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INSTANT VOTER REGISTRATION KILLED

When the Ohio voters killed instant voter registration last month, they proved anew that the people have better judgment than their leaders. Furthermore, the Ohio voters who won that important referendum got double their money's worth because the ·,rote was so decisive that it appears also to have buried President Carter's own proposal for instant voter registration.

The Car er plan would have allowed anyone to vote on election day so long as he could present some kind of identification. The program was to be mandatory throughout t:1e country in 1978.

For weeks before the November election, the word around Capitol Hill was that House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. (D.-Mass.), was ready to call up the Carter instant voter registration bill as soon as the Ohio version was approved by the voters. The defeat of the Ohio law was so decisive (61.5%) that it axed all such plans.

Because the Ohio Legislature had previously passed an instant voter registration law, the November referendum was on a proposition to repeal the existing law. Repeal was strenuously opposed by the Carter Administration as well as by organized labor.

Electior results showed that voters were overwhelmingly against instant voter registration even in heavily unionized, industrial areas. In Cleveland and Youngstown, the law was rejected by a margin of nearly two to one.

The 700,000 margin by which Ohio voters turned down instant voter registration was piled up in spite of the fact that an estimated quarter million instant voters, who had no prior registration, actually voted in that very election!

The Ohio vote was a personal victory for Congressman Robert K. Dornan (R. Cal.) who had campaigned in Ohio for repeal. He had also been instrumental in stopping

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the instant voter registration bill in Congress earlier this year when he personally got several fraudulent I.D. cards just to prove how easy it is for anyone to do.

The immense possibility for fraud is the reason why instant voter registration is so unwise. Among the election experts who have testified against the Carter proposal is Robert F. Spindell, who has had nearly 40 years experience with voting procedures ir Cook County, Illinois.

Spindell said that, before the present permanent registration system was instituted in Illinois, between 250,000 and 400,000 fraudulent votes were cast in Cook County (Chicago) in every election. He said, "I can categorically state, on the basis of my experience, that [the Carter instant voter registration] would result in *even* greater fraudulent voting..."

Spindell presented a list of "some of the more obvious ways the honest electorate would be cheated." Anyone can make a fraudulent I.D. card. Each of the 3,000 precincts in Chicago has five paid city workers whose jobs depend on producing votes on election day. In two-thirds of these precincts, they could have at least 20 I.D. cards made for each of their helpers, but with addresses in 20 different precincts. It would be impossible to detect such multiple voting.

There would be absolutely no way to stop millions of aliens from voting, since they may have legitimate I.D. cards. A dead person's card could be used for years without being detected.

In addition to Ohio's rejection of instant voter registration, the voters in the State of Washington defeated a proposal to allow postcard registration. This would have also opened up almost unlimited opportunities for fraud.

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Although the Carter instant voter registrationf.vas approved by the House Administration and Senate Rules Committees last May and appeared then to have the momentum for early passage, fortunately it now looks as though it is going nowhere.

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