

First attorney general election

By JOHN SCHLANDER
Daily Collegian Staff Writer

A 1978 amendment to the Pennsylvania Constitution enables voters to elect an attorney general for the first time in the state's history.

Before the amendment, the governor appointed the attorney general. A 1978 statewide referendum paved the way for the constitutional amendment, which is designed to make the attorney general more independent of the governor.

The referendum was sparked by corruption in the administration of former Gov. Milton J. Shapp and the lack of independence of the appointed attorney general from the governor's office.

Government experts hope the new method for selection of the attorney general will give the official greater

power as a watchdog over the administration, with the independence needed to battle corruption.

The attorney general is the chief law enforcement officer for the state and the head of the Department of Justice. He appoints most attorneys for the state, including local district attorneys.

He works with and supervises district attorneys in enforcing criminal law, and he supervises the Office of Civil Law, which handles all civil cases. He also acts as legal advisor for some state offices.

Attorney generals are now elected in more than 40 states.

Gov. Dick Thornburgh recently signed a bill that gives criminal and civil powers to the attorney general. The attorney general was previously the governor's legal counsel, but the Office of General Counsel will pro-

bably take over this duty.

In a written statement Thornburgh said, "This bill grants to the attorney general office strong law enforcement powers and keeps it independent and accountable to the people."

"It also recognizes the right of the governor and the executive branch of government to have their own legal representative through the creation of the Office of General Counsel."

The constitutional powers are subject to interpretation, however, and whoever is elected to the office could have an important role in further defining the powers and responsibilities.

The powers and responsibilities of the office will change as experiences with the elected office dictate, legislative officials say.

Winner to shape office powers

By JOHN SCHLANDER
Daily Collegian Staff Writer

The man that the voters will select for the first attorney general in the state's history will have the opportunity to shape and define the powers of the office.

Vying for the distinction of being the first elected attorney general are Republican LeRoy S. Zimmerman, Democrat Michael A. O'Pake and Libertarian Richard D. Fuerle.

Although Gov. Dick Thornburgh signed legislation defining duties and powers of the elected office, the law is subject to interpretation. Whoever wins the election will have a large role in defining the office.

Pennsylvania voters will see the office of attorney general on the ballot for the first time Tuesday. The governor previously appointed this officer, but he lost that right under a 1978 amendment to the state constitution.

Zimmerman, 45, of Harrisburg was

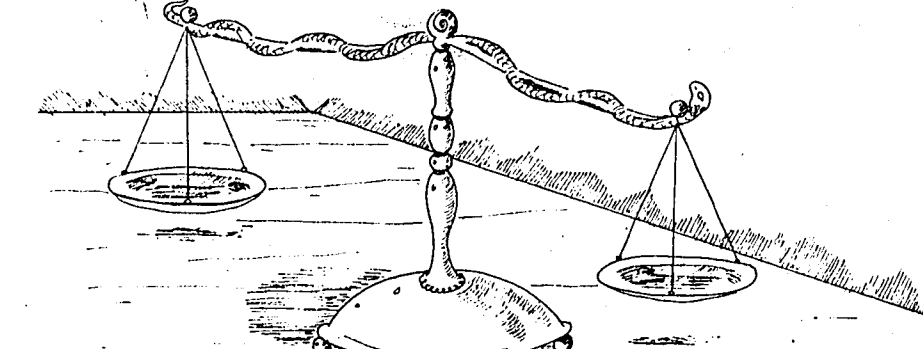


Illustration by Scott Smith

district attorney of Dauphin County from 1965 to last January.

O'Pake, 40, of Reading who is a state senator has served in the Legislature for 12 years.

Fuerle, 39, of Monroeville is an attorney.

O'Pake says the attorney general should be an administrator responsible for running the state Justice Department.

He adds that he will appoint an independent prosecutor to head the criminal law office and a non-partisan to head the organized crime and political corruption unit.

Zimmerman, however, says the attorney general should lead the battle against street crime, organized crime and public corruption. Handling state deeds, leases and contracts is also important, he says.

Zimmerman accuses O'Pake of not having the experience for the job. He has said O'Pake, a state senator, has experience writing laws but no experience enforcing them.

