

Senate hopefuls split on suburban integration

BY TIM RICHARD

Democratic hopefuls for the U.S. Senate nomination have different degrees of enthusiasm for racial integration of suburban neighborhoods.

Seven Democrats who would like to unseat two-term Republican veteran Robert Griffin fielded the question last week in a forum at Schoolcraft College set up by western Wayne County Democratic clubs.

"Would it be good to integrate the suburbs (through public housing)? How would you go about it?" they were asked. Here are their answers, in order of reply:

RICHARD VANDER VEEN, former 5th District congressman from western Michigan, said, "It would be good to integrate all suburbs. It would be good for East Grand Rapids, where I live. It would be good to integrate the whole country."

After mentioning several places where society can be integrated, Vander Veen concluded: "The answer lies in the public

schools. That's fundamental. It's the most essential thing. It should come about."

CARL LEVIN, former two-term Detroit councilman and president, said "it's desirable that all of society should be integrated, as is my own neighborhood."

"Our policies should be emphasizing rental property instead of ownership, and we should emphasize maintenance. Too often, people with inadequate means have been encouraged to own homes."

"We should provide incentives to private people to rehab homes. I would not link low-income housing to other programs," said Levin, singling out federal linkages of low-income and senior citizen housing for harsh criticism.

PAUL ROSENBAUM, state representative from Battle Creek Township, disagreed, saying "we can't separate the issues."

Rosenbaum emphasized "local control." He said the federal government

has habitually "dictated" housing policies first, "then has come back to ask the people."

"I don't live in Livonia. That question (public housing and integration) should be up to the people of Livonia."

HARRY PAYNE, former Michigan director of the American Arbitration Association and a resident of Lafayette Park in Detroit, said, "The problem is called color. No one's concerned with how much money you make, how you dress, how many kids you have... It's color."

Payne, one of two black candidates in the race, said, "I'm not so sure we should push integration. I'm more in favor of open housing. I want to have a choice."

"A lot of black people find camaraderie in the ghetto... Get rid of the ordinances and restrictive covenants. Let me choose."

ANTHONY DEREZINSKI, first-term state senator from Muskegon, corrected Payne on one point: Restrictive covenants have been outlawed in

Michigan for a couple of decades, and state open housing laws take precedence over local ordinances.

"Think of the progress we have made. Yet we haven't gone far enough," said Derezinski, an attorney. "Half of the problem is low income. The root problem is economic. Let's take a look at raising salaries."

Derezinski said the much-discussed flight from the cities is reversing itself in Washington, Chicago and New York: "Rich people are moving back in and pushing the poor into the suburbs."

JOHN OTTERBACHER, state senator from Grand Rapids, said "there are still some social and legal barriers on the basis of race." He called it "unconstitutional" for a community to keep people out.

Otterbacher said he agreed with "a piece of everyone's answer except Paul (Rosenbaum)."

Otterbacher urged "tax laws to encourage industry to move into those areas with high unemployment. We need to encourage industry to move in

where crime rates are higher and insurance costs are higher."

PHILIP POWER, owner of Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, said the question is "what kind of society do we want to promote?... Freedom of choice is central."

"It won't come from the social engineering put together by HUD (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development). Of all the people we don't want to do social engineering, it's HUD."

Power, of Ann Arbor, said "to link low-income to senior citizen housing is

immoral. It would link HUD's only success (senior citizen housing) with its biggest failure (low-income housing)."

Power said some local governments have attacked housing problems through bring poor housing up to codes, but "those are the programs that are being attacked and prevented by HUD."

Missing from the forum were two other declared candidates: Dudley Buffa, a former aide to the late Sen. Philip Hart, and Warren Bracy, law professor at the University of Toledo.

GOP names '78 campaign team

Oakland County Republicans are rounding out their 1978 campaign team.

The party's executive committee last week unanimously approved eight more volunteer appointments. Each of the appointees will be dealing directly with General Chairperson Mary Thomas. Organization Chairman David Baumhart and Campaign Chairman Joseph Knollenberg.

Joining the ranks of Republican coordinators and directors were: Bob Lindner of Birmingham, finance coordinator; Paul Nida of Troy, county issues committee chairman; Bob Lowmaster of Clawson, statistics chairman; Sary DeFrancis of Birmingham, research chairman; Bob Carr of Waterford, grass roots organizational pledge drive chairman; and Kathy Schlager of Birmingham.

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