

ELECTION ANALYSIS

Report from the Co-ordinating Committee to the General Meeting Of Dec. 14th

Reform Metro definitely has some reason to celebrate its success in the 1976 municipal elections in Metro Toronto. We endorsed 19 candidates and recommended 21 others. From these 40 candidates, 16 were elected as aldermen, this includes 3 Metro councillors with the possibility of more. (some seats to Metro Council from the boroughs are still pending) In Toronto 4 new aldermen, plus the re-election of 5 of our incumbents resulted. In York, 1 alderman, in East York, 1 alderman and in Etobicoke 2 aldermen of those we supported were elected. Probably our biggest success was in North York where from a slate of 8 aldermanic candidates, 3 new aldermen have been elected. Although we were not successful in Scarborough, it is worth noting that 5 out of 12 Scarborough seats were acclaimed and without our 3 candidates reform policies would have been absent. Not a bad record for an organization which has been in existence for only one year.

We think it would be safe to say that this is the first time that so many candidates have run under one banner, supporting a common program and it is also the first time so many left candidates have contested civic office. A rough estimation shows the support by metro voters for Reform Metro candidates and program, as over 122,500 votes.

Several times during election night coverage by the media, references were made to a particular exciting race, especially in the boroughs, and it would not be immodest to say that this election was made exciting by many of the campaigns run by our candidates. Several of the opposing candidates found it no longer sufficient to run campaigns based on their shining personalities and smiling families. Even the "old guard" had to address themselves to the questions of transportation, rent control, tax reform etc. It was through combined effort that this was a political campaign and policies for the people of Metro Toronto were brought forward.

In analysing our successes we must also take a look at our weaknesses. In some wards lack of unity allowed the left and progressive vote to become split, allowing the right to slip through where chances for our success were real. In some areas the introduction of party politics played a destructive role, by -passing established community organizations and putting their own candidates into the field. In other areas candidates were belatedly placed into the field alongside already well established candidates.

As well, not enough emphasis was placed on Reform Metro's program and policies by all our candidates so that the full effort of the program was not felt in these areas. In the next election we will have to take a closer look at candidates programs before we consider endorsing them. Also, not all our candidates used their endorsement by Reform Metro to the fullest advantage. This was not always the fault of the candidate since the endorsement in many cases was rather late. The process will have to be speeded up the next time. On both these points the co-ordinating committee could have played a greater role through publicizing the candidates and the issues better.

Our new representatives must now stand the test of time. We must work closely with them so they may truly represent the needs and interests of our organization and the working people of Metro!

This brings us back to the main reason for Reform Metro, which is not to rear its head every two years come elections, but to establish local organizations and to work with established ones to serve the needs of the communities they include. There is no better time than now to establish local ward organizations if they do not already exist and to strengthen the ones that do exist. Whether it was a winning or losing campaign, no doubt many people were drawn into municipal politics, many probably for the first time. It is the responsibility of each and every one of us to join these people into lasting organizations to continue the fight.

Our problems are far from being over, there is still a fight to be waged around the recommendations of the Blair Commission, the Robarts Commission, the repeal of the market value assessment, continuation of an effective rent review program, and a fight against a fare increase. In short, our program is not on the books across Metro and it is only when this happens that we will begin to solve the crisis of our cities.

Reform Metro is still in its infancy. Yet we must become the initiators of unity with the labour movement and with all reform minded organizations and individuals over the next two years to build the reform movement at the grass roots level in Metro Toronto. This is something which needs to be done and which we are capable of doing.

PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD REPORT

All incumbents running were returned in Etobicoke, East York, & North York - Scarborough, York, & Toronto each had one incumbent defeated. We now have a total of 17 new trustees in Metro Toronto. 19 of 74 trustees were elected by acclamation. Many of the problems seem to be in a lack of education of voters as to the importance of trustees and a lack of awareness or concern over educational issues.

The media did very little to inform anyone of any trustee position. Several articles appeared in the Globe and Mail but dealt mainly with what the candidates present occupation was and how good the chances were of incumbents returning. The Star devoted 4 full pages with pictures to aldermanic candidates but did not devote even a 1/2 page to trustee candidates who have 53% of the budget to spend.

In many areas good candidates were too polite, not pressing anyone on issues, and not running strong enough campaigns to counteract the fact that most people probably vote for a name they are familiar with. The trustee candidates losing on the two Toronto community teams were both new comers. Some candidates needed more support and organization for a longer time in order to win.

Reform Metro should start now by working with those trustees who will work with us and agree with our policy. We should establish a base with people interested and involved in education in those areas where there are no trustees to work with.

MICHELLE MCGINNIS
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

ANNUAL CONVENTION

TO DISCUSS: CHANGES TO REFORM METRO'S PROGRAM
CHANGES TO THE STRUCTURE OF REFORM METRO
ACTION CAMPAIGNS
RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PROGRESSIVE GROUPS SUCH AS THE
NDP AND THE LABOUR COUNCIL

FEBRUARY 11, 12 + 13 1977 Place to be announced

RESOLUTIONS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED NO LATER THAN WEDNESDAY FEB. 2ND
TO THE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE AT 165 SPADINA AVE. #26
CORNER OF QUEEN, 368-6800.

