

Campaign '66

Frank Joyce

1966

The August second primary was almost enough to send one to the political physicists with their slide rules and computers to find out what happened. Why was it such a disaster?

But then we don't really need political physicists to tell us what happened. We know. Racism, confusion, manipulation, "apathy" and one-dimensional politics happened. What happened is the logical consequence of a political system which for too long has never provided any alternatives for people beyond bright shining faces and good family men. The result is that people did not know that in a few isolated cases there were alternatives or didn't believe them when they saw them or for other, more complicated reasons, rejected them.

Without complete precinct returns it is, of course, impossible to begin a comprehensive analysis of the vote. Some random reactions, however, follow.

CONGRESS

James Lafferty has contended from the outset that the success of his campaign could not be measured in terms of the percentage of the vote he received. Nevertheless, 6,676 votes to 42,139 for Martha Griffiths was respectable given the radical orientation of the campaign, the composition and nature of the district, and the extremely limited resources available. (Particularly financial Contributions to make up the \$100 deficit incurred will be gratefully accepted by Lafferty for Congress at 14066 Grand River.

Lafferty also faced the obstacles of the *Detroit News*, Red-baiting (one would never have believed there are almost 7,000 voters in the 17th district who follow the commie line and breakthrough. No action has as yet been taken by the Fair Campaign Practices Committee on Lafferty's complaint against the leaflet circulated by Breakthrough (See Fifth Estate issue 11, July 30, 1966) which his opponent never bothered to repudiate.

Whether the Lafferty effort achieved the desired result of beginning to educate and organize a radical constituency in the district will be seen in the weeks and months to come.

Albert B. Cleage's campaign against Charles C. Diggs (incumbent Mortician) was admittedly begun too late. Doubtless the percentage of the vote would have been higher had Rev. Cleage had more opportunity to speak to the voters about the War in Vietnam and urban renewal. There is no question that Diggs' campaign slogan "Keep Moving with Diggs" given the history of urban renewal in the 13th district must be one of the greatest political ironies of all time.

The newspapers engaged in their usual slander by omission and commission. Needless to say, this includes the Michigan Chronicle.

It is significant to note that Diggs total of 21,000 votes compared to Cleage's 4,500 (plus David Boston's—whoever he is—3,400) represented a serious reduction in Diggs' popularity in the district. He can be beaten in '68.

In the race for Board of Education, Cleage, with no campaign whatsoever, gathered an impressive 40,000 plus votes. Unfortunately this was not sufficient to supplant any of the four white (sic) candidates who opposed him for the nomination.

COURTS

There were some surprises in the recorders court race. Like all the biggest racists (Olsen, Poindexter, Gibbs, Schemanske, Silverman, DeMascio) made it into the top twelve. Isn't that a surprise? George Crockett, who finished fourth will undoubtedly not do as well in the general election once the newspapers finish with him and the voters find out what color he is. Sheldon Otis finished poorly considering he was endorsed by nearly everyone, including this column, and apparently spent a small fortune on his campaign.

Nobody good won any of the other court races although Fredrick Yates came close, as did Warfield Moore.

MISCELLANEOUS

One bright spot was the election of Jackie Vaughn III to the state legislature in the 23rd district. The people have finally won out over the newspapers, dilettantes and intellectuals and elected a people's representative to office.

In the Seventh Senatorial District the equal of two evils (I've changed my mind since last time based on new information) Raymond Dzendzel beat John Lama. BIG DEAL. The professional "libs" did throw a scare into Dzenzel. And some of us too.

G. Mennen Williams defeated Jerome P. Cavanagh for the Democratic nomination for US Senate.

NEWSPAPERS

The *Detroit News* is more than a zero on the Detroit Newspaper scene. It is definitely a minus. No political progress is possible in Detroit until it is repudiated. By force if necessary.

Stay tuned in, turned on and dropped out for more next issue.

Isn't politics ridiculous?

fifth Estate

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