

## Shirley Chisholm Speaks at Freedom Rally in Support of Mitchell Defense Committee

BALTIMORE, MD — Over 1,000 citizens raised \$100,000 in cash and pledges in a Freedom Rally held by the Mitchell Defense Committee in historic Bethel A.M.E. Church recently.

The crowd rose from their seats and cheered former Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm of New York as she exhorted them to March to Washington again to protest the selective prosecution and false indictments of Maryland State Senator Clarence M. Mitchell, III and State Senator Michael Bowen Mitchell, and other strong black elected officials by Reagan's Justice Department under Ed Meese.

Democratic Committee Black Caucus, showed "Never again," as she pledged that the Post Reconstruction drive that eliminated black elected officials from office during the period 1880 to 1900, will never happen again.

"This is no coincidence," declared Cong. Chisholm. "All over the nation strong black elected officials, like the Mitchell brothers, are under harassing federal investigations and indictments as the Reagan Justice Department plots to drive them out of office and destroy the tremendous gains we've made. I'm ready to march again," the Congresswoman concluded.

## Firefighters Present 7th Annual Installation of Officers Program, Dinner and Dance

The Professional Black Firefighters of Las Vegas and Clark County will present their seventh annual 'Installation of Officers' Program, Dinner and Dance at Heritage Hall, 932 W. Owens at 8:00 p.m. on February 27. No-host cocktails will start at 7:30 p.m. with music by Henry Shed. Dance D-J will be Jr. Gene.

Special guests are Frank Hawkins, Rev. Bill Casey, and Rev. Marion Bennett.

Donations will be \$10.00 at the door. Tickets can be purchased from members.

Come and support the efforts of the Black Firefighters community.

The Professional Black

Firefighters of Las Vegas and Clark County are non-profit organizations.

For more info call 438-6697 or 647-4573.

## SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION ELECTED NEW OFFICERS

by H.P. "Fitz" Fitzgerald

The Westside School Alumni Association elected its officers and Advisory Board at its January 9th Board for 1988 at its January 9th meeting.

Association officers elected for 1988 were Betty Scott Henderson, Director; H.P. Fitzgerald and Leonard Mason, Assistant Directors; Judy Simpson Banks, Secretary; George Ward, Treasurer; Diane Lalorie Luck, Historian; and Robert Fortson, Sergeant at Arms.

al Director of the NAACP, standing in for Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks, Executive Director of the National NAACP, brought the message that their organization stands behind the Mitchells, longtime freedom fighters.

Every major civil rights organization in America has pledged its support of the Mitchell brothers, Mrs. Tucker announced.

Elected to the Advisory Board for 1988 are North Las Vegas Municipal Judge Gary Davis, Judge John Mendoza, Doris French, Henry Moore, Dr. James Pughsley, and Elder George Ward.

The Association will continue to meet the first Saturday in the month at the Old Westside School located at 330 West Washington Avenue at 7 p.m. to plan its May 29, 1988 school reunion. The reunion theme is "Reuniting in Thanksgiving and Fellowship." Special recognition will be given to selected former teachers, administrators and students who have made significant contributions in fields of work, community service, etc.

Volunteers are needed and donations as well, to help underwrite some of the reunion and operating expenses. Call Betty Henderson at 649-7070 or H. P. Fitzgerald, 648-0039.



Shirley Chisholm speaks at Freedom Rally.

C. Delores Tucker, Co-Chair of the Mitchell Defense Committee, former Pennsylvania Secretary of State, and present Chair of the National

Mrs. Tucker announced that the rally was the kickoff, the first in a series, in a National Campaign for Justice to send the message

that Black America will not stand for this assault on the dramatic gains made under the 1965 Voting Rights Act which the Mitchell brothers' father, the late Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr., NAACP lobbyist, pushed through the Congress. The rallies will assist the Mitchells and others in their defense against the attacks.

The second Freedom Rally in the nationwide series of protests was held on Sunday, January 24, 1988, at the 19th Street Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., as the Defense Committee drives to raise one million dollars to assist in the defense of the Mitchell brothers and others.

The Mitchell brothers were found not guilty in November in Maryland's U.S. District Court of conspiracy to obstruct a congressional investigation, but they were convicted on wire fraud and one other count, which flowed from the alleged conspiracy. They are preparing their appeal.

The Senators' uncle, retired 16 year veteran Maryland Congressman Parren J. Mitchell, at the Bethel rally, called vindictive the charges that his nephews attempted to stop his investigation into the minority status of a Hispanic controlled defense contractor, Wedtech Corporation of New York.

"They, the Reagan Justice Department, sought 'revenge' when I refused to end my probe," he declared.

The Mitchell brothers have steadfastly maintained their innocence. They state that the indictments against them were a frameup by the Reagan Justice Department. They vowed at Bethel to fight

until they are completely vindicated.

Michael, an attorney, stated that in 1984 when the Wedtech Corporation was being widely praised in the press, the Department of Labor and The White House as the outstanding minority-owned business in the country, providing jobs for the poor, he was retained in a proper legal contract to perform general legal services. The Company talked of establishing a branch with a job training program and employment in an industrial park in Baltimore City, he said, and always held themselves to be a bonafide company, hiding any wrongdoing from the Mitchells.

Blaine A'mmon White, one of the defense attorneys, noted Sunday that the Mitchells are the first to be indicted under a 1942 Federal Statute that prohibits the obstruction of a duly authorized congressional investigation. There was never any evidence introduced by the prosecutors of any violations of the statute.

State Senator Decatur Trotter, Chairman of the Maryland Legislative Black Caucus, and Rep. David P. Richardson, Jr. of Pennsylvania, President of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators, received standing ovations upon informing the rally: "We stand 100 percent behind the Mitchells and the National Campaign for Justice."

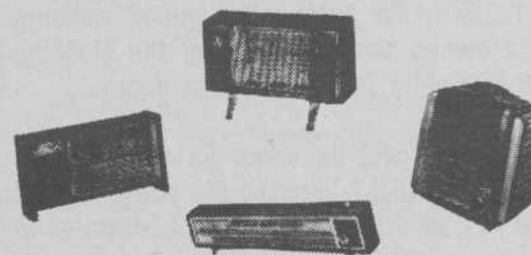
The National Black Caucus of State Legislators of which Senator Clarence Mitchell is the founder and was seven year President, is one of the largest organizations of black elected officials in the nation. Dr. Emmett Burns, Region-

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