

Number Of Black Elected Officials In The United States Up By 4 Percent

Washington, D.C.-- The number of black elected officials in the United States increased by 4 percent last year, according to the 16th edition of *Black Elected Officials: A National Roster*, published by the Joint Center for Political Studies. The total number of black elected officials rose from 6,424 to 6,681 between January 1986 and January 1987. The previous year's increase was 6.1 percent.

The 10 states with the largest numbers of black elected officials are Mississippi (548), Louisiana (505), Alabama (448), Georgia (445), Illinois (434), North Carolina (353), South Carolina (340), Arkansas (319), Michigan (316), and California (293).

A total of 71 black elected officials were elected in jurisdictions where no black American had ever before held elective office. Additionally, the number of black women elected officials has almost tripled since 1975, when the Center first began compiling data in this category. In 1975, the total number of black women elected officials was 530; as of January 1987, the total was 1,564.

The total number of blacks in the U.S. House of Representatives has also increased. In 1986, 21 members of the House of Representatives were black. In 1987, the figure rose to 23 with the elections of Mike Espy (D-MS) and John Lewis (D-GA). Moreover, two blacks were elected to fill seats previously held by blacks: Kweisi Mfume (D-MD) succeeded Parnell Mitchell, who decided not to seek re-election, and Floyd Flake (D-NY) defeated Alton Walton, who in 1986 had become the first black to represent the 6th Congressional District of New York.

R. L. Hannon Announces Candidacy

While in Raleigh recently, Dr. Bob Hannon who ran for Governor in 1983, announced his candidacy for the office of Lt. Governor.

In addition, he also announced what he calls "Dr. Bob's Mobile Think Tank". He is presently an associate member of the Joint Center for Political Studies program, which has its headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Hannon's ten topic platform details his campaign issues including:

1. A \$20,000 starting salary for beginning teachers. Other teachers and state workers salaries raised by ten to fifteen percent.
 2. One hundred percent against any type of merit system designed to rate teachers' efficiency.
 3. Improvement of highways for the farm and industrial growth, as well as for transportation in general is a must.
 4. An expanded effort to create job employment industries within the state, and to continue to seek out of state industries by providing local and state competitive incentives.
 5. An "all out" effort to help increase the number of successful minority businesses throughout the state.
 6. An expanded system of day care centers in the eastern parts of the state and elsewhere that shows a need for such centers.
 7. Adequate funds for improving the "Black Image" of our predominantly black public universities of the UNC system.
- Dr. Hannon's press release was carried by the Associated Press and UPI. He stated that he would release full details of his platform at the time of paying the official filing fee.

Democratic Celebration

The Mecklenburg County Democratic Party will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution on Saturday, September 26, with a birthday bash at Sharon View Country Club, 3501 Sharon View Rd.

The festivities begin at 8 p.m. and will last until 1 a.m. Musical entertainment - appropriate for dancing - will be provided by two local groups, The Belvederes and The Johnny Holloway Band, playing blues and jazz. There will also be refreshments and a cash bar. Door prizes will be awarded.

Admission is open to the public. Tickets are \$10 per person and can be purchased at the door. For advance tickets or more information, drop by Democratic Party Headquarters at 1601 South Blvd., or call 334-1139, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

There are seven blacks who hold statewide office and 410 who serve in legislatures. At the municipal level, there are 3,219 black elected officials, including 2,485 councilmembers and 303 mayors. The number of black mayors in cities with populations over 30,000 increased from 28 to 34.

The geographic distribution of black elected officials clearly parallels the distribution of the total black population in the United States. The South has 53 percent of the country's black population and 62 percent of all black elected officeholders. The second largest concentration of black elected officials, 19.2 percent, is found in the North Central United States, where 19.8 percent of the black population is located. The Northeast, with 18.5 percent of the total black population, has 10.6 percent of the black elected officials; and 5.7 percent of all black elected officials are found in the West, where 8.9 percent of all black Americans reside.

There is a direct correlation between the black voting age population and the number of black elect-

CRC May Tip Balance Of Power

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stereotyped. It will be interesting to see how these young men and women mature politically. Will they view politics as merely a business proposition for improving one's network and net worth. Perhaps some will become ideologues who renounce their civil rights heritage. Some will mature into pragmatic statesmen who are impassioned about educational and economic opportunity and who skillfully work toward those goals with leaders of both parties.

The GOP and the county has much to gain from the latter group. A party sensitive to the aspirations of African-Americans should by all rights be the majority party. If these young people can expose their peers to what Republicans really stand for and sensitize fellow CR's at the Wake, Carolina and Duke's to economic development or South African policy options, they will have done the county a great service and their

Yard To Speak At Conference

Molly Yard, President of the National Organization for Women, will be the keynote speaker at the North Carolina NOW conference, Saturday, September 19, from 8:10am until 5pm, at the Winston-Salem YWCA, 1201 Glade Street. The conference title is "Taking the Power," and this theme will be addressed by Ms. Yard in a 9-10am workshop on taking political power by electing good women candidates.

