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*B. Williams*

## DRIVE TO REGISTER BLACKS IS OPENED

Carter May Be the Major  
Beneficiary of Project

By WARREN WEAVER Jr.

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 24—A bipartisan drive to register millions of blacks who have never voted before, which was opened here today by a broad coalition of labor and civil rights groups, could turn out to be a political bonanza for Jimmy Carter, the Democratic Presidential nominee, and Democratic candidates generally.

Sponsors of the project, known as Operation Big Vote, denied repeatedly at a long news conference that it was intended to give covert support to the Democratic national ticket, citing participation by at least two Republican party auxiliaries.

But political history indicates that Mr. Carter and Senator Walter F. Mondale, his running mate, would be the major beneficiaries of any increase in participation by black voters in November. In 1972, 85 percent of the black vote went to Senator George McGovern, the Democratic candidate.

Party leaders estimate that 55 percent of the blacks who are now registered to vote are members of the Democratic Party, with the rest divided among Republicans and independents.

Timothy Jenkins, the only one of a dozen organizers at the news conference who identified himself as a Republican, said that the goal of the registration drive was "full integration of both political parties" to increase overall black influence in both politics and government.

Eddie Williams, president of the Joint Center for Political Studies, a black political research unit that spearheaded the new registration coalition, said that it was "not aligned with any particular party or any particular candidate."

One of the 45 participating groups, the Voter Education Project, will hold a fund-raising dinner next Monday in Atlanta, and Mr. Carter is to be the principal speaker. In announcing the event today, John Lewis, director of the project, identi-



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Coretta King supporting  
the registration drive in  
Washington yesterday.

fied him only as a former Georgia Governor.

In 1972, according to the Census Bureau, 8.8 million, or 65 percent, of the 13.5 million blacks who were eligible to vote registered. Of the 121 million whites eligible, 89 million, or 73 percent, registered.

Coretta King, the widow of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., said today that it was "something very historic" for so diverse a group of organizations to join in a single cause. She recalled her husband's efforts to promote the right to register and vote for Southern blacks.

Among the organizations participating in the National Coalition on Black Voter Participation are the Congressional Black Caucus, the A.F.L.-C.I.O. Committee on Political Education, the N.A.A.C.P., the National Black Republican Council, the National Urban Coalition, the National Urban League, the National Women's Political Caucus, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the United Auto Workers and the United Negro College Fund.