

Winning Jesse's Way



Special
Supplement

FRONTLINE

On the Frontline
In the Struggle Against
War and Racism

By Frances M. Beal

No one following the 1988 presidential contest can now deny it: Jesse Jackson's bid for the Democratic nomination has scrambled every standard equation in U.S. politics. In the face of overwhelming odds, a progressive, anti-corporate platform of peace and justice, going far beyond the bounds of what has been considered acceptable political behavior in mainstream America, is taking the country by storm and winning enough adherents to place Jackson within shooting range of the nomination target.

The Reverend managed to make a splash in the national electoral arena in 1984, but his candidacy in 1988 is shaping up as a tidal wave. Less than two months into the campaign, Jackson's dazzling triumph in the Michigan caucuses at the end of March stood the conventional political wisdom on its head. Mountains of predictions about Jackson's narrow base and his alleged unelectability crumbled overnight, compelling every political force in the country to regroup and reconsider what was going on. At the mid-point of the primary season, Jackson had already surpassed his 1984 total of 3.5 million votes; his delegate count was approaching 700, and these successes were the impetus for money to begin flowing into a financially strapped campaign.

Among those least surprised by Jackson's showing were the candidate's own strategists, who clearly were able to read the election and the electorate better than all of their competitors. The early strategic projections from the Jackson camp of a breakthrough in 1988, based on consolidation of Jackson's Black community base and a major broadening of support from other sectors, seemed boastful in December—and right on the money in March.

ASSESSING CHANGED CONDITIONS

One of the keys to the success of the Jackson strategy was an accurate assessment of the changed conditions in the country and in the Democratic Party that made 1988 shape up very differently from 1984.

Unlike four years ago, when the President was riding high and promising to make the "Reagan Revolution" permanent, Reaganism today presents a much different, weakened face. The peace initiatives of the Soviet Union, the Iran-contra scandal, the exposure of America's cozy relationship with South Africa and the inability of the Reagan Doctrine to tote up any real victories have called the White House's foreign policy into serious question. Add to this the exposures of the sleaze element in the administration, a jittery Wall Street and ever-increasing numbers of the population feeling the brunt of seven years of an anti-working class assault, and the result is a major decline in the President's personal popularity and serious criticism of the reactionary thrust of his program. The prospects for a candidacy that would challenge Reaganism, rather than buy into it, became greatly improved.

Political dynamics within the Democratic Party

likewise presented a better terrain for Jackson's '88 effort. In light of Reagan's diminishing fortunes, the Democrats recognized that they had a real chance to recapture the White House. Most party leaders, still smarting from Walter Mondale's disastrous defeat in '84, were convinced that only a moderate-to-



Toiy Rocamora/Frontline photo

conservative candidate could attract the votes of "Middle America." Grouped around the Democratic Leadership Council, such luminaries as former Virginia Governor Charles Robb and Georgia Sen. Sam Nunn began actively organizing to assure that the Democratic Party would move to the right to capture what they perceived as the conservative bent of the U.S. electorate. Super Tuesday was their brain child, the object being to advance the chances of a more conservative Democratic nominee. But no such viable candidate emerged to carry the standard, and the primary season has been characterized by a muddled field of white candidates, none of whom has been able to pull away from the pack in a decisive manner.

GAUGING BLACK UNITY

The strategy of the conservative wing of the party foundered on the misinterpretation of a number of political developments. First, they made an erroneous assessment that Jackson's 1984 effort was a flash in the pan, never to be duplicated, and certainly not a

serious challenge to their plans for 1988. They presumed instead that the Black electorate would have no choice but to tail after a white Democrat chosen by the "sensible" party leadership.

It was a serious error. An unheard of level of Black unity around the Jackson candidacy from every social strata and political persuasion has been evident this year. This constitutes a dramatic shift from 1984 when some of Jackson's most vocal opposition came from Black elected officials and the civil rights community. And unlike 1984, Jackson does not have to contend with a Walter Mondale—a white politician with longstanding ties to civil rights and Black community organizations.

