

Knight takes the helm in Dallas

By WENDY E. LANE
Associated Press Writer

DALLAS — Richard Knight Jr., the first black city manager of the nation's seventh-largest city, says he believes in a hands-off management style.

"I like to hire people, then stay out of their way so that they can do their job," said Knight, who was drafted for the city manager's job last December by unanimous vote of the city council.

"He is an exceedingly bright and competent manager with exceedingly well-developed interpersonal skills," former City Manager Charles Anderson said recently.

Anderson hired Knight and was his boss for four years before he resigned last October to become executive director of Dallas Area Rapid Transit.

Knight, 41, was acting city manager and had already decided to accept a job as Anderson's deputy at DART when the city council appointed him as city manager. He had not applied for the post.

"Richard has been here, he knows the city and he knows the problems of the city," Mayor Starke Taylor said at the time of Knight's appointment. The council decided to appoint Knight,

after interviewing six candidates, because "he was the best person for the job," Starke said.

Knight's appointment comes as a congressional panel plans to investigate last fall's shooting of a 70-year-old black woman by a white officer. The woman had reported a burglary, and police said she pointed a gun at them when they arrived and refused to drop it.

Black community leaders have demanded a congressional inquiry into the mostly white police department's use of deadly force, its minority hiring practices and previous controversial police shootings.

Knight must also deal with increasing homelessness, growing pressure on social services, a need for better transportation because of the city's growth, and fiscal problems caused by the state's economic downturn.

"He will be addressing some important issues that have not been adequately addressed, such as health and human services, housing issues and health issues," said Nancy Steorts, executive director of the Dallas Citizens Council, a conservative business group.

At a time when the city's minority communities are growing, leaders of both the city's

white business establishment and the black community say they view Knight as someone who can bridge the gaps among the city's more than 900,000 residents.

"Dallas is becoming much more pluralistic," Knight said. "This diversity has to be recognized."

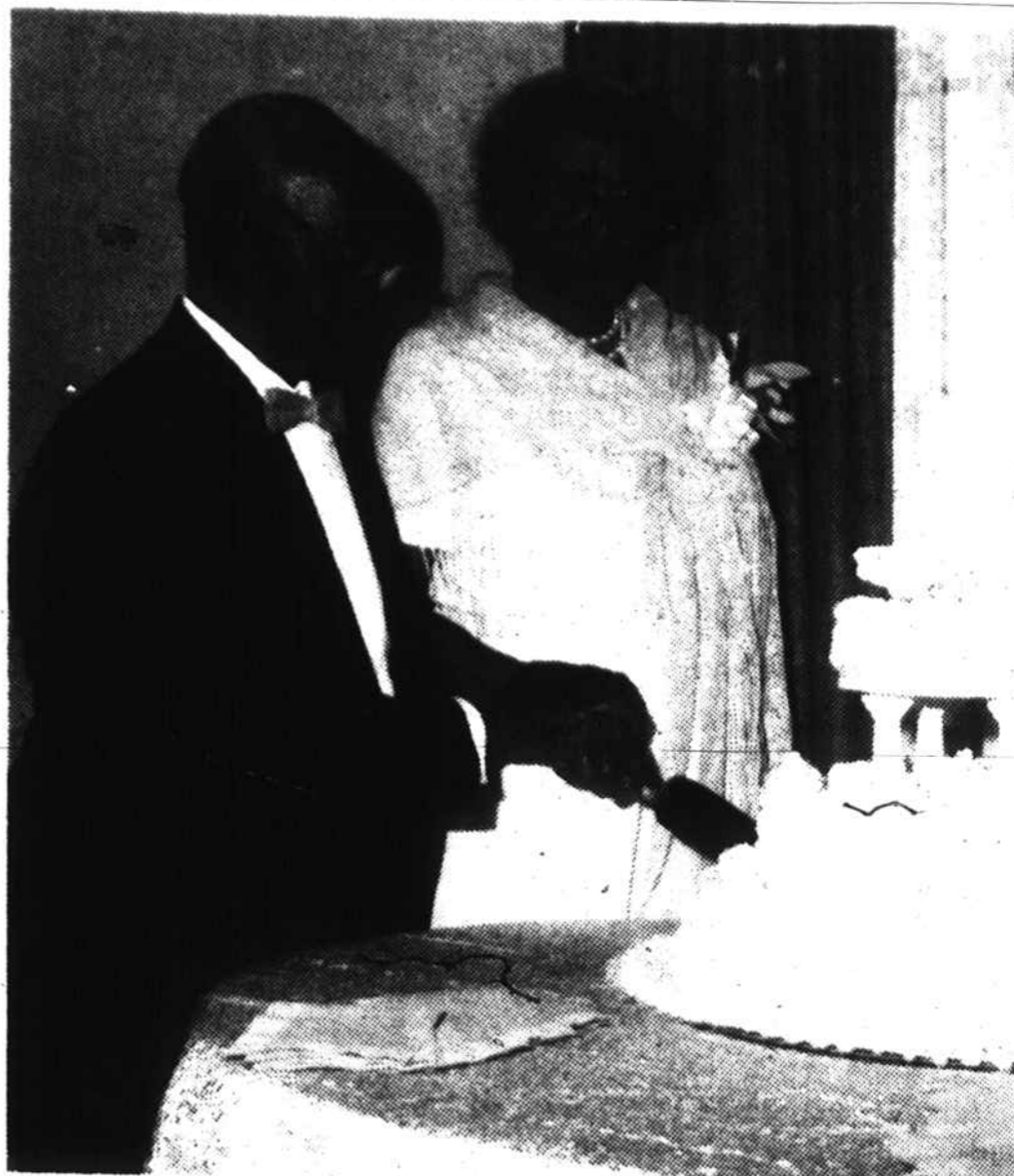
According to the 1980 Census, more than 29 percent of Dallas' population was black, while its Hispanic population was more than 11 percent. These percentages have increased since then, according to city officials.

Dallas is the largest U.S. city to have a city manager. Its budget for the 1986-87 fiscal year reached \$1 billion.

Knight was hired by Dallas after two years as deputy city manager in Gainesville, Fla. He previously was city manager of Carrboro, and before that he was the city manager's administrative assistant in Durham.

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— ROBERT N. TAYLOR



Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Roberts recently celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary at an event sponsored by their children.

About Town

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discovered in the early 1970s that she could tell stories as part of her work in a public library.

She has been featured at the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tenn., on National Public Radio, with Charles Kuralt of CBS Television on "Sunday Morning" and is working with Sally Struthers as co-host of "The Teller and the Tale" for prime-time television.

Miss Torrence recently completed a storytelling tour in the British Isles. ...

Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Roberts celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary Sunday, Jan. 11, at the home of their daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Baker.

Hosts were the couple's

children and sons-in-law, including Mr. and Mrs. Milton Jordan of Hampton, Va.; Mr. and Mrs. George Boler of Winston-Salem; James Roberts and Leroy Roberts, both of Lexington.

The Robertses have 29 grandchildren, 28 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

Roberts is retired from Ervin Hosiery Inc. of Lexington; Mrs. Roberts is a homemaker. ...


The Winston-Salem Symphony will celebrate its 40th anniversary at the next Classical Series concert on Sunday, Feb. 8, at 3 p.m. and Tuesday, Feb. 10, at 8 p.m.

Performances will take place at the Stevens Center.

The guest artist will be Joe Robinson, principal oboe with the New York Philharmonic,

who will perform the "Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra" by Richard Strauss.

Robinson was formerly the principal oboe with the Winston-Salem Symphony and a member of the faculty of the North Carolina School of the Arts. ...



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