



THE NATURE AND INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Honorable Richard M. Scammon

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Reviewed by: Colonel J. H. M. Smith, 22 November 1962

INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES

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The Nature and Influence of Political Parties

24 August 1962

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Reporter: Albert C. Helder

Reviewed by: Col. G. H. M. Smith Date: 22 Nov 1962

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GENERAL QUILL: In our studies so far this week we've been reminded that our founding fathers did not give official recognition to political parties. Yet, before the Washington Administration was completed, political parties became very obvious and influential. Since then they have developed into powerful controlling forces in our governmental system. The nature, influence and the role of political parties in our government will be discussed this morning. This subject is important to us personally as voters, and also collectively and professionally, as it pertains to national security.

Our speaker today has been directly involved in the field of political science most of his life, and in recent years as Director of Elections for the Governmental Affairs Institute. He was responsible for analyzing the operations of political parties. And he has been an observer of elections in the Soviet Union and in Israel. He also participated as a TV analyst during election eve of 1960, the outcome of which he correctly forecast.

It is my privilege and pleasure to introduce for his fourth lecture at the Industrial College, the Honorable Richard M. Scammon, who is currently Director of the Bureau of the Census. Mr. Scammon.

MR. SCAMMON: I understand, gentlemen, that very recently - yesterday, perhaps, - Larry O'Brien was here to talk to you about his work. I must say it seems presumptuous for anyone in the Census Bureau trying to talk to you about political

parties and how they operate in Washington, and in this country. Mr. O'Brien is certainly a prime practitioner, my own favorite Irishman, a very nice and pleasant guy as well as a first rate operator - if he spoke to you with any candor about what he does. I hope for the sake of the record he cleaned up his conversation.

In speaking of any kind of political parties here or in any kind of public discussion, unfortunately one of our tasks is the purely academic one of definitionism. Political parties, like any social group, depend on what you mean when you use the word. Theoretically, at least, they are groupings of people trying to achieve political authority with some kind of program or policy in mind once they achieve that authority. This is the textbook definition. But this morning I would like, if I might, to approach this problem in a more pragmatic way. Rather than try to define whether or not this automobile is a lemon in the abstract, I'd rather discuss with you some of the things the automobile does, and then leave you to decide whether or not the definition so broadly and generously given, fits this particular car.

Rather than try to explore with you academic definitions of the point at which a party simply becomes a machine, the point at which a party becomes simply a personal instrument of authority and power, I'd rather define with you this morning what a party does, how it works, and how it affects policy, and see, out of those more pragmatic definitions of day-to-day operations, if we can't derive some kind of understanding, at least, of what may not, in fact, be definable.

First I'd like, if I may, to remove from our consideration the more popular concept of the party as simply a machine. The average political party organiza-

tion in this country is inefficient, cumbersome, wasteful, noisy, and doesn't do much. Tammany, for example, in New York, is ^{probably} the most inefficient social institution ever devised. It has, by good fortune and the characteristics of its electorate, been able to win office. But, aside from a very, very few - the O'Connell organization in Albany, the remnants of the old Kelly-Nash organization in Chicago, now under Dick Daley, and Bill Green's organization in Philadelphia, plus a few machine organizations that you never hear about because they operate in small rural areas under conditions which are Hollywood-like in their political meaning but which just aren't important enough or attention-attracting enough to get much time - aside from some of these; a very few of these, the concept of the political party as a monolithic machine; the smoke-filled room, the party boss, and all the rest of it, is much too simple to be correct.

In all of the political life of America this kind of definition, this kind of octopus-like picture of the political boss and the machine in sort of the, as I say, Hollywood sense of the word would not apply to as much as 5% of the total political operations in the United States. It has no more real effective meaning in terms of politics today than, if I may so, the Cavalry might have meaning in terms of the fact that the Armored Force still maintains at least an alleged parental relationship to the former Cavalry arm of the service.

It is an older day, a more romantic day, a more glamorous day perhaps, but one that doesn't exist today except in a few limited areas. I suppose the real reason is that ~~as~~ politics has become more sophisticated and more international; as little local questions have passed into relatively unimportant meaning, the

things that built the machine - the great wave of immigration, the great need of the people for some kind of buffer between their political system and themselves, the lack of education of the people - these things have diminished. So, the machine in its classic definition I would want to push aside insofar as we are talking about the party and its influence this morning.

But there are ways in which we ought to define this term. There is a Congressional Party, there is a Popular Party, there is a Presidential Party, and it is to these that I'd like to address myself now.

Perhaps the easiest way to define what a party is, and the most confusing, is to ask your colleagues what they regard themselves as, politically, and then to ask them what they think that means. Then try to sort out the great variety of confused and confusing answers that you will get to your own query. An easier way and one which I think is a more pragmatic approach, which does not involve great exercises into ill-defined ideology, is to ask two questions. First, who represents whom? And second, for whom do people vote?

I'd like to take this this morning in terms of who gets office, and secondly, in terms of how people vote and why they vote the way they do. Let's start out from the beginning. Who represents whom? Who gets elected? Specifically, who gets elected to Congress? Who are the Congressional Party? Who are the 537 Members of the Congress, in the Senate and the House? Where do they come from? What kind of people are they? How do you relate the label that they wear to their political viewpoints and to their own personality?

I think here we can establish, or at least we can begin to establish, some

meaning for the words "Republican" and "Democrat." Now, we may have to make subdivisions, subsegments, subgroups, in order to do this effectively, but it can be done. We know, for example, that geographically when you talk about Republicans and Democrats in the Congress you can immediately identify the south as a primarily Democratic region. Despite the half dozen members who are Republicans who come from the area of the 11 states of the Old Confederacy, the great majority of Members of the Congress, from the south, are Democratic. So, this becomes, then, only one element of any pragmatic definition of what is the Democratic Party. It is, first of all, the Congressional Membership from the south.

Secondly, we can identify the great cities as being, again, essentially Democratic - New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, - the great majority of the Members of the Congress, who come from these cities, are Democrats; not Republicans.

On the other side of the fence we can identify the majority of suburban Members of the Congress, and we can identify the majority of farm Members of the Congress as Republicans. So, we start out with Democratic Members coming from the south and the cities, and the Republican Members as coming from the farms and small towns. Now, there are many exceptions to this; there are many footnotes; there are many differences that one could point out; but basically this is the broad stream of the Congressional kind of party we are talking about.

