

The media fix

How the 1980 election is being rigged

by Nancy Spannaus and Jeffrey Steinberg

There was perhaps never such a well-planned election as this presidential election of 1980.

It was 1973 when the New York Council on Foreign Relations, a dependent offspring of the British Special Intelligence Service, began its Project for the 1980s, designing the program for the U.S. President in the context of their One-World dictatorship. Despite the fact that the vast majority of authors of the Project went into the Carter administration, the CFR had no assurance that this administration would succeed in forcing their program of “controlled disintegration of the world economy”—a total reversal of the American System of scientific and economic progress—on the American population. To assure victory, they had to make sure that no alternative to their program became the only option for the American voter. They had to have total control over the media.

Thus it was that shortly after Carter’s inauguration, the Twentieth Century Fund joined with the Aspen Institute in creating the Taskforce on the 1980 Presidential Debates. Headed by Douglass Cater, a longterm British intelligence operative who edited *The Reporter* magazine until 1964, the taskforce brought together the three television networks into a policymaking body dedicated to ensuring a CFR victory. The Taskforce has produced a 120-page report recommending a streamlining of publicity in favor of chosen “major candidates.” More importantly, they have begun to determine both federal government rulings and network practice to the

point that only the anointed candidates of the CFR will become “practical” candidates in the eyes of the American voter.

A trail of lies

The media, especially television, has an awesome power in American life. Whatever does not appear on it, especially whatever politicians are not covered by it, simply do not exist. Without constant television exposure, there is no way a candidate can convince the population to vote for him. By manipulation of television coverage, candidates can be wiped off the map.

The coverage which the television networks have given or sold to the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates during the 1980 campaign demonstrates their commitment to creating a presidential race between Carter, Kennedy, and George Bush. The central issues of the campaign are to be jingoistic alternatives to the U.S. foreign policy debacle and the “lack of leadership” in the country. Challenges to this approach—especially requests for half-hour policy addresses by certain candidates—have simply been refused.

The fraud begins with the news coverage of the election. Despite the fact that the New Hampshire primary has signalled the winning presidential candidate in every election since 1956, when this election was only 11 days away, the major TV news was still not covering it regularly.

This is in shocking contrast to the networks’ role in

the Iowa caucus meetings of January. Capitalizing on the fact that the caucus meetings are not bona fide elections, but rather vote-packing sessions, media personalities like Walter Cronkite of CBS simply moved in to orchestrate the result. Through creating the impression of a groundswell for Carter and giving bad coverage to Reagan, the networks in fact created the winners! And now in the eyes of millions of Americans, because Cronkite says that George Bush and Carter are the most popular candidates, they are in fact potential winners in real presidential primaries.

Why not the same tactic in New Hampshire? Because in New Hampshire there is an actual campaign organization being run by Lyndon LaRouche, a new contender within the Democratic Party who is proposing to save the party and the nation with his programs for a new world monetary system, eliminating drugs, and starting a massive startup of nuclear power plant construction and export. Media coverage of the actual campaign in New Hampshire would put the issues before the population. And that is not in the CFR script.

There is no other way to explain the fact that LaRouche, who has been on the ballot since December, been the second Democratic candidate to qualify for federal matching funds, and finally succeeded in buying two half-hour spots on national television, has been covered no more than a handful of times on TV network news. The only documentable instance of his coverage was a CBS broadcast announcing his receipt of matching funds on Dec. 28.

Is it not news that a presidential candidate addresses the nation on how the lying, incompetent Carter administration is leading the U.S. straight into world war? Is it not news that leading French spokesmen for the right-to-life movement and pro-growth industrial circles have come to America to campaign in support of LaRouche and his ideas? Is it not news that LaRouche is increasingly under threat of assassination as shown by a broad-sweeping libel campaign against him as "antisemitic" and a "Nazi" and coordinated personal threats by known terrorist supporters?

Yes, it's news. But it doesn't fit into the script.

It is an ill-kept secret that the major television networks do have plans to do special programming on LaRouche. ABC's 20-20 Show made a major investment of time, if not money, to set up a slanderous show about LaRouche during December/November. Donald Hewitt, executive vice-president of CBS News, has admitted similar plans on the part of 60 Minutes. Both shows were postponed until a national climate of scandal might be created around LaRouche through the broad repetition of newspaper slanders against LaRouche, especially focused on his so-called antisemitism and financial support. Back in the fall, they felt the national coverage

would necessarily rebound—creating more interest in LaRouche and confirming LaRouche campaign charges that they were complicit in assassination efforts against him.

