

West LV Leaders Set Sights on Council Seat

West Las Vegas leaders, hoping to take advantage of the interest focused on black voters this year, have decided to battle for a place on the Las Vegas City Council in the political arena instead of the courts.

Last month, they failed in their attempt to make it easier for the city's first black councilman to be elected through the realignment of the council ward that encompasses much of the Westside. Their proposal would have increased the number of black voters in Ward 3 by one-third.

Councilmen instead approved new ward boundaries that slightly decreased the percentage of black voters in Ward 3. The decision was criticized by leaders of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Black Chamber of Commerce.

The Rev. Jesse Scott, local NAACP president, said then that he would consult the organization's attorneys to see if the city could be successfully sued.

The threatened NAACP lawsuit has since been ruled out as too expensive and time-consuming to pursue, despite a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision that questioned the longtime practice of political gerrymandering.

But neither Scott nor local dentist James McMillan, a member of the Black Chamber of Commerce's board of directors, are conceding the 1987 Ward 3 election to incumbent Bob Nolen, who has already said he plans to run for re-election.

Nolen defeated the only black person ever to serve on the council, Clark County Commissioner William Pearson, in 1983 by less

than 200 votes. Pearson was appointed to the post in 1982 to fill a vacancy. Nolen reportedly received only 72 votes from West Las Vegas in the primary election.

Both Scott and McMillan said they expect the controversy over the ward realignment to generate interest among potential black candidates for the council seat.

More important than finding candidates, they said, is ensuring that there are plenty of black voters registered in time for next spring's election.

However, rather than launch a separate voter registration drive for the spring election, they are

See WARD, Page 4

Coalition Planned For West Las Vegas

Invitations have been mailed to more than 35 churches, civic, social, fraternal, and service organizations in West Las Vegas to form a coalition. The meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday, July 17, 7 p.m. at 1312 North "F" Street, Suite "B".

Spearheading the drive to form the coalition are The A. Phillip Randolph Institute, the Barbara Jordan Democratic Women's Caucus, Inc., and the Black Fire Fighters. The immediate goals of the organization are to register 10,000 voters in the West Las Vegas area, Voter Education, and To Get Out and Vote in this year's Primary and General Elections, according to Amos Knighten, Public Relations Director of The A. Phillip Randolph Institute, and Mrs. Doris Femenella, President of the Barbara Jordan Democratic Women's Caucus Inc.

South African Leader Urges Las Vegas Blacks To Vote

By H.P. Fitzgerald

Desmond East of the South African Mine Federation in Johannesburg, South Africa, and Kim Robinson from the African Labor Center (U.S. State Dept.), in Washington, D.C. addressed the Las Vegas Chapter of the A. Phillip Randolph Institute at its June monthly meeting recently.

Both speakers strongly urged the Las Vegas Chapter to assist in forming a West Las Vegas Coalition immediately in order to demonstrate that in unity there is strength. They urged the importance of the Coalition reaching its goal of registering 10,000 Blacks in the Las Vegas area before the 1986 Primary and General Elections.

Desmond and Robinson stated that in order for Blacks to participate in the political process, they must register and vote in all local elections, and this includes the upcoming elections in Clark County. Both speakers stated that many of the problems facing South Africans today are due to the fact that they are not totally free to participate in the political process, and that the Blacks in Las Vegas stand a good chance of losing their right to participate in the political process by failing to register to vote, and then voting, once they have registered.

Kim Robinson stressed the importance of Blacks in Las Vegas supporting Black Labor Unions, or local unions that have Black memberships in general.

Desmond and Robinson were in Las Vegas recently visiting Labor Unions, and they were accompanied by



BLACK PUBLISHERS MEET—Winston-Salem, North Carolina was the city for the 46th annual convention of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, (NNPA). More than 300 publishers, corporate executives, editors and guests attended seminars, luncheons and special exhibits extending the convention theme, "The Power of the Black Press." The highlight of the convention was the dynamic speech by Shirley Chisholm, the first Black woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and was also a candidate for the presidency of the United States. The occasion was a luncheon at the Hyatt-Winston Hotel hosted by Miller Brewing Co., the Seven-Up Company and Philip Morris, for publishers and their guests. Mrs. Chisholm is now on the teaching staff of Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts, (the oldest women's college in the United States). President Christ Bennett said that this was one of the most successful conventions in the history of NNPA. Ernest H. Pitt, publisher of the WINSTON-SALMEN, who served as president, was highly congratulated for a well organized convention. THE CHRONICAL was the host paper. Left to right: William E. Merritt, director, Industry Affairs, the Seven-Up Company; George L. Knox, director, Corporate Communications, Philip Morris Inc.; Shirley Chisholm; Obrie Smith, director, Corporate Communications, Miller Brewing Co. and Allene Roberts, manager of Constituency Development Programs, Philip Morris USA.

Claude "Blackie" Evans, Executive Director of the Nevada State AF of L.

Amos Knighten, Chapter Director of Public Relations stated that a drive is underway in the Black community to recruit membership in the West Las Vegas Coalition from churches, sororities, fraternities, Black Fire Fighters, Black Policemen, NAACP, and all other organizations and clubs in Clark County. The Barbara Jordan Women's Democratic Caucus is already in the process of recruiting memberships for the West Las Vegas Voter Contact Office located at 1312 North F Street, Suite B. The date and time of this meeting will be announced in the Las Vegas Sentinel Voice.

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