

Perspectives Page

EDITORIAL Tale Of Woe

Oh kind reader, loan me a few moments of your time whilst I try to relate, in no uncertain terms, a tale of woe and misbegotten adventures concerning a place that you and I know well.

This unfortunate state of affairs I speak of takes place in a learning environment, bordered on all sides by a small community, in a place settled by a man named William Penn. Yes t'is true, the place I speak of is Pennsylvania, specifically a small town, which we may as well call Smallville.

In Smallville there is a school, oh, a university, but only a branch of its big mother, who happens to be spread out over all of Penn's Woods. We shall call this school, the Smallville Branch of Big-U.

The Smallville branch is probably not a whole lot different from Big-U, although, not nearly as many people have entrusted their funds to promote their intellectual stimulation at the Smallville branch as compared to Big-U.

The Smallville branch of Big-U has several governing factions each directly associated with and consisting of the members they represent.

For example those who pay for the knowledge to be taken out of Smallville, have elected people to watch out for their interests. We'll call them Lower Watcher-Outers.

Those who get paid have done the same. As a note of interest here, thou reader, you must know that those who now get paid have at one time or another themselves paid, not necessarily at the Smallville-U branch, but, nevertheless at some institution adapted to such purposes. Those who get paid have elected Watcher-Outers too.

Now there is an organization that is sort of an overseer for the Lower Watcher-Outers and the people they watch-out for. Here is where the conflict arises.

It seems the Executive branch of the Lower Watcher-Outers has somewhat hostile feelings toward the Overseer, whose name I can't bring to mind, I know, though, that it is a direction on the compass. Why this is so, I can only theorize, but it is true.

What the Overseer thinks about the current Lower Watcher-Outers administration is anybody's guess.

Of course the opinions of both sides are only expressed within the confines of the respective camps. Eventually, I foresee openly expressed adverse opinions probably by the Lower Watcher-Outers, for the Overseer is too smooth to act foolish.

One member of the Executive Branch, a certain, young, aspiring, sci-fi writer, constantly claims that this is the year of detente. [An allusion to relations on a much broader scale.] Well eventually we'll see if he is correct.

It is still somewhat early in the year for the Lower Watcher-Outers Administration, and they seem to be just getting prepared to do something probably for the next term. Maybe something is in the wind about parking fees or prof. evaluations. In any case, to drop a bit of advise directly from a sagacious old seer: "You catch more flies with honey than you do with vinegar."

But, alas, oh reader, we'd be foolish to think such a problem could be solved, once a mind is of a certain opinion. Distrust and contempt and anger are all conditions of which each creature, known as human, are all injected in gradations of severity.

Oh Yeah, Have a Happy Turkey.

Jimmy Carter And The Future Of American Politics

Jimmy Carter, a figure silent and unknown in the 1960's, is the president-elect of the United States in large part because of the political forces which were let loose in that decade. Carter's nomination would have been impossible without the reforms begun in 1968 opening up the Democratic Party to challenges from those who could not garner regular organizational support. Without the civil rights movement and the dramatic progress it brought to the South, no Southern governor would have warranted black votes in the North nor would they have been there to gather in the South. Much of the Carter effort- paid and volunteer- came from individuals whose politics were shaped by the movements of the 1960s. Rep. Andrew Young, of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and a key Carter advisor, is no doubt symbolic of this phenomenon.

Yet, if Carter can be somewhat ironically called a child of the 1960s, his victory does represent a sharp break with the politics of that era. The divisions between young and old, white and black which characterized American politics in the late 1960s and early 1970s were clearly a result of the struggle over civil rights and the Vietnam War. As these issues have faded from our political landscape, so have the divisions that they have produced. And no where is this more apparent than in the election returns from the South.

Carter's success in the South, the key to his victory, was unprecedented not in its size but its composition. Carter's percentages in the deep South were in fact dramatically behind those of Roosevelt's in 1940 and Stevenson's in 1952 and in some states behind Kennedy's in 1960, as evidenced in the chart below:

	Roosevelt (1940)	Stevenson (1952)	Kennedy (1960)	Carter (1976)
Ala.	85%	85%	57%	56%
Ga.	84%	70%	63%	67%
La.	86%	53%	64%	50%
Miss.	95%	60%	60%	52%

* percentage of the major party vote.

