

1. The open-convention drive

Support for a move to open up the August Democratic National Convention in New York spread rapidly across the country in the past two weeks. The significance of the "open" convention notion is that Democrats must somehow find a way *not* to renominate Jimmy Carter.

The proposal first made headlines when Senator Henry Jackson (D-Wa.), Senator Pat Moynihan (D-N.Y.), New York Gov. Hugh Carey and other officials, in part frightened by the prospect of losing both the presidency and the Congress to a Reagan landslide, called for an open convention. But since those mid-May outbursts, a grass-roots movement to free the delegates has come to center around Lyndon LaRouche, the Democratic 'dark horse' who issued his own call for an open convention two weeks ago.

The Democratic Party must be free to choose somebody other than Senator Kennedy or Jimmy Carter, said

LaRouche, and his call was quickly endorsed by more than 15 labor leaders from California, who have since been joined by several dozen other labor leaders and party officials in New Jersey, Ohio, Maryland, and Florida. After LaRouche delivered a nationwide television address May 31, his campaign organization reports still more grass-roots support for the idea coming across, and not-a-few endorsements of LaRouche's own candidacy.

"We are headed for a crisis," LaRouche told the American people in his broadcast. "Out of this crisis, if it comes before August 11, nobody is going to tolerate Carter as the nominee of the party or anything else; even if Carter wants to keep it, the Democratic Party will find a way not to renominate him. The Democratic party as a whole will not accept Kennedy as an alternative to Carter, even though Kennedy does have a number of people who are very solidly for him within the party . . .

A labor call for an open convention

In the past month, rank and file labor leaders from across the country have put their names to a call for an open Democratic Party convention issued by the Labor Committee for LaRouche, the third major candidate for the party's presidential nomination.

The following is the text of that call.

We, the undersigned, labor leaders and friends of labor, call upon delegates to the Democratic national convention to publicly break with their previous commitments and open the convention for the selection of a presidential nominee who adequately represents the traditional interest of the party, the nation, and working people. It is our profound conviction that neither President Carter nor Edward Kennedy represent these interests. For the delegates to the convention to

thoughtlessly rubber-stamp the nomination of either of these choices in the face of our present, severe national economic, moral and foreign policy crisis, would be a grave disservice to country, party and the American people.

If the nation is to survive the present crisis, we must choose ourselves a leader who can rally the majority of Americans to the purpose of bold economic recovery through high technology development and expansion of nuclear and basic industrial capacity. Only such a candidate, with such an anti-austerity perspective, can deliver the kind of productive employment and rising living standards that can win a majority committed to making America number one again. Carter and Kennedy are the professed champions of austerity and the deepening moral degeneration of our people, especially our youth.

If the nation is to survive, we must act boldly as our forefathers who fought to establish and defend this temple of liberty. Our only obligation is to our nation's real interest. Our only guide is our conscience, informed by that interest. Our only judge is our children and those future generations who will know whether or not

That convention is not going to want Carter, and it's not going to take Kennedy; it's going to start looking for a dark horse."

Voters agree

While the backroom boys huddle and mull options, the voters themselves have clearly shifted to a "neither one" open-convention approach as the primary season winds up. As some press have put it, the only candidacy clearly coming on strong is that of "Mr. Uncommitted." In Arkansas, uncommitted received 18 percent of the vote, nosing out Kennedy's 17 percent. In Nevada, uncommitted decisively beat Kennedy by 34-29 percent. Carter received 64 percent of the vote in Arkansas and 47 percent in Nevada. As worried party officials noted, Carter had expected to do much better, even in Arkansas. In the crucial California primary, fully one-third of the Democratic voters on the eve of the primary considered themselves "undecided." Election officials were estimating that only 28 percent of the 2 million registered voters would even turn out—another kind of "third choice" vote. In Ohio, uncommitted again took a large percentage.