DISCUSSION OF THE GENERAL MEETING OF DECEMBER 14TH

A group of 50 people representing campaigns from across Metro attended the December 14th meeting to evaluate the outcome of this year's civic election. For the most part, people viewed our effect on the elections as very positive, particularly in the aldermanic contests. Some were critical of our lack of emphasis on the trustee elections, especially to the separate school board. The Education Committee responded that through the results of their questionnaire they had gained further contacts and so would be expanding their base. Larry Colle took responsibility to make inroads in the separate school communities.

Much of the discussion centred around how we could work better with the NDP and the Labour Council. There was agreement that we should try and co-ordinate things better with these groups but there was disagreement as to how much we should encourage the NDP to be more active municipally in a formal way. There was hesitation as to whether the NDP would have the same grass roots approach as Reform Metro and how their presence might exclude independent activists and people from other parties. It was agreed that this discussion would be fully explored at the convention in mid-February. People were encouraged to hear that the Labour Council was meeting with all the candidates that it endorsed to discuss their future relationship with organized labour.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Dan Heap be called upon to organize a meeting of progressive aldermen from across Metro to issue a joint statement of their aims in specific policy areas for the next two years.

2. That Bob Spencer be called upon to organize a meeting of progressive school trustees from across Metro to issue a joint statement of their aims in specific policy areas for the next two years.

3. That the next newsletter go out to all the campaign workers of the different campaigns we supported.

4. That literature from all campaigns, whether we supported them or not, be collected so that campaign stands will be on record. As well it was proposed that campaigns write down their experiences so that certain pitfalls can be avoided next time.

city executive

On Wednesday December 22nd the Labour Council and several prominent citizens involved in various municipal fields held a press conference to kick off a phone and letter campaign to Crombie and ward aldermen. They want people to request that council reconsider the gentlemen's agreement of December 17th so that John Sewell make it to the city executive. The executive, as it is now does not represent the majority of people in Toronto-Sewell's programmatic stands need to be heard.

I strongly encourage everyone who reads this to make the effort to let Crombie and their ward aldermen know that they want Sewell on the executive and that it is not sour grapes to want a political balance on the committee.

But as well the emphasis on the more important position of the Metro executive should be made. It is crucial that reform positions have some say there and that we gain greater access to the workings of Paul Godfrey, especially with his present push for a reduced Cabinet size executive.

The election of North York and East York Councils of Metro representatives has not been favourable to reformers. In North York it is an unwritten rule that only experienced members can go to Metro. So there was a choice of 4 from a possible 5. Betty Sutherland was the loser. Peter Clark Gordon Risk, Mike Smith and Irv Chapley were chosen. In East York, Ray Ireland got beat out by Leslie Saunders in a 5-4 vote. Hence minus one reformer on Metro.

Carol Ruddell has been picked as the aldermanic representative from Scarborough. Lets hope she will take consistent progressive stands.

Whether or not Sewell makes it to the city or metro executive, lets make sure that reform politicians in the various boroughs get together very soon and work out definite terms of cooperation.

Separate School Board Report

The S.S. Board remained basically conservative as a result of the December 6th. elections. The only M.M.R. endorsed candidate Lorenzo Colle, finished second in a three way race in the inner city Separate School Ward 6 (composed of City Wards 6 & 7) versus two traditional opponents:

	WARD 6	WARD 7	TOTAL 6 & 7
Charles Arsenaault.....	636	714	= 1350
Lorenzo Colle	627	416	= 1043
Jim Carson	384	441	= 825

Approximately 25% of eligible voters cast thier ballots. It seemed that running with Frank Heale (incumbent Separate School Rep. to Public Board) and association with Heap/ Sparrow/ Leckie et al was not enough:

In any case having an endorsed M.M.R. candidate running for Separate School Board was a positive move in the right direction. To bring the Board into a more public profile and expose members like Paul Frank (former member of the racist WESTERN GUARD) for what they are takes community action. In the past a high percentage of positions were filled by acclamation as were 7 out of 21 in this election. Five priests mostly unopposed were elected with only one women reflecting the conservative attitude of Catholic voters.

What can be done

First, it must be recognizedly groups such as the M.M.R. that an effort to democratize and open up the election for School Board is due and that there are progressive people in the Catholic community that must be reached to start working in the community for future elections. If the School Boards are to improve, the community must be aware that there are alternatives to acclamation and that only the community can elect these alternatives. In conjunction with this idea, the Education Committee of the M.M.R. should have two chairpersons, one from the Separate and one from the Public schools. Community activists, concered citizens, and progressive elements in the communities will be encouraged to take part in the discussion and planning. Many people including young people are dissatisfied in the direction the Separate School Board is taking especially with the election of known members of groups like the WESTERN GUARD.

Lorenzo Colle

Sincere wishes for peace and joy in the
Christmas season and in the New Year.

Co-ordinating committee

P.S. make one of your new year's resolutions to renew your membership. We have some outstanding bills. Thanks.

MOVEMENT FOR MUNICIPAL REFORM
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