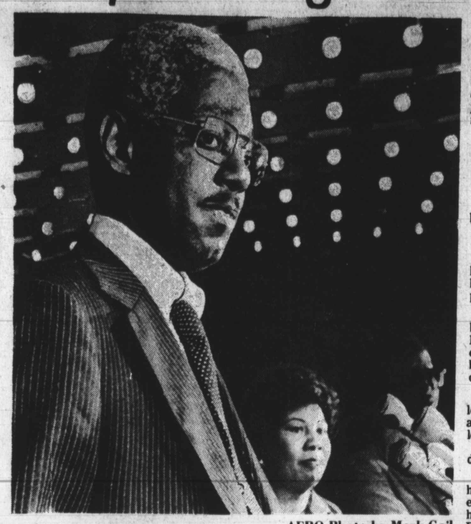
Primary election 1979

Spirits high even after Douglass conceded



AFRO Photo by Mark Gail

BRAVE LOSER — Delegate John Douglass, with just a hint of a smile on his face, thanks his campaign supporters after losing to incumbent comptroller Hyman Pressman 40,207 to 57,655.

The way folks were partying at the Ritz disco restaurants you would not have known thei rcandidate John Douglass had just lost the comptroller's race.

He had lost by slightly more than 18,000 votes to incumbent Hyman Pressman.

For a while disappointment clouded the faces of his supporters and campaign workers.

But the champagne kept flowing, the drinks kept coming and the people kept dancing.

"This is just the beginning," said Douglass in his concession speech. "We'll be back for either this office or another one."

A cheer went up in the lounge as Douglass stood at the podium proudly looking around the room.

"I don't quit easily," he declared.

For Douglass the night had begun confidently enough. He was holding his own against Pressman. But as the evening wore on it was clear that the low voter turnout had clearly hurt Douglass.

But Douglass was brave and about 10:30 p.m. conceded.

"I want to thank everyone who labored with me during this long and hard campaign," he said. "After this is over (the party) I think I'll just disappear for the night."

"I did all I could," Douglass went on. "I presented myself as a candidate, but that's all I could do. Blacks must realize that they have to take a share in the system, but it looks like they just don't want to."

Douglass also felt that the election resulted in "the city wide community losing a great deal of respect for the black community due to the low voter turnout."

But there were some present who did not blame the low turnout entirely on the voters.

"The black leadership didn't do all it could to get the black voter to the polls," said one campaign worker. There were nods of agreement from some of the supporters around him.

AFRO Photos by Mark Gail

SUPPORTER — City Council President Walter Orlinsky, who supported John Douglass in his bid to unseat City Comptroller Hyman Pressman, leaves the Ritz with one of his supporters just prior to Douglass' concession speech.

After Nathaniel McFadden, the campaign treasurer, praised all the campaign workers who helped out as well as Ritz owner Dave Richardson and Odell Brock, owner of Odell's Disco, the music was turned back on and everyone got on the floor and danced.

Mayoral race

Even in defeat, Clarence Davis feels victorious

Election night was grim for the Clarence "Tiger" Davis for Mayor campaign workers.

Nobody had much to say at Davis' Collington Avenue headquarters as they waited for the results. Mostly they clustered in small groups talking about anything except the election.

The candidate, however, still felt a victory had been won.

"So far we're losing by more than two to one," said Davis, the long-shot mayoral candidate at about 10 p.m. "And there's no way we can win it, but we won anyway."

"This is just the beginning," he declared. "We shall not give up the struggle."

The weary candidate sat at his desk, surrounded by friends and campaign workers.

He said the main goal of the campaign was to "pull together people who are not usually politically motivated as well as opening up avenues for our young people to get into politics.

"We'll continue the work that we started with this campaign, awakening our people to the need for self-rule. We're going to be geared toward building institutions," he said.

But the campaign workers didn't look as if they wanted to continue. They sat around glassy eyed, dejectedly munching Pappy Parker, Fried Chicken and potato chips and sipping sodas while they watched election returns on television.