But this is purely geographic; this is purely an identification of where a man lives, and the geographic area that he represents. Let's look at it another way. In terms of religion, racial background, and ethnic origin, the differentiations between the two Congressional parties are marked, specific, and concrete. There

are four Negro Members of the Congress; all are Democrats. I think it is fair to say that if any other Negro Members are elected to the Congress in coming years they will be Democrats too. There are perhaps a dozen Jewish Members of the Congress; all save two are Democrats. Senator Javits and Congressman Halpern from New York are Republican; the rest are Democratic. There are perhaps a hundred Roman Catholic Members of the Congress. With the exception of about 12 or 15, they are Democrats.

So, the great majority of the major minority groups in the United States, in Congress; Negro, Jewish and Catholic, are Democratic. It is also true that if one is to identify in any way from ethnic origin - though this sometimes involves the religious question as well - you would find that the older immigration; by that I mean the Scandinavian, basically, tends to be Republican. The newer immigration, Italian and Polish particularly, tends to be Democratic.

The German immigration - which is also an older one - tends to be mixed. And the Irish, which is an older one, tends to be Democratic. So that, when you look at the immigration patterns - the ethnic origins of the Members of Congress - you will find that the larger proportion comes under the Democratic rather than the Republican side.

But here is our problem. In any kind of definition, as I suppose in a military exercise, nothing, really, can be attributed to a single cause. So, if you find that you have a member who is both a Roman Catholic, of Polish origin, and comes from a big city, which of these three have conspired to make him a Democrat? This you can't answer. All you can say is that if he comes from such an area

the odds are at least ten to one that he will be a Democrat; that he will be Roman Catholic; and that he will be Polish, if it happens to be that characteristic for district.

We can identify also in terms of economic status of members who are elected to Congress, and particularly of the areas they come from. By and large, outside the south, Democratic Members will come from areas that are less advantageously situated, economically, than will the Republican. I know of no area in the north which has a high income and which elects a Democratic Member to Congress. The only possible exception to this would be Pike on Long Island, and this was, I think, due to a local situation which may well be reversed in this coming election. If you do find such a situation you find it only once or twice, and that it changes.

I mention this particularly because in our system of government, in our non-parliamentary representational system of law-making, the Congress is under much less party discipline, in the normal sense of the word, than it might be in a parliamentary system. In England, for example, and in Germany, when the party cracks the whip you must get in line. This is understandable because if you don't get in line the party itself loses control over the government. In a parliamentary system once you lose your majority you're out. In this country, as you can see in every day's activity in the House and Senate, you can lose your majority in the House and Senate and nothing happens except a few harsh words at the next Georgetown cocktail party. You can stay in power, which is the element, perhaps, that is final in all political decisions even though you are defeated in the Congress.

So, these are the members; men, mainly; middle-aged, mainly; lawyers,

mainly; from a great variety of geographic, economic, ethnic and religious backgrounds. These are the members who make the decisions. What about the people who put them there? What is their party? What is their feeling about politics as such?

Ever since the election of Mr. Roosevelt in 1932 I think it has been pretty well identified, pretty well agreed among ~~almost everyone~~ working in this field, that the majority of Americans, if pressed, would call themselves Democrats. If you asked them, and said, "Look; let's not shilly shally. If you had to make a choice what would you be?" They would say "Democratic." At the present time the polls tell us that this figure would run around 60-40 Democratic. Now, one might well ask, "If this is the case why are we even discussing this question? If the Democrats have such a tremendous lead among the popular feeling, why do we even include this on the agenda for the course? You ought to simply analyze the Democratic Party, see where the power sources are, and try to make the best we can out of a bad situation. "

From the Democratic point of view, unfortunately the 60-40 doesn't always add up to the 60-40 in the polling place. The reason is that that 60-40 includes a large number of people in the South who are Democrats if you ask them, and who are Democrats in terms of voting for sheriff, but who are not Democrats when it comes to voting for the Presidency. In the last three elections - in 1952, '56 and '60, the voting patterns of the South were almost even - 50-50; 48% - 49%; 51% - 52% - either way. They were not 60-40, and they were not the 75-25 or 80-20 that they had been under Roosevelt.

So that, when you apply what I would call a habitual slippage in the South, to any given Presidential Election you immediately cut into this 60-40 as far as the count for the Presidency is concerned. Moreover, another factor operates here to the disadvantage of the Democrats. Though it is true that the people as a whole may be 60-40 and even discounting the South 55-45, this is a measure of the people as a total people; not of the actual people who go to the polls and vote. There have been a hundred studies which demonstrate, I think, completely conclusively, that the Republicans tend to vote more frequently than the Democrats; not more than once, hopefully, but they tend to vote more frequently.

Just to give you a case in point, which I think is illustrative; in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul there is a suburb outside Minneapolis called Edina. It's a suburb of about 30 or 35 thousand people; upper middle-class; very pleasant, with incomes around \$12 to \$15 thousand a year; a high educational level - all the kids go to college; business, professional people, lawyers; two cars two bathrooms; all the measures of their standard of living. In that suburb of Edina in 1960 over 90% of the adults went to the polls and voted. They voted about three or four to one for Mr. Nixon.

Now shift your sights from the lustrous green areas of Edina over to the area of St. Paul, just north of the State Capital; dilapidated old frame houses, mainly Irish and German Catholic; not Negro, which would introduce another factor; working class; factory workers, garage mechanics average income around \$5,500 a year, average education for people over 25 less than four years of high school; strongly Democratic, three or four to one for Kennedy, but only 60% of the people

voted. 90% of the people voted in Edina; 60% of the people voted in Wards 8 and 9 in North St. Paul.

This is the basic fact in American politics today; the Democrats have the majority of the people, but they don't necessarily have the majority of the voters. And that is why politics in America are contestable rather than being, as they are, in some areas of the world, virtually a one-party system. The fact of the matter is that when you take out the normal slippage for a Presidential Election in the South, and when you equate the normal loss among the less-advantaged parts of the population, in income, in housing, in education, you find that the 60-40 rapidly goes down to about 50-50.

