



news release

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Further info: Albert Mark

DEMOCRATS BAR DISCRIMINATION IN DELEGATIONS TO 1968 CONVENTION

WASHINGTON, DC, July 12 -- All delegations to the 1968 Democratic National Convention will have to be "broadly representative of the Democrats of the State," Governor Richard Hughes, Chairman of the Special Equal Rights Committee of the Democratic National Committee, stated today.

At a press conference concluding the Special Committee's meeting here Governor Hughes underscored the phrase in releasing the text of a resolution passed unanimously by the Special Committee. The phrase, and the resolution of which it is a part, will be incorporated into a letter to be sent shortly from Governor Hughes to Democratic Governors, State Chairmen and National Committeemen and Committee-women.

The paragraph reads:

"The Committee interprets its mandate as insuring an equal opportunity to participate in Party affairs for all Democrats of all States regardless of race, color, creed or national origin. While the Committee has agreed that a quota system for delegations is not feasible in practice, it is determined to make certain that all delegations to the 1968 Democratic National Convention are broadly representative of the Democrats of the State. In the event that there should be violation of the 1964 resolution by the Party of any State, this Committee will recommend that the Credentials Committee declare the seats to be vacant and fill those seats with a delegation broadly representative of the Democrats of that State."

The Special Committee, which Governor Hughes called "an instrument of the conscience of the Democratic Party" was established at the request of the 1964 Democratic Convention. Its function is to assist States in meeting the Call for the 1968 Convention.

The Atlantic City Convention laid down the requirement that the 1968 Call stipulate that each State must undertake "to assure that voters in the State, regardless of race, creed or origin, will have the opportunity to participate fully

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in Party affairs."

The Special Committee was originally chaired by the late David L. Lawrence of Pennsylvania. Governor Hughes, who was named chairman after Governor Lawrence's death, held his first meeting with the Equal Rights Committee on April 19.

While that session acknowledged the need for further study, Governor Hughes at that time stated the group's unanimous view "that to satisfy the 1968 Call for the Democratic Convention, delegations should and must be representative of the Democratic voters of the various states."

The action of the Equal Rights Committee today was viewed as a further step in the direction of no bias at the Convention.

"We cannot and will not tolerate the discriminatory exclusion of any Democrat in the Party affairs of his state," Governor Hughes announced.

When asked if he anticipated opposition to his Committee's approach, the New Jersey Governor replied by citing "the greatly changed attitude since the 1964 Convention."

The Committee members who attended were:

Mrs. Helen T. Gunsett of Ohio

Reverend E. Franklin Jackson of the District of Columbia

Mrs. Mildred Jeffrey of Michigan

Eugene L. Wyman of California

Former Governor Stephen L.R. McNichols of Colorado

Mrs. Mary B. Fantasia of Massachusetts

The only member not present was State Senator Edgar A. Brown of South Carolina who is recuperating from an illness, but who sent as his representative Mr. Earle Morris, Jr., State Senator and Chairman of the South Carolina State Party.

Democratic National Committee officers who attended were: Chairman John M. Bailey; Vice Chairman Mrs. Margaret Price; Secretary Mrs. Dorothy Vredenburg Bush; Acting Treasurer John Criswell. Deputy Chairman Louis Martin, who is Chairman Bailey's representative to the Special Committee, also attended.

Washington Attorneys Berl I. Bernhard and Joseph L. Rauh, Jr., who serve respectively as Executive Director and Associate Counsel for the Committee, also attended.

In another action, the group appointed former DNC Treasurer Richard Maguire to the post of counsel to the Special Committee.

The Committee will meet again in September.

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