

Jenkins Says Defections Will Aid Liberal Cause

The defection of eight local Republicans to the American Party is viewed by the chairman of the local GOP as an aid to the liberal rather than the conservative cause they espouse.

Charleston County Chairman Micah Jenkins was active in independent party movements from 1952 through 1960. Jenkins then joined the Republican Party and led the local rebirth because he concluded that the

third party route was a "dead-end street."

"Looking back in history, it has never succeeded in this country and has diluted the conservative vote," Jenkins said.

The chairman said he wasn't surprised by the announced resignation of eight local precinct officers released in Columbia Monday.

In fact, the chairman said he was informed of their intention to resign some two

weeks ago. Jenkins said, however, he does regret the action "not because it will hurt the local or state party, but because their support and that of other conservatives of a third party will tend only to injure the conservative cause here in America.

"By diluting the conservative Republican and Democratic vote, a third party movement places political control in the hands of the liberal Democrats and the welfare staters," Jenkins said.

While the chairman said he sympathizes with the defecting eight's dissatisfaction with what's wrong with America, "I question the direction and effectiveness of their movement.

Jenkins said the objects of the group's dissatisfaction "have been in the making for three decades and cannot be changed in a few short months. The trend today in America is toward conservative government both on the county, state and national level," he said.

The trend can and will be reversed, he said, if the liberals are not allowed to get political control once again. "A third party movement has never succeeded here in the United States and it is more doubtful now than ever that such a movement can succeed today," Jenkins said.

The chairman urged "all conservative-minded people in Charleston County to stand fast and work within the party in power and try to influence its direction and course. The name of the game in politics as in life is winning.

"Planning a third party movement that cannot assert its force for three years is, to my mind, not within the realm of practical politics. Only by getting control of the local, state and national offices can the things deplored by these ex-Republicans be cured. It is therefore with regret that I accept their resignation," Jenkins said.