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The Week That Was

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1. “General I Have No Division”

Our Spin:

The civil war in the Senate chamber seems to have rapidly approached the battle of Gettysburg. Many insiders are fearful that there could be mass casualties on either sides of the aisle during this year’s elections. Another similar comparison being debated is if the Senate Democratic unity announcement will be anything like *Pickett’s Last Charge*. For those of you not up on your history, shame on you. *Pickett’s Last Charge* occurred on the third and final day of the battle and is considered to be one on the biggest military blunders of the war. Thus we feel compelled to remind our readers of Major General George E. Pickett famous words to General Lee at Gettysburg on July 3, 1863 "General, I have no division..."! General Lee ordered the charge to take place anyway. Most history books portray *Pickett’s Last Charge* as a blunder in itself. Ultimately the confederate line charged a well-entrenched enemy with little success.

How is this relevant to Albany? Earlier this week it was the announcement that Citizens Action, a well-respected political organization that has a large number of state committee members of the Working Families Party (WFP), is endorsing Cynthia Nixon for Governor. Insiders believe this could pave the way for the WFP endorsement to also go to Nixon. In response, the Governor is looking at forming a new party line (rumored to be called “The Real Working Families Party”) made up of labor groups with close ties to the WFP. Just how well-entrenched the Senate GOP army is will first be tested on April 24th.

The Story:

Cynthia Nixon and Governor Andrew Cuomo are poised to face their first consequential battle this weekend, as they vie for one of New York’s most coveted progressive endorsements: the Working Families Party.

The endorsement of the small but influential coalition of labor unions and progressive activists is seen as an early test of the depth of liberal unhappiness with Mr. Cuomo and the potential energy around Ms. Nixon. The party endorsed Mr. Cuomo in both 2010 and 2014, although it did so reluctantly four years ago.

The party’s convention, where a nominee will be formally chosen, is not until next month, but the 200-plus state committee members are gathering in Albany on Saturday and could jump the gun to deliver a shock endorsement, according to some party officials.

“I’m anticipating there might be a resolution that the party would endorse Cynthia Nixon,” said David Schwartz, an influential state committee member from Westchester County. Ms. Nixon appealed to state committee members in a roughly hour long conference call on Wednesday evening.

Earlier in the week Nixon’s campaign gained the support of another progressive activist group, Citizen Action of New York. The group, which boasts of 30,000 members across the state.

"Our leaders are really enthusiastic that we can trust Cynthia Nixon to make decisions in the best interests of working families and communities of color all across the state," Karen Scharff, executive director of Citizen Action of New York said.

[The New York Times](#)

2. The Times They Are A-Changin

Our Spin:

As Bob Dylan once said, “the times they are a changin.” Last Friday, after FWC released The Week, Senate Majority Leader Flanagan announced that four now mainline Democratic minority members were being removed from their committee chairmanships. The move did not come as a surprise. However, it was a defining moment since it represented the Majority Leader’s first public response to the Democratic Unity of the State Senate. On a more serious note, we would like to recognize the difficult position that a lot of now former Independent Democratic Conference (IDC) staffers are currently facing. Most of the IDC staff worked countless hours in March on the budget. Instead of getting a few days to recuperate, they were immediately launched into the Democratic Unity announcement. Not to mention that fact that there are still looming primaries facing each of the members they served. Hopefully the staffers can catch up on some sleep this weekend, because the games and sportsmanship are just beginning as we move towards the remainder of session and the Special Elections. It’s only appropriate that we end with the verse:

*“The line it is drawn
The curse it is cast
The slow one now
Will later be fast
As the present now
Will later be past
The order is
Rapidly fadin'.
And the first one now
Will later be last
For the times they are a-changin.”*

The Story:

New York State Senate Majority Leader John J. Flanagan late last week announced the appointment of four new committee chairs. The changes come after the reunification of the Independent Democratic Conference and the Senate Democrats.

Senator Fred Akshar will serve as Chair of the Labor Committee; Senator Chris Jacobs will serve as Chair of the Consumer Protection Committee; Senator Elaine Phillips will serve as Chair of the Banks Committee; and Senator Pam Helming will serve as Chair of the Children and Families Committee.

The changes are effective immediately, and will be formalized pursuant to Senate rules at the earliest possible date.

This week Majority Leader Flanagan stripped Senator Jeff Klein of his government car and spacious offices in Albany and Manhattan. Klein is the head of the eight-member Independent Democratic Conference, which had a power-sharing pact with the GOP majority since 2011.

“Senator Klein is being moved into space reserved for the Democratic minority,” Senate GOP spokesman Scott Reif said Thursday. He said it will be up to Senate Democratic Minority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins to determine what office space or vehicle Klein gets to use.

[NY Post](#)