With a few notable exceptions like Detroit Mayor Coleman Young, even the more traditional Black politicians remembered the bitter lesson they learned in 1984 when the majority of Black voters ignored their pleas to vote for Mondale and backed Jackson at the polls. The broad support Jackson garnered from Black elected officials this year has put at the disposal of his candidacy the machinery of a professional army, built up over the past 20 years in a myriad of registration and get-out-the-vote efforts.

Secondly, many of the Democratic Party's would-be gurus failed to note that the winds of political change were blowing to the left. This motion was highlighted in 1986 when liberal candidates generally did much better than the conservatives in congressional races. Blacks rightly took the major share of credit for turning the Senate back to the Democrats and then, in alliance with labor, women, and the overall civil rights community, for defeating Robert Bork's nomination to the Supreme Court. But the likes of the Democratic Leadership Council never changed their tune.

JACKSON CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

Jackson's key supporters and advisers, Black and white, had a much better handle on the political temper of the U.S. electorate. Seven years of Reaganomics had given rise to a stream of discontent in the U.S. working class and the population as a whole that went far beyond the Black community. Jackson spent four years identifying and cohering this base, appearing on the front lines of many communities in crisis over the ravages of Reaganism: at auctions of small farms, marching with strikers at the factory gates, speaking about AIDS at the historic Lesbian and Gay Rights march last fall, participating in mass mobilizations against war in Central America and collusion with apartheid South Africa.

To all of these places, Jackson brought a critical message of coalition-building: no single sector can make an inroad on its own; it takes all the oppressed, the working poor, minorities, those on strike, those opposing U.S. adventurism abroad, all working together. For the past four years, Jesse Jackson has been building a grassroots constituency for the politics of jobs, peace and justice.

Pulling it all together in a presidential bid, however, has rested on the professional campaign operation
continued on supplement back page

By Gerald Lenoir

An independent, working class party is a long overdue necessity in U.S. politics. The capacity of the working class to express and fight for its own interests is qualitatively circumscribed in the absence of such a party, impeding the development of a self-conscious working class program and constituency.

Jesse Jackson's presidential candidacy offers great potential toward bringing such a party about, and most of the U.S. left has thrown itself enthusiastically into the 1988 campaign. But, far from being independent of the Democratic Party, Jackson has insisted on being recognized as a legitimate party leader. And, though Jackson has geared much of his message to poor and working people, his appeal is to a broader, cross-class progressive constituency. What then is the relationship between the present whirlwind of activity which takes place well within the Democratic Party and the long-range struggle for an independent voice for working class politics?

FROM NEW DEAL TO NO DEAL

The Jackson candidacy has brought to the surface a long festering contradiction that lies at the heart of the Democratic Party. The party that, since the New Deal, has professed to be the representative of poor and working people, in reality represents the interests of liberal wing of the ruling elite. The diametrically opposed interests of the working class and ruling class have been contained within one party for a number of reasons: the generally low level of working class consciousness and organization in the U.S.; the structural hostility of the U.S. political system to third parties, and the Democratic Party's skillful management of the alliances crucial to the hegemony of the ruling class.

It is these alliances that have been badly shaken by the popular response to Jackson's candidacy. Jackson has gone over the heads of the main brokers of the party's liberal-labor alliance to speak directly to its base. And, much to the brokers' dismay, the base has responded with great interest and support.

Jackson's anti-racist populism challenges the conservative, pro-imperialist stance of the AFL-CIO right wing and the hat-in-hand politics of leading Black Democrats. His unabashed advocacy of a platform well to the left of Lane Kirkland and the Youngs (Mayors Coleman and Andrew) upsets a delicate balancing act. Opportunism within organized labor had already been put on the defensive by the anti-labor attacks of the Reagan administration. The resounding defeat of labor's candidate in the '84 election, followed by the rightward swing in the Democratic Party and its delegitimization of organized labor as a "special interest," tested the bond between the two. Increased activity by the progressives in labor prepared to buck the AFL-CIO leadership on questions like intervention in Central America began to shake up the labor movement. Jackson's pro-labor stand was not met with much interest in '84. This time he has attracted a significant section of the labor movement to his cause, particularly in the service unions that have a large minority membership. Beyond that, Jackson has reached the increasingly numerous unorganized mass of workers and farmers who have no official brokers in their relationship with the Democratic Party.

