Are Political Conventions Undemocratic?



By HERBERT McCLOSKY

O feature of American politics has so aroused the disdain of political purists as our Presidential nominating conventions, Raucous, windy, tumultuous, festive, noisy-to the casual observer they seem as rowdy as a Tammany saloon, as stylized as a Kabuki drama, as ritualized as a professional wresling match. Overripe in their rhetoric, inelegant in their proceedings, a combination Mardi Gras and clambake, they suggest a carnival rather than a deliberative body charged with the momentous task of nominating a Presidential candidate and shaping a party program. Some observers consider them an offense against dig-

DELEGATES - "Why do we persist in imagining delegates as city hall hacks and self-servers?" nity, reflection and sensibility. Others, wearied by their interminable talk, find them irksome and boring.

The standard description of the convention's decision-making process is scarcely more flattering:

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Above, the Kansas delegation at the 1964 G.O.P. convention in San Francisco.

back rooms and hotel suites, candidates, delegation leaders, functionaries and "bosses" meet clandestinely to arrange the convention's business and to work out agreements and accommodations favorable to their mutual interests; "deals" are made, bargains are struck, principles are compromised and beliefs are sacrificed to expediency.

This description, however widely voiced, is caricature. Like most caricature, it contains elements of truth, but it is far from being either generous or entirely accurate. This year such comments on our Presidential nominating process have increased, and there have been urgent calls by many prominent in public affairs for the abolition of the national convention. These doubtless reflect the unparalleled events of the past five years: the assassination of three of our most-gifted and venerated public men; the horror, dashed hopes and frustrations caused by Vietnam; dramatic and disconcerting changes in the ecology of our cities; uprisings and disorder in the ghettos and universities; the reversion in many quarters to "confrontation" politics in place of democratic civility and mutual accommodation. All these matters have profoundly shaken the national consensus, provoked what some regard as a crisis of legitimacy, and brought into question many of our institutions, including, of course, our procedures for nominating the nation's Chief Executive.

vents specific to the present campaign have increased the misgivings many voters feel not only about the national convention as an institution but about the particular two conventions being held this month. Some have even been led to the conviction that the electoral process has miscarried this year and has deprived many voters—especially young people—of an effective voice in the shaping of their own and the nation's, affairs. Notable among these events were: (1) President Johnson's decision

to remove himself from the race (itself a response to the profound cleavage he sensed among the national electorate), which left his critics without a major target for venting their anger about Vietnam; (2) the withdrawal of Romney and Rockefeller from the primaries, which for a time deprived Republicans of a liberal alternative; (3) Nixon's easy sweep (partly for that reason) of every state primary he entered, and (4) the paralyzing and embittering effect of Senator Kennedy's death on many blacks, young people and intellectuals, who have withdrawn into political apathy.

By far the most exasperated voters are the McCarthy supporters. They see a fundamental flaw of our prenominating system in the fact that Humphrey has succeeded in acquiring strong delegate support without having participated in the primaries (he was unable to enter before most deadlines for filing, owing to the timing of the President's withdrawal), while McCarthy, although losing

most of the contested primaries, made an unexpectedly strong showing in some of them and, like Humphrey, has scored well in the polls. McCarthyites believe that their man should be rewarded for having first challenged Johnson for the Democratic nomination and for having helped force a change in our Vietnam policy.

They complain further that Mc-Carthy has received a smaller share of the delegates from some of the state organizations than his popular support warrants; that the combined McCarthy and Kennedy vote in the primaries signified a rejection of Administration policies; and that the convention machinery will be used in an effort to exclude from the platform an adequate expression of McCarthy's views on Vietnam and other issues. They allege, in short, that the convention is not being kept "open" and that the popular will is about to be denied by the men who command the party organization.

Some of these charges, of course, are typical of the complaints voiced in political campaigns by the "outs" against the "ins." Nevertheless, one must concede that the existing method of nominating Presidential candidates is, from the point of view of democratic theory, less than ideal. Some of its deficiencies are inherent in all complex forms of political organization, while some are peculiar to the party system as it evolved under American conditions.

