

tunity for meaningful participation in the democratic process. The McGovern Commission has engaged in a searching and honest examination of the problems of party reform. Its Guidelines provide us with a base on which to build a more effective party, which is responsive and responsible."

SENATOR EDMUND S. MUSKIE,

February 12, 1970.

"In 1968, many people were asked to test our political system through the Democratic Party. That system was found lacking. If people are to turn to the Democratic Party again, there must be substantial evidence that the events of 1968 will not recur. The Guidelines of the McGovern Commission require provisions for timely delegate selection, 18 year old participation, adequate public notice, one man-one vote, and the existence of party rules—as well as the elimination of all mandatory assessments, proxy voting, unit rule, and closed slate-making. These Guidelines, if enforced, will open up the party to new ideas and new people.

"The danger is that this document will be just one more paper that politicians may prefer to ignore rather than implement. The national Democratic Party must—if it is to be worthy of its name—reform its own processes and procedures."

SENATOR EUGENE J. MCCARTHY,

March, 20, 1970.

"The Guidelines developed by the McGovern Commission are a major step toward the Democratic Party's goal of broadening citizen participation in the nominating process. I am confident that the Guidelines will provide the 1972 Convention with effective criteria for assessing the delegate selection process in each state, criteria which themselves have been arrived at openly and with the fullest possible participation of the entire spectrum of the Party.

"The members and staff of the Commission deserve the Party's thanks for reporting early enough so that all state and local party organizations will have ample opportunity to achieve full compliance in time for the next convention."

Senator EDWARD M. KENNEDY,

March 17, 1970.

"I am impressed with the work accomplished by the McGovern Commission, and I believe the great majority of Democrats will welcome its Guidelines as being fair and long overdue.

"We have no greater task than assuring that ours will be an open party, encouraging the widest possible participation in all of our affairs. The Democratic Party must serve, not be served; it must facilitate choice, not deny it; it must invite diversity, not discourage it. The Guidelines of the McGovern Commission are a most important step toward these goals."

Senator FRED R. HARRIS,

December 4, 1969.

"The work of the Commission chaired by Senator McGovern spotlights a crucial question confronting our nation today: whether our traditional political party system can be modernized and rehabilitated to meet the challenges of the democratic process in the 1970's. I believe we will meet that test only if we enlarge upon the efforts already underway and if we assure the fullest participation of all in our Party who wish to associate with us, while being vigilant against the exclusion of any segment or any element."

LAWRENCE F. O'BRIEN,

Chairman, Democratic National Committee, April 8, 1970.

COMMISSION ON PARTY STRUCTURE AND DELEGATE SELECTION, Washington, D.C., April 1970.

DEAR FELLOW DEMOCRAT: The 1968 Democratic National Convention adopted a resolution requiring that all Democratic voters be given a "full, meaningful and timely" opportunity to participate in the delegate selection process and authorized the crea-

tion of a commission to "aid the state parties" in meeting this requirement.

Early in 1969, Senator Fred Harris, then Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, announced the establishment of this Commission—the Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection—and invited me to serve as Chairman.

From the beginning, the Commission, with the assistance of a small staff and the cooperation of Democrats throughout the nation, set out to find methods which would guarantee every American who claims a stake in the Democratic Party the opportunity to make his judgment felt in the presidential nominating process.

After intensive study, during which testimony was taken from hundreds of Democrats, the Commission concluded that the processes by which delegates to the National Convention are presently chosen are inadequate for assuring the opportunity for widespread participation. To remedy this weakness, the Commission has adopted Guidelines for delegate selection that are binding on all state parties for 1972. In the following report, the Guidelines are placed in the historical context of 1968 which gave birth to the reform mandate of our Commission.

Throughout its deliberations, the aim of the Commission has been to strengthen the National Convention, and, in the process, to strengthen our Party and American democracy. I believe that the adoption of these Guidelines by all the states will contribute to the regeneration of the Democratic Party as a more responsive and dynamic servant of the American people.

I hope that you will give the Guidelines the most careful study and consideration.

Sincerely,

GEORGE MCGOVERN,  
Commission Chairman.

