

VOTE

E A R L Y

and vote



**Dick & Leah
for DUFF**

This piece of electioneering is brought to you by Dick and Leah Smith, candidates for DUFF, the Down Under Fan Fund, and residents of that notorious home of vote fraud, Cook County, Ill. -- or more specifically, 17 Kerry Lane, Wheeling, IL 60090-6415 (yes, we're still here; no, we haven't heard anything more from the airport).
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Chicago, home of the original "smoke-filled room" (Suite 804-805 in the Blackstone Hotel, coincidentally the site of Windycon I), has been infamous for its crooked politics since before Illinois was even a state. In 1818, Illinois entered the Union by nefarious means. A population of at least 40,000 was required for statehood. Fewer than 30,000 people were living here at the time.

So the U.S. marshalls counted everybody in the state -- including those who just happened to be passing through in covered wagons or on horseback. Then, for good measure, they counted some of the families over again. And again.

So has voting in the region proceeded to this day.

As you head to the polls to cast your vote for one of the Three-Stooges fine candidates for president of the United States, we thought you'd appreciate a few anecdotes about elections -- Chicago-style.

FRANCHISE FRAUD

Even Chicago's very first mayor, William B. Ogden, was accused of "large-scale election fraud" in the city's initial mayoral race in 1837. There were only 4,170 people in the town at the time, though, so how large could it have been?

By 1858, the city's scandalous elections were so notorious that Rep. William Porcher Miles, a congressman from South Carolina, charged, in a speech to the House of Representatives, "'Vote early and vote often,' the advice openly displayed on the election banners in one of our northern cities."

Greasing the palms of the voters was regarded as just the cost of campaigning. When at the behest of "Hot Stove" Jimmy Quinn, Honore Palmer, son of millionaire Potter Palmer, ran for alderman, his rival, John F. O'Malley, complained, "Damn that feller Quinn! By trotting out that Palmer guy he raised the price of votes in the 21st Ward from 50 cents to two dollars."

Two of the most infamous of Chicago's many corrupt politicians were "Bathhouse John" Coughlin and "Hinky Dink" Kenna, who between them ruled the legendary, gangster-infested red-light district, the First Ward, from the 1890s through almost the end of the 1930s. The pair were masters at getting out the vote.

In 1892, Bathhouse John boasted he had 2,300 new names on the registration lists. "You don't mean," he was asked incredulously, "you've got that many new voters in the ward?"

"Well," he said, "it's like this, see? It don't make no difference whether they're new votes or no, see? We got the names on the lists and the names goes election day."

Hinky Dink, who owned a saloon, was generous to the many unemployed men who frequented the place. When the time came, he knew how to get their votes. Billy Skakel, who ran against Coughlin for alderman in 1894, bragged that he was prepared to pay \$5 a vote, saying "We're gonna spend money like water. We got plenty." But Hinky Dink did better: he offered the thousands of homeless bums and tramps and unemployed men he'd been feeding a place to sleep, as much food and beer as they could swallow and 50 cents a vote.

He put them in his saloon, Coughlin's bathhouse, other precinct captain's businesses, cheap hotels, deserted buildings, brothels — whatever space he could find. By the end of registration day, the First Ward had 8,397 voters, almost double that of the previous election.

Meanwhile, on election day, the local police also helped out, conveniently rounding up "vagrants" who happened to

be wearing Skakel buttons and closing down saloons and gaming houses known to belong to pro-Skakel forces. Kenna also found a gang of hoodlums to serve as guardians of the Coughlin voters.

The beatings, shootings and other violence, scandalized even hardened Chicago. The Chicago Tribune wrote: "There have been elections in Chicago and there have been elections but yesterday's fight... was a world beater. Clubs were trump, and the police carried the clubs. Bathhouse John's election was secured by methods which would have disgraced even the worst river parishes of Louisiana."

But the Coughlin-Kenna duo was foiled the next year, when their own tactics were turned against them, with vote pay-out rates increased to fantastic proportions. And afterwards it came out that Skakel and the pair's enemies in the Democratic Party had finked to the Republicans about the hundreds of repeaters and dead men enrolled by the First Ward organization, forcing the board of election commissioners to strike those names from the rolls. Hinky Dink was defeated.

Bathhouse John, however, managed to secure reelection in 1896 through such expedients as removing his rival's campaign posters and walking around on election day with his pockets so full of coins it made him round-shouldered. But by day's end, he was standing tall again, with empty pockets and double the votes of his nearest opponent.

Hinky Dink and the Bathhouse continued to work elections their way, despite such blows as complaints to the department of health in 1902 about all the bums and hoboes they packed into their taverns during elections -- "The kind of cattle upon whom Bathhouse John depends are human swine, literally penned before election in the tough saloons," charged Walter Fisher of the Municipal Voters' League, "sleeping like hogs on the filthy floors and fed like hogs from the free lunch trough and the beer barrels piled against the walls" -- and a revolt of the bums when Hinky Dink tried to reduce pay outs in 1904.

In 1914, Coughlin's opponent was suffragist Marion Drake. Ninety-five thousand women voted in Chicago that year, but some of them voted for Bathhouse John. All the prostitutes showed up at the polls, claiming they could not read nor write, which allowed the Democratic judges to enter the voting booths and mark their ballots for them.

Hinky Dink also improved on his chain-voting scheme: He secured genuine ballots, marked them for Bathhouse John and sent one into the polls with one of his bums. The floater would get a fresh ballot, turn in the pre-marked one, and bring the new one out with him in exchange for a payment. This ballot was then marked and sent in with another bum. This method insured every vote paid for actually went to Coughlin.

Drake's workers were pushed aside at the polls, although, one hopes, less violently than those of previous opponents. Bathhouse John won by 3,000 votes.

