



1972 MOCK DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION

Washington & Lee University



LEXINGTON MAY 5 and 6



A QUESTION OF VALUES

What happens to the country, to the world, depends on what we do with what others have left us.

—ROBERT F. KENNEDY

It may be true that the national nominating convention is an anachronism. Americans have disparaged the length, cost and dysfunction of the entire nominating process, and they have focused their attention on the conventions—logically enough, for these are central to the process. Television reveals only their dull formalities; often they serve only to ratify choices made elsewhere. National nominating conventions are not the best way, many critics argue, to select the man who will lead the nation for four years.

For that reason alone, it might seem pointless to simulate a national convention. Washington and Lee has been doing precisely this, every four years, for more than six decades; but the fact that it has become a great tradition at our University is hardly justification for continuing it in 1972. Washington and Lee has been doing many things differently from year to year, reflecting—as it should—the constantly changing character of its student body. Traditions endure only as long as they offer meaning to each current University generation.

The Mock Convention *can* do this in 1972.

The Mock Convention remains a valid, worthwhile undertaking for the Washington and Lee student because the national convention, whatever its faults and excesses, is still a characteristic American institution. *No matter how we regard our national institutions, we remain ignorant of them at our peril.* One university community working alone cannot, of course, re-structure American politics—but its members, working together, can learn about the nominating process in a manner that will permit them intelligently to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the national convention. Only in this way can the individual student acquire the information and the perspective to judge whether or not the process serves the search for good national leadership. If he decides that it does not, then he may seek and apply remedies based on his own examination. If he decides that it does, then he has learned for himself how—and why. “Working within the system” can be appealing, after all, only to one who *understands* the system.

A RECORD OF REALISM

Washington and Lee's Mock Convention, a unique educational experience, has become the nation's most widely noted collegiate political event—primarily because of the continuing emphasis which students have placed on its accuracy and realism. Students have conducted 14 conventions, and in 10 of them have accurately anticipated the eventual nominee of the party out of power in that year. The authenticity and attention to detail shown by the Washington and Lee Mock Convention always attract the interest of national politicians and the media.

Washington and Lee's first great Mock Convention triumph came in 1924, when students solved an apparent stalemate in the Democratic party by nominating the University's own alumnus, John W. Davis. That summer in New York, when the real convention deadlocked between McAdoo and Smith, the Democrats nominated Davis as a compromise candidate on the 103rd ballot.

Since 1948, no Mock Convention has been wrong. Eisenhower, Stevenson, Kennedy, Goldwater and Nixon all received the Washington and Lee nomination—months before receiving their party's, but just as surely. And for 1972, Washington and Lee students are already at work on the task of predicting history again.

The Mock Convention is an effort of students themselves. It touches every part of the University and extends beyond it. Faculty members in the humanities and social sciences, in the arts, in journalism, in law and in every other field will counsel students throughout the year of preparation where they can furnish expert advice and opinion. The University makes its facilities wholly available to students in staging the Mock Convention. It remains for Washington and Lee students themselves to organize and coordinate the elements involved in holding a successful, accurate Mock Convention.

Students organize state delegations for political research—but the effort does not stop with political work. Students must arrange the Mock Convention's financing. Part they contribute themselves; part is contributed by alumni, parents, state political organizations, and foundations interested in collegiate leadership education.

Washington and Lee students receive many other kinds of support from national political professionals—because of the enthusiasm the Mock Convention is able to create through its genuinely educational character. Its accuracy in technique and in result has given the Washington and Lee Mock Convention a pre-eminent national reputation. Although it is neither the largest nor the oldest, it is the most accurate and the most authentic—and therefore the most respected.

Washington and Lee's Mock Convention is not a popularity poll. It does not seek to reflect students' personal choices. Rather it reflects, as far as is humanly possible, the way the various real state delegations will vote on the first ballot at the real national convention. On subsequent ballots it attempts to anticipate shifts in delegation commitments, as the give-and-take of national politics shapes the final outcome.

A YEAR OF PREPARATION

Intensive work toward 1972 has been underway at Washington and Lee since last spring, when Mock Convention co-chairmen Thomas Gillespie and Michael Campilongo began financing efforts and speaker selection. The Convention staff and delegation chairmen have also been named and their work is underway.

The greatest responsibility lies with the state delegation chairman and research director. Diligent effort by each is crucial, particularly in light of changes in methods of delegate selection since 1968. They must establish close contact with state party leaders and with those men and women who are likely to become delegates. The Washington and Lee Mock Convention is scheduled two months prior to the actual convention in Miami and before primaries in California, New York and New Jersey; attention to real party officials therefore becomes essential.

A model national platform, drafted after realistic committee hearings, will be accepted at the Mock Convention by a prominent Democrat on behalf of the national party.

On May 5, the fifteenth Washington and Lee Mock Convention will take place in Doremus Gymnasium—Convention Hall. After the traditional festive parade through Lexington, student delegates will hear the keynote address by Gov. Jimmy Carter of Georgia. That night, students will nominate Presidential candidates, and balloting begins the following morning. Once a nominee has been selected by the Mock Convention, a delegation will call on him personally—and Washington and Lee will then await the outcome of the actual Democratic Convention next July.

The Washington and Lee Mock Convention will in 1972 again play a role of major importance on the national political scene—the direct result of its accuracy and realism. Its pragmatic orientation will offer every student participant a priceless insight into this characteristic American institution, in a way that is unique in American education.

Keynote Speaker

Gov. JIMMY CARTER

Leader of the “New” Southern Democrats

Symbol of the South's remarkable progress in virtually every respect—economically, educationally, socially, politically—James Earl Carter Jr. combines a belief in “self-reliance, local control, and individual participation in government” with an extraordinary sense of his state's new mood, the aspirations and abilities of her citizens, a new pride in Georgia and what Georgia can become.

His own attitudes and achievements have rocketed him into a position of enormous influence in national political affairs—and so who more appropriate than Jimmy Carter to keynote Washington and Lee's 1972 Democratic Mock Convention?

He entered politics in little Plains, Ga., where he continues to operate his family's peanut and cotton warehouse. Elected to the state legislature only nine years ago, he quickly established a record for himself as a progressive with a strong interest in the advancement of education. (This year, in fact, he was elected chairman of the Southern Regional Education Board.)

Though he came in third in Georgia's 1966 gubernatorial contest, his vote-getting strength startled political observers. In 1970 he polled almost 60 per cent of the vote.

In his inaugural address he articulated the new directions he saw Georgia and her people traveling, the “major and difficult” decisions they made. And he *has* led Georgia dynamically, intensely.

“As contradictory as Georgia itself,” said *Time*, describing Carter in its cover profile of him—“both product and destroyer of old myths . . . determined to resolve some of the paradoxes.” Carter's national reputation is that of a liberal, partly because of the contrast between his posture on race and the position of his predecessors; yet he describes himself in his official biography as a “conservative.”

“For the first time in almost a decade,” *Time* remarked, “Democratic Presidential aspirants are courting the South. Edmund Muskie, Birch Bayh, Henry Jackson and Hubert Humphrey have recently called on Carter to discuss the lay of the votes in '72. And Carter and his colleagues in the other Southern states are assembling a caucus to be reckoned with at convention time.”