And one reason why elections for the Presidency are so much closer than elections for the Congress where the Democrats do tend to have an advantage, is that in the elections for the Congress the Democrats in the South can still vote Democratic without the slippage, so you restore a measure of this 60-40 balance.

So, this is the matrix within which we try to define what I would call the Popular Party as opposed to the Congressional Party. Perhaps the best way I can put it is to cite a poll that was taken out in Colorado in 1960. They took the poll in three levels; first, those people - everyone they talked to; secondly, of those whom they talked to who were registered voters, and finally, of those whom they talked to who were registered voters and who were sure they were going to vote.

Now, in the first category - the total adult population - the Democrats had about 58% of the people. Of those who were registered voters he had about 53%, but when you got down to the number of voters who actually went to the polls he

went behind and ended up with 48%, and he did, in fact, lose the election. When you get into this kind of situation, the registration of voters and the mobilization of your side are much more important than "Medi-Care," "Foreign Policy," or anything else the New York Times talks about.

The most important fact in any kind of party or party activity is to line up your people and get them to the polls. Because any other kind of work for the party that has the natural majority is a waste of effort. You don't have to talk about the issues, you don't have to talk about things, if you have the majority on your side anyway, which is the premise of every survey I know. You've simply got to get the people out who are there. Now, when you get these people out how can we break them down? What can we say about their behavior patterns, their label loyalties, if you want to talk about politics that way?

Well, one colleague of mine put it this way; "that the typical Democrat is a new immigrant, Roman Catholic Pole, living in the Bronx, belonging to a trade union, and himself active in the needle trades; young, male, motivated. Your typical Republican is a widow lady in her late '60s, living in Cedar Rapids, whose late husband left quite an income from a prosperous hardware business." Now, you take these two extremes and you probably never will find any one of them. You'll never find these two people. But it does represent a pretty sound judgment as to the characteristics of what I would call "label loyalty;" what kind of people call themselves Republicans and what kind of people call themselves Democrats.

Geographically, the same kind of distribution holds for the people as holds for the Congress; the great majority of the people in the South and in the cities, who

would call themselves Democrats; the majority of the people outside the South and outside the cities would call themselves Republicans. In terms of age, people tend to be more Republican as they grow older. As you move up the age level you will find that the percentage who regard themselves as Republicans increases with each group. Whether this is wisdom born of experience or loss of vitality and education born of long depression, I don't know. But, the fact is that this is the pattern. And one might add that with the development of a length of the age span in America this has a very interesting series of meanings in terms of the future development of American politics. It's one reason, incidentally, why the Democrats are always so strong on Medi-Care; because, by being strong on Medi-Care you do what is called in politics, "the leap-frog." You jump into a group of people who are normally on the other side, give them something they would like, and then run back, hopefully with their votes, to your own side.

Younger people, by and large, are more Democratic than older. And I don't mean because of the young people in the White House - the President and his wife. This would be true in almost any circumstance. The difficulty, of course, from the Democratic point of view is that young people tend to vote less frequently than the older. If you were to measure, not by economic status as we did with Edina and St. Paul, but measure by age your turn-out, there is a curve in which the people in their 20s vote relatively little, and it suddenly goes up high. And in the 30s, 40s, and 50s, the turn-out is pretty good, and then it begins to slant off again. I think this is understandable in terms of younger people developing an interest in affairs around them and older people beginning to think of retirement and shaking off their

immediate concern with these matters. But younger people tend to be more Democratic; older people tend to be more Republican.

In terms of sex, women tend to be more Republican; men tend to be more Democratic. Despite the newspaper columnists, if men couldn't vote in 1960, Mr. Nixon would be President. There is every evidence that among women Mr. Nixon polled a majority in the last election. Among men Mr. Kennedy polled a larger majority than he did when you put the two together. Actually, there are about four million more adult women than men in this country. We are not the stronger sex. We tend, unfortunately, to be snuffed out a little ahead of our time. The way it works is, that though there are about four million women more than there are men, women do not participate in politics nor do they vote in the same percentage as men, so that, the end result tends to be about equal. About the same number of votes are cast by men as there are by women; a slight majority on the Republican side among women; a slight majority on the Democratic side among men. I would hasten to add, however, that the difference - without trying to get into the old story of Vive La France - the difference is not great in terms of political implication; 51 or 52 on one side, 51 or 52 on the other.

In some countries you'll find this difference is very marked. In Germany, for example, and in France where you have a Catholic political party, the tendency of women to support the Catholic political party is much greater than the tendency of the men to support it. But in this country, with our relatively bland politics, there tends to be about a 51% or 52% on either side.

In terms of education it is certainly true that the higher the education the

greater the percentage of Republicans. Now, whether this is a measure of education or of income is a nice question. Because, as the census points out, in every part of America, I know, income and education are almost completely inter-related. If you find an area with a high income you find an area with a higher education. If you find an area with a low education you find an area with a low income. There may be little variants here and there, but almost without exception you can spot in any part of America the relationship between education and income. The only place where this isn't true is in college towns where the education hasn't yet been put to the making of money. You will find, if you go into a college town, that the income of the students is not high, though their education at the time of their graduation is. So, from that time on the curve begins to move together until you find that the education and income are moving almost step in step in the general pattern of our population. So, again, whether the high percentage of Republicans among the well-educated is a proof of wisdom or of money, I'll have to leave to you.

The fact is that the great centers of Republican strength in America are basically in the upper middle-class, wealthy suburbs. These are the four, five and six to one Republican areas. That, of course, and one should add the hills and mountains of Tennessee and Kentucky, which are the strongest Republican Districts in America, largely, of course, because these are the people who didn't own slaves, weren't going to fight the planters' war, made the decision a hundred years ago, and with the typical obstinacy of mountaineers they've stuck with it ever since.

But basically, income, the quality of housing, and education; the higher it is the more Republicans you find.

In terms of religious persuasion and ethnic origin and race the opposite is the case. By and large, the majority of Roman Catholics in this country are Democrats, and this is not primarily due to Mr. Kennedy. As a matter of fact, it was pointed out Mr. Kennedy polled in 1960 almost exactly that same share of Roman Catholic voters that the Democratic Party as a whole had polled in 1958. There was no particular exchange here; there were some particular areas in which he undoubtedly gained, as there were some in which he lost by reason of the religious factor. But basically over the years the majority of Roman Catholics have been Democrats. The great majority of foreign born have been Democrats; the great majority of Poles, Italians, Jews and the like, have been Democrats. The great majority of Negroes have been Democrats only in the last generation.