The city primary of 1928 was dubbed the "Pineapple Primary" because of the regular use of hand grenades to persuade voters. "Diamond Joe" Esposito, candidate for alderman in the 19th Ward, was told, "Get out of the ward; it's healthier for you." His failure to take that advice proved fatal. One senator suggested the Marines be withdrawn from Nicaragua and sent to Chicago instead, while all candidates were advised to spend the night before the election in hiding. Almost incidental were the 16 votes cast from a stable, which proved to house 16 horses — but no humans.

In 1955, the voting fee had risen to \$1. Some registered Democrats in poorer parts of the city reported finding envelopes stuffed in their mailboxes containing dollar bills and messages reading, "This is your lucky day. Stay lucky with Dick Daley."

Out in the 43rd Ward, campaign workers spent the time before election day with pockets bulging with silver dollars, which were passed discreetly to those promising to vote a straight ticket, while in the Skid Row precincts, the winos got their pay either just before they went in to

vote, or after they got their ballots — they didn't have to vote them, the precinct captain would happily do that.

Meanwhile, there were the short pencil men, who used secreted pencil stubs to mark up opponents ballots while counting them, thus rendering them invalid. "There is all kinda ways," said Charlie Weber, ward boss of the 45th during the Daley era. "Every guy's got to do it his own way, only you better get it done, by God, or them guys downtown will crucify you."

In 1960, Richard J. Daley was credited with getting out the vote in Chicago for John F. Kennedy. Ninety percent of the registered voters in the city turned out. The only trouble was, post-election investigations suggested, many of the votes cast for JFK came from graveyards.

On the other hand, election returns from Chicago had been in for two hours before hardly any of the tallies came in from the Republican collar counties, implying there was vote-cooking going on out there, too. It wasn't until Sen. Paul H. Douglas threatened the election clerks with investigation by the federal district attorney that the counts came pouring in.

MUDSLINGING

The current presidential campaign has been filled with accusations of mudslinging, personal attacks and character assignation. These guys are mere dilettantes in comparison with "Big Bill" Thompson and his opponents. Thompson's motto: "If your opponent calls you a liar, call him a thief."

In 1927, his adversary in the Republican mayoral primary, Edward R. Litsinger, jeered, "Bill Thompson has the carcass of a rhinoceros and the brains of a baboon." The comment was inspired by one Thompson had made about Litsinger's mother. (It's interesting to note that the 1992 Illinois senatorial campaign has also featured attacks against a candidate's mother.)

In 1931, after Thompson had a falling out with two longtime political cronies, Fred "Poor Swede" Lundin and

Dr. John Dill Robertson, he made an appearance at a Loop theater with a pair of caged, live rats, whom he called "Fred" and "Doc." Of the latter, he said, "I can tell him because he hadn't had a bath for 20 years until we washed him yesterday. But we did wash him and he doesn't smell like a billy goat any longer."

On another occasion, he said, "The doc is slinging mud. I'm not descending into personalities. . . . But let me tell you that if you want to see a nasty sight, watch Doc Robertson eating in a restaurant. Eggs in his whiskers, soup on his vest. You'd think he got his education driving a garbage wagon."

Thompson's opponent in the 1931 Republican mayoral primary, Municipal Judge John H. Lyle, whom Thompson dubbed "the nutty judge," was also pretty good at name-calling. The sobriquets the two hurled at each other were so colorful, the *Chicago Daily News* compiled a list, which read in part: William Halitosis Thompson; blustering loudmouth, irresponsible montebank; Jumbo the Flood Relief Quack; moron; blubbering jungle hippopotamus; arrogant, incompetent, inefficient judge; lazy blood-sucking jobbers; lurching shambling imbecile; flabby jowls of a barnyard hog; blubbering charlatan; sluggish being; two jackass ears, a cowboy hat and an empty space in between.

"Can both be right?" the paper queried. Maybe so -- both lost. Lyle lost the primary, and Thompson lost the election.

NEFARIOUS NOMINATIONS

In the 1992 North America-to-Australasia DUFF race, astute election observers noted that Roger Weddall, the Australian administrator, was listed on the early ballots as a nominator of one the candidates. Was this a case of unfair patronage, of subversion of the impartiality of the administrators?

Well. . . no. What it was was a mistake.

No one knows exactly what happened, but the name in that space was supposed to be that of Stephen Boucher, Melbourne fan, raconteur and trans-Pacific smof. (And, in fact, we also had a spare nomination from Sydney's Jean Weber, which Eric Lindsay sent along with his, just in case.)

We briefly considered accusing our esteemed opponents of breaking into Art Widner's house and forcing him at zappun-point to type the wrong name in order to discredit us -- but being that they both seem to have been dragged kicking and screaming into the race at the 11th hour in order to spare us the ignominy of running alone against Hold Over Funds, we didn't think anyone would believe it.

Anyway, the enclosed ballot is a corrected one, with Art's approval.

VICTORIOUS VICE

In 1860, Abraham Lincoln was nominated for president of the United States in Chicago at the Wigwam, a two-story wooden hall at what are now Lake Street and Wacker Drive. The news was announced to the city through the repeated firing of a cannon atop the building.

Cincinnati journalist Murat Halstead described the scene: "The city was wild with delight. The Old Abe men formed processions and bore rails through the streets. Torrents of liquor were poured down the hoarse throats of the multitude. A hundred guns were fired from the top of the Tremont House [hotel]."

When Big Bill Thompson won the 1927 mayor's race, he threw an election-night victory bash on his Fish Fan Club ship. His celebrating supporters -- 1,500 strong and full of bootleg booze -- partied so heartily they overburdened the boat, which sank in six feet of water.

Please vote for us.

Dick & Leah Smith