

Computers tally delegate choices

To the television watcher, the numbers flash on a screen, and Michigan 153 votes at the Democratic National Convention are history.

On the crowded, noisy floor of the Moscone Center here, a roll call is an intricate process.

"You see those funny TV sets in front of us?" said Rick Wiener, state chairman and leader of the Michigan delegation. "Those are computer telephone voting machines."

WHEN VOTES on platform issues are to be reported, Wiener and four young staff members canvass the delegation.

"Every delegate has an assigned seat," he said. "The staff will go up and down each row and count. You can vote only yes, no or abstention. There are about 14 or 15 rows."

"When the vote is tabulated, I punch it into the machine. It's a user-friendly machine (easy to operate)," he smiled.

Looking over his shoulder are the leaders of each of three groups of delegates: Ellen Globokar, an aide to Gov. James J. Blanchard for the 76 Mondale troops; George Wahr Sallade, Ann Arbor attorney for the 49-member Hart contingent; and Joel Ferguson, Lansing, for the nine Jackson votes.



A NETWORK of "whips" spreads the word from candidate's headquarters to the delegates.

"In a deputy state whip for Mondale," said Mary Ryan Taras, social studies teacher from Birmingham.

Taras covers 16 suburban and out-state congressional districts. A second deputy whip covers the 1st and 13th Congressional Districts (Detroit) and the at-large delegates.

One of the regional whips is Alan Heimkamp, Livonia attorney attending his first convention.

"Our job is not only to spread information, but to understand what's going on. We get facts. We tell what Mondale headquarters' position is. We kill rumors."

Prosecutors drop conspiracy charge in 1 Williams case

By Kathy Parrish
staff writer

Williams International and the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office let some peace activists off the hook this week.

But it may not go as easy for 50 others charged with trespassing at the Commerce Township defense supplier's plant.

"We're reviewing the cases, one by one," said Assistant Chief Prosecutor Richard Thompson.

"It was a tactical decision made in one case."

THE PROSECUTOR'S office Monday dropped trespass and conspiracy to trespass charges against three defendants in the Nov. 27-Dec. 2 blockades at Williams, which makes engines for cruise missiles.

Instead, Mt. Pleasant residents, the Rev. Thomas Jones and Anne Laurie, and Detroiters Benita Mullins were charged with the misdemeanors of interfering with Williams employees and failure to obey police officers.

The jury was expected to decide this morning.

In another surprise move this week, five fasting activists were released from Oakland County Jail at the request of Williams International. The request was granted by Circuit Judge James Thornburn, whose refusal to let them out unless they promised not to trespass at Williams spurred the water fast.

Williams attorney Dawn Phillips said the defendants had "placed themselves in a position where they no longer pose a threat to the plaintiff or the public."

Spokesman David Jolivet said the

company's position is unchanged. "We respect their right to demonstrate but cannot condone trespassing," he explained.

DEFENSE ATTORNEYS, who were surprised by both court actions, contend the prosecution dropped the conspiracy charges because their charges won't hold up in court. They linked the decision to the jury acquittals.

"It's circumstantial evidence. I don't know what's in the mind of the prosecution," said attorney Deborah Choly, who herself was arrested at Williams during a Nagasaki Day demonstration.

"The problem is that it's taken so long and these people had to wait with charges over their heads."

THOMPSON SAID the controversial conspiracy charges were dropped because evidence was a "lot less" than in the case where defendants were acquitted by a jury.

Walled Lake District Court Judge Michael Batchik last week dismissed the conspiracy charge against Jean Hutchinson, an British-born demonstrator against cruise missiles. A jury acquitted students Crystal McCartney of Detroit and Michael Hoffman of Detroit.

"We didn't want to taint our good charges," explained Thompson, who said he does not intend to routinely drop conspiracy charges against the other defendants.

Thompson said he respects the jury decisions and feels "justice is being done."

And he disagreed that the charges are unfair. "The charges were sustained by the law; a judge sustained them and authorized a warrant," the chief assistant prosecutor said.



'Our platform's emphasis on arms control is an effort to make the world safer. But does this minority plank contribute to that effort? Is the world more secure if we assure the Soviets that they could invade western Europe and not fear any nuclear response?'

— Sen. Carl Levin

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