

Williams urges programs on crime prevention

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BY BEN J. PLASTINO

Post-Register political editor

J.D. Williams, Preston attorney, Democratic lieutenant governor candidate, said the attorney general, should be out promoting effective crime prevention programs.

Here to attend the Democratic-sponsored Harry Truman Birthday Banquet Friday night, Williams said "the attorney general should be an innovator of criminal justice. The leading challenges of the 1980s is to do more with less."

Williams pointed out as chairman of the Idaho Youth Commission, he has found that some of these innovative programs have worked.

He said there has been self esteem or positive action programs from the kindergarten to the sixth grades which teaches the student "the positive things on the reason for obeying, such as letting them know that drugs should not be used because they injure the body."

Williams said such a program was inaugurated in Twin Falls and has been expanded to Hayden Lake, Groveland and Boise schools.

"The results of such programs have been incredible," he said.

The one in Twin Falls showed that in four years, the number of referral crime violations dropped from 38 to only four, he said.

"Another program is in education where students are taught to learn obedience to law and why there are such laws," said Williams.

Williams said the interest in such courses



J.D. Williams

is high in the political center at Boise high schools.

He then mentioned the alternative high schools which are designed for high school dropouts.

"These high school dropouts are the prime candidates for crime and something constructive should be done for them," said Williams.

He mentioned such alternative high school programs for these dropouts are functioning in Idaho Falls and Blackfoot and he hopes they can be expanded to other schools.

Williams added that in the crime area, the attorney general should help county prosecutors in securing convictions and providing assistance. Once the convictions are obtained, he should also help in affirming on appeals.

"I believe strongly that more criminal laws are made by the Supreme Court and the new Court of Appeals than the Idaho Legislature," said Williams. "The courts rule on appeals and thus sets the guidelines for laws."

In other matters, Williams said he is not taking a stand on the right-to-work issue because it is one of "emotional nature."

"Because of the nature of the attorney general office which is quasi judicial, such an issue should not affect the operations of the office," he said. "For an attorney general candidate to take a stand on this would not be proper nor ethical."

He pointed out that he served as deputy two years in the attorney general office and during that time was chief deputy in the criminal division, an experience neither of the Republican candidates possesses.

He is the Franklin County prosecuting attorney in Preston and in addition has an extensive private practice.

As chairman of the Idaho Young Commission he pointed out he has taken a leading role in planning on law enforcement, he said.

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The political pulse

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The election eye . . .

Batt appears leading but Olmstead gaining

BY BEN J. PLASTINO

Post-Register political editor

With the primary election only two weeks away and interest still at an apathetic level, political observers are taking a close look at the top state race for the favorite.

Polls of two years proved so inaccurate that newspapers and others which conducted them appear to be shying away this year.

It is not too difficult to figure out races which are lopsided but those within, say, 5 percentage points, are something else.

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The feature primary race, but a far cry from the one four years ago, is for the Republican gubernatorial race between Lt. Gov. Philip E. Batt and House Speaker Ralph Olmstead. In 1978, there were six primary contestants and they whipped up considerable interest in the closing two weeks.

Most veteran observers feel that Batt has held a decided edge so far in the campaign by virtue of better organization, more money and more campaigning but Olmstead now appears getting into stride and closing the gap.

If Batt does win, it will be the first time in 20 years since Gov. Robert E. Smylie that a mod-

erate candidate has plucked the gubernatorial nomination.

Both have attacked Democrat Gov. John Evans on what they say has been his anti-business and anti-growth policies up to this year but it's the differences between the two that is important at this time.

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This writer asked both the question within the last week: why a voter should vote for him rather than his opponent? Batt replied he could best handle state problems and is the strongest Republican candidate to beat Evans. Olmstead responded that although both have somewhat similar legislative background their record "clearly shows" he is the one who "favors a lean responsible conservative government."

These contrasting statements, of course, are for the Republican voters to judge. In the final analysis, just as it has been the case in the past, it will be personal appeal and charisma that decides the winner, everything else being about equal.