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***The 57 Club: My Four Decades in Florida Politics* by Frederick B. Karland
How Florida Happened: The Political Education of Buddy MacKay by Buddy MacKay & Rick Edmonds**

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The 57 Club: My Four Decades in Florida Politics. By Frederick B. Karl (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2010. xiii, 343 pp. Foreword by David R. Colburn and Susan A. MacManus, preface, B&W photographs, appendices, acknowledgments, index. \$40.00, cloth)

How Florida Happened: The Political Education of Buddy MacKay. By Buddy MacKay with Rick Edmonds (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2010. xv, 260 pp. Foreword by David R. Colburn and Susan A. MacManus, B&W photographs, acknowledgments, index. \$32.00, cloth)

This year, the University Press of Florida published political memoirs by Frederick B. Karl and Buddy MacKay, Floridians with long and distinguished records of public service. Both books provide insightful and entertaining accounts of Florida politics in the second half of the twentieth century, when Florida emerged from the rural poverty of the Old Confederacy to become one of the nation's most populous and cosmopolitan states. Together with LeRoy Collins, Reubin Askew, Lawton Chiles, Bob Graham, and other Florida reformers, Karl and MacKay exemplified an honest, progressive brand of leadership that defeated the politics of fear, bigotry, and corruption in the early decades of the cold war. As today's progressives confront a political environment in which honesty and moderation are at risk, they would do well to study Karl's and MacKay's thinking and tactics.

Although they shared the same political philosophy, Karl entered Florida politics about a decade ahead of MacKay. A highly decorated veteran of World War II, he was elected to the Florida House in 1956 and began serving in 1957. At the time, North Florida conservatives who staunchly defended racial segregation, legislative malapportionment, and a system of public finance that favored rural over urban interests generally dominated the legislature and state politics. Serving first in the House and then in the Senate (and later as a justice on the Florida Supreme Court), Karl stood strong for desegregating public schools, properly apportioning the state legislature, increasing funding for education at all levels, and extending home-rule powers to counties as well as cities. Highly regarded for his honesty and integrity, Karl was often picked to direct inquiries when a legislator was accused of ethical misconduct.

As a freshman in the House, Karl led other freshman in opposing a series of bills proposed by the notorious Florida Legislative Investigation Committee chaired by Senator Charley Johns. Established in 1956, the "Johns Committee," as it was nicknamed, brought McCarthyism to Florida. The committee targeted university professors, journalists, and civil rights leaders and organizations.

MacKay joined the Florida House in 1969. By then, the progressive reformers were ascendant in Florida politics. The legislature had been reapportioned to meet the requirements of U.S. Supreme Court rulings mandating population-based districting. The Florida constitution of 1968 had also been adopted, which, among

other things, strengthened the office of the governor, added the office of lieutenant governor, initiated annual legislative sessions, and consolidated executive agencies. In MacKay's words: "When I came to the Florida legislature, the 'Old Guard' had been decimated as a result of the historic reapportionment battle. The iron grip of the rural legislators had been broken and the Pork-Chop Gang no longer existed. The special interests that had historically controlled Florida politics were reduced to fighting a series of holding actions like a defeated army in retreat. Although I did not realize it at the time, it was not a single revolution, but a series of intertwined changes all taking place at the same time" (40).

Together, reapportionment and constitutional reform ushered in an era of political progress in which MacKay (and Karl) figured prominently. The reforms of this era included judicial restructuring, a corporate income tax, increased and equalized funding for public education, growth-management legislation, no-fault insurance, and more.

In their books, Karl and MacKay offer numerous anecdotes about Florida politics. Many of their stories convey in concrete terms the reactionary, racially prejudiced politics of Florida in the 1950s and 1960s. For example, Karl relates a story that he "believed to be true" about Farris Bryant in the 1960 gubernatorial contest. Bryant, who had cultivated a reputation for opposing racial integration, was accused of "speaking to an organization of African Americans in Jacksonville." Later, to set the record straight, "Bryant is reported to have admitted to attending the meeting and making a campaign speech, but denied sitting down at the table or eating with them" (190).

MacKay provides some new insights about the disputed 2000 presidential election. Specifically, he explains that many of the problems with ballot design and voting equipment in 2000 had also occurred in the U.S. Senate race in 1988, when MacKay lost to Connie Mack by 35,000 votes out of more than 4 million votes cast. In the heavily Democratic counties of southeast Florida, a total of 210,000 ballots contained "undervotes" (votes that could not be read by electronic tabulators). Sandy D'Alemberte urged MacKay to file suit in federal court, but MacKay declined because he was "exhausted, out of money, and sick at heart." In retrospect, he says, if he had followed D'Alemberte's advice, he "might have been a U.S. senator, and Al Gore might have been spared the same fiasco twelve years later" (117).

The political struggles of Karl and MacKay offer valuable lessons for contemporary Florida moderates and progressives. Perhaps most important of these is how to respond to demagogues who appeal to people's prejudices, misconceptions, or wishful thinking. The demagoguery of the 1950s and 1960s played to racial bigotry. Karl and his fellow moderates dealt with it by being direct and candid and framing issues in terms of what was morally right and best for Florida.

They were also prepared to put their principles ahead of their political careers. Karl cites the example of Jack Orr, a state legislator who in a special legislative session in 1956 was alone in speaking against efforts in the House to impede school

desegregation following the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*. Karl and the other newly elected House members who would take office in 1957 sat in the audience. Although Orr was soundly defeated the next time he ran for reelection, his 1956 speech, which is included in the appendix of Karl's book, was an inspiration to the incoming freshmen. In Karl's words: "Jack Orr's integrity and eloquence set the tone for those of us at the threshold of legislative service. Frankly, it was an inspiration to many of us and helped us find our own courage when the emotionally charged issue of race relations forced many of us into situations similar to the one he had faced" (18-19).

MacKay suggests that the politics of bigotry was replaced in the 1970s by a politics of deception. Opportunistic politicians began to sell Floridians a "fairy tale" – the idea that Florida is uncomplicated and needs little from government. MacKay offers a blunt assessment of how this has played out: "Since the election of Reubin Askew, no candidates except Askew, Bob Graham, and Lawton Chiles have been able to be elected governor based on reality. To make matters worse, compromise was increasingly portrayed as less than honorable and a new fantasy, ideological purity, was becoming accepted in lieu of bipartisan, nonideological problem solving" (236).

Like Karl, MacKay stresses the value of putting principles first. For example, he explains that LeRoy Collins took positions on civil rights that probably cost him election to the U.S. Senate in 1968 but nevertheless served as a standard for others.

Of course, this is also true of Fred Karl and Buddy MacKay. Even when they lost elections, they won hearts.

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The Columbia Restaurant: Celebrating a Century of History, Culture, and Cuisine. By Andrew T. Huse with Recipes and Memories from Richard Gonzmart and the Columbian Restaurant Family (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009. vi, 314 pp. Acknowledgments, introduction, family tree, illustrations, color photographs, epilogue, subject index, recipe index. \$40.00, cloth)

The photograph that illustrates the cover of Andrew T. Huse's centennial history of Florida's historic Columbia Restaurant is powerful beyond words. Like military troops posed for inspection, almost two hundred employees and family members stand proudly before the historic façade of the Columbia Restaurant in Tampa's Ybor City. The assembled group of accountants, bartenders, busboys, cashiers, chefs, dishwashers, flamenco dancers, maitre d's, musicians, restroom attendants, singers, sommeliers, valets, waiters, sons, daughters, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren