, the continuing liberalization of the Democratic Party in the House, most notably in the new representatives from the South; second, the continuing polarization of the Republicans in the Senate. Since at least 1970, average moderate conservatives have been the Republicans to lose elections; those who win have been clearly "left" or "right" within that party. In this election Republicans like Beall or Taft were the ones to lose; new arrivals were figures like Hatch, Schmitt, and Wallop on the far right, or (for Republicans) very liberal figures like Heinz, Danforth, and Chafee.

The most depressing results of the elections were the state-by-state referenda. The news here, as this NEWSLETTER pointed out recently, is that big business has learned how to use its money for sophisticated media campaigns playing on fears for job security and the sanctity of the home to defeat almost all referenda aimed at limiting the spread of nuclear power, ending right to work, fairer electric pricing systems, improved farm labor laws, and so on. Perhaps the disadvantage of the Left when it fights such issues on the Right's terrain, issue-by-issue rather than with a wide-based critique, has been demonstrated once more. □

among Catholics and Jews was generally concentrated among the right (for example, Jews outside New York are the richest single ethno-cultural group in the country). Unless we are to believe that poor Protestants and rich Catholics and Jews are peculiarly more susceptible to ethno-cultural feelings than their compatriots at other economic levels, we must see that what was really going on was a division of the electorate along class lines. It is a tribute to our own self image of a middle class "classless" society that neither the commentators nor the affected individuals themselves mentioned economic class as an influence on voting. It was easier to

Capital quotes

Robert A. Gerard, the assistant secretary of the United States Treasury in charge of overseeing New York City's finances, hailed the city's "tremendous progress" yesterday while cautioning President-elect Jimmy Carter against granting the city additional aid.

"There are people who say the city deserves more in the way of Federal assistance because it has done so much," Mr. Gerard said at a luncheon at the City Club.

'I say that because the city has come so far, it deserves to finish the job itself.'

New York Times, November 6, 1976

focus on other feelings as a justification for altering voting behavior. This probably was the first election in American history in which class was clearly *more important* than ethno-cultural or sectional background in explaining voting behavior (even the huge black vote for Carter may reflect less some imagined relation to his Protestant Southern background than simply the class position of most American blacks).

Everyone is now writing that Carter faces some interesting decisions. Taking only three of the late deciding states that gave him the election, it is hard to see what policies he can follow for the next four years that will give him New York, Hawaii, and Mississippi all at once. The problem he had holding this collection together during the election, it is argued, is the problem he will have governing. And within the context of the present American electorate, that is exactly right.

How many times have you heard or read that the Republican party is only about one-fifth (18 to 22 percent) of the electorate? What you don't often hear is that this minority measures the Republican share, not of the voting electorate, but of the potential electorate. Since only 53 percent voted in this election, and Republican identifiers are the most high-status, well-motivated group in the electorate—almost all of them vote—we discover that the proportions change radically: Republicans are one-third of the voters.

If one makes the (somewhat dubious) assumption that all groups of Americans followed a European turnout pattern and voted in the same proportions, one realizes that Carter would have won this imaginary election by at least a dozen points rather than three.

Even Kevin Phillips has admitted that our turnout levels could be raised by 10 percent simply by changing our registration procedures (not to mention other ideas such as holding elections over weekends). Interestingly, he also argued that American turnout is low because Americans don't see much difference between their parties while Europeans do.

Carter is being told that he must respond to the "close" election by governing moderately. This usually means using liberal rhetoric with conservative policies. Liberals don't win re-election that way; they just put themselves in a box of rising expectations unmatched by reality. The Right which we sometimes scorn as stupid gets its way; the Left gets frustrated; turnout declines more, and conservatives return to power.

The President-elect would be better advised to move leftward, not to the right. He should draw sharper class lines rather than blur those lines. Acting boldly and moving to the left, Carter has a chance to work at changing the shape of the electorate instead of concentrating on the nearly impossible task of building a consistent majority within that half of the population that currently votes. To suggest that he move in that direction and focus on a fight with big business is not to suggest that he suddenly become a Marxist. Rather, it's the most effective way for him to function as a capitalist politician. He might think about the two most successful Democrats to hold the White House, Andrew Jackson and Franklin Roosevelt. Both were opposed bitterly by the majority of the business community throughout their terms in office. But both also focused the party conflict, increased the electorate and even helped business to prosper. They were re-elected and could clearly have been re-elected as long as they lived.

For Carter, playing it safe is a formula for failure; the formula for success is to use the Presidency as it can be used in this country, as a dramatic tool for focusing political conflict. □

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Jimmy Higgins reports . . .

SUCCESSFUL SPECULATION—For the first time in anyone's memory, George Meany has openly mentioned the possibility of retiring from the presidency of the AFL-CIO. That startling possibility, combined with Meany's advanced age (81) and some recent health problems, has started a round of speculation on who might succeed Meany. The sometimes ghoulish game can be played by many—labor journalists, candidates to the succession and labor-watchers of all stripes. So far, possibilities mentioned as the second president of the AFL-CIO include: Al Shanker of the Teachers; Murray Finley of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers; Glenn Watts of the Communications Workers; I. W. Abel, retiring head of the Steelworkers; and Ed Carlough, John Lyons and William Sidell, all younger, progressive leaders of building trades unions. The various paths to the presidency for these candidates can be detailed elaborately through rounds of compromises and maneuvers. None of it is likely to happen. AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Lane Kirkland is almost sure to succeed Meany when he either retires (not before next year's convention) or dies (his health right now is apparently good). Kirkland won't represent any sharp break with Meany's leadership, but he won't be as powerful as Meany is.

ALL-IRELAND PEACE DAY is scheduled for December 4, and a group of Americans is forming to support the efforts of Betty Williams, Mairead Corrigan and the 30,000 women of Northern Ireland who have been marching for an end to the bloodshed. Endorsed by prominent activists and intellectuals like LuVerne Conway, Mildred Jeffrey, Mary Daly, Arvonne Fraser, Patricia Cayo Sexton, Jane O'Grady and Margaret Mead, Americans for Peace in Northern Ireland has been working since late October to put together a delegation to visit Ireland for the December 4 peace rally. They describe their work as a non-sectarian and non-political

effort to participate in this international plea for peace. More information on Americans for Peace in Northern Ireland is available from PO Box 24154, Washington, D.C. 20024.

WOMEN MADE QUIET GAINS in last month's election. The defeat of a state Equal Rights Amendment in a very low turn-out election in New York last year set off talk of the death of the feminist movement. Substantial feminist victories in Colorado and Massachusetts have gone unremarked this year, however, as have women's gains in legislative races. In Colorado, voters turned back an effort to rescind the state's approval of the federal ERA by a 3-1 margin; Massachusetts voters approved a state ERA which will now become part of the state constitution. And the number of women holding state legislative posts rose by 10.7 percent.

A PRIVATE CLUB FOR PUBLIC POLICY and a "bankers' bank" are Rep. Henry Reuss' description of the Federal Reserve Board. Writing in the *Nation*, Reuss decries the Fed as the least representative, least responsive arm of the government. Although monetary and credit policies affect everyone, the Fed boards are composed of and most responsive to the big lenders and big borrowers: large banks and corporations. And the Fed by its exclusive control over the money supply is sometimes able to cancel out policies set by Congress and the President. To reform and explicitly politicize the Fed, Reuss calls for more representation of labor, women, minorities and consumers on the Fed's governing bodies, greater coordination between the Fed and Congress on coordinating monetary policies with tax and spending policies, and more accountability of the Fed in its testimony before Congress.

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