

# *Birmingham News* CREDENTIALS REPRIEVE Straight talk saved state delegates trip to woodshed

BY AL FOX  
News staff writer

CHICAGO

The credentials committee may have been caught off guard when Robert Vance candidly admitted to a degree of collusion with a challenging group in an effort to get Loyal Democrats seated at the Democratic National Convention. But his candor, shown earlier in his unsuccessful challenge of delegations pledged to Sen. Eugene McCarthy, may have been the deciding factor in winning Alabama the "up on the wrist" rather than the "woodshed spanking" that Mississippi and Georgia got from the credentials committee.

Alabama, unlike other states, has a delegation heavily flavored with supporters of George Wallace, the former Alabama governor, out to disrupt the two-party system who may well be on the way to creating a significant third party. In Mississippi, the committee ruled primarily on the issue. In Georgia, it was the hand-picking of delegates. Gov. Lester Maddox, who was announced as a presidential candidate. The committee took these two delegations "to the woodshed" by kicking out the elected Mississippi delegation and using an alternate handle on the Georgia delegation.

But to Alabama, where they have no hopes of winning this year, they merely said "be quiet and keep quiet later." THEY ARE NOT asking the

delegates to "support" the nominees of this convention as in 1964, but "not support" the candidacy of any other party, thus, a delegate may participate in this convention, and if he dislikes the outcome, all they ask is that he "go home and be quiet."

Vance readily admitted that he "had a hand" in the fact that Negroes were represented in the delegation.

And, he told the committee, the Alabama Independent Democratic party — one of the two challengers of the elected delegation — was formed with the full knowledge and cooperation of "leaders of the party."

Why was this "two-headed party?" formed?

Simply to allow delegates to the convention, elected by Alabama voters, to meet requirements of the convention.

Convention rules state that delegates must be able to vote for convention nominees.

After Wallace locked up Alabama's 10 presidential electors in the May primary, Loyal Democrats looked for another avenue whereby they could cast a vote for the convention nominees for president and vice president and still vote for local Democratic candidates.

It was the creation of the AIDP, which placed only presidential electors on the ballot.

Thus a person may vote under the AIDP "Donkey" label for president and vice president and return to traditional "Rooster" of the Demo-

cratic party for local offices . . .

David Vann, chairman of the AIDP, said the new party in Alabama merely performed the same outlet that Wallace's third party movement did in other states . . . "It gives the voter the opportunity and right to be able to vote his convictions."

THE FIRST MOVE toward the "two-in-one" party came when the state Democratic executive committee abolished the loyalty oath within the

state which required candidates to affirm that they had not voted or intended to vote for candidates other than the "candidate of the Democratic Party of Alabama."

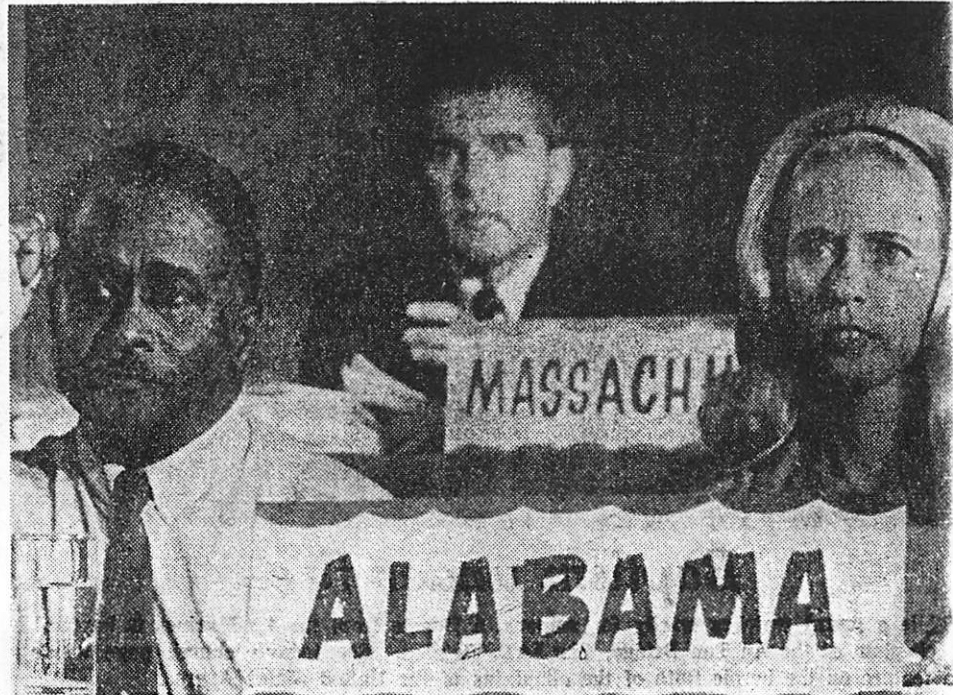
When the loyalty oath was abolished, it opened the way for the formation of a "new party within the party."

But it did not take into consideration of an insurgent group, dissatisfied with the plan apparently because it did not make a clean break with Wallace.

The rump group headed by

Dr. John Cashin of Huntsville, a McCarthy oriented delegation, could muster only 14 of the 110 committee votes. A proposal that replaced delegates to the elected group be divided evenly between Vann and Cashin groups could muster only 20 votes.

The majority of the credentials committee apparently felt, that although they could win Alabama this year, no efforts are being made to bring the Alabama Democratic Party back into the National Democratic Party.



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The rump group headed by

Dr. John Cashin of Huntsville, a McCarthy oriented delegation, could muster only 11 of the 110 committee votes. A proposal that replacement delegates to the elected group be divided evenly between Vann and Cashin groups could muster only 20 votes.

The majority of the credentials committee apparently felt, that although they could win Alabama this year, honest efforts are being made to bring the Alabama Democratic Party back into the National Democratic Party.