Added to this are private polls indicating that more than half of Jimmy Carter's delegates, and many of Kennedy's, would welcome a "third choice"—the option to vote for a 'dark horse' at an open convention. Thus,

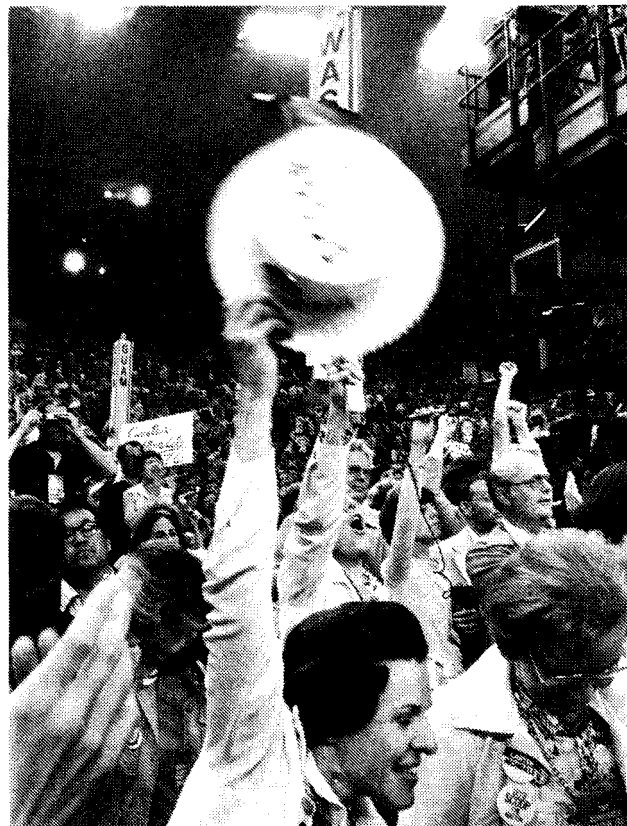


Photo: NSIPS/Philip Ulanowsky

we were equal to the tasks before us. By all these standards, the only fit course of action is to break with the numbing acquiescence to the mediocrity, the deals, the 'lesser of evils' thinking that have brought us to the brink of disaster. Instead, we must strive to achieve the kind of greatness that is man's calling in times such as these.

Among the signers are:

In California—Marco Aquilar, the secretary treasurer, Metals Polishers Local 67, Los Angeles; Wilbur Farrel, business representative; Homer Poling, B.A., Sign, Scene and Painters #831, Los Angeles; C. Butch Gilmore, Laborers #507, Long Beach; Richard Lusk, secretary treasurer (ret.), Pipefitters #34, Los Angeles; Elster (Al) Blankenship, chief shop steward, State Employees Trade Council, Liuna, Los Angeles; Clyde Cable, financial secretary, Carpenters #1507, Los Angeles; Fred Rule, B.A., Plumbers and Pipefitters #365, Santa Cruz; Richard Noar, Business Rep. Lathers #258, Santa Rosa; Wayne Thomas, secretary treasurer, IBEW #617, San Mateo; Paul Klutts, Carpenters #1149, San Francisco;

B.J. Cooper, B.A., IBT #420, Los Angeles; Jim Legare, financial secretary, Firemen and Oilers #486, San Francisco; Jim Thornton, former USWA official and president of United Black leadership.

In New Jersey—Bernard Johnson, secretary treasurer (ret.), Carpenters #15, Bergen County; John Alperti, business manager, Laborers Local #711, Morris County; William Armstrong, secretary treasurer, Flint Glass Workers Local #44, Vineland; Anthony Leone, president, Flint Glass Workers Local #153; Vineland; William Sesty, shop chairman, Paper Workers Union #399, Paterson; Rene Gorneau, secretary treasurer, Laborers Local #519, Morris County; Louis Conty, business agent, Laborers Local #779, Morris County;

In Maryland—Clyde Harveson, president, United Steel Workers of America, Local #14603 Baltimore; Ronald Pruitt, secretary treasurer, Graphic Arts International Union Local #2-P, Baltimore.

In Florida—Mark Koenigsburg, Democratic County chairman, Dade County.

despite the regularly reported delegate counts that put Carter over the top, it's very shaky—Walter Cronkite might say “volatile”—and more honest Carter officials are ready to admit it, at least outside the walls of the Oval Office.

