

Editorials

Nobody Can Save Us But Us

With the new proposed Reagan Administration budget cuts, federal aid to black colleges and universities may be completely wiped out. This may pose undue hardship for black colleges and universities and black students. But this will not be the first time that black education has been threatened in this country by lack of funds.

During Reconstruction at the end of slavery, when black colleges were still in the infancy stage and blacks were literally facing physical survival, to say nothing of the means for economic survival, black people pooled their resources, both intellectual and financial, to build some of the best educational institutions in this country.

Whatever his motive, Booker T. Washington pulled himself "Up From Slavery" and built famous Tuskegee Institute with the meager sums of money contributed by poor black Alabamians who were determined to see their sons and daughters receive an education.

Indeed, it was through the undying, unyielding strength of our foremothers and fathers that blacks were able to build the many predominantly black institutions of higher education that we now have. And it was in these institutions that some of the best minds in this country were nurtured and grown.

Now, since we have begged, pleaded, prayed and moaned to enter the white colleges and universities, we now seem content with the small numbers of blacks who are graduated from them, and we seem to be willing to sit back and watch the doors of black institutions close forever to the future of our children.

This would seem to indicate that there is a serious problem facing black people in this country, and that problem is that we have acquired a distorted value system. We no longer value anything that is essentially ours but are content to beg to share something that whites are not particularly interested in letting us share.

We have also become so materialistic that expensive possessions have become a way of life with us and we no longer place value on the truly important matters. Thus, the education of our children has fallen low on our list of priorities. This is tragic.

What an enormous sum of money could go to our black institutions of higher education if each black worker in this country would contribute just ten dollars each year (a small sum) to the United Negro College Fund or to the black college or university of his/her choice. It would mean that he/she would only have to give up one bottle of good Scotch, or eat hamburger instead of steak one evening a week, or give up one Rick James concert, or buy one less expensive pair of designer jeans. It could mean the difference between having our own black institutions of higher education where our children could choose to attend if they so desired or to continue begging white institutions to adopt affirmative action policy in order that more black students are able to attend.

It is in the final analysis our responsibility to save our black institutions. We have the means with which to do it. We need only the determination to surmount the task.

Toward Being A True Champion

The mark of an athletic champion is having the heart, the guts, the final reserve of energy and determination to overcome certain defeat to emerge triumphant.

This was the classic case with the WBA and the WBC Welter Weight Champion Sugar Ray Leonard of the Washington, D.C. area. Robinson had to rally in the thirteenth round to beat the equally competent "Hit Man" from Detroit, Tommy Hearnes.

According to press reports, this was one of the richest boxing matches in the history of the game, with Sugar Ray reportedly taking home \$10 million and Hearnes a few million less.

We join in Washington's salute to Sugar Ray, in part. What remains for us to be absolutely certain of his true championship are signs of his sensitivity and commitment to his community. We are waiting for you, Sugar Ray, with all your media notoriety and wealth, to do as Don King has done in recent years — contribute liberally to the support of black institutions to help those who remain mired in the mud and clay of racism, inferior education, limited job opportunities, and a life of bare survival.

Other black champions — Joe Louis, Jersey Joe Walcott, Sugar Ray Robinson, and even Muhammad Ali — have been "champions" of their own people in not forgetting for a minute from whence they came.

Sugar Ray Leonard, with all your millions, we're waiting for you, too, to become a champion of your own people. In this regard, we need to follow the historic example of our Jewish friends. Loyalty to one's own people is a major principle of Judaism. —NNPA

BLACK GIANTS

Six feet tall, powerfully built and a persuasive speaker, Abraham was a cunning and brave warrior feared and respected by Army forces. He had run away from his master in Pensacola, Florida, to settle among the Indians.

He served as interpreter in 1835 when the Seminoles agreed to inspect the land onto which the government proposed to move them. Abraham was among the subchiefs who went west and viewed the land. But the relocation plan collapsed after the Indians were tricked into making additional agreements, and the Seminole war erupted.

Abraham traveled from plantation to plantation persuading slaves to run away and join the Indians. He and his black warriors fought Jesup's forces all through the swamps and in one major battle in 1835 wiped out an entire company of 100 soldiers.

Abraham, however, was wise enough to see that relocation was inevitable. He and two Seminole Chiefs, Jumper and Alligator, met Jesup and agreed to a peace conference.