But an open attack—even a scurrilous, slimy smear such as that planned by ABC—would be more honest than the current blackout on the LaRouche campaign, and the virtual total blackout on discussion of real policy issues in the 1980 campaign. To ensure such a blackout, the national TV monopoly has put all the muscle it can behind the policy of refusing access to the airwaves for political discussion. It has been their stated, and hard-fought policy, to refuse to accept *paid political advertising*—not only from LaRouche, but from Kennedy, Conally, Brown, Reagan, and even Carter himself!

The issue was first joined in October 1979, when ABC, CBS, and NBC all refused to sell a 30-minute prime time spot to the Carter-Mondale Committee. The networks, who were later brought to court by the Carter-Mondale Committee, argued that it was too early in the campaign to provide such long chunks of advertising, that selling time to Carter would lead to inundating them with requests from the entire field of more than 13 Democratic and Republican candidates, and that presidential contenders were being adequately covered in the news programs of the networks for this period of the campaign. Those were the "practical" considerations they raised.

But even the arguments of the networks show that they were motivated not by practical constraints, but by the deliberate intention to have Big Brother-style control over how candidates are presented to the public. First, the networks, led by the most egregious pointman NBC, argued that since primaries occur state-by-state, they have no obligation to cover them as national issues. In coherence with this states' rights position, NBC further argued that it cannot bind its local affiliates to run national programming, due to their so-called independence. These arguments, however insincere, do reflect intended practice by the networks. They have determined to present the election as an aggregate of opinions and prejudices from local constituencies, rather than a debate on the economic and foreign policies that will determine the future of the nation.

More arrogant and fundamental was the statement by the broadcasters that the presentation of political programming is at the discretion of the networks, not of the candidates. In blatant disregard of the current Federal Communications Commission regulations concerning "reasonable access" of presidential candidates to the air waves, NBC declared its demand that the law be changed to allow "reasonable (sic) limits to the forced disruption of program schedules (necessary) to present candidates in which the public has little or no interest."

They were backed up by the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) who said that it is of the "utmost importance that the reasonable access provision be interpreted ... in light of a standard which gives great weight to the editorial discretion of broadcasters."

In other words, a national candidate can win the support of thousands of people in order to raise the money to meet FEC regulations, get sufficient petition signatures to get on the ballot in dozens of states, or even currently occupy the Oval Office, and still be determined less important than NBC's star attractions—Little House on the Prairie, BJ and the Bear, or Henry Kissinger.

If, in fact, the television-watching population does have "little or no interest" in political programming, that simply points to two problems. One, the quality of the formatting or actual content of the programs put on by those candidates who usually can afford to purchase prime-time television; and two, the political demoralization of a population that has been denied real and substantive political debate for decades—in large part due to the networks themselves.

In fact, the current regulations of the Federal Communications Commission are geared to facilitate the maximum access of the public to political issues, and calls for "federal candidate's decisions as to the best method of pursuing his or her media campaign (being) honored as much as possible under the 'reasonable' limits imposed by the licensee." But the networks don't intend to let that bother them. Operating through the Taskforce on the 1980 Presidential Debates on the one side, and the CFR's inside-media men within the administration, such as Hedley Donovan and the presidential reelection committee on the other, the networks intend to send the FCC and the philosophy of open, substantive political debate and access on which it is based down the tubes.

The center of the current conspiracy to fix the 1980 election lies with the Taskforce on the 1980 Presidential Debates. Working with Douglass Cater on the taskforce are: CBS's Frank Stanton and Richard Salant; NBC's Lester Crystal and William Small; and ABC's Richard Wild. Other members include Herbert Schmertz, Norman Lear, Lee Mitchell and Newton Minow—all of whom are active workers in the Kennedy presidential campaign. Taskforce member Douglas Bailey is the current director of media for Howard Baker, and is slated to run the entire postconvention Republican media campaign, as he did in 1976.

The explicit aims of the taskforce, stated in their report, are two. One is to utilize the "great promise of television as a means of informing—and involving—potential voters ..."

The second is to correct what the taskforce calls "restricted robust debate." But instead of approaching the solution to this restriction—which is indeed the

case—by increasing appropriate political access, the Aspen taskforce calls for an elimination of the provision of the Federal Communications Act which allows for equal time!

What the taskforce wants to set up instead is an apparatus that will decide—independent of the candidate's ability to meet criteria such as politically significant ideas, raising money, and getting on ballots—what candidates should get significant access to the media.

First as Minow and Mitchell proposed in a recent article in the Chicago Tribune, the ability of the candidate to raise money to purchase time would become irrelevant. The federal government would pay for, and thus control, a series of 30 minute prime-time appearances which would be called "voters' time." Thus the federal government would "solve the conflict" between

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candidates and media by simply taking over the decision as to who should get time, not on a case-by-case basis, but far in advance. The key word as Minow and Mitchell present the plan is "nonadversarial," i.e., with the government eliminating any challenger to the policies they have chosen in advance.

