

## Second District Races Poses Questions

(Continued from Front)

would write in political pain, and supporters of independent black political movements would jump gleefully into the fray.

And so measured against the possibility for significant and long range impact, the 2nd district race is probably one of the most important political contests in this state's history.

But first, let's set the background.

Michaux, a Durham attorney, former state legislator and U.S. Attorney in the Jimmy Carter administration, announced his candidacy for the 2nd district congressional seat back in January. Initially, he was challenging venerable L.H. Fountain, who had held the seat for about thirty years. Michaux based his challenge on the fact that urban and urbane Durham had been added to a mostly rural district. The articulate black politician counted on both his popularity at home, and the implication of what Durham could offer the rest of the district to help him overcome Fountain's "home field" advantage. Fountain is practically venerated in the eastern part of the district.

But Fountain hurled a curve. He retired, throwing the field wide open.

Shortly, I.T. "Tim" Valentine announced his candidacy, and it was generally understood that he was running under the Fountain mantle. Then Jim Ramsey, another former legislator from Roxboro threw his hat in the ring and now

Michaux was caught in the middle.

Each end of the district had a favorite son candidate.

In the western end, which includes Person, Granville, Vance and Caswell counties, Ramsey, the favorite son, had the edge.

In the eastern end, which includes Halifax, Nash, Edgecombe, and Wilson counties, plus O'Neal township in Johnston County, Valentine, the favorite son, had the edge.

That left Michaux with Durham and Warren counties as his base.

Thus we have the first of several questions. Was the corraling of Michaux into the middle of the district, forcing him to campaign against favorite sons in the eastern and western fringes a matter of mere circumstances or a carefully crafted political strategy?

According to one highly placed source in the state Democratic Party who asked not to be identified for fear of being drummed out of the party, Party leaders simply didn't want Michaux as its nominee in the fall.

"Paranoid about the growing strength of the Congressional Club in the state," the source said, "Democratic Party leaders decided they didn't want to field a candidate who could clearly be labeled a liberal. Besides, the Republicans had early said that the second district was a seat they wanted."

There is no way to prove the charge because

party leaders won't discuss the issue. But their very silence raises the second of several questions.

As party leader in the state, why didn't Hunt support Michaux?

Through his press secretary, Hunt says that he never gets into primary races.

Sensing a chance to increase their presence in a state where they are outnumbered 2-1 in registered voters, North Carolina Republicans came up with Durham lawyer Jack Marin, who came out on top in the June primary, and then didn't have to face a runoff.

Thus was the field set, and from all indications, the Republicans wanted the choice to be a clear one.

When Michaux led the field of three in the Democratic primary, but had to face Valentine in a runoff in July, two days before the runoff vote, State Republican Party chairman David Flaherty appealed to Republican faithful throughout the state to send in the money "...so that we can begin a district-wide effort to defeat Mickey Michaux in the general election."

Therefore, the first segment of this congressional race appears to have boiled down to the following conclusions:

\* Blacks wanted Michaux because they like him, and he was one of the most attractive and qualified candidates they could field right now.

\* Republicans wanted Michaux because they felt he could be easily

beat in the fall. The race would have been a clear choice between a Democratic candidate sensitive to once-popular social issues, and a Republican candidate who thinks President Reagan is not doing such a bad job.

\* Democrats didn't want Michaux because they feared the Republican challenge.

Therefore, the 2nd congressional race boiled down to an issue in black and white, and since then little has changed.

"When Valentine won" the Democratic Party source said, "everybody in the party breathed a little easier because now it was a matter of numbers and quickly the edge had swung back to us."

Quickly, Gov. Hunt moved to rally the troops behind their standard bearer from the east.

But then Michaux, hoping as he said later to send the Democratic Party a message, hinted at a write-in effort at a press conference where he said, "...some people take pencils to the polls."

Weary and frustrated over losing a toughly fought campaign where the party had obviously

left voters to vote their racial convictions, some black voters launched a write-in movement.

The pressure mounted.

"There is no question," the source said, "but that a Michaux write-in effort is far more damaging to us than to the Republicans. If Michaux gets a good vote, Marin will probably win."

Marin is banking on that. He hopes the write-in campaign will siphon enough Democratic votes from Valentine to get Marin elected. He hopes against hope that the write-in effort won't be successful enough to put Michaux in Washington.

Valentine just wishes the whole write-in thing would go away. He says: "It behooves minority people to stick with the Democratic Party." But then he added: "I can't say I intend to do anything specifically for whites or any other people of this district."

And so, since about July, the 2nd district campaign has operated on two levels.

Publicly, Marin, 37, and Valentine, 56, have run against each other, trying valiantly to

discuss issues that would help set them apart in the voters' minds. It has not been easy, because though there are differences between the two candidates, they are not easy to see.

On another level, mostly behind-the-scenes, both Marin and Valentine have been running against the write-in.

Enter the Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People. The oldest, the most respected and most effective local black political organization in the state, the Durham Committee can usually deliver more than 90 percent of the Durham black vote to candidates it endorses.

But with the write-in, the Committee has been asked not to endorse a candidate — Michaux early on disassociated himself from the write-in effort — but a concept of insurrection and independence.

