

Editorials

Ford Foundation's New Head

When the Ford Foundation went into the closing weeks of its intensive search for a new President, rumors circulated about the identities of the short list of finalists.

They were, as might be expected, an unusually distinguished group of people. And on that list was the name of Franklin Thomas, a prominent black lawyer who became nationally known through his successful leadership of the community-based Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation.

Skeptics said Thomas wasn't a serious possibility. The Ford Foundation, a mainstay of America's elite establishment, would never turn over its reins to a black man, they said.

Well, they were wrong. The Foundation did indeed choose Frank Thomas to be its next President. And that move has enormous implications for our society.

The first of these is that it signals to all black people that our aspirations are indeed attainable. Black people have never been satisfied with tokenism in any of its forms. As blacks made their way into middle management positions, they continued to aspire to the top.

Frank Thomas' appointment as head of a major bulwark of American institutional life heralds a new era of black inclusion, not only as soldiers in our society, but as leaders commanding its heights.

That's a message that needs to be absorbed by all our young people. Doors are not merely open now, but black people are beginning to go through them. The Thomas appointment means that blacks with intellect, experience and talent can aspire to the top. And it means that black youngsters now have the positive examples and incentives to make the full use of their abilities in the knowledge that they too, can make it to the pinnacle of our society.

It would be hard to exaggerate the importance of Frank Thomas' new position. The Ford Foundation is at the Center of power in America. It not only controls several billion dollars, but it wields an influence far beyond the monetary values of its grants. And its board is drawn from

the cream of America's elite. They--and the Ford Foundation they administer--frequently set the tone for other leadership groups in America.

Herein lies another important message in the choice of Franklin Thomas. The leaders of the Foundation are signalling America's leadership that the time for blacks at the top is now. The implicit meaning of the Thomas appointment is that there is a cadre of skilled black leaders capable of heading any of our important institutions, including major leadership roles in the private sector.

The appointment is also eloquent testimony of how much America has changed. Blacks moved from near-total powerlessness to a stage of moderate gains. Their relations with major power blocs in our society, though, remained marginal. Real power remained concentrated in other hands.

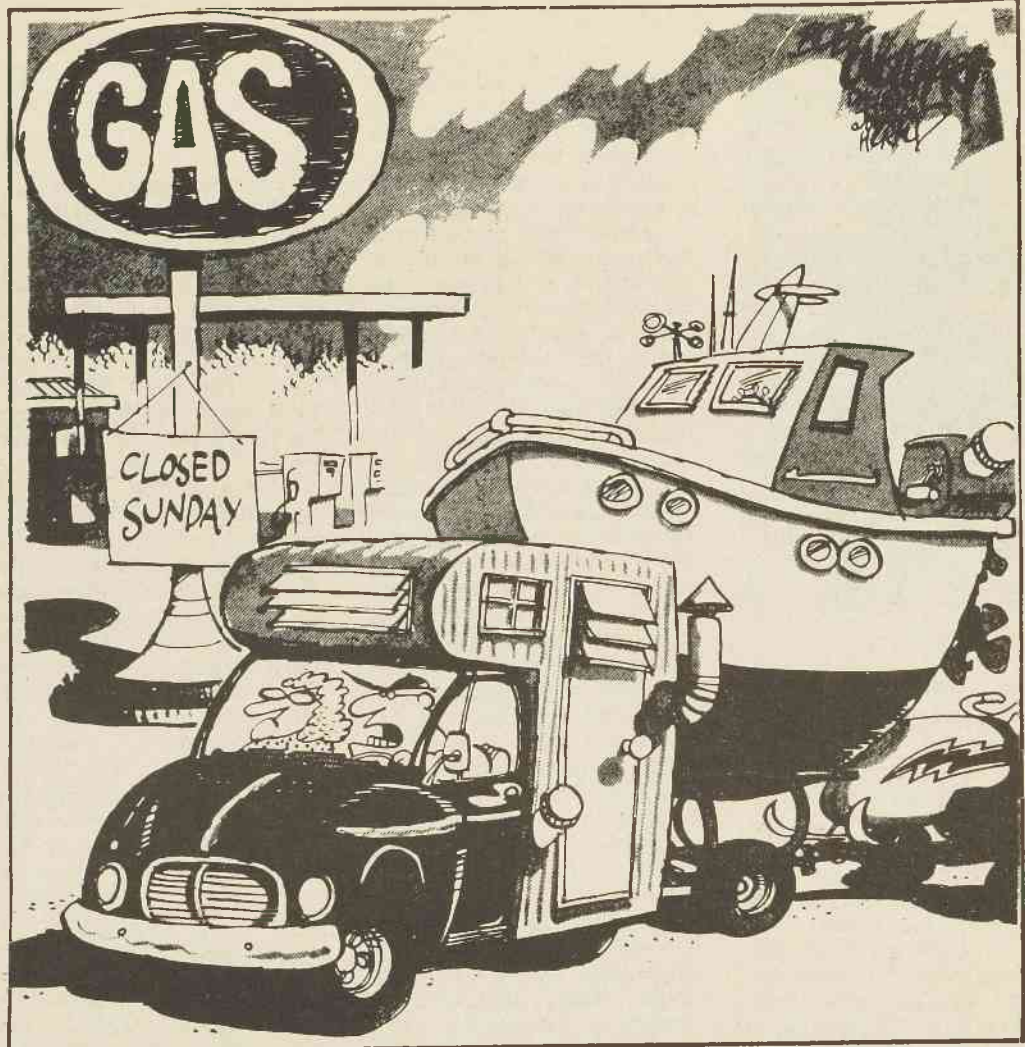
Now at Ford Foundation at least, a black man controls money and policy to a degree unprecedented in our history. And since Ford is a pacesetter, other institutions should not lag far behind.