Secondly, what the Asp-enites are leaning toward is an extragovernmental "impartial board" which would have the regular authority to decide all the ground rules for media coverage. The fact that the FCC was established to play precisely this public-interest function does not impress them, since the FCC is not playing according to the restrictions of CFR politics. One suspects that this board would take on the character of the "board of impartial umpires" proposed by Cater in his 1958 book on "The Fourth Branch of Government," the press. Since "frequently policies depend for their life or death on the publicity that can insure the public support and the funds from Congress to make them operable, and conversely, vital policies can be killed without trial or verdict by the National Security Council simply because of failure of publicity," Cater wants to have a board to

pass on secrecy questions and ensure that the right policies are promoted. Unfortunately, he concludes, such a policing apparatus may be impossible in peacetime.

The model Cater and Aspen have in mind is most closely approximated in the experience of the American population as the wartime controls of the press through the branch of the British-controlled Office of Secret Services known as the Office of War Information (OWI). Cater himself is a veteran of the OSS, as was William Paley of CBS, who was deputy chief of the psychological warfare division of the allied command. Under this model the press is no longer simply an instrument of influence, but the direct bludgeoning, terrorizing arm of a Nazi-like police state.

Cater's perception of this is once again revealed in his book on "The Fourth Branch of Government":

... The President must suffer torment as he watches the reporters seize his phrases and rush in a mad stampede to the telephones outside the conference room where, in a matter of seconds, they transform these phrases into the bulletins that create headlines all over the world. For a brief time, the President is exposed. He knows his moment of truth as clearly as any matador.

The Aspen Committee on the 1980 elections aspires to be the new OWI. Already weighted with Council on Foreign Relations member Stanton and London International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) member Richard Wald, the committee is fully integrated into the central policymaking center of Aspen and the Council on Foreign Relations. Aspen has just opened a new branch at the Wye Plantation on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, 90 miles outside of Washington, D.C. Donated to Aspen by the Houghton family, prominent figures in the CFR and owners of the Corning Glass Company, the Wye Plantation will function as a control center for the 1980 effort. Its co-directors are Cater and Henry Kissinger. Kissinger wears hats from all the major institutions involved in the 1980 election fix—a special consultant to Aspen Institute, CFR member, director of the North American branch of the Trilateral Commission, and a fellow of the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies.

The 1980 committee has not yet been credited with any public policy coups, but its composition alone tags it as the policymaking group for the media's current secret police operation against the LaRouche campaign. Carefully coordinating with the Federal Election Commission, the newspaper media have been caught in an intensive harassment campaign against publicly listed contributors to the LaRouche presidential campaign, so to better generate slanderous copy for the media smear campaign against LaRouche.

Through other frontline committees, however, the Aspen Institute—itsself a key apparatus of the British Secret Intelligence Service—has proven its mettle as Media Thought Police. The one accomplishment publicly credited to it is the so-called Aspen Ruling, imposed on the FCC in 1976, which removes political debates sponsored by such supposedly nonpartisan institutions as the League of Women Voters from falling under the "equal time" provision of the FCC regulations. The unspoken corollary of this ruling is that from now on institutions like the League will be the only ones sponsoring national political debates among important candidates. By treating these debates as strictly "news" and eliminating any "adversary" proceedings as to who will participate, CFR-controlled groups such as the LWV will determine who is a viable candidate.

The cabal at Aspen Institute has other accomplishments, however, that it would not be so anxious to broadcast. Since at least 1970 this thinktank of zero-growthers has taken over as the unsung Führer of all news media, the journalism schools, and major press smear operations. It would be no exaggeration to say that Henry Kissinger and Katherine Graham owe a considerable debt to Aspen for their cold coup over the U.S. government—Watergate!

The Aspen record

The Aspen Institute was founded in 1949 under the principal initiative of Robert Maynard Hutchins, then Chancellor of the University of Chicago and soon-to-be policy director of the Ford Foundation. Aspen has been at the center of creating both the World Federalist movement and the environmentalist movement. The thinking of its founder still permeates its activity. Hutchins was a diehard proponent of his close friend Sir Aldous Huxley's project for massive drugging of the population with LSD-25 and other deadly psychotropic drugs, for one lurid example.

Aspen deploys its \$10-20 million official annual budget into three major areas: 1) executive seminars; 2) "Thought-through-Action" programs in areas such as environmentalism, communications, geopolitics, etc.; and 3) the activities of its several hundred affiliated members.