O'Pake has responded by saying that he has more experience in making state government respond to people's needs.

O'Pake, very popular in his native Berks County, has drawn publicity as a hardworking legislator for his work as head of the Senate Judiciary Committee and for his role in the Senate's probe of Medicaid fraud.

Zimmerman, backed strongly by Thornburgh and former Gov. William F. Scranton, has been criticized by O'Pake as not being able to maintain the independence of the office is supposed to have.

O'Pake has drawn fire for running in the attorney general race while seeking re-election to the Senate.

STATE TREASURER (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN ONE)		
R. Budd Dwyer	Republican	
Bob Casey	Democratic	
Tory A. Dunn	Socialist Workers	
Thelma Hambricht	Consumer	
Frank Bubb	Libertarian	
ATTORNEY GENERAL (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN ONE)		
LeRoy S. Zimmerman	Republican	
Michael A. O'Pake	Democratic	
Richard D. Fuerle	Libertarian	
AUDITOR GENERAL (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN ONE)		
James W. Knepper, Jr.	Republican	
Al Benedict	Democratic	
Darcy Richardson	Consumer	
Brian Sayago	Libertarian	

Opponent charges corruption

Auditor general meets attacks

By JOHN SCHLANDER
Daily Collegian Staff Writer

The race for the post of state auditor general features a all-out attack on the incumbent by one of his opponents.

State Rep. James W. Knepper Jr., R-Allegheny County, challenges the integrity of Democratic incumbent Al Benedict.

Benedict meets the attack with apparent indignation and denial.

Libertarian candidate Brian Sayago, a banking manager from Nazareth, is also running.

Knepper claims Benedict has received campaign funds from persons named in a recent state Crime Commission report.

Patronage abuse has been rampant, also, Knepper claims. He says he has a list of 100 patronage employees.

Knepper charges Benedict with "disgraceful and blatant macing" for collecting \$170,000 in campaign contributions from his office employees.

Benedict denies some charges and appears indignant at others, refusing to answer them.

He claims he and his staff have discovered more than \$153 million of misused or lost state funds, and he has saved taxpayers \$33.5 million in uncovered fraud and abuse, including Medicaid and welfare fraud.

Benedict received publicity for exposing out-of-state students at state colleges and universities paying in-state tuition rates.

He also established the TIP program for taxpayers to report instances of misused state money.

Knepper has been a state representative for 10 years. He authored the state's Sunshine Law, legislation designed to keep political meetings open to the public.

He is chairman of the Urban Affairs Committee and state representative of the National Task Force on Urban Affairs. He is also owner-president of Knepper Press Corp.

The auditor general's job is to review how taxpayers' money is spent.

He is responsible for ensuring that all money owed to the state is deposited in the Treasury and that money due to the public is disbursed legally and properly.

The Department of the Auditor General, which he heads, postulates the financial affairs of state government.

Treasurer - question of Caseys

By JOHN SCHLANDER
Daily Collegian Staff Writer

Will the real Robert Casey please stand up?

Republican candidate for state treasurer Sen. R. Budd Dwyer, Crawford County, contends the 1976 election of the treasurer was a fluke.

Robert E. Casey of Johnstown was elected because he was confused with Robert P. Casey, a Scranton resident who had been a popular state auditor general from 1968 to 1976, Dwyer says.

With a campaign fund of \$866, Casey defeated former state Rep. Patricia Crawford in the 1976 election.

Casey admits the confusion over names may have helped him, but it does not make any difference now, he claims.

He says he has been a good treasurer. Casey said the Treasury achieved record interest earnings of more than \$709 million in the 1979-80 fiscal year.

Dwyer, 40, has been state Senator since 1970. Before 1970 he served in the state House, where he was elected in 1964 as its youngest member—only 24 years old.

Dwyer holds three college degrees: a bachelor's in accounting and economics and a law degree, compared to Casey's two years of college.

However, Casey, 70, has 10 years of experience in the state Treasury.

Critics say Dwyer has not done that much in his 16 years in the state Legislature.

He is Senate Republican policy

chairman and a member of the state Republican Party executive committee.

Casey has been accused by critics of junketeering. In the last two years he has attended 11 conventions, visiting Hawaii and Arizona while attending conventions.

