

The Legacy Of The Civil Rights Movement By Bayard Rustin

The 1976 Democratic national convention was a product of the civil rights movement. Twenty years ago no-one would have predicted that the Democratic party would nominate a presidential candidate from the Deep South, much less that many blacks would be enthusiastic about his nomination. Never more clearly has the political revolution worked by the civil rights movement been more clearly demonstrated than at this convention.

Even without a quota system, more than 10 percent of the delegates were black. But the political impact of blacks was larger even than their representation on the floor. Texas Congresswoman Barbara Jordan inspired the convention and nation with her opening night keynote address.

At this convention the most important black leader may well have been Andrew Young. Indeed, he was Carter's most important supporter. Young symbolizes the changes that have taken place in the civil rights movement in the last two decades. He got his start as a minister active in Dr. King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Today as Congressman from Atlanta, he has made the shift from protest to politics, from confrontation to compromise.

(From Bailey Files, Page 1.)

help tear down the wall of fear that has been built up in the minds of many black and white citizens when they think of West Las Vegas.

"For 15 years many of us fought to tear down the wall around the white community only to learn now that our own community has a wall around it - a wall of fear," said Bailey. "The people who live in West Las Vegas don't want to spend their recreation time here, and neither do the white citizens of the rest of the city."

"We simply cannot have any kind of real economic development here until that wall of fear is taken down," he said.

Bailey said he would be fully outlining his own positive program to deal with the needs of the black community in the coming weeks of the campaign. But he said his first priority would be to spend his time with representatives of all groups within Senate District 4 to learn more about how they see their own needs, and how those needs can be met through efforts in the Nevada Legislature.

Since only two Democrats have filed in the race, there will be no primary. Bailey will face State Sen. Joe Neal in the November 2 general election.

For the past three years Bailey has been director of NEDCO (Nevada Economic Development Company), which assists minorities with business loans for starting up or expanding businesses. Bailey has taken a leave of absence from NEDCO to pursue his campaign.

Bailey's only other try for elective office was in the City Commission race in 1971. In that race, he came in third in a field of 15 candidates who ran city-wide.

Bailey was educated at Ohio State University, Morehouse College, Atlanta University, the School of Radio and Television New York City, the Columbia University Theatre also in New York City. He also holds graduate and post-graduate certificates from Howard University's Institute of Minority Business Enterprise.

For nearly 15 years Bailey was active in Las Vegas radio and television and was Nevada's first black television personality.

Bailey's efforts on behalf of the community have been recognized with numerous civic and governmental awards during the past 15 years. He received recognition for outstanding work as chairman of the Urban Renewal Advisory Board from Las Vegas Mayor Oran Gragson. He also received special recognition for meritorious work in racial relations from Governor Grant Sawyer.

Bailey and his wife Ann live in Las Vegas with their two children, John, age 16, and Kimberley, age 14.

The political transformation was also seen in the selection of Walter Mondale as the Democratic vice-presidential candidate, in the Democratic platform, and in the acceptance speeches of Carter and Mondale. The selection of Mondale, a leading liberal and a protege of Hubert Humphrey, was filled with historical irony. For it was Humphrey's 1948 convention speech in support of intergration that led to the bolt of the Dixiecrats. All of the people considered by Carter for the vice-presidential nomination had good civil rights records, but Mondale was most closely identified with the kind of civil rights activism that was once anathema to the South.

The civil rights movement has worked a fundamental transformation in American politics. To take full advantage of the new political situation our strategy must complete the transition from protest to politics, from symbolism to accomplishment, from confrontation to coalitions. The uncompleted portion of the civil rights agenda is economic and thus requires an approach which is not exclusively black, but which appeals to the needs of all Americans who suffer from poverty, unemployment, poor housing, and inadequate health care.

Black Democrats Score

Mobilizing one of the most effective and sophisticated caucus strategies in recent history, Black members of the Rules Committee of the Democratic National Convention scored startling victories in reversing weak affirmative action regulations which have led to a dramatic decline in the number of Blacks, women, and other minorities which were represented at the 1976 Convention. Accounting for only 22 of the 153-member committee, the Black delegation met into the morning hours to lay-out a strategy to secure passage of two major amendments to the Democratic Party's Charter and By-Laws which will require the establishment of goals and time-tables for minority participation in the delegate selection process as well as all official party affairs from the national to the lowest level.

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New Department Chairmen

Three new department chairmen have been appointed in the College of Arts and Letters at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, according to Dr. Marvin Loflin, Dean of the college.

The three new chairmen are Dr. Robert Davenport, Department of History; Dr. Albert Johns, Department of Political Science; and Dr. Robert Koettel, Department of Psychology.


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