

# New Politics: Real or Imagined?

**Two Temple alumni, both delegates to the Democratic National Convention, offer opposite views of the party's—and America's—political future.**

By Samuel Passow

In all of American political history, there has never been anything quite like the Democratic National Convention in Miami in July, 1972.

Operating under rules never previously used in national politics, the convention represented a unique departure from the old form of nominating conventions.

What made it unique was the composition of the delegations, which for the first time was somewhat in proportion to the ethnic and age groups of the populations they represented. Because of new voter reforms, 80 per cent of the delegates were attending their first national convention. Some 15 per cent of the delegates were Black, 23 per cent were under 30 years of age, and 36 per cent were women (compared to 5.5, 2.3 and 13 per cent at the 1968 convention in Chicago).

The vastly different character of the delegations, and their success in getting George McGovern elected as the party's Presidential nominee, posed some significant questions regarding the direction of the American political system. Is a new type of politics emerging? Or was the 1972 convention simply a remodeled version of the old politics?

To Bernard L. Segal, BS '52, American politics will never again be the same. A new day has dawned, he says, and the politics of the future will be in the hands of the people, rather than in the hands of the party regulars.

To George X. Schwartz, BS '36, LLB '40, the style of the 1972 convention was a passing fancy

which will soon immerse itself in the ways of the old politics. To him, the convention was a disaster.

Although they represent two widely divergent views, Segal and Schwartz were both members of the Pennsylvania delegation, the largest split delegation at the convention (70 delegates were committed to Hubert Humphrey, 54 to McGovern, 40 to Edmund Muskie, two to George Wallace and 12 uncommitted).

Segal and Schwartz were among the more than 20 Temple University alumni attending the convention as delegates. Both are Philadelphians. Both are attorneys. And both agree that the form of the convention was changed considerably from that of previous years.

Their similarities, however, go no further. And while one represents the new politics and the other the old, their views mirror the debate which both during and after the convention attracted considerable attention and coverage throughout the nation.

William Jennings Bryan, a three-time presidential nominee, once observed that, "the convention is, in a way, a photograph of the nation. All the great forces that exert a potential influence in our country are here in person or by proxy."

From such forces in 1972 emerged a candidate and a philosophy which some observers feel has altered the course of the Democratic party, and perhaps the nation. The question is: will the alteration be permanent?



SAMUEL PASSOW



# "New politics is the same as old politics."

—George X. Schwartz.

**G**eorge X. Schwartz is what is often described as a party regular.

At 58 years of age, he has been active in politics for more than 35 years. He is the president of the Philadelphia City Council, one of the top political officers in the city. He has been a member of the Council since 1960, and has been its majority leader and its finance committee chairman.

He has been a Democratic committeeman, and has held numerous other city and state government as well as civic positions. From 1953-1960 he was a member of the legislature of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. He has attended every Democratic National Convention since 1952.

In 1972, he attended the convention as a delegate committed to Edmund Muskie, who had the support of many party regulars throughout the state.

Like many of his colleagues, Schwartz went down hard when George McGovern rolled to the Presidential nomination with an easy first ballot victory. To Schwartz, the convention was a disaster.

"What happened," he says, "was that the pros in the party paid very little attention to the new rules. They got caught with their pants down all over the country."

"It was McGovern's ball game. His people were cued in, they knew exactly what they were supposed to do. What amazed me was the cold way in which they went about their tasks. They had everything pre-charted. I didn't think they had that kind of expertise."

Despite the success of the McGovern organization, which he admittedly admires, Schwartz does not see a new stage developing in the American political system. Nor does he concede that the McGovern techniques differed much from those used in past campaigns.

"It was a question of whose ox was being gored," he says. "They picked up the ball, ran with it and did very well. The big city organizations figured in Miami that this was just a phase that was going to pass."

"But now they realize that it was old politics being used. It wasn't new politics at all. The so-called new politics is the same as old politics. Only the actors and the faces are different."

Therefore, Schwartz contends, the McGovern phenomena seemingly evident in Miami—especially the apparent formation of a new coalition of supporters—was, at best, a temporary illusion which will not survive. In time, he says, every candidate must align himself with the party regulars in order to win. Once that happens, the status quo will be maintained.

"McGovern's job was much easier in the primaries than it's going to be in November," Schwartz says. "The national election is a different ball game altogether. He'll need the party regulars. Because without them he'll never have the people to do things such as get out the vote and man the polls."

"I'm talking practical politics," Schwartz says. "These were my feelings before I went to Miami, and they haven't changed."



