



**YOU MUST BECOME  
INVOLVED IN THE WELFARE  
OF THE COMMUNITY.**

### Editorial

## We Do Have A Choice

It is baffling, indeed numbing, to know that with the vast potential political power that blacks have in this country that we have been willing to endure the type of grueling assaults on our lives for so many years.

For example, blacks represent 22% of the nation's population and comprise 20-40% of the electorate in eight national congressional districts. Yet, because blacks do not vote, there is only one black senator in the United States Senate.

In North Carolina, blacks make up 20-40% of the electorate in eight out of eleven congressional districts, but there are only one senator and three members in the State House of Representatives.

When we evaluate the quality of our lives and assess how well our elected officials have served us, the following facts become apparent:

- in every school house in this country in districts controlled by whites, black pupils make up a disproportionate number of special education classes;
- black unemployment is as high as sixty per cent in some areas;
- blacks live in high price shacks and run down apartments in crime ridden neighborhoods;
- blacks, due to the unfair justice system, are losing their land at the rate of several thousand acres each day;
- large numbers of black youth are introduced to a life a crime in their early teens; and
- black neighborhoods are buried under freeways and expressways each day.

All of these disparaging circumstances exist because we do not, as a group, assume responsibility for setting goals and objectives for our own lives; that we are too willing to allow others who have no interest in our well-being to control our destiny. We do not register and vote in large numbers.

A voteless people is a hopeless people and we are doomed to further destruction unless we assume some of the responsibility for what is happening to us. We cannot continue to allow 'somebody else' to determine our fate.

*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 ocean's majestic waves without the awful roar of its waters.*

—Frederick Douglass

## Things You Should Know

John  
Paterson

# GREENE

Born in 1845 in New Bern, N.C., he was educated in Cleveland, Ohio, getting his LL.B. degree in 1870! After ten years of law practice he was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives, and re-elected in 1888, and to the Ohio Senate in 1890—their first Negro! It was he who introduced the bill founding Labor Day, later to become a national holiday!



### To Be Equal

## Behind The Block Grants

By Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

The Administration is pushing its concept of a "new federalism" with vigor. Its centerpiece is lumping the bulk of federal social welfare programs into block grants to the states.

This is justified on a number of grounds. It is alleged that state and local officials are closer to the problems, and are better able to determine which programs fit local needs, and that they can deliver those services more efficiently.

That's the official justification, and it is wrong.

The federal government got into the business of providing social programs because of two realities. First, they are necessary for the nation's security and well-being. Second, the states either did not or could not meet those needs.

State and local governments are closer to the people and the problems. That is why most federal programs are actually run by those governments. They apply for inclusion in the programs and administer them under federal guidelines.

Those guidelines help keep the programs honest and efficient in a way they would not be under total local control. Experience with present block grant programs that turn funds over to states and cities for fairly specific purposes but with little federal oversight demonstrates this.

A recent study by the federal General Ac-

counting Office, the watchdog of federal dollars, reports the misuse of hundreds of millions of dollars provided under the Community Development Block Grant program.

The aim of the program is to revitalize cities. But the report says the money is spread so thinly among so many localities that major problem areas get shortchanged.

It reports too, that in many cities housing rehabilitation funds were going for garages and sun decks instead of upgrading substandard housing for the poor. In one city, fifteen per cent of federally-funded rehab loans went to people earning over \$30,000.

So it is clear that the experience of block grants is that they invite local misuse of federal funds. The absence of federal targeting and controls results in costly abuse.

The real intent of block grants is the dismantling of social programs. The first step is to lump them together, giving states discretion to determine how much each program gets. Since the block grants amount to 25% less than the total of the separate programs, that also means less money.

Phase Two comes when state and local governments divide up the pie. Since there is less money to go around, deserving causes are pitted against each other. Minorities, the poor, women, the handicapped, are all set in competition against each other for available funds.

The best and most humane governors and mayors will have the hard task of distributing funds for worthy causes, knowing there is not enough in the pot to really meet their communities' needs.

And in many states and cities, if not most, the poor will be frozen out altogether. Officials will take advantage of their freedom from control by Washington to spend the money on programs for which Congress never intended it to be used. Politically powerful groups will get money intended for the poor and the powerless.

The next phase inevitably will be reducing Washington's grants to states and cities for those programs. Congress won't want to appropriate money for programs over which it has no control and little political credit. And part of the drive for lower federal taxes is to give states room to raise theirs.

But faced with the choice of raising taxes and cutting programs, local politicians will likely choose the latter. And that will be the end of many of the programs we need to provide basic social services and public amenities.

That is why the shift from targeted categorical programs to block grants is more than a bookkeeping change. It represents a fundamental change looking to the dismal days of the past when government shirked its responsibility to meet society's needs.

### Business In The Black

## Country's Got To Follow The Leader

### General Motors Behind The Move

By Charles E. Belle

What's good for General Motors is good for the country," according to the current GM chairman as well as a previous GM chief executive officer. Openly boasting before a devoted audience of "our country first" Commonwealth Club of California members, Robert B. Smith, chairman of General Motors Corporation, claimed "U.S. automakers are aggressively moving to meet these (foreign) challenges."

Calling President Reagan "probably California's greatest gift to the nation," Smith claims Reagan and General Motors Corporation are both on the right path for recovery of the automobile maker and the country.

Mr. Smith, an ex-Navy man, is steering his ship at full throttle toward automation of work positions. Placing the blame for being behind the Japanese squarely on the shoulders of the U.S. working man, Mr. Smith stated that "GM's labor costs are more than seventy per cent above the Japanese." Just looking at dollars per hour costs alone, the chairman says U.S. labor costs almost \$8 per hour too much.

