Demo Chiefs Pessimistic on Electing Ticket

By Warren Weaver Jr.
New York Times News Service

WASHINGTON—The nation's Democratic leaders, taken as a group, are deeply pessimistic about the current prospects of electing the Humphrey-Muskie ticket eight weeks from next Tuesday.

The worst of it, from the Democratic point of view, is that this is true even though the angry, bloody national convention seems to have left the party with fewer, less serious handicaps than anticipated.

Survey

A survey of political opinion by New York Times correspondents, covering more than three dozen states and including all the large ones, indicated this picture for the Democrats from the relatively brief perspective of a week after their convention:

1—A fourth party movement, which some had greatly feared, presents only a relatively modest threat to the Democrats from the left. Such competition is only likely in a handful of states with small electoral votes, and may not happen even there.

2—With some notable exceptions, the party seems to be reassembling after the bitter battles of Chicago in better order than almost anyone had hoped, with self-interest, loyalty and Richard M. Nixon combining to provide the impetus.

3—The violence between Chicago police and protestors at the convention does not seem to have lost as many votes for the party as the delegates on the scene had feared. Again with exceptions, Mayor Richard J. Daley's law enforcement policies may even constitute a political asset in some parts of the country.

But, despite these relatively encouraging reports from the field, the signal fact remained that there were very few states that party leaders contend Vice President Humphrey and Sen. Edmund S. Muskie would surely carry if the election were held today.

Wallace Lead

The Times survey indicated that George C. Wallace, the former Alabama governor, was leading in eight or nine states although his vote would be liable to attrition once the two major party candidates began campaigning in earnest. Among these were Tennessee, Arkansas, and Florida as well as the Deep South.

Reports from another dozen or more states gave the lead to Nixon, who showed particularly early strength in the Middle West—Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Ohio—and on the West Coast—California and Oregon.

In most of the rest of the states, the outcome was still rated uncertain or the Democrats were given a narrow insubstantial edge. There was no state checked in which party leaders were willing to say at this juncture that Humphrey had a commanding lead.

With states like New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania undecided, this initial reaction did not mean that the Democrats were effectively shut out, but it hardly provided an encouraging backdrop for the opening of their campaign.

Heated Threats

In the heat of the convention, many of the frustrated McCarthy and McGovern supporters threatened to lead their followers out of the Democratic Party into independent movements that would actively oppose Humphrey.

Among the few states that appear likely to have fourth party candidates on the ticket, as filing deadlines march by, are Minnesota, where McCarthy himself is still a possibility; New Hampshire, where petitions are being circulated for a new party; and Utah, where the Peace and Freedom Party is on the ballot but attracting little attention.

McCarthy has indicated that he would not allow third parties to use his name in States like New York that require the candidate's consent. And in California, McCarthy backers must get 330,000 signatures by Sept. 20 to get the senator on the ballot.

Party Harmony

Party harmony, so conspicuous by its absence in Chicago, was beginning to reassert itself in a number of Democratic state organizations, the survey indicated. In Michigan, for example, regular leaders have made substantial concessions to the McCarthy forces in the wake of the convention.

In many areas of the country, McCarthy supporters were reluctantly coming to the conclusion that they had little alternative to supporting Vice President Humphrey, particularly if they could detect any movement on his part away from Johnson and toward peace in Vietnam.

In some instances, party unity was reported developing to meet local circumstances. In Texas, for example, the conservative wing of the party headed by Gov. John B. Connally was uniting behind the Humphrey-Muskie ticket as a matter of loyalty, the long run, while the liberal faction was backing the same candidates as a matter of philosophical preference.

Hopeful View

Many of the Democratic leaders contacted, some of Democrat said, "Now that there was overemphasis and overplay on the part of some of the news media during the trouble," one Kentucky indicated they believed the violence in Chicago would not prove harmful to the Humphrey-Muskie ticket in the matter. I think you'll find a different reaction."

"The story and now that is time to reflect on the probably hopefully, the public is getting the full

(AP Wirephoto)

Dispenses $50 Bills

Lynne Reeves, a secretary at the Capital National Bank of Miami, inserts a card in the money dispensing machine in the outside lobby of the bank. At right, bank president Theodore Davis exhibits an envelope with a $50 bill as it comes from the machine. The dispensers have proven successful on downtown street corners in Japan.

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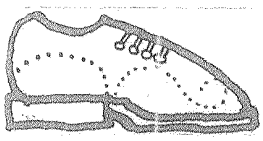

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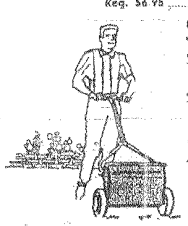

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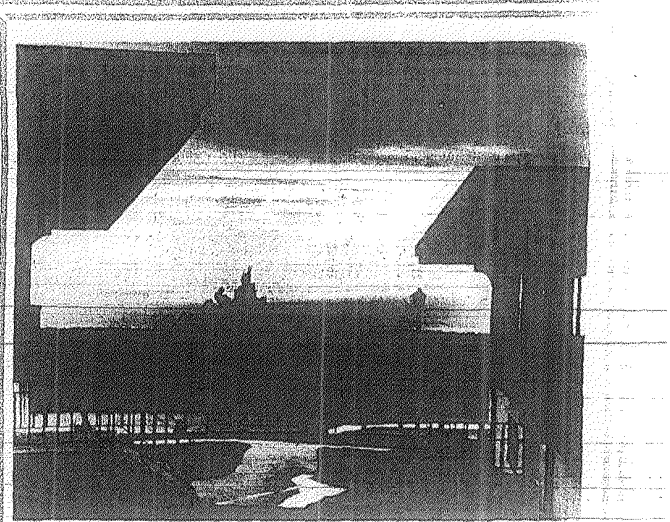

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