

commentary and analysis

Uninformed voters foul political machinery

By Tony Joyce

Forty percent of North Carolina's registered voters cast their votes in the May 6 primary and after reviewing the results, only one conclusion can be made: Many voters voted just for the sake of voting and others voted for candidates they apparently knew nothing about.

Results of the primary are as follows:

- Incumbent Gov. Jim Hunt completely demolished his Democratic opponent Bob Scott by carrying every county in the state. He gathered 70 percent of the more than 750,000 votes cast.

- Incumbent Jimmy Green squeaked out a small victory over House Speaker Carl Stewart in the Democratic race for lieutenant governor. It seems many of Green's votes came from conservatives who hoped to balance the progressive Hunt ticket.

- Incumbent John Ingram defeated three of his former aides to win the Democratic nomination for insurance commissioner. In a true test of voters' dissatisfaction with his current term, only one of them should have run against him. Fortunately for him, all three of his aides ran, the vote was split between the three of them, and Ingram captured the majority.

- Jimmy Carter soundly defeated Sen. Edward Kennedy in the Democratic presidential primary. Carter equaled some of the biggest primary victories that he received in the South in 1976 by beating Kennedy 3-to-1 and capturing 56 of 69 delegates.

- Ronald Reagan fared just about as well as Carter as he captured the Republican nomination easily and took 30

of 40 delegates. George Bush ran a distant second and John Anderson finished third.

- I. Beverly Lake won the race for governor on the Republican side as he garnered 79 percent of the more than 150,000 votes cast.



Green

Cobey

Key matchups for North Carolina voters to look for in the fall include Hunt's efforts to gain a second consecutive term against Lake. Even though Lake has the support of U.S. Sen. Jesse Helms, it remains to be seen if he can overtake the popular Hunt.

Jimmy Green will face Bill Cobey in the race for lieutenant governor. Cobey stated that "I've demonstrated my management skills" in his work as UNC athletic director. Cobey hopes "the people will interpret that I can apply skills to government also." It seems Green will not have as much of a battle against Cobey as he did against Stewart because of Cobey's weakness as a relative political newcomer.

Carter forces are anticipating a tough battle from Reagan, who is supported by the politically powerful Jesse Helms, a local favorite, and his conservative Congressional Club. Carter's campaign officials have said North Carolina will be one of the top 10 states where money will be spent for his re-election in the fall.

One of the most disturbing facets of the

primary centered on the Republican race for attorney general. Harold Covington, a Chapel Hill High School graduate, surprised everyone, including himself, by garnering 56,000 votes and carrying 45 of 100 counties. Former U.S. Attorney Keith Snyder from Asheville, a political newcomer, won the nomination with 57 percent of the votes. Covington, a national party leader of the Nationalist Socialist Party of America immediately gloated over his accomplishments as a vote against the abuse received by 16 Nazis and Klansmen following the shootings of five Communists in Greensboro on Nov. 3. It is ironic that the precinct in Greensboro where the incident happened voted in favor of Covington. Obviously, many of the voters that marked the May 6 ballot knew nothing of his affiliation with the Nazis.



Lake

Hunt

Another Nazi, Robert Stirewolt of Rowan County, who was running for a seat in the state House was endorsed by the Fundamentalist Christians, a religious group, who knew nothing of his earlier endeavors with the Nationalist Socialist Party. Not only a gross error of judgment, it is also a perfect example of the ignorance of many of North Carolina's voters.

There are many reasons for Covington's receiving his 56,000 votes, among them his traditional North Carolina name. Also, many of his votes seem to have come from

actual racists in the state. His was the first name on the ballot and many voters may have felt obligated to vote for someone while in the voting booth. None of the above rationalizations, however, merit votes for the state's top legal office.

One thing to be thankful for is that Covington was defeated for the nomination. If he had won, North Carolina would have had one of its blackest days in political history. Besides that, the state would have been the laughingstock of the country.

If there is a lesson to be learned from this episode it is that all voters should know who they are voting for, and why. If not, they shouldn't cast a vote at all. With a little more effort, North Carolina voters can greatly improve the state, but with a little more apathy, such as that witnessed May 6, North Carolina can become a planted for the seeds of destruction.

The elections can be summed up in an I. Beverly Lake statement about Gov. Jim Hunt. Lake stressed the point that Hunt's "main weakness is that he is so totally political. We've never seen anything like that in North Carolina."