#### MANDATE FOR REFORM

The 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago exposed profound flaws in the presidential nominating process; but in so doing it gave our Party an excellent opportunity to reform its ways and to prepare for the problems of a new decade.

The delegates to the Convention, concerned by the chaos and divisiveness, shared a belief that the image of an organization impervious to the will of its rank and file threatened the future of the Party. Therefore, they took up the challenge of reform with a mandate requiring State Parties to give "all Democratic voters . . . a full, meaningful, and timely opportunity to participate" in the selection of delegates, and, thereby, in the decisions of the Convention itself.

In order to ensure that this mandate would be implemented, the Convention directed the Democratic National Committee to establish a Commission to aid state Parties in meeting the Convention requirement.

In February 1969, Senator Fred Harris, Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, appointed us to that body mandated by the Convention—*The Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection*. We are Democrats who represent every segment of our Party. We find common cause in our Party's history of fair play and equal opportunity. We believe that the continuing vitality of the Democratic Party depends upon its adherence to this heritage.

Since its inception, our Party has been an open party—open to new ideas and new people. From the days of Jefferson and Jackson, the Democratic Party has been committed to the broad participation of rank-and-file members in all of its major decision-making.

In the American two-party system no decision is more important to the rank-and-file member than the choice of the party's presidential nominee. For this reason, popular control over the nominating process has been

a principle of the Democratic Party since the birth of the National Convention 140 years ago.

This tradition for participation and popular control, however, has not always been adequately expressed. After a lengthy examination of the structures and processes used to select delegates to the National Convention in 1968, this is our basic conclusion: meaningful participation of Democratic voters in the choice of their presidential nominee was often difficult or costly, sometimes completely illusory, and, in not a few instances, impossible.

Among the findings the Commission has made about delegate selection in 1968 are the following:

In at least twenty states, there were no (or inadequate) rules for the selection of Convention delegates, leaving the entire process to the discretion of a handful of party leaders.

More than a third of the Convention delegates had, in effect, already been selected prior to 1968—before either the major issues or the possible presidential candidates were known. By the time President Johnson announced his withdrawal from the nominating contest, the delegate selection process had begun in all but twelve states.

Unrestrained use or application of majority rule was the cause of much strain among Democrats in 1968. The imposition of the unit rule from the first to final stage of the nominating process, the enforcement of binding instructions on delegates, and favorite-son candidacies were all devices used to force Democrats to vote against their stated presidential preferences. Additionally, in primary, convention and committee systems, majorities used their numerical superiority to deny delegate representation to the supporters of minority presidential candidates.

Secret caucuses, closed slate-making, widespread proxy voting—and a host of other procedural irregularities—were all too common at precinct, county, district, and state conventions.

In many states, the costs of participation in the process of delegate selection were clearly discriminatory; in others, they were prohibitive. Filing fees for entering primaries were often excessive, reaching \$14,000 in one state, if a complete slate of candidates had been filed. "Hospitality" fees were often imposed on delegates to the convention, reaching \$500 in one delegation. Not surprisingly, only 13% of the delegates to the National Convention had incomes of under \$10,000 (whereas 70% of the population have annual incomes under that amount).

Representation of blacks, women and youth at the Convention was substantially below the proportion of each group in the population. Blacks comprised about five percent of the voting delegates, well above their numbers in 1964; since blacks make up 11% of the population and supplied at least 20% of the total vote for the Democratic presidential candidate, however, they were still underrepresented at the Convention. Women comprised only 13% of the delegates with only one of 55 delegations having a woman chairman. In a majority of delegations there was no more than a single delegate under 30 years of age, and in two delegations the average age was 54. The delegates to the 1968 Democratic National Convention, in short, were predominantly white, male, middle-aged, and at least middle-class.

As this information emerged, we recognized that two alternative courses of action were available to us. First, we could suggest that the institution of the National Convention had outlived its usefulness and should be discarded. To be sure, at our public hearings several Democrats gave testimony expressing the judgment that the convention system did not deserve to be saved. There was a substantial body of feeling, in fact, that a national primary within each Party would