

PALMER SLATED TO TAKE FIRST BALLOT

McAdoo Second With Cox Trailing, Is Forecast.

TWO GROUPS TO BATTLE

Ohioan's Supporters and Administration Leaders Due to Decide Final Roll Call.

BY MARK SULLIVAN.
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THE AUDITORIUM, San Francisco, July 1.—Within 24 hours, and probably within 12 hours, of the balloting, here is the way the situation stands. Palmer should lead on the first ballot. He should have about 250 votes. Next to him will come McAdoo. It is less easy to predict McAdoo's strength on the first ballot accurately, because strategy clearly calls on the McAdoo managers to conceal some of their strength at the beginning.

However, McAdoo should have on the first ballot as many as 250 votes. Cox should have almost as many. All the rest of the votes will be distributed among the favorite sons and minor candidates with New York giving its bi-delegation to its governor; Indiana to Marshall; Oklahoma to Owen, and so on. If these figures become out of date between now and the balloting it will be because of growth of McAdoo strength.

Palmer to Lead. After the first ballot, if Palmer continues to gain, that fact will not be significant. Every competent observer here believes that Palmer will reach his peak in one of the very early ballots, and will thereafter decline.

Thereupon the convention should crystallize for a time into a tug-of-war between two groups, which may be loosely designated as the state leader group and the administration group. I emphasize the fact that these terms are chosen merely for convenience. Lines are so crossed that the terms "state leader group" and "administration group" do not mean much except as convenient designations.

The state leader group will be for Cox; but when you come to say whom the administration group will be for there arises the necessity for explanation and surmise. In other respects in these dispatches. It is true that in the beginning McAdoo will seem to be the candidate of the administration group. It is also true that there is a small army of office holders and ex-officers who are working for McAdoo.

Little Fellows Back McAdoo. But the conspicuous fact, which is extremely puzzling unless you explain it on the basis of the theory which will be stated later, is that this group of office holders and ex-officers, working for McAdoo, includes the really big administration leaders, members of the cabinet and the like, who in other respects are carrying out the administration's will here. McAdoo in a way, and in the beginning ballots, can be loosely described as the candidate of the administration group, in the sense that a large number of minor officeholders are working for him. But only in that sense.

The cabinet members and other friends of Wilson, who have so far completely and conspicuously dominated the convention and carried out the presumed wishes of Wilson as respects practical details, have not been identified with the McAdoo candidacy. The attitude of these men as regards this detail of the nomination is so far unknown. They have given no indication whatever of having a candidate for the nomination.

This might readily be explained on the ground of superior wisdom and superior subtlety. They are aspects of it which make that explanation difficult to accept. Your correspondent's explanation is based on the surmise—which is wholly a surmise—that these cabinet members and other friends of Wilson are in an embarrassing position. They think that Wilson is going to be canonized by the democratic party within a quarter of a century.

Wilson's Supporters Loyal. Inasmuch as they have this sort of exalted attitude about Wilson as a party leader, they are reluctant to take of their own initiative the definite step which marks the passing of that leader from power. They are reluctant, in short, to take the initiative in lining themselves up for any candidate other than Wilson himself. They fear it might seem disloyal to Wilson. They may know, and they just know, the impossibility of Wilson running again; but they hesitate to be the ones to act officially, so to speak, on that assumption.

If these men were united on a candidate as they are united on other things, there would be no question of the outcome. Up to now it is perfectly apparent that they are not so united. Your correspondent's surmise is that with the taking of the first ballot the embarrassment of this situation about Wilson's personal position will be solved. The result of the first ballot will break the ice, the result of that ballot will serve notice on every individual concerned and to all the world that however much this convention honors Wilson as a party leader, he is not to be taken seriously as a candidate for the nomination.

Administration Holds Whip. That fact, it seems to your correspondent, will relieve the embarrassment of these cabinet members and friends of Wilson. They will then feel free to take a hand in nominating somebody else. If they take that hand with the same firmness and the same unity among themselves as has characterized their previous control of the convention they can probably do what they please with regard to the nomination as readily as they have done what they pleased in regard to everything else. Let us assume that they have this unity and that they do take control. If they do, whom will they back for the nomination? Will they adopt McAdoo, or will they adopt someone else? Unquestionably they will adopt McAdoo for the beginning, as a means of holding their forces in order. But your correspondent is less confident that they will go at it with the serious determination of putting McAdoo finally over.

If it is not McAdoo that they determine to put over, then their choice must lie among a small number of others, like John W. Davis, Homer Cummings, or someone else similarly agreeable to the administration. In any event, assuming that they are as united on this point as they have been about the rest of the convention, they will succeed with whomsoever they take up. But at this point arises the question: Will they be united? Will these cabinet members and friends of Wilson, who have so far dominated things, stand together on

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the point of naming the candidate for the presidency?

