

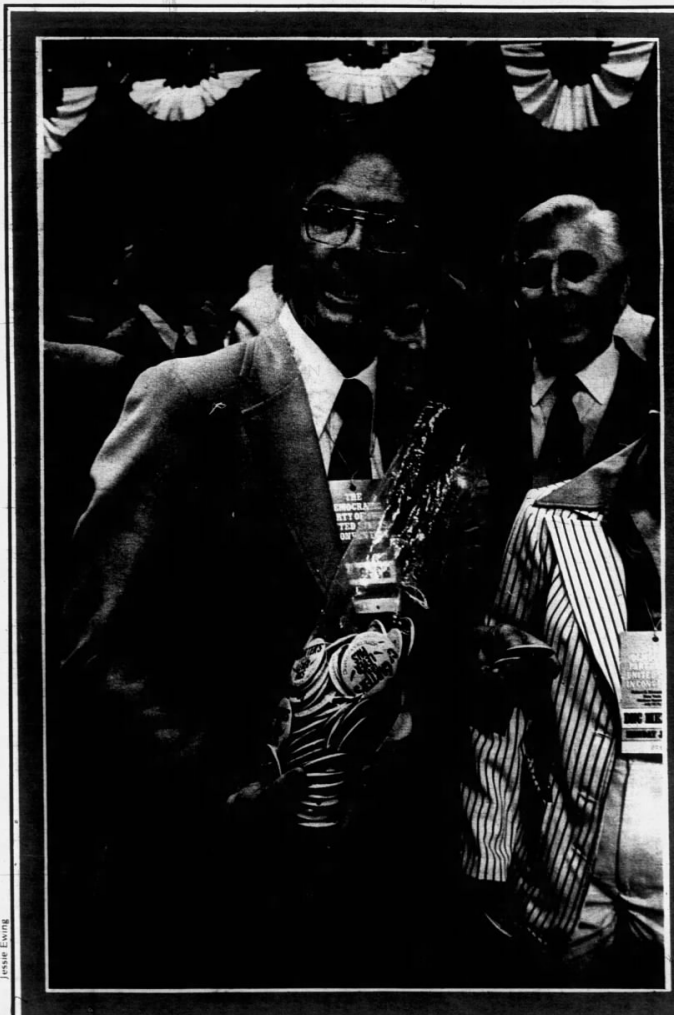
ILLINOIS Times

JULY 16-22, 1976

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ILLINOIS AT THE CONVENTION: CARTER SEEMS JUST THE TICKET



P.2

DOWNTOWN SPRINGFIELD PART III

P.6

YOUR OBEDIENT SERVANT

P.16

BATTLING THE SANGAMON

P.14

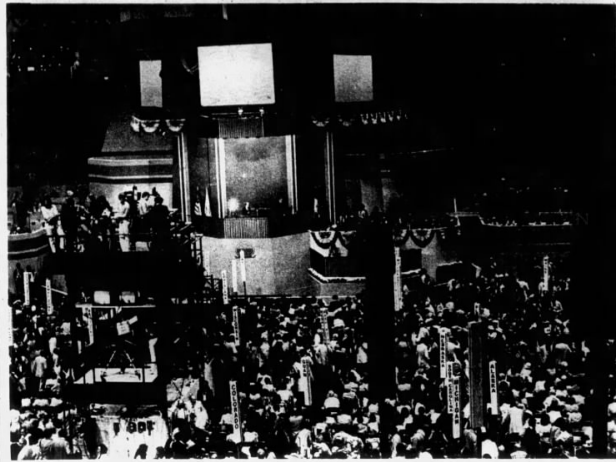
New York's 'Other' Convention

P.18

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 45

Carter delegate James Wall gives out buttons

Photos by Jessie Ewing



The new Madison Square Garden, decked out for its first political convention.

