

Nat'l Opposition To Carter Voting Bill

"President Carter is undermining the U.S. Constitution by attempting to make on-site registration a national policy. If this becomes law, we have disenfranchised the U.S. population and in essence legalized vote fraud." These were the opening remarks in a statement released by Wisconsin State Representative George Klicka (R-Wauwatosa) on April 12, the latest of a series of attacks against Carter's so-called electoral reform package which have intensified over the past week.

The vote fraud in the Madison, Wisconsin mayoral elections last week (see below) has brought the vote fraud perpetrated in the 1976 general election into the public eye. An American Press wire carried in the April 10 issue of the Boston Globe discussed Carter's electoral package in the context of fraud charged in his election and highlighted the Wisconsin vote. The article included former Governor Knowles' televised statement charging widespread presidential election fraud, and efforts by the U.S. Labor Party and the American Independent Party to deny confirmation of Jimmy Carter by the Electoral College. Other media attacks on the Carter package include a Los Angeles Times statement that the new California state law passed "to minimize discrimination" will be certain to result in the retention of names of the dead on electoral rolls.

The steady barrage of media, congressional, and other public declarations of opposition to the Universal Voter Registration Act proposed by the Carter Administration marks a shift in a previous blockage of action against Carter's vote fraud policy from both Republican and Democratic layers. Indicative of the sentiment against the unconstitutional bill was the passage last week of a resolution condemning the bill in the Vermont State legislature. On Friday, April 7 the House passed the resolution by a 62-56 vote alerting the state's congressional delegation "to the complications for Vermont implicit in the national proposal." The complications enumerated included the requirement of only one form of identification for registration which, according to the resolution, would "greatly increase the potential for fraud and place an additional burden upon local officials on Election Day." Same-day registration, also cited in the resolution, would "prevent orderly transfer of voter's names from those checklists with which they were previously associated," another obvious source of fraud.

The widespread opposition to the bill has begun to force concessions from the Carter Administration. In an attempt to quell congressional fears that the Administration's electoral package would be used to the disadvantage of the Republican Party, the White House has announced the appointment of Republican aide to Sen. Robert Griffin (R-Mich.), Judge Shaner to a top post in the Federal Elections Commission. Shaner is currently engaged in planning a possible Republican alternative to the Administration package. This appointment to the FEC is significant in light of the fact that the Carter Ad-

ministration considers the FEC the agency central for implementation of its registration bill, under which the FEC would receive a broad extension of powers.

Wisconsin Election — Test For New Kind Of Fraud

The April 5 mayoral election in Madison, Wisconsin, set up by the Carter Administration and trumpeted in the national press as a demonstration of the validity of Carter's on-site universal registration electoral reform proposal, actually served as a trial run for the institutionalization of mass absentee balloting to facilitate vote fraud on a national scale.

The number of absentee ballots in this Madison election increased by 1300 percent, while on-site registration, the vehicle used throughout Wisconsin to get out the vote for Carter, dropped dramatically below the figure for the November 1976 presidential election.

Wisconsin's on-site registration came under public scrutiny as a result of fraud exposés in the press and a lawsuit to overturn the November election brought by the multi-party Committee for Fair Elections. As a result, four Federal Election Commission investigators were dispatched to Madison to observe on-site procedures during the April 5 election, and under these circum-

Wisc. State Rep. Charges 'Legalized Fraud'

On April 12, 1977, Wisconsin State Representative George Klicka, a Republican from Wauwatosa, issued the following statement from his office:

"President Carter is undermining the U.S. Constitution by attempting to make on-site registration a national policy. If this becomes law, we have disenfranchised the U.S. population and, in essence, legalized vote fraud. What this means is that the curtailing of political liberty will become institutionalized in this country. Carter's cynical use of Wisconsin as a shining example must be exposed for the fraud it is. The Committee for Fair Elections and I have been gathering evidence of irregularities and fraudulent voting in the April, 1977 Madison mayoral race, and while not challenging the outcome we are challenging the margin of victory — 20,000 out of 75,000 total votes cast. The information we are gathering will be included in a federal suit challenging the constitutionality of on-site registration."

stances on-site registration fraud could not again be used as the primary vehicle for throwing the election.

Fraud "The Easy Way"

The Democratic incumbent in the Madison election, Paul Soglin, ran an all-out campaign to entice students at the University of Wisconsin to request absentee ballots, a campaign that resulted in thousands of unverified ballots swamping the polls. The Committee for Fair Elections (CFFE) found myriad irregularities on these ballots including many that were not signed by the purported voter, as required by law. In addition the Committee sent 3,500 letters of verification to newly registered and absentee voters, of which a full 14 percent were returned to the Committee as undeliverable at the time of this writing. In addition, there were numerous instances of students who registered under multiple names and non-existent addresses.

