

From The Editor: The Onus Is On US

As this is being written a twenty-sixth black victim has been found in the Chattahoochee River...west of ATLANTA. Once again, police appear to be baffled. In addition, this may well be the twenty-seventh victim since Atlanta police have still delayed in adding 21 year old Jimmy Ray Payne to the official list. These continuous, nightmarish assaults on Black American people serve to propell to the forefront of our thinking how really vulnerable Black Americans still are to not only economic violence but physical violence as well.

The Atlanta murders (among other things) has finally succeeded in shocking Black people into a reality that many tried desperately to deny. The reality is that in 1981 we are still not free. Yes, after almost a decade we took advantage of the hard-fought gains of the Civil Rights Movement only to let these gains systematically slip away as we discoed our cares away. Many of us felt so good with our new jobs and two extra dollars that we saw no need to nurture the ties that bound us together in the movements of the sixties. Why should we? Aren't we free? If you find

yourself questioning freedom then, obviously we don't have it.

A most unfortunate byproduct of our education and career advancement, in recent years, has been a devastating loss of compassion for our own. We drifted blindly back into the old "crabs in the barrel" syndrome turning deaf ears to those who need our help while basking in personal and/or material accomplishments. Of course, all of us did not take this course. There will always be people among us who exemplify an unwavering love and dedication to helping us. But enough of us took the other route to make it clear that we have created our own void. This is a void that we cannot depend on white America to fill. This is a void that if filled at all Black Americans will have a renewed tower of strength. This is void that if filled killings like those in Atlanta would not go on unsolved. This is a void that if not filled (by us) we can only expect more of the same. All that is needed to fill the void is self love and the creation of Black Unity. That ONUS IS ON US!

REAGAN VS. REAGAN

by Norman Hill

A project administered by the A. Philip Randolph Educational Fund—the Youth Employment Program (YEP)—has fallen victim to the Reagan budget cutting ax.

At first glance, this might not seem in the least surprising. Dozens of other programs funded by the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) were slated for reductions or elimination. A number of such programs were run by civil rights organizations.

However, what is remarkable about the demise of the Youth Employment program is that it was oriented around a private sector approach. It was not a makework boondoggle. The program successfully placed young blacks into meaningful jobs in the private sector. For a cost of a little over \$1,000 per placement, half the cost of most government-sponsored and private training and placement programs, young blacks were counseled and placed in jobs with a future.

The yearly million-dollar budget of YEP was lean. Most of the money went to pay for staff and office expenses in ten cities. In two-and-a-half years, this modest program succeeded in placing nearly 2,500 young people in full-time jobs. It provided an essential mechanism for young blacks by which they could escape the cycle of poverty and enter into the productive workforce. The program provided a needed service for employers, as well. It pre-screened young blacks on the basis of training, ability, and work habits.

All of this, one would think, is precisely the kind of approach the Reagan Administration should be encouraging if it is honestly committed to including blacks in the private sector.

Interestingly enough, several months ago, the Institute for Educational Affairs—an organization whose Vice-Chairman is neo-conservative political scientist Irving Kristol—wrote in glowing terms about the Youth Employment Program. The organization's newsletter referred to YEP as "a refreshing alternative" and contrasted it favorably to "youth employment programs with pie-in-the-sky goals and built-in inefficiency." YEP, the report asserted, "is based on fiscal soundness, incentive, and realism." This, then, was the assessment of an organization which included among its officers a substantial number of members of President Reagan's transition team.

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Roy Wood's ONE BLACK MAN'S OPINION

On the basis of the fact that F.B.I. and local authorities say there is a definite pattern to the Atlanta slayings...I think that local, state and national moratoriums should be held on this very crucial to black folks matter. I think the one way to solve the problem in Atlanta, and in black communities across the nation where black on black crime is an ever increasing problem, is through the formation of neighborhood organizations. I am of the firm opinion that black on black crime, crimes against black youths...including the nonsensical murders and mahem committed by teen gangs...and crimes against elderly blacks and our women is a national problem that requires every concerned black person and black community across this country to take the initiative and action that can and will bring excessive violent crime in our hoods to an end. For several years now I and several other concerned African Americans have been urging black people to become more actively involved in the day to day efforts to rid black communities of crime...especially violent crimes and thefts. I don't know why, but it seems that we as a people only respond in a crisis situation, such as the Atlanta murders. Even then, we tend to

only give the situation lip service. I sincerely hope that those dastardly deaths in Atlanta will make us realize at long last that we all have to watch out for one another. It is only by concerned neighbors watching out for neighbors and their children that we African Americans can reduce and possibly end crime in our communities. Let all those black people who are now wearing green ribbons to show their compassion and concern for the Atlanta killings, turn their attention and energy towards ridding their communities of crime and grime. Through the solving of your own local black on black crime problems you will be able to provide some concrete examples of what we can do for ourselves. As that relates to the Atlanta situation...anything that is less than day to day anti crime activity in our own communities is simply pure black emotionalism, and that ain't never solved our problems. If we as a people continue to respond emotionally and sporadically to the matter of violent crime in our neighborhoods...whether in Atlanta...or elsewhere, black communities need only prepare for more funerals and a continuing increase of assaults on the streets. This is just one black man's opinion. What's yours? I'm Roy Wood.