

Campaign '66

Frank Joyce

1966

The following are some random comments and recommendations on the upcoming August 2 primary election races.

RECORDERS COURT

It is entirely possible that Recorders Court is the worst criminal court in the United States. Its brand of "justice" has been discussed, exposed and documented in a number of reports, studies and editorials by the daily press.

The court will not, of course, be reformed through the election of "good guys" to judgeships. Systematic reform in the bail and attorney system as well as the judicial assignment procedure itself is necessary. Serious consideration should be given to one of the many proposals for abolishing the court altogether and consolidating its work into an expanded metropolitan court system. Nevertheless, some candidates for the post would represent an improvement over the present judges.

A determined effort is being made by the right wing to perpetuate its control of the court. This drive is led by Samuel H. Olsen (presently the Wayne County Prosecutor) and Thomas Poindexter (a WHITE homeowner). It is the opinion of this writer that anyone who has served on Mr. Olsen's staff, given its history of bigotry is unqualified to serve as an impartial judge on any court anywhere. This includes Roman S. Gribbs, Max Silverman, William Hathaway, Clarence Laster, and Jesse Eggleton in addition to Olsen himself.

Of the more than eighty-some candidates entered in the race for 13 vacancies only 11 are known to this writer to represent any improvement over those now on the bench. (It is difficult to imagine the court getting any worse although Olsen and Poindexter might be able to do it.) The names of those worthy of consideration follow.

For Recorder and judge, a separate post, no one seems to be any better than Vincent Brennan, the incumbent. It can be said of Brennan that he is not the worst of the present judges.

For regular term vacancies George Crockett, Albert Best, Henry Cleage, Tom Downs, Robert Lee Evans, Henry Heading, Rolland O'Hare, Sheldon Otis and Lucille Watt: seem the best of the group.

Sol Dann, Geraldine Bledsoe Ford and Sidney Shevitz might be considered.

If Elvin Davenport is reelected to the court it will not be a major tragedy.

CONGRESS

Albert B. Cleage would undoubtedly be one of the best Congressmen in the nation if he were elected in the 13th Congressional district primary. He could win if enough people work hard enough.

In the 17th Congressional district James Lafferty, long supporter of the peace and human rights movement has run an excellent campaign, on limited resources against Martha Griffiths. His position on the war cannot be faulted. Vote for him.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

In the eleventh state representative district, Kenneth Cockrel has run a disappointing campaign against liberal Thomas White. If anyone could have sharpened the racial and ideological issues in this key urban district, Cockrel could have done so. For the most part, he has not.

On the strength of a brilliant speech in Washington some time ago I will vote for him anyway.

In the ninth district, Lucille Blakely should be elected; in the fourteenth Raymond Willis. And in the twenty-third, Jackie Vaughn III deserves support.

STATE SENATE

Coleman Young should be returned to Lansing as the representative of the fourth State Senate district.

Russell S. Brown Jr. should be supported in the sixth Senate district.

Never has the politics of the "lesser of two evils" been more evident than in John Lama's campaign against Raymond Dzendzel in the seventh district. Lama is the lesser.

Two outspoken Black Nationalists are running in the ninth district John T. Hill and Jackie Wilson. Either would clearly be better than anyone else who is running.

MISCELLANEOUS

Richard H. Austin is a nice black liberal. He would be a competent County Auditor, whatever that is.

Leonard Townsend has promised to make some reforms in that bad joke known as traffic court if elected. All of the incumbents are terrible.

Warfield Moore who is running for a vacancy on the Common Please court is a good choice.

Fredrich Yates is the outstanding choice for Judge of the Circuit Court.

Isn't politics exciting?

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Fifth Estate #11, July 30, 1966

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