Schwartz, however, feels that the style used by the McGovern supporters in Miami, and the jolting he and his cohorts suffered at the hands of the McGovern neophytes will cost the Democratic nominee support in the general election.

"Committeemen are no different than the type of campaigners McGovern has working for him. If they have the spirit, feel imbued, they work harder and do a better job. If not, they sit on their hands."

"McGovern does not convey the kind of spirit that inspires workers. His problem is that he has gone a little too far in order to get the kind of support he did. He has a bag of supporters that come from all segments—with the exception of the pros in politics."

In the long run, Schwartz sees the McGovern delegates as having placed a restraint on their candidate's path back to the mainstream of the political system. He cites as an example, the rejection of Chicago mayor Richard Daley.

"The McGovern strategy called for no quarter from the enemy, and they were not taking prisoners," Schwartz says. "That was obvious in their handling of the Daley situation. I'm sure McGovern and the professionals around him would have loved to have had an accommodation with Daley, realizing that they would need every vote they could muster in November. But they just couldn't get some of their delegates—their contentious forces—to agree to any kind of compromise."

That could hurt the McGovern campaign. So could the failure of the McGovern workers to appeal to other big city politicians, labor and southerners. And without the support of such groups, Schwartz sees no practical future for anything resembling a new political coalition.



# "An era of new politics is here."

— Bernard L. Segal.

"**A**merican politics will never be the same. The rapid development of our nation has swept away the time honored traditions. Today, politics is in the hands of the people."

The man who said that, Bernard L. Segal, considers himself part of a new movement in politics. It is a movement, he says, that is asserting itself as the dominant strain in the American political system.

Segal, 41, is a practicing attorney, specializing in criminal law. He is also an instructor at the University of Pennsylvania, a widely traveled lecturer, author, advisor and consultant, and is an officer in many professional law organizations.

He is or has been associated with the American Civil Liberties Union, and groups involved in civil rights, prisons, narcotics and drugs, public defending and women and girl offenders.

He has attended seven national conventions. At the 1972 Democratic convention, he was committed to George McGovern, and was floor leader for the McGovern Pennsylvania delegation.

Buoyed by McGovern's winning the Presidential nomination, Segal sees the end of the old style political system in which the Democratic party is run by regulars, and the start of a new era in which the party is controlled by "real people."

"The old politicians are passe," Segal says. "They are political neanderthals. Their time has come and gone, and their time will never be again. The people who think like them will never run a Democratic national convention again. They're not even going to run the Democratic party."

"An era of new politics is here. It is an era of real people being involved in politics. It was somewhat of a shock to me to look at the delegation and realize that instead of being composed of a large group of men who look like stereotypes or caricatures of politicians, there were real people there. And they represented a large cross section of America."

A good example of this was the number of young delegates. After protesting a system for nearly a decade, young people have found that it's better to be inside where the action is, rather than to be out on the street.

It's ironic, he says, but the same generation which pleaded with these kids to conform now feels threatened by their new involvement. Because of the speed of this change, those who were very comfortable in their positions of power just a short time ago, are suddenly combatting the very element which they originally sought to attract.

"The charges that new politics is cut throat," Segal adds, "is only a projection of the old politicians' death rattle. They know that they are in the final throes. They can not shift; they will never be able to be the kinds of political leaders who will be in the forefront of the new politics. In their frustration, they only make sounds that describe their own feelings and activities."

The old politicians, Segal charges, are the cut throats. "When you're in a war with professional politicians, it is really something. You can't believe



that your throat is to be politically slit and that there is such bitterness and so many grudges. And if they don't beat you in the primary, they'll cut you to ribbons in the general election. That's how they operate."

Segal says the new breed of politician, epitomized by the McGovern delegates, embraces no such tactic. The contention was contradicted by some reports from the convention, but Segal stands by his observation.

"There were no McGovern people that I met who were talking about working only for McGovern, and saying 'the hell with everybody else,'" he says. "Yet that is precisely the kind of talk you get from professional politicians."

"Despite the fact that McGovern people are ideological people," he adds, "and that they believe in their candidate, in a program and in a cause, I was terribly impressed that the majority—not everyone—but a majority of the McGovern delegates was very sensitive to the need for working together with disparate groups for the election of George McGovern."

The unification of such groups, Segal contends, is the beginning of the formation of a new political movement. The old guard has passed, and a new one has entered. In 1972, the Democratic convention signalled the start of a new chapter in the American political system.

---

Samuel Passow is a junior in Temple's School of Communications and Theater. His major is journalism and minor is political science. Currently spending a year at the London School of Economics and Political Science, he attended the Democratic National Convention on a grant from the General Alumni Association. While there, he worked for CBS radio.