

resign or be impeached (according to a November Gallup Poll the American public opposed removing Nixon from office 54 to 37 percent), and more cautious editorials, including those in the *Washington Post* and the *Wall Street Journal*, have argued that talk of impeachment and resignation is still premature, smacking more of the capricious whim of popularity à la Fourth Republic France, rather than the U.S. Constitution. But if anyone can create the environment conducive to impeachment it is this Administration, and not the left wing of the Democratic Party. Nixon still ignores his experienced politicoes Harlow and Laird, and instead turns to Haig and Ziegler, political novices who still have not learned that it ain't what ya do but how ya do it!

GOP sinking with Nixon?

In an effort to rejuvenate his support among congressional Republicans Nixon spent the first days in November meeting with Republican congressmen and senators, and leading Democrats, but many remained skeptical. This skepticism is in no small part the result of yet another recent public opinion poll taken by Harris at the end of October. According to the Harris Poll the Democrats have a lead of 53 percent to 31 percent in voter preference for the 1974 congressional races. This represents a drop of 8 percent from last spring and it compares poorly to the 56 percent to 44

percent in favor of the Democrats in 1964, the year of the Johnson landslide and the stunning defeat for congressional Republicans.

As a result, many Republicans are urging their colleagues to declare their independence of the White House. Senator Peter Dominick (R-Colo.) in a speech before the Denver Bar Association said, "There can be no more deals and no more technical arguments about evidence. Nothing short of complete disclosure will be adequate to restore the confidence of the American people." In the strongest terms since Bob Dole (R-Kansas) left the chairmanship of the Republican National Committee, dominick went on to say, "The fact that I am devoted to my Party is sufficient reason to speak out. I think Republicans have more reason to be upset about the current state of affairs than anyone else. Frankly, I am damned mad about it. The Republican Party did not get us into this mess. As far as I'm concerned, the working relationship between the Republican Party and this Administration has been tenuous at best for some time. Going back to the congressional elections of 1970, there has been little willingness on the part of the Administration to cooperate with Republican Party leaders, let alone seek their advice. The Administration has pursued its independent course to this juncture. Although our overall goals and policies will probably continue to coincide with those of

the Administration, I believe the Republican Party would be well advised to follow a more independent course from here on. I think a good place to start would be for the Republican Party to take the leadership in resolving the crisis of confidence in our government."

Behold the Irony

But if the Administration's strength still seems to be waning with congressional GOPs, leading southern Democrats have begun rallying around Nixon. This can probably be explained by the fact that Nixon, even after Watergate, still outpolls George McGovern with ease, in some congressional districts by a margin of more than two to one. The all-important chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Edward Hebert (D-La.), recently called Nixon "the strongest President of our time" and fellow Louisiana Democrat, Otto Passman, lashed out at the "radical segment of the news media" and praised Nixon's integrity as "unimpeachable" and his "greatness" as long "established."

One liberal Republican, when told about the increasing Democratic support accruing to Nixon, quipped: "I have said all along the problem with this Administration is that it has behaved as if it were a Democratic one. But unfortunately Republicans just do not have their [the Democrats'] experience at this sort of thing." □

Harold Mott

The Case for Negative Votes

In 1964 Lyndon B. Johnson was elected president in a landslide over Barry Goldwater, getting 61 percent of the popular vote, and yet, four years later, so many of his supporters were deserting that his reelection seemed doubtful. In 1968 Richard Nixon was narrowly elected over Hubert H. Humphrey and George C. Wallace, receiving 44 percent of the popular vote, but in 1972 he in turn won a thumping victory over George McGovern, with 61 percent of the vote. Why did Johnson's voters desert him, and where did Nixon's troops come from? One is tempted to speculate that Johnson never had the support of 61 percent of the electorate and that many voted for him only to insure the defeat of Barry Goldwater, the Mad Bomber. It requires only a little imagination to believe that Nixon had, in fact, as many people for him as did Johnson four years previously and that the 1968 race was close only because Humphrey had fewer people against him than did Goldwater. Unfortunately, these thoughts will remain forever unproven.

I propose here a slight modification of our voting system that can remove this speculative element from future elections and give us all a better estimate of the true popularity of a newly-elected president and his programs. Under the new system the voter will be allowed to vote for candidate A, or for B, or against A or B. The net vote for A will then be the difference of the

number of votes for him and the ones against him. This system puts into practice the expressed wishes of multitudes of voters who seem forever to be choosing the lesser of two evils. Such a system might have been cumbersome in the days of paper ballots, but can be handled with ease by slightly redesigned voting machines.