Similarly, the ravages of Reaganism and the inability of the Democratic Party to address the fundamental aspirations of the Black community for equality and economic justice have spurred on the support for Jackson among Blacks. The politics of accommodation to the racist status quo have given way to the politics of resistance to the onslaught of Reaganism. The bankrupt "strategy" of hitching the Black community's wagon

THE DEMOCRATS' DILEMMA



Democratic Party strategists never expected the grassroots enthusiasm for Jackson evident at the '84 party convention to mature and place him within shooting range of the nomination in '88.

to whichever white candidate is judged to be the lesser of two evils has been called into question. Jackson has brought a message of Black empowerment through mass mobilization, and judicious use of the franchise and adherence to a comprehensive progressive agenda. In other minority communities and to a wide-range of issue-oriented movements—many of which were never even afforded "special interest" status in the Democratic Party—Jackson's campaign offers progressives an unprecedented view of their perspectives and demands.

Though Jackson's campaign is not organizationally independent of the

Democratic Party, his politics do represent a serious challenge to the traditional alliances that have been at its core. In this sense Jackson's program serves as the basis for the development of a self-conscious progressive bloc, independent of the old liberal-labor power-brokers, within the organizational context of the Democratic Party.

Though many on the left have expected that such a development would be initiated by the left wing of labor, it is not at all a quirk that such a motion arises out of the dynamics of Black politics. The Black community, standing as it does, at the intersection of the race and class

contradictions in U.S. society, has always provided fertile soil for progressive politics. From the abolitionist movement to the civil rights and Black power movements to Jackson's economic common ground, the Black freedom struggle has been on the cutting edge of the overall battle for democratic rights in the U.S. Over the last seven years, Reagan's general attack on the working class has had a decided racist edge, which has propelled the Black community into the forefront of the struggle against Reaganism and the rightward drift in U.S. politics. This motion has spawned a political movement which can speak on behalf of the most oppressed, least privileged and disproportionately minority sector of the U.S. working class.

Moreover, just as the Democratic Party depends on its alliances with moderate Black leaders and organized labor's officialdom to secure the mass allegiance of U.S. workers, so too any serious thrust towards an independent political agenda would require the initiative and support of those forces in the minority communities prepared to break with accommodationism and with the progressive and left forces in labor. It is exactly these elements that the Jackson campaign has stirred into action.

Jesse Jackson has amassed a lot of political muscle, but he is a wise enough politician to know that his power rests today with trying to reshape the party to better represent the interests of the constituencies he has galvanized rather than initiating a split with the Democratic Party.

It appears that his intention is to consolidate and lead a progressive wing of the party and to fight for influence within it. Jesse's own intentions coincide with an objective fact: the working class will only abandon the Democratic Party when it is proven to them through their own experience that it does not and cannot represent their interests and when an alternative appears politically feasible. At the moment, neither of these two conditions has ripened.

THE JACKSON CAMPAIGN AND THE LEFT

For the left, it will take patience, maturity and a precise political analysis to understand the opportunities of the moment. The potential for the development of an independent working class party which can be glimpsed in the Jackson effort will require a protracted process of consolidation of a progressive wing in the Democratic Party, and a series of polarizations with the forces of reaction over a number of years. Any expectations of a mass exodus from the Democratic Party in 1988, or in the immediate future, are woefully premature.

But that prediction should not paralyze us from maximizing what can be gained from "Jackson action." In the most immediate sense, the task before us is to contribute to Jackson's momentum by taking part in the fundraising and voter education and mobilization efforts for the primaries and caucuses yet to occur. Beyond that, the struggle to capture the momentum coming off the Jackson campaign and the 1988 elections and to harness it for further consolidation should be squarely on the agenda of left and progressive forces. In that regard, the development of the Rainbow Coalition as a permanent, progressive, grassroots organization that operates both inside and outside the Democratic Party and the electoral arena can be an important ingredient to the mix of factors which will further the advancement of independent politics.

