

Faces of past and future emerge

Democratic convention featured candidates-in-waiting

NEW YORK — A national convention is a snapshot, taken at a single instant, of a political party whose institutional life spans the

generations. It is a family reunion on a massive scale.

When the last bit of ticker-tape has been swept away, and the



David S. Broder

celebrants of this year's nominee have ended their revels, what remains in the spectator's memory, so often, are the faces of the generation past and the generation yet to be.

The first Republican convention this reporter covered was won by Richard Nixon. But the most vivid scene was Herbert Hoover — feeble but still proud — receiving his final tribute from the loyalists of a party that had begun its long slide from power under his presidency.

Here, at Madison Square Garden this past week, there were faces from the Democratic past — from the Roosevelt, Truman, Kennedy and Johnson years — watching, with varying emotions, the passage of power to the new man from Georgia and his circle.

Averell Harriman — the perpetual insider — was here, along with that veteran of the New Deal years and the FDR staff, Washington lawyer James H. Rowe, Jr. In proper dynastic fashion, Rowe's son has become a member of the Carter campaign hierarchy.

Hubert Humphrey, George McGovern, George Wallace and other presidential contenders of the past all were granted their nostalgic moment in the spotlight. But more intriguing were the glimpses of some of those who may be center stage in future convention years.

The game of guess-who's-rehearsing-for-next-time is more than just a game. In 1956, John F. Kennedy came before the convention to concede defeat in a close, exciting floor fight for Vice President. Four years later, he was back as presidential nominee. In 1960, Barry Goldwater appeared briefly to help Richard Nixon quell a conservative rebellion. Four years later, he was the nominee.

George McGovern ran a short warm-up race for President at the 1968 convention, four years before he won the nomination, and Jimmy Carter stood at the podium, at least briefly, to nominate Scoop Jackson in 1972.

Who were the candidates-in-waiting at this convention? One could see young Jay Rockefeller, the candidate for governor of West Virginia, making the rounds with his Carter button on his chest. There were the platform twins — Govs. Wendell Anderson of Minnesota and Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts. There were Sen. Dale Bumpers of Arkansas and Rep. Tom Foley of Washington. And of course there was, fleetingly, Ted Kennedy.

But the most obvious candidate-in-waiting for future years was California Gov. Edmund G. (Jerry) Brown, Jr., who beat Carter in three head-to-head tests this year and still was shaking his head when

there is more provocative in its program assumptions and more talented in its top-level administrators than any other with which this reporter is familiar in America today.

Including the government of Washington. The competition in performance and reputation between Sacramento and Washington will continue in coming years, whether it is Carter or Ronald Reagan or Gerald Ford in the White House. California is big enough to provide a yardstick for measuring Washington's performance.

Brown carries back to his job what he calls "a broadened personal awareness of what this amazing mechanism called the Democratic Party is," a by-product of his campaigning in the diverse political environments of Oregon and Rhode Island, New Jersey and Nevada.

He will do some more campaigning around the country this fall for other young Democrats, like Pennsylvania Senate candidate Bill Green. But mostly he will stay home and nurture the experiments The government he is running

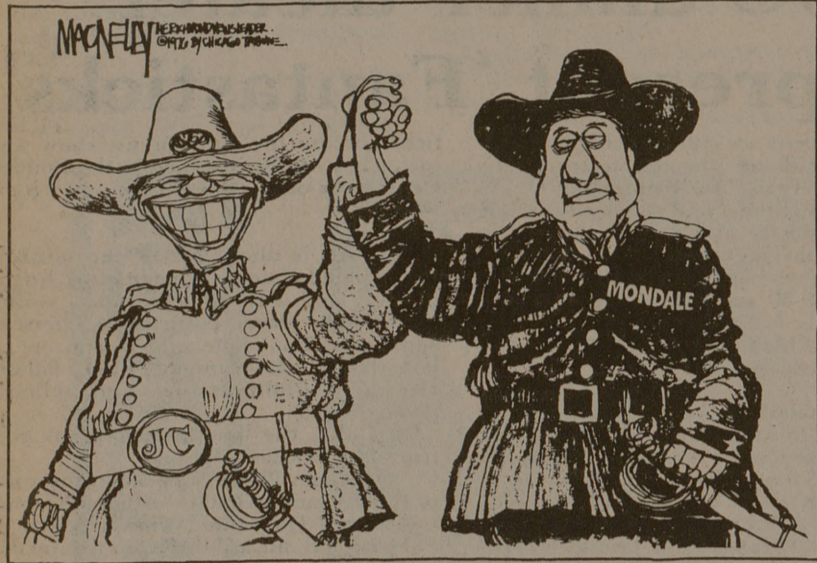
that are beginning to change the structure and policies of government in our largest state — in areas from consumer affairs to employee compensation, to urban problems to agriculture and the environment.

Brown, who says, "I believe in doing things in increments," also is one of the few practicing politicians

in America who believes that ultimately transforms the direction of a society are the ideas the leaders generate.

And one idea that has been planted — incrementally but — in this year is that Jerry Brown may some day be President.

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