

Affirmative Action:

Reaganomics and Affirmative Action

Gerald C. Horne, Esquire

hypocritically, "I must convince the nation that this administration is not anti-black, anti-minority, not anti-anything."

But witnesses at Congressman Hawkins' hearing in Chicago were adamantly unconvinced. Virtually all spoke out forcefully for the continued need for quotas. Paul King, speaking for the National Association of Minority Contractors, said pointedly, "company voluntarism won't work. Contractors don't seek minority workers when they do private jobs. But when federal funds are used, as in the O'Hare (Airport) transit extension, you'll see large numbers of minorities. Without affirmative action compliance and enforcement we'll be back to 1969 when we had to enforce the moral law ourselves."

Mr. King is understating the case. It might be fairer to say that Reaganomics will take blacks back to 1869!

A basic tenet of the Reagan Administration is that if they starve the rest of us long enough, the rich will accumulate all that capital, invest in manufacturing and provide jobs for all us working stiff.

But even before the Administration's tax cuts were approved by Congress, evidence had mounted that corporations would take their windfall and not create new jobs but act like monopolies always have by gobbling up other corporations.

In anticipation of the Reagan give away, in the first half of 1981, \$35.7 billion was spent on acquisitions, more than was spent in all of 1978. Take the recent highly publicized effort by Mobil Oil, Seagram's (the liquor barons) and DuPont that competed eagerly to swallow Conoco, the ninth largest American petroleum company.

Did these monopolies try to create new jobs? Of course not. Why should they when it is a much safer investment to buy an already profitable enterprise rather than go the speculative route of creating new enterprise.

This will be the pattern for all those corporations which will benefit from Reagan's counter-revolutionary, astounding effort to abolish the corporate income tax. In fact, if anything, jobs may be lost by these mergers. For example, if Mobil had won the battle to buy Conoco, there would have been a duplication of jobs that would not have made profit-making sense; thus certain jobs inevitably would have been eliminated.

This facet of Reaganomics — eliminating jobs rather than creating them — is reason enough for blacks to vociferously oppose what George Bush

himself once called "voodoo economics." But this facet, damaging though it may be, is only part of the story. The monopolies that tried to buy Conoco lined up over \$20 billion in credit. Mergers soak up available credit and tend to keep interest rates high.

Further, at a time when many black businesses cannot get one dollar in credit and prospective black home owners are in the same boat, here we have the spectacle of big banks falling all over themselves trying to press billions in credit on DuPont, Mobil and Seagram's.

This is Reaganomics in action — an unmitigated disaster for black workers who don't get (and may lose) jobs, black businesses, prospective black home owners, etc.

But that's not all. Reaganomics also involves the largest peace time military build-up in the history of human kind. Despite protestations to the contrary, the only way this can be done is by gutting Social Security, eliminating food stamps, abolishing any federal aid to college students, etc.

The amounts to be spent on the Pentagon are mind-boggling. Just the cost overrun alone on the Navy's Aegis cruiser program is \$8.4 billion. How many students could be sent through school on that amount? Nuclear weapons funding for fiscal 1981 alone is \$5.6 billion. How many unemployed black teenagers could be trained and hired with this king's ransom? The initial cost of the MX missile system was estimated at \$34 billion. How many black senior citizens could be saved from eating dog food with this gigantic sum?

The insanity of Reaganomics is already straining municipal budgets that rely heavily on federal allocations. New York City officials are talking about the possibility of closing a hundred or so care centers for children and the elderly. Imagine the impact on unwed black mothers who are being told to "go back to work" or incapacitated senior citizens. Fairfax County, Virginia expects to increase the cost of school lunches by 15 cents to 75 cents per pupil. Atlanta is considering increased transit fares. New York and Chicago just raised theirs. Denver plans to charge its residents for use of its parks. Students in schools at Longmeadow, Massachusetts will be asked to pay for one-fourth of their athletic expenses.

Federal cuts in housing aid will force poor families receiving government subsidies to spend more of their personal income for rent. These cuts will significantly reduce the ability of state and city housing agencies to build new housing and renovate dilapidated buildings. Richard A. Berman, Com-

missioner of New York State's Division of Housing and Community Renewal is scathingly critical of this aspect of Reaganomics: "The bottom line is that the federal government is walking away from the housing problem."

This, as is clear, is not the only problem the Administration is "walking away from." Affirmative action, is not only being walked away from, but Reagan is practically running away from the problem of blacks being last hired-first fired and at the bottom of the economic ladder.

With this dire picture painted, you may rightfully ask what a group of "black supporters" of Reagan were doing conferring with the President in the White House.