If we let the number of votes for a candidate be P (for positive) and those against him be N (for negative), his net vote, T, is $T = P - N$. Then it is appropriate to speak of his popularity as the ratio of T to the total votes cast in the election. With this definition of popularity in mind, let us reconsider the 1964 election to see if 61 percent of the voters were with Johnson. Keep in mind the warning that this is sheer speculation. In that election the vote for Johnson (in millions) was $V_1 = 43.0$, and for Goldwater, $V_2 = 27.2$.

Of those who voted for Johnson, perhaps 70 percent were really for him and 30 percent were against Goldwater and would have voted that way if given an opportunity. The same thing could be said about Goldwater's voters. Let's say that 75 percent of his voters were really voting for him and 25 percent were voting against Johnson. Then if voting under the new system had been permitted, Johnson's net vote would have been those votes for him (0.7×43.0) minus the number who voted for Goldwater because of a dislike for Johnson

(0.25×27.2). This would have resulted in a net vote for Johnson of 23.3 million, and we conclude that a true index of his popularity might be $23.3/70.2$ or 33 percent rather than the 61 percent attributed to him. Perhaps if Johnson had considered carefully the significance of such a popularity index, he might have avoided some of the disillusionments of his last years in office.

We may formalize this development by defining confidence factors k_1 and k_2 for the two candidates. If 70 percent of the voters voted for Johnson because of their confidence in him, k_1 would be 70 percent or 0.7. Likewise, if 75 percent had confidence in Goldwater, k_2 would be 0.75. Johnson's net vote, T_1 , would be

$$T_1 = k_1 V_1 - (1 - k_2) V_2$$

where the first term, $k_1 V_1$, represents those voters (70 percent of 43 million) who voted for Johnson because they liked and trusted him, and the second term, $(1 - k_2) V_2$, represents those voters (25 percent of 27.2 million) who voted for Goldwater because they disliked Johnson. Using the same reasoning, the net vote for Goldwater would be given by

$$T_2 = k_2 V_2 - (1 - k_1) V_1$$

Some of the characteristics of this plan are interesting. In our example, the equa-

tions for T_1 and T_2 show Johnson's net vote to be 23.3 million with a popularity percentage of 33 percent and Goldwater's vote to be 7.5 million with a percentage of 11 percent. We see that the popularity percentages do not add to 100 percent. We see too that Goldwater dipped perilously close to 0 percent. It is, in fact, possible for the loser, and even the winner, to receive a negative net vote. If the equations for T_1 and T_2 are subtracted, the vote difference, $T_1 - T_2$, is the same as the difference, $V_1 - V_2$, of our present system of voting, so the proposed system cannot affect the material outcome of a two-man race. In spite of this, the new system would undoubtedly have a helpful moral effect on our presidential campaigns. In the Nixon-McGovern race, it seemed to be important to many people to have Nixon win with a greater (or smaller) popular vote percentage than Johnson in the 1964 election. To a candidate, winning comes first, but the vote percentage (mandate from the people, etc.) is important, too. With the proposed voting system a candidate might win an election by frightening voters away from his opponent, but he could not increase his own popularity, as measured by the net, T . Perhaps this might lead to that much-desired end, a candidate stressing his own strong points rather than his opponent's weaknesses.

The three-man race is more complex. In addition to its moral effect, the proposed plan may even in some cases affect the material outcome of a race. Under our present voting system, it is normally important to campaign positively in a three-man race, since taking votes from one candidate only to watch them go to a third is a poor victory. This is sometimes forgotten in the turmoil of a campaign, however, because no one knows for certain where those votes will go. In fact, if a third, minor candidate has a somewhat inflexible base, such as Wallace perhaps had in 1968, a three-man race takes on some features of a two-man race, and there is no penalty for negative campaigning. Voters frightened away from A by B will vote for B or stay home. The reverse may not be true, and C's voter base may appear inflexible to A, but

not to B. At the other end of the spectrum, a third, minor candidate having a reputation as a "moralist" or as everyone's second choice may profit greatly from the negative campaigning of two major candidates.

The new voting plan removes these uncertainties. If A impresses a voter positively, he is one vote ahead, but if he frightens a voter away from B, then C profits *exactly* as much as A. Both A and C effectively gain half a vote (so A has to work twice as hard with negative campaign tactics). C's voter base is no longer inflexible, except for those voters firmly committed to him in a positive sense. The three-man race, with one candidate having an inflexible base as at present, can no longer become a two-man race in the sense of scare tactics being used with impunity by the two major candidates. Neither can C the moralist gain *unduly* from the blood-letting of two major candidates. He profits, to be sure, and can watch happily as they knife each other. The main point, however, is that with the new plan the major candidates will know precisely what part of a vote is gained and lost. They can be certain that degeneration to scare campaigning will be punished, if only by a drop in their popularity index.