Later Abraham said he expected to be hanged but had decided to die if he must, like a man, in one more effort to save his people. He used his influence in the negotiations, and a second treaty was signed in 1837 with a provision protecting the blacks. The Seminoles eventually were relocated in 1839, and Abraham moved west with them.



Minority Features

ABRAHAM

To Be Equal

Rich Nations and Poor Nations

By Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

There may be a few issues of greater importance than helping the poor half of the world achieve economic independence and a measure of prosperity.

Resolution of that issue directly affects the terrible problem of mass hunger, malnutrition, and even starvation in many parts of the world. It affects the continued prosperity of the West. And it even has implications for the dangerous threat of nuclear warfare.

For years, the world's leaders have been groping with the issue. This month's North-South summit meeting at Cancun, Mexico, is another step on the road toward reaching a reasonable solution of the vital economic questions dividing the rich and poor nations.

A lot is riding on the outcome of the Cancun meeting, especially for the poorest of the poor nations — some 31 countries with a total population nearing 300 million people.

Worldwide, the World Bank estimates that 800 million people live in "absolute poverty." That means pervasive hunger, illiteracy, disease and mortality rates virtually unimaginable for the average American.

Those countries have few resources and

big problems, especially the high cost of imported oil that makes it next to impossible for them to develop their economies.

Similar problems plague other poor countries, some of which have borrowed heavily to buy food and oil or to initiate development projects, and now find it hard to pay off their creditors.

Many of the poor nations have agitated for a new world economic order, largely consisting of huge transfers of cash and technology from rich nations to poor nations. Since this has often been accompanied by harsh words against the West, these demands have run into a blank wall.

Now, however, there are fresh voices in the West calling for steps to help develop the economies of poor nations.

Respected European elder statesman Willy Brandt led a prestigious panel that advocated more aid. Former head of the World Bank, Robert McNamara, has urged that development aid on a massive scale is in America's self-interest.

And the new French government has stated that developing the poor nations to the point where they could expand trade with the West is crucial to the future of the economies of the industrial nations.

So there is growing recognition that it is

in our own self-interest to encourage economic growth throughout the world. The alternative could well be mass starvation in the Third World, economic decline of the industrial countries, and even regional wars that escalate into nuclear confrontations between East and West.

But the current Administration still seems to be indifferent to the need for an international effort to develop the poor nations.

Although its participation at Cancun is a hopeful sign, it has sent strong signals that it would not favor an international Marshall Plan or some similar international effort.

It wants to cut back on foreign aid, restrict it to key countries allied with us, and place greater reliance on private lending and the free market.

Such an approach virtually bars agreements to stabilize prices of raw materials that many poor nations depend on for export earnings.

That is a prescription for continued international strife. It is a reflection of the lack of compassion that has hurt so many of America's poor people. And it is shortsighted, neglecting America's long-term interests in a more stable world.

Reagan's Economic Mess

By Congressman Augustus F. Hawkins

In a curious example of irony, the Reagan Administration's major weapons for fighting stagflation (the problems of inflation and unemployment) are economic tools which have traditionally caused higher inflation, more unemployment and which have eventually led to recession.

The Dow Jones Industrial Stock and Bond averages have been in a continuous decline since March when the Administration's economic plan was unveiled. At the same time, the Prime Rate has been escalating. Despite these developments, the Administration maintains that the economy will soar once this program takes effect. Confronted with the obvious disintegration of his economic forecast, President Reagan has unsuccessfully tried to shift the blame from his policies to the Congress, Wall Street and past Administrations.

As you know, money is more difficult to get than ever before and interest rates are skyrocketing. Yet the Administration supports a policy of tight money and high interest rates despite the damaging effects this is having on many sectors of the American economy, particularly housing, auto sales, savings institutions and the job market.

The Administration's policies have become a gigantic windfall for those who have money to lend. In addition, these policies benefit those who are able to get inflated prices for their goods and services due to high interest rates. At the same time, small businesses and middle and low

income consumers get the short end of the stick. High interest rates severely impact the success of small businesses with little available capital and the ability of middle and low income consumers to obtain credit in order to purchase necessities. When reasonable interest rates can't be found, many small businesses are forced into bankruptcy or are taken over by larger corporations and conglomerates. When this occurs, competition in the marketplace is eliminated. As a result, when fewer businesses corner specific markets of goods and services, they are able to control the supply. Thus, they can control prices. This is known as administered prices and is a major cause of inflation.