In the long haul, the warning signs that there is a storm brewing in the Democratic Party will only continue to resurface. Working class interests and ruling class interests are fundamentally incompatible. And as the immutable laws of physics predict, when an irresistible force meets an immovable object, sooner or later, something's got to give. □

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The Candidate with the Message

Jackson's Common Ground

By Linda Burnham

Now that Jesse Jackson is poised to go into the Democratic National Convention as the frontrunner in delegate votes or close to it, the substance of his message is coming under more and more scrutiny. Television commentators routinely, shamelessly and usually unsuccessfully try to trip him up on questions concerning the budget deficit or the balance of trade. The general image projected is that Jackson's program is muddled, idealistic, expensive, and impossible to implement.

Actually, Jackson's program, as reflected in his speeches and position papers,

from their recognition that he is advancing along a path partially cleared by the Civil Rights Movement of the '50s and '60s. Jackson himself regularly evokes these linkages.

The struggle to win the franchise, crystallized in the hard-won passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, laid the basis for the struggle to effectively exercise the vote by electing representatives who are committed to functioning in the interests of the Black community. That struggle has been waged in thousands of cities and counties across the nation for the past 25 years and, looked at in one way, the Jackson campaign is another version of it writ large.

certain exigencies that are not so insistently felt by other sectors of the population. Specifically, the issue of coalition with whom and on what grounds imposes itself quite persistently.

And the question of coalition imposes itself on Black leadership, despite the fact that, often enough, the white population has appeared disinterested or even actively hostile to the notion of common interests with Black America. Thus it has been the special task of Black leadership not only to provide direction to the struggle of the Black community for its own empowerment, but also to breach the disinterest and dispel the hostility of whites. For King, rousing the moral conscience of the nation coincided with dispelling the pall cast by the Cold War and reviving the politics of protest. For Jackson, it has coincided with breaking the paralysis of Black leadership and the broader popular movement in the face of Reagan's right-wing onslaught. In both cases, the struggle to place the interests of the Black community on the nation's agenda led to the mobilization of a broader progressive constituency on a wider spectrum of issues.

ECONOMIC COMMON GROUND

In its fundamentals, Jackson's program in '88 is not so different from that of '84, but there have been significant shifts in emphasis. In the shift from thematic emphasis on "Peace Abroad and Justice at Home" to "Economic Common Ground" Jackson has certainly not abandoned his commitment to negotiation over confrontation in international relations or retreated from issues of social justice at home. But, in taking up the call to come together on economic terrain, Jackson has focused on the element of his complex program that could serve as the basis to "widen the white stripe." He has sounded a keynote that whites could



An army forged in the fight for Black empowerment turned out to bring Jackson his Super Tuesday victories. Youth members of the Black Slate rally in Atlanta (above). Later, Jackson's winning streak hit a zenith in his stupendous Michigan campaign (right).

is a combination of very clear proposals and clear principles. On some issues, his positions are not that different from those of some of the other candidates. On the question of Nicaragua, for example, the Democratic candidates uniformly opposed the continuation of military aid to the contras, and called for a negotiated peace in the region. On other specific issues, Jackson is well to the left of his fellow Democrats. He is the only candidate to support the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, to call for a comprehensive national health program, and to speak forthrightly to the question of gay and lesbian rights.

But Jackson's program is much more than the sum total of his position papers—as important as these are. The platform he is running on, both what is expressly articulated and what is implicit in his posture, represents a radical departure from what has gone before in the realm of presidential politics. And, as the media and the other candidates attempt to "challenge him on the issues," what they are really taking aim at is Jackson's frontal challenge to politics as usual.

At one level, Jackson's program is noteworthy for its historical continuity with the struggle for Black empowerment. It is twenty years ago this spring that the city of Memphis took on special significance for the nation with the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. King and Jackson are as much a study in contrast as they are in commonalities, and facile comparisons can distort more than they clarify. Yet Jackson's enormous appeal to Black voters—consistently winning well over 90% of the vote—stems, in large part,



COALITION BUILDING

Yet, as with King, concern for the condition of the Black community has inevitably drawn Jackson beyond the question of particular interests to the question of unity of interests and the coalition required to address them. This is the programmatic thrust of his '88 campaign.

