

B-PEP - "THE FIRST YEAR"

News Conference of Monday, September 14, 1987  
10:30 A.M. - Hill House Association

""IT'S A LIFETIME COMMITMENT...IF YOU'RE BLACK, YOU'RE REGISTERED. IF YOU'RE BLACK, YOU VOTE -- IN EACH AND EVERY ELECTION!!" This has been the conceptual foundation for B-PEP, the Black Political Empowerment Project, since its inception in May, 1986. We are happy to report that after one year of existence there has indeed been a positive shift in the voting pattern in the six predominantly Black wards of Pittsburgh. Our pride was "on the line", and our pride is coming through!

Within the one year period from May 20, 1986 to May 19, 1987, the predominantly Black wards moved from a minus 2.3% voting pattern to a plus 1.9% voting pattern relative to the percentage of voters citywide; and moved from a minus 2.8% in 1986 to a plus 1.8% relative to the voting patterns of the predominantly white wards. The shift in the Black voting pattern represents a gain of 4.6% percentage points in a Black to white voting pattern during the one year existence of the Black Political Empowerment Project.

The Black community also contributed greatly to the success of the District Election fight. One of B-PEP's slogans has been to vote only for these issues and candidates in our community's best interest. Apparently the Black community received this message clearly. The six predominantly Black

wards voted 88.7% in favor of District Elections. The city-wide vote was 69.4% in favor of District Elections, and the predominantly white wards voted 63.4% in favor of District Elections. The Black vote indeed had a tremendous impact on this very significant issue. The success of the District Election effort, coordinated by the Pittsburgh Alliance for District Elections, almost guarantees that our city will never again be without Black representation. It was the total absence of Blacks on Council which led to the creation of the Black Political Empowerment Project.

The significant Black voter turnout also helped to bring about the nomination of one Black Democratic City Council candidate, Otis Lyons, two Black Republican City Council candidates, Samuel Hurt and Elmer McClung, one Democratic candidate for Commonwealth Court, Doris Smith, and one Republican candidate for the Court of Common Pleas, Cynthia Baldwin. The Black community now has an opportunity to utilize its vote in a new, independent and more effective manner in the coming November Election. It is time that our community utilizes "SPLIT PARTY VOTING" and vote for candidates in either party who have our community's interests at heart --- be they white or Black, Republican or Democrat! Our slogan will be "IF WE SPLIT IT... THEN WE GET IT!!"

Registration Centers will continue to be available in most of the major social service agencies and community-based organizations within the Black community of Pittsburgh. The number to

call is 661-8751, the Kingsley Association.

Radio stations WAMO and WJLY have again agreed to run spots promoting the concept of "A LIFETIME COMMITMENT TO VOTE IN EACH AND EVERY ELECTION!" The New Pittsburgh Courier will continue its significant coverage of Black Political events in our community. Talk Magazine, NIP Magazine, and Renaissance Too Publications have agreed to continue to support the Black Political Empowerment Project.

With the sincere involvement of many people in Pittsburgh's Black community we have indeed begun "waking the sleeping giant!" Our commitment continues!!

--Tim Stevens and Stephan Broadus  
Co-Coordinator of B-PEP

P.S. Thanks for your help and participation!!

(SEE ATTACHED CHART)

ANALYSIS OF BLACK VOTING PATTERNS  
 FROM MAY, 1986 to MAY, 1987  
 THE FIRST YEAR OF B-PEP ---  
 (THE BLACK POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT PROJECT)

MAY, 1986	<u>VOTING %</u> <u>6 PREDOMINANTLY</u> <u>BLACK WARDS</u>	<u>VOTING %</u> <u>CITYWIDE</u>	<u>VOTING %</u> <u>PREDOMINANTLY</u> <u>WHITE WARDS</u>
Black Variance:	31.9%	34.2%	34.7%
Black Variance:		-2.3%	-2.8%
NOVEMBER, 1986	51.3%	52.7%	52.6%
Black Variance:		-1.4%	-1.7%
MAY, 1987	48.7%	46.8%	46.9%
Black Variance:		+1.9%	+1.8%
BLACK VOTING SHIFT FROM MAY, 1986 TO MAY, 1987		REPRESENTS A ONE YEAR SHIFT OF +4.2%	REPRESENTS A ONE YEAR SHIFT OF +4.6%



**B-PEP A YEAR LATER**—B-PEP Co-coordinators Stephan Broadus and Tim Stevens, at center and right, discuss the upward trend in voting patterns in predominantly black wards of Pittsburgh. B-PEP supporter Ewari Ellis sits at left.

## B-PEP Says City Black Voter Turnout Increases, Urges 'Split-Ticket' Voting

By **ROBERT MOORE JR.**  
 Courier Staff Writer

Black Political Empowerment Project B-PEP leaders say Pittsburgh has seen a "significant shift" in voting patterns in the predominantly black wards of the City, but the group urged split-party voting if that increase is to translate into representative numbers of minorities in elected office come November.

Voter turnout in the predominantly black wards jumped some 17 percent in the May primaries compared to figures from a year ago, said B-PEP co-coordinator Tim Stevens.

That increase in turnout — from 31.9 percent in May 1986 to 48.7 in May 1987 — also indicates that percentage-wise Blacks cast their ballots in larger numbers than whites, according to Stevens.

Now, Stevens said, the black community should utilize its voting power in an "independent and more effective manner" by utilizing "split party voting and vote for candidates in either party who have our community's interests at heart."

The increased black voter turnout, Stevens said, helped to bring about the nomination of several black Democratic and Republican nominations to City Council and judgeships on the state and county levels.

The campaigns of Republican candidate for Court of Common Pleas, Cynthia Baldwin, and Democratic nominee to Commonwealth Court, Doris Smith, were noted by Stevens, along with Democratic City Council candidate Otis Lyons, and Republicans Samuel Hurt and Elmer McClung.

In what Stevens described as the "variance" in voting patterns, the 48.7

percent turnout in the predominantly black wards was 1.92 percent larger than voter turnout citywide, according to B-PEP statistics.

Citywide turnout was listed at 46.78 percent, while the figures were 46.91 in the predominantly white wards, Stevens said.

Statistics from this year's primary indicate an increase of 4.22 percent when comparing black ward turnout against those recorded citywide, according to B-PEP. In May 1986 voting, citywide was at 34.2 percent, while the black wards, by comparison, were 2.3 percent less than that.

At a Monday, Sept. 14 Hill House press conference during which Stevens and other B-PEP officials revealed the statistics, the organization said it will keep its voter registration centers throughout the city's black communities open.