A smooth convention, free of strife

To battle-weary Democrats, a conciliatory Carter seemed just the ticket

In quick almost giddy succession to the Tall Ships and Queen Elizabeth's royal visit, New York welcomed some 3,000 Democratic convention delegates, sixty-two of whom were from Illinois, with a gallant and generous sense of hospitality. To ease their entry into the Big City, the visitors were offered a multitude of courtesy services — special transit passes, bargain tour and cruise rates, passes to all the museums, special transportation to and from the airports, bus service from the hotels (the Illinois delegation stayed at the Waldorf Astoria, where Mayor Daley had a floor-wide suite), discount parking, parties, tickets for Broadway shows and a sizable corps of hosts and hostesses. New York City officials admit they expect \$8 million to be spent by convention delegates, but say that their real purpose was to project a warm image of the city to conventiongoers; after all, delegates may come back some day as tourists. To this end, New York City will spend \$3.5 million (\$1.9 just for the rental of Madison Square Garden).

Despite the presentation of "Welcome to our Town" kits (stuffed with advertising goodies ranging from Diane von Furstenberg perfume to Personna Double-blade razors) and other promo-

tional packages to lure the out-of-town consumer into the city's marketplace, many of the Illinois delegates were comfortably contained in the convention's inner world of meetings, briefings, caucuses and luncheons. The first of these events was a Sunday night caucus, cocktail and dinner hosted by Mayor Richard J. Daley of Chicago. Comments on the proceedings were as varied as the individuals who have rallied under the Carter banner. One alternate delegate, in mildly sarcastic tones, capsulized the scene as "a great and wonderful evening with party luminaries." Another spoke in superlatives about the "superb" camaraderie. Several delegates however, chose to attend a dinner given by Carter on Pier 88 of the Hudson River; delegates H. Brent DeLand and James E. Withers, Sr. pronounced the evening "a wonderful time."

The enthusiasm of Brent DeLand and Jim Withers for the Pier 88 party reflects their interest in Carter that began in the early stages of his campaign. DeLand brought Carter to Springfield for the first time in September 1975 and Jim Withers has been organizing support for the candidate in his hometown of Loami since last fall. In fact, Withers' drive and that of fellow Loamian Harold Dodd, head

ILLINOIS TIMES

Gathering at the Garden.....	2
Whither Downtown: Part 3.....	6
News of the Week.....	10
Opinion.....	12
Art Contest.....	12
Forum: The Role of SCADA.....	13
New York's "Other" Convention.....	14
Reviews: 'Your Obedient Servant'.....	16
Historiana: American Dreamboat.....	18
Calendar.....	22
Good Bets.....	24
Classifieds.....	24
Illinois Home.....	26

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2 Illinois Times, July 16-22, 1976

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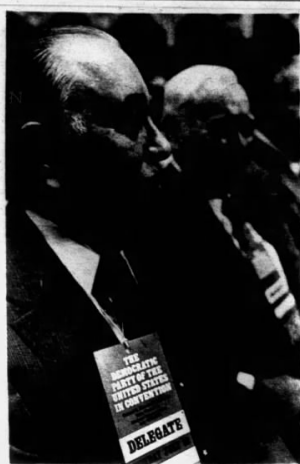
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Mayor Daley, at left, has the satisfied look of a man back in the saddle. The Rev. Jesse Jackson, right, is pensive at a convention that represents a big change



from that of 1972, when Jackson's delegation was seated in place of Daley's. This year Jackson is prominently labelled 'guest.'

of the National Farmers' Union, has given Loami (pop. 600) the distinction of having raised more money per capita for Carter than any other town in the state. DeLand thinks that this support reflects Carter's enormous popularity with farmers; "the small ones, not corporate," he says. Those people that started with Carter as long ago as early last winter are "everyday citizens," he says.

Withers says that Jimmy Carter appeals to farm folk because "he's an ordinary man you can talk to. There's no man smart enough to know everything, and Jimmy Carter knows how to listen. When he came March 10, Loami fell in love with him. The town gave him three votes to Humphrey, twenty to Wallace and the rest of the 250 total to Jimmy." Withers also remembers that when he was driving in a car with Carter during that visit, he told Carter that a stand on inheritance tax would be "real popular." Carter said he was sympathetic to a reduction of inheritance tax, but explained that he could not commit himself until he knew all the facts. Says Withers, with pride, "He wants to live up to every promise."

In the early primary, says DeLand, the Carter delegates were a group apart from the party regulars. He remembers that, at the beginning,

three-quarters of the platform people were not Carter people, but as more primaries were held, that changed. "If everyone would have been for Carter at the time of the March 16 primary, as they seem to be now, we would have won the presidential preference not with 45 percent but with 75-80 percent," says DeLand.