The Oval Office itself is responding with a massive, if unpublicized, attempt to consolidate, cajole and patronize delegations into remaining firm, while seeking to lock up the party platform and “reunify” all factions around the president. At Carter-Mondale headquarters an elaborate “tracking” system, fully computerized, has been established, including the names of all delegates, their social and political histories, and their personal “concerns” all on file. Each delegate is being called at least once by the campaign and invited for a junket to the White House. “Our goal is to develop a close working relationship with each delegate by convention time,” said Tom Donilon, Carter’s delegate coordinator. “The Carter operation will be unrelenting.”

Meanwhile, the president’s campaign officials have tried to rush a “fix” of the Democratic Party platform which all office holders will stake their reputations on come November. The entire platform is currently to be written to Carter specifications—a continuation of administration economic and social policy, and plaudits to Carter’s “foreign policy successes”—under Detroit Mayor Coleman Young, who the White House has ordered to hand-pick the 15-man Draft Subcommittee which will produce the actual document.

Which way Kennedy?

In its reunification efforts, Carter is undoubtedly ready to make “concessions” to Kennedy on the platform, and is otherwise doing the utmost to negotiate a settlement with the Massachusetts senator’s camp. The White House, according to press reports, has appointed Vice President Mondale as the man in charge of the unification effort, and Mondale plans to work closely with Rep. Morris Udall (D-Ut.), a politician close to Kennedy circles. If Mondale’s special “Party Unity Task Force” under Richard Moe, Mondale aide-de-camp, does enough leg-work, a Kennedy-Carter meeting may yet occur, although the Senator has said no—and that’s the big question.

Where does Kennedy stand? On the very eve of Carter’s attainment of his paper-thin majority-delegate count, Kennedy put on a posture of fighting harder than ever. He attacked Carter’s economic policy as a “clone of Reagan.” In a speech to the Cleveland, Ohio City Club, Kennedy pledged to “release my own delegates to cast their votes in accordance with their conscience . . . Delegates should be permitted their freedom of conscience.” He demanded that Carter do the same.

“The convention should be at liberty to nominate

Mr. Carter, to nominate me, or to select a third person,” Kennedy stated.

And Kennedy has continued to demand that Carter debate him publicly—leaving the “rose garden” to face the voters.

A LaRouche-Kennedy debate?

LaRouche has said the same, and in a lengthy telegram issued from his Detroit campaign headquarters June 4, LaRouche proposed that Senator Kennedy join him in a strategy to accomplish what they both want, and what the party and the nation need: forcing Carter out of “Rose Garden” politics and into the public eye in the period leading up to the August convention.

LaRouche’s telegram to Kennedy stressed the role of national debates on the issues in ensuring an “open convention” of free delegates. LaRouche asked Kennedy to *debate him*, without Carter if need be, and thereby force the president out of his present posture.

“We of the Democratic Party found ourselves in this mess because of the combination of President Carter’s cowardly ‘Rose Garden’ strategy, and the manipulation of the primary campaigns by the principal news media. If we continue to tolerate the ‘Rose Garden’ strategy of avoiding debates embarrassing to Mr. Carter it might be extremely difficult to upset the present apportionment of first-ballot delegates,” LaRouche wrote.

LaRouche proposed that Kennedy debate LaRouche. Provided that the debates take the form of “substantive 19th century-style town meeting” discussion of the issues, the media manipulation which has reduced the primary process to a series of “dog-and-pony shows” can be overcome, he argued.

“Since the majority of the electorate is glued to the tube,” LaRouche told the Massachusetts senator, “our debate must be brought to the TV medium.” The majority of the voters went for Carter largely because of “the domination of the media coverage of the campaign by irrelevant, tendentious gossip.” A Kennedy-LaRouche debate on substantive issues—LaRouche proposed “How to Prevent the Avoidable Onrushing Depression”—could well break the electorate free of the present pattern.

Will Kennedy accept LaRouche’s proposal? If so, Carter could be in big trouble. As LaRouche put it, “Some would view such an arrangement as ‘unthinkable.’ But in politics, as well as in military operations, the effective flanks are those which the adversary—in this case President Carter’s advisers—have excluded as ‘unthinkable.’”