One consequence, for example, of combining a Presidential form of government with a Federal two-party system is that it puts the parties under severe pressure to bring together a coalition of state delegations large enough to nominate the one nationwide candidate who will represent the party in the general election. In contrast to multiparty, cabinet systems of government, more emphasis is put on attaining a majority than on calling attention to the diverse views within the electorate. Little effort is made in party conventions to expose, much less heighten, the cleavages that divide the country; instead, the emphasis is on unity and on the search for a candidate who can reconcile the often conflicting interests of party members and voters from different parts of the society.

The warning sounded by critics that each of this month's conventions may seek in its proceedings to minimize the national conflicts over Vietnam, the cities, law and order, etc., is a realistic expectation. In the face of crisis, and the bitter election struggle it is likely to evoke, party leaders will be especially concerned

to soften existing differences, or at least to keep them from being paraded before the eyes of millions of television viewers and newspaper readers. The American parties are loose confederations of state parties, and this not only reduces their motivation to publicly debate divisive national questions, but also affects the degree to which party members across the nation are adequately represented. Whether a state's delegates are chosen by a primary, state convention, caucus, state central committee, or some variation or combination of these, no special effort is made to represent the state's party membership in proportion to their beliefs or preferences.

PRIMARIES, in fact, some seturn out to be the least representative, since they assign the entire state's delegations to the Presidential candidate who gets a plurality. Certain state parties are strongly dominated by the governor or some other official, and these leaders are often more concerned with the strength and unity

of the organization than with its representativeness.

Once a majority forms at a convention, or is on the way to becoming a reality, its usual impulse is to take command. It may stop short of actually trampling on the minority, but considerable forbearance is required for it to refrain from exploiting its strength to enlarge its advantage. The candidates who appear to be running behind in the delegate count are at a disadvantage, for they are less likely to win the close ones.

When a group of party leaders sense that they have, or are likely to have, a majority at the convention, some of them will surely try to force the appearance of unity upon the party by shutting out the minority in any way they can—the more so if they happen to perceive the minority as dissident or disloyal. Thus, in the present contest for the Democratic nomination, a number of factors may conspire to place the McCarthy forces at an even greater disadvantage than they would suffer from the mere fact of having attracted a smaller number

PRESIDENT-PICKING



Sanders in The Milwaukee Journal.

"Don't bother us, kid! Can't you see we're busy nominating a President?"

"The suggestion that we discard the national convention"—some of whose faults inspired these cartoons—"and nominate Presidential candidates via a national primary is a manifestation of misplaced democratic zeal."

of delegates, to begin with.

The entire drama, however, need not go in this direction. for there are counteracting considerations which lead one to believe that the conventions are, or may be, less tightly dominated than one might suppose. The incentive of the majority to command, for example, is to some extent counteracted by a commitment Americans share about the "rules of the game." These include the sense of fair play and the respect for minority rights.

Then, too, while the party leaders of key states can, if they combine, move large numbers of key delegates, it is an oversimplification to assume that the convention delegates are mere pawns in a political chess game played out by masters. Not all delegations are dominated by a leader or unified in their preferences. Some delegations are the handiwork not of a single "machine" but of competing machines. Some contain dissident factions that challenge the leaders at every turn. Nor is the influence in one direction only, for even strong political leaders can retain their power only if they know when to bend to the wishes of the delegation.

WE would also be mistaken to assume that the convention leaders always see eye to eye. Some are rivals or even enemies. They are not a syndicate or a clearly defined oligarchy, but rather a loose, unstable coalition, volatile and, except for a few of its members, surprisingly uncool. Behind the formal structure, especially among Democrats, one discovers a bewildering assortment of factional, class, geographic, ethnic and ideological interests—the state of affairs that led Will Rogers to his famous comment that he belonged to no organized party, for he was a Democrat.

While some leaders or delegates have more power than others, one ought not to conclude that more power equals absolute power, or that less power equals no power. Like all men who are eager to win, they are weakened by their ambitions. Their desire, for example, to avoid a bloody public squabble may lead them to make concessions (these may involve changes in the platform, opportunities for certain individuals to address the convention, the

seating of contested delegations, or in extreme cases. the Vice-Presidential nomination). Few party professionals want to drive the minority out of the party. The predominant motivation is to achieve unity, and it is this, rather than oligarchic usurpation, that most often leads to "deals" and accommodations.

