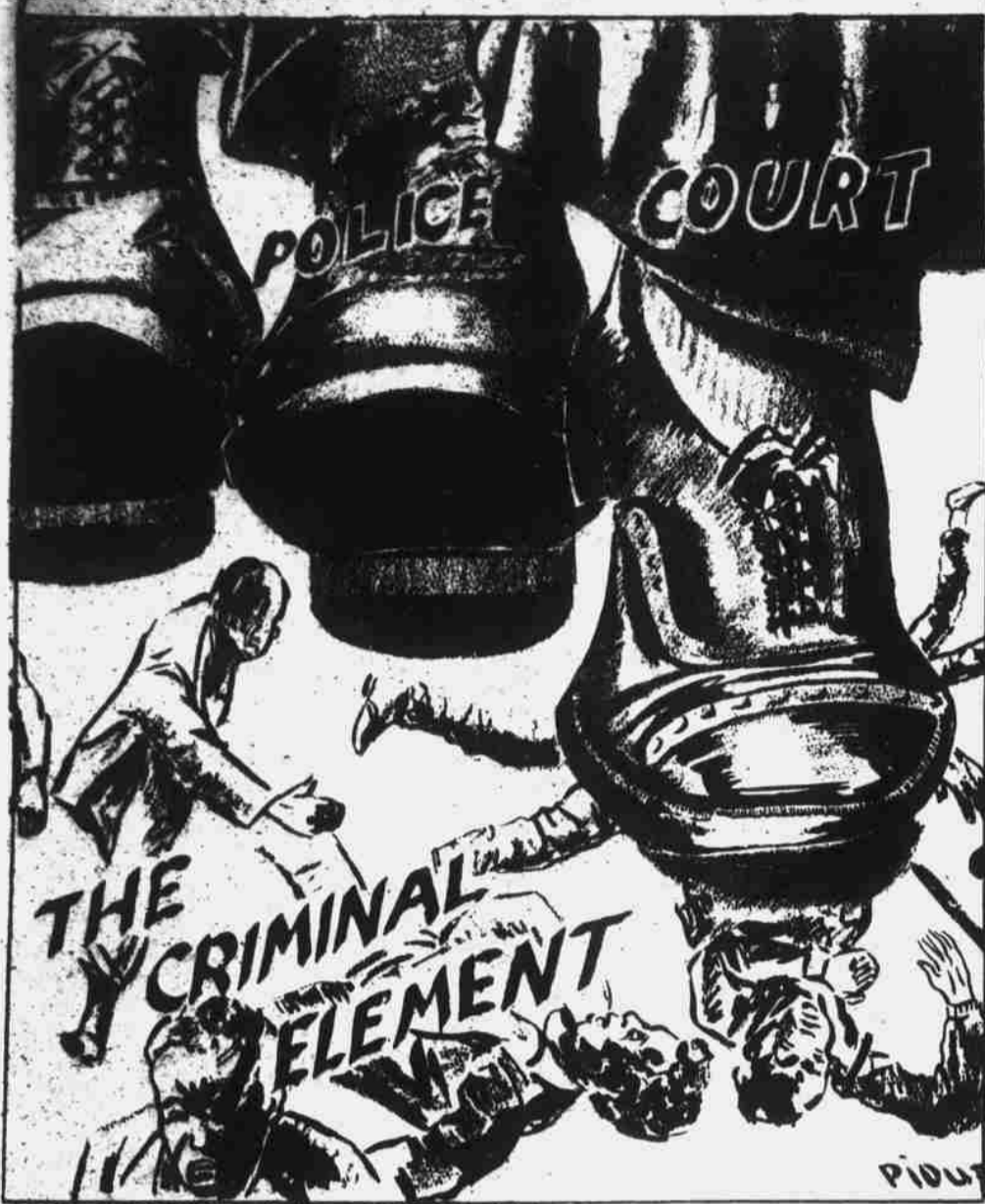


FOR A SAFE COMMUNITY—TEAM WORK



Senator Kennedy And The American Soul

By Bill DuBois

In a move that promised to break the Iranian crisis wide open, Senator Edward Kennedy recently criticized the former shah of Iran as being only for himself, and said, further, that the United States should relate to the Iranian people as a whole, not merely as one man, the shah.

