

Miami '68: A Study of Contrasts

By Julie Morris

(ED.'S NOTE: Miss Morris is a senior in the NU School of Journalism. She has spent the past two months in Miami, working for the Miami Herald, and covered the Republican Convention.)

Miami Beach, Fla. — America celebrated another of its finest hours last week in Miami Beach.

The duly chosen representatives of 27 per cent of our people met among overstuffed sofas and bar stools and picked Richard Nixon to run for President of the United States.

The delegates came from Kansas wheat farms, Hawaiian sugar plantations and California department stores.

The candidates and their aides came burdened with data on subjects from the beer preferred by Delegate Y to the favorite delicacy of Delegate Z.

Legions of young people came, offering their services as Rocky girls, Nixon girls, Reagan girls, ushers, guards and pages in exchange for a ticket to the convention.

The press came armed with cynicism and immediately got to work counting and recounting the delegate votes for each candidate.

The 1968 Republican National Convention was gaudy, boisterous, expensive, nerve wracking and unreal.

I sat in a 12th floor suite at the Fontainebleau Hotel the evening of the Republican Gala, a \$500-a-plate chicken dinner, and talked with Tom Fox, past director of the International Volunteer Services refugee program in Vietnam.

Fox was one of perhaps two dozen independent political activists who'd come to the Beach hoping the Republicans would make a few meaningful gestures.

Fox watched with disgust as competing supporters of Nelson Rockefeller and Richard Nixon paraded, chanted, danced and contorted in front of the hotel.

"These delegates," he said, "are more concerned about partying at night and in making sure they are wearing the correct mod clothing than about dealing realistically with Vietnam."

Fox's co-worker Stuart Bloch said the Republicans seemed to be suffering from "a reality gap."

Things seemed most unbelievable when NELSON ROCKEFELLER announced that Gov. Raymond Shafer of Pennsylvania would nominate him for president and cited Shafer's "distinguished" record — "five varsity letters and more than 80 combat missions."

SEN. CHARLES PERCY'S office issued this press release: "Sen. Charles Percy will visit a Miami ghetto area Friday at 12:30 p.m. He will talk with the people and be available for pictures."

RONALD REAGAN told a Georgia caucus "I am against prejudice. I am against discrimination. I have been all my life."

THE CONVENTION HALL rocked with roars of approval when Richard Nixon promised to restore "law and order" to the land while seven miles away in Miami black people and law officers reached a standoff in the city's first ghetto riot.

A HALF DOZEN anti-war demonstrators were evicted from the Fontainebleau, convention headquarters, with the explanation, "The Republicans have control of the hotel and they don't want to allow you to stay."

Among the prose that flowed all week at the convention, the phrases "The kind of leadership that this country so desperately needs" and "forward-looking and positive" came up again and again.

The delegates listened, applauded at times and retired to hospitality rooms for orange juice, potato chips, beer and pretzels.

The delegates, their families and guests were invited to entertain themselves at receptions, brunches, luncheons, dinners, midnight snacks, fashion shows, cocktail parties and on yacht rides — all free, of course.

In the end, they responded to Spiro Agnew's call and nominated for president "a man to match the times."

The choice seemingly confirmed a Republican orator's belief that "America has fallen upon bad times, indeed."

Opinion
Analysis
of the
Author



Photo—Courtesy of The Miami Herald

Lincoln: A Study of Similarity

By Wayne Kreuscher

Not all Lincolnites spent last week glued in front of their television sets watching the Republican National Convention in Miami.

Some of them — especially supporters of Sen. Eugene McCarthy's presidential candidacy and proponents of the 19-vote in Nebraska — were involved in their own political activities.

The local McCarthy for President office at 433 So. 13th had a television set tuned in to the convention during the evenings and occasionally a group would gather in front of the TV to watch a speech.

But most of the time the McCarthy workers were too busy planning a rally, writing letters, answering telephones, addressing envelopes and welcoming visitors.

The same sort of activity was going on in the homes and rooms of Lincoln young people who were outlining a statewide campaign for ratification of constitutional amendment No. 1 lowering the voting age to 19.

More of these young people no doubt were giving their attention to the TV sets since many of them are Republicans, but yet they continued discussing plans and drafting pamphlets at the same time.

The McCarthy fund raising rally and picnic, which was keeping at least 20 of the workers busy making plans, is scheduled for Saturday at 2 p.m. in the Izaak Walton League clubhouse, 5100 No. 48th.

Bill Braun, McCarthy staff coordinator, explained that the rally-picnic will feature a combo, an art auction, games for both observers and participants, food and drinks.