It should be noted that the minority plays the same game as the majority, but enjoys the advantage, as a minority, of appearing the more virtuous. McCarthy supporters, for example, have been no less active than Humphrey's in trying to line up the support of party leaders and delegates. For Humphrey, there is no way to emerge unscathed: if he is nominated on the first ballot, he (or the "organization") will be said to have rigged the convention beforehand; if he wins only after several ballots, he (or the "organization") will be said to have successfully manipulated the convention in Humphrey's favor; and if he loses the nomination to McCarthy or some other candidate, he (or the "organization") will be said to have been overturned by an uprising of the "people."

In short, the degree to which partisans favor or oppose the nominating convention notoriously reflects the vicissitudes of the political contest. It is not uncommon for the losers in a political struggle to propose the structural reforms of the institution which denies them victory.

LHE circumstances of the Republican contest differ from those of the Democratic, but similarities can be detected. The Rockefeller camp, aware that Nixon enjoys a considerable initial edge in delegate strength, points to the national opinion polls to prove its claim that Rockefeller is the preferred candidate of the voters. Owing to Rockefeller's fumbling and indecision in first withdrawing from the race, and his re-entry when it was too late to compete in the primaries, his associates cannot complain about the inappropriateness of the convention system or extol the superiority of a national Presidential primary. Nevertheless, they too have sought to circumvent the convention as an instrument of decisionmaking by asking, in effect, for a national plebiscite to be officially conducted by the

Republican party, the results

of which would presumably guide if not actually bind the delegates at Miami Beach.

The assumption behind both objections to the convention system is that the selection of the Presidential candidates ought properly to be lodged with the voters themselves, and not with a body of party practitioners. A national primary, its proponents claim, would correct the deficiencies that now attend the Presidential nominating procedure. It would not only be democratic, allowing all party supporters to participate in the choice, but would also draw on the people's wisdom, remove the party from the hands of the political bosses and mountebanks and return it to the governed, restore a sense of individual participation in the shaping of one's destiny, awaken voter interest, and permit the electorate to register its preferences for urgently desired changes.

.The recommendation is well-meaning; it is also, however, misguided, for many of its assumptions are false, and the cure would, in any event. be worse than the disease.

The mystique that surrounds elections in a democracy has been carried over by the proponents of the Presidential primary to bolster their claim for its superior wisdom. If the assumption of vox populi, vox dei holds for general elections, why should it not also hold for primaries?

One difficulty with this assumption, however, is that voters often differ sharply in their views, and unless God speaks in many and conflicting tongues, their claim to superior wisdom becomes difficult to sustain on this ground. Nor do voters always exhibit sagacity in their choice of rulers, for they have elected men of malignant as well as benevolent aspect. Nothing in the electoral process insures that wise, just, prudent and compassionate men will be preferred to stupid, cruel and irresponsible ones. Voters have elected despots and democrats, Fascists and Communists, totalitarians and libertarians, liberals and conservatives, the virtuous and the vicious, men of honor and integrity as well as liars and cheats.

ON what grounds, then, should we expect the elec-

sight when it participates a a Presidential primary? Indeesince a primary removes part di ferences and other familia guides that are ordinaril available to the voter in general election, the danger i increased that he will fall vic tim to demagogues and crowd pleasers, matinee idols an publicity seekers, familia names and celebrities. Pri maries are, to an even greate: degree than general elections popularity contests. Men of minor talent who, by ostenta tious display, are able to cal attention to themselves, enjoy

an unusual advantage in the primaries over men of greater gifts, but of more sober de meanor.

No defender of the convention system needs to apologize for the over-all quality of the men who have been nominated for the Presidency. During the present century, the conventions have turned up among others, Woodrow Wilson, William Jennings Bryan. Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, Charles Evans Hughes, Franklin Roosevelt, Herbert Hoover, John F. Kennedy, Harry Truman, Thomas Dewey, Richard Nixon, Wendell Willkie and Adlai Stevenson. A few of the nominees may have fallen short of Presidential caliber, but the list on the whole is an impressive one.

Nor does the historical record show that the men chosen by the conventions were less able and deserving than the men they rejected. How many distinguished and supremely qualified men can one name who would have been nominated by a national Presidential primary but who were passed over by the conventions? In some instances conventions have turned up men of extraordinary quality and distinction who were not widely known to the electorate and who would certainly have been unable to win a national Presidential primary. Woodrow Wilson is one example, and Adlai Stevenson is another. It was the "organization" and the convention system that discovered Stevenson, recognized his brilliance, integrity and high-mindedness, and nominated and renominated him for the nation's highest office.