In the 1968 race the vote totals, in millions, were: Nixon, $V_1 = 31.7$; Humphrey, $V_2 = 30.9$; Wallace, $V_3 = 9.4$. Of Nixon's votes, $k_1 V_1$ were for him, and $(1 - k_1) V_1$ were against Humphrey and Wallace. For lack of a better estimate, we take $\frac{1}{2}(1 - k_1) V_1$ against each of the others. Note that this uncertainty applies only to elections using our present system. Under the proposed plan, the voter would have more freedom to express himself, and his motives would be more apparent. If the proposed voting system had been in effect in 1968, the votes for each candidate would have been

$$\begin{aligned} T_1 &= k_1 V_1 - \frac{1}{2}(1 - k_2) V_2 - \frac{1}{2}(1 - k_3) V_3 \\ T_2 &= k_2 V_2 - \frac{1}{2}(1 - k_1) V_1 - \frac{1}{2}(1 - k_3) V_3 \\ T_3 &= k_3 V_3 - \frac{1}{2}(1 - k_1) V_1 - \frac{1}{2}(1 - k_2) V_2. \end{aligned}$$

If we take all the k coefficients as 0.7, we find $T_1 = 16.2$, $T_2 = 15.5$, and $T_3 = -2.8$, and Nixon's popularity index is 23 percent. If all the k coefficients were

slightly higher, at 0.8, Nixon's popularity index would be 30 percent, about the same as Johnson's in his "landslide."

The actual vote difference between Nixon and Humphrey in 1968, $V_1 - V_2$, was 0.8 million, but $T_1 - T_2$ in this example is 0.7. Here we see a small material effect on vote differences. The difference in net votes, $T_1 - T_2$, under the new system can be found by subtracting appropriately in the last group of three equations. For the special case, $k_1 = k_2$, the result is

$$T_1 - T_2 = \frac{1}{2}(1 + k_1)(V_1 - V_2)$$

and since the confidence factor k_1 is less than one, $T_1 - T_2$ will be smaller than $V_1 - V_2$.

If Hubert Humphrey had campaigned more positively in 1968, with the new voting plan in effect, and had raised k_2 to 0.75, while k_1 and k_3 remained the same at 0.7 the net votes under the new system would have been $T_1 = 16.9$, $T_2 = 17.0$, and $T_3 = -2.1$. Then (neglecting the factor of electoral votes) Humphrey might have won that cliffhanger. Keep in mind that this change in net votes did not require Humphrey by some eloquence to win votes committed to Nixon. Those votes never belonged to Nixon. Humphrey's task was only to persuade the voters to vote for himself rather than against Nixon.

In spite of this example, the primary effect of the proposed voting plan is unlikely to be its material influence on the outcome of elections. I see these major benefits of the system:

(1) It gives the voter greater freedom in making his views known, and it gives the victor (and indeed all of us) a truer idea of voter attitudes about his programs.

(2) A candidate who really wants a mandate from the people will have to present his ideas in a positive form, because the way to increase his popularity index is to increase his confidence factor, k , and that cannot be done by belittling his opponent.

Surely any change in our system that eliminates television commercials about little girls being blown up by hydrogen bombs can't be all bad. \square

Book Review

Mark Twain: God's Fool

It is rather like being told there is no Santa Claus to read Hamlin Hill's biography of Mark Twain; but we suffer more because now our beliefs are more ingrained and inflexible than they were during childhood. The lovable American humorist, the teller of children's stories, the impish and adventurous Huck Finn whom we cannot help but identify with his creator—all these are suppressed in Hill's book which concentrates on the last ten deeply troubled years of Samuel Clemens' life. Instead we see an embittered old man furiously and unsuccessfully involved in speculation, neglecting those who love him and becoming at least partially responsible for two of their deaths.

by Hamlin Hill
Harper & Row \$10.00

Much of *Mark Twain: God's Fool* is based on the previously unpublished diary of Isabel Lyon, Clemens' personal secretary, and it contradicts Albert Bigelow Paine's carefully edited *Mark Twain: A Biography* published in 1912, ten years after Twain's death. Paine, a member of the Clemens household for several years, and Clara, the only one of Twain's three daughters to outlive him, continued the censorial tradition of Olivia Langdon Clemens, deliberately omitting from Twain's biography the un-

pleasant aspects of his life. And there were several. Olivia's "nervous prostration" which struck in August 1902 and lingered until her death in June 1904 must have been attributable in some way to her husband, because her doctors refused to let him see her during much of her convalescence lest she suffer a relapse. Twain's daughter Susy's death from spinal meningitis at the age of twenty-five led the whole family to such morbid activities as annual celebrations of her birthday and anniversaries of her death. The youngest Clemens daughter, Jean, was severely epileptic, and for several years, Hill contends, her father was repulsed by her illness and frequently sent her away from his house. When Jean