Until Roosevelt the Negro vote in America was almost entirely Republican. One Negro leader once commented that when he was a boy in Kansas City if you had voted Democratic they would have stoned you off the streets in the Negro wards of that city. Now probably the reverse would be true, because the shift of Negro voters from the Republican to the Democratic side is probably the greatest shift of our lifetime in terms of group voting in the United States.

But here again, when I talk of the Roman Catholic voter, the foreign-born or the foreign white stock, or the Negro, am I talking, really, about ethnic and religious questions, or am I talking about economic status? Because, by and large, the foreign-born and the foreign-born white stock - the Negro - are more on the working-class level than they are on the upper-middle-class.

The Jewish population tends to spread out a good deal more. But still, the

average Pole or Italian of the first or second generation - though there are many exceptions - there may be exceptions in this room this morning - the average Polish or Italian resident in the East and Middle-West where the great majority are concentrated tends to have a somewhat lower income and to be more identified with the working-class than ~~with the~~ older ethnic group in the North and West.

What else can we say about these voters? We see how they divide themselves by sex, by age, by geography, by their own background - by education. What we can say, of course, is that all of these things are very broad generalizations. On another occasion this question came up and I was asked about how could you explain why Kennedy hadn't won by so much; why he had won by such a narrow margin if all these things are true, and you had to point out that there are probably as many exceptions as there are factors backing up the other. And that actually Mr. Kennedy was probably elected because a lot of old, native-born, upper-middle-class, feminine Americans voted for him as well as the elements that I mentioned.

Our politics are a bland politics. They are a cross-current of politics in which the labels have meaning; they have an effect in the Popular Party, but they don't have that kind of militant, disciplined, marching Army kind of meaning that they have, unfortunately, in some parts of the world.

Now, this is the way people normally regard themselves in America in terms of their label loyalty.

How do they regard themselves in terms of ideology? Well, actually from the evidence that we have, about half the people would regard themselves as liberals and about half as conservatives. And quite honestly, you can't tell which half.

Nor can you tell it's going to be the same half on any given question. If you were to take ten issues on which you felt there was a fairly clear division between liberal and conservative, and if you could get an agreement as to how to frame this so that it wouldn't tip the answer one way or the other, you'd probably find almost a perfect bell curve in terms of the responses of most Americans. You would also find that when the average American ended up he'd probably end up with five liberal answers and five conservative answers on the ten propositions that you put in; and that this average American would never have the same five, that it would be generally a rather confused and confusing picture of exactly what he thought.

Because, basically our politics and our people are not ideological; they're not philosophical; they're not, in the German phrase, "Weltunkaulich." They do not regard themselves as being under the mystique of an over-all dogma or doctrine which gives them the answer to everything that they need to know. They tend to be very pragmatic, very practical, and to deal with a specific question from time to time. Now, this does not mean that they and their parties are not very conscious of their interests and that they're not prepared to fight very hard for their interests in Congress, in the State Legislatures, all the way down. This is why, in this country, the pressure group is such an important part of our political life, in many ways, perhaps, even more important than the political parties; the organization of the teachers, the trade unions, the Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers, the animal glue producers union - whatever it may be - the maritime groups, the coal miners and the coal operators; anything you want you can find. It has been known to happen even in the military, that there is a certain

amount of pressure group work done on Members of Congress.

The general approach in such a bland politics is a direct one and possibly Mr. O'Brien may have discussed it with you before. Because the parties themselves are not, in this country, efficient, disciplining organizations. You will find that the pressure group often makes an individual pitch to a Congressman or a Senator; not in the older sense of "this is the payoff for this or for that," but in the sense of bringing pressure to bear on that Congressman from his home area. So, when we talk about political parties, their influence and meaning in Congress, we have to modify this with two important considerations; first, that the average Member of Congress, I think, feels far more responsibility and loyalty, and certainly far more need towards the home folks and the voters, than he does toward the political label. He feels far more the need to keep the majority at home behind him than he does to keep the party headquarters in Washington behind him.

And secondly, the fact that the member is himself subject in our relatively non-partisan, partisan politics, to a great barrage of influences - good, bad and indifferent, strong, weak and moderate - to get him to take individual positions, lines and approaches, on problems that come up before the Congress. This is why, in almost all of our politics the political parties themselves tend to be less disciplining organizations and more rallies of the label loyalists around election time. This is why in our politics you can find a Clifford Case and a Jake Javits on the left-hand side of the Republican Party, and you can equally find a far Right extreme conservative wing in the Republican Party.

In the Democratic Party you can find a Hubert Humphrey and an Eastland in

the same organizational structure because basically the organizational structure is neither organizational nor structure. It is in this fact - in Congress, at least - a relatively weak operation.

In sum, then, the political party as we see it now in the United States, as it has developed in our lifetime - because it has changed markedly since Roosevelt - remains a sort of federation; loose, undisciplined; of people whose backgrounds and current interests tend to march more or less part of the time together. It is a kind of politics in the Congress much affected by the needs of the people back home. It is most responsive to them. It is the kind of politics which is popular, in the very real sense of the word, as opposed to being organizational or ideological. It is the kind of politics which places itself in an occasional ideological frame of reference but without the binding of an ideological frame of reference. Because, the politics can move into it and out of it with equal ease. It's a politics which is essentially pragmatic, and it's a politics which is essentially non-Old World, non-European in the way in which it is set up, without the disciplines and all the philosophies which are involved in the political systems of so many other countries.

It is a politics, basically, of people, rather than a politics of doctrine. It is the politics of the market-place, the luncheon table, and the deal, rather than the politics of professorial lecture and the politics of the long essay in a philosophical journal. It's a politics, if you will, of the operator rather than the thinker, though I must confess that anyone who tries to follow this doctrine of the non-thinker when he testifies before a Congressional Committee may find that his mental processes are being rapidly speeded up by the questions that he gets from the other side.