The delegates' ability to recognize and nominate superior candidates is not fortutorate to exhibit greater in- itous. Inrough competitions itous. Through comparative

of party leaders and voters, we have learned that convention delegates are much better prepared than ordinary voters to assess the attri-butes of candidates. They are more interested, aware, and concerned about political outcomes. Ideologically they are far more sophisticated and mature than the average voter. Despite their differences, the delegates to the two conventions constitute, to a far greater extent than their rankand-file supporters, communities of cobelievers. Not only

ach of the party deleons tend to converge around identifiable belief systems, but they also tend to diverge from each other along liberal-conservative lines. Their respective followers, however, tend to look alike.

Thus, it is not the delegates of the two parties but the mass of their supporters who can more appropriately be described as Tweedledum and Tweedledee. Whereas delegates are prone to search out and select candidates who embody the party's values, the mass of Democratic and Republican voters, participating in a national Presidential primary, would be likely to select candidates who are ideological twins. Nomination by primary, in short, might well afford the electorate less of a choice than nomination by conven-

WE have grown so accustomed to the stereotype of convention delegates as Babbitts who wear funny hats and engage in juvenile hijinks that we often overlook the fact that they are a relatively sophisticated group of people. Most of them are above average in education, have participated in politics for many years, have usually held public or party office, are active in their local communities, and associate with the men who lead and manage affairs in almost every segment of society.

Our stereotypes of politicians and convention delegates have done them (and us) the disservice of misleading us about the pride many of them feel about the political vocation. Like physicians, journalists, professors or carpenters, most of them are concerned to do a good job and to up. hold acceptable standards. No matter how drastically the political vocation changes, we persist in imagining the delegates as city-hall hacks and self-servers, ignorant and. coarse.

Convention delegates actually are found to be not only less cynical politically than the average voter, but they have higher political standards and make greater demands on the performance of their colleagues. Many of the delegates who pursue politics mainly as an avocation hold important positions elsewhere in society. They are tradeunion leaders, businessmen, editors, physicians, writers, civil-rights leaders, lawyers, professors, engineers, or have other jobs that require education or the ability to perform effectively in organizational roles. Many are conscientious citizens who belong to goodgovernment groups, foreignpolicy associations, organizations of women voters, and other voluntary bodies concerned with the public welfare. In sum, it is difficult to see by what logic or evidence convention delegates can be derided as morally shabby and intellectually inferior to the voters who participate in primaries, or as less qualified to assess the claims of the wouldbe candidates.

Consider also that the convention delegates often know the candidates personally, or have had opportunity to observe them at close quarters. The average primary voter, by contrast, has only superficial and indirect knowledge of the candidates, is poorly informed about even the simpler issues. has little special information concerning who in the party has worked industriously, shown originality or proved himself trustworthy, intelli-gent or responsible. His concern with politics and with the party's welfare is marginal, and he generally lacks the motivation and knowledge to relate his opinions to a larger belief system.

The depths of misinformation among primary voters is sometimes astonishing. Surveys conducted in this year's Oregon primary, for example, confirmed that more than three-fourths of the voters who favored Kennedy or McCarthy were either unable to identify, or completely misidentified, the Vietnam views of the two men, although for many weeks the campaign had been fought over this very issue.

One must not, on the other hand, overstate the qualifications and wisdom of convention delegates. Not all of them meet the standards demanded of a society of philosophers, astrophysicists or

the League of Women Voters. But if the delegates fall short of the ideal, how much greater is the distance between the ideal and the average primary voter. The contrast holds not only for their knowledge of candidates, but also for their understanding of the requirements and deeper meanings of political democracy. The delegates are ahead of the average voter in this respect as well. What is even more startling is that they prefer. to a greater extent than the voters do, parties that divide by ideology, that stand for something, and that distinguish themselves from each other.

NE also hears that conventions are inherently "conservative" and designed to defend the status quo, while direct primaries are "progressive" and open the system to new ideas. Even a moment's reflection, however, will confirm that conventions have nominated a large number of imaginative and forward-looking men (as well as some conservatives), and that the electorate has nominated and elected numerous conservatives and reactionar es (as well as many liberals).