A word is due both Frank Thomas and his distinguished predecessor, McGeorge Bundy. Frank Thomas grew up in the streets of Bedford-Stuyvesant. He knows what it means to be poor, and he knows what it takes to renew urban communities. At a time when many Americans have reached an ugly consensus of indifference toward cities and minorities, he can be expected to act with compassion and with hard-nosed initiatives to revive our communities.

And the basis was laid by Mr. Bundy, who pushed the Foundation into an activist posture that did much to advance solutions to problems faced by black people, to encourage integration, and to disperse power and influence to those who had neither.

In selecting Frank Thomas, the Foundation has chosen a successor who can be expected to provide leadership for the coming years worthy of the Foundation's past role.

Vernon Jordan, Jr.
Reprinted from FORUM, March, 1979.



"IT'S ALL KHOMEINI'S FAULT!"

Our school has come face to face with a serious problem. This problem is theft. Different buildings on our campus are losing valuable equipment ranging in the thousands of dollars. This loss is not yearly but monthly. The dining hall has been a constant victim of vandalism. We can chain up the doors to keep people out but you can't chain books to keep them in the library. Many books and articles are being vandalized from our

library. Do you ever stop to think about who may need that book that's sitting in your room? If you have books, please return them to the library, even if you have to leave them on the table because of high fines due on them.

During the spring break a vandal struck the Administration Building. Theory is that the vandalism occurred in mid-day on March 3, 1979. The vandal broke a second floor window in the Office of

Development. The thief had to climb up the side of the wall to enter. The loss was estimated at \$3,000 worth of camera equipment. An investigation is underway and the police have a suspect under surveillance. More information will be given in the next edition of THE VOICE.

Remember students, when you steal from the school, you steal from yourselves.

Edwin DeVaughn

SOUTH AFRICA

by Fidele Essono

Why is Namibia's Independence still in limbo? The question is painful and confusing. One has the notion that the UN's power is decreasing more and more. If the UN's total independence was inspected, it might be found that it is a victim of pressures from the leading powers in finan-

cial matters.

SWAPO (South West Africa People Organization) is the only representative of the Namibian people and is squeezed from both sides. First, placed under the authority of Nations League (the former name of the UN) after Germany's defeat in World War I and who was the

colonizing power until 1916, the problem was who would administer that former German colony. The Nations League appointed South Africa to rule that territory until its self determination. But now, South Africa has completely rejected that conviction for its own conveniences. The South Africa apartheid system has viewed that the way to keep the policy is to extend the area of domination by strengthening those principles. The permanent veto imposed in favor of those who disregard the emphasis of human dignity and lowering it to the animal state is not understandable. The South Africa government is not an unbreakable power but is simply sustained at 100 percent for reasons that are becoming apparent. Then, the United Nations became a useless tool subjected to pressures that involved its credibility as the defender of human rights. When we look back, the UN's main objective was to reunite nations and coordinate and resolve conflicts that has arisen in implementing judicial procedures that would protect the rights of people and promote the self-determination of nations. It has an arsenal of laws and humanitarian operations all over the world to carry this out.

Clearly, apartheid still
(Continued on Page 5)

Letter

Dear Editor:

I am writing this letter to protest the recent decision of President Carter to pardon Patricia Hearst. How is it that our President Carter resolved not to interfere in North Carolina's case concerning

Rev. Ben Chavis and the Wilmington 10, yet interferes in this case? Is it that her blood is white and that makes her right or is it that her blood is rich enough so that she can switch from a convicted criminal to a citizen? Is it because she is Patricia Hearst the news media helped to plead her case before the public in order to gain her freedom? How is it that the news media played down her release so that it would not be known how unfair it is to spank one child for a crime and not spank the other?

Mr. Carter are you so dumb that you will bite the hand that feeds you? I will tell you one thing: this hand will not feed you his ballot in 1980 unless the deed is redeemed in the fall.

Disappointed,
Michael Shepard

The word, "slave," was originally applied to white people. It comes from "Slav," a Russian people captured by the Germans.

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