

PROSPECTS FOR NOVEMBER

The Duffey Formula

BY RICHARD J. MARGOLIS



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GNES MORLEY, the Democratic state representative from Greenwich, Connecticut, was laid up in the hospital on Primary Day, August 19. But Mrs. Morley is a supporter of Joseph Duffey, the soft-spoken insurgent running for U.S. Senator, and Duffey supporters do not suffer obstacles lightly. She had herself placed upon a stretcher and borne by ambulance to the polling place. Still flat on her back, she was carried into the voting booth—that little room with several views—where she pushed the Duffey lever.

Joseph Duffey, 38, is a Congressional minister, national chairman of Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) and Connecticut's happy symbol of sensible dissent. His followers have been reaching hopefully upward for several years—as partisans of Eugene McCarthy in his 1968 bid for the Presidency (Duffey led that crusade in Connecticut), and more recently as promoters of reform within the Democratic party. But August 19 marked the first time the reformers' reach did not exceed their grasp.

It was all too much for Alphonse J. Donahue, the wealthy, 53-year-old zipper distributor from Stamford, who was running for the senatorial nomination with official blessings from John M. Bailey (see "Duffey vs. the Bailey Machine in Connecticut," NL, July 20). Polling more than 79,000 votes, Duffey beat Donahue by 12,000; and he beat a third candidate, State Senate Majority Leader Edward L. Marcus, by 43,000. Both losers, along with Bailey and his minions, promptly pledged full support to the winner in the autumn election, a three-way race with Republican

Congressman Lowell P. Weicker Jr. and Senator Thomas J. Dodd, who is seeking reelection as an independent. Thus, in less than three years Duffey has transformed his position within the party from pain-in-the-neck to standard-bearer.

He played by all the old, stodgy rules—no revolutionary rhetoric, no captious call for a third party—and to nearly everyone's surprise, he won. In consequence, a lot of people who had turned their back on "the system" may now be taking a second look. A college student sent the following congratulatory telegram to Duffey: "Now I have faith that the America I learned about when I was a child will become a reality."

But faith so easily gained can be as easily squandered. If Duffey loses in November, what are we to say of August? The fact is that Duffey had a lot going for him this summer that he will not have going for him this fall. He had Marcus, for instance, who kept insisting he was a liberal but came across to

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voters as a law-and-order man. Marcus took votes from Donahue.

Then, too, Duffey benefited from a lackluster performance by the Bailey organization, which failed both to get into the fray and to get out the vote. "We didn't want to create any wounds within the party," Bailey explained later; but Duffey supporters prefer to think that the machine was itself wounded—on its last legs, in fact—and simply did not have the strength to help Donahue.

Whatever the case, senatorial insurgencies do not arouse the party faithful, because senators, unlike governors, do not control much patronage. Duffey could win without unduly undermining the political job-holder's favorite prayer: *Give us this day our Bailey bread.*

Even so, 'twas a famous victory, and the way Duffey achieved it might offer some guidelines to peace candidates around the nation, most of whom have been faring badly. Duffey softened his "peacenik" image and emphasized instead some bread-and-butter economic issues that just about everyone could understand and subscribe to. In a state where industry is heavily dependent upon war contracts, Duffey called for a "conversion trust fund"—in effect, a Federal subsidy to workers while defense factories were converting to peacetime production.

Duffey went down the line for organized labor, urging unemployment benefits to strikers caught in long strikes, opposing sections of the Taft-Hartley law, and showing up on picket lines in front of General Electric and the Avco Corporation in Stratford. He also had much to say about the hardships of inflation, backing the establishment of temporary wage-price controls.

By winning a large share of organized labor's support, Duffey succeeded in forging a coalition which even FDR might have envied. To labor's rank-and-file he added: elderly citizens enchanted with his

boyish sincerity and disenchanted with the rising cost-of-living; young people who want America to get out of Vietnam; black and Spanish-speaking ghetto-dwellers who appreciated his liberal positions on civil rights, housing, education, and poverty. ("We need a family assistance program that helps not only the destitute," said Duffey shrewdly, "but those thousands of Americans who work full-time but still live on the edge of poverty.") In addition, Duffey had thousands of affluent white liberals left over from the McCarthy days working all summer—telephoning, canvassing, raising money—to get out the Duffey vote.

They did a good job. Duffey won big in wealthy suburban spas like Westport (1,295 for Duffey, 94 for Donahue, 54 for Marcus); he also won, though not so decisively, in cities like Hartford, New Haven and Norwalk. In all, he gained pluralities in 120 out of the state's 168 cities and towns.

IT MAY NOT be so easy next fall. Lowell P. Weicker Jr., the popular and good-looking Republican congressman from Fairfield County, is an intelligent campaigner. And the record he has compiled during two years in Washington is that of a reasonable moderate who keeps his own counsel. For example, Weicker voted against ABM appropriations and he endorsed the Church-Cooper amendment restricting U.S. military operations in Cambodia. He also voted to override President Nixon's vetoes on the housing and education bills. "He's really got a pretty fair record," lamented a Duffey aide. "He's no Goldwater."

On the other hand, Weicker has been evasive about his position on the McGovern-Hatfield amendment, and being a Republican, he has slipped into the habit of professing fealty to the President. This could hurt him in a state that is traditionally Democratic.

A few weeks ago Weicker had

his own primary to contend with. He was challenged by State Senator John Lupton, a tory Goldwaterite, who kept accusing Weicker of abandoning Republican principles. Weicker easily won the primary, but during the course of the campaign he felt compelled to emphasize his Republican credentials. "I'm going to hold him to that," says Duffey. "We're going to make Weicker look like the Republican he is." (There are 400,000 registered Republicans in Connecticut, and 475,000 registered Democrats. The balance of power lies with the 550,000 who have not affiliated with either party.)

Senator Dodd's candidacy, to borrow from Churchill, is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma. No one knows why he is running—it is assumed he cannot win—unless he wants to be "the spoiler." But then, whose candidacy will he spoil? As a kind of conservative Robin Hood, he might be expected to take from the Republicans and give to the Democrats; but as a former Democrat with a large and perhaps still-loyal constituency, he could pull from Duffey.

In any case, it seems likely that Dodd will seek the hard-hat vote: he will run against "crime in the streets." Duffey, meanwhile, will run against President Nixon disguised as Lowell Weicker. And Weicker, groping for middle ground, will run against "extremism on both sides." He has already labeled Dodd a hawk and Duffey a dove, observing at the same time that he does not believe in labels.

In the end it may come down to a contest of looks and personalities: Dodd's white hair and old-fashioned senatorial-ness, vs. Weicker's imposing appearance and soothing baritone voice, vs. Duffey's warmth, sincerity and perpetual good cheer. But whether issues or personalities predominate, Connecticut is sure to be the scene of a spirited campaign that will be closely watched across the country.