And in fact, even one such event as a “Carter-LaRouche debate” would so embarrass the president that an “open convention” of the Democratic Party this August would be virtually assured.

'For Jimmy Carter, the beginning of the end'

The following is excerpted from the New York Times lead editorial June 5, "The End of the Primaries."

Yogi Berra once said that a baseball game is never over till it's over, a philosophy that Edward Kennedy has applied to politics doggedly—and now profitably. That last round of eight primaries on Super Tuesday gave him much to cheer about. Not so many days ago, it will be remembered President Carter was drubbing him weekly, by 2-to-1 margins. . . . Now by winning five of the eight last primaries, Senator Kennedy has set an example of personal tenacity and philosophical commitment . . . President Carter may have come out of Tuesday with a clear majority of Democratic delegates, but he will have to work to keep them.

. . . Not even Harry Truman . . . had to defend against intense opposition within his own party of the kind Senator Kennedy has been generating against Jimmy Carter. It is hard to imagine any Democrat calling Harry Truman a 1948 equivalent of "a clone of Ronald Reagan." Yet . . . Mr. Kennedy is not wonderfully popular. Polls in California, Ohio, and New Jersey showed that only one voter in five regards him as truthful. One of every four Kennedy voters pulled a lever against Mr. Carter, not for the Senator. . . . Voters were asked whom they would choose if the general election were held now. How many Democrats answered, "Carter"? In each state, fewer than half. . . .

Even if Mr. Carter can skillfully neutralize the Kennedy challenge . . . the public gives no sign that it endorses fighting inflation on the backs of the unemployed. Political tactics are one thing; consistent, humane economic policies are another. Unless the President can articulate them persuasively to party and public, what the end of the primaries may most clearly signify is the beginning of the end.

'Uncommitted' growing

The following is excerpted from the Washington Post May 30 editorial entitled 'Candidacy on the Move':

For those who cared about the candidacy, the 1976 experiment must have been discouraging. How else could you describe a first-place finish (by 10 percentage points) in the Iowa Democratic precinct caucuses that did not

lead to a single invitation to appear on the Today show, the Tonight show or the Tomorrow show? All the attention, after the election four years ago, went to the Iowa second-place finisher, former Georgia governor Jimmy Carter . . .

Texas was the first big splash. Running principally in the Democratic primary, Uncommitted received more votes than George Bush received in the Republican primary. In fact, if the votes Uncommitted drew that same day from Texas Republicans are added to his Democratic total, he also defeated Ronald Reagan. Mr. Bush got 256,616 votes; Mr. Reagan, 263,616 votes; Uncommitted 264,168 votes. Texas was no lone star in the Uncommitted firmament. Just last Tuesday he captured 18 percent of the Democratic presidential primary vote in Arkansas, while in Nevada, he beat Sen. Kennedy and fell only 2,666 votes behind President Carter . . .

As for California . . . the only candidacy showing any forward movement in the Field poll during the same period was that of Uncommitted, whose support grew from a marginal 10 percent to a challenging 27 percent.

. . . Almost invariably in the past, Uncommitted has run far stronger at the outset of any campaign than at the end. As voters have gotten to know the other candidates better, their support usually has grown and Uncommitted has faded. But this year, as indicated by the Texas and Nevada results and the California surveys, Uncommitted is coming on strong.

'Resign! Resign!'

The following "Review & Outlook" column was published in the Wall Street Journal May 29, under the title, "Resign! Resign!"

It's early August in steamy New York. The Democratic platform committee is locked in mortal combat over price controls. The inflation-unemployment "misery" index refuses to budge below 20. The new Republican Reagan-Bush ticket is already up 10 points on the President in the Gallup poll. Bani-Sadr says there can be no further discussion of the hostages until after the fast of Ashura, November 20.

Mr. Carter already has enough delegate votes to assure renomination. He has been rehearsing his acceptance speech, sounding the theme of "a new direction." But at the moment he is surrounded in his hotel suite by somber-faced Democratic luminaries, among them Hugh Carey, Frank Church, Phil Burton, Birch Bayh, Doug Fraser, Henry Jackson, Jane Byrne and Secretary Muskie. Their message:

"We cannot turn the country over to Reagan. For the good of the nation, and the good of the nation, you have to withdraw so we can win in November. It's nothing personal, of course, and in order to ensure a de facto continuation of your administration the candidate we can all unite behind is your own Vice President, Walter Mondale."

