

Collection #  
SC 2643

## NATIONAL BLACK POLITICAL CONVENTION COLLECTION, 1972–1973

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### COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF  
COLLECTION: 6 folders

COLLECTION  
DATES: 1972–73

PROVENANCE: Guy E. Russell, 624 W. 40<sup>th</sup> Street, Indianapolis, IN 46208-3937, May, 1998

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: None

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1998.0617

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 gathered by Guy E. Russell. The materials relate, mostly, to the National Black Political Convention held in Gary, Indiana on 10–12 March 1972 (folders 1–4). Of particular note are a conference program, a fact sheet describing the history of the organization, an outline of the delegate selection process in Indiana (folder 1) and a transcript of a speech attributed to Carl B. Stokes, former mayor of Cleveland (folder 2).

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 6.

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Black Unity Conference, 1973	Folder 6

## 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 "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
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.