Nothing about the primary process gives it an inherent advantage over the convention process in opening candidates to new ideas. Indeed, as much research bears out, one is more likely to find tendencies toward innovation and experimentation among active party members and leaders than among voters. On many questions, notably civil rights, tolerance, constitutio al liberties, openness to "change." conformity and conventionality in opinions and life-styles. the delegates of the two parties are usually more enlightened than the ordinary citizen. What determines -"progressiveness" ie less the formal nominating device than the purposes to which it is addressed and the manner in which it is employed. To insist otherwise is to value appearance over substance.

Although the conventions tend to select candidates who represent the party's dominant ideological position and thus afford the voters a genuine choice, they are, oddly enough, less likely to confront the electorate with political extremists. There is no contradiction in observing that a convention will choose a candidate who can be ideologi-

cally differentiated from the opposition while maintaining that he is unlikely to be an extren.ist. Forces toward convergence and divergence are simultaneously at work in the conventions. The usual outcome is that one of the conventions (the Democratic) selects candidates who are somewhat left of center but not radical extremists; while the other convention (the Republican) chooses candidates who are somewhat right of center but not reactionary extremists.

One observes in the convention the pull of ideology in the one direction, and a desire to win, and therefore to attract

the middle range of voters, in the other. Some people argue that the desire to win is so overwhelming that everything is sacrificed to that objective. and that the pull toward the center invariably prevails. But these observers overlook the genuine political convictions of the party activists. The delegates want to win, of course, but they hope to do so on something resembling their own intellectual terms. Strongly held beliefs are not the sole motivation for active political involvement, but neither are they entirely absent from the political activity of thoughtful men.

The nomination of candidates is for most voters only a small matter. They read, talk and reflect upon politics much less often than the delegates do, and most voters see elections as having little relevance to their daily lives. The extent of their indifference is evident from the size of primary turnouts. It is not unusual for primaries to involve as few as 25 to 40 per cent of the electorate. Since the election of Governors, Sen-ators and other important officials is frequently at stake, one may doubt that a national Presidential primary would activate many of the voters who now neglect to participate.

NE of the most serious drawbacks of a national Presidential primary, however, is the damaging effect it would have on the operation of our political parties. Primaries are profoundly antagonistic to the achievement of a responsible party system, for they deprive the party of its most important functions, the right to select candidates and to formulate programs on which those candidates are to stand.

Candidates selected by pri-

mary rather than party have won their positions by plebiscite, and have little reason to feel obligated to any organiza-

tion. They can refuse to support the party's candidates, and even flirt with the opposition, without fear of being disciplined.

A party that consists of totally autonomous individuals, none of whom bears any ideological or fraternal relationship to any other, is the equivalent of no party system at all. It is extremely difficult to derive from such an arrangement a coherent, integrated set of policies. Without a responsible party, every representative works only for himself, thinks only of his own political safety and advantage, and cannot be depended upon to behave in predictable ways.

In such a system, not only is a legislative program difficult to attain, but the voters are left in confusion. Party labels mean little. Under such conditions when voters choose someone who calls himself a Democrat or Republican, they have no idea what policies he is likely to follow. Thus, what seems on its face to be a more democratic and representative arrangement turns out in the end to be less representative, because more capricious and less predictable, than is possible under a more orderly, responsible system of party organization. In modern societies, with their vast and complex problems, the need for responsible political parties is greater than ever before.

IVI ANY political observers believe that the American parties are already too diffuse and too weak to impose discipline on their members or hold them to a political line. Even now, each survives as a party by the sheerest good fortune, with 50 state party units and no effective national office, no continually functioning executive committees, no clear criteria for membership, not even regular national newspapers or magazines to communicate with the rank and file, and no effective power to punish or reward members.

The parties can scarcely afford further impediments to their ability to function as national organizations. What holds them together now is in some measure a common set of beliefs, a sense

of fraternity, informal personal and organizational ties and, perhaps most of all, a big, splashy, quadrennial meeting in which each tries to work out a common program. select national leaders, heal divisions and unite in a common effort to elect party candidates. A national Presidential primary would be a step in the wrong direction: it would seriously weaken the chances of producing a strengthened, more responsible, more meaningful party system.

