

# Jackson calls Democrats' bluff

California Republicans are sipping their martinis and gleefully watching the Democratic party come apart at the seams.

After all the Reagan administration's scandals and fiascoes, the Republicans, by all rights, ought to be the ones in big trouble. Instead, Gentleman George Bush is making his stately way towards coronation at the party's convention while the Democrats are twitching and squirming. And well they should. Their bluff has finally been called by the Rev. Jesse Jackson.

The Democrats were traditionally a broad coalition of blue-collar workers, bureaucrats, Jews, Irish, Italians, liberals (U.S. political jargon for left-wingers), white southerners and blacks. In recent years, as the party moved to the left, many blue-collar workers, southern whites, Italians and Irish have deserted the old Democratic coalition. This left blacks, who vote 98% Democrat — when they vote at all — as the party's solid core.

Illustrating this trend, the Democrats received more than half of the nation's white vote only once since 1944. Since 1964, the only Democratic presidential candidate to win more than 40% of the white vote was Jimmy Carter. The last Democrat to run, Walter Mondale, got a paltry 36% of the white vote and carried only his home state.

Enter Jesse Jackson, the most radical candidate to run for the presidency since World War II. Until Jackson, the Democratic party championed blacks but was run by whites. Blacks were strictly spear carriers whose appointed role was to turn out on election day in return for welfare programs and government patronage jobs. Jackson's bid for the presidency suddenly challenged continued white control of the national party.

## Eric IV ARGOLIS in Los Angeles



Worse, Jackson made the ugly racial slur of calling New York City "Hymietown" and seemed to back the anti-Jewish ranting of the Black Muslim leader Louis Farrakhan. Jackson even met with Yasser Arafat and called for a Palestinian state, an act of unprecedented audacity in American politics.

This outraged liberal Jewish Democrats who provide over 50% of the party's funds. In spite of recent efforts by Jackson to paper over his disagreements with Jewish Democrats, an abyss of mistrust separates the two camps.

As if this were not bad enough, now many blacks are growing that Democratic power brokers are stealing the nomination from their man Jesse. Last week's primary victories by Michael Dukakis convinced some blacks that there is a conspiracy among white voters never to allow a black to become president. They claim whites will only vote for other whites while conveniently forgetting that blacks always vote for black candidates.

In truth, Jackson stands only a slim chance of winning the nomination. His views are too radical for many middle-of-the-road Democrats, his manner too coarse, his

understanding of world affairs too shallow. Can one imagine Jackson negotiating with Mikhail Gorbachev?

Jackson has done well only because the Democratic primary process has become dominated by left-wingers, just as Britain's Labor party was taken over by radicals and destroyed. And, of course, because Jackson's rivals have been not only pygmies, but terribly boring ones at that. The lugubrious Dukakis, his chief rival, has the magnetism and personality of a hotel concierge. Another as yet unasked question: Will America elect a Greek-American, particularly after Spiro Agnew? Or an Italian? Or a Jew?

The clear political trend in America is to give the presidency to WASPs and local government to ethnics. George Bush's preppiness will not hurt him in the coming election. Americans demand a certain reserved style from their presidents, governors, bankers and funeral directors.

Which will likely leave Jesse Jackson with only the black vote and support from liberal Democrats. If Jackson loses the nomination, blacks will probably go off in a huff, convinced their favorite son had been stabbed in the back. This, in turn, will probably mean a very low black voter turnout for the presidential election in November — unless Jackson can be persuaded to run for the vice presidency.

Without a heavy black voter turnout Dukakis is unlikely to win against George Bush. If blacks stay home and sulk, the Democrats could face a calamitous defeat, perhaps even losing the Senate and House. If Jackson is nominated, election results for the Democrats could be even worse. Either way — Dukakis or Jackson — the Democrats seem headed for a shellacking.