

A Rally for Nobody and a Vote at Age 112

By FRED FERRETTI

Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, opposite the United Nations, has been the scene of many large and diverse political rallies through the years. Yesterday's Election Day convocation was not one that could be considered massive — it consisted of 14 adults, one baby, three dogs and one chicken—and it was for neither Gerald R. Ford nor Jimmy Carter. It was for Nobody.

"Who keeps his campaign promises?" shouted a man in a blue sweat suit, who identified himself as Wavy Gravy, one of the leaders of the West Coast Hog Farm collective.

"Nobody!" shouted the crowd in return, everybody but the dogs and chickens.

"Who is your leader?" asked Wavy Gravy.

"Nobody" was the return shout.

"Who is in charge here?" asked a policeman assigned to crowd control in the plaza.

"Nobody!" answered the crowd.

And so it went. There were Nobody songs, Nobody buttons, a Nobody bus and Nobody banners. It was promised that Nobody would show up in an open convertible and nobody did.

Said Wavy Gravy: "Forty-three percent of all eligible voters in the last election voted for Nobody. So Nobody has been in the White House for some time. Actually, he might be re-elected."

It was Election Day for the young and old and in-between. At the age of 112, a naturalized Albanian immigrant, Mrika Mrnacaj of the Bronx, voted for the man who signed her citizenship papers, President Ford. Last week she had said that as a registered Democrat she intended to vote for Jimmy Carter, but early in the morning she turned up at Public School 46 on East 196th Street, assisted by her 20-year-old grandson, Paul, and said she was changing her mind.

She voted for Mr. Ford and Representative Mario Biaggi, the Bronx Democrat—"the men who gave me citizenship."

Further downtown, in the Casa d'Italia on the Columbia University campus, 4-year-old Ronald Hunter, in the voters' line with his mother and father, Veronica and Charles, allowed as how he intended to vote, too, and said he knew who was going to win. "It's either going to be Ken Norton or Muhammad Ali," he said.

Up in New Hampshire, in Dixville Notch, the 26 voters in this town near the Canadian border gave President Ford his first plurality of the day, casting 13 votes for him, 11 for Jimmy Carter, one for Eugene J. McCarthy. The last was disallowed. But Mr. Ford could not draw too much heart from that, for Dixville Notch has, with one exception, in 1972, picked every Presidential loser since 1960.

In the last few years, radio and television have become more and more sophisticated in their analyses of national elections, and commentators have been hired by all broadcasters to interpret election results. Last night, Prof. Irwin Corey was guest analyst on WNEW-FM radio.

The professor, who bills himself as "the world's foremost authority," said early in the evening: "The events were quite meager. The electronic devices have made some rectification of results, and that is to the good. There is a trickle from Poland, with about 14 percent of the vote in, and Yugoslavia

is abstaining. Votes are being sent by way of Czechoslovakia, and it is expected that any losses that abrogate the final result will be abstained.

"Poland and Albania, it appears, are litigant and free from any bonds that might be construed as being a partisan vote, and it would seem that the trend from the outlining states is not yet apparent. And we have not yet heard from out-of-town states."

This was the first of Mr. Corey's analyses.

Election night is a night for parties —victory parties, crying parties, silly parties.

Out in Billings, Mont., President Ford's state chairman, Ed Eck, admitted last night that he had not planned his party too well, seeing that he had booked it into the Carter Room at Billings's Northern Hotel.

In New York City, Barry Pelkey, executive chef of a restaurant called the U. S. Steakhouse, was ordered to create an ice sculpture centerpiece for a victory party for Representative Edward I. Koch, who comes from Manhattan. He asked what it should be, and was told a donkey. Mr. Pelkey did not have a model, so he raced next door into a greeting card store and bought a 79-cent cardboard centerpiece with a red-white-and-blue accordion stomach and began copying it.

"It wasn't the prettiest donkey," he said, "but after two hours his stomach had melted away anyhow. Who knew?"

