

MINORITY DEVELOPMENT

Clinton sets up panel to shore up black support

The Clinton/Gore campaign Saturday announced the creation of a national steering committee to shore up support among African-Americans in 30 key states, including California, Texas and Pennsylvania.

President Clinton kicked off the effort with a conference call with black leaders and grassroots activists at 160 sites across the country, telling them their support was crucial to his re-election campaign.

"I intend to build on my record of the last four years," Clinton told national steering committee members and state senators, church leaders and activists in the 30 states.

He said his administration's policies and the improved economy had won enthusiastic support nationwide among black groups and said this was "a stunning validation of how we can do well and do good at the same time."

Clinton campaign spokeswoman Lisa Davis said the campaign planned similar steering committees for a variety of ethnic and other interest groups — including women and educators — over the coming weeks.

On Tuesday, the campaign will unveil a Jewish leadership council, followed by an announcement Wednesday of environmental activists supporting Clinton's re-election bid, she said.

Ethnic groups and individuals with Italian, Polish, Armenian, Lithuanian, Greek and Asian-Pacific heritage would also form

national and state steering groups to drum up support for Clinton, Davis said.

The Clinton campaign said 1995 Census Bureau statistics showed that incomes rose faster last year than in any year in a decade and the poverty rate among African-Americans was at the lowest level in history.

Davis said the typical black family's income had risen by \$3,000 since 1991.

Ernie Green, honorary co-chair of African-Americans for Clinton/Gore '96 lauded the administration's efforts to promote community banks in low- and moderate-income communities, and the campaign's deposits of \$5 million in four minority-owned community banks.

"These and many other accomplishments demonstrate why we should work to make sure that President Clinton has four more years," Green said.

The national steering committee includes

Betty Shabazz, wife of slain civil rights leader Malcolm X, Representative Donald Payne, D-NJ, and Representative William Jefferson, D-La..

Saturday, October 5, 1996

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