These conventions have kept him away from his office for about 40 days.

Casey said he has no political ambition beyond re-election as state treasurer.

The other candidates are Socialist Worker Tory A. Dunn, Consumer, Thelma Hambricht and Libertarian, Frank Bubb.

The state treasurer is the head of the Treasury Department.

Group issues Cunningham rating

By TOM ROYER
Daily Collegian Staff Writer

The League of Women Voters has given Rep. Gregg L. Cunningham, R-Centre County, a "political accountability rating" of 40 percent, meaning that as a Representative Cunningham voted with the League's position on two out of five issues the League surveyed.

State Sen. J. Doyle Corman, R-Centre County, was also given a rating of 40 percent.

While the League does not endorse candidates for political office, it does take positions on issues. The five bills used by the League in compiling the rating are:

- Senate Bill 1834, now law, which increased maximum truck weights to 80,000 pounds. The League opposed the measure, Cunningham and Corman voted for it.
- House Bill 9456, now law, which gave the state primary responsibility for enforcing safety regulations in the disposal of solid and hazardous wastes. Both the League and Cunningham supported the measure, Corman opposed it.

- House Bill 610, now law, which reformed the state's divorce laws to allow unilateral divorce after three years of separation and review in court and alimony for economically dependent spouse, among other provisions. The League, Cunningham and Corman all supported the measure.
- House Bill 302, now law, which allows local referendums to decide whether voters use electronic voting devices or paper ballots. The League and Corman supported the measure, Cunningham opposed it.
- House Bill 2044. Passed by the Senate, it would remove from General Assistance rolls all those who refuse a bona fide job offer, and provide a tax credit to businesses employing general assistance recipients. The League and Corman both supported it.
- Senate Bill 579, passed by the House, which included provisions restricting Medicaid funding for abortions, removing able-bodied persons from state welfare rolls, and capping funding for child welfare services. Opposed by the League, Cunningham voted for the bill.

Cunningham, calling the rating "myopic," said the rating only represents a small part of the important legislation voted on by the General Assembly in his term, and is not a good measurement of his whole performance.

"I think the League makes a very serious mistake when it becomes involved in partisan political legislative issues," he said.

"I would gently admonish them to go back to doing what they do best, and that is the very superb job they do of informing voters on the qualifications and views of candidates for public office, and that they stay out of the lobbying business," Cunningham said.

Cunningham said the League's rating was unfair because legislators cannot respond to explain every vote that was part of the rating.

"They're making a blanket categorical statement to which they know no candidate will ever be able to respond," Cunningham said. "They themselves are creating a very misleading appearance."

Candidates support reform bills

By TOM ROYER
Daily Collegian Staff Writer

Candidates for state House of Representatives from the 77th district have indicated support for reform legislation supported by Pennsylvania Common Cause.

According to the results of a questionnaire distributed by Common Cause to all candidates for state General Assembly, incumbent Rep. Gregg L. Cunningham, R-Centre County, supports the organization's position on five of seven issues.

Cunningham's two opponents in Tuesday's general election, Democratic nominee Robert C. Brazill (8th-political science), and independent candidate Michael G. Day, indicated they support Common Cause's position on all seven questions.

The survey questioned candidates on the following legislative issues (candidates support the legislation unless

otherwise indicated):

- "Sunset" legislation, which would require periodic review of state agencies and abolishment of those agencies that are no longer needed.
- Partial public financing of statewide election campaigns in which public funds could be used to supplement private contributions. Cunningham said he opposes such legislation.
- Tightening the state's Sunshine Law to require government agencies to open their policymaking discussions to the public.
- Disclosure of lobbyist expenses.
- State ratification of the U.S. constitutional amendment granting the District of Columbia representation in the U.S. Congress. Cunningham opposes the amendment.



Photos by Renee Jacobs

Two October rallies in Harrisburg presented opposing positions on the pro-choice, pro-life controversy. Rep. Gregg L. Cunningham, R-Centre County, spoke at the pro-life rally with the young boy pictured here standing behind him on the stage. The woman on the left seems to be undecided about the issue, but the banner in the foreground presents a very strong statement in favor of pro-choice.

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