

A Negro as Mayor Here in 6 Years?

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With the election of Negro mayors in Cleveland, Ohio, and Gary, Ind., and the fact that about 37 per cent of Atlanta voters today are Negro, more and more talk revolves around if and when we'll elect a Negro mayor here.

That discussion can't be separated from speculation about how much longer Ivan



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Allen will want to stay in office.

Allen probably doesn't have the overwhelming support of Negro voters he had in his first two outings, but he is a near sure bet to stay in office about as long as

he wishes.

And if Atlanta and Fulton County governments merged all this "guesstimating" would have to start over again because the Negro percentage would drop.

This is pure speculation, but let's suppose Allen finishes the two years in this term and then wins another four-year stint.

After Allen, who? Vice Mayor Sam Massell, Charles L. Weltner (if he doesn't get back his seat in the U.S. House), Ald. Rodney Cook, Ald. Q. V. Wil-

Comment and Analysis

liamson and State Sen. Leroy Johnson—the latter two are Negroes—have been mentioned.

Without the luxury of a poll or a crystal ball to see developments within the next six years, this is just talk. But consider this:

Allen could say near the end of his third four year term in 1973 that at the age of 63, he's ready to step down. Say that Weltner isn't available. Without them, it appears that a Negro might win the mayor's chair.

So the white power structure—which some contend doesn't exist—could get together and decide on a capable Negro, acceptable to the Negroes because he isn't an Uncle Tom, yet acceptable to the white community, also.

Who might that be?

How about Vernon Jordan, a young, native Atlantan now working on voter education with the Southern Regional Council? He's not widely known now, but in six year, who knows?

The inference there is that Williamson and Johnson, as well as other present Negro leaders more widely known than Jordan, wouldn't be acceptable to a majority of the white power structure.

Who knows — but many white and even a few Negro leaders are saying Williamson and Johnson already have killed their chances for the office by blazing the elective trail for Negroes — and thereby stirring up much animosity.

One City Hall official has predicted that Negro voters will outnumber white voters by 1980-1985, but admits that Negro bloc voting coupled with liberal white voters could elect a Negro mayor in six years.

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J. H. Robinson, city services coordinator, rarely makes news



but is one of the mayor's most valuable aides because he handles many of the complaints called and mailed into City Hall.

Last week, Robinson happily announced he had worked with various city departments to get a stop light, crosswalk and sidewalks at the corner of Oakland Drive and Merrill Avenue SW, where a youngster was killed several months ago.

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Mayor Ivan Allen reported the Police department had only three vacancies last week, "the lowest since I've been in office."

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Twenty-seven of the city's almost 9,000 public housing units are occupied by college students. Jack Glenn, Atlanta Housing Authority member, led the way at an authority meeting last week in denying a Georgia Tech student from New York a place in a project.

"With all the need for low-cost housing here, I don't see how we have room for students," Glenn said.

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Municipal Court is asking \$25,000 for a "public defender staff" for persons who can't afford legal counsel at the state traffic court operated by the city court.

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The city has told Fulton County to go ahead and sell property on the northwest corner of Northside Drive and Hunter Street NW.

While the county was holding it for the city in anticipation of use as an overpass, the City Building department found code deficiencies and called the county on the carpet.

City officials now regret the hassle and have decided they won't need the land after all — certainly not in the next few years.

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The aldermanic Zoning Committee's approval Friday of 650 public housing units on Sewell Road SW shocked and angered many West End residents, almost 400 of whom had turned out in protest.

Talk of a court battle and of the end of Southwest Atlantans for Progress' drive to stabilize the area racially was heard over the weekend.