He said the art auction will include nearly 50 paintings and prints along with some sculpture and pottery work. The art work is being donated by students and faculty in the University of Nebraska art department.

Bernard Hart, executive secretary of the National Auctioneers Association, will be the auctioneer.

Braun said the money raised at the rally will be used to help finance the Minnesota Democrat's presidential campaign.

Planning for the rally was only part of the McCarthy activity which was going on in Lincoln while the Republicans were choosing a candidate.

The local McCarthy office is also taking part in the national McCarthy for President petition drive.

Many of the letters that were being written while the Republicans were on the TV urged Nebraskans to both sign and circulate a petition.

The petitions, which can only be signed by those of voting age, said, "Because Senator Eugene McCarthy is the man who will bring about the changes America so desperately needs, we the undersigned endorse his nomination for President of the United States."

Braun said the Lincoln office has a minimum goal of 10,000 petition signatures. Letters were also being sent asking people to write letters supporting McCarthy's nomination to the Nebraska Democratic convention delegates.

Office coordinator, Julie Phelps, explained that they left the Republican Convention on TV while workers were preparing letters because "every time a hawkish speech was made, the addressers work harder."

Miss Phelps noted that several McCarthy fund raising cocktail parties were also held "around the Republicans on TV."

Nebraskans For Young Adult Suffrage (NFYAS), an organization of young people working for the 19-vote in the state, were holding strategy meetings several nights of the convention.

NFYAS was formed after the Nebraska Legislature voted in February 1967 to place on the Nov. 5 ballot constitutional amendment No. 1 which if passed would lower the voting age in the state to 19.

"We watched the convention pretty intently," Dave Pieseter, 20, NFYAS chairman, explained, "but earlier in the evening before the TV coverage started and between speeches we were able to discuss a great deal."

Pieseter, who has been working on the University of Nebraska freshmen orientation staff this summer, said NFYAS is currently laying plans for a statewide campaign.

He said the group plans to have district chairmen

Actually, New Parties Are Nothing New

"We meet in the midst of a nation brought to the verge of moral, political, and material ruin. Corruption dominates the ballot box, the legislatures, the Congress . . . The people are demoralized . . . the newspapers are subsidized or muzzled . . . business prostrated, our homes covered with mortgages, labor impoverished, and power concentrated in the hands of the capitalists. The fruits of the toil of millions are boldly stolen to build up colossal fortunes, unprecedented in the history of the world. From the same prolific womb of governmental injustice we breed two great classes, paupers and millionaires. . . A vast conspiracy against mankind is taking ossession of the world. If not met and overturned at once, it forbodes terrible social convulsion, the destruction of civilization, or the establishment of an absolute despotism."

"Oh, hell," says the moderate Nebraska political observer of 1968. "Those radicals are at it again." He is tiring of the verbage of the New Left.

"Why can't things be like they were?" he might ask.

But that long, pompous statement was not made by the newly-formed Peace and Freedom Party, which represents the extreme left of Nebraska's political spectrum in this presidential election year. Nor was it made by The New Party, the infant party conceived at the University of Nebraskathis summer, spokesman for the New Liberalism.

That statement contains excerpts from the Preamble of the Peoples' Party platform, adopted at an

Omaha convention in 1892. For, it seems, one of Nebraska's great political traditions concerns the rise (and fall) of a multitude of extraneous party movements.

In fact, at one time, Nebraska was considered to be part of the hub of the progressive politics of the last decade of the 19th Century and the first of the 20th. With William Jennings Bryan and George Norris their leaders, liberal farmers from Nebraska helped to give America women's suffrage, the Australian ballot, free text graduated income tax . . . and gave Nebraskans the only complete public power system in the nation and a unicameral legislature.

Oddity

But the strangest part of this story is the fact that Nebraska is now, at least mentally, considered a stronghold of what is generally called conservatism — the tendency to preserve established institutions or traditions, and the general policy of opposing change in them.

(To be coy, it could be possible to rationalize that Nebraskans, to be truly conservative, should have preserved the tradition of being progressively minded.)

As Walter Johnson said while addressing the 1951 Nebraska State Historical Society meeting:

"It is rather ironic, from the vantage point of history, that the region which once gave Abraham Lincoln and liberalism to the Republican Party, has now become the section where progressive ideas must find a most uncongenial reception."

The tradition of liberalism can be traced back to the free-soil

and abolitionist movements of the 1850's but one of the most flourishing was the Liberal Republicanism movement of the 1870's.

In 1872 Edward Rosewater, editor of the Omaha Bee, called for "reform in the state and the nation." Shortly thereafter, the group formed a coalition with the Democratic Party (Aug. 28, 1872) and endorsed Horace Greeley for president.