It is a politics essentially, I suppose, of success, because, to reverse the old phrase, "Nothing in American politics fails quicker than failure." You can never, never in America claim ideological correctness for the loss of votes. If you try to do this in a political conversation you will get only a blank stare and a free bottle of Coca Cola, and a ticket out.

The basic pattern of American politics is the pattern of victory. And I must confess, with all respect to my colleagues in the Department of State, where I served for some years, it's a good doctrine and it tends to come up on top often.

Thank you very much.

QUESTION: Have you made studies or have any studies been made on the influence of an organization such as the labor union on the manner in which their men vote?

MR. SCAMMON: Well, by and large, the effect of trade unions on one side or of business organizations on the other, is relatively minor in this sense. I think the best case in point was John L. Lewis. John Lewis endorsed the Republican candidate for President when he was head of the Mine Workers in 1936, 1940, 1944, and 1948. In each election the Republican lost. Then in 1952 Mr. Lewis endorsed Mr. Stevenson and he lost. It doesn't mean that Mr. Lewis has a genius for backing a loser, it just means that basically the endorsement of a trade union leader doesn't have a great deal of meaning to the rank and file.

What often confuses us here is that by and large the interests of the trade unions and the interests of their members tend to go together. In other words,

if you get a trade union which is actively engaged in trying to increase wages or get lower hours the members by and large are in agreement with that and they'll tend to go along with the candidates who support it. The same thing is true of business. A Republican candidate for Congress, for example, who campaigns we'll say on a pro-business platform; this doesn't mean that he has been bought off by the Chamber of Commerce; all it means is that his viewpoint happens to be that which agrees with the Chamber of Commerce and with the business community in his area.

So that, influence in any untoward sense, in the sense of bringing pressure to bear or forcing people to do something they wouldn't otherwise do, I think is almost zero.

Another excellent example of this is the complete failure of the Hoffa effort in 1960 to beat Kennedy. But all down the line where local elections were concerned you just can't do this. The average member just doesn't respond to this kind of pressure.

QUESTION: Mr. Scammon, I noticed in the statistics information that you presented always a positive approach for this; for that. Now, we know in individual conversations, particularly at election time, there is an awful lot against this or against that, giving vent to the individual and group prejudices. If it is politically acceptable, does any work go on - have you any facts and figures that deal with the handling of prejudices?

MR. SCAMMON: Well, let's put it this way. It's certainly true that people tend to vote as much - maybe more - against something as they do for something. This also depends upon the nature of the issue. When Roosevelt, for example, was

President, there were ~~people~~ people voting for Roosevelt and there were people voting against Roosevelt. When Hoover ran against Roosevelt in 1932 I think there was almost nobody voting for Hoover. People were either voting against Hoover and for Roosevelt, or they were voting for Hoover not because they agreed with Hoover but because they didn't ^{like} Roosevelt or the Democrats. Now, how much this may be in the individual mind you'd have to consult a psychiatrist rather than a political scientist. You never can tell. A lot of this comes out in an individual's approach to many other problems as well.

In terms of prejudice in a larger sense, racial prejudice, religious prejudice or whatever it may be, this is extremely hard to measure. You can take statistics and prove certain areas of the country that have abnormal patterns which can be attributed by some, at least, to this. But it's pretty difficult to investigate by, as I say, interview or polling, or survey techniques, because people by and large tend to cover this up. Instinctively they will not say, "Well I'm not going to vote for or against Kennedy because he's a Roman Catholic." Some will; a surprising number will; but most will not. They'll say, "Well, he's not as good as Nixon," or, "He doesn't have the experience." They'll use some other reason. You're never quite sure whether this is the real reason.

Actually, there is a Member of Congress - a Democrat - whom I'm sure is a Democrat because his mother was a Republican. If you ask him this he will not agree with this statement unless he's crazy, which he isn't.

QUESTION: Mr. Scammon, what factors most significantly contributed to the downfall of the Pendergast, Cump, Hague, etc. machines? Would you elaborate

on that a little?

MR. SCAMMON: Well, most of the political machines that have been eliminated have fallen out of favor for a variety of reasons; sometimes because the man at the top has lost his skill; he has gotten old and he just doesn't have the drive that he had before; because of growing factionalism among various elements - parts of the team just don't pull together in harness; sometimes because some particularly malodorous bit of work has been brought to the public eye, which people just won't stand for; sometimes because a local newspaper or a local group of people have gotten organized and have provided a nucleus around which the more generally apathetic majority can unite.

Quite frequently in the cases that you cite and others like them - Crump - Phoenix City, Alabama, which some of you may remember who served in the Infantry School - I know when I was an Officer Candidate in Benning, during the war, we were instructed to stay away from Phoenix City not because it was a cesspool of evil, which it was, but because we might get into a fight with somebody and get thrown out of school. They needed Second Lieutenants more than they needed Phoenix City at the time.

Most of these particular areas, though, big or little, it is a combination of this kind of factor which has produced this change.

QUESTION: How would you explain the fact that the participation of voters in Presidential Elections in the United States tends to be lower than in similar elections in Western Europe?

MR. SCAMMON: Well, for these reasons. First of all, in this country you

have to get registered. In most European countries you are registered by the state. In Britain, for example, or Germany, they come around house to house and make up a register of voters. You don't have to do anything. You don't have to go down to City Hall or the county court-house and register yourself.

Since, in most states, the time in which you can register is cut off anywhere from a week to ten weeks before the election, in some instances you don't even get interested or activated in the election until after the date of registration is passed.

Then, too, there are, of course, in many parts of the country, inhibitions on registration. Rural colored voters in some parts of the South - I wouldn't want to register in some parts of Mississippi. In New York you have to be literate in English. Well, for Puerto Ricans this is often difficult, particularly if they've just come from the Island; they've come from a rural area, or perhaps from a working-class part of San Juan where you don't hear English; they can't speak English.

Another major factor in cutting down our vote is the tremendous mobility of our people. About one out of five Americans moves every year. If you move, first you have to re-register; it's not automatic as it is in many European countries. You have to re-register, you have to fill out a residence requirement in your new area; you have to go through the administrative and legal difficulties of getting yourself back on the list of voters.