What happened as a result was what one would expect in a country at war, in a country visibly threatened by another country: the office of the President and the office of the Secretary of State and many public officials severely criticized Kennedy as if he had sided with a national enemy at war with the United States.

The fact is, however, that we still have diplomatic relations with Iran, and the fact is, even more basically, that what Kennedy was speaking was truth, a commodity that is being rapidly lost in the hysterical pre-war atmosphere now building in the United States.

What is not being confronted in these moments of hysteria is that the United States has welcomed to its bosom a man whom the Iranian people consider a traitor, a mass murderer, and a thief of billions of dollars of Iranian wealth. Although they had no right to invade the American embassy and even less right to take hostages, the actions of the Iranian students who took the hostages are a response to that fact. The American people appear to be blind to this. The reason for this blindness would be a subject for another column, perhaps even a series of columns. The reasons are to be found in the conquering tendencies of the American people—the conquering of the Indians, the blacks, the

Filipinos, and the mind-set that has resulted.

Even so, the American people, apparently, want the shah, out of America; yet, according to the polls, they applaud Carter's "leadership," which is essentially an exercise in demagoguery which appeals to the self-righteous tendencies in the American character. What we close our eyes to is the fact that Carter is leading the American people down the possible road to the third war in thirty years against a small, impoverished Asian nation. And his whipping up of hysteria against Iran and Khomeini is accompanied by the applause of the American people.

Kennedy's attempt to alert the American people to what is going on is pure sanity. He is attempting to bring to the attention of the American people the fact that they are being misled and that this misleading may cost them not only the respect of the international community and their relationship with the Moslem world but may also cost them, perhaps, thousands of American lives — even, perhaps, a wider atomic war that could cost millions of American lives. Kennedy's words are not only sanity, but patriotism. He is attempting to bring the American people to their senses.

The lives and the well-being of the hostages are quickly being lost in this hysteria, and surely war would be the surest way of destroying them.

Let us hope that Kennedy's sane voice will remain strong and self-assured in this time of aggravated crisis—a crisis not of Iran and the United States, but a crisis of the American soul.

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who propose to favor freedom and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the oceans majestic waves without the awful roar of its waters."

—Frederick Douglass

Things You Should Know



Benjamin LUNDY

1789 — 1839

BORN IN HARDWICK, N. J., HE WAS A FOREMOST ABOLITIONIST WHO LIVED IN WHEELING, W. VA. / IN 1815 HE ORGANIZED THE UNION HUMANE SOCIETY — IN 1821 HE FOUNDED AN ANTI-SLAVERY PAPER, AT MT. PLEASANT, OHIO (THIS WITH WM. LLOYD GARRISON AS CO-EDITOR FROM SEPT. 1829 TO

MARCH 1830.) IN ALL, HE TRAVELLED MORE THAN 25,000 MILES; VISITED 19 STATES AND COUNTLESS PLACES ABROAD. FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM FOR THE SLAVES!

CONTINENTAL FEATURES



Occupational Safety, Health & The Black

Gerald C. Horne, Esq.

No better reason for the need for affirmative action in employment are the statistics on occupational safety and health among black workers; for the fact is that blacks and other minorities are faced with the hardest, dirtiest, most dangerous jobs. The following dismal recitation should sober those who have been traduced by the siren of "reverse discrimination:"

Fifteen per cent of the black work force (twelve million) are unable to work due to permanent or job-related disabilities.

Blacks have a 37 per cent greater chance than whites of suffering an occupational injury or illness.

Blacks faced a 20 per cent greater chance than whites of dying from job-related injuries and illnesses.

Many factors account for this. Inadequate health and safety laws, corporate greed ("profits before people"), etc. are a few. But the fact that black workers are trapped at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder is clearly a central cause.

