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## OFF TO A SLOW START

### A Candidate for Mayor? Name Your Own

By REESE CLEGHORN

SINCE MAYOR Ivan Allen announced that he will not seek re-election this fall, the silence among potential candidates has been deafening. Some have been scurrying about making soundings for support, but it is probably safe to say that not one of these has found the response altogether satisfying.

In this preliminary stage, the most interesting fact is that there has been no coalescing behind one or two possible candidates. In the downtown business community and in the Negro community, there appears to be a wait-and-see attitude.

It is, of course, too early for the picture to be clear. When Mayor William B. Hartsfield announced his retirement eight years ago, the name of Ivan Allen Jr. was not immediately upon everyone's tongue. Although he already was well known and had made a large mark upon the city as president of the Chamber of Commerce, some time passed before such early Allen supporters as Mills B. Lane, Richard Rich and Jack Adair began to feel strong response from the business leadership in general (or, if you prefer, the "power structure"). It was not clear for a while that he would have strong Negro support, either.

In some ways, the most apparent successor to Mayor Hartsfield at the time was M. M. "Muggsy" Smith, who had fought the city's battles for many years in the Georgia House. He had demonstrated strong voter appeal in many races, had good downtown business support and was popular among Negroes.

BUT WHEN THE sides were finally drawn, Muggsy Smith had been left out. The loose coalition which had supported Hartsfield for many years, combining business leadership, Negro voters and Northside "moderate" whites began to fall into place again behind Ivan Allen.

The first names that come to mind among local political observers this year are those of Rodney Cook, alderman and legislator; Sam Massell, the vice mayor; Milton Farris and Everett Millican, aldermen; Leroy Johnson, Negro state senator; and Charles Weltner, the former congressman.

COOK PERHAPS HAS had a more even citywide support in past races than anyone else. He has just won an impressive race for re-election to the legislature against strong opposition (Cecil Turner). This time he did not, as in the past, draw overwhelming Negro support, principally because he was on the Republican ticket in a year when many Negroes were voting a straight Democratic ticket. But he can point out that he has never been defeated and that he has drawn support from all parts of the city, white and black. The big question for Cook: How "hard" is that broad support?

MASSELL, UNLIKE COOK, cannot show a series of political successes. He won a tough race for the office of vice

mayor eight years ago against an incumbent, Lee Evans, who had alienated the Negro community with a tie-breaking vote on a housing matter. He seemingly lacks the breadth of organization and support in the white community that Cook can claim; but his hold on Negro voters looks stronger in this preliminary stage.

Weltner's position is peculiar. In many ways he is, of course, in the Allen mold. He has enjoyed strong support in the business community in his races for Congress, and he has been popular among Negroes. But his defeat in the congressional race in November, by a margin that surprised many people, has left him in a kind of limbo. The passage of time may help him.

FARRIS AND Millican, both lacking the political style and clear "image" of these other three, have been oil company executives of high rank but that has not made them leaders in this loose thing called the "power structure." Nor does either have any special standing with Negroes. It may be unfair to categorize them, but here is a guess about their place in the spectrum: Either could emerge as a kind of moderate-conservative candidate with appeal to people who do not like the liberal "image" and style of Atlanta's City Hall leadership of recent few years.

JOHNSON, IT SEEMS to me, is not likely to run for mayor. Although there has been talk about the possibility of a major Negro candidate this year, there are indications now that most of the Atlanta Negro leadership will choose instead to influence and try to elect another white mayor. If so, there may be a push for a Negro vice mayor. Two young Negro lawyers who are interested are Vernon Jordan, voter education director of the Southern Regional Council who is temporarily a lecturer at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School, and Maynard Jackson, who carried Atlanta in his 1968 race against Sen. Herman Talmadge.

NEW NAMES are certain to appear in the speculation about a mayor. Already there is some mention of Cecil Alexander, an architect-businessman who has been a major force for progress in Atlanta in public and private roles; Superior Court Judge Jack Etheridge, a former legislator and Allen-Weltner ally; Robert Wood, Southeastern legal counsel for Sears; Bill C. Wainwright, president of the school board; Frank Carter, president of the Chamber of Commerce; A. H. Sterne, banker and civic leader; and Cecil Turner, alderman.

If thoughts turn to some very young "darkhorse" candidate for mayor or vice mayor, there may be talk of Gerald Horton, who has just won an impressive countywide race for the legislature, and Michael Trotter, lawyer and president of Good Government Atlanta. Dr. Vivian Henderson, the energetic, articulate and nationally known economist who is president of Clark College, might be a formidable candidate.

Anyone else? Don't be surprised.