"I'm moving out of Baltimore, said Eric Harrison, campaign manager. He was clearly upset with the low voter turnout in the city. It was later learned that Davis managed to garner 10,999 votes.

Davis remained confident. He expressed optimism concerning the future role of blacks in the city political arena.

"Personally my political future is not the immediate concern, the future of the city is," he said. "We still have to assume our proper power base in the city.

We have to find the courage to stand up and stop the downward spiral of our families, our schools and our community."

He leaned forward in his chair to hear the televised announcement that his opponent William Donald Schaefer had won by a five to one margin and incumbent City Comptroller Hyman Pressman had beaten Delegate John Douglass.

"There's not going to be any partying at the Douglass headquarters tonight," Davis predicted.

AFRO Photo by Mark Gail

END OF THE ROAD — Clarence "Tiger" Davis (R, standing) watches the mayoral election results on television at his campaign headquarters on Collington Avenue. Although he lost to Schaefer, Davis made an impressive showing, raking in 10,999 votes, just 4,000 behind white challenger Patrick McDonough.

Pride to return

The Pride of Baltimore is homeward bound after a swing through the St. Lawrence Seaway and is expected to arrive at the Inner Harbor Wednesday for the City Fair.

The Pride cruised as far as Toronto, Ont., and more than 25,000 visitors boarded the ship during its frequent stops.

The Pride, a replica of an early 19th Century Baltimore clipper, is to stay in the city through October, except for brief visits to Washington and New York.

More politics for Grover McCrae?

The largest crowd of the night showed up at Grover McCrea's 3rd District headquarters Sept. 11, only after the word went out that free beer and chicken was available, prompting one bystander to remark, "Maybe they should have handed this stuff out at the polling places!"

McCrea, a city school board member making his first bid for a councilmanic seat in the predominantly white 3rd District, suffered a severe setback. Out of a field of eight candidates, he managed u seventh place finished with 4,684 votes.

The election was the first foray for blacks into the district which has traditionally been a political stronghold for the Curran family, whose candidates, all incumbents, swept the seats.

Kenneth Webster, a former House of Delegates member and and one of McCrea's campaign lieutenants, stated that the primary goal of the campaign was to politically educate the young and black electorate.

McCrea agreed, adding, "We're trying to get blacks to realize that voting isn't an emotional thing, but a rational way of achieving goals and objectives. Politics are not just an election night process, but a way of life."

When asked if he planned to delve deeper into politics, McCrea replied with a smile, "It's too early to tell just yet."

AFRO Photo by Mark Gail

FAMILY AFFAIR — Peggy Ann Jackson (C, standing), defeated City council candidate for the 6th District, is surrounded by her family on election night at her Cherry Hill home. Shown are (L to R): Classie L. Robinson, her godmother; Mark and Shirley Moore, cousins, Ms. Jackson, Venus Jackson, her daughter and Nadine Hudson, her sister.

Peggy Jackson's youthful campaign

By James M. Abraham

The spirit at Peggy Jackson's headquarters was undoubtedly youthful. As reporters pulled up outside her Cherry Hill residence, youths wearing "Jackson" T - shirts carrying campaign literature greeted them

Ms. Jackson, a teacher in the community, was waging her first campaign a struggle to unseat one of the three white 6th District incumbents. The district, controlled by political strongman Sen. Harry McGuirk, D-37th, and the Stonewall Democratic Club, has never sent a black representative to City Hall.

"It was a community campaign," said Ms. Jackson, smiling. "My goal was to bring the community together, and I feel that we've accomplished that. As a matter of fact, we actually blocked the machine in our home districts."

I wish to express my appreciation to the Afro-American, the Ministers, and all of the organizations who endorsed and supported my candidacy for re-election to the Baltimore City Council.

To the thousands of voters who have stood with me in the struggle to make our city government respond to the needs of all the citizens, and who pulled Lever 7A on Election Day, my heartfelt thanks!

Yours for freedom,
Councilman
Michael Phillips Mitchell