

CHANEY, WALLACE

Former Ravenswood administrator Chaney named to high-ranking post in Louisiana

By John Raess
Times Tribune staff

REDWOOD CITY — Former high school administrator Wallace M. Chaney Jr., a self-described rarity as a conservative black Republican, was named last week to a position in the state government of Louisiana.

Louisiana Gov. David Treen picked Chaney, a former vice principal of Ravenswood High School, to be assistant secretary for human development.

Chaney's appointment was seconded by state party chairman George Despot, who oversaw his campaign efforts on behalf of Ronald Reagan.

Chaney, 62, retired in 1979 after 24 years in the Sequoia Union High School District. Since his retirement he has tutored San Mateo County Jail inmates working for their high school diploma.

His tutoring position was paid for through Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) funds a

favorite target of Ronald Reagan, Chaney's candidate.

He dismisses speculation that the new president may decimate such programs.

"The man's not crazy. He knows he can't wipe out everything."

Chaney toured black communities in Louisiana and Texas during the election on behalf of Ronald Reagan.

"I got booed a lot," Chaney said.

One black preacher accused him of playing Uncle Tom to Ronald Reagan's Simon Legree, he said.

His less-than-warm reception left Chaney undaunted. He wants to end the era of neglect between the Republican Party and America's blacks.

"Most blacks blame Herbert Hoover for all the evil that has happened since," Chaney said with a laugh. "That same indictment is on the back of our party today."

But, Chaney said, the Republican government will benefit blacks in

the next four years by improving the country's economic climate.

"Jobs, jobs, jobs. That's what they (blacks) are interested in," Chaney said.

He predicted that the improvement of the nation's economy under the coming administration will double the percentage of the black vote for the 1984 Republican candidate from what Reagan received in 1980.

It may take some time, Chaney said, and he acknowledged that it took considerable persuasion to change his wife, Blanche, from being a long-time Democrat to "the most liberal Republican you've ever seen."

Chaney has had the same political affiliation since his boyhood in Tyler, Texas, with his "Abraham Lincoln-style Republican" father, a Baptist minister.

Chaney is a graduate of Tuskegee Institute and holds advanced degrees from Columbia University and Stanford University.