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1991

Wisconsin Progressive Party

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Recommended Citation

Richard M. Valelly. (1991). "Wisconsin Progressive Party". *Political Parties And Elections In The United States: An Encyclopedia*. Volume 2, 1222-1223.

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As Reagan's pollster, Wirthlin developed new and important survey research measures. In 1968 he initiated "tracking"—the continuous monitoring of the course of a campaign—and a sophisticated geo-demographic targeting scheme. Two years later, while taking surveys for Reagan's gubernatorial campaign, he applied the techniques of economic modeling to politics. Although not perfect, such modeling of political behavior showed promise. He also developed forecasting techniques at the state level to generate estimates of the electoral vote count. Wirthlin refined these techniques in a "Political Information System" (PINS) for Reagan's 1980 presidential campaign. PINS—while providing accurate, coordinated, and timely strategic information to the campaign—also accurately forecast the election outcome. Wirthlin used PINS to predict Reagan's reelection in 1984.

As pollster to the President, Wirthlin refined a technique called "speech pulse." A small group of voters were asked to react to key phrases in presidential speeches using a hand-held device. Phrases that received very positive responses were dubbed "resonators," and were repeated in subsequent Reagan addresses.

Wirthlin's innovations have led to recognition by his peers. In 1981 he was named Adman of the Year by *Advertising Age*, the first poll taker so named. Many officeholders have sought his services. In 1981 one-half of all Republican U.S. Senators were Wirthlin clients.

See also: Elections of 1980 and 1984, Gerald R. Ford, Barry Goldwater, Ronald Reagan

John K. White

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Wisconsin Progressive Party

The key role played by Robert La Follette, Jr., and Philip La Follette in the formation in 1934 of the Wisconsin Progressive Party (1934–1946) speaks volumes about the initial fragility of the New Deal. In 1934 intelligent, practicing politicians—the heirs, in the case of the La Follettes, to a successful state political dynasty—could and did seriously believe that the New Deal's future was quite open. They strongly suspected

that in 1936 a national third-party movement might well capitalize on discontent with the New Deal's supposedly palliative measures. The plausibility of this perception seems hard to fathom only if one assumes the inevitability of the New Deal's success.

The Progressive Party was patterned in large part after the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party (1918–1944): indeed its founders considered naming their organization the Wisconsin Farmer-Labor Party. The left wing of the founding convention represented such forces as the Wisconsin Federation of Labor, radical farmers, and the Milwaukee Socialists. Eventually these forces grouped themselves into an organization that became known as the Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation. It was this constituency that was interested in a Wisconsin Farmer-Labor Party. But the founders opted for a label already familiar to the Wisconsin electorate. In rational terms, they opted for lower "transactions costs" with the Wisconsin electorate.

Until 1934 the La Follettes headed a liberal faction within the Wisconsin Republican Party known as "the Progressives." How well organized this faction was can be gauged from the ease with which the La Follettes and their local supporters switched to a new party and succeeded in electoral settings as third-party politicians, albeit with a familiar label.

Philip La Follette lost the Wisconsin governorship after a single term to a Democrat in 1932. But as a Progressive he won reelection in 1934 and 1936. The 1936 election was the height of the Progressive Party's electoral strength; it gained the Progressives solid control of the Wisconsin congressional delegation and it also gained control, if by a very thin margin, of the Wisconsin legislature. Although a bitter session, the 1937 legislative session led to a "little TVA," the Wisconsin Development Authority, a "little Wagner Act," and higher relief spending, among other measures. But in 1938 the Progressive Party broke apart and steadily lost strength until it closed shop in 1946. It did elect a governor in 1942, but he died before he could take office. In any case, he had plans for merging the Progressives and the Republicans.

The Progressive Party disintegrated in part because of Philip La Follette's somewhat bizarre effort in 1938 to create a national third party. Furthermore, the New Deal's intervention into Wisconsin's economy and society weakened the Progressive coalition in the same ways that the

New Deal weakened the Minnesota Farmer-Labor coalition. Although there is no strong evidence that Franklin Roosevelt intended the defeats of the Wisconsin and Minnesota third-party forces, he nonetheless took great satisfaction in those conquests.

See also: Philip La Follette, Robert M. La Follette, Jr., Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party

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Woman Suffrage Movement

The American political tradition, with its rich rhetoric of sovereignty, representation, and individual rights, denied that women had a right to vote. Until 1848 the denial rested on a consensus of silence. Beginning in that year, when Elizabeth Cady Stanton prevailed on a woman's rights meeting at Seneca Falls, New York, to come out for women's right to the franchise, politicians had to justify the exclusion of women from the body politic. At first the reasons had a tidy simplicity. Despite a commitment to "individualism," patriarchal attitudes lingered. "Individual" was taken to mean the head of a family, and through that head, women enjoyed virtual representation. The economic foundations of patriarchal politics remained. Indeed the states had only recently abandoned property qualifications that white heads of families had to meet in order to vote. When woman's claim to a right to vote was met with jokes about who would tend the hearth if women left home for the polls, the humor barely disguised men's inability to regard the sexes as alike in anything. Home life, along with the racial caste system, preserved strong vestiges of hierarchy in a nation still working out the ramifications of republicanism.

That simple but basic dilemma persisted as a constant personal issue and a pervasive cultural conflict. But the woman suffrage question moved to new terrain over the next 72 years, until ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment gave women the vote in 1920. During the Civil War, the meaning of U.S. citizenship emerged as a central political issue in the wake of emancipa-

tion of slaves, and women were able to make their claim for political rights as part of that debate. From Reconstruction onward, justifications for denying votes to women were drawn from American political discourse. They were expressed in terms of opportunities at the next election, of the extent of federal power, of the rights of states, of winning southern support, of holding urban voters, and of whether to expand or contract the electorate.

From the perspective of suffragists, this connection with national politics promised a more efficient resolution of their complaint, a clean enactment of law rather than the drawn-out changing of minds. Yet suffragists lacked the coinage that changed laws, and legislative action proved very difficult to achieve. The strategic possibilities open to suffragists changed not only with the platforms and behavior of politicians but also with their own steadily growing acceptance among women and their persistence as a presence in American politics. At no time in their protracted experiment with indirect influence on the political process did they have the help of a political party. Only in the very last years of the contest, when Woodrow Wilson came to their aid, did a powerful political figure stand by them and deliver his best. The major parties failed women as did the political culture. The fragmented and contradictory ways that Americans wrestled with political and economic inequities left suffragists isolated from other democratic movements. The record of support for woman suffrage from third parties is nearly as dismal as it was from the major parties. To the third parties (the Populists, for instance), some other alliance mattered more, usually the dream of gaining strength in southern states. Suffragists became willing participants in this politics of narrow self-interest. When they won their amendment in 1920, they walked away from the reality that most African-American women, sister suffragists since 1848, had won nothing at all. Those women had to fight on for 45 more years, until passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 assured them the vote.

At its inception the woman's rights movement derived a political strategy from the antislavery movement with which its supporters uniformly identified. Among William Lloyd Garrison abolitionists, women had gained near equality of action and opportunity, while that radical group's antielectoral methods allowed women full participation in reform. The movement's understanding of sexual equality