So far the organization has hedged, playing its bets close to its chest. Several weeks ago, the organization's political sub-committee recommended the write-in on a split vote, but the organization's membership sent it back to com-

mittee. The issue surfaced again about two weeks ago, this time with a unanimous vote from the sub-committee, and insiders say the organization is likely to support the write-in effort when it holds its endorsement meeting this week.

Meanwhile, throughout the district, leaders of the write-in movement have been quietly trying to convince black voters to take their pencils to the polls. They have basically said that neither Valentine nor Marin offers a viable choice for blacks in this district.

In recent days, Marin has launched his own offensive against the write-in.

Operating under the banner, "Concerned Blacks for Marin", a small group of local black Republicans has been lobbying quickly for the former NBA basketball player. This week they launched a series of radio commercials on local stations programmed to the black community, saying basically that Marin is a viable choice, now that Michaux is out of the race.

And so the stage is set.

There are three candidates in Tuesday's 2nd district congressional race. They are:

\* Marin, Republican, who says he's much, much different from Jesse Helms and John East, North Carolina's two Republican senators.

\* Valentine, a Democrat, who in his campaign has talked about almost everything but the Reagan administration's economic policies.

\* The write-in, a seldom used concept by black voters that could in many ways establish both the destiny and the power of blacks in this state for years to come.

And there we have the final of several important questions: Will blacks vote for destiny, and power, or for tradition?



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## Jack Marin, Tim Valentine Differ Little On Most Issues

By Donald Alderman

Differences between the Democratic and the Republican candidates for the 2nd district congressional seat are relatively hard to find.

Both Jack Marin, the Durham Republican, and I.T. "Tim" Valentine, the Nashville Democrat, shared their views of the write-in effort for H.M. "Mickey" Michaux and on timely domestic and foreign affairs issues in interviews this week with *The Carolina Times*.

Marin hopes the write-in campaign will siphon enough Democratic votes, ones that Valentine would ordinarily get, to push him — not Michaux — into the hallowed halls of Congress. Valentine admits that the write-in could do just that. Democratic Party leaders recognize the black disenchantment with the party, but have no concrete plans to mend the fence.

Marin, 37, a Durham attorney and former professional basketball player who is backed by Jesse Helms' National Congressional Club, say blacks should vote for him because he'd be in a better position to bring new employment to the district, with his party's administration in the White House. He said he supports a targeted jobs program which allows jobs to be created in the private sector, by the business community, rather than by the public sector of government.

Valentine, 56, a Nashville attorney, said it "behooves minority people to stick with the Democratic Party," but added that "I can't say I intend to do anything specifically for whites or any other people of this district."

Both candidates say they intend to have bi-racial congressional staffs, if elected, though they declined to give any percentages, and Valentine says he intends to have a Durham office and a mobile office to travel through the district, gathering information upon which to base decisions and political action.

The district stretches from Caswell in the west, to Warren in the east, dips inland to Durham and further east to Wilson. The district's other counties are Person, Granville, Vance, Warren, Halifax, Nash, Edgecombe, plus O'Neal township in Johnston.

Voters can expect business pretty much as usual in foreign affairs if either candidate is elected. While both candidates say they oppose South Africa's apartheid system of government, a system where blacks are treated even worse than blacks were treated in this country during slavery and segregation, neither candidate advocated a policy stronger than the current actions of hopeful negotiation.

Valentine said: "I think we ought to continue policies that would indicate our displeasure with the way they're treating the blacks. But there are limits of what we can do in other

people's affairs... We live in a real world and, unfortunately, democracy is limited to certain people. In South Africa, for example, our choices are to deal with a totalitarian government that's friendly or a totalitarian government that's communist."

Valentine, noting that the government has been too generous, said the whole question of foreign aid should be examined. "Sometimes it (the money) goes for a new palace for the dictator or a new limousine."

Marin, addressing the South Africa question from a business sense, said increased pressure could cause turmoil which, in turn, "could bring that economy down."

"The pressure we could bring on them could hurt blacks more than help them," he said, noting that countless numbers of blacks would be killed in case of a revolution. He said the solution to the South Africa dilemma "should be diplomatic, should be negotiated."

On the role of the federal government, both candidates, in varying degrees, say its role should be decentralized, allowing state and local governments to supply most needs.

Noting that he doesn't see any need "for any general retreat of democratic doctrines of the past," Valentine called for "fiscal restraint" and a change in "bureaucratic thinking." "At the end of the fiscal year, if there's money left, they (bureaucrats) find a way to spend it. We need to change that... you don't just spend it because you've got it."

Marin, criticizing government policies of the past, said he supports reduced federal regulations that hamper efficiency of the private sector, and he supports a further reduction in taxes. "We have to have a government that lives by cost-benefit analysis. If benefits exceed the cost, then we go with it." He said government policies of the past have created more needy rather than reducing their numbers.

With Durham, a mostly urban center, new to the largely rural district, both candidates say they view the union as a complementary one.

One area where you get a feel for different views is one where conservatives, led by Jesse Helms, just recently suffered damaging defeats in Congress. That is the body that should decide issues such as abortion and school prayer. Valentine supports the deciding of such issues through the judiciary process, while Marin, though he leans toward the Congress, says he hasn't decided which he'd prefer.

Both agree that the best way to stimulate the economy and bring down dismal unemployment figures is to cut federal regulations and reduce interest rates so that businesses and individuals can borrow money.

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