In the elections of 1968 and 1972 the Democratic vote in the deep South was almost entirely black and reduced to less than 30%. Carter's South in spite of the showing in the Electoral College was not the solid South of the pre-civil rights era. His margins were exceedingly thin in Mississippi and Louisiana and exceeded 60% only in his home state of Georgia were

provided by a coalition unprecedented in past presidential elections in the South. It consisted of the newly enfranchised blacks (95% of Southern blacks supported Carter) and poor and working class whites who returned to the Democratic party after supporting Wallace and Nixon in successive elections. While President Ford, according to the CBS News poll, won a majority of the whites in the South, Carter won 63% of all Southern voters earning \$8000 a year or less, 47% of those earning between \$12,000 and \$20,000 and only 36% of those earning more than \$20,000. Carter carried the black counties of southwestern Mississippi and white blue collar counties of northeastern Mississippi. Carter carried, according to early reports, approximately two-thirds of the Southern Wallace voters. The urban middle class voter in the South remained Republican as he has generally been since 1952. What then emerges from Carter's victory in the South is the triumph of class loyalties over race- a populist's dream come true. Carter's success in the South was not the politics of region but of class.

Throughout the country Carter's narrow victory (in only 12 states plus the District of Columbia was his margin greater than 100,000) is highlighted by its class character. Two divisions in American politics, characteristic of the past decade, have blurred class lines- religion and age almost disappeared in this election. Kennedy's mandate in 1960 which had a distinctive class content was nonetheless colored by the religious issue. He gained 78% of the Catholic vote and only 38% of the Protestant. Jimmy Carter's mandate, for all the talk about religion in the campaign, was not as sharply distinguished by a religious split. The Protestant and Catholic vote came close according to most polls to splitting down the middle. According to the CBS poll Carter gained 55% of the Catholic vote and 46% of the Protestant vote. The Harris Poll even indicates that the Jewish vote, traditionally Democratic by overwhelming margins, went only 54% to 45% for Carter.

In addition to the descent of region and religion as factors in American politics, this election also marks the decline of generational politics. The "youth" vote as a bloc seems to have disappeared as the Republicans not the Democrats appear to have benefited from the 26th Amendment. Those between the age of 18-21 favored Ford 52%-48% according to the CBS-New York Times survey. This mirrors the

exact split of those voters over 45 which may indicate that the young are returning to the politics of their parents and perhaps to their own class origins.

All of this throws into disarray many of the popular theories about the direction on American politics. Political writers such as Fredrick Dutton, who saw the liberal Democrats harvesting votes among the children of the upper-middle class, and Kevin Phillips, who saw Southern supporters of George Wallace moving inexorably toward the Republican Party, may have to return to their drawing boards. The notion that the Sunbelt would provide the geographic base for an emerging Republican majority was based on the premise that race would continue to be the transcendent issue in the South. Carter's victory splits the Sunbelt at the Texas border and the "cotton" South from the conservative Southwest.

The collapse of the Southern strategy first conceived during Barry Goldwater's 1964 campaign does not by any measure leave the Republican Party without a firm constituent base. If anything the 1976 election clarifies their prospects for the future, Freed from the racial politics of the Nixon-Agnew years, the Republicans can think nationally rather than regionally. Their potential as a moderate conservative party- middle-class, small town and suburban- has not been effectively tapped. Republicans need only look at the success of such moderates as Thompson of Illinois, Weiker of Connecticut and Heinz of Pennsylvania in this past election to see where their future should lie.

The opportunities for the Democratic Party may be unprecedented if they can avoid being snared by the two issues which have plagued them throughout this century- war and racism. Unlike Franklin Roosevelt, who inherited a devastated economy, and John Kennedy, who inherited a tense international situation and a conservative Congress, Jimmy Carter confronts a world at relative peace, an economy out of balance but hardly devastated, and a Congress which is perhaps the most liberal since 1938.

If Carter can avoid debilitating military entanglements and moderate the excessive rate of arms spending and arms competition, he may have the first opportunity for any American president in over 50 years to develop a program for reform uninterrupted by international crisis. Roosevelt hardly was beyond his economic recovery program when the war clouds appeared. Truman

See Page 3

Capitol Campus Reader
of the Pennsylvania State University
The Capitol Campus
RTE. 230, Middletown, Pa., 17057
Office W-129-131
Phone (717) 944-4970

Editor-in-Chief.....William M. Kane
Assistant Editor.....Tim Adams
Associate Editor.....Deborah K. Young
Copy Editor.....Robert L. Fisher Jr.
Advertising Manager.....Wayne Stottmeister
Business Manager.....Carol Andress

Staff.....Ann Clark, Rich Dullase, Greg Hall, Young Inoyang, Virginia Lehman, John Lelczapf, Diane Lewis, Ray Martin, John O'Neill, Karen Pickens, Pat Stanchak.

Perspectives Logo.....Janine M. Rannels
Hot Lion Sketch.....Beth Kopas
Captain and The Wino.....Ed Perrone, John Robinson

The Capitol Campus Reader is the school newspaper of Penn State's Capitol Campus. It is published by the students who attend this school. We of the Reader Staff try to accurately represent the voice of the students, and keep them informed as to current events and relevant issues. We are published on a weekly basis.