GLOSSARY OF POLITICALTERMS

PREPARED BY
BERNICE SCOTTY

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ABSENTEE (voting). Method whereby registered voters who will be out of town or otherwise unable to go to the polling place on election day are allowed to vote. Set by law.

ADVOCATE. One who pleads the cause of another. One who defends or supports any cause by argument.

AGENDA. A list of things to be done, as items of discussion to be brought up at a meeting.

APATHY. Lack of feeling or excitement. Indifference.

BI-PARTISAN. Representing or composed of members of two political parties.

BLOCK-VOTE. A group of voters who, having a common bond and/or interest, vote together for or against a candidate or proposition.

BUREAUCRAT. An official, hired to carry on the business of a governmental bureau.

BY-LAWS. A set of rules by which an organization governs itself.

CAMPAIGN. A planned series of operations to bring about the election of a candidate for public office or the passage of a certain proposition.

CANVASS. The process of direct communication with the voters, either door-to-door or by telephone.

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CAUCUS. A meeting of leaders and/or members of a political organization to decide on policies or candidates.

CONSERVATIVE. Opposed to change. One who prefers existing institutions or forms of government.

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DELEGATE. One elected by a group to represent and act for that group.

DEMOCRACY. The form of government in which the supreme power is retained by the people.

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ELECTION. The filling of an office by vote.

ELECTORATE. A body of people entitled to vote in an election.

ENDORSEMENT. Approval or support of a candidate or an issue.

FACTION. A group within a political party. ("liberal democrats"or "right-wing conservatives").

FILE (for election). The first step for getting a name on a ballot.

FLOOR LEADER. A member chosen by his group to be in charge of his organization on the floor of a convention.

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GERRYMANDER. To divide a state or county into districts in an unnatural or unfair way for political advantage.

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To charge a public official with misbehaviour in office.

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JAW-BONING. To persuade by strong verbal argument.

LEGISLATIVE (district). A geographical area from which the voters elect their legislators.

LEGISLATOR. An elected member of the legislature.

LEGISLATURE. A body of persons impowered to make, alter or repeal the laws of a state.

LIBERAL. Not bound by established forms in political philosophy. Not conservative.

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MAJORITY. In a political body, the group having more than half of the members.

MINORITY. In a political body, the group having less than the number of votes necessary to control.

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NOMINATE. To name as a candidate for an election.

NOMINEE. Aperson named as a candidate for an office.

NON-PARTISAN. Not controlled by political party interests.

ORGANIZE. To arrange interdependent parts to attain an effective whole.

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PATRONAGE. The offices, contracts, honors, etc., which an official may bestow by favor.

PETITION. A formal written request for a certain service or action, usually signed by several people.

PLATFORM. A declaration of principles and policies adopted by a political party.

POLLS. The place where votes are cast.

POLL-WATCHERS. Individuals present at the polling place on election day to protect the interest of their party or candidate.

POLITICIANS. One actively engaged in or primarily interested in party politics.

POLITICS. The science and art of government.

PRECINCT. The smallest political division for the purpose of voting.

QUORUM. A majority of all members of a group constitute a quorum, in the absence of a rule to the contrary.

SENATOR. A member of the senate.

SENATORIAL DISTRICT. A geographical area from which the voters of that area elect their senator.

SUFFRAGE. The right of voting in political matters.

UNANIMOUS. Being of one mind; indicating the agreement and consent of all those present.

UNIT RULE. The rule, adopted by some delegations, that the entire vote of the delegation shall be cast as a unit as determined by a majority vote.

VOTE. To express the choice or preference of a person, or an issue, expressed by a ballot or voice or show of hands.

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WRITE-IN-VOTE. Method whereby a voter, not wishing to vote for a name on the ballot, may write in a substitute name for anyone he wishes in a space provided for such a vote.

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