

To Whom Does It Belong?

The West Las Vegas Power Structure Part VII

By George A. Burns

This is a continuation of a series of articles presented over a 12-week period giving an overview on the West Las Vegas POWER STRUCTURE. At the end of this series, the SENTINEL-VOICE will print in its new magazine, BRONZE LAS VEGAS, the complete series in this new venture for Las Vegas and Nevada.

Hypothetically speaking, what would it be like for the West Las Vegas power structure to be comprised of Black national and noted leaders who help to direct and guide our country? Or, if one was

to set out to create the ideal leader for West Las Vegas, comprising the qualities from those leaders into one, just what qualities taken from whom would be the ingredients necessary to create this ideal leader?

Just what are the West Las Vegas residents looking for in a leader?

Well, this week we discussed this hypothetical situation with a group of young ladies and got their opinions of their ideal leader for West Las Vegas and those qualities taken from our national black leadership. We spoke with the Black Chamber of Commerce president and local business-woman Sarann Knight-Preddey; local realtor and member of the city planning commission Bonnie Juniel; Arlene Lawson and Lubertha Johnson.

"I think that the people of our community are looking for a dedicated and concerned person. One who has the community at heart . . . someone with ability, and a person of ethics, principles and integrity." Those feelings were expressed by Sarann Preddey. She added to that the belief that one person alone doesn't necessarily provide leadership but "groups of persons working together could accomplish by far much more." "In this regard," she continues, "different ideas which could serve the whole community can come to surface, and quite honestly, I do see this happening in the community."

When the hypothetical situation on "creating the ideal leader or leaders for West Las Vegas" was put before her, Preddey responded with, "Well, there's Tom Bradley (Mayor of Los Angeles) who's extremely dedicated and experienced, and I personally feel that he's proven himself. He has "tempo," and "mold" and has that rapport with people. That's vital. There's also Rev. Jessie Jackson and Rev. Sullivan (founders and presidents of Operation PUSH and O.I.C., respectively) who continue to show intelligent and dynamic leadership. And then there's Shirley Chisolm. They all are forceful and you can definitely see the care and compassion that they have for their fellow citizens."

Juniel agreed with Preddey in her high respect for those individuals. "The best thing about Bradley is that he is a true representative and he has that unique ability to attract all kinds." On Jackson, she enthusiastically responded, "He possesses class, charm and charisma."

Lubertha Johnson spoke highly of Georgia State Senator Julian Bond. "He's really an intellectual, and his stature comes across with youthfulness."

On Detroit Mayor Coleman Young, Juniel stated that while she notices he rarely speaks out on national issues, he "concerns himself mainly with the city he leads, that being Detroit." On the other Mayor Young, (Andrew of Atlanta), Juniel found him to be both charming and charismatic. Johnson noted that Young offered a little "something of everything."

Juniel described Barbara Jordan, the former Texas Congresswoman as being a "dynamic and forceful leader." "She was extremely intelligent, but you know, I got the feeling that she felt, on the national front, she could go no further. She'd reached her peak."

Johnson too agreed with Juniel's estimation. "She, like a lot of other Black women who are in positions of leadership sometimes get out there

and then find that they just can't go any further. She, particularly wanted a meaningful position."

On Harold Washington, all agreed that he would probably be an effective mayor of Chicago, but too, they all were unanimous that he's "new" on the scene, somewhat.

On Ralph Abernathy, Lawson considered him to be "boisterous." Former Urban League Director Vernon Jordan: "A very smart man," said Johnson. Preddey said of Rev. Ike, "I feel him to be very charismatic." Of Mohammed Ali, Preddey declared, "he stands tall." Juniel said of the former heavyweight champion, "he defied the system and had the courage to stand tall, and he won!" Lawson said of him, "He articulates himself very well." And when the name of the other "charismatic" leader in the world of boxing came up, that being Sugar Ray Leonard, all agreed that was extremely "intelligent, bright and likable."

A local leader Preddey was quick to note as being a person whose qualities of being both "dynamic and determined," can be added to that "hypothetical ideal leader" for West Las Vegas would be Rudy Duncan. "She's well known all over the country. In fact, if you mention her name in Washington, D.C., New York, Atlanta or Los Angeles, in political circles and social causes, she's known."

Of Coretta Scott King, Preddey described her as being simply, "courageous." Johnson added that, "she keeps the dream alive."

Juniel added to the list, entertainer and activist Pearl Bailey. "I admire her for intelligence and education, plus she speaks out on national issues and she's involved."

Johnson added another name to the list. She said of the late Sen. Robert Kennedy, "even though he wasn't a Black leader, he was one of the finest men of our time, and was a marvelous person. He had a marvelous caring, concerned, compassionate and genuine feeling for people. If you could just take the leadership qualities of both he and Dr. King alone, you'd have yourself one outstanding leader."

Just what lessons can our present leadership here in West Las Vegas learn from those aforementioned leaders and their special qualities? Juniel summed it up by saying, "Internal fighting and "backbiting" is detrimental to all, and we need to realize that fighting for justice and welfare of all people and standing for something good and decent should take precedence over personal heights."

"Yes, all those superb qualities of those great individuals all wrapped up in one would make for an exceptional person to help lead in the community's power structure," said Preddey. "That person would be the "ideal" leader!"

Rev. Allen, NAACP Executive Board Meets

Newly elected NAACP president Rev. James Allen met with his just as new executive board committee on Tuesday to set out plans and focus on alleviating the pressing problems at hand.

Allen, who stressed that the press not be invited to that meeting but promised to hold a press conference the following morning, called for unity, togetherness and a putting aside of personality conflicts, thereby in turn getting on with the important and crucial

business at hand, it was learned.

A press release and position paper was promised to be circulated at that Wednesday morning press conference.

Allen spoke briefly with the Sentinel-Voice last week, at which time he expressed his appreciation to those who gave him the opportunity to serve, and said that it would be his endeavor to "uphold those things said by me before the election."

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