

Tony Brown's COMMENTS

Can Jesse Jackson Win?

The primary weakness of Jesse Jackson's campaign for the Democratic Party's nomination for President has been tested and found genuine.

After months of denying that he is a black-symbolic candidate and insisting that he heads a "Rainbow Coalition" of all races, the Jackson campaign limps into the South, beset by White voter rejection in the North, to the only constituency that it ever had - blacks.

Instead of "Rainbow Coalition," the appropriate slogan all along should have been "Blacks for Jackson." And he doesn't have a lock on that vote either. Older blacks are supporting Mondale; younger blacks - the most unlikely to vote - are Jackson's solid base.

In the New Hampshire primary where Jackson spent over \$1,000,000 and most of his time, he received only 5,288 votes or six percent of the total. He tied

for fourth place in a field of eight. Even Republican Ronald Reagan beat at least three of the Democratic hopefuls with an estimated five percent of the Democratic contest.

Jackson's final campaign days in New Hampshire were dogged by his calling Jews "Hymies" and New York "Hymietown." This racial slur, first denied by Jackson, speeded up his slippage in the polls, which had been underway for over a month. His final confession came only after he was forced to admit to using the racist terms.

But long before the "Hymie" incident, Jackson was falling out of favor with the voters. He started off with 10 percent of the Democratic vote - even before he officially declared. After his successful trip to Syria, he went up to 15 percent.

By mid-February and before the Jewish slur was made public by the Washington Post, he had sunk to nine percent - a loss of six percent in one month. Among Democrats in the South - where a large percentage of voters are black - he went down to 10 percent.

Even in the black community, Jackson's most solid base of support, by mid-February Mondale had 43 percent of the black votes and Jackson trailed with 39 percent. Nationally, among Democrats, Mondale is also ahead of Jackson 55 to nine percent, a 46 point lead.

And if a miracle took place and Jackson overcame racism and his own personal blunders and won the Democratic nomination, he would lose to Ronald Reagan by 64 to 27 - a 37 point margin; Mondale would lose to Reagan by five points.

By all accounts, little, if any, progress had been made at electing Jesse Jackson to the highest office in the land. The early encouragement, "Run, Jesse, Run," now that the Democratic Party's primaries are underway and votes are being counted, has been turned into "Can Jesse Win?" The opinion polls project Walter Mondale as the eventual nominee

of the Democratic Party, but Jackson supporters still insist that he is going to win, that his "Rainbow Coalition" of issues will attract enough voters to overtake Mondale.

In order to have any chance of winning the Democratic Party nomination, Jackson must inspire blacks, especially in Alabama, Florida and Georgia, to vote for him on "Super Tuesday," March 13. He must first convince them, however, that he can win. Although he generates emotion and excites many blacks, the Jackson question becomes, "Can Jesse win?"

I asked leaders of two national black organizations to debate this question on my program: Rev. Herbut Daughtry, Chairperson of the National Black United Front, who is also special assistant to Rev. Jesse Jackson, and Mr. Roy Innis, National Chairman of the Congress of Racial Equality, also known as CORE. Following are excerpts from that upcoming program:

Daughtry: "I think he's already won. I think a people excluded have to define for themselves what winning is. I think of eight ways in which he's already won. He's already won because he has lifted the hopes and spirits of our people across the country. He's already won because of the greater involvement.

"He's already won because he has brought about more unity among our people. He's already won because he has raised the level of political discussion. He has brought about a kind of symbolism of dignity and pride.

"He has won because he has been a pioneer. Never again will they take lightly the aspirations of a black man or woman who says, 'I'm running for the Presidency of the United States.' So in that sense, he has already won."

Innis: "I wish that Rev. Daughtry and the other enthusiasts of Rev. Jackson would have expressed that statement to the grass roots folks and to the black students that I've been talking to who believe that Jesse can win - but not in the poetic sense that Rev. Daughtry just described for us. But win in terms of winning the Democratic primary.

"We should understand that very delicate and important instrument that is this political revival among black people. We shouldn't toy with it, we shouldn't play with it, we shouldn't run the risk of dashing hopes against the hard wall of despair, and this, I think, is what is being done when Rev. Daughtry and others around Jesse say to the grass roots, and say to young black students that he's going to win, not meaning it in a poetic sense."

"Tony Brown's Journal" TV series can be seen on public television Sunday, March 25, on Channel 42, at 5 p.m. It can also be seen on Channel 58 Sunday, at 6:30 p.m. Please consult listings.

At Spirit Square

Newport Jazz Festival

All-Stars To Perform Here

On Saturday, March 17, the Newport Jazz Festival All-Stars will perform an anthology of jazz hits from the 1920's through the 1950's in Spirit Square's NCNB Performance Place beginning at 8:15 p.m.

Tickets are \$12 and are available at the Spirit Square Box Office, 318 N. Tryon St. in Charlotte. Box Office hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Call 704-376-8883 for ticket information. Tickets ordered by phone will be held for five days without payment. Checks, American Express, VISA and MasterCard are accepted.

Groups bearing the "All-Star" title have included a talented array of musicians, including legendary bass player Sam Stewart and cornetist Ruby Bratt, who will be appearing at Spirit Square. The All-Stars have performed the music of Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday, Louis Armstrong, and other jazz greats throughout the world.

For 30 years the name

"Newport" has been synonymous with the best that jazz has to offer. The Festival began in Newport,

R.I., moved to New York City in 1972 and returned to the Rhode Island coast in 1981.

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