Actually, in 1960 about 64% of our adult population voted, as compared to perhaps 75% or 80% in many of the European countries. On the other hand, if we had

eliminated from our total, people who couldn't vote because of these difficulties we would not be as high as Western Europe, but we wouldn't be too far behind them.

QUESTION: In the taking of the 1960 census, quite a few people - I won't say quite a few, but some, at least - felt that the information requested by the census takers was an invasion of their personal privacy. Now, as a consequence of that, has any legal action been taken against those who refused to cooperate, and if so, what has been the reaction in the courts?

MR. SCAMMON: There have been two cases which involved situations such as you have mentioned - both in New York - one involving a man named Sherow and another a man named Rickenbacker, the son of Eddie Rickenbacker. In both cases the court held that this was not an invasion of privacy and in both cases the respondents were found guilty and were fined \$100. My understanding is that both cases are on appeal; I can't say that definitely. But this has been the pattern.

What happened in 1950 I don't know. Normally, we don't get much difficulty on this. Where you do sometimes get difficulty is on an economic census where you are going to a corporation and asking them to tell you a good deal about their internal workings.

Most people have no problem as far as the census is concerned; the only difficulty is that in 1960 many a census-taker floated away on cups of coffee, because he'd be invited in to sit down, and by the time the day was over - particularly if it was a long way between men's rooms he had quite a problem.

But, there are some who have this view, and it's unfortunate. I must confess that before I went into the census, perhaps it's because I'm a statistician, I got

the form and filled it out very carefully; it was very interesting. I would have liked them to give me more questions. I can say this because I had nothing to do with the census at that time. But, the number of such instances are very small. And we respect the viewpoint of such people, but our job is to get the data. If we can count 180 million people and only get two \$100 fines out of it, why, we aren't making much money on the deal, but I think it's better that way.

QUESTION: Mr. Scammon, you talked about the difficulty of measuring the socially unacceptable question such as religion. However, divorce is something that is a prejudice, but it's still socially acceptable. We've had one Presidential Candidate and one talked about candidate, both effected by this. Has there been any measure made of its effect?

MR. SCAMMON: No. This is even harder to get than, say, a question of religious prejudice, because there are ways in which you can measure this in terms of statistics of later voting in areas of certain known religious characteristics. Until we get some precincts that are entirely composed of divorced persons it will be a little difficult to find this out.

It is a factor, however, in survey and polling research - and much of what I say this morning is based on polling research. There are people who mention this. Your problem, of course, is to identify whether this is always the basic reason. A person may take a divorce as a reason for not voting for a candidate. As you say, it's a socially accepted prejudice. Under these conditions they may say, "Well, I won't vote for a divorced man." What they really mean is that they got beat out for top place in their high school class by somebody of the other political

party years ago and they're still sour about it.

In the case of Mr. Stevenson, as far as we can find out - and this is very iffy material - the divorce was not a major factor. In other words, if he had ~~not~~ been divorced or separated in the case of the first election, from the evidence we have it wouldn't have made any measurable difference.

I think with Mr. Rockefeller in New York the same thing is true with one possible ~~excep~~tion. Among Roman Catholic voters, with whom the divorce issue is likely to have a larger impact, it may be that if the man who is divorced is on your side it's easier to hump over than if he is on the other side. It gives you another socially acceptable prejudice reason for not voting for him. And perhaps one should add too that this may work the other way among some of the stricter Protestant groups such as ~~Nor~~wegian Lutherans in western Minnesota - something of that sort. But, this is awfully hard to measure. It's one of the least easy to measure, of prejudices, socially acceptable or otherwise.

QUESTION: Do you think you're going to have a more difficult time, or less difficult time in re-electing Mr. Kennedy in 1964?

MR. SCAMMON: I like the use of the word "you." I wish some of my colleagues agreed with it. I would think, assuming that there is no major depression - which I think is a fair assumption no matter who is in the White House now - that the task of Mr. Kennedy in approaching 1964 would be much easier than it was in 1960. In the first place, the religious issue, although not completely eliminated, has been very largely vitiated simply because they did not build a tunnel under the Atlantic either way. The fact that Pope John is not in the White House is a fact;

it is not now a premise. This will be helpful.

It is also true that it is very difficult now to talk about inexperience. You may say that the experience has been bad, but you can't say that there has been a lack of it. Thirdly, and most important - more important than either of these - the Presidency is an awfully big tree and it's difficult to grow anything in its shadow. This would apply to Nixon as well as to Kennedy if Nixon had been elected. Just the surroundings of the Presidency, the exposure, the media, foreign affairs - all the rest of it - that it's just very difficult for anybody even to get in the ball park. This doesn't mean that you can't lose; you can. But, in the years of the present century, the only incumbent President trying for re-election - the only two who have been defeated, have been Taft in 1912 when his own party split apart, and, of course, Hoover in '32 in the midst of the greatest depression of the century.

Now, there is no evidence that there is going to be any splitting apart. Of course, there will be diversities; there always are in both parties; but there is no evidence as you go into '64 that there is going to be any split. I would say that there is no evidence that there is going to be a depression of the 1930-31-32 magnitude, simply because the state now moves in on this.

In 1932 there were great philosophical differences as to what the government ought to do. The result was that for several years there there was simply inactivity, because there was no agreement that the government ought to do something about this other than letting it find its own level. Now I think on either side of the aisle it's not a party question. The only question really is, do you jump in head first or feet first. But you're going to jump in. You're going to save the

economic situation with any kind of governmental action that's needed. I think this is true of Nixon, Kennedy - anyone I know on the political horizon, even including Mr. Goldwater.

It's simply the acceptance of the role of the government to prevent grievous economic harm to the state is there. So that, when you get the media, and you get the absence of economic depression, I would think it would be difficult to see the task of Mr. Kennedy, electorally, as anything but easier than it was in 1960. He still might lose. In fact it couldn't be more difficult than it was in 1960, or else he would lose. It's not easy to get much closer than you were then.

QUESTION: Mr. Scammon, what decision will be made on the third-term limitation of the President?

MR. SCAMMON: Well, this is a sort of anti-Roosevelt mood, if you will remember, which I can think of nobody who shot an arrow into the air and had it come down right through his head the way it did for the Republicans on the third term. This gives me a certain sense of Schoudenfreuda, which we can enjoy.

