

Eye on Democrats by Cincinnatus

Manatt admits he will rig the convention

All Democratic National chairman Chuck Manatt's thousands of pages of rules mandating an "open process" and the "widest possible outreach" for the selection of convention delegates and the 1984 Democratic presidential nomination itself were dismissed quickly in mid-August.

The "Proposed Final Call to the 1984 Democratic National Convention" contains a remarkable passage under Section VI, "Presidential Candidates," which gives Manatt sole power to determine for the convention who is a Democratic presidential candidate and who isn't.

The Call states: "The term 'presidential candidate' herein shall mean any person who, as determined by the Chair of the Democratic National Committee, has established substantial support for his or her nomination as the Democratic candidate for the Office of the President of the United States, is a *bona fide* Democrat who has the interests, welfare and success of the Democratic Party at heart, and who will participate in the convention in good faith [*italics in original*]."

DNC press officer Diane Dewhirst told a journalist on Aug. 18 that the clause was inserted because presidential candidates are entitled to a certain number of rooms, space, and other convention facilities, and Manatt doesn't want "non *bona fide*" candi-

dates using them up.

Would the chairman consider Jesse Jackson or has-beens George McGovern, who mooted a candidacy in early August, or Gov. George Wallace, *bona fide* candidates? Oh yes, said Dewhirst, and they would be afforded all the amenities.

What about Lyndon LaRouche, who received federal matching funds and ran in 16 Democratic presidential primaries in 1980? "LaRouche is not a Democrat; he's a member of the U.S. Labor Party," lied Dewhirst. Twitted on this childish answer, Dewhirst said that Manatt would certainly invoke this clause against LaRouche were he to run for President.

The hand of Chuck Manatt is also visible in the not-so-subtle threats against anti-Harriman delegates who might be elected during the February-June 1984 delegate selection "window." The Proposed Final Call's "Responsibility" Section VII (M), stipulates that each delegate "expressly agrees that he or she will not publicly support or campaign for any candidate for President or Vice-President other than the nominees of the convention."

In short, all the monstrous fixes that were used to secure the renomination of the hated Jimmy Carter in 1980 are in place, as befits an associate of the mob-linked Hollywood crowd like Chuck Manatt. This is not to say that Manatt will succeed in his rigging attempt against LaRouche Democrats—only that he is making predictable moves already.

'Leadership' principle but no leaders

Crashing boredom characterizes the Democratic presidential race. Front-runner Walter Mondale became so panicked by the situation that he convinced the AFL-CIO to move up its planned endorsement session from December to October. One California Kennedy hand said "The AFL-CIO

endorsement of Mondale was necessary . . . it's a mixed blessing. He got it early because his campaign was going nowhere." The AFL-CIO endorsement, he chuckled, was hardly decisive for George McGovern in 1972 or for Henry "Scoop" Jackson in 1976 in Pennsylvania, and besides, some of the other candidates "have friends in labor who won't be denied."

The problem, as a second Kennedy hand concurred, is that none of the Democratic presidential campaigns has caught fire. It's not this or that issue, though they should be talking about issues, our interviewee said; none of the candidates project as a strong leader who has the intellect and moral integrity to solve the nation's problems. "A candidate like that you can support even if you don't agree on every issue," he said.

Will the Bob Strauss-Lane Kirkland-Trilateral Commission roadshow otherwise known as the Democratic National Caucus, or the complementary "issues debates" that the Democratic Caucus is now sponsoring, fill the bill? No, the Kennedy field hands agreed. The Democratic Party only functions on the basis of an individual leader who embodies certain values for the nation. That, though these fellows didn't say it, is the secret of Ronald Reagan's ability to hold the nation's interest, while the Democratic candidates parade through media events like male mannequins.

Policy solutions are the true coin of real moral-intellectual leaders. "Somebody has to say 9.5 percent official unemployment is not good news," quipped one of the Kennedy loyalists. But the official position of the Manatt party is that there is an economic recovery! *New York Times* pundit Tom Wicker warned the Democrats on Aug. 23 that without a solution in Central America they will be seen as handing the region to the communists. Nor does every Democratic voter believe the party's propaganda about Andropov's desire for peace.