

Black Democrat Named Speaker In California With Aid of G.O.P.

By WALLACE TURNER

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SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 1 — The California Assembly today picked Willie L. Brown Jr., a San Francisco Democrat, as Speaker, amid indications that the opposition of Cesar Chavez, the United Farm Workers leader, may have attracted the Republican votes that elected Mr. Brown.

The 46-year-old lawyer, a native of Mineola, Tex., is the first black Speaker in an 80-member body that has six blacks. Also, for the first time in the memory of legislative veterans in Sacramento, most of the votes cast for the winner came from the opposition party.

Assemblyman Brown defeated Assemblyman Howard Berman of Beverly Hills. Mr. Berman moved a year ago to unseat Speaker Leo McCarthy, also a San Francisco Democrat, and was successful in a yearlong campaign in which about \$5 million was spent to support competing slates of candidates in the Democratic primaries.

Battle in Democratic Caucus

In the Democratic caucus this morning, Mr. Berman could muster only 23 votes, which Mr. Brown matched, while one Democrat refused to vote. The custom has been for the majority party to cast all its votes for the winner of the majority in its caucus. Assemblymen Art Torres and Richard Alatorre, both of Los Angeles, defied a public warning by Mr. Chavez and abandoned their earlier support of Mr. Berman. Their support of Mr. Brown in the caucus helped undermine Mr. Berman. Mr. Chavez had supported Mr. Berman because he is one of the last-ditch supporters of the farm union's legislative proposals.

On the Assembly floor, Carol Hallett of San Luis Obispo, the Republican leader, said in seconding Mr. Brown's nomination that she had been moved by Mr. Brown's promise to be fair to the state's agricultural interests. Then 28 Republicans voted for Mr. Brown, which with his 23 Democratic votes gave him 51 votes, 10 more than he needed.

Mr. Berman received votes from 23 Democrats and one Republican, while four Republicans and one Democrat, Assemblyman Tom Hannigan of Fairfield, abstained.

Praise From the Loser

Mr. Berman, in losing, said, "I have tremendous respect for the new Speaker."

Mr. Brown said that one of his early meetings would be with Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr., who legislative observers say covertly supported Mr. Berman and op-

posed first Mr. McCarthy and then Mr. Brown.

The Speaker of the Assembly in California has great powers. He appoints all committee members, including chairmen, and controls the movement of legislation. These powers will be particularly important next year as Democrats and Republican seek to redraw the Congressional districts of the largest state.

The State Senate elected as President pro tem Senator David A. Roberti, Democrat of Los Angeles, who had supplanted Senator James Mills of San Diego without the internecine struggle that divided the Democratic majority in the Assembly.