In the case of the individual consumer who needs a new car, a home or desires to send his kids to college the only way to do these things is through credit. With interest rates at their current levels, most people can hardly afford to take out loans. Instead we try to make the old jalopy last a little longer, fix up the old house with handyman specials and do without a new washer until the old one literally breaks down. When millions of people are forced into doing these same things, these actions add up and adversely affect the entire economy. In the final analysis, purchasing power drops because people just can't buy the items they need. Further, the fact that purchasing power drops also means that more people will be laid off from their jobs causing the

economy to weaken even further.

As the House of Representatives' Banking Committee said in its Report on Monetary Policy for 1981, "The Administration and the Federal Reserve refuse to do anything to encourage a distribution of existing scarce credit resources in an equitable and productive fashion." The Committee's Report, which was required by the Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act of 1978, then goes on to recommend that efforts should be made right away to provide credit to small businesses, homeowners and others impacted by unreasonably high interest rates. Attention should be paid to the demand for credit and not just the supply of it.

The longer high interest rates continue, the longer the economy will be squeezed and the longer the average citizens will have to do without the goods and services that he or she needs.

I support the Banking Committee's call for immediate selective credit availability to those who are suffering the most from the tight money crunch, at lower interest rates and I join them in their call for restrictions on non-productive credit. If the Administration really wants to put a dent in the inflation rate, this is a good way to start.

Hopefully, this Administration will begin to consider the needs of the average American as opposed to the whims of large corporations and the rich.

Reagan's Evaporating Mandate

By Norman Hill
President, A. Philip Randolph Institute

On September 19, over 300,000 Americans demonstrated their opposition to the economic and social policies of the Reagan Administration. The AFL-CIO-sponsored Solidarity Day march was by all estimates the largest demonstration on economic and social issues that Washington and the nation have seen since the 1963 March on Washington.

The demonstration reaffirmed that the coalition of labor, blacks, and those committed to social justice remains a significant political force in our nation's life. It also clearly signalled that the President's mandate is evaporating and that the nation's honeymoon with Ronald Reagan is over. The Solidarity Day march was, therefore, in effect, the opening salvo of the 1982 Congressional election campaign.

In the months before the demonstration, the news media were filled with articles lamenting labor's diminishing clout, accenting the depletion of labor's ranks, and suggesting that organized labor was out of step with its membership. Even President Reagan went so far as to assert that labor leaders were out of touch with the views of their members. The Solidarity Day turnout has put an end to this speculation. Indeed, it demonstrated that union members are closing ranks behind their leadership in the face of the most significant challenge to social justice since the 1920s.

Organized labor put its reputation on the line when in the early summer Lane Kirkland issued a call for Solidarity Day. Kirkland's call came at a time when the President was at the height of his popularity and when the Reagan budget proposals enjoyed widespread popularity in Congress. However, labor's leaders were well aware of the interests and needs of their members and therefore understood that the consequences of the President's economic program would

spell disaster for America's poor and working poor, and would provide no true relief for working people who suffer from inflation and high unemployment.

A public opinion poll published in the September 23rd *Washington Post* indicates that the massive turnout for the Solidarity Day march was no accident. Rather it was a clear manifestation of the shift which is occurring in the thinking of many Americans. According to the *Post* poll, most Americans view the President as siding with the wealthy and being far more sympathetic to big business interests than to the labor movement. The poll suggests that while the President remains personally popular, his policies are now viewed with increasing skepticism and pessimism. Only one in eight Americans, the poll indicates, feels that the economy is getting better.

When the President defeated Jimmy Carter in November and Republicans took control of the Senate and made large gains in the House of Representatives, many commentators began to speak of the possibility of a Republican majority. The *Washington Post* poll, however, indicates that affiliation with the Republican Party is in decline while identification with the Democratic Party is increasing. The most significant erosion in support for the President's policies has come from elderly Americans who are deeply worried by the Administration's attempt to severely reduce Social Security benefits.

The *Washington Post* poll also suggests that support for the Reagan budget cuts is diminishing. Of those polled, 47 per cent say Reagan is going too far in cutting social programs, thirty per cent feel that the cuts are about right and only nineteen per cent feel the President hasn't gone far enough.

Despite the massive turnout for the AFL-CIO's march, despite the significant

shift in public opinion which is reflected in the *Washington Post*, the President appeared on national television on September 23 to outline additional budget.

(Continued On Page 16)

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