There is no need to guess where the inspiration for Aspen projects comes from. Its president Joseph Slater and its chairman of the program committee Lord Allan Bullock are both affiliated with the Royal Institute of International Affairs of London. Its executive board reflects the high level of policy input which it has on an ongoing basis in key U.S. institutions. Besides the two above, they include:

- Henry Kissinger—who besides previously stated

affiliations, is also a special consultant to NBC and the Chase Manhattan Bank.

- Robert Strange McNamara, president of the World Bank and Kennedy advisor.
- Thornton Bradshaw, President of Atlantic-Richfield Co. and director of RCA Corporation, founder of both NBC and ABC television and radio stations.
- Barbara Ward (Lady Jackson), chairman of the International Institute of Environmental Development.
- Douglass Cater
- Thomas J. Watson, Jr., U.S. Ambassador to the U.S.S.R.; former chief executive officer of IBM Corporation.
- Douglas Fraser, president of the United Auto-workers.
- William Gomberg, Tavistock Institute of London, Professor of Management Relations, Wharton School, Philadelphia.

Aspen began its operations in the media field in the fall of 1970—within 72 hours of Vice President Spiro Agnew's declaration of war against the "Eastern press." Slater, Cater, Edward Barrett (the recently retired head of the Columbia School of Journalism), and Sig Mickelson (former president of CBS News and vice-president of the Encyclopaedia Britannica) were present. What came out was a new "Thought-through-Action" program—the Program on Communications and Society.

If the term "Thought-through-Action" sounds like mind control to you, you have got the idea. Aspen knows what *action* it wants when it starts any of its programs—to stop nuclear power development, to ensure freedom for the CFR-controlled press to run dirty tricks and destroy politicians at will, to foster Islamic fundamentalism as a vehicle for destroying the fruits of industrial progress in the developing sector. What they need to do is to control the thoughts of key corporate and political leaders, labor leaders, and the population as a whole in order to accomplish these action goals. Nothing could be more crucial to controlling the thoughts of the general citizenry than the mass media, especially television and radio. The 1938 CBS radio broadcast of H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds*—when CBS was early in its apprenticeship to the British psychological warfare divisions—was only a foretaste of what mass brainwashing effect the evil oligarchical elite wants to create.

By 1975 the Aspen Communications and Society program had established a "concentric circle" of over 500 leading executives in the field of media, ranging from FCC commissioners to deans of virtually every significant journalism school in the country, to the top hundred editors and producers of nationwide news. Aspen established a clearinghouse for CFR-approved syndicated news material, and a separate clearinghouse for material

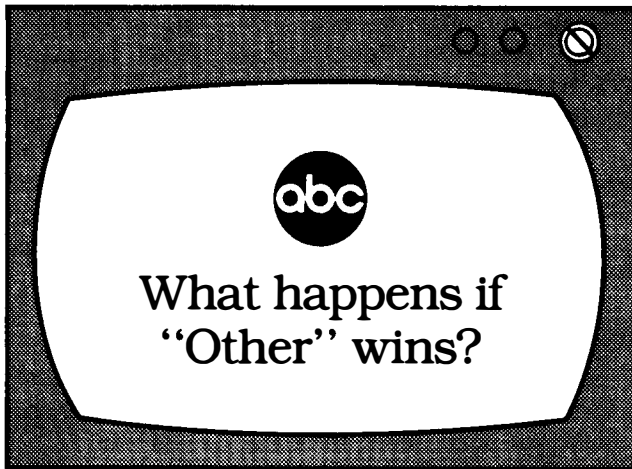
specially screened for use on public broadcasting networks. Dozens of journalists and editors had a one-year direct training course at Aspen.

Aspen also joined with the Twentieth Century Fund and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in establishing the National News Council, an in-house policing agency intended to insure that no future administration ever set up an external investigation of media activities. Cater had personally been responsible for legislation which allowed the creation of the Public Broadcasting Corporation, which is modelled in content as well as form on the liberal brainwashing techniques of the British Broadcasting Corporation—itsself an acknowledged arm of the British Secret Intelligence Service.

You have Aspen to thank for the proliferation of "educational programming" on the dangers of nuclear power, on the glories of do-it-yourself medicine and sexual counseling, as well as "entertainment" geared to make the degraded depths of drug-use and homosexuality an accepted model of life. The people who control television's content are the people who founded the Friends of the Earth, an institution dedicated to reducing the population of the world by 1-2 billion people—in the interest of "quality of life!" Do you really expect people with that goal to be concerned about honesty in the media?

