10-17-1979

# New registration drive may end voter apathy

WHEN JIMMY CARTER appeared before a Michigan Democratic party rally at Flint's auditorium last November, he predicted, accurately, that two-thirds of eligible voters would stay at home on election day. Likewise, when local political observers were pondering Jamie Kenworthy's electoral defeat to Louis Belcher in the city mayoral race six months later, the blame had to be placed squarely on the shoulders of student voters—or, more precisely, student non-voters.

The causes of voter apathy are widespread, and not totally unwarranted. Among some, there is a feeling of low efficiency—that the vote doesn't count anyway in a race between carbon-copy candidates expousing the same unfulfilled promises of elections past. To others, non-participation has become some form of silent protest. For others still, voting just never is ranked high on the list of a day's activities.

But the fact remains that those who did not vote held the critical balance in most elections, nationally, statewide, and in Ann Arbor. Those who stayed home from the polls could have elected Gerald Ford over Jimmy Carter, Bill Fitzgerald over Bill Milliken, or Jamie Kenworthy over Lou Belcher.

Now, before the elections, the Michigan Student Assembly has joined with PIRGIM (the Public Interest Research Group in Michigan) and Students for a Progressive Government in a massive registration drive aimed specifically at students, the source of the most rampant electoral apathy.

The registration drive becomes particularly urgent, with two seats on the University Board of Regents up for grabs in November 1980. Since the present body has shown its intransigence on issues of concern to students, like divestiture from South Africa, students are left with no recourse but to work in concert to change the make-up, of the board at the polls. Until now, regents have not had to respond to student demands since it was the voters of the state—not the students—who put them into office in the first place.

However, once students start flexing some electoral muscle at the polls, regents will have to be more responsive to their concerns. The ultimate goal is still, of course, the election of at least one student regent to the board, since only a student regent can truly be the voice of the most important, and most often ignored segment of the University. But to elect a regent responsive to student needs, or to, at the very least, prevent the reelection of any one of the present hardliners on the board, would in itself be a victory for the students, and would signal a message to the regents and all elected officials that the student vote is no longer a factor to be ignored.

But the student vote begins with student registration, since the promise of universal voter registration at birth remains one of the unfilled promises of the disappointing Carter presidency. But thanks to MSA, PIRGIM, and the Students for a Progressive Government, more eligible students will be involved in the electoral process than ever before.

# British risk peace with stubborn diplomacy

EXPECTED TO BECOME a key ally, the Margaret Thatcher administration in London has been a stubborn foe of the new bi-racial government in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. Instead of lifting economic sanctions against the Muzorema regime, the British have urged for more reforms and rights for that country's blacks.

And to climax its peacemaking approach, the British courageously arranged a conference in which all sides could hammer out their seemingly insurmountable conflicts.

That was six weeks ago.

Since then, the Thatcher government has been more than just a mediator. It has been an irresponsible participant, for it has only called for a few changes in that country's constitution. In addition, the British have provided more than enough security for the minority white population, including guarantees to keep its domination over extensive land holdings.

But, at least, during the conference's sessions, the British were able to listen carefully to proposals by Muzorewa and the representatives of the Patriotic Front. The diplomatic double-talk and meaningless rhetoric have been there, just like any other peace conference. What's unique about this conference is that the participants have never sat down and talked to each other. The only communication between the two sides has been in the form of guns and rockets.

Yet, just after scoring a major diplomatic breakthrough in perhaps the last chance to end that country's 14-year civil war, the British have suddenly become the dogmatic and intractable party which most diplomatic observers thought they would be right after Thatcher was elected.

The most recent British maneuver was the issuance of an ultimatium Monday saying the Patriotic Front would be allowed to continue in the conference only if they agreed to British proposals for a new constitution.

Thus, Britain has decided that only its goals can be approved if the conference is to continue.

After brilliant diplomacy to engineer these talks in the first place, it is deplorable the British have to adopt such a strict line. It only risks further conflict, instead of preventing it.