But, I think myself, from a purely point of view of government, it's probably a mistake. In other words, the people really are the ones who ought to decide this question. But, it's there and I'm sure you're not going to change it. I mean, it's accepted now as a two-term limitation. It's a form of early retirement.

I understand when the President was put this question one time what he was going to do when he retires at the age of 53 or 54, he thought for a moment, and then he said, "Well, I'll just be a rich bum." It's a lovely life if you can afford it.

QUESTION: You mentioned the plan of people - of party loyalties or label loyalties, about 60-40 Democrats to Republicans. Do you have any views on long-term trends on this subject?

MR. SCAMMON: Well, this kind of basic label loyalty is pretty deep and it doesn't change very easily or quickly. In fact, we've only seen one such change in our lifetime, which was the change associated in the '30s with the great depression and with the election of Roosevelt. This did change people from a basically Republican label loyalty to a basically Democratic label loyalty. And I think it would take a social or political elections revolution of at least that magnitude to produce a change. What actually happens here is not so much a question of the label loyalty as what does it actually mean in terms of the voting place. That might change from time to time, although I must say that if you look back historically, 1962 will be 32 years since the elections of 1930. The Republicans have won two and have controlled the House four years out of those 32. It's almost like the Yankees and the American League; no matter who the team seems to be, the conditions are such that they end up close to the top or on top.

I would think that in our lifetime - this is in our active lifetime, the next 15, 20 or 25 years - it's unlikely that this basic label loyalty will be shifted. The arithmetic of American politics depends not so much on changing the label loyalty as how much slippage is there from that label loyalty in any given personal issue or election situation that may develop.

QUESTION: Does the release of a professional poll taken before an election tend to influence the voters?

MR. SCAMMON: Well, this is an old question about whether or not polling and the announcement of results has any effect in creating a bandwagon. And I'm sure the greatest expert on this is "President" Thomas E. Dewey. In the years since 1948 we have, I think, pretty well exploded the idea that the release of polling information has this kind of effect.

In 1958, for example, Rockefeller was way behind Harriman in the first poll that was taken in New York State in the Spring of 1958. But he crept up, went ahead, and won easily. This very year the first poll that was taken in California showed that Mr. Nixon was far ahead of Governor Brown; I think about 50-40, with 10 undecided, back at, say, Christmastime of last year. If the election had been held then presumably Brown would have been erased by Nixon in a land-slide victory. Since then, Brown has crept up and now he's ahead of Nixon.

So, if this bandwagon theory were correct it should have had the opposite effect both in New York in '58 and in California in '62. In other words, the man who was ahead should have gone further ahead instead of slipping backward.

I would think, myself, that these three instances - the big Dewey operation in '48, Rockefeller in '58, and now most recently, Brown in '62 would pretty conclusively indicate that the poll doesn't have this effect.

Now, there's another school of thought which says that it has the opposite effect; that the poll tends to hurt the winner. What happens is, if we take a poll and you and I are running for office and you're way ahead, your people start to get lazy; you don't raise as much money, you cut down on your advertising budget, you only make three speeches a day instead of six, you forget to go to that other

picnic on Sunday afternoon, and this sort of thing. The creation of an atmosphere of confidence can also create an atmosphere, eventually, of defeat, because you won't do the things necessary to maintain it.

I think that both theories are unprovable, but there may be more to be said for the second than for the first.

QUESTION: In your discussion about in recent years having a national purpose, assuming we could arrive at some more or less precise definition of our national purpose, because of our loose political setup, do you think it would be practical to mobilize our policies and let the voters decide them, as a national purpose?

MR. SCAMMON: No, I do not. I don't think you can do this. I don't think you can get a national purpose any more than you can get a universal service-agreed intelligence system about anything. And if you do get it it's so bland and so generalized that it's perfectly useless and the time of the people that went into it could better have been employed in digging ditches. It has no value. Usually you can get agreement on specific programs for specific purposes under specific conditions. All you end up with when you talk about broad national purpose is a very broad thing; that we ought to be good, we ought to be against sin - under certain conditions - we ought to do good for people, and this sort of thing.

I think, quite frankly, the Commission on National Goals, which operated a year or two ago was a case in point. It's hard. One really hesitates to attack this; it doesn't seem cricket. These are nice people and they're doing their best

but I think if their salary were to be donated to charity the public would be the gainer.

QUESTION: You led a delegation of observers, I believe, to the Russian elections back in the late '40s. I wonder if there were any impressions from that experience that you'd like to pass on?

MR. SCAMMON: Well, this was a group that went over to observe the elections in 1958 in the Soviet Union. It was mainly an exercise in observing non-elections. The procedure is nothing. There is only one candidate for each job. Everybody marches to the polls and is handed a ballot which is already prepared and printed in advance. You don't have to mark it; all you have to do is drop it. The whole operation is just meaningless in terms of any kind of democracy, contest, disagreement, alternate viewpoints, etc.

Now, there is this kind of contest in the Soviet Union. It exists, perhaps, in the Central Committee of the Party. There are disagreements, obviously. Do you have machine tractor stations or don't you? Do you collectivize farms more, or less? There are, obviously, differences of opinion and disagreement among the leadership, but these are not permitted to degenerate to the point at which they are decided by the peasantry; they aren't.

By and large, I think the only phrase that I would find helpful in describing an election in the Soviet Union is that it's an exercise in contempt. It's an exercise of an elite group with a contempt for the people. It's like Fascism, almost word for word. The results are almost exactly the same; 99.84% on our side, whether it's Hitler's Germany, Mussolini's Italy, or Stalin's, or Khrushchev's

or X's U.S.S.R.

QUESTION: You do not use the term "Independent" as a term for a group or an individual, although, of course, you treated them in the discussion of the transitive parties. Do you feel that there is really an independent group, and is there a possibility of the independent group forming a third party?

MR. SCAMMON: Well, I don't think there is an independent group in the sense that you talk about is there an Anarchist organization. I mean, the two words are antithetical. The very fact of being independent means ungroup-conscious. This is an interesting question, because Independents in politics are not what we usually assay them to be.

