

## Eye on Democrats by Anita Gallagher

### Where are the black, labor, and Hispanic constituencies?

The Florida Democratic Party's 2,000-plus delegates' straw poll, crafted to give a victory to favorite son Reubin Askew, a former governor of the state, was remarkable for whom it didn't include as well as whom it did.

A series of changes in the party rules created a "delegate selection" process in which only 12.5 percent of the delegates were not selected by party units, provoking screams of "fix" from an authority—Superfixer Alan Cranston, who had ably rigged the Iowa and California straw polls. Askew won the straw poll, boycotted by Senators Hart and Hollings as well as Cranston, with 45 percent to Mondale's 35 percent, and 15 percent for John Glenn.

In itself, the fact that the Florida delegates were selected by the party apparatus does not account for the virtual absence of black and Hispanic representation. One of the very few Hispanic officials present insisted that the Manatt Democratic National Committee is "excluding both the Hispanics and the poor."

And though Mondale's come-from-behind 35 percent was the work of organized labor, our correspondents met Florida labor leaders who had no inkling of any Democratic convention going on. Labor's pro-Mondale work was spurred by Askew's overt anti-union policies, not by enthusiasm for Fritz.

The delegates unanimously passed a resolution in support of a "mutual and verifiable nuclear freeze as a step toward comprehensive, negotiated arms reductions." Having proposed to disarm the United States in the face of wild Soviet provocations, the session proceeded to condemn the Soviet destruction of the unarmed civilian KAL 007.

While a resolution was passed calling for a National Industrial Policy to modernize basic industries and encourage R&D, the convention also voted to de-authorize the Florida Barge Canal; the Green Caucus's propaganda for "anti-pollution" efforts was passed out in the party's official press packet. When the convention ended, one delegate asked an onlooker, "How do things look?" "Good for Reagan" was passed up and down the line for the phone.

### Seven dwarfs against the MX missile

In a repeat performance of the Sept. 20 Harriman-Manatt declaration of unanimous Democratic support for the nuclear freeze, the Andropov Seven issued a highly unusual joint declaration on Oct. 26 calling on Congress to refuse funding for the MX missile.

The MX is a cold-start missile which is essential to the now over-powered U.S. land-based deterrent.

The seven candidates declared in a co-signed letter to Rep. Joseph Adabbo (D-N.Y.), chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, that "If elected to the presidency, none of us will request funding for this purpose. We do not need to waste the taxpayers' money on a vulnerable weapon which does not contribute to the national security of the United States. . . . We strongly urge Congress to vote against the fiscal year 1984 procurement funding for this ill-advised program."

### Will these policies play in Peoria?

Let's take a look at the Democrat who won the biggest victory of 1983, in the Oct. 22 Louisiana gubernatorial primary. Edwin Edwards, former Democratic governor, trounced Republican incumbent David Treen with a 68 percent vote.

Treen was a Volcker Republican who stumped for high-interest rates to wring inflation out of the economy. Edwards campaigned vigorously against Carter both in 1976 and in 1980; family members endorsed Republicans rather than support the Carter disaster.

Though he was frequently hit with corruption allegations, none of the tar stuck as the state's population turned out heavily to vote for someone they perceived as able to get people back to work and take the state forward.

Such a pledge of industrial recovery based on an economic policy that repudiates Volckerism, and taken to farmers, labor, business, and minorities, would work wonders for any Democrat. Instead, the party is offering Neville Chamberlain formulas and economic programs that shut out every productive constituency.

You can exclude constituencies at a convention but not in an election. That's why, according to many insiders, Ted Kennedy decided not to run this year. But he has former Kennedy aides placed in each one of the campaigns, and if a draft materializes on the convention floor, there will be strings enough to pull.

According to publisher Rupert Murdoch's sources, Ted Kennedy's advisers all pick Reagan to win. That, though few see the question quite that way, depends on whether he accelerates his beam weapons program to deal with the strategic and financial economic crises that will be sprung soon enough.