The Aspen Committee played a very significant role in rigging the 1976 elections. Not only did its Aspen Ruling leave the other major candidate, Lyndon LaRouche, out of the series of Carter-Ford debates—thus setting up a choice which led over 50 percent of the American voting-age population to stay at home on election day and a climate in which Carter's machine could rig the election. Even more important is the fingertip control which the television media has over the course of the voting on the election day itself. Guided by the central clearinghouse, TV Election Control coordinates with local political machines to create a media "landslide" phenomenon for the candidates it wants to promote, and to wipe out candidates they feel will challenge the results they want. They correctly presume that, like sheep, the American voter will decide to "go with the winner."

This method of media vote-fixing is already underway in preparation for the upcoming New Hampshire primary. In some areas TV and local election boards have decided to withhold the vote totals for LaRouche in hopes of holding down what is now projected to be a 10 to 15 percent vote total. This is less likely to work in New Hampshire, which is supersaturated with LaRouche media ads. But the major networks are still committed to playing God along the lines Henry Kissinger does: "LaRouche does not exist."



In an interview made available to EIR, John Thompson, General Manager of ABC-TV's "Political Unit" in New York, declared that ABC News would not report the vote for Democrat Lyndon LaRouche, who is expected to make a very strong showing in New Hampshire, but only the vote for Carter, Kennedy and Brown. LaRouche's vote will be buried under an "Other" category, even if that vote reaches 20 percent. In the following interviews, other networks' spokesmen reported that same commitment to keep candidates other than "Carter, Kennedy and Brown" out of the news, no matter what. "If he takes 20 percent of the vote in New Hampshire, it's irrelevant," says ABC's Thompson. The text of the interview with the ABC executive follows:

Q: I'm calling about an article that appeared in a New Hampshire newspaper about the News Election Service.
Thompson: I'm on the board of directors.

Q: How will you be using the News Election Service in New Hampshire and other primaries? The article mentioned "bell-weather precincts." Will these be used to make projections?

Thompson: The News Election Service has nothing to do with any projections. The NES is a cooperative organization ... It collects all the vote ... projections are done by the three networks individually, and each of them has their own similar but different system of projecting at the earliest possible time who has won an election. In my case, I have a number of key precincts in each state individually ... New Hampshire, Florida, Illinois ... which I have selected. I based my selection upon my research and study going back many years ... which enables us without waiting for all the votes to be collected, to tell us who has won.

Q: Can you tell me which precincts in New Hampshire?
Thompson: No! Of course not, absolutely not. It costs thousands of dollars and hundreds and hundreds of

manhours have gone into this ... What kind of demographic, population density, economic, religious ...

Q: Can you tell me how many precincts are on the list?
Thompson: Over 50 ... Two lists, one is Republican, one Democrat. We don't use NES for key precincts. We just use NES to tabulate what the total is at any given moment.

Q: You use NES for the statewide totals only?
Thompson: Yes. In the key precincts we have our own duplication of the NES reporters... Take Manchester, Ward 1. NES will have a reporter there, and if it's one of my key precincts, I will also have a reporter there, and he will phone not NES but my computer.

Q: You have your own separate computer?
Thompson: Of course, separate. We depend on NES for what we call the raw vote and we have our own set up to handle the key precincts. Projection, that's the key word. We take a little vote and project it to the entire state. Now, if NBC and CBS also selected Manchester Ward 1 there may be four reporters there.

Q: Could you give me a few examples of key precincts?
Thompson: Manchester Ward 1 is one of mine, and ...

Q: Democrat or Republican?
Thompson: I use them for both... Nashua Ward 1, Concord Ward 3 ...

Q: Which ones for Berlin or Rochester?
Thompson: No, those are a little dicey, they aren't as obvious as the ones in Manchester.

Q: What time will you make your projections?
Thompson: That could be anytime from 8 o'clock in a very obvious race to later ... When it's close, nobody is able to make a projection.

Q: How many of the key precincts do you need in to project?
Thompson: It's a matter of human judgment... It has to do with what I had for dinner that night. You weigh so many factors in deciding whether or not you make a projection. Say all the ones that come in first are from cities... What the hell, it would look like Kennedy is winning easily... Then, when your rural vote comes in, you see it's gonna be close as hell.

Q: Do you have breakdowns in the area where one of the minor candidates might do really well ... Jerry Brown in one of the University towns ...

Thompson: No, we don't report those individually. We're more apt to do it that "Kennedy is running strong in all the cities in New Hampshire..."

Q: What about the other minor candidates... in terms of your own judgment?

Thompson: What others?

Q: What percentage will Lyndon LaRouche take, do you think?

Thompson: LaRouche is insignificant. He's not important. He won't take anything.