DeLand, who was also involved with the McGovern and McCarthy campaigns, says he's more liberal than Jimmy Carter. He recalls an incident with Carter which he says stirred his commitment to the candidate. "He was introduced to a little girl by her parents who said she was shy but wanted to meet him. Carter picked her up, gave her a kiss, put her down. A minute later he returned to her and said, 'You know, the worst thing about this campaign is that I have to be away from my little girl.'" As DeLand tells this story his eyes fill with tears, and he is silent. When asked about what issues of Carter's he supports, he cites his stand opposing a Constitutional amendment banning abortion and his desire to pardon Vietnam war evaders.

Once the delegates had settled under the red,

white and blue bunting in their orange folding chairs on Monday night, the general atmosphere in the Illinois delegation (and, indeed, throughout the mighty assembly) was one of calm, though expectant, unity. There were few surprises; some were disappointed by the dull keynote address of Sen. John Glenn (D-Ohio); very few expected the speech by Rep. Barbara Jordan (D-Texas) to be quite so exalted or to cause so much excitement (the audience applauded for five minutes before she even began). At the Illinois delegation a short but upbeat visit by Gov. Dan Walker caused a ripple of attention. Walker pledged his support of Jimmy Carter, said he didn't want to have a Republican governor in the state of Illinois, and that he would "campaign vigorously for Mike Howlett." Walker was also busy elsewhere, appearing by himself at fifteen Democratic caucuses and receptions on

Will the platform float in Illinois?

Part practical, part utopian, mostly tailored to fit Jimmy Carter's tastes, the Democratic party platform should meet with mixed reception in Illinois. In a state where the work ethic reigns, the platform's design to reduce the unemployment rate to 3 percent through government employment programs is sure to stir debate. So will a plan for direct government involvement in wage and price decisions.

The Democrats even seem ready to take on the IRS. Their platform calls for a complete overhaul of our clearly inequitable taxing structure. They also assert that the time is right for a national health insurance program, financed in part through general tax funds, and an overhaul of the welfare system. "Income maintenance" would be substituted for the present direct payment program, guaranteeing a minimum wage to the working poor; those able to work would be put through compulsory training programs.

Perhaps the most potentially divisive part of the platform is the party's bold stance on abortion. Recognizing, it says, the legitimate religious aspects of the subject, the platform nonetheless opposes a constitutional amendment on abortion. That plainly allows recent Supreme Court decisions to stand. Michael Howlett, a Roman Catholic, spoke for some Illinoisans in objecting.

The Democrats have pledged themselves through the platform to search for a method of providing school aid to nonpublic schools, to employ busing as a desegregation tool only of last resort, and, also sure to raise some dust, a stepped-up effort to better control the manufacture, assembly and sale of handguns.

—W.F.

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Tuesday alone.

While Peter D. ... in's orchestra played jaunty tunes, Robert S. Strauss, the party's national chairman, and others called for a final break with the "Nixon-Ford Administration." Tom Hayden, an alternate, in the California delegation (who was tear-gassed and indicted at the Chicago Democratic Convention eight years ago) called for the country to rid itself of the present administration. So did the activist Jesse Jackson, as he visited the Illinois delegation, urging that "we change our fate in Washington." When asked about Mayor Daley's presence in the delegation, he answered that he was glad to see the mayor. Jackson added that at prior conventions Daley had failed to meet his obligation on black quotas, but that this year he had. (Jackson was referring to the 1972 convention, when the Credentials Committee voted to bar Daley and his followers, seating Jackson's group instead.)

Throughout the evening, James Wall, head of Illinois' Carter delegation, was on his feet, either in conversation with members of the group or talking on the white princess phone installed at the back of the delegation's seating area. When Wall joined the Carter campaign in October 1975, it may have been a surprise to some of those who remember his association with the McGovern campaign. A Methodist minister and editor of *Christian Century Magazine*, Wall says that today he finds acceptable a man of Carter's conservatism. "I determined early," he says, "that I wanted to support a man with a capacity to govern, who could make the country respond in '76 and also deal with ideological matters without being inflammatory. The country won't respond to ideological warfare." Wall is particularly impressed by Carter's intelligence ("One of the reasons I decided to work for him") and by Carter's



At-large delegate Michael Howlett poltticks with the Illinois delegation in the Garden. He comes out of the convention not only with resounding support from Carter, but firmer support from Illinois' present governor — worked out over a breakfast in New York's Warwick Hotel. Howlett's running mate, Neil Hartigan, trails behind.

platforms. He cites Carter's intention to reduce the amount of money spent on the military as one issue which he is personally interested in.

