

State Presidential Primary Offers Spotty Picture of Voter's Desires

By HALE SCARBROUGH

Oregon's presidential preference vote coming up May 16 can just barely escape being a farce.

It would be most interesting to see just what Republican and what Democrat the people of this state actually want to see run for the office of President of the United States. But under the circumstances, a real expression of preference in either party is practically impossible.

That's because all of the persons of either party generally considered to be possible presidential nominees aren't on the Oregon ballot. And it is further complicated in that the names of some individuals who aren't potential presidential nominees are on the ballot.

Take the Republican ticket, for instance. There are six Presidential candidates listed. Theoretically, at least, they are candidates, because their names are printed on the ballot. The six are Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, Gen. Douglas MacArthur, Sen. Wayne Morse, William R. Schneider, a St. Louis lawyer, Harold Stassen and Gov. Earl Warren of California.

There's no doubt about Eisenhower, Stassen and Warren being legitimate candidates. They're after the nomination and the job, although General Eisenhower ap-

parently wants to appear as a drafted hero and Stassen is expected to pull out in favor of Eisenhower before long.

Morse and Schneider aren't candidates and MacArthur says he isn't, although he might be what is called a "dark horse", a possibility for the GOP nomination in case the principal avowed candidates stand each other off at the party's national convention, where the nomination is made.

All three are on the Oregon ballot because this state's election laws are so liberal as to allow unwilling and frivolous candidates to get their names put before the public. A man can run for the presidential nomination in Oregon simply by asking that his name be put on the ballot and getting the okay of a top member of the state party organization. A man can be put up for president in Oregon, whether he wants to run or not, by petition signed by 1,000 voters of his party members, who might or might not care to vote for him at all.

Morse, Schneider and MacArthur got on the GOP ballot in that fashion.

On the other hand, there is one avowed Republican candidate for the presidential nomination who is not on the Oregon ballot. He is

Sen. Robert A. Taft of Ohio, one of the two most likely to get the eventual nomination. The other is Gen. Eisenhower.

The Republicans, it would seem, have four men who are actual candidates for the presidential bid—Taft, Eisenhower, Stassen and Warren.

Yet the Oregon ballot bears the name of six, and one of the four actual candidates isn't listed.

There's not much chance for an actual expression of Republican preference. A sizable slice of the Republican electorate (the supporters of Sen. Taft) doesn't have representation on the ballot.

The only method those persons have of expressing their real preference is to write in Taft's name and a write-in campaign takes considerable doing. So far it has hardly been suggested for Oregon.

The Democrats have an even siltier situation on their primary ballot. The Democrats have the names of three men on the ballot as presidential candidates, and only one of them actually and avowedly is. That's Sen. Estes Kefauver of Tennessee. The others on the ballot are Gov. Adlai Stevenson of Illinois, who the other day announced he wasn't out for anything but the governorship of his state, and Supreme Court Justice William Orville Douglas, who isn't

a candidate, never has been and is begging the people not to waste their time at bat by voting for him.

So this state's Demos have only one actual candidate on their ballot, and that lacks a lot of allowing for an expression of preference.

The Democratic woods are full of fellows who might run for the presidency.

In addition to Pefauver, there are Sen. Richard Russell of Georgia (probably the best of the lot), Sen. Robert Kerr of Oklahoma, Sen. Paul Douglas of Illinois, Sen. Brien McMahon of Connecticut,

Averill Harriman and Vice President Alben Barkley.

And also there is President Truman. He's in the best position of all to get the party's nomination at the convention next July in spite of his announced intention not to run again, and he can make it look like a draft, call of the people.

But the Oregon Democrats get to choose between Kefauver and a couple of others who don't want the votes. What kind of expression of preference does that allow?

Here again the only escape is write-in. Democrats who don't like what has been served up to them can write in the name of a man.

they like.

Fortunately, write-in votes here in Oregon are legal. Democrats and Republicans alike who don't like the printed ticket can insert the name of the man they prefer. It'll be counted. Just be sure to mark an X in front.

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