



SENATOR BILL MCCOY



REP. WALLY PRIESTLEY



BILL STEVENSON



REP. ED LEEK



MARGARET CARTER



HAROLD WILLIAMS

PORTLAND OBSERVER

Volume XIV, Number 20
March 7, 1984
25¢ Per Copy

USPS 950-090-000
© East Publishing Co., Inc. 1984



SHIRLEY CHISHOLM

(Photo: Richard Brown)

Chisholm supports Jackson

by Lanita Duke

Grassroot News, N.W.—The nation's first Black presidential candidate, Shirley Chisholm, said, "The press carries on like I never existed." In 1972, she carried 186 delegates into the Democratic convention.

"I'm supporting Jesse Jackson for the presidency of the United States. If nothing else, Blacks will go to the upcoming convention with a certain amount of dignity and pride because other persons will need the votes that we will bring to the convention."

She called Jackson a catalyst for change. "They are always ahead of their time. They are laughed at, misunderstood and misinterpreted. But change comes from those who have the nerve to challenge certain things in our society."

Chisholm said Jackson's candidacy will have a ripple effect on state and local politics. "The tremendous number of Black persons registered will translate into votes on the local level. There will be an increase in the number of people in State and local councils (representatives). . . It is time for other persons—other than white males—to guide the ship of state."

Chisholm said she advised Jackson, "to go to as many parts of

the country to get the delegates as he needs. The mistake is concentration on the Northeast part of the country. The South supported me much more than the great liberals of the North."

At a Friday morning press conference, Chisholm tried to avoid the categorization as a candidate for the vice presidency. "I do not care to discuss that issue. The vice president is not selected by popularity, but on the basis of who will bring strength to the ticket."

She said she was frightened by Reagan's re-election. "He would place very conservative gentlemen on the Supreme Court. We would have to live with their decisions for a very long time."

Chisholm said those Black elected officials who are supporting Mondale are supporting him on the basis of pragmatic (convenient) politics. "These gentlemen will be on the list to get grants to govern their cities."

She asked these officials not to attack Jackson in the media. "Jackson is providing the model and image young Blacks need. So, they should keep quiet and don't knock those of us who are trying to bring about changes in this society to get rid of all the inequities across the board."

Boosters tackle development

by Chuck Goodmacher

Not everyone has heard of the Northeast Business Boosters and fewer still know of their current plans to help stimulate the economic vitality of inner-Northeast Portland. But if the group's new president, Sam Brooks, and the Board of Directors are successful, the community will be hearing a great deal more from the business group.

The Boosters are just now coming out of a transition period—a transition they hope will provide benefits to the entire community. Originally formed as the Union Avenue Boosters several years ago, the group broadened its focus and recently merged with the Albina Boosters. The Northeast Business Boosters now aspire to represent business and concerned citizens

throughout inner-North and Northeast Portland, says Brooks. Membership (\$25 annually) is open to all as are general meetings held on the second Tuesday of each month.

Unfortunately, notes Brooks, shortly after the Boosters' initial focus on Union Avenue improvements became blurred, so did the group's purpose. "Maybe we floundered just a bit. . . not having articulated goals." The Boosters are only now in the process of forming specific goals and objectives, but Brooks makes clear the direction he (and the board) are headed.

Brooks said the Boosters' highest priority now is to meet with a broad cross-section of community groups to find out how to help inner-Northeast get off the ground economically. "Community groups tend to look at business groups with a jaundiced eye," he notes.

"Sometimes they forget they (business and community interests) are closely interwoven," continued Brooks, who is himself a long-time community volunteer.

According to Brooks, the Boosters' hope is "to be the catalyst, the buffer, between the citizens and the city." Meeting with community groups is a vital part of filling that role. Brooks notes, "If we can have good input. . . about what our own goals are as businesses, we'll be well on our way" to helping the community as a whole articulate development needs.

A one-day work session at which community residents, groups, the Boosters and the Portland Development Commission (PDC) can discuss needed efforts in planning for this spring. Brooks said most groups, agencies and businesses know little about each

other and he hopes the work session will help bridge communication gaps. The Boosters have already met with leaders of some groups and hope to meet with others so the work session can be planned together to meet everyone's needs, he added.

The community, said Brooks, vitally needs to put forth its own economic goals and objectives. "The indications are if we clearly identify what the specific needs are, they (PDC) will assist in any way they can." Brooks agrees with PDC officials who say it is the responsibility of the community to present the needs (both in terms of obtaining data and developing projects) rather than asking PDC to initiate action.

PDC's closure of its office on Union Avenue makes impossible the (Please turn to page 2, column 5)

Oregon Primary races promise controversy

The primary races in Northeast Portland alone should be enough to drive the voters to the polls in great numbers this May 15th.

