

Inn crowd elated as Republicans pick Detroit

By SHIRLEE IDEN

You don't have to like elephants to be ecstatic that the Republican National Convention will be called to order in Detroit's Cobo Hall in 1980.

Impact of the meeting is expected to spill over into Oakland, Macomb and Washtenaw counties. For Southfield, it is almost certain to mean that the "No Vacancy" signs will be out the week of the convention, July 14-20.

Oakland County Republican Chairman Joe Knollenberg, of Southfield, said it's a very big plus for Detroit. "The city will be the big winner," he said.

"For Republicans it will be a shot in the arm, but a lot of work, too. I expect to be challenged. We'll be asked to lend a hand in many ways and I expect to involve a lot of Oakland County-ites."

Tim McCarthy, executive director of the Oakland County Republicans, said "this is a really, really, really big deal."

"There's never been a Republican convention in Detroit in all our 120-year history as a party," he said. "In fact, I don't think there has been any major party convention here."

"This is going to be worth a lot to Michigan Republicans and to national Republicans as well. It indicates a commitment to urban areas and to the ethnic minorities," McCarthy said.

THE WEEK-LONG convention will mean added income to the area of from \$7 million to \$10 million and an influx of some 20,000 visitors, including observers, media people, party officials, delegates and alternates.

Phil Meagher, executive director of the Southfield Chapter of Commerce, said the impact on Southfield is that every hotel and motel space will be taken.

"Any transient services—that means any business that serves people here on a short visit—will boom," he said, referring to car rentals, shops, hotels, eating places and the like.

"Places like the Raleigh House will move to utilization of their space."

Meagher said the Chamber of Commerce will begin its planning for July 1980 next Thursday at its regular meeting. "I'm sure there will be cooperative efforts also by chambers of commerce in this area."

The huge influx of people will also mean some pressure on the City of Southfield.

Jerry Tobin, director of public safety, said there will be a need for more manpower.

"Our main concern will be that those delegates who come here have a stay that is both pleasant and safe. It will cost the city," he said. "They'll be looking for a good time, and we have to expect an increase in the so-called victimless crimes."

TOBIN SAID the convention will mean more traffic, more heart attacks, and the necessity for greater surveillance by the Southfield public safety officers.

"But it shouldn't dampen the fact that it's great the convention is coming here. Those coming here will have a lot going for them, and we're kind of responsible for them while they're here."

Susan Moiseev, former chairperson of the Southfield Democratic Club, said she is thrilled at the news. "I'm excited for the city and I think it gives us a better chance to get our own Democratic convention here, too."

Ms. Moiseev, an attorney, said Democratic activists are working hard to try to bring the convention to the city. "We hear the networks want both conventions in the same city," she added.

She pointed out that Republican Chairman William Brock wanted the convention in a city where minorities vote for Republicans. "That could be very significant for Bill Milliken," she said. "He'll be very convenient as a dark horse candidate."

Another political figure who thinks the site of the convention is

significant for the Michigan governor is Republican State Rep. Wilbur Brotherton of Farmington.

"I suspect there's some significance on the importance the party places on Gov. Milliken as a possible dark horse candidate," he said. "He's never made any statements about a possible candidacy, and the time for that is close. One must move at least 18 months ahead."

BROTHERTON ADDED that the convention is "certainly something Detroit deserves."

Hotel personnel in the Southfield area were unanimous in their praise of the decision.

"I think it's a positive thing," said Jim Mastrangelo, director of sales at the Michigan Inn.

"They won't come to Detroit and find the murder capital of the world, and there will be a great impact. We have 413 rooms, and it will fill us and probably every hotel between here and Ann Arbor."

Mastrangelo, who managed a Hotel in Kansas City during the 1976

Republican National Convention, said the convention will tend to bring local people out rather than make them hibernate until it's over.

"They will want to be out seeing the national figures," he said. "This will be a lifetime chance for a Southfield person to be in on the action."

Unlike Ms. Moiseev, Mastrangelo contends the Democratic National Convention is "a bit too big for us."

"The number of rooms needed is quite a bit higher, but we could do a good job on a mini-convention," he said. "The next thing we need here is a Super Bowl. After all, it can't rain in the Silver Dome."

Other hotel representatives said their concerns had made big commitments to the convention, and now were prepared to meet them.

Bill Bowers, general manager at Stouffer's Northland Inn, said the Republican Site Committee visited his hotel, and a commitment for 180 of 200 rooms was made.

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