In the steel industry, blacks are heavily involved in coke oven work; as a consequence, blacks are eight times more likely than whites to get lung cancer. Blacks make up 22 per cent of the industry, and eighty per cent are assigned to the dangerous, comparatively low-wage coke ovens.

In the textile industry, 25 per cent of the work force is black. Blacks there are more likely to get bysinosis (brown lung), chronic

bronchitis and dyspnea (lack of breath).

In the rubber industry blacks have significantly higher rates of stomach, liver, kidney, colon and prostate cancer than white workers.

In fact, blacks have the highest prostate cancer death rate in the world and most of these black deaths are concentrated in Toledo, Akron and Cleveland where the rubber industry is situated.

In the agricultural areas of Florida, Blacks were assigned mostly to handling pesticides. Not surprisingly, these black workers have high rates of liver and kidney dysfunction.

Black women comprise 25 per cent of the 225,000 laundry and dry-cleaning workers, where many dangerous chemicals—e.g. tetrachloroethylene—are used. Black workers in that industry had death rates twice as high as white workers.

In the heavily black labor force of the tobacco industry (thirty per cent) of North Carolina, cancer is the leading cause of death among blacks between 40-54 and the second leading cause of death among black females 25-39.

Ponder that the next time you light up! Blacks comprise 23 per cent of the shipbuilding and repair industry where asbestos—which causes lung cancer and mesothelioma—is a prime element.

What can be done about this murder on the job? Are we consigned to a fate of seeing our finest sons and daughters wiped out? Is

there nothing we can do about a situation that amounts to—and the term is not used lightly—genocide?

As ever, there is a way out. We must give support to unions in their battles for safer jobs. Employers, in the name of "de-regulation," have mounted a vicious attack against the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the main government watchdog. We must let our representatives in Congress know that weakening OSHA will mean defeat at the polls. Some states, like California, have state administered versions of OSHA; in those states were they don't have them, we must pressure state legislatures to establish them. We must reform workers' compensation laws to make more benefits for the disabled. We must push for a health care system modeled on the bill introduced by Congressional Black Caucus member Ronald Dellums, which makes illness less of a personal financial catastrophe.

But above all, we must move aggressively on two fronts: First, we must combat the "profits before people" ethic that too often characterizes industry and push for health-safety committees at every work-site. Secondly, we must strenuously call for affirmative action in employment, so that blacks can escape from those menial, low-wage, dangerous jobs.

Without such an effort, we will continue to be casualties in the ongoing war for profits.

To Be Equal

Which English — Black Or Public?

By VERNON E. JORDAN, JR.

Last summer a judge in Ann Arbor, Michigan ruled that teachers at an elementary school serving youngsters from a low-income housing project would have to take a course in "Black English."

That decision won't be the last we'll hear on the subject. It relit the fires of controversy surrounding Black English, and it resolved the issues in a reasonable way.

Proponents of Black English suggest that it is a separate language and black children must be taught it both because it is their "home language" and because proficiency in Black English will pave the way for their mastery of Public English.

Opponents on the other hand, condemn its use in the schools and insist that the children be taught in Public English, with no concessions made to those who use Black English on a daily basis.

But the crux of the issue was never which language should be used in the classroom. Black parents have made it abundantly clear that they insist their children be taught — and be proficient in — standard English.

That's the language of job applications, of higher education, and of the world of work. Without skills in standard English black children face limited futures.

Black English became a barrier to learning not because of the children's use of it, but

because teachers automatically assume its use signified inferior intelligence, inability to learn, or other negative connotations.

Teachers often decide, on the basis of student's speech patterns, that they can't learn. As one black psychologist testified at the Ann Arbor trial, "too many are branded as stupid, just because they are brought up using different words than whites."

So by focusing on the teachers, the judge made the right decision. Sensitizing teachers to Black English will equip them to communicate better with pupils who use the language in their daily lives. And it should help them to make better assessments of the students' ability to read and speak Public English.

But it's a big leap from that to advocate teaching Black English in the schools. That would be a big mistake.

