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Platform is target

Miller says Jackson will seek 4 changes

By Tim Richard
staff writer

ATLANTA — Disappointed presidential contender Jesse Jackson will try to amend four sections of the national Democratic platform, Louis L. Miller predicts.

But Miller, Oakland County Democratic chairman and a Jackson delegate to this week's national convention, may not vote with Jackson on those points.

"I'm with the winner," said Miller, a Farmington Hills resident who heads Financial Data Services in Detroit. "My personal gut feeling is that the platform is over-emphasized, overplayed."

In general, Miller said Jackson's amendments would give the U.S. government "less room to maneuver" in negotiating its position.

The winner, due to be nominated

Wednesday, is certain to be Gov. Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts. His running mate, due to be nominated Thursday night, will be U.S. Sen. Lloyd Bentsen of Texas.

THE PLATFORM committee was headed by Michigan Gov. James J. Blanchard's panel deliberately wrote a short, 3,500-word, generalized platform compared to the 40,000-word tome of 1984.

Miller said Jackson will seek these changes:

• A freeze in the military budget. The platform advocates "more stable defense budgets."

• A statement precluding a "first strike" with nuclear weapons by the United States.

• A tax increase for the rich. Miller said the impact of the 1985 tax reform law should be reviewed, but added "I don't think it's popular" to

promise a tax hike on higher incomes.

• Assurance of a Palestinian homeland. "I'm in favor of a Palestinian homeland," said Miller, "but there are a number of complicated issues. . . It should be negotiated."

MILLER AND other suburban Democratic delegates generally praised Dukakis' selection of Bentsen as his vice presidential running mate.

"It was a stroke of genius in a way," said Miller. "It will neutralize some of the attacks. Bentsen beat Bush for the Senate (in 1970), and it will raise the question, who's the real Texan?"

Bush is the son of a U.S. senator from Connecticut but got into the Texas oil business after attending Yale.

Patricia Hough, a Jackson alternate from Westland, was disappointed

that Dukakis failed to pick Jackson but was philosophical.

"Really, the vice president is the prerogative of the nominee," said Hough, a vice president of a UAW local.

"I think you'll find the discussion will occur on issues, rather than candidates. I'm involved with the women's caucus, and naturally there are issues like comparable worth and child care that are extremely interesting to me."

"Texas is a big state and an important one," said Barbara Johnson, a Dukakis alternate from Livonia.

She had backed Sen. John Glenn of Ohio and said Bentsen's name hardly came up during a meeting of delegates a few days earlier.

Staff writers Wayne Peal and Tom Henderson contributed to this story.

State Dems size up Bentsen

(AP) — Michigan's Democratic governor and state Republican Party chief both found reasons Tuesday to praise likely Democratic nominee Michael Dukakis' selection of Texas Sen. Lloyd Bentsen as his running mate.

But one of Jesse Jackson's most ardent campaigners said he was shocked and disappointed. "I'm waiting anxiously to try to

find some logic in this," said Rep. John Conyers, D-Detroit. Conyers has campaigned extensively for Jesse Jackson.

Conyers speculated the decision signaled a desire "to make the Democratic Party only slightly less conservative than the Republican Party."

Jackson supporter George Sallade, an Ann Arbor activist who formerly

headed the Gary Hart effort in Michigan, disagreed with that assessment, saying Bentsen was the logical strategic choice.

"Of course, Rev. Jackson was my first choice, but to me there was a choice between either having a Southern strategy or a Midwest and Western strategy," he said. "It is an effort to do what John F. Kennedy did in 1960 when he picked (Texan)

Lyndon Johnson."

STATE GOP Chair Spencer Abraham said he, too, found encouragement in the 1960 comparison.

"He's got the right year, he's got the right campaign, he's just got the wrong pick," Abraham said. "It's more like (Richard) Nixon's choice in '60. Henry Cabot Lodge didn't carry Massachusetts against Kennedy."

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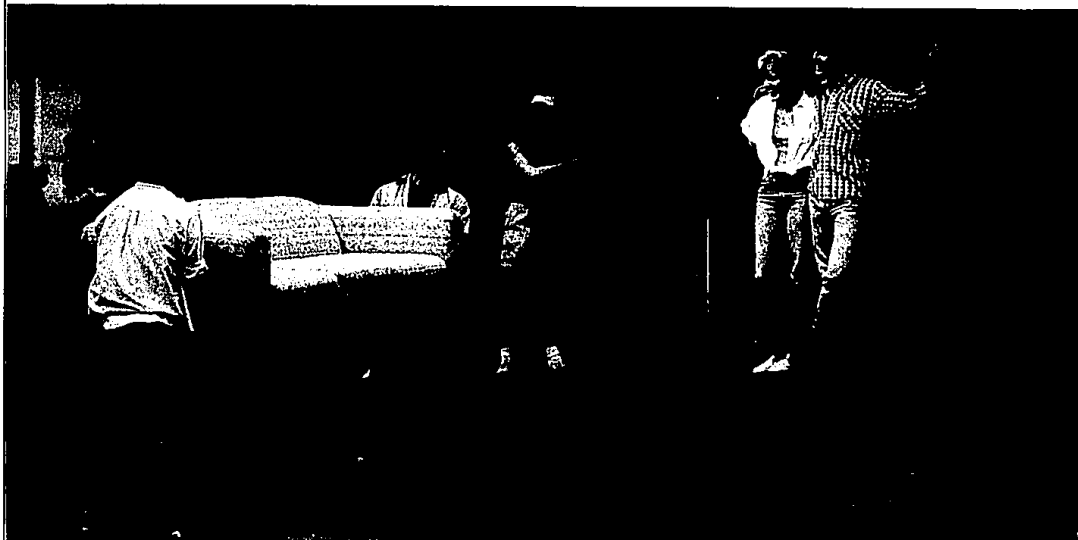
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