King moved toward the war on poverty and a focus on the working poor in a different period and with a different style and method than Jackson. Yet Jackson's theme of "economic common ground" has evolved for the very same underlying reasons. One thing that the prism of the Black experience reflects most brilliantly is the urgency of coalition. The character of the Black community as an oppressed minority population impresses upon it

hear and returned to it again and again. Through the endless retelling of the parable of the quilt, he has reminded whites that they are only one patch in a complex and variegated pattern. He has utilized the concept of "economic violence" to enable poor whites to recognize the form of brutality they experience in common with Blacks and other minorities. He has located the source of that brutality as corporate greed and, in his emphasis on the depredations of transnationals, has called on both Black and white workers to abandon the notion that foreign workers are "taking our jobs"—insisting that they too are victims of economic violence. He has encouraged white workers to identify with the other little fishes and recognize the predatory barracudas as a threat to us all. He has

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ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE JACKSON PROGRAM

WORKERS' BILL OF RIGHTS

- The right to a job, to organize unions, to a living wage
- Affirmative action and pay equity
- Vocational education

CIVIL RIGHTS

- Affirmative action in education and employment
- Equal opportunity in access to jobs, job training and job mobility
- Enforce the Voting Rights Act
- Pass the ERA
- Pass the Lesbian/Gay Rights Bill
- Ban anti-gay discrimination in the federal government, in the military, in immigration policy

SOCIAL WELFARE

- Double the federal education budget
- Fund bilingual education
- Adult literacy and education campaigns
- Restore college grants and loans
- Teen parenting services
- Eliminate hunger by increased funding and more effective programs
- Meet the nutritional needs of Native Americans and immigrants
- National health care program

DRUGS

- Trade sanctions against drug-producing nations
- Block narcotic entry points
- Expand drug education and treatment programs

AIDS

- Increase funding for AIDS research and education
- Special AIDS outreach for drug users, prostitutes, prisoners and the homeless
- Increase funding for medical and social support for people with AIDS and their families
- End AIDS-related discrimination

FAMILY BENEFITS

- Comprehensive national child care policy
- Minimum poverty-line benefit for needy families
- Increase funding for family planning, prenatal and maternal health care
- Restore Medicaid funding for abortion

FAMILY FARM

- Moratorium on family farm foreclosures
- Fair price to farmers to meet production costs
- Debt restructuring, soil conservation and affirmative action for minority farmers
- Make foreclosed acreage available at long-term, low-interest rates

FOREIGN POLICY

- Respect international law and strengthen the U.N. and the World Court
- Respect the right of nations to determine their social systems
- Cut the military budget and reduce intervention forces
- Moratorium on the testing and deployment of nuclear weapons
- Adhere to the ABM treaty
- Stop the development and deployment of Star Wars
- Halt U.S. aid to Central American contras and UNITA in Angola
- Full economic sanctions against South Africa
- Support the economic development of the Frontline states
- Respect the right of the Palestinians to self-determination, including an independent state
- Respect the right of Israel to secure borders
- End the U.S. military build-up in the Persian Gulf
- Restructure the international debt
- Halt the IMF austerity programs



The Press on Jesse

By Linda Burnham

The saga of Jesse Jackson's treatment in the mainstream media—the tormented logic, obscurantism, shifts and reversals—has been nearly as interesting as the story of the presidential campaign itself.

In the early stages of the campaign, before the caucuses and primaries, the Jackson campaign was virtually ignored. After all, the reasoning went, he was staging a sideshow that everyone had already seen. Then Jackson began to appear in the polls as frontrunner. The press, unprepared to accord Jackson's effort the coverage it deserved, treated the polls as a fluke. All kinds of interesting explanations were advanced for the figures in the polls: Jesse had greater name recognition than the other candidates; people were responding not to Jackson's positive qualities but to the weaknesses of the other candidates, etc., etc. Anything but the notion that perhaps

a majority of those polled honestly believed that Jesse Jackson's program and approach represented the kind of leadership they would like to see in the White House.