Obligations Prevent Unity.

The only reason for apprehending that they may not is the fact that several of them have developed either personal ambitions for the presidency or else are the beneficiaries of booms organized by others. There is a movement for Cummings, there is a movement for Colby; there is a movement for Glass. Whether the possession of individual ambition may prevent their unity of action in naming a candidate for the presidency can only be told by the event.

As to the state leader group which is supporting Cox, they are likely to continue that support for a considerable time. The state leader group has as its basis the Illinois delegation, under the leadership of George Brennan, aided by the bulk of the New York delegation and other large delegations from the middle western and eastern states. The chief purpose of this state leader group, however, is expressed as being not merely the nomination of Cox, but the prevention of McAdoo's nomination.

The state leader group proclaims that they have some 450 delegates who will stand against McAdoo to the end. Four hundred and thirty delegates, of course, is more than a third, and if it should stand together, and also be intelligently led, it might prevent the nomination of McAdoo. I add the qualification that it must be intelligently led. Indeed, it is held with extraordinary intelligence.

One Group May Decide. Your correspondent has seen this kind of situation on many occasions, and it is one of the accepted axioms of practical politics that it is extremely difficult, as it is expressed, "to beat someone with no one." A balance-of-power group like this can readily be, and often is, the deciding factor in a convention, but as a rule it is the deciding factor only when it has an affirmative candidate of its own. When it is acting in a purely negative way, it is much less formidable.

Your correspondent hesitates to believe that McAdoo's nomination, if it is prevented at all, will be prevented by this group. Of course, in a way this group does have a candidate. They are loosely identified with the main body of the Cox supporters. But the principle upon which they have been brought together is not to nominate Cox, but to defeat McAdoo.

Now as to some minor factors. First, Bryan: I cannot discover that so far as regards the nominee, Bryan has any specific group of delegates who will follow his leadership. Bryan's fight here has so far been solely on the dry versus wet plank in the platform, and on that point undoubtedly there are many dele-

gates, indeed, probably a majority of the delegates, who sympathize with Mr. Bryan's position and feel grateful to him for the fight he is making.

Bryan's Standard Deserted.

But whether that sympathetic attitude toward him will crystallize into a willingness to act under his leadership as regards the nomination, remains to be seen. Of course, if the nomination should become a case of dry versus wet, uncomplicated by other considerations, Bryan would have power. Cox is the candidate of the wets. There can be no doubt about that, and if at any time it should become a case of getting together to beat Cox the dries would be very happy to accept Bryan's leadership.

Next, this matter of "ten men in a room at 2 A. M." This has become a derided phrase and a derided condition of hypocrisy on the one hand and cynicism on the other. Both point to it with scorn. But any observer of national conventions, if he is frank, knows that practically always at some point toward the end it does become a case of "ten men in a room at 2 A. M."

The phrase as recently used has come to have a sinister significance that need not be so and is not always so. The truth is that 1920 men cannot take any action and cannot be brought into intelligent agreement except by means of agreement on the part of the leaders of the various groups.

Caucus Wards Off Disaster. Without this meeting of minds on the part of leaders, 1920 undirected men would wobble around and get nowhere for weeks, or else, in a burst of some accidental emotion, would come to some eccentric and perhaps unfortunate result.

There will be "ten men in a room at 2 A. M." here as there was in Chicago. In fact, these meetings are already beginning to take place. In the heat of a battle leaders may yell at each other publicly. To newspaper men they may picture their opponents as malevolent scoundrels, but all of that is of the heat of battle. Sooner or later certain specific facts affecting their own fortunes become perfectly clear to these leaders, and sooner or later they come together for conference. In point of fact, these conferences are already beginning tentatively.

Last of all, it remains true as it always has been that everybody here concedes that John W. Davis is in a class apart. If ever the situation arises where someone will say, "Let us stop this snarling; let us cease being for one man because he is my enemy; let us cease being against another man because he denied me patronage; let us raise this situation to a higher elevation and, omitting all personal relations, choose that one democrat who could most surely

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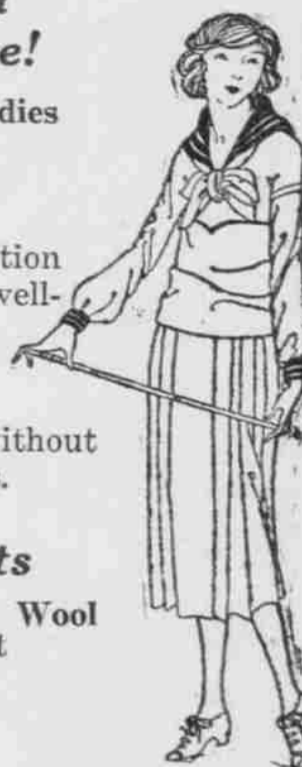
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