

On Political Mechanics

Tip O'Neill said, "All politics are local politics." Pat Robertson said, "He who controls the Precincts, controls the nation." Two different men, with differing philosophies, but with the same appreciation of political mechanics.

What is political mechanics? Webster's defines "**politics**" as

- a. "The art or science of government."
- b. "The art or science concerned with guiding or influencing governmental policy."
- c. "The art or science concerned with winning and holding control over a government."

Webster's defines "**mechanics**" as "A branch of physical science that deals with energy and forces and their effect on bodies."

Political Mechanics, then, would be, "*Energy applied to the Body Politic to win, hold, guide, and influence governmental policy.*" The key word in the last sentence is "applied". The precise application of energy to sensitive pressure points within the Body Politic is the solution to the plight of the concerned citizen. It is my intention to demonstrate that the most vulnerable pressure point in the Body Politic is the little understood office of Precinct Executive.

The office of Precinct Executive is not a government job. The Precinct Executive is not paid by the government. He is not paid by anyone. The office of Precinct Executive is a voluntary post. The job of Precinct Executive is an office within a political party. The Democrats have their Precinct Executives and the Republicans have theirs.

The function of Precinct Executive within the Party, is to represent the members of his party that reside in his precinct. He represents them by occupying one of the seats on the Central Committee of his Party. Basically, the terms, "Precinct Executive" and "Member of the Party Central Committee" are interchangeable. As a member of the Central Committee, he will be called on to vote on issues, and for officers, during meetings of the Central Committee.

There is another very important committee in each party: the Executive Committee. The main reason the Precinct Executive is so influential is because he directly decides who will sit on the Executive Committee. The function of the Executive Committee is to "advise and consent" to the decisions of the Central Committee Chairman.

By far, the most predominant officer in the party is the Chairman of the Central Committee. The Chairman presides over all the meetings of the Central and Executive Committees. The Chairman of the Central Committee is elected to his office by the Precinct Executives.

As you can see, the real base of influence in either party is the Precinct Executive, because it is they who decide will be: Central Committee Chairman and Executive Committee members and therefore, who will guide the philosophy and policies of the Party.

It is important to remember that the Republican Party is not intrinsically conservative, and the Democratic Party is not intrinsically liberal. This phenomena is in accord with the First Law of Civics that "People **are** policy." If the majority of Precinct Executives believe in Constitutional Government, then that will be the underlying principle of all policy made by that party. If the majority of Precinct Executives believe that the current opinions of the majority is the basis of law, then this will also be the policy of that party.

To fully appreciate what a sensitive pressure point membership in the Central Committee is, it is necessary to make some observations on how the average voter makes up his mind in voting for a candidate. First, many citizens would like to take the time and energy required to thoroughly investigate each candidate, but they simply do not have enough time. It appears that the most popular decision-making technique can be described thus: "My Grandfather was a Republican, my father was a Republican, I am a Republican, therefore I vote for the candidates endorsed by the Republican Party." Of course, the "Democratic Party" could easily be substituted in our example.

Most citizens trust the Executive Committee of their party to do the right thing and endorse candidates who possess integrity, honesty and who are sincere about the oath of office to "support this Constitution" [article 6, US Constitution]. Unfortunately, it is all too often the case that the Executive Committee will recommend candidates whose principles are more aligned with those of the Central Committee Chairman than those of the Constitution.

Regardless of what the beliefs are of the Executive Committee, and therefore those of the candidates they endorse, the ordinary voter will simply use the Party's Sample Ballot to steer his voting. What then, is this "Sample Ballot"? A Sample Ballot is a list of candidates and the office they are running for, who are recommended for endorsement by the Party. This Sample Ballot is therefore the most prized tool in campaigning for any particular, or group of, candidates. This is the chief reason that Precinct Executives are the most influential people in the county, and therefore the state, and ultimately the nation.

To summarize: The Precinct Executives are members of the Party's Central Committee, who elect a Chairman of the Central Committee. Depending on your county, the Central Committee or the Chairman will decide the Executive Committee members. The Executive Committee recommends candidates for endorsement, and the Executive (or Central Committee depending on the County that you live in) votes to endorse these recommended candidates. The Party then publishes the names of the endorsed candidates on the Sample Ballot. This Sample Ballot will be used by the average voter as a guide of who to vote for at the polls.

The important concept to remember is that many people can run for a single position (say, County Auditor) during the Primary Election, but only ONE can receive the Party's endorsement (thus only ONE per position is on the Sample Ballot).

Although Independent and write-in candidates can, and do, sometimes win, the vast majority of those who sit in the seats of power in this country are not independent; they are Party.

You may hear some folks say that they are neither Democrat or Republican, that they Independent and vote for the Man, not the Party. Just think for a moment, that virtually everyone for whom this "independent spirit" is voting has already been selected for him by one of the parties. Is he really independent or disenfranchised? Is he not merely shunning his responsibility to insure that only those dedicated to our Constitutional form of government succeed in getting their names on that ballot in November? Whether we like it or not, only those people on the ballot can win, and ultimately, only the Precinct Executive determines whose names turn up on the sample ballot.

If you have ever wanted to do something about our problems -- county, state and federal -- but wanted to be sure that your effort really meant something, that your work was not merely an exercise in futility, then Precinct Executive is the job for you. Now I know you are asking, "How do I get started?" "How do I become one of these Precinct Executive?" I'm glad you asked.

To become a Precinct Executive, you need to be elected to the office by your fellow Democrats or fellow Republicans who inhabit your precinct. Precinct Executives are elected in the Party Primary in the spring, every two years. Just like every other candidate that expects to win an election, it is an indisputable given that your name must appear on your Party's Primary Ballot.

To fulfill this requirement, you will obtain a Precinct Executive petition from the Board of Elections in your county, fill it in per the instructions, beseech **five registered voters in your party and your precinct to sign your petition** (it's good to get a few more than five in case some are disqualified). This petition must be returned to the Board of Elections at least seventy-five days before the Primary Election. Barring any bureaucratic bungling, your name will appear on your Party's ballot in the Primary.

A few weeks after the deadline to turn in petitions, call the Board of Elections to see if anyone else is running for the same seat in your precinct. If you are unopposed, you simply vote for yourself and win. Congratulations! On the other hand, if your race for that seat on the Central Committee is contested, then you must take further steps to increase your chances of victory. You must do what is termed a "Voter Identification" in which you call the registered voters of your party, in your precinct and determine if they have the same basic philosophy as you. If they do, ask them to "Please vote for me in the Primary. I'm running for Precinct Executive." Keep track of your supporters names, then on the day before election, call and remind them to vote for you. If you do these things, I can virtually guarantee a victory for you. I personally know many people who have done far less campaigning than this, and are today, members of their Party's Central Committee.