Rep. Ed Leek of District 18, after playing the "will he or won't he" game since before the legislative session ended last July, filed for re-election. Leek had also tested the waters in Senate District 8, the position now held by Senator Bill McCoy.

Also in the District 18 race for the Democratic Party nomination are Margaret Carter, Harold Williams and Gayle Troutwine. Carter, a Portland Community College counselor, won the endorsement of the community forum.

Williams, a labor negotiator for the state, ran second to Leek in the 1982 Primary.

On the Republican side, businessman Chad Debnam is the only candidate.

Senator Bill McCoy, the state's

only Black senator, faces the most serious challenge of his legislative career. Filing against McCoy is Bill Stevenson, former state representative, senator and labor commissioner. McCoy was appointed to the Senate in 1974, when Stevenson was elected labor commissioner and resigned from his Senate position.

Also jumping into that race was Wally Priestley, who has been a member of the House for nine sessions, where, as a member of the House Revenue Committee, he has been a staunch opponent of the sales tax. Win or lose, Priestley reached a high in his political career when the *Oregonian*, usually scathing in its attacks on him, said Wednesday, "Highly individualistic and regarded by some as an eccentric, Priestley nevertheless has amassed a solid body of knowledge and is particularly skilled in legislative procedure."

Additional candidates for the Senate seat are Stephen McElroy and Marjorie Toedtmeier. Francis McKenna seeks the Republican nomination.

Priestley's move gives Mike Burton, North Portland community activist, the House District 15 nomination unopposed.

Other races that will draw voter attention include Sellwood Middle School principal Carl Piacentini's challenge of City Commissioner Mike Lindburg. Frank Shields, chairman of the county's charter revision committee and instigator of the initiative petition to zone the Portland School Board, is seeking Caroline Miller's county commissioner position.

City Commissioner Charles Jordan faces a minimal challenge by James D.S. McDonald. Jim Hill, the only Black in the House of Representatives, is unopposed in the Primary.



CHAD DEBNAM

In Northeast Portland, Senate District 10, now held by Senator Jim Gardner, is sought by Rep. Jane (Please turn to page 2, column 4)

Administration challenges affirmative action

The government of the United States has gone to court to fight affirmative action in Birmingham, Alabama. The Justice Department is joining ten white male police officers and firefighters who claim the City of Birmingham violated their civil rights.

The ten employees filed suits charging they were denied promotions based on race and sex. Blacks and women were promoted under a consent decree signed three years ago.

The Justice Department sued the City of Birmingham in 1975, charging that there was a pervasive "pattern and practice" of illegal discrimination against Blacks and women. After a long trial, the Justice Department helped negotiate a consent decree which included an affirmative action plan, numerical goals for hiring and promotions and back pay of \$265,000.

In the meantime, the Reagan Ad-

ministration had come into office, but a Justice Department attorney, Richard J. Ritter, signed the decree on May 19, 1981. Three days later, Attorney General William French Smith, in his first address on civil rights, attacked racial employment goals. The consent decree was approved by Federal District Judge Sam C. Pointer, Jr., in August of that year.

In 1981, the population of Birmingham was 54 percent Black; 13 percent of the police force was Black and 9 percent of the firefighters were Black. Today, 19 percent of the police and 13 percent of the firefighters are Black.

The white firefighters and police have repeatedly attempted to block enforcement of the decree. Judge Pointer earlier denied their request for an injunction and his decision was upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals.

The Reagan Administration has

sided with white employees complaining about affirmative action in other cities including Boston, New Orleans, Memphis and Detroit; but this is the first time it has attacked a consent decree to which it was an original party.

James K. Baker, City Attorney of Birmingham, said the Justice Department's position is "rather startling." The case was in litigation for over seven years, he said, and the government suggested the city settle. "We negotiated for over a year. We ended up with a consent decree which, by its terms, bound the federal government to defend the decree if it were ever attacked. The decree mandated racial preferences and said the city's compliance with the decree shall not be viewed as a violation" of civil rights laws.

The Justice Department claims it can defend the consent decree, as it is

obligated to do, and still support the white employees. "If there's an allegation of discrimination, the government's responsibility under the law is to come in and say we're against discrimination on account of race," William Bradford Reynolds, Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, said.

"We always side with those people who claim they have suffered discrimination on account of race." Other attorneys in the case say it is impossible for the government to represent both sides because the white employees' suit is an attack on the consent decree.

Mayor Richard Arrington, Jr., said the Reagan Administration is joining the persistent efforts to undermine or completely destroy the decree. "This city was once steeped in discrimination. If affirmative action can't prevail here, it can't prevail anywhere in America."