P.S. to the NEWS
by PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY
Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002
Phone: 618-462-5415

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POSTCARD REGISTRATION

Does the right to vote include the right not to vote and the right to have your vote counted honestly? It should. But, while there are numerous pressure groups lobbying fiercely to extend the right to vote to everyone, no matter how disinterested or illiterate, few people show any interest whatsoever in whether or not those votes are counted honestly.

The latest manifestation of this peculiar double standard is the Postcard Registration Bill. Despite the evidence that it will cause massive vote frauds, and that it will encourage a dramatic Federal invasion of the entire election process, the bill sailed through the Senate earlier this year by a 2-to-1 margin. Now it is in the House Administration Committee where it ought to die.

The primary purpose of the bill is to create a new Federal bureau, with more Federal officials issuing more Federal regulations, and spending more of our tax dollars. It would be called the National Voter Registration Administration and would register voters in all states through a system of postcards. The Agency would even offer cash incentives to state and local election authorities to encourage their adoption of this Federal system.

One of the most dangerously defective provisions of the Postcard Registration Bill is the statement that "possession of a registration notification form indicating that the individual is entitled to vote in an election shall be prima facie evidence that the individual is a

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qualified and registered elector entitled to vote in any such election, but presentation of the form shall not be required to cast his ballot." In other words, the same individual could vote once without a registration card by identifying himself on the poll sheets, and then vote a second time under another name by presenting the "registration notification form" issued to a name which is not on the poll sheets, because the law requires that this form be accepted as "prima facie evidence."

Anyone who understands the election process can quickly see that registration by postcard, which eliminates the requirement to appear in person, would result in monumental frauds. There would be no way to determine whether the person is eligible, or even alive. Senator Sam Ervin pinpointed this danger in his own colorful way when he said that, if the bill were passed in its present form, "there is going to be a general resurrection of the dead on every election day."

"Ghost voting," of course, is one of the principal types of vote frauds used by the big-city machines. For example, after the 1960 election, I was part of a team of election judges who witnessed the official recounting of the ballots in Chicago. This recount provided ample proof of widespread frauds, such as the Chicago precinct with only 22 residents which reported 79 ballots cast for John Kennedy and 3 for Richard Nixon.

The main cause of low voter turnouts is not the trouble it takes to register, but lack of interest in the outcome, which in turn may be caused by laziness or apathy, but which also may be caused by a genuine belief that the politicians seeking office are no better than the politicians in office. The cure for that is honest candidates, not more voters.

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