

Is Caucus Effective?

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standpoint of the more young, college educated voters, they usually vote on their own merits and not the opinion of the caucus," he said.

Leeper also expressed concern over the effectiveness of caucus endorsements.

"I'm not sure they are the best way to get people information. (Endorsements) tend to get people lazy. There are a lot of people who don't go to a forum and don't prepare themselves because somewhere down the line someone is going to support me," Leeper said.

There is also the track record of the caucuses endorsements. McCain said it was "very good," but in recent elections the organization's opinions have not reflected voter's opinions. The caucus supported Charlie Dannelly, whom Martin beat in the recent primary. Last year the caucus supported Charlotte businessman Nasif Majeed against county commissioner Bob Walton. And in 1987 the caucus gave Harvey Gantt its support over current Mayor Sue Myrick.

Although Majeed's campaign wasn't successful, he did feel the caucus' endorsement helped.

"I'd rather go into an election with it than without it," he said. (Endorsements) are an effective tool in swaying peoples opinions."



McCain



Leeper

McCain said he doesn't see a won - loss record as a litmus test of the effectiveness of the caucuses endorsements.

"I don't think it says much at all. Ultimately, who wins the race is the candidate and not the endorsement," he said. "The caucus has never set itself up as a deliverer of votes. There is no one organization that can deliver the black vote."

However, McCain said the caucus is still the most respected black organization in the com-

munity. "People ask what the caucus feels about something. They don't ask what the Black Bar Association feels or the fraternities and sororities feel. I don't want to sound like a salesman but I believe in the caucus."

Leeper, however, does not share McCain's enthusiasm.

"If I had to grade the caucus on performance, I think I would give them a C. There's a lot to do politically and maybe the caucus is not the organization to do it."

Majeed, who is a caucus mem-

ber, was a bit more optimistic.

"I think it can be more effective. It needs some tune-ups but there is nothing wrong with that. There is no perfect entity.

"We have to work on bringing more people in and being more strategic in our planning."

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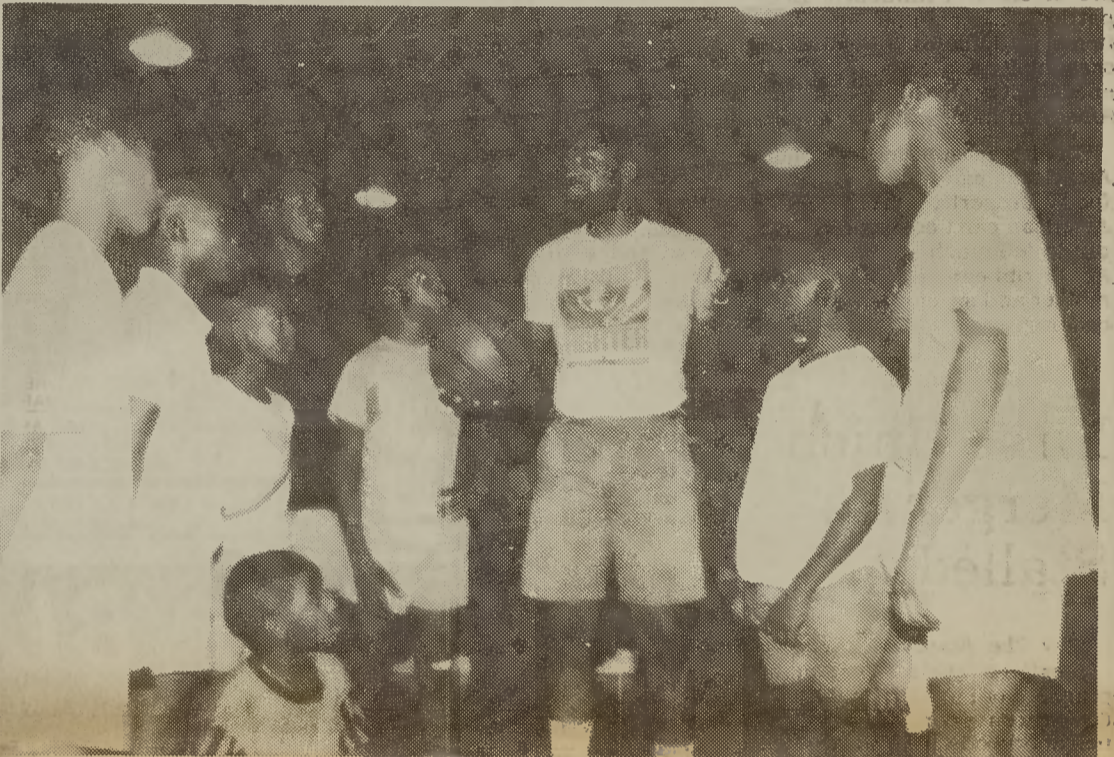
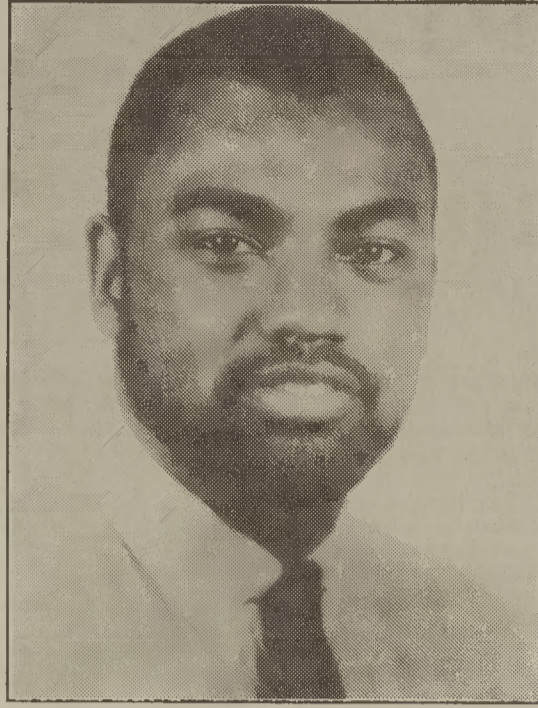
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Gaston Woman Starts Deserted Parents Group

