New Hampshire March 7th primary: Muskie

By Joe Kahl

The voters of New Hampshire, who have traditionally been a reliable bellwether and weary of student canvassers, or at least those workers who run a campaign for the White House.

The March 7th primary election will be dominated by the hallowed status of "Major candidate" or consign him to that status himself, if not, his candidacy is in jeopardy. To elect a "Major candidate" is to elect the Senator will get. The state is highly regarded as a bellwether, since it is the first primary in the nation and has traditionally supported the candidate who later stakes a claim to the presidency. The state's residents, aware of the TV lights that trundle into their state every four years, have developed a reputation for voting up or down issues rather than candidates.

This state often plays crucial role in determining the outcome of candidates for party nomination. Lyndon Johnson, who should have been in the White House, was denied victory by the press because his margin was less than anticipated. By extension, most of the electorate considers this state's primary victory or defeat the victory or defeat of their candidate despite the large number of votes garnered by Johnson. Suddenly, the Johnson hand-wars were derided by Vietnam and hundreds of McCarthy's anti-war students canvassers. Within a few weeks, Johnson's campaign was all but over. Nixon radiated some of the ineptness of his campaign to the 1972 presidential campaign. Nixon commands much support among registered Republicans, though his recent renomination by the party pros, who spend more than most of the other candidates on speaking tours, is a sure sign that he will gain victory in New Hampshire. Nixon ran almost daily. Left-center Democratic fund-raising dinners to Lincoln, he decided to skip a Democratic primary.

Muskie himself is so confident of winning here as actively as the other candidates. Many of the local politicians were both angered and embarrassed by this apparent lack of interest. Yet, Ed Muskie is still running strongly in this normal convention.

Senator Edmund Muskie of Maine is by all accounts the leading contender for the Democratic nomination and his campaign looks it. Most of the state's Democratic politicians have jolted his bandwagon. However, it is still possible to consider the depth of their commitment to Muskie, "if Muskie wins, they don't want to go along with him either."

The campaign headquarters is large, very attractive, and unlike that of either McGovern or Muskie organization, in downtown Manchester. He obviously has money. The Muskie people do not feel that the New Hampshire race is a crucial one, since several much larger states, including Georgia, Jacksonville, and most of the voters in New Hampshire are registered as Independents, the information gives a fair idea of the Senator's power base, the salient issues of the race, and upon whom subsequent campaign efforts should be concentrated. Independents have been especially cultivated this year.

Under a new state law, people who register as Independents may vote in either the Democratic or Republican primary and still retain their Independent status. As a result, both parties have been astoundingly careful in their careful plans for shutting McGovern's campaign efforts. Nixon has run almost daily. Left-center Democratic fund-raising dinners to Lincoln, he decided to skip a Democratic primary.

"I'm not worried about them. I'm not worried about them."

The Union-Leader's forecast is a mile wide and as tech deep. Our people are committed. We don't have to pay canvassers $2 an hour like Muskie's people do. Our organization's fine; they're dying.

Muskie's bracket position will probably help him carry Massachusetts over the other candidates. According to the Union-Leader, McGovern is a threat, due to the large number of student canvassers. Mayor Sarnoff's list of Democratic canvassers was cut to the Muskie margin here since he has a large, slick campaign staff and because the Union-Leader is giving him large amounts of favorable publicity.

(Continued on opposite page)

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