

north america

Primary Vote Plummet; Labor Party Picks Up the Slack

Sept. 14 (IPS) — Tired of playing charades with non-sense-spouting labor leaders and politicians outside the polling places, hundreds of thousands of registered voters in industrial, urban neighborhoods stayed away from the voting booths in the recent primary elections. Workers refused to obey traditional calls for voting in machine-endorsed candidates because they had enough empty rhetoric. Repulsed by the death grip of both the Democratic-labor alliance and the conservative-Republican coalitions, workers decide to sit out this election. Said one Florida candidate: "It's as if nobody cares who's elected."

The primary results indicate clearly that future political battles at the polls will be between the Labor Party and counterinsurgent agents for the Rockefeller cabal. On the heels of the widespread alienation of workers from the traditional party machines, CIA-style liberal "insurgents" gained primary victories around the nation:

"Winners"

Law Enforcement Assistant Administration founder Ramsey Clark as Democratic candidate for Senator in New York City; Alinsky-trained anti-busing advocate Barbara Milkulski as Democratic senatorial candidate in Maryland; "New South" liberal Reuben Askew as governor in Florida; and former McGovern campaign manager Gary Hart in Colorado as democratic candidate for the Senate.

Without any committed campaign workers, the old-time political machines were unable to get out the vote for even shoe-in incumbents, home-town favorite sons, and top political bosses. Party regulars, terrified of meeting face-to-face with crowds of angry people and feeling that their party was too fragmented and impotent to provide any concrete practical solutions, boycotted campaign work. Across the country, this phenomenon was reflected in the candidates' emphasis on TV and radio advertising, the appearance of scores of 12-year-old children as leafletters, and paid staff and relatives accompanying candidates on their walking tours.

In acknowledgement of the traditional machine's bankruptcy, as soon as primary results were tabulated in Massachusetts, Republican gubernatorial candidate Sargent immediately began negotiations with his unsuccessful Democratic opponent for the right to use the Democrat's campaign staff! Sargent's campaign was highlighted by the failure of the Republican State Chairman to endorse his candidacy and by numerous "Democrats for Sargent" committees.

Labor Party Recruits Dems

The U.S. Labor Party campaigns have moved rapidly into this vacuum. Democratic clubs and wards and union meetings have become Labor Party forums (and a source of campaign funds) at the invitation of party and union officials. In Philadelphia, where the Labor Party is on the verge of recruiting a Democratic committeeman right out of Congressman William Barrett's network, Barrett panicked at the Labor Party's success and resorted to blatant, illegal maneuvers to throw the Labor Party opponent off the ballot.

The Rockefeller press was quick to gloat over the CIA's victories: The *Washington Post* reported: "Insurgents scored important victories in half a dozen key races across the country...Baltimore County's Democratic Party Organization has been virtually wiped out as the controlling force in government, ending the rule of one of the nation's most entrenched and powerful political machines." The *Boston Globe* followed suit: "The mantle of the Democratic Party power has shifted...[from] the urban, moderately conservative working class three decker neighborhoods...[to] the more affluent and more liberal single family homes of suburban Massachusetts..."

In a more sophisticated analysis, the *New York Times* warns of danger approaching: "Nobody can take the electorate for granted in this post-Watergate election season" The *Times* calls "failure of nearly three-fourths of eligible Democratic voters to register their choices at the polls...unconscionable."