The Michigan Daily

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shafts of sunlight slant through the windows but are absorbed by coils of wire, vials of chemicals, metal tubing and a jumble of scientific apparatus. Some sunlight does escape, bouncing off the brass and glass for an evanescent moment before being captured forever by the chemical-stained wooden floor.

It was in this 100-foot-long, 30-foot-wide gloomy building formerly in Menlo Park, N.J. but transported to Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Mich., by his lifelong admirer, Henry Ford that Thomas A. Edison 100 years ago invented the first practical incandescent light and perfected the transmission of electric power, taking the world out of medieval darkness and into illuminated modernity.

SCARCELY ANYTHING remains untouched by Edison's electric age.

The way we work, how we get to work, the way we spend out leisure time, how we communicate, how we learn, how we store and distribute our information, how we fight our enemies, how we celebrate our births and mourn our dead, all are affected by the electric machines and systems that followed the invention of incandescent lamp.

We have even changed the nature of night. One writer, Murray Melbin, says we have "colonized" the last frontier: From discotheques that open only after darkness to midnight movies to "we-never-close" stores and laundromats, the electric light has opened up the night to settlers everywhere.

Some statistics: In 1974, 2.3 million Americans worked a full shift that included the hours between midnight and 6 a.m. By 1977, that figure had increased by 300,000 people. In all, more than 12.5 million people, or 18 per cent of the workforce, work fulltime or part time on evening and night shifts.

The single most important development that led to the conquering of darkness occurred 100 years ago in late October in this lab back in New Jersey.

EVER SINCE HIS boyhood working as a telegrapher for Western Union, Edison was intrigued with electricity and electrical devices. Prior to working on the incandescent light, he already had invented the electric vote recorder, the electric stock ticker, the quadruplex telegraph system, the electric pen and manual duplicating press, the mimeogra-j, the telephone transmitter and the microphone, the phonograph, and the microtastimeter, a device that ,easured minute heat variations by electrical means.

But without question, the incandescent light remains his greatest achievement. He began work on it in earnest in the fall of 1878, after a year of study and basic experimentation.

Very intense arc-lamps were already being used to light the streets of Paris and other major European cities, but the light emitted from them was far too intense—and dangerous—for home and inside business use.

Because arc-lamps were costly, bulky, and burned out easily, Edison looked to other methods of producing artificial light. In his "inventory factory" in Menlo Park, Edison and his 50-man team began the laborious quest for a lamp that would be "practical and affordable by all." Edison would try to subdivide light.

HE WROTE: "I saw the thing had not gone so far but that I had a chance. I saw that what had been done had never been made practically useful. The intense light has not been subdivided so that it could be brought into private houses."

Theoretical scientists at the time said that "subdivision of light" was impossible and contrary to the laws of conservation and energy. Edison, nevertheless, never discouraged by "experts," proceeded to experiment with filaments.

But despite the resources at Menlo Park, the work was difficult. In one report to his financial backers Edison wrote: "I speak without exaggeration . . . I have constructed 3,000 different theories . . . each of them reasonable . . . yet, in two cases only did my experiment prove the truth of my theory."

There was also public disapproval. Edison, always eager to talk to the press, promised within six weeks new and startling developments that would replace gas lighting. But even months later the developments were not forthcoming.

The gas lobby and envious scientists pronounced Edison an uneducated fraud and declared the subdivision of light a hoax.

BUT EDISON PERSISTED. He and his team worked 20-hour days for 14 months, testing every kind of fiber and metal to use as a filament and perfecting vacuum pumps to evacuate the sealed glass bulb so that the filament could be heated to light-emitting incandescence without burning out.

On October 21, 1879, he succeeded. Using a filament of carbonized cotton thread in an evacuated glass bulb, he created the first practical incandescent lamp. It burned for 40 hours until Edison himself ended the experiment by turning on the voltage to full power, burning out the filament.

