

Veteran political sage eyes fate of his party

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Aldo Vagnozzi seems at home in the midst of political dissension. He entered politics in the spring of 1948, the year G. Mennen (Soapy) Williams appealed to the state's liberal Democrats who felt they hadn't any place to go within the party. Vagnozzi was one of Williams' liberal supporters in his race to become governor.

Next month, Vagnozzi, known for his expression of dissenting views from the audience of Farmington Hills City Council meetings will be an alternate delegate to the Democratic National convention in New York.

Once again, Vagnozzi finds himself embroiled in controversy involving a portion of the party which feels cut off from the decision-making process.

Pledged to Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Vagnozzi hopes he and other supporters can have some influence on the party's nominee and platform.

The fact that Kennedy supporters managed to do well in Michigan's caucus encourages Vagnozzi to believe that they can at least prompt a minority report and debate if enough of their numbers join platform committees.

"THE PLATFORM itself isn't that significant," he said. "Hopefully, (President) Carter will pledge at the convention to support some of these issues."

Vagnozzi and other Kennedy supporters want Carter to come out in favor of creating jobs with federal funds, limiting car imports, controlling oil and natural gas prices and promoting a national health insurance plan.

Through these plans, they hope to cope with inflation by creating jobs and controlling prices.

But Vagnozzi, who for a time worked for the Michigan AFL-CIO News, realizes there aren't any guarantees that Carter will adopt these positions for his presidential platform.

"Chances are, he wouldn't," admitted Vagnozzi.

The delegates, themselves are hand picked in many instances for their staunch support of the candidate. As a result, Vagnozzi says, "they're oblivious to what's going on. Many take the position that 'these problems are be-

yond the control of the president and no president can do anything about them."

In spite of his sometimes pessimistic predictions, he continues his political involvement in the light of lessons he learned during his own first contact with party politics in 1948.

"You can have an impact if you

know where the decisions are made," he said.

THE POST OF precinct delegate has impact and is relatively easy to obtain, he explained.

"When they're vacant, there's usually no opposition. In that position you can influence the types of candidates

you get either by endorsement or by the fact that the state party gives you some pretty important people to meet. You have to keep working at it."

The longer he keeps working at it, the more liberal his political views become.

"I think I'm becoming more so as I get older," he said.

The Libertarian Party has some appeal for him. He remains staunchly in favor of individual rights but doesn't agree with the Libertarian advocacy of marginal government services.

"We need government. But government should be accountable to the people and responsible to peoples' problems," he said.

Player seeks way to gridiron

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Farmington school administrators are in full agreement with the MHSAA, which established the age rule for the safety of all players.

"Jeff is a fine young man. I have great empathy for him," said Lynn Nutter, assistant superintendent of Farmington Public Schools.

"We have to be concerned with the number of students he would come in contact with," Nutter said.

"A 19-year-old is agile, stronger, faster and more experienced than the 14-, 15-, and 16-year-olds he is competing with. That's true in contact and non-contact sports."

Kinjoski said he was told in junior high that probably he wouldn't be able to play football his senior year. Coaches told him to fight the ruling, but didn't support his effort, he said.

"Last year I decided to file but people kept telling me to wait because similar cases were in court," he said.

"The others were thrown out.

"I'M GOING TO start with them (the team) in case anything happens on appeal," he said.

Falcon coach Hal Beardsley refused to comment.

"I've been advised by both sides not to say anything," Beardsley said. "I just prefer not to be quoted."

Beardsley wasn't aware of the appeal.

"You can always find an exception to the rule, but you're talking about 725 high schools and thousands of players across the state," said Jerry Potter, Farmington High principal.

"Rules are made for the protection of everyone. Where is the cutoff? If it isn't 19, is it going to be 20 or 21?"

"There has to be a cutoff or any dropout could come back and want to play high school sports," Potter said.

Joan Kinjoski resents the implication that her son might be considered "a stupid dumb ass."

"He was held back in first and third grade because of asthma," she said.

Mrs. Kinjoski would like the case to go to arbitration.

"To say that anyone born before Sept. 1 has mental or physical prowess greater than anyone born after that date is a bunch of crap," she said.

"At 6-foot-1 and 200 pounds, my son isn't as big as some of his teammates."

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