Lake's claim is totally absurd. The point is that North Carolina needs to have more of such total politicians. It needs to have candidates who are dedicated totally to North Carolina and to its betterment. It needs hard-working candidates who are known by all and not by just a few.

As Lake stated, we've never seen anything like that in North Carolina.



Carrington

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the week at a glance

by Elliott Warnock

Well over three million Quebec voters went to the polls Tuesday to decide their future as a state. By close to a 60-40 margin they decided Quebec would remain a Canadian province, not become a separate nation.

The result was a resounding defeat for the Quebecois movement, and is the culmination of generations of tense friction between Canada's two major nationalities. Most Canadians are English-speaking, but of the 4.3 million eligible voters in the Tuesday referendum, 3.5 million were French speakers.

Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau had said before the election he would not allow sovereignty for Quebec, whatever the vote. (Trudeau himself is of French descent.) As for the Quebecois, they don't feel the issue is moot, and contend they will continue the effort for an independent Quebec.

Another group of people have been taking their fate into their own hands recently. Thousands of Cubans have been leaving their island and seeking a new homeland in the United States.

Voting with their feet, and their boats, 40,000 Cubans decided they had seen enough of Fidel Castro's socialist dream in Cuba, and have poured into Key West, Fla. at a rate not seen in the United States since efforts of the Vietnamese boat-people. Like their Asia counterparts, the Cubans have faced poor conditions, bad seas and overcrowded boats to get out of their country.

The Florida Straits have calmed a bit in recent days, and the massive influx of refugees has slowed, mostly due to President Carter's orders to the U.S. Coast Guard to keep

the exodus under control. Carter's desire has not been to keep new citizens out of the United States, but to filter out a small core of criminals sneaking into the country via a claim for political freedom.

The Coast Guard has prohibited the departure of anymore boats from Key West for Cuba, at least for now, but anywhere from 743 to 1,000 U.S. boats are still in Mariel harbor in Cuba, prepared to return with refugees for the United States.

Dr. Alejandro Portes, a Cuban-born Duke University sociologist, said Tuesday he expected the refugees to be faced with problems of language and lack of job training in the United States. But, he predicted, if they are like the Cuban-Americans already in the country since 1972, they are likely to overcome these obstacles and be absorbed into American life.

If those Cubans head for Miami, Fla., looking for jobs, they are likely to see devastation they didn't expect. Following the riots in Miami, close to \$100 million damage has been assessed by local businesses, putting hundreds of local residents out of work.

In the past, black community leaders in Miami had complained of Cuban-Americans moving into formerly black neighborhoods and taking jobs away from long-time residents. With all the damage in Miami, competition for jobs in those areas is likely to be even more fierce.

Miami was not the only site of riots during the past week. A military takeover in South Korea sparked massive unrest in Seoul. More than 100,000 persons have rioted, fought with police and crashed commandeered buses into buildings, as well as police cordons.

In the provincial capital of Kwangju alone, 11 persons

are dead in the wake of the riots; 13 buildings were wrecked and 50 vehicles were set afire Tuesday. Witnesses in Kwangju said paratroopers guarding the capitol building opened fire on demonstrators who tried to drive buses through the guards. Four policemen were reported struck and killed by one bus driven by the demonstrators.

The riots come on the heels of the resignation of the 19-member South Korean cabinet. The resignation, ironically, had come after three days of riots last week in Seoul and five other cities.

Lt. Gen. Chun Doo-Whan, who took control of the country months after the assassination of President Park Chung-hee, said martial law could be lifted only after the riots had ceased. But the cycle goes on.

U.S. Secretary of State Edmund Muskie called for restraint on all sides of the problem in South Korea, hoping for "some kind of stability."

Korea is just one hot spot in the world concerning Muskie. The State Department ingenuer still is trying to comprehend France's overture to the Soviet Union concerning the U.S.S.R.'s invasion of Afghanistan. French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing met in Warsaw Monday with Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev with little warning to the United States.

Muskie may not have long to ponder the recent developments. Though President Carter all but cinched the Democratic nomination for a second term in Tuesday's primaries, Ronald Reagan, by most counts, is already over the top in the Republican Party.

National polls show Reagan leading Carter in the upcoming race.

And in Iran Wednesday, the American hostages suffered through Day 200 of their captivity.