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way Parents Organization of Gaston County.

The organization is designed to locate parents that have abandoned their families and to provide support to single parent households that are in need.

The group currently consists of 15 members.

"I hope this organization will be able to help some parents get

the help I once needed and was unable to get when my children were small and life seem to be so hard. I thank God I have almost made it. They are almost grown," said Annie Bynum.

Bynum says that it is important for women especially to push this matter. "We have always been the one left holding the bag," she said.

Wilder Touts Va.'s Success

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ing "the new Virginia mainstream." He promotes the successes of the last two Democratic administrations and talks little about Coleman.

When asked by reporters, he condemns the Republican's negative television advertising and defends his own as responses to distortions aired by Coleman.

But most of the questions deal with abortion and race. Wilder plays up his pro-choice views on abortion and minimizes the racial significance of his campaign.

"What happens here would say that things can happen anywhere," he said when asked if his victory could influence black politicians in other states.

But if he loses, he will not blame racism, Wilder said.

William B. Hopkins, a former Roanoke state senator who attended the Vinton rally, said a few years ago he would have seen a Wilder bid for governor as impossible.

"Wilder is one of these people who's been able to judge everybody on his own merits," Hopkins said. "He thinks Virginians are going to do the same thing on Election Day and, you know, I sort of think he's right. And if they do, he's going to win."

Report: Black Couples Income Up

The real median income of black married-couple families and per capita income increased from 1987 to 1988, while the number and percent of blacks in poverty were unchanged, according to the Commerce Department's Census Bureau.

The real median income of black married-couple families rose by 6.8 percent to \$30,390, while black per capita income increased by 3.9 percent to \$8,270 after adjusting for a 4.1 percent increase in consumer prices.

About 9.4 million, or 32 percent, of all black persons lived below the official government poverty level in 1988. The comparable figures for black families were 2.1 million, or 28 percent. These figures were not significantly different from

those in 1987.

These income and poverty figures are based on pre-tax money income only, before any deductions. They do not include the value of non-cash benefits, such as food stamps, public housing, Medicaid or Medicare, or employer-provided benefits.

The median income of white married-couple families was \$36,840 compared with \$25,670 for Hispanic married couples. Neither showed a significant change from 1987 in real terms.

The real per capita income of whites rose by about 1.5 percent to \$13,900, while that of Hispanics was unchanged at \$7,960.

About 20.8 million, or 10 percent, of the white population was poor in 1988, compared with 5.4 million, or 27 percent, of Hispanics. These figures were unchanged from 1987 levels.

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