Some such dream seems to be behind the current buzzing about an "open convention," being championed mostly the same Democrats who thought they had a sure winner before Senator Kennedy simultaneously announced and peaked. It is interesting chiefly as a measure of the desperation of the liberal wing of the Democratic Party.

'Back to the drawing board'

The following are excerpts from "Turning Whose Tide?", a column by William Safire appearing in the New York Times June 2:

Washington—The conventional wisdom—that Jimmy Carter may be an inept President, but is a great political campaigner—deserves closer inspection. The ineptness is spreading. . . .

Campaigning in Ohio last week, however, Mr. Carter made five stump speeches that give us a preliminary indication of his new campaign style . . . based on H.L. Mencken's adage, "Nobody ever went broke underestimating the intelligence of the American voter."

The overall theme is "turning the tide." No matter that inflation has tripled at home and that America is viewed as a pitiful, unhelpful giant abroad—the worst, the President says, is over. He expects gratitude for promising to turn his own tide of disasters . . .

"This is a time of inconvenience," he told Ohioans, chastizing them for kicking: ". . . people complain about temporary inconveniences, they're concerned about being disturbed just temporarily . . . these kinds of things are inevitable." (A million people were thrown out of work last month; two million more will be "inconvenienced" before the year is out.)

On defense, Mr. Carter talks very tough: "We have turned the tide in military strength," he insisted, even as his own Joint Chiefs of Staff were telling Congress that the current Carter budget was inadequate. . . .

On the stump, he is simultaneously for more defense spending, more "compassionate" spending, and a balanced budget—which is talking nonsense. He is against inflation, against high interest rates, and . . . inconveniences that bring inflation under control—more nonsense. That is why he must insist he is "talking sense."

Back to the drawing board, Rafshoon. In 1976, the Carter campaign turned a two-to-one lead into a squeaker. This time, that cushion is not there.

Carter would lose big

The following is excerpted from the Evans and Novak column, "Carter's False Spring," appearing in the Washington Post, June 2:

Cleveland—The shortage of cheer that marked Jimmy Carter's return to overt campaigning in Ohio reflected the problems he faces against Ronald Reagan rather than the outlook for tomorrow's Democratic primary. . . .

"Carter will win the primary with votes to spare," a top Carter operative told us. "But he would lose this state to Ronald Reagan and lose it big if the election came any time soon."

Winning Ohio's primary, even if coupled with losses in California and New Jersey, should block threatened last-minute Kennedy machinations to unhorse Carter at Madison Square Garden. But winning the Garden will have little if any ameliorating effect on laid-off factory workers, unemployed blacks and inflation-pinched households that, until now, automatically have voted Democratic in presidential elections.

Accordingly, Tuesday's eight-state primary windup is no test of Carter's political strength. To the contrary, finally clinching the nomination looks more like a false spring, following Jimmy Carter's winter of discontent.

That explains the cheerlessness, and it measures the gap that Carter must cross between now and the Nov. 4 election. Exploiting the patronage power of the presidency and trying to talk away the country's problems are enough against a crippled Kennedy candidacy. Much more will be needed against Reagan.

'Kennedy helped Carter'

The following are excerpts from the "Open Commentary" column of the June 2 Christian Science Monitor "What Carter owes to Kennedy," by Godfrey Sperling, Jr.

It seems clear now that Senator Kennedy did the President a big favor by deciding to take him on.

- First and foremost, Kennedy by running himself made it impossible for some other Democrat who might have had a better chance against the President to make the race.

- Also, Kennedy has thus provided the President with an almost weekly fare of victories—starting with straw-vote tests in Florida and a caucus win in Iowa. . . .

So at the same time the Soviets were invading Afghanistan, the hostages were being held in Iran, and the economy was moving into recession and high inflation, Mr. Carter has usually been able to say something like, "Hey look over there. I'm beating Kennedy again."