

Will MassDems mimic the GOP?

By Jon Keller for MASSterList

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If you missed the recent GOP state convention in Springfield, no worries. Here's how one delegate described it to us: "Trump from start to finish. National, divisive issues — steady stream of bile and bombast. Sound and fury, etc."

Ah yes, etc., Macbeth, Act 5 Scene 5:
"Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing."

This description is a bit tough on convention nominee Geoff Diehl, who proved he could successfully organize more than 70 percent of the delegates despite the distaste of all the GOP legislators in attendance, some of whom served alongside him. (Former Sen. Vinny deMacedo of Plymouth gave the convention nominee an especially cold shoulder, voting for his running-mate but blanking Diehl.)

It was one thing last year when all but one of the House Republicans called for party chairman Jim Lyons' resignation. But to rebuke their former colleague this way in favor of a political newcomer tells you just how splintered the party is into shards, insiders vs. outsiders, Trumpkins vs. apostates, ideologues vs. pragmatists.

Next up, the Democrats, warming up the beautiful DCU Center in Worcester for Monday's Shepherd Hill Regional High School graduation with their convention this weekend. And you wonder – could some splintering of their own be on display?

It's been awhile since so many statewide seats have been open. So for a party that pays homage to empowering women and minorities, Saturday's nomination roll calls will be a bit of a litmus test.

Sen. Sonia Chang-Diaz may be a heavy underdog, but she's the first Asian American and Latina to hold a state senate seat, the daughter of the first Latino NASA astronaut, and a popular six-term senator. It's a wicked bad look if the assembled party can't cough up the 15 percent support she needs to make the ballot.

The scrum for lieutenant governor includes two well-qualified women, one of the state's most prominent and successful mayors, Kim Driscoll of Salem, and a substantial newcomer, Rep. Tami Gouveia. No offense to the three white guys who round out the field, but do the MassDems have a quota of one woman only at the top of the ticket?

The contest for attorney general could easily be another foot-in-mouth moment.

What an unwanted headline if former four-term Boston City Councillor and mayoral candidate Andrea Campbell struggles for votes against a white female class-action lawyer and a white male bureaucrat. The latter, Quentin Palfrey, hasn't hesitated to attack charter schools as a way to rough up Campbell, who supports them, as do many black, Hispanic and working class voters.

The Republicans were hell-bent on touting their opposition to abortion rights ("infanticide," in the words of party poet laureate Lyons) and their sick fantasies about public school "indoctrination" of tots into alternative sexual lifestyles. Will the Democrats also insist on turning off the wide swaths of the electorate who oppose drivers' licenses for undocumented immigrants and want taxes to go down, not up?

Writes our GOP delegate friend: "It took 30 years but we now have a party that sees 100% purity and a 30% portion of the vote as markers of success." We'll see this weekend if the Democrats want in on this race to the bottom.

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