There is a myth in this country that the Independent is sort of a well-educated, Jovian individual who sits on top and examines the issues, the candidates and the record, and thinks carefully about this, makes up his mind, and chooses this good man from this ticket and that good man from the other ticket. Well, this happens in some cases - very few cases. By and large, the people whom you call "Independents" and who would be so classified in most areas, are the least intelligent, the least motivated, the least active, and the most stupid elements of the electorate.

Now, why do I say that? Because, people who think about these things usually have ideas. In other words, if you're interested in politics you know something about it and you've got a conviction. The typical person who has no conviction, isn't interested, couldn't care less, can't remember even that there is an election, much less the name of the candidates - that's the Independent. Because, when you

try to push them they say. "Well, I don't know much about politics; I'm an Independent."

Now, it's true that there is a minority in this group who are just what I first described, people who do take a great interest, who don't think of themselves as really identified with the party, who do try to make an effort - all of 1%, perhaps. But the great mass of Independents are simply the uninterested, the unmotivated, the kind of people who were described to me last night.

It was^a very interesting situation. I had dinner with the Congressman from Michigan who was pointing out that in his home town youngsters have to go down to City Hall to get a liquor card when they're 21 in order to be able to get a drink. He said that 10% got the liquor card and voted and the other 90% just got the liquor card and didn't bother to register. This is the Independent; get the liquor card and forget about the registration.

A rather more important group, I think, actually, in terms of politics, is the group of what I would call the "slippers." That is, those who have a party viewpoint and normally think of themselves not as Independents, but as party people, but who are not strong enough in their party feeling to be just blind loyalists; I mean they can go from time to time over on the other side; Republicans who might have voted for Pat Brown in California in '58; Democrats who would have voted for Rockefeller in New York in '58 - this type.

But as for the Independents themselves, I wouldn't waste much effort on them, quite frankly. It's just too hard to dig into this. Well, some of you may have served in Germany or Austria, and you know that in Austria when you get a cake

- a little confection - there is always a mountain of whipped cream on it called Schlag; these are the Independents, the Schlag. And they have all of the weight and the authority that the schlag has.

QUESTION: In this vein, then, would you comment on the possible reconstitution of the make up of the two parties?

MR. SCAMMON: I would not think that this is likely. On the Northern side the demarcation is fairly clear; more or less liberal on the Democratic side; more or less conservative on the Republican, with a lot of individual exceptions.

The Souther^{ners,}/of course, have the best of all possible worlds, because, if the Republicans win the Conservatives win, and if the Democrats win, with their Conservatives they can stop the Democrats from doing anything they don't want them to do.

So, the only way you'll get any re-alignment of the party that is basic is for a large number of Southern Democrats to become Republicans. There may be some movement along this line, but the pragmatic and very practical approach is that they've got the very best of all possible worlds. It may be anatomically impossible to eat your cake and have it too, but they're getting awfully close to it, without having to go through the Roman system of regurgitating before you can get another piece. They've done pretty well, I must say. They can stay inside the Democratic Party and continue to have all those Committee Chairmanships in the House and in the Senate. If they like what the Administration proposes they can vote for it. If they vote against it it's defeated because the Republican opposition will be fairly solid anyway. If I were a Southern Conservative Democrat I think

I'd let it stay right the way it is. This way I get them coming and going, up and down, sideways and in the middle. Incidentally, there is no more pragmatic group in the world, than this one.

QUESTION: How effective do you consider the Press and other national news media in molding voters' decisions?

MR. SCAMMON: This is a differential question, in the sense that on local issues the Press can be very effective. If it's a question of a school bond issue, or increase in the local police force - something of this sort - the Press can often have a good deal of effect. When it gets into national issues that effect diminishes markedly.

The fact is, of course, that Roosevelt never had a majority of the Press on his side in any of his election campaigns - the four that he won. Eisenhower did in his two election campaigns; Truman did not; Kennedy did not. If the Press had been for Stevenson it would not have effected '52 and '56. In other words, they still would have voted for Eisenhower. I don't think that the influence of the editorial page has, really, very much to do with what people decide.

Now, there is a different kind of influence. If you have a newspaper in your area which constantly sells a certain idea or a certain personality and diminishes all of the others, not necessarily by telling an untruth, not by slanting the truth, but simply by emphasis. This may have a long-range effect. But in terms of a specific election and the influence the Press has, I think it's pretty limited.

Now, TV and radio - particularly TV - have a tremendous impact, but there, except for a few editorials which you've heard in recent years on TV and radio,

most of which are very bland and don't really address themselves to highly controversial questions, the main impact is simply in the image itself; the fact that people can see and hear this person or this bit of discussion or idea. It isn't so much a party operation or an editorial operation. I don't think the effect of the newspapers, though, is very great.

QUESTION: Labor spends a lot of money on lobbying in Congress. How effective are they in mustering grass roots support of their organizational members in support of legislation they desire?

MR. SCAMMON: Well, for labor and for all the others this depends entirely on the issue. When you get a foreign trade bill coming up you'll find that the unions, for example in an industry like pottery, which is likely to be affected by foreign imports, the unions will be very effective because the average worker can see that this is a threat to him. So actually, of course, the unions and management are hand-in-hand on this one because everybody can see that they are going to lose.

When you get a situation in which the average ordinary member and his wife can see a specific situation in which their own personal situation is involved, then the union can be very effective; petition signing, meetings, telegrams; this sort of thing. On larger questions which don't specifically affect the members they'll be very desultorily affected. This is true all down the line. It's true with unions; it's true with the business community; it's true with the farmers' organizations; it's true with the veterans' organizations - any lobbying group is much more effective when it's trying to get legislation which is of immediate practical benefit to

the individual.

I'm sure, for example, if you had an organization of veterans whose GI Insurance had lapsed or who had never taken out GI Insurance, and that question came up before Congress, they'd be very effective on that question because that's what they exist for. On the other hand, on some of the larger issues - more general, philosophical issues - you wouldn't find a great deal of interest. They are effective, primarily, in terms of how immediate and pragmatic the issue is.

COLONEL BERGAMYER: Mr. Scammon, we've already presumed on ten minutes of your time and I'm sure the students would like to keep you here for the rest of the morning, but we must stop. I want to say ~~that~~ on behalf of the Commandant, the faculty, and the student body, thank you very much for an excellent presentation.

MR. SCAMMON: Thank you.