Q: Well, suppose he takes his hometown of Rochester. Suppose he were to take it big. How would that be reported?

Thompson: That's news, we might cover that. But as a "sidebar," no more, a minor item.

Q: Might that city show up as something influencing your projection?

Thompson: No. We'd average it in with the others. He'd be insignificant.

Q: I'm very surprised. People up there are saying he might take a very significant percentage of the vote statewide, which would certainly affect the projection, wouldn't it?

Thompson: Look, suppose he takes 20 percent of the vote in New Hampshire. He's irrelevant. It doesn't matter, he has no chance of taking the nomination. He'll never get to the convention....

Q: So, even if LaRouche gets 20 percent of the vote he's irrelevant?

Thompson: Yeah, as far as being the Democratic nominee for president.

Q: But didn't everybody once say "Jimmy who?"

Thompson: Carter in 1976 was a hell of a lot different than LaRouche in 1980. My point is that even though he might get some votes from his home town in New Hampshire, what's that gonna do to him in Florida or Illinois or Wisconsin or Texas or Kansas or Oregon.

Q: But wouldn't a big vote in New Hampshire make him nationally known, like Carter became, very suddenly? And LaRouche does intend to campaign in those states. Is it fair to decide in advance that it's totally impossible for him to take the nomination?

Thompson: Of course, it's impossible, absolutely, absolutely. There's a few things in politics I'd bet on but that is one that I would... listen, I don't think he will come out with 20 percent of the vote, but I said if he should get that many in his home base I don't think it would mean a damn thing anywhere else. I think that the following

How media control the vote count

The following article, "Computers to Speed Primary Tabulation," by Steve Taylor, appeared in the Thursday, Feb. 21 edition of the Keene, N.H. Sentinel.

As candidates hustle around New Hampshire, searching for votes in next Tuesday's presidential primary, major news organizations are gearing up to gather and tabu-

late election results. Computerized systems for collecting vote totals have grown more sophisticated in the past few years and elimination of the bed-sheet ballot, a New Hampshire voting form which listed scores of candidates for convention delegates in addition to the presidential hopefuls, is expected to speed the process of finding out who's won. Two organizations will gather election results independently in the state, with each serving as a backup for the other.

One is the News Election Service, the cooperative owned by the three major commercial broadcast networks, ABC, CBS, NBC and the two wire services, the Associated Press and United Press International. News Election Service hires peo-

ple to cover each of the state's 299 voting precincts, and this year will have a checks and balances system with two separate groups of precinct-level reporters collecting totals and feeding them into the cooperative's computer center in New York.

New Hampshire's town clerks have reported results to News Election Service in the past eight major New Hampshire elections, and will again call totals into New York next Tuesday. At the same time young people from 4-H clubs will cover city wards and many towns. The 4-H Club members have worked for News Election Service in several cities in past elections, but this is the first time they'll cover all cities in the state.

week in Massachusetts he would disappear into nothingness ... He'll never take the nomination; the political establishment of the Democratic party would never allow it.

Q: But if he got 20 percent in New Hampshire, wouldn't he start to get support from elsewhere and huge financing?

Thompson: Well, look, John Connally has had money coming out his ears and he can't get out of fourth place no matter how hard he works ...

Q: You say the political establishment of the Democratic Party would not allow him to win?

Thompson: And the voters would not allow it?

Q: What do you mean by political establishment?

Thompson: The people who run the party and who influence votes. Why, one of the strongest things Carter's got going for him in New Hampshire is that the governor of the state is working like hell for him ... How many governors ... or senators or people like that has LaRouche got or could he get ... I've known a lot of these people.

Q: Have you talked to any of these people about LaRouche?

Thompson: He's not interesting enough to be talked

about by people such as myself; he's just one of those things that clutters up things on election night ... Nobody would waste their time thinking about it ... The guy cannot do it. Call me back in a couple of months and tell me where Mr. LaRouche is then.

Q: But if he should take Rochester, New Hampshire, say, you will report the fact?

Thompson: We would mention it on the air, that this kook from never-never land could carry a place the size of Rochester. It wouldn't be big news ... If LaRouche carries one small city or even a couple, that'd be just a sidebar ... It would just be mentioned.

Q: But then you'd melt that vote in with the others so that it wouldn't show in terms of projections, even if its projection would be 20 percent for LaRouche?

Thompson: Yeah, of course. Right.

Q: Could you refer me to some of your local people in the key precincts.?

Thompson: Well, they don't know anything. Frank Reynolds doesn't care. I'm the only one... How I sample them for projections is my job ...

Q: Could you tell me who you're counterparts are at NBC and CBS?

