

How Local Partisans See A Primary

By KATHY MORAN
Gov. William Milliken's proposal for a presidential primary in May has been rated as a "public relations gimmick" as well as a "fine idea" by local Democrat and Republican officials.

Regardless of party affiliation, local officials seem anxious to include the newly enfranchised 18 to 20-year-olds in the political system—but they differ on how it should be done.

Democrats have been pushing for an April primary for the election of precinct delegates to get young voters involved in process and also to bail themselves out of possible trouble over seating their delegates at the national convention.

Republicans have vigorously opposed the April primary but seem enthused about Milliken's unexpected proposal. The governor's plan would have the effect of getting young voters involved in the election process but would not bail Democrats out

of trouble with their own party.

CURRENTLY Michigan's precinct delegates are elected two years prior to the presidential election. These delegates are involved in the state conventions, and some among their ranks are elected to go to the national convention.

Sets Breakfast

Boy Scout Troop 324 of MacGowan School, Redford Township, will serve a pancake breakfast on Sunday, Feb. 13, from 7 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the YW Post 345, at 2245 W. Seven Mile, Redford.

Stempien Attacks Proposed Primary

State Rep. Marvin Stempien (D-Livonia) labelled Gov. Milliken's proposal for a spring presidential preference primary a "shallow offer to a newly enfranchised voters of a preference, without any active participation in the party of their choice."

Stempien, who is House majority floor leader, said the plan falls short of real election reform.

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two states to elect delegates so far in advance.

Milliken's plan would arouse greater interest for a spring election by bringing presidential hopefuls to the state for campaigns prior to a May primary.

At that time, the electorate would vote on presidential candidates, but also would be selecting national convention delegates. Though the delegates' names would not appear on the ballot, the voter would elect delegates hand-picked by the presidential candidates.

The candidate who carried a congressional district would get the delegates he selected. The candidate who did best in the entire state would take all the at-large delegates in addition to those in the congressional districts he carried.

It is still uncertain whether the delegates would be "pledged" to vote for the candidate from their party drawing the most votes, but in theory they would be required to support the top presidential vote-getter.

"I'M GLAD the governor finally agreed to consider a plan to give new voters a voice in the selection of presidential candidates," Aldo Vagnozzi, 19th district Democratic

"I'm sympathetic with the large number of young voters... If a presidential primary would get them out, then I'm all for it."

-- A Republican view

"This is the governor's way of getting young people involved but getting total delegate support for Nixon at the national convention..."

-- A Democratic view

chairman said, "I just hope it isn't too late for a meaningful election."

"I (Milliken's unexpected announcement) does demonstrate the importance of constant pressure on elected officials," Vagnozzi said.

Unless the plan is approved early in the session, Vagnozzi said the presidential primary could lose some meaning. "It will bring various candidates to the state to campaign on the issues. But the candidates have to commit themselves to time schedules with the 26 primaries scheduled in the country."

JOHN CARTWRIGHT, 19th District Republican chairman, said a presidential primary is the "most democratic" method of determining support from the electorate for presidential candidates.

But he said he would prefer

to see the presidential primary combined with the state primary (held in August) because of the cost.

"I'm sympathetic with the large number of young voters and I'm going to get as many active as possible. If a presidential primary would do it, then I'm all for it."

"But I'm against multiple primaries when you are talking about a half a million dollars for each one. State and local governments are highly pinched right now, and the burden of the expense would be put on them."

ROBERT DWYER, 2nd District Democratic chairman, said he is not optimistic about the Legislature passing Milliken's plan.

"The Democrats are going to take a long, hard look at it," Dwyer said, explaining that the proposal is both a device to get the support of young

voters and to get total support from Michigan delegates for President Nixon in the national election.

Since all the delegates would be required to support Nixon at the national convention, any anti-Nixon forces in the state would not be represented. However, if the plan would allow for proportional representation, any votes cast by the anti-Nixon forces would be represented at the national convention in San Diego.

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"Basically any kind of spring primary which would open the political process to young voters is very laudatory," Robbins said.

Dave Leathley, who heads the 19th District Wayne County Republicans, described Milliken's plan as a "fine idea" but declined to elaborate on the proposal until he sees it.

"It is my opinion we are operating under a rather antiquated system," he said, referring to the election of precinct delegates two years in advance of the presidential election.

He called Milliken's announcement a "public relations gimmick" because Republicans were discouraging young voters, by their opposition to an April election.

Pressure from young voters "encouraged the Republican Party to grow up and mature and realize that the majority point of view has a right to be heard," Dwyer added.

BILL ROBBINS, who heads the 19th District Democratic Party in Wayne County, said he would prefer the election of precinct delegates but reserved comment on Milliken's proposal until seeing the governor's plan.

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