For one thing, if many black children already speak the language at home there is no need to teach it to them. For another, it is inappropriate. It may be a useful communications tool in the playground, but not in their dealings with the rest of a society that universally uses Public English.

And the use of Black English varies widely according to region and class. Educators can't assume that being black automatically means a student knows or uses Black

English.

So Black English's place in the school is best seen as a sensitizing mechanism for teachers, aiding them to teach Public English to their students.

Language isn't the only area where many teachers need to be sensitized. Just as hearing Black English makes many stigmatize its user, so too do many teachers display discriminatory attitudes based on race, dress and class.

Teaching black, Hispanic, or poor children requires that teachers demonstrate respect for the child and his heritage. It means overcoming white middle class behavior and speech patterns and accepting the validity of other cultures. Such a constructive attitude demands a degree of sensitivity lacking in many schools today.

The overriding goal has to be to equip black school children with the ability to read, write and speak Public English, the language they will have to know if they are to enter the mainstream of American life.

And that Public English must be taught in a way that does not ignore, denigrate, or eradicate the rich language traditions of the students.

Black students then, must be taught language skills which will give them access to the full range of economic, political and social opportunities.

Congressman Hawkins' Weekly Column

By Augustus F. Hawkins

On April 4, 1979, I wrote an article in response to an irate communication from one of my constituents, who was finding it difficult to pay her bills, because of mounting inflation.

Her special concern was her need to drive to work, and gasoline price-inflation. Unfortunately she lived in an area where public transportation was almost non-existent, which necessitated the daily use of her car to get to and from her place of employment.

I noted in that article that the President was going to move to some kind of decontrol reasonably soon; especially because of the pressure of his secretaries of state, treasury and energy and his top economic adviser, Charles Schultze.

Those of us in the Congress who were opposed to decontrol attempted without success to exert great pressure on him to keep him firmly reminded that decontrol would mean extreme inflation.

In addition to the fact that rapid decontrol would cause severe inflation, we also reminded him that oil company profits would be excessive; and that those least able to afford decontrol would be hurt the most by it: poor people and minorities.

Many of my Congressional colleagues agreed with my assessment; Rep. Toby Moffet said on "Face the Nation," that the President's decision was "probably the most inflationary decision ever made by a President."

Hobart Rowan, the *Washington Post's* economic expert, indicated that "All the President has done by going ahead with decontrol is to assure the nation that energy will cost more, inflation will worsen, and the oil companies will prosper."

And this is exactly what is happening. Energy prices are up sixty per cent this year (fifty per cent of the inflation rate). Gasoline prices have spilled clear over the one-dollar per-gallon mark. Inflation has hit a double-digit thirteen per cent, and it

doesn't appear that it will decrease anytime soon.

And the oil companies profits? Not just an obscene fifty per cent or 100 per cent increase over previous quarter profits, but some companies are experiencing 300 and 400 per cent profit margins.

Even talk of a windfall profits tax seems ludicrous, because as the windfall tax bill makes its way through the Congress, it appears less and less likely that it will be meaningful.

The House bill calls for a windfall profits tax that will yield an estimated \$277 billion by 1990, but the Senate version has cut this almost in half. Additionally it appears that domestic, independent oil companies which are not involved in the refining of oil, will probably be totally exempt from paying any windfall tax at all. There are other such exemptions just as likely to neutralize any move to make oil companies more responsible to the kinds of sacrifices the President keeps telling consumers they must make.

Saying "I told you so," doesn't help either; what it does do in this case, is to indicate that those of us who were greatly concerned about the inflationary nature of decontrol, have a greater job to do now.

And that job is to mount a campaign to reinstitute controls on oil, and to roll back prices on certain energy products, at some mutually agreed upon level.

If energy prices are clearly fifty per cent of the current inflation rate, our job then is to attack that aspect of the economy, in order to slow it down, reduce it, and stabilize its impact on the cost of living.

If we can do this, we'll see a reasonable decrease not only in energy, but also in the cost of housing, health care, and food. And also see reductions in all the other spin-off costs so affected by these four. This means harder work on our part to change the current energy policy but the alternative is worse.



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