Wall also reveals a realism about politics that Carter must have if he is to deal effectively as President. Says Wall: "Politics is compromise and adjustment." The Democratic party's recent ability to compromise and adjust has been startlingly evident since mid-June, when the Democratic Platform Committee put together a package of planks on knotty issues such as defense spending, foreign policy, national health insurance, gun controls and abortion — and, miraculously, stayed in agreement. And when the convention took up its platform business on Monday night, the presentation took place in a smooth, astonishingly brief two-hour session. It was a striking contrast to the Miami convention in '72 when eleven hours of public debate on controversial platform topics weakened the image of party togetherness — and the party itself.

For some people, the party was trying just a little too hard to avoid debate. The uninfammatory atmosphere in the caucuses and at the convention left a few delegates quietly smoldering, especially minority groups such as blacks and women. One irritated delegate was Bonnie Rubenstein, an alternate from the Twentieth District who sat in for delegate Peter Mack part of the evening while Mack was "visiting friends in other delegations." She said that the Monday women's caucus meeting had left many attenders dissatisfied. The compromise resolution, accepted on Tuesday morning, in the interest of party unity, used the wording, "shall promote equal division between delegate men and

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U.S. Rep. Paul Simon, always jaunty in his bow tie, led an unsuccessful move to draft Hubert Humphrey for the Presidency.

planks of the party's platform. This would have required a rule change, which they delegates voted down by a count of 1,975 to 735.

Wynette Frazier, a black woman who is still an uncommitted alternate delegate watched the crowd respond to Barbara-Jordan and said, "He's crazy not to seriously consider her." Although she feels that Carter never made his stand clear on minorities and the inner city, she said she was heartened by the black caucus held Monday which she considered a

Please turn to page 26

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women." This was not as strong as the original wording, that would have required equal representation for women at the 1980 convention. Rubenstein says that the constant talk about "promoting party unity" gives her a "strange intuition about Carter."

One group of delegates asked that members of the convention be allowed to make speeches on disputed

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Convention ...continued from page 5

turning point in her support of Carter. In this meeting, Carter renewed his pledge to name blacks to high-level jobs, including areas in which they have not yet served.

Black delegates were disappointed that black representation has shrunk at the convention, from 15 percent at the 1972 gathering to 11 percent this session. But the Illinois delegation has a greater number of blacks than it did in 1972.

Despite the resentment of some delegates, most were even-tempered. Liese Ricketts, a delegate from Crete, in the Seventeenth District, seated next to John J. Houlihan felt that the women's minority report would smooth itself out. She spoke emphatically with a husky voice, looking back to past

conventions and her former favorites, Muskie and Humphrey. After saying that she was glad to welcome Mayor Daley back, she explained her own reason for running for delegate: "I wanted to be here in an active way so that it would be better this time." Carter, she says, "is pulling together North and South," and winning the trust of farm people such as herself. "He doesn't want the farmer to be driven from the farm. As an issue it hasn't come out yet, but in speeches he's talked about making the productive part of our land truly productive." Then Ricketts comments with rhetoric that seems to bind these Illinois Carter supporters even more than political ideology: "We need a sense of integrity in politics and Carter is giving it to us."

As the convention moved toward its formal endorsement of Carter, and toward the selection of

his running mate, the general mood ranged from the conciliatory to the jubilant. Nearly everyone seemed so excited by the possibility of a big win in November that they were willing to bury the hatchet for now. Even Mayor Daley seemed happy, back in his seat after the humiliation of 1972, leading the state's delegates — not a kingmaker, perhaps, but honored and flattered just the same.

The only cloud over the Illinois Democrats was caused by the uncertainty of future relations between Daley people and Carter people. Some of Carter's followers feel that their man really does represent the "little people," and they are loathe to see "their man" usurped by big-city politicians. Carter may need all the conciliatory skill displayed at the convention to prevent such factional strife from developing.

—Victoria Pope

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