

Recount Ordered In Wisconsin, Carter Vote Bill In Trouble

Former President Gerald Ford, speaking before a meeting of California State Legislators in Los Angeles, April 16, took a jab at President Carter's electoral reform package by pointing out that universal on-site voter registration could lead to vote fraud. Ford's statement, which has provoked an angry response from Vice-President Walter Mondale, is the latest attack from the swelling ranks of nation-wide opposition to the Carter proposals, which include the elimination of the Electoral College.

On the same day, recount of the April 5 Madison, Wisconsin referendum and mayoral election was approved by the Madison City Council. Alderman Robert Estka introduced the petition to review the vote on a marijuana decriminalization referendum which passed by a 10,000 vote margin on the strength of postcard and on-site, same-day voter registration.

This is the practice used some five months ago to give Jimmy Carter Wisconsin's presidential election votes. Carter is using the Wisconsin example to push his election reform proposals for relaxed registration requirements.

The Committee for a Fair and Honest Election in Wisconsin has documented significant fraud in the April 5 election by false postcard and same-day voter registration, which will drastically reduce the margin in both the referendum and the mayoral vote. That evidence will be included in a suit to be filed by the CFFE in Federal Court challenging the constitutionality of the Wisconsin on-site registration law.

In the Nov. 2, 1976 General Election, over 30,000 fraudulent votes were cast in Milwaukee County alone, engineered by the UAW and the AFL-CIO for the Carter campaign. Carter, who carried the state by 25,000 votes, points to the Wisconsin law as the prototype of the "effectiveness" of his reform package.

State Senator George Klicka (R-Wauwatosa), in a joint press conference, April 12, with Wisconsin Labor Party chairman and CFFE representative Paul Greenberg, said: "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...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 Evidence

Incumbent Democratic Mayor Paul Soglin defeated Republican Anthony Amato by an official vote of 45,090 to 26,569, a wide discrepancy from the primary election vote totals just a few weeks before. Then, Amato registered 16,000 votes to Soglin's 12,000. In Amato's aldermanic district, he defeated Soglin in the primary by a 3-1 margin. Yet in the April 5 election, Amato only carried his district by a mere five votes.

The new 10-day residency requirement legitimized voting by persons who register and vote absentee from other states or are in town for a brief period. While on-site registration dipped below the Nov. 2 General Election figures, the number of absentee ballots increased from an average of 1,000 to 13,000. The majority of the ballots came from "student radical" wards where the use of drugs is prevalent.

Of 3,500 postcards sent out by the CFFE to check the validity of new registrants, 540 — or over 15 percent — have been returned as "undeliverable" or "address unknown."

Other evidence of fraud includes proof of multiple student registrations under different names and illegal procedures at the polls such as machine tampering, refusal by poll judges to allow poll watchers to view the opening of absentee ballots, and individuals being allowed to "vote" before the polls were legally opened. Affidavits are being collected on all these incidents.

Congressional and State Opposition to Carter Vote Proposals

Carter's intention to reform the electoral process and eliminate the red tape has met with cross-party opposition from state and federal political officials throughout the country. Their legitimate concern is that such proposals will open up the electoral system to tampering and manipulation putting an end to the Constitutional right to vote and the related "one man one vote" guarantee. In addition to the following statements, the list of opponents includes the North Carolina Board of Elections, Virginia Lieutenant Governor John Dalton, and the National Council of State Legislatures, which has drafted a statement of opposition subject to ratification at its August convention.

April 4: Rep. Edwin Forsythe (R-NJ) entered the following statement into the *Congressional Record*: "In the state of New Jersey, we have postcard registration and have been able to substantiate very little if any increased participation in elections." Forsythe then entered into the record a letter from the Burlington County Board of Elections which cited numerous abuses of the electoral process, including the voting of minors, and detailing the numerous "loopholes" for fraud and the impossibility of maintaining honest procedures at the polls.

April 5: Republican Party National Chairman Bill Brock withdrew his previous endorsement of the Carter reform package in the face of national opposition to the legislation. Brock is a Trilateral Commission member like Carter and his Cabinet.

April 6: Republican members of the House Administration Committee questioned Attorney General Griffin Bell on the Carter electoral reform legislation. Countering Bell's statements, Charles Wiggins (R-

Calif) stated that the proposed reforms would be "rejecting 180 years of history." The Carter proposals, Wiggins emphasized, may be unconstitutional and invites vote fraud. Bill Frenzel (R-Mn) "implicitly questioned the Justice Department's past dedication to exposing fraud in Federal voting, asking for detailing figures on prosecutions, and conviction," reported the *New York Times*. James Cleveland (R-NH) challenged Bell to provide evidence that state registration laws constituted a barrier to voting.

April 10: Congressman Robert Young (D-St. Louis) said the Carter "instant voter registration proposals could lead to Dial-a-Vote massive fraud, and stolen elections," reported the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*. "Such relaxation opens the whole system to massive fraud, especially in the big cities." Young emphasized that the rationale for loosening up the election procedures — poor voter turnout — was attributable to disaffection within the political spectrum, rather than red tape in voting. He condemned Carter's proposal to abolish the electoral college. Young's chief aide, former state legislator Walter Meyer held hearings last August on the proposed computerized voting in Missouri.

April 12: The *Columbia (S.C.) State* carried an OpEd by Senator James B. Allen (D-Ala) entitled "Reform or Fraud": "Why, in the big cities they would clean out every skid row hotel, every street corner, every beer joint and loafing hang out, every x-rated movie house, every massage parlor and march them to the polls," Allen charged.

Press Opposition to Carter Reform Proposals

Press across the country have opened an attack on the election reform proposals. Major papers such as the Seattle Times, Chicago Tribune, Chicago Sun-Times, Phoenix Gazette, and Arizona Republic all point to fraud as the logical outcome of the "reforms". The Cleveland Press and the Cincinnati Post have editorialized against an Ohio bill for on-site registration. The Charlotte, N.C.

CBS affiliate WSOC is one of several television stations to voice opposition. The following excerpts are indicative of the national assessment that "the President's voting reform plan seems objectionable on every count."

The Arizona Republic, March 22, "Carter's Voting Plan": "...The real objection to Carter's proposal is that it would make fraudulent voting easier. Vice President Mondale, when he was in the Senate, insisted that Minnesota's elections were just as clean as ever, but he offered no evidence to support his assertion, and, in fact, no evidence exists..."

Rocky Mountain News, March 25, "Opening Up Elections": "...highly questionable however is Carter's proposal that voters be permitted to register at the polls on the election days for all federal elections...to begin with states do have — and should have — a right to require advance registration...beyond that there is a strong possibility of fraud and deception if all states suddenly were required to register at the polls as states like Minnesota and Wisconsin which have a long history of good government do now..."

Detroit News, March 25, "A Political Play? Carter's Election 'Reforms' Risk Fraud and Instability": "...President Carter's package of election reforms has been skillfully put together to help Mr. Carter get elected again in 1980. Paradoxically, it contains the risk of massive political fraud, electoral instability, heavy increases in election costs and the politicizing of federal workers..."

Madison, Wisconsin NBC-TV affiliate Channel 15, April 15: editorialized in favor of revoking the state's on-site registration law and against the national election reform proposals.

WPIX-TV, New York, April 15: this station, owned and operated by the New York Daily News, editorialized against the reform proposal pointing out the "false notion of democracy" implied and the potential for coercion and fraud.

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