Peter Camejo, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for President, decided he ought to have a victory party last night, too. The Socialist Workers Party is to the left of the Socialist Labor Party, which is to the left of the old Socialist Party.

Why a party?

"Because we are getting a bigger vote than we did last time out. Because we detect a shift in the mood of the American people to the left. Because we see disillusionment with both the Democrats and Republicans. We know we will begin to fill the political vacuum in the country. Our potential vote is growing. The socialists are back in America."

So last night in Roosevelt House on New York's East Side, Mr. Camejo and his running mate, Willie Mae Reid, spoke glowingly by phone hookup to 45 Socialist Workers rallies throughout the country to celebrate their "victory."

It wouldn't be an election without some ballot mixups.

In New Jersey's Hudson County, a perplexed member of the county Democratic organization reported that more than 100 calls had been received from voters whose registration pages had been torn out of voting books.

"We've been shipping them up to the courthouse by the busload to get orders so they can vote," he said.

"The upsetting thing is not that this type of thing is going on," he said, "but that it's happening to our people —to Column A people."

In San Francisco, some voters complained that they had accidentally voted for Lester G. Maddox when they really wanted to vote for Jimmy Carter. It seems that ballot levers had been placed unevenly over the names of the various candidates, with Mr. Carter's name covered by levers for Mr. Maddox's American Independent Party and the Socialist Workers Party.

The United States Attorney's office has been asked to look into the lever placements to see if there had been any deliberate fraud, but election offi-

cials have asked Mr. Carter's forces to take heart: The lever mixup apparently was limited to San Francisco County, and did not occur elsewhere in California.

Election Day not only means votes, it means changes in patterns of behavior, alterations of schedules, a time for play, a time for business. In New York, the schools were closed and so were some businesses, but in other states schools remained open and the day was a signal for special sales.

Some people voted, then took the day off. Representative Otis G. Pike, Democrat of Suffolk County, who had campaigned almost as a low-profile Republican out in conservative Suffolk County, voted and then went fishing and said he would be unavailable until he returned with some flounder.

On the New York subway trains—on a No. 2 train out on Nevins Street—a conductor closed the doors and announced with gentleness, "Have a nice day and don't forget to vote."

At Barney's clothing store in the Chelsea section of Manhattan, business was, according to salesman John Burkey, three times that of a normal day. It was so busy that patrons had to put their names on a list and wait to be called by a salesman.

Mr. Burkey, one of the store's dynamos, usually sells six to eight suits a day. By mid-afternoon he had sold 11 and was still counting. "Everybody shows up on Election Day," he said with some exasperation, complaining that he couldn't even check into people's credit because "the line to American Express was busy all day."

The people on the ferry boat on its way to Ocean Beach on Fire Island yesterday morning were much like the summer crowd, but instead of wearing bathing suits they were dressed in winter coats and instead of going to the beach they were going to vote.

The travelers on the boat, most of them from Manhattan, were among dozens who took a one-day excursion here to cast their ballots where they think it will have the most impact—at their summer residence.

"Once you own a home out here, you want to protect your interest," said Gail Labb, who came out from her Manhattan apartment to vote, accompanied by her gum-chewing 6-year-old son, Evan.

"The more people who vote out here, the more attention we get from state and Federal officials," said Charles Coakley, another owner of a summer home.

"Besides," added his wife, Trudi, "we welcome any excuse to come out here."

Local officials say that about 350 people lived on Fire Island year-round. According to the Suffolk County Board of Elections, 574 people were registered to vote today. Many of them vote by absentee ballot, but some prefer to take an Election Day excursion.

The Fire Island Ferry Company puts on an extra run for Election Day to supplement the three daily winter round trips. The 10 o'clock boat this morning was reminiscent of the summertime journey. People carrying pets, groceries and other household items crowded onto the Fire Island Miss for the half-hour trip.

People said they were concerned with local issues, such as beach erosion, the use of dune buggies and the designation of the island as a national seashore. Voting took place between the two red fire trucks in the Ocean Beach firehouse.