Did they raise any concern about Reaganomics harming blacks? No. Did any walk out in outrage and protest? No.

In fact they applauded the President and endorsed his program thoroughly. Historians of the future will no doubt be interested in which blacks had the gall and temerity to sell-out for a mess of pottage. Let the record show that this list included Lionel Hampton, George Haley (Alex's brother), Barrington D. Parker, Jewl Lafontant (prominent Chicago attorney), William O. Walker (recently praised by closest Reagan supporter Tony Brown), Stanley Scott, James Cummings, Art Heicher and a bunch of others.

Black Democrats have no reason to point their finger in disgust for their party tried to outdo the GOP in giving away the store during the vote on Reagan's budget and tax cuts.

Right now the Democratic Party is in the process of passing rules to insure that blacks will not carry as much weight in higher party councils. The party leader, Charles Manatt, is a wheeler-dealer lawyer-banker from way back who has been going hoarse lately in saying "me-too" to every GOP proposal.

Visitors to the recent Philadelphia gathering of the once liberal young Democrats have little reason to feel reassured. One visitor waggishly observed that he thought he had wandered into a junior John Birch Society meeting by mistake, so vigorously did the delegates attack striking workers, so-called "Soviet expansionism," and other favorite targets of the extreme right.

It has become increasingly clear that new political direction is needed if Reaganomics is to be beaten back. The September 19th demonstration in Washington, sponsored by the AFL-CIO and NAACP, is a gigantic first step in the right direction.

Letter to the Editor . . .

On Naming Planet for MLK

How naive can the white man be, to think the black man is honored to have a minor planet named in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.

What about the long agitation and petitioning for a legal holiday in his honor? Maybe, I do not understand the honor. If I am, forget it.

Mrs. B.M. Edwards
Gary, Indiana.

is everything in this country and affirmative action is no exception. Even economics and controls what is fundamentally a political...
is why so many have expressed concern "Reaganomics" and its impact on the and economic health of blacks. For the that with Reagan's snatching of milk from of babies and gorging of the Pentagon, economic version of the "Titanic" is expected to the black community.
Chicago recently, Congressional Black Caucus Augustus Hawkins (D-Calif.) and Harold (D-Ill.) listened intently as a series of testified as to the expected devastating im- of the proposals to change affirmative action which were made by Vice President Bush in March.
most ominous comments at the hearing were by Rev. Herbert Martin, Chicago director NAACP. He refuted the notion that there is "lethargy" over Reaganomics. Like others, that the full impact of the cuts would not until after the new fiscal year begins on Oc- 1, 1981. The subcommittee hearing became quiet as Rev. Martin, a long-time propo- of non-violence, charged: "We feel that ugly are brewing and in the next riot we will see white and middle class throwing bricks."
President Bush and the Administration have a virtual mantra out of their vocal opposition "quotas". Most recently he preached this line to group of corporate executives meeting in . Feeling the pressure from skeptical critics, Bush felt compelled to add

**Plain Talk About The Law
Credit and the Consumer**

By North State Legal Services

our economy runs on credit. American consumers have become so dependent on credit that it creates problems for many of us. The low-income consumer is no exception.
at North State Legal Services receive numerous calls from consumers who owe money. They owe money to a bank, a furniture company and very often to loan companies.
look at some of the protections when the or place that we money to does not the debt over to a agency and des to collect the himself.
1977, North Carolina passed legislation which covers those who choose to their own debts their customers.
the important thing to remember is that as a who owes money, have certain legal s. You are not a second class citizen just use you owe money. you get to a point re you can't keep up payments, notify creditor immediately and try to work out an ar- onable arrangements. If onable arrangements not be worked out your creditor tries to the debt himself, these things in
The creditor cannot in that non-payment lead to your arrest. member, owing they is not a crime. tors prisons were lawed long ago.
The creditor cannot obscene or abusive uage when trying to est a debt.
If you have a phone ome, you have the to tell the creditor to call you at work. creditor cannot call at unreasonable s or with reasonable frequency.
The creditor cannot ans your debt with me else or try to col- it through a relative our employer.
They can't leave ces at your home or e of business so that one can see that owe money.
The creditor cannot mpt to collect or ac- ly collect from you debt collection fees pt attorney's fees m permitted by law.
The creditor cannot nite to contact you he has been ed by your attorney he is representing
you feel that your or is not treating fairly, you can call

the Consumer Protection Division of the Attorney General's office in Raleigh at 919/733-7741.
If you are completely overburdened with debts and have no way of paying them, there are procedures to work out a partial repayment plan or get a fresh start from your debts by using the U.S. Bankruptcy Court.
For more information on your rights as a debtor, contact your attorney or North State Legal Services.

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