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# Incoming Chamber Chief Hopes For Action

By JOSEPH WEILER

James C. Merkle, incoming Memphis Area Chamber of Commerce president, said yesterday Memphis has seen enough plans and proposals for grandiose projects and needs to start breaking ground on some of them in 1973.

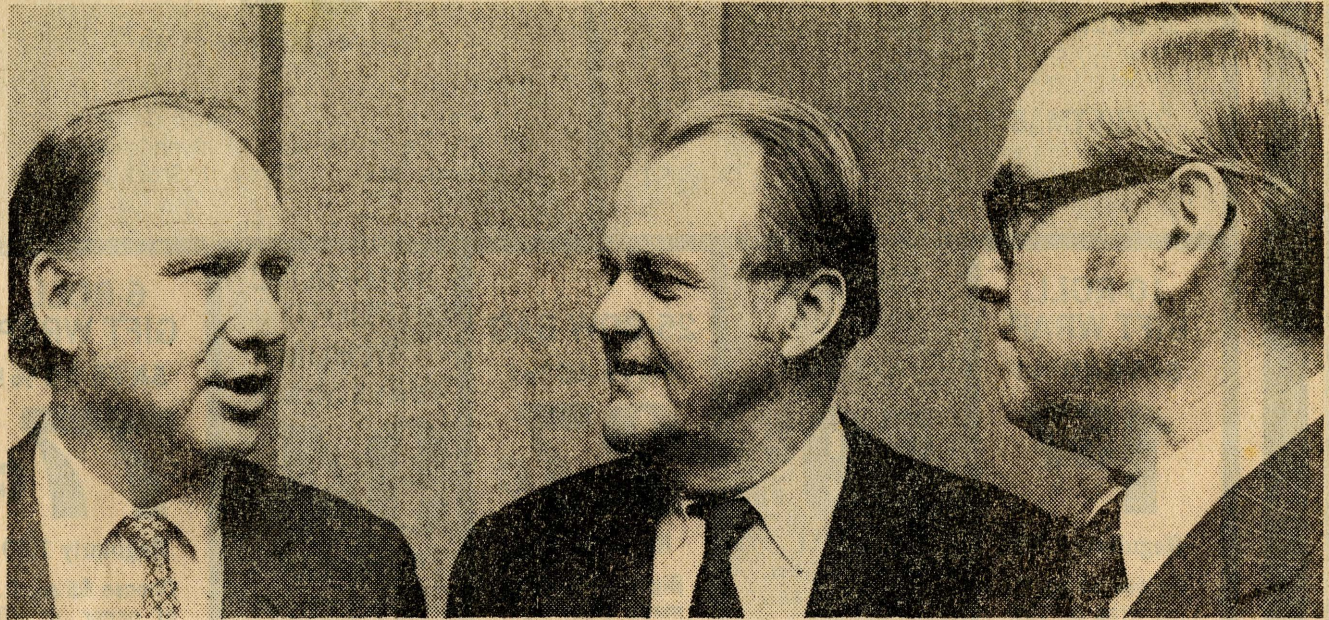
"We need to accomplish something we can see downtown this year. . . . The mall is a good example. It isn't the whole answer, but we have got to get started on something we can see," Mr. Merkle said after he was voted 1973 president yesterday at the chamber's regular meeting at the Sheraton-Peabody.

Mr. Merkle is president of Union Planters National Bank. He will be formally installed as chamber president in January, replacing Frank M. Norfleet. Mr. Norfleet will succeed Kemmons Wilson as chairman of the chamber board.

"Mr. Norfleet had a very active year," Mr. Merkle said. "We will continue his programs, such as Area Development, and are going to add the 'Believe in Memphis' program. We will be spending a lot of time and money to build this new spirit in Memphis."

He said there has been too much talk and not enough visible results. The chamber "cannot spend all its effort puffing the city up to something it isn't. There are problems and we will have to face them. There are also good points."

Among the projects he said he hoped to see started this year — besides the mall which is planned for Main from Gayoso to Exchange — are the Memphis Central Business Improvement District and a major luxury hotel in the



Chamber President James Merkle (left), Board Chairman Frank Norfleet, President-Elect M. M. Gordon

—Staff Photo

vicinity of the new Everett R. Cook Convention Center.

"I am optimistic about Memphis' future and 1973. Things are cooking that I am not at liberty to talk about. Things look good," he said.

**M. M. 'Jack' Gordon, president of Gordons Transports, Inc.,** was named president-elect at the meeting. Mr. Gordon served this year as vice president of the communications division.

Succeeding Mr. Gordon is Robert G. Snowden. Other newly elected vice

presidents are Samuel B. Hollis, business development division; E. Ray Stockdale, finance and S. W. Fry, business and industrial services.

Re-elected vice presidents were Sidney A. Stewart Jr., membership; Walter A. Barret, central city development; R. M. 'Mac' Hunt, public affairs; Wayne W. Pyeatt, community improvement; Odell Horton, research, and Walter P. Armstrong Jr., human resources.

Mr. Wilson and George M. Houston, past chamber president and chairman,

remain on the executive committee. Named to a new term on the committee was Wallace E. Johnson. Re-elected were Abe Plough, W. D. Galbreath, Lewis K. McKee, Dr. Joseph Johnson, Allen Morgan, Jerry Salemi and Lewis R. Donelson III.

The chamber also announced yesterday that Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, well-known author and minister, will address its annual luncheon meeting Jan. 25 at Holiday Hall of the Holiday Inn-Rivermont to formally launch the "Believe in Memphis" program.