The stance of the media was dismissive. As everyone knew, the real deal was the winnowing out of the white candidates to establish the supremacy of a white frontrunner. The presumption was that Jackson's frontrunner standing would quickly become history as soon as the caucuses and primaries began. On to Iowa.

Around the time of the first few primaries the press had a brief romance with Jackson. Articles began to appear heralding the "mainstreaming of Jesse Jackson." Jackson was fulsomely praised for bringing on more moderate advisers, for adopting a less challenging attitude toward the Democratic Party, for playing by the rules, for softening his rhetoric. Jackson became "the candidate we can live with." The more liberal comment-

ators were even prepared to grant that perhaps Jackson's gains among white voters in Iowa, Maine and New Hampshire were a good thing, demonstrating the latitude and tolerance of democracy and a healthy, enlightened break with racism on the part of some white voters. Then came Super Tuesday.

In the aftermath of March 8th the overriding theme in the media was "What Does Jesse Want?" The dismissive attitude and benign paternalism of fall and winter gave way to the urgent speculation of spring. Once it became clear that Jackson was a power to be reckoned with, the question of appeasement became paramount. It was eerily reminiscent of the early days of the Civil Rights movement when headlines read, "What Does the Negro Want?" The notion that "the Negro" might want a complete rearrangement of the disposition of power was as unthinkable as is the notion that Jackson might want exactly what he says he wants—the presidency.

Though Jackson had shown tremendous strength in the South, he had not pulled ahead of Dukakis and there was

still hope for Gore. Jackson was a power but not a mortal threat. And, with the industrial states of the North coming up, the assumption was that his glory days were done.

Michigan changed all that.

The prospect of Jesse going into the Democratic National Convention with a sizable block of delegates was daunting enough; the idea that he might win a majority has been greeted with near hysteria. Gone are the "Jesse in the Mainstream" articles. The press has taken to reminding us on a daily basis that Jackson is a long-time radical on the far-left fringes of his chosen party. There is new-found interest in his program and reporters and commentators are picking through it with a fine-toothed comb. Old news is good news: Castro, Farrakhan, PUSH finances. The Arafat hug has become the most talked-about embrace in political history. The name of the game is discredit Jesse, by any means necessary.

At the same time, the media are providing the service of ringing the wake-up gong for those white voters who might be considering voting for Jesse in the upcoming primaries. "Vote your head and not your heart," they are told.

The *New York Times* (March 31) tells us that the Democrats are once again intoxicated with liberalism and Jesse is their liquor. Naturally, the voters are urged to go on the wagon before it's too late.

Dire warnings about the Democratic Party's self-destructive tendencies come along with advice to Dukakis on how to make himself more appealing. Those who, pre-Michigan, argued that whoever has the most delegates should get the nomination—after all, fair is fair—have quietly withdrawn that concrete commitment to democracy.

The Democratic Party will not admit to a Stop Jesse strategy, but the mainstream media are clearly willing to do their part. As the primaries draw to a close and the battle of Atlanta looms near, "Stop Jesse, Save the Party" has become the theme song of the press on Jesse. □

Message...

continued from previous page

presented to working class whites the prism of their own experience and challenged them to see through it their links with the oppressed. And, he has challenged them to act on that vision.

In pursuing the imperatives of Black empowerment Jackson has marched onto the wider field of national electoral politics addressing every issue of significance and every sector of the population. As a radical reformist treading on terrain defined by the ruling class, Jackson functions within certain limits. But he has

tested and stretched those limits in ways that have reshaped U.S. politics.

By doing so he has transformed the electorate. He has persuasively reasserted to the Black community the necessity of coalition in charting the path to empowerment and liberation. He has rekindled in many working class and poor whites a sense of their commonalities with those on the other side of the color line and their differences with the corporate rich. To both groups he has demonstrated the power and potential that lies in the struggle for coalition and unity.