The second system has been set up by the Concord bureaus of the Associated Press and United Press International, and uses New Hampshire newspaper and radio reporters to gather totals from communities and report them to a pool based this year in a Concord church rectory. That in-state pool will report results of Constitutional amendment votes as well as the presidential primary.

A phone bank in the Concord rectory is used to take reports which are fed into a computer system provided by a Falmouth, Maine firm, which also tabulates results from the wire service bureaus in Maine. The two tabulation systems trade their data throughout election night, each backstopping the other,

in case one system fails or one communications network is disrupted. Neither organization projects winners of elections; they provide only raw totals for the news organizations which control them. These reporters and news reporters and politicians hope this year's shrunken primary ballot will permit a rapid vote count, giving the public a fairly clear idea of the winners for the 11 p.m. news election night.

In the past, scores of delegate candidates were listed on the presidential primary ballot, and local election officials worked into the wee hours of the next day tallying all the votes to see who won. Now, delegates to the party conventions will be apportioned on formulae based on the total votes a candidate

receives. Both vote tabulating organizations have written computer programs to figure out delegate apportionment summaries, in addition to candidate-by-candidate vote totals. Meanwhile, broadcast networks will keep track of several bell-wether precincts in an effort to speed up the determination of who won ...

In a close race, the news organizations will ride solely with the News Election Service and the in-state pool operated by AP and UPI. Poll workers in most precincts in which paper ballots are still used plan to sort presidential ballots into stacks by candidate, then count the stacks and announce the total, a process that should greatly speed up the tallies.

Thompson: Warren Mitofsky at CBS, and at NBC, it's Roy Wetzel.

Q: I spoke to a friend at CBS and he said that aside from having reporters at each poll, they're going to have questionnaires for voters, in addition to just taking totals from town clerks.

Thompson: Yes, that's what we call "exit polling"; all three networks do it. That's not for projections, that's for analysis purposes. Questions are asked of people as they leave the polls just to simplify: Who did you vote for, would you make the reasons you voted for him clear on this list? Then we go on the air and explain why.

Q: Can you outline the questionnaire to me? Or is it private also?

Thompson: Sure it's private. All of them are.

Q: Are you going to have all 47 candidates' names on it?

Thompson: Well, only the major ones I think, only the ones who are really in the race.

Q: Who would that be? Carter, Kennedy, Brown and Other?

Thompson: Yeah.

Q: So, if they voted for Richard Kay, let's say ...

Thompson: We wouldn't be interested because he won't get enough votes to make it worth putting on the air.

Q: But if they voted for Kay, they would have to write it in on the questionnaire, instead of just checking it off?

Thompson: No. All the candidates are on the ballot.

Q: Oh, they are. So on the Democratic side, all five of them will be on the questionnaire.

Thompson: Yeah, we've gotta give them the option.

Q: I thought you said that only the major ones ...

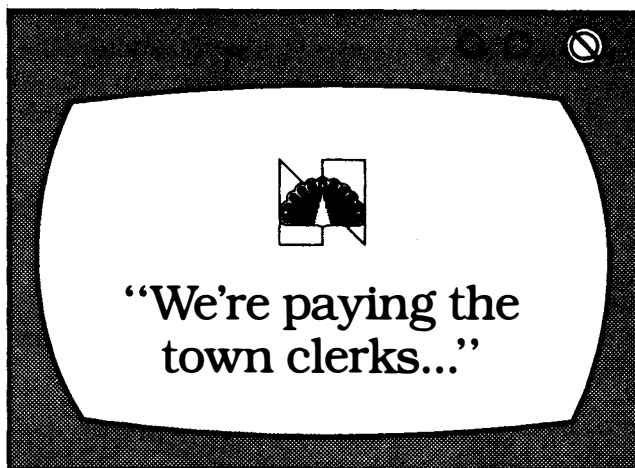
Thompson: My point was there wouldn't be enough of them to pay attention to them ... I'm just saying, thinking ahead to the ones that would make news ... The stuff that gets on the air is only the stuff that makes news.

Q: Which means only the three major ones?

Thompson: Yes, that'll make news. In other words, I don't expect Kay or LaRouche to make news.

Q: So, if you have a situation in which, say, Carter and Kennedy are running neck and neck, and LaRouche wins big somewhere where Carter or Kennedy were hoping for a big vote, you still won't report it or take account of its effect on the projected outcome?

Thompson: That's right, exactly. Because it's not making news. Everything is relative.



The following interview was made available to EIR. Roy Wetzel is the General Manager of the Election Unit at NBC-TV in New York.

Q: Are you employing the News Election Service in the New Hampshire primary?

