

The election eye . . .

National GOP actions please Idaho delegates

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The National Republican Convention at Detroit last week came out pretty much as expected, meeting with general approval of the Idaho delegation.

Only the fiasco of attempting to get Gerald Ford on the ticket as a running mate to Ronald Reagan marred the proceedings but this likely was exaggerated and never was a serious overture. How any deal can be concocted that would give a vice president responsibility for certain areas of the government faces constitutional and practical obstacles. This nation could not accept a co-presidency status hammered out by the two principals. It's to Reagan's credit that he rejected such an arrangement.

Ford never proved to be a strong president and his presence on the ticket would not have helped Reagan. If elected, it could have created an impossible situation.

The selection of George Bush who gave Reagan the stiffest competition is a natural when it is obvious the majority of delegates wanted no part of any moderates, meaning Sen. Howard Baker, of Tennessee, and others of similar views.

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The National Republican Party put itself solidly in the conservative camp, much to the delight of the Idaho delegation, which would have shoved even further right if it had had its way. Fifteen of the 21 Idaho delegates favored the hardline conservative Rep. Jack Kemp, New York, for the vice presidential nominee. Kemp is known mostly for his advocacy of the Kemp tax cut.

As Idaho Republican Chairman Dennis M. Olsen reported after the convention, the Idaho delegation was not reluctant to accept Bush. Really, past elections show a running mate provides only a sideshow for the main event, that it doesn't make that much difference. In this case, however, it could have slightly more impact because if Reagan is elected, he would become 70 in February, the oldest president to take office.

From this long-range East Idaho angle, Republicans nominated the strongest ticket available — a view also expressed by Olsen.

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The Republicans looked and acted like a party of winners at their convention, but the more sage and cooler heads know they have a tough campaign ahead — make no mistake about that.

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The Idaho delegation was in the limelight because of the impending titanic senatorial race between Democrat Frank Church and Republican Steve Symms. It also was seated near the front where it received considerable television exposure.

The interest focused on the Idaho senatorial race would leave one to believe control of the Senate hinges on it — and maybe it does. Analysis indicates Democrats hold a fairly comfortable margin, but the campaign is yet to be fought.

The Idaho delegation attempted to get Bush to mention Symms in his acceptance talk, but he refused to do so.

The Church-Symms race likely won't be decided until late October. The best analysis is to consider it a tough one. What happens in the final two or three weeks may decide the outcome.

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The Idaho platform conforms amazingly close to the national platform except for the Sagebrush Rebellion, which Idahoans included but national

delegates refused to accept.

Much like the Idahoans, the national convention ignored both the Equal Rights Amendment and draft registration. The national GOP plank merely stated it was not prepared to accept a draft at this time but said nothing about registration.

Olsen commented the platform emphasized the concept of basic values of preserving family life and the neighborhood and to work for peace and freedom.

Olsen aptly describes the

"platform theme of one that expresses a sincere concern on the future of the country, and to give a new sense of direction to the country from the standpoint of the economy, national defense, inflation, employment and the preservation of the basic moral values that are essential to a strong family life."

Platforms are generally forgotten except such emotional issues as the ERA, abortions and Sagebrush Rebellion, which could become focal issues.