CFFE member and Republican candidate for mayor, Anthony Amato has sought to impound the voting machines and absentee ballots and envelopes from the Madison election. Amato, who beat Soglin in the primary, lost the April 5 general election by a huge margin. In the primary, Amato carried his own district against Soglin by a three-to-one margin, yet in last Tuesday's election, Amato carried his district by a mere five votes. In seeking the impoundment, Amato stressed that the evidence of fraud must be investigated whether or not it overturns the election. The evidence from that investigation will be made available to the CFFE for a

major suit to challenge the constitutionality of Wisconsin's on-site universal registration laws.

The subversion of the absentee ballot for purposes of fraud is also evident in Washington State where the AFL-CIO political action committee, COPE, sponsored a major drive to influence its membership to vote "the easy way" in a special congressional primary. COPE sent 52,000 letters to state AFL-CIO members each of which included two requests for absentee ballots. The letter urged: "working people are tired, vote the easy way, vote absentee ballot for Gary Grant." It should be noted that Grant, the Democratic candidate endorsed by the AFL-CIO for the vacant congressional seat, was responsible for the passage of Washington's new unrestricted absentee ballot laws in the state senate.

As further encouragement for absentee balloting, the King County Board of Election (Seattle area) and local school board solicited absentee ballots. Twelve percent of the ballots in this election were cast by absentees.

The potential for fraud by such absentee ballots is similar to the post-card registration used in several states to send Carter to the White House. In the first place, where fraud is intended, there is unlimited possibility for the voting of nonexistent persons or multiple voting by a single person, especially where the usual voter turnout is low. Second, the absentee ballot lends itself to manipulation of the electorate. Limited interest groups and institutions can pressure for an early vote well before the electorate is adequately informed of the issues of an election campaign.

N.J. Congressman Finds Universal Registration 'Unreal'

On Monday, April 4, 1977, Representative Edwin B. Forsythe (D-N.J.) questioned the feasibility of Carter's plans for "easier registration" before the U.S. House of Representatives. His remarks, reported in the Congressional Record (E2007), included the text of a letter directed to him from the Burlington, N.J. Board of Elections, registering the board's opposition to the Carter Administration's Voter Registration Bill. The letter specifically stated that registration made easy in Burlington, N.J. had led to documented vote fraud in the 1976 general election. Excerpts from Rep. Forsythe's remarks and the Board of Elections letter follow:

"Mr. Speaker, all of my colleagues here in the House are aware of President Carter's March 22 election reform proposal. Of that five-part package, perhaps the most controversial "reform" proposal is the so-called Universal Voter Registration Act. The purpose of this proposal is to simplify registration and supposedly thereby enable millions of additional voters to participate in federal elections.

In the State of New Jersey we have postcard registration and have been able to substantiate very little if any connection between easier registration and increased participation in elections. Additionally, postcard registration has itself created enough problems to make local election officials quite apprehensive of the sweeping changes proposed by President Carter....

...Mr. Speaker, an informed and participating elec-

torate is one of the fundamental strengths of a democracy. I think I can say without hesitation that we all support the principle underlying attempts to increase voter participation. Unfortunately, however, as responsible legislators we also have an obligation to our constituents to provide laws which reflect the realities of the world in which we must function.

The following letter, I think, highlights some of the unrealities of the Universal Registration Act...

(The following are excerpts from the March 24 letter, signed by Mrs. Dorothy P. Main, chairman and Pearl B. Bush, secretary of the Burlington, New Jersey Board of Elections.)

Dear Congressman Forsythe: As members of a County Board of Elections, we strongly oppose voter registration at the polls. We look upon the right to vote as a privilege that should be extended to everyone who can qualify; but, with that privilege should be borne the responsibility of establishing proof of those qualifications....With registration by mail, one need not even leave his home to register to vote...

...In Burlington County, we have uncovered some fraud in registration by mail simply because it is made so easy, and because the forms get into the hands of irresponsible people who use them....We...appealed to the prosecutor to obtain the names (of two fraudulently registered minors who voted and were reported in the press — ed.) for us, but he was uncooperative since they were minors. As a result, they are still registered — fraudulently. We are sure that if we had cooperation and the means to investigate, we could find many more...