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Presidential Politics and the Black Vote, Part 2 of 3

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Black Votes Matter
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Black Lives, Black Poverty and Black Votes Matter

Presidential Politics and the Black Vote

Part 2 of 3

From part 1. “No consensus decision was ever formally made (of what black leader would run for President in 1984) but Rev Jackson decided to test the waters and received the blessing of most of the leaders.

RUN, JESSE RUN!

Rev Jackson launched a southern voter registration tour, hired me as his only staff (I took a leave of absence from the City of Atlanta). “ During the summer of 1983 Rev. Jackson and I traveled at first during the weekends and later full time, into the historic southern states Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky. Rev Jackson spoke to growing crowds, in every state and we urged locals to register voters. The crowds grew and grew. Rumors and events began to point to the fact that Rev Jackson was considering running for President. These overwhelming black crowds flocked to our appearances, registered to vote and began to shout, RUN, JESSE, RUN, RUN, JESSE, RUN. The test of the waters quickly became a powerful movement that was growing nationwide and almost rose to a fever pitch, RUN, JESSE, and RUN.

Meanwhile the field for the Democratic nomination grew to over 7 candidates including Walter Mondale. Rev. Jackson’s potential candidacy for President became one the biggest national stories. The idea of Jackson’s run for President was becoming a national black movement not seen since the civil rights movement in the 60’s. Time Magazine had Rev, Jackson on the cover, Jesse was as big as any individual in the United States. Jesse, with me in toll as his traveling partner, research partner and confidant, expanded our travels from the southern states to visits all over the country to black audiences. Our venues were to the black churches. Jesse had a national network of churches stemming from his civil rights days with King and his national organization *Operation PUSH*. *PUSH* (People United to Save Humanity) had chapters all over the USA that were mostly all headed by local clergy.

We formed a federally mandated exploratory committee, which I headed. An exploratory committee is required by IRS to begin the process to regulate and track the financial aspects of running for President, while the potential candidate continues to evaluate the decision to run or not run. We were now formally testing the waters for Jesse Jackson’s to run for the President

of the USA. The Black and progressive communities were ready and chanting RUN, JESSE, RUN, but Jesse still not ready to commit.

In late 1983 Jesse traveled to Syria and accomplished the release of a Syria held hostage (a American black airman). There was a problem, Jesse had taken to Syria, a very large entourage and when time came to return, the delegation didn't have the funds to checkout of the Hotel. Unknowing to the public and the Hotel, the delegation just stayed in the Hotel until we could raise the money stateside. Fast forward to his return. While Jesse traveled to Syria, I was left to run things, but a close friend named Lamont Godwin traveled with him to Syria. The three of us met in a hotel the day of their return from Syria. Jesse had been devastated by his hotel experience and now had second thoughts about his run for President. In that hotel, that day we struggled and argued the pro and cons and finally he made the decision. At that moment he decided to run for President of the United States

Read Part 3 and learn about the run for President and the black vote.

*To review previous Black Votes Matter column articles visit **Omahastar.com**. Or **prestonlovejr.com**. Preston love can be reached at prestonlovejr@gmail.com*

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