Jackson's message has found its audience, partly because the messenger is so skilled and energetic; and partly because

the audience turned out to be far more receptive than most people had reason to believe it would be. Michigan has rightly been identified as a turning point in Jackson's campaign. But well before Michigan, Jackson had greatly increased his Black vote in the South and doubled his white vote as compared to '84. Jesse's successes have established the viability of a progressive platform and provided him with the basis to sorely test the status quo.

But the numbers of whites who have cast their votes for Jackson have done more than confound the complacent. They have also begun to answer the question of whether whites could embrace Black progressive leadership as their own

or whether they would inevitably reject it on the basis of race. This same question will be posed many times over in the course of the development of the progressive and working class movements. We can thank Jesse Jackson for having posed it so persistently and so eloquently and to so many millions. And we can revel with him in the fact that he has elicited such an enthusiastic response.

Jackson has taken it upon himself not only to run for president but also to yoke together the exploited, disenfranchised and oppressed. No other candidate has that burden, that mission or that perspective. No other candidate has that "program." □

Winning...

continued from supplement front page

Jackson has put together. Savvy politicians with in-depth knowledge of how to run a big-time political campaign now can be found among Jackson's inner circle of advisers. A professional fund-raising operation was put in place and a massive direct mail campaign has provided the material base for the 1988 effort—a far cry from the chicken dinners and collections at rallies that characterized the 1984 campaign.

SCENARIO BECOMES REALITY

Most important, the Jackson campaign developed a comprehensive strategy based on making some significant inroads into the white vote in the first few primaries, following up with outright victories in several of the Super Tuesday states, mainly on the strength of the Black vote, and then moving on to the large northern industrial states with the momentum gained in the early contests. The actual results from the first half of the primary campaign have corresponded to this scenario to a phenomenal extent.

The campaign threw substantial resources into the initial races in Iowa and New Hampshire, recognizing that it was important to break the myth that Jackson could not attract white voters. Significant inroads were made: from Iowa to Vermont and Maine, states where

the Black population is minuscule. Jackson racked up tallies of 10%–28%. In 1984, Jackson got only 1.5% of the vote in Iowa; in 1988 that figure jumped to 10%. The Maine caucus gave him 28%, the Vermont primary 26%.

The campaign then relied upon Super Tuesday to give Jackson the push he needed to pull ahead. On this first test of Jackson's strength in the Black community, he came through with flying colors, literally doubling the vote he got four years ago. When all the ballots were counted, the Reverend had garnered five outright victories and strong second place showings in 11 states. He had attracted 90-95% of the Black vote and galvanized the Black electorate to a degree that swept away all previous records for primary turnout. And the further peeling away of racial blinders was underscored when Jackson increased his white vote in the South from 1% to 7-10%.

GATHERING MOMENTUM

With the momentum from Super Tuesday, Jackson grabbed a first place finish in South Carolina and a surprise victory in Alaska, and then captured second place in Illinois. But it was Jackson's stunning victory over Gov. Michael Dukakis in the Michigan caucuses which put the cherry on the sundae.

Jackson's resounding upset—55% of the vote—had political commentators, the Dukakis campaign, the

Democratic Party establishment, grassroots activists and the nation as a whole reeling in either dismay or exultation, depending on their politics. When the Jackson whirlwind swept through Michigan, the media's insistence that America was not ready for a Black candidate, and particularly one of Jackson's political hue, received a serious blow. The electability argument was shot full of holes, or in some cases turned against Dukakis.

If Jackson's success within the Black community made the ruling elite uncomfortable, the inroads made in broadening his coalition to other sectors is now making them extremely nervous. A new coalition based upon explicit working class interests has begun to flex its political muscle, with significant numbers of white and Latino voters joining a unified Black community.

Jackson has clearly emerged as the only candidate willing to directly confront the assumptions of Reaganism and the rightward drift in the Democratic Party. That he has done this through constructing a coalition which explicitly embraces the interests of the victims of corporate America's domestic and foreign policies represents a dramatic breakthrough for the future of progressive politics in this country. The 1988 election still has miles to go, but Jesse Jackson's campaign may well be written up in the history books as the beginning of the end of the bourgeois monopoly in the electoral arena. □