ESPITE all the flimflam about national primaries, the charge that bosses "put over" their own hand-picked candidates in disregard of the popular will, and that the "true" party leaders are seldom chosen, the two candidates most likely to emerge victorious from the Democratic and Republican conventions (Humphrey and Nixon) are by almost every criterion the leaders of their respective parties, who, if they win the nomination, will have earned it.

Both Humphrey and Nixon embody rather closely the ideological tendencies (liberal the one case, conservative in in the other) of their parties. Both have the largest followings among party activists throughout the nation. Both have devoted themselves to their respective parties. Both are among the most experienced leaders of their parties, having served for more than two decades in party and Government offices. Both have been Senators and Vice Presidents, and have gained extensive experience in national and international politics beyond that of most (perhaps all) other contestants for the nomination. Both have expended much energy and time in raising funds and promoting their parties' causes and candidates. Both are men of unusual intelligence and political savvy. Both are energetic, active, lively and effective politicians. Both have long been recognized as high among the highest-ranking leaders of their parties, and have long been thought of as qualified Presidential candidates. Even Rockefeller, who comes closest of all the other candidates to having comparable experience, does not have better credentials for the nomination than Nixon or Humphrey.

It is ironic, in light of their considerable achievements and

records, that the convention system should now be challenged on the grounds that Humphrey and Nixon are likely to be the nominees. What would one say about the effectiveness of a party system which excluded or bypassed men of their qualifications?

THE recommendation to eliminate the national convention and to nominate Presidential candidates by direct popular primary is a manifestation of that misplaced democratic zeal that has led to such absurdities as the election of sheriffs, dog-catchers, assessors and coroners. Nothing about democracy requires that every official be elected. Like most virtues, democratic participation can be carried to excess and perverted by the very ubiquity or capriciousness with which it is employed. To elect certain officials in a large representative democracy is essential, but to subject every office to election is to impose impossible demands upon the electorate's ability to judge wisely. We would all be kept so busy with politics that we would have no time to read books, enjoy music, watch baseball or make love.

A few state primaries in the course of a national campaign might conceivably be useful as warm-ups or to help candidates to estimate the effectiveness of various appeals. But the costs of these and other benefits are excessive.

The use of primaries lengthens the course of the campaign, and may serve, in the end, to diminish rather than increase voter interest. Primaries also add enormously to the cost of campaigns, and permit men of large fortunes an even greater advantage than they enjoy in general elections (the Rockefeller campaign this year expensive, flamboyant and lavish beyond belief-affords a dramatic example of the power of wealth to return a candidate from relative obscurity to the forefront of the political arena).

In discussing these and other shortcomings of Presidential primaries, Nelson Polsby and Aaron Wildavsky ("Presiden-

tial Elections") have observed that a national primary would invite the candidacy not merely of two or three participants, but of many, perhaps 10 or 12, with none coming close to a majority. This would neces-

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sitate a second or "run-off" primary which would add further o the length and expense of a campaign procedure that is already absurdly grueling and expensive.

OME of the arguments against primaries can, of course, be made against elections as well. One deludes himself in thinking that elections are in any sense ideal devices for the selection of rulers; they are simply the least bad of all the devices we have been able to think of so far. If we knew a way to recognize and appoint philosopher-kings, it would be mere fetishism on our part to continue to elect public officials. But we are, alas, fallible, and no method of appointment has so far been discovered that assures the selection of political leaders who are noble, fair, just, honorable, generous, compassionate, beneficent, strong, courageous, sensible, refined, prudent and wise.

None of the alternative methods so far employed to select political leaders - hereditary title, oligarchic selection, military conquest, seniority, appointment by co-optation, charismatic revelation, ruthlessness and the ability to climb over and eliminate rivals, etc.—have demonstrated a systematic capacity for producing leaders of superior virtue and solicitude for the governed. We use free elections because they offer us an opportunity to hold leaders responsible. When rulers govern without opposition or fear of removal. the temptation to oppress their subjects, to destroy rivals, to usurp power and aggrandize themselves is too great for most of them to resist

But if elections are essential to democracy, national Presidential primaries are not. Conventions are not only an acceptable but superior alternative, entirely in keeping with the democratic idea. Doubtless they could be improved. They could be made smaller, more deliberative, less chaotic, more representative and less oratorical.

It is not clear, however, that either the parties or voters want the conventions reformed. Like the circus to which they are sometimes compared, they are among the greatest shows on earth. Tune in to Miami and Chicago and see for yourself.