"I know if it can last this long, it can last 100 hours," Edison said.

Two months later, on New Year's Eve, Edison gave the first public demonstration of his invention and its possibilities by illuminating a street in Menlo Park, using lamps mounted on wooden poles.

But Edison did not stop with the incandescent light. He knew that the distribution of electricity and transmission of electricity was crucial to the acceptance and practical use of his new light bulb. By February 1881, after two years of experimentation with generators and transmission systems, Edison was ready to build a central generating station. He chose a half-mile square area of lower Manhattan for his power station and erected a building to house his generators on a 50-by-100 foot site on Pearl Street.

EDISON AND HIS workers installed underground power lines of metal tubes that contained copper wires insulated from the tubes by hardened asphalt. On Sept. 4, 1881, three years after his invention of the light bulb, Edison threw the switch and energized the world's first electric light and power system. A total of 85 Manhattan customers received power to illumunate a total of 400 lamps.

*"I shall make electric light so cheap that only the rich will be able to burn candles."*



Thomas Alva Edison
Feb. 11, 1847—Oct. 18, 1931

Josephson, describes Edison's train.

". . . A LITTLE MONSTER of a locomotive, about six feet long and four feet wide, was placed on the trucks. It was, in fact, the first full-sized electric locomotive ever made in America, and consisted of a 'Z' tyoe dynamo, laid sidewise on a four-wheeler truck and functioning as a motor; current was supplied to the two rails through the flanged metal rims of the locomotive wheels. A rather crude transmission mechanism mafe up of pulleys and friction wheels transmitted power to the driving axle."

At full power, the locomotive could reach 40 miles per hour.

Seizing on Edison's success with the electric train was Frank J. Sprague who engineered a 12-mile electric train system in Richmond, Va., in 1888. The success of the Richmond streetcar system revolutionized transportation in American cities.

In less than 15 years, more than 20,000 miles of electric streetcar railway were built and horse-drawn cars became a thing of the past.

But Edison had always regarded his electric train as a diversion from his real work: the making of efficient electric generators and transmission systems.

One of the most important of his post-light contributions was the "three-wire system." This system was first tried by Edison at the small lighting plant in Sunbury, PA., IN July 1883.

# *Edison's contributions to technology*

(UPI) — Thomas A. Edison holds the record for the most United States patents by an individual—1,093. The following are some of his most significant contributions to science and technology:

1868—Invented electric vote recorder.

1869—Invented electric stock ticker.

1872—Invented motograph and duplex, quadeuplex, sextuplex and multiplex telegraph systems.

1874—Invented electric pen and manual duplicating press.

1875—Discovered "etheric force." Twelve years later this was recognized as the foundation of wireless telegraphy or radio; invented the automatic copying machine known today as the mimeograph.

1879—Invented the first practical incandescent lamp.

1880—Discovered "Edison Effect," the fundamental principle of electronics; invented the magnetic ore separator and invented and installed the first electric railway for freight and passenger use.

1882—Began operation of first commercial electrical distribution station in New Yoirk City.

1883—Patented the electric indicator using the "edison Effect."

1883—Invented system of wireless telegraphy for use between moving trains and railway stations as well as ship-to-shore.

1891—Invented the motion picture camera.

1896—Invented the fluroscope, using principles of x-ray for medicine and surgery.

1899—Invented the fluorescent light.

1902—Invented the alkaline storage battery.

1903—Invented rotary kilns for cement production.

1905—Established the first Portland Cement mill. Introduced new dictating machine allowing person dictating to hear repetitions and note corrections.

1907—Introduced the first universal motor that operated on all lighting circuits.

1912—Introduced the Kinetone or talking motion pictures.

1914—Invented a method for producing synthetic carbolic acid. Invented the Telescribe, combing the telephone and the dictating phonograph. Patented electric safety lanterns for use by miners.

1915—Established plants for manufacture of coal-tar derivatives.

1927—Commenced experiments to discover a domestic source of natural rubber.