The party platform resolved that "the safety and prosperity of our state demand a radical and immediate reform in state government." It also called for the repeal of all state statutes which conflicted with national legislation.

The party suffered defeat that fall and soon disappeared. But it is considered to have fostered much of the spirit of reform which followed during the years.

During this time the Grange movement was beginning to show power. Actually, Grangers were non-political but in principle they stood for definite political reform.

By 1874 several reform parties were founded — the Independent Party, the People's Party, Farmer Labor Party, the Prohibition Party.

Nationally, the Greenback Party, which supported an eight-hour laboring day, a graduated income and opposed land grants to railroads, was gaining popularity. In 1876, though, it was a quiet organization in Nebraska.

By 1878, however, a large state convention was held, supporting a detailed platform on many of the aforementioned issues. It, too, died an early death after a crushing defeat.

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Sorenson's 20 Years Have Changed NU's Summer Look

He has been director of the University of Nebraska Summer Sessions for 20 years, and he has helped build one of the most highly regarded summer programs in the nation.

He has pioneered in the field of aerospace education and has developed a curriculum which has been lauded by national educators.

And he devoted 42 years of service to education in Nebraska, working with academic and administrative leaders of the state.

Now Dr. Frank E. Sorenson is embarking on a new course of service to the University and the state.

Because of a University policy which replaces administrative personnel at the age of 65, Sorenson will be transferred to the Department of Education Administration where he has carried rank as a professor since holding the directorship post. There he will again resume contact with educators and administrators throughout Nebraska, continuing the task he has worked for all his life — the best possible public education

system the state can have.

Sorenson's entry into Nebraska educational circles came in 1926 when he took a teaching job at Taylor, Neb. High School as a mathematics and social studies teacher and a football and basketball coach.

"I didn't know anything about the sports, but I was still a coach," he said.

He had completed just two years and one summer of college but he was "rather typical of the times, when most educational personnel did not have bachelor degrees, let alone a master's or Ph.D.," he said.

At that time NU's summer school was aimed directly to the teacher or administrator, trying to qualify for certificates for teaching or degrees, he said.

Sorenson attended summer school for 17 straight sessions to work on his degrees, all three of which came from NU.

While in school he became interested in geography and soon became a part-time graduate assistant, teaching the course during the summer. Sorenson points

to NU's nationally-known reputation of allowing a student to follow dual programs of interests, something for which he has become equally famous:

"The University of Nebraska has excelled in providing students the opportunity of fulfilling interests in the academic and professional fields."

If, for instance, a person wanted to become a school administrator and gain knowledge about geography, as Sorenson has done, the University's policies allow that student to have double-majors in order to satisfy his desires.

Sorenson decided to stay in

university life during the mid-30's. He took a teaching fellowship at Ohio State University for one year, but returned to NU to receive his Ph.D.

In 1938, he became an NU staff member. In 1948, he took the position of summer sessions' director, replacing Dr. Richard Moritz who held the post for 20 years also.

During Sorenson's two decades as director, the University's summer enrollment has clearly doubled. In 1948, there were approximately 5600 students. In 1968, the figure was 11,185 — surprising even Sorenson who had predicted 9000 students at the beginning of the

summer, admittedly pushing the figure.

He has been instrumental in many of the features now taken for granted during the summer:

—A program of special institutes, providing informal educational activities which enrich the students' summers.

—An emphasis of outstanding teaching to lure the student, "since we don't have mountains and lakes to advertise."

—Outstanding programs, which have brought national leaders, performing artists and prominent educators to the campus.

—Funding of University cultural activities to broaden the students' experiences.

Sorenson also pointed to NU's nearly complete air-conditioned city campus which will be entirely finished by next year, and should attract more students, he said. And, this year, NU went to a two-session program.

But, perhaps, one of his most often recognized accomplishments has been the program of aerospace education he has developed. In fact, Nebraska has become sort of a

Cape Kennedy in the field of aerospace education, including its summer institute designed to give teachers a chance to catch up on man's progress in space.

Sorenson credits his interest in geography for what he has done:

"I hate to separate aerospace education as something out of the study of geography. Man and his environment, together, equals geography."

"Now, with man's expanded use of air and space, geography has expanded. All I really am is a geographer with an ever-growing concept of the subject."

Sorenson said when man moved more and more from the earth's surface "it was just an expression, to me, of my concept of geography — man's relationship to what's surrounds him."

So, although effective Sept. 1, Sorenson vacates his position as summer sessions' director, his concepts of administration and education will still be a part of the University, because he will still be a part of the University.

Inside You Will Find:

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