

Collection #  
SC 2643  
OM 0780

**NATIONAL BLACK POLITICAL CONVENTION  
COLLECTION, 1972-1973**

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|------------------------|---|
| Collection Information | 1 |
| Biographical Sketch    | 2 |
| Scope and Content Note | 3 |
| Contents               | 4 |
| Cataloging Information | 5 |

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## COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 5 manuscript folders, 1 oversize manuscript folder

COLLECTION DATES: 1972–73

PROVENANCE: Guy E. Russell, 624 W. 40<sup>th</sup> Street, Indianapolis, IN 46208-3937, May, 1998; Purchase from Hindman, 1550 W. Carroll Avenue, Suite 106, Chicago IL, March 2024

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: None

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1998.0617; 2024.0065

NOTES:

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

On 10–12 March 1972, several thousand African Americans gathered in Gary, Indiana, for the National Black Political Convention. The convention pulled together a cross section of people representing a wide range of political philosophies. Held at Westside High School, the event brought together Republicans, Democrats, nationalists, Socialists, and independents.

The steering committee consisted of Gary mayor, Richard G. Hatcher, U.S. representative Charles C. Diggs, and Imamu Baraka (also known as poet LeRoi Jones). The convention was a culmination of a series of earlier meetings, mostly held in 1971. The purpose of the meetings was to develop a unified political strategy for African Americans from 1972 forward. Convened by Diggs, the first planning session for the 1972 convention was held in Washington, D.C., 30 January 1972. A convenor was identified for every participating state. Delegates were selected from statewide political caucuses. (All blacks holding elective office in a state automatically qualified as state delegates.) In addition to the steering committee, participants listed on the program for the three-day conference included Carl Stokes, Louis Stokes, Yvonne Braithwaite, Jesse Jackson, Walter E. Fauntroy, Ronald V. Dellums, Richard Roundtree, Bobby Seale, Louis Farrakhan, Vincent Harding, Patricia Patterson, Kim Weston, Barbara Jordan, and Julian Bond.

An ambitious agenda included numerous issues, most of which did not and have not materialized. Several of these issues have resurfaced and continue to be part of political discussions of other groups. Issues listed on the agenda of the National Black Political Convention included:

- Home rule for the District of Columbia;
- Establishment of national network of community health centers;
- Establishment of system of national health insurance;
- Elimination of capital punishment;
- Creation of a new urban-based Homestead Act;
- Government guarantee of minimum annual income of \$5200 for family of four;
- Minimum wage guarantee of \$2.50;
- Establishment of a black United Fund;
- Effective enforcement of anti-trust legislation.

Sources: Materials in the collection.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

This collection contains six folders of materials. The materials relate, mostly, to the National Black Political Convention held in Gary, Indiana on 10–12 March 1972 (folders 1–3 and oversize). Of particular note are a conference program, a strategy paper by Percy E. Sutton, a fact sheet describing the history of the organization, an outline of the delegate selection process in Indiana (folder 1), a transcript of a speech attributed to Carl B. Stokes, former mayor of Cleveland (folder 2), and a conference agenda (OM0780).

The convention was an outgrowth of planning meetings conducted in 1971 by a broad cross section of black leadership throughout the United States. There are also materials that relate to state (Indiana State Black Political Caucus) and regional (Mid-West Regional Coalition) initiatives to form coalitions to address various issues pertaining to African Americans. A 1972 anniversary booklet and a newsletter from the Indiana State Black Caucus are in folder 4. The Mid-West Regional Coalition, along with several other black organizations hosted the Black Unity Conference held at Dunbar High School in Chicago on 13–15 April 1973. A program of the conference is in folder 5.

## CONTENTS

| CONTENTS   | CONTAINER               |
|--|-------------------------|
| National Black Political Convention, Gary Convention, 1972     | Folder 1                |
| National Black Political Convention, Convention Correspondence | Folder 2                |
| National Black Political Convention, Convention Agenda, 1972   | OM0780<br>Folder 1 of 1 |
| National Black Political Convention, News clippings            | Folder 3                |
| Indiana State Black Political Caucus                           | Folder 4                |
| Black Unity Conference, 1973                                   | Folder 5                |

## CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://157.91.92.2/>
2. Click on the "Traditional Search" icon.
3. Click on the "Call Number" radio button.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, SC 2643).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.