There will also be a panel of fe-

Rustin: Modern Day Hero

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James Baldwin wrote of that day in August, 1963: "That day, for a moment, it almost seemed that we stood on a height, and could see our inheritance; perhaps we could make the kingdom real, perhaps the beloved community would not forever remain that dream one dreamed in agony."

While the days of late August call to mind memories of that wonderful moment, they also call to mind simpler memories: of young people going back to school. And I find myself wondering whether America's young people will have the opportunity to learn about Rustin and about other leaders who shaped our society by participating in the conflicts and controversies of their times. Bayard Rustin was, as the Atlanta Constitution declared, "a hero for our times." But will our young people have the opportunity to learn about Rustin and similar heroes and heroines?

When I read the articles that appeared about Rustin following his death, it occurred to me that so much about his life is inextricably linked with events and concepts that have been banished from our textbooks - or, at the very least stripped of their excitement and emotional impact. Rustin was born illegitimate; he grew up in a small town in Pennsylvania where racial discrimination was a daily reality; a former Communist, he later became a fierce critic of Soviet totalitarianism; a committed pacifist, he was imprisoned for refusing military service; a dedicated practi-

ed officials within an area. For example, Mississippi, which has the largest number of black elected officials (548), is the state with the largest proportion of voting-age blacks (30.8 percent). Voting-age blacks compose 66.6 percent of the total voting-age population in the District of Columbia, where 67.8 percent of all elected officials are black. Conversely, there are no black elected officials in Idaho, Montana, and North Dakota, where blacks compose less than .05 percent of the total populations. Although blacks continue to make political gains nationwide and at almost every level of office, they still hold fewer than 1.5 percent of all elective offices in the United States, while constituting 11 percent of the total voting-age population.

Copies of the 16th edition of *Black Elected Officials: A National Roster, 1987*, which contains detailed statistics and data and a complete listing of blacks in elective office, can be purchased for \$29.50 from the Joint Center for Political Studies, Publications Office, 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., #400, Washington, D.C. 20004, (202) 626-3500.

school proud. When I took on the task of club advisor, there were no guarantees that the club would last for one year. It looks as if maybe, just maybe, they will be around for a while. And if just one of the statesmen discussed above emerges from the activity then the effort will not have been for naught.

Some of the students have faced derision and hostility from their peers, had their signs ripped down and events cancelled by mysterious callers but have always kept their cool and marched on.

I've always felt that the 1st African-American President of the United States will be a Republican, as were the first members of Congress. News item: early 21st Century...the President swung through Winston-Salem briefly addressing a group of students at her alma mater.

You just never know about these things sometimes. Sincerely, Vernon L. Robinson, 21st Century NC PAC Chairman

male elected officials who will talk about their decisions to run, their campaigns and their experiences serving in elected office. Patricia Ireland, VP Executive of National NOW and an attorney, will discuss the current legal situation of American women.

Molly Yard will hold a press conference at 2pm, following the 12:30pm luncheon and keynote speech. Appointments for individual interviews with Ms. Yard can be made by calling Maura Fallon at 919 288-7184.

tioner of civil disobedience, he was arrested countless times for refusing to obey laws he considered unjust.

The self-appointed censors of our nation's textbooks and self-styled protectors of our young people's virtue would shield students from reading about the ideas that distinguished Rustin and his life's work; yet I, for one, believe that young people would be inspired to learn that this man and the movements he advised have had so great an impact upon our history.

Not only have history textbooks underplayed the controversial chapters of history in which activists like Rustin played so inspiring a role, but civics textbooks have down-played the very idea of controversy itself. As a recent study by People For the American

Way revealed, civics texts all too often are lifeless descriptions of the institutions and processes of government and neglect to mention the role which individual citizens and activist movements can play in promoting their ideals. From the civil rights movement to the Religious Right, the civics texts fail to depict the excitement of the causes and controversies that have transformed America.

Bayard Rustin, of course, was controversy and activism personified. During a public career that spanned almost half a century, he championed causes from the plight of Japanese-Americans during World War II to the prospects for democracy in Haiti in the post-See Textbooks On Page 6A

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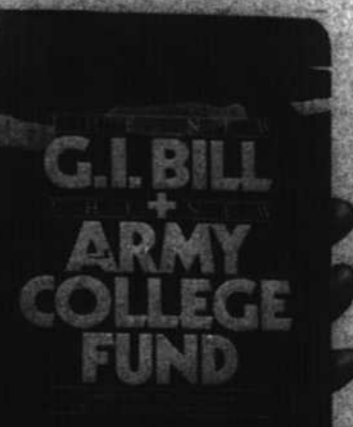
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