Furthermore, "Relief time, another form

of pay for time not worked, is about three times the Japanese standard." While Mr. Smith stresses the fact that "the majority of our GM people are hard-working, long-term employees who come to work everyday, and who are dedicated to doing the best job for themselves and for GM, some cuts in salary and staff are still in store.

The new "J" car series line of GM cars created in a sensational seven month span, will start being produced "with modernized plants and processes." Robots, not people, will be employed greater in future production of GM automobiles.

GM's major effort to improve its competitive position for automobile sales worldwide will be carried out under "a massive five-year, \$40 billion capital investment program — the largest ever undertaken by an industrial company." Cars made for GM, according to the chairman, are for export as well as domestic sales.

Outside the U.S., GM expects sales to reach \$32 billion by the end of the decade, up almost 35%. Perhaps Smith senses something several European states have not noticed. Japanese car exports to the Euro-

pean Common Market countries leaped almost twenty per cent for the first three months of the year. Only France and Italy have not suffered fatalities under the Japanese assault, because the governments in those two countries, as does Japan's government, protect their home markets from foreign imports.

General Motors is a giant who is not afraid of foreign competition and supports free trade — no import restrictions in the U.S. or any other country. "GM has no fears about domestic or foreign competition," claims Chairman Smith. "We have always said the way to beat the Japanese is not with paper and pen in Washington, but with products in the market place."

The new "J" car lines, including the Chevrolet Cavalier, the Pontiac J-2000 and the Cimarron by Cadillac, are expected to lead the GM charge. These highly fuel-efficient cars can achieve thirty miles per gallon in the city and 47 miles per gallon on the highway on some models, says Smith. The chances are great "the car of the future" will no doubt have a "J" associated with it.

### Affirmative Action

## States Rights And Human Rights

Gerald C. Horne, Esquire

Many will not feel the hot breath of Reagan's budget cuts until next October 1st. And by that time it may be too late to complain. Jobs are the bottom line and a black community, reeling from an unemployment rate that makes the "Great Depression" of the 1930's seem inviting by comparison, will be particularly affected.

One of Reagan's first targets was the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, which provides so-called CETA jobs. Over 300,000 have received public sector jobs pursuant to this program, many of them black. But barely after reaching office, one of the President's first acts was to hold back or reallocate about \$1 billion in funds for the current fiscal year. This has forced an immediate dismissal of tens of thousands of workers.

"Last summer we had 8,000 individuals in public service employment and we nearly had a riot in the city anyway," said Willie F. Johnson, executive director of Philadelphia's office of Employment and Training. "Now they have taken away one of the tools we use to provide not only employment and training, but hope for our young people. It adds to the burden the city faces in trying to keep calm during the summer."

There have been certain problems with CETA jobs, not the "least of which, has been the wages that are below those paid to regular municipal employees, which at times made it resemble "workfare." But it is the cruelest of ironies that a President elected on a pledge to "put America back to work" has instead chosen to "put Americans out of work."

This won't come as a surprise to those who know that the staff that meets with Reagan daily is as white as fresh snow or that on Nancy Reagan's staff there is not one black. Unfortunately, many voted for Reagan on the premise that he would "get the n—s" and thus far, he hasn't disappointed them. Even the few blacks on Reagan's team make George Wallace or Jesse Helms sound "liberal." Jay Parker, who professes to be an Afro-American, has opposed staunchly affirmative action. Like Interior Secretary James Watt, he had the temerity to announce that he would think twice before visiting a black doctor just because the physician might have been admitted to medical school pursuant to an affirmative action program. With this kind of

Judas Iscariot attitude on the part of the black staff, one can only imagine what other fiendish plans — besides slashing a life-line of CETA jobs — the Reagan Administration is cooking up.

While throwing some out of work, Reagan has proposed putting others to work. But this is not a benign proposition. "Workfare," Reagan's "new" program is in fact as old as the hills. He proposes to make welfare recipients work — a guaranteed applause line for the racist set — but is vague about the disabled and mothers with small children unable to afford child care, who comprise a disproportionate percentage of recipients. He ignores the report of his own General Accounting Office which shows that the administrative costs to run "workfare" in the United States today far exceed the amount saved in lower food stamp benefits and work performed. Historians have documented this rather simple, elementary fact from as far back as 1619. It was at that time in Speenhamland, England that the borough fathers learned that forcing work on the dependent poor had a tendency to drive down wages. If employers can get workers from the welfare rolls for nothing (or for less than the prevailing wage), they will pay other workers less. From their point of view, it would not make sense to do otherwise. And from the point of view of anyone who happens to work for a living, it would make sense to oppose this so-called "workfare" with unusual staunchness.

Another one of Reagan's pet phrases is "states rights". Again, though put in a new bottle this is decidedly old wine, having been thrashed soundly at least in the 1789 Constitutional Convention, definitely by the Civil War, and the 13th and 14th Amendments. One would think that this bitter conflict that pitted North against South had settled for all time the notion that states could direct whatever they wanted against the population within their borders without Washington intervening. Reagan is not an historian or a lawyer but one would hope that he was taught in civics class these simple truths.

But what is at stake here is not truth but money, power and racism. In addition to seeking a cut of more than \$40 billion in domestic programs in the fiscal 1982 budget, Reagan has proposed a large-scale shift to the use of "block grants". This would shift

responsibility for more than \$15 billion in education, social and health services to state and local governments.

Reagan must know that many of these programs — family planning, community and mental health programs, clinics for migrants and Black Lung victims, myriads of health and education efforts — were developed by the federal government precisely after it became inevitably clear that local and state officials were not addressing fundamental health, education and welfare needs. Concentrating lobbying efforts in Washington, D.C., rather than dispersing them in fifty state capitols, catalyzed this

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