Wetzel: Yes. NES collects the votes. The votes we will display on the air will be from them and no one else. They staff precincts, collect the vote from individual precincts, and telephone it to an NES center in New York where it's entered into a computer.

Q: Is it a separate company that has its own computer?

Wetzel: It has its own computer. It doesn't use any of the network computers or the UPI computer.

Q: Do the town clerks, say, in New Hampshire, actually get on the telephone and call NES?

Wetzel: No. NES people do that ... to gather the vote.

Q: Do they wait until the poll closes and get the total?

Wetzel: That's right.

Q: An article in the Keene, New Hampshire newspaper, the *Sentinel*, says that town clerks themselves will report the vote right into ...

Wetzel: Well, some of the town clerks may be doing that. They may be paying some of them to do it.

Q: Election News Service pays the town clerks?

Wetzel: Sure. They pay whoever gets the votes.

Q: You mean in some cases the individual they have hired to call them in the vote is also a town clerk?

Wetzel: Right. The clerk may also be the person getting the vote for NES.

Q: So you're directly linked to the town clerks? ...

Wetzel: That's all there is to it. Once they get it into their

computer, they pass it from their computer to our computer and we display it on the air electronically.

Q: How long has NES been doing this?

Wetzel: Since 1964. Richard Eimer, the NES Executive Director, has been there since the beginning. He was an Associate Press bureau chief ... in various places.

Q: What if in a place like Rochester, Lyndon LaRouche were to get a large part of the Democratic vote? Will you be reporting regional votes?

Wetzel: We'd be very surprised. The history of voting in the United States does not suggest that people are likely to vote for a candidate of minor parties or who have been involved with minor parties, or who they don't perceive as likely winners.

Q: Well, suppose John Anderson took Laconia. Would you be reporting it?

Wetzel: It's possible.

Q: What history do you refer to?

Wetzel: Just go back and look at the pattern of voting over the last 25 years in the U.S. primaries. One of the most important considerations in an election campaign is the perception on the part of the voters that the candidate is a winner.

Q: How did people come to know Jimmy Carter as a winner?

Wetzel: They read about it in the newspapers and heard about it on television. In Iowa, he went to a dinner in October of 1975 and won a straw ballot and the *New York Times* wrote an article saying he's very strong in Iowa. A fellow named Apple wrote it, and that started Carter ... He then got publicity that helped him win in the actual caucus in Iowa.

Q: R.W. Apple.

Wetzel: Yeah.

Q: And if R.W. Apple decided that he wasn't going to say someone's a winner, then they aren't?

Wetzel: Sure. Carter won the straw ballot, but it was R.W. Apple reporting on it that put him on ...

Q: So, if LaRouche, say, got a chunk of votes in Rochester ...

Wetzel: Look, what I mean is that if you look at the voting patterns over the last 25 years, what you'd ascertain is that the lesser known candidates don't do very well.

Q: So even a big vote for a minor candidate, if the press didn't cover it ...

Wetzel: Well, it wouldn't be suppressed, but we wouldn't pick it out and make a big thing of it on national television.

Q: LaRouche has been making a lot of noise up in New Hampshire. You don't perceive he has any chance?

Wetzel: Nope.

Q: How many key precincts do you use?

Wetzel: We don't talk about that.

Q: Key precincts?

Wetzel: No. We stratify them by looking at, say, the percent of the vote that Reagan got there last time ... He's the only one among the people running this time who ran last time. Then we pick a random sample ... On the Democratic side, the only person running this time who ran last time is Carter, so we use Carter as one of our stratifying forces.

Q: Do you take election day polls?

Wetzel: Yes, we do have an election day poll ... Some call it an "exit poll."

Q: How is it set up? Do you list all candidates?

Wetzel: We have a category "Other" ... I think it's just Kennedy, Carter, and Brown. Nobody cares much about others.



CBS interviewed

A similar interview with Warren Mitofsky, General Manager of CBS News's election unit, was made available to EIR. Mr. Mitofsky, like his counterparts at ABC and NBC, said that the News Election Service would be used to estimate early returns, and employ an "Exit Poll" that deliberately omitted the name Lyndon LaRouche. "I'm looking for something in the 10 point range" between Carter and Kennedy, he predicted. Asked about other candidates, he said that he expected Jerry Brown to get as high as 10 percent. LaRouche might get 5 percent, he said flatly.

Mitofsky was told that LaRouche's machine was "big and very visible..." If he wins in his home town of Rochester? "Well, that's obviously not going to have a big impact statewide..." What about all the undecided voters at last count? "They'll vote uncommitted," said Mitofsky. But there is no uncommitted slate in New Hampshire. "Oh, that's right. Well, we'll see what happens... LaRouche won't get a big vote."