



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

Delegate Magazine 1984

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[[image - photograph of Jessie Jackson with two women]]

[[image - photograph of Jessie Jackson with two men]]

Aware of Mr. Jackson's Disruptive Potential, aides to former Vice President Walter F. Mondale met repeatedly with him in the hope of steering him out of the race. Mr. Jackson's "nine-state strategy" of concentrating on a half-dozen Deep South states, plus heavily black Congressional Districts in New York, Illinois, and Pennsylvania could represent a serious obstacle to Mr. Mondale. For example, The New York Times/CBS News Poll shows Mr. Mondale and Senator John Glenn of Ohio running even among white democrats in the south. Blacks, leaning heavily to Mr. Mondale, represent his margin of victory in the region, but with Mr. Jackson in the race, that swing vote is in jeopardy.

Prestige is at Stake

There are risks for Mr. Jackson, too. For one thing, the black vote is not monolithic, where he is concerned, according to the polls. Black politicians such as Mayor Coleman Young of Detroit are arguing publicly that a symbolic vote for MR. Jackson is a luxury blacks cannot afford in a year when they should use the primaries to help Mr. Mondale gain momentum to beat Mr. Reagan in the general election. A poor showing among blacks would be a heavy blow to Mr. Jackson's prestige, especially since the Democrats' delegate selection rules will make it hard for him to attain the modest goal of 200 convention delegate (out of a total of 3,391) set by his strategists.

But Mr. Jackson professes to see opportunity where others see the danger. He would like, to use one of his favorite metaphors, to be regarded as the David who slew the political Goliath named Ronald Reagan. "Goliath won with a perverse coalition of the rich and unregistered," Mr. Jackson has said. His remedy is to register enough new black voters to erase Mr. Reagan's margin of victory in the South. This seems an attainable goal.

The true unknown about Jesse Jackson is where the practical politician ends and the radical crusader begins in his makeup. In his announcement speech, the crusader often had a louder voice. Using another of his trademark figures of speech, Mr. Jackson promised to use his campaign to force his party to confront the plight of poor people in economic "boats that are stuck on the bottom."

"We shall bring the American press and the American people right down to the boats," he vowed. That promise, if carried out, could make for a very uncomfortable campaign season for the seven other Democrats who will soon be debating with Mr. Jackson.

[[image - photograph of Jessie Jackson with two men]]

[[image - photograph of Jessie Jackson with one man]]

Jesse Jackson on New York Tour - During a recent press conference and voter registration drive at the North General Hospital in Harlem, the Rev. Jesse L. Jackson (right) took a moment to chat with Martin M. Turbee(left), Sales Activities Coordinator Eastern Division, Somerset Importers, and Alfred P. Schexnayder (center), Vice president, Assistant National Sales Manager, Somerset Importers.



Rev. Jackson was in New York for thewe days as part of several tours
he is making in cities throughout the U.S.

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