

SOMETHING BLACKS CAN DO FOR THEMSELVES...REGISTER

**OVER 15 MILLION BLACKS ARE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE IN THE NOVEMBER ELECTION, (BUT THEY MUST REGISTER) THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS CAN DO THE JOB:**

TEACHERS  
MINISTERS  
BUSINESS MEN  
LAWYERS  
DOCTORS  
SOCIAL WORKERS ORGANIZATIONS  
UNIONS  
FRATERNAL-GROUPS  
FEDERATION OF WOMENS-ORGANIZATIONS  
(BLACK PRESS)

Editorial

**Black Durham's Duty**

With black folk making up 47% of the population of this city, Durham could truly have city government which is representative. We cannot afford to continue to let someone else pick the decision-makers for us — what we have done in the more recent elections.

It is particularly incumbent upon blacks to cast their votes in the November 3 election. We have the most to gain by voting and the most to lose by not voting. Too often we make the mistake of considering local elections not to be important enough to make a sacrifice to participate. It is on the local level that decisions are made which directly affect us every day of our lives.

We need to have a whole lot of say about who sits on the City Council, who serves on commissions, who makes appointments and why. We can not afford to continue to take such a carefree attitude about our existence in this city, county, state and nation. Those who mean us no good have not slept a wink while plotting ways to keep us divided and asleep. How much longer are we going to keep swallowing this line of gunk? How much longer are we going to keep sleeping? The world is passing us by.

It is not only a duty to ourselves, but an obligation to generations yet unborn to let nothing stand in our way of casting our ballot on Tuesday, November 3, even if we have to crawl to get to the polls. The situation is just that serious.

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people

**Things You Should Know**



**Charles H. TURNER**

1867—1923

BORN IN CINCINNATI, OHIO, HE WON HIS M.S. DEGREE AT CINCINNATI UNIVERSITY IN 1892. AFTER A SHORT EXPERIENCE TEACHING BIOLOGY, HE RESUMED STUDIES AT UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, WINNING HIS PH.D. WITH HIGHEST HONORS! HE DID EXTENSIVE RESEARCH AND MADE MANY INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS IN A FIELD OF BIOLOGY SO ADVANCED AND COMPLEX THAT ONLY A FEW EXPERTS COULD FULLY APPRECIATE THEIR WORTH!

CONTINENTAL FEATURES

To Be Equal

**Undermining Social Security**

By Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

Social Security is the most popular federal program and has been since it was started back in the 1930s. Now it is being undermined by widely-backed proposals to cut back benefits, and by scare tactics used by the system's opponents that suggest imminent bankruptcy for the Social Security trust funds.

The constant barrage of reports that "Social Security is in trouble" are wrong. The system is not in trouble, and it won't be if Congress resists the plans to cut it.

A short-term deficit is likely in the trust fund that finances pension payments. That can easily be dealt with by shuffling money between the various funds making up Social Security or by using general revenue.

There is no reason to overhaul a system that works because of a temporary cash flow problem that is easily resolved. By 1986, for demographic reasons, the funds will be solvent again. After that, trouble is not expected until well into the next century, leaving plenty of time to work out long-range answers to long-range problems.

So it is just plain wrong to frame the system's problems in grossly exaggerated terms designed to scare people into losing

confidence that they will ever collect their retirement benefits.

And it is wrong to try to correct the system's minor problems through major surgery affecting the most vulnerable of the elderly. But that is what many current proposals amount to.

Last summer, the Administration rammed through one such idea. It persuaded Congress to drop the minimum benefit, a measly \$30 per week. That was a terrible blow to the poorest of the elderly — many of them women who typically worked in low-paying jobs or in non-covered employment.

They were told that if they can't make it without the minimum benefit, they could always apply for welfare. That insulted elderly people who worked hard for low wages all their lives just to keep off the welfare rolls.

With Congress moving swiftly to rescind that callous move, the President has decided to join in asking for restoration of the minimum benefit — a wise decision. But the flap over that issue has severely damaged his credibility in the coming debate over the future of social security.

After all, people heard him say he

would not take any benefits away from current recipients, and then he proposed a measure that would strip away the minimum below which no elderly person could fall.

So while the Administration is to be commended for now attempting to put social security on a permanently sound footing, its track record in dealing with the poor and the elderly engender great suspicion.

Those doubts were only reinforced by the President's continued backing for drastic benefit reductions for those retiring at age 62.

People taking early retirement already get reduced benefits. The majority choose to retire early because they are in poor health or because they can't find work.

We can expect further attacks on benefit levels as political leaders seek spending cuts to absorb the huge deficits caused by tax cuts and military spending.

We must be on guard against any attempt to change Social Security from a universal insurance system to a means-tested welfare program for the elderly. Warnings of impending bankruptcy for the Social Security system and suggestions that people rely on personal savings for retirement only inspire fear.

**Who Are The Real Criminals?**

By Congressman Augustus F. Hawkins

On September 28th, President Reagan delivered his first major talk on the problem of crime in America, to the International Association of Chiefs of Police. Reagan's basic message to the Police chiefs was that crime has grown because of increased government spending; that there is no connection between poverty and crime; and that crime is a problem "of the human heart" because today's criminal, for the most part, is not a desperate person seeking food for his family, but it is the way of life he has chosen to lead.

That's funny. . . . I thought his Administration said increased government spending is the cause for inflation, unemployment, high interest rates, high taxes, a weak Social Security system, low growth, and a bad stock market. Now, criminal activity has been added to the list. Gee, I wonder if government spending made Sugar Ray TKO Tommy Hearns?

Seriously, the President's remarks on crime absolutely defy the realities of life as we know it today, and fly in the face of years of statistical and academic evidence that argue a direct relationship between unemployment and deteriorating social conditions and increases in crime.

This Administration's simplistic approach to a very complex problem is just as reprehensible, disgraceful and foolish as is a street mugger's activities.

The President offered no new answers to this cancerous problem. He ignored dealing with handgun control or thoughtful reforms to the Criminal Code. Instead, by looking at crime as a "problem of the human heart", he looked at

the symptoms of criminal activity instead of addressing the cause of such behavior.

A variety of studies over the last several years have shown definite relationships between rising unemployment rates and increases in prison populations. Studies have also shown the relationships between increases in the unemployment rate and increases in death rates, heart disease, suicides, homicides, mental hospital admissions, and heightened family tensions and disintegration. I firmly believe that there can be no long-lasting effort to reduce crime permanently without a major reduction in rates of unemployment and efforts to ensure people access to basic human dignities.

The Administration's economic program of laying off workers, reducing school lunches, dropping needy people from food stamps and medical care, and requiring renters in subsidized housing to use more of their paychecks for rent, will literally make our lives and property less safe.

When so much unemployment and poverty exist side by side with so much affluence, when the rich get richer through Administration sponsored tax breaks and incentives, and the poor and jobless can't move up the economic ladder because they don't have the necessary skills and education to succeed in a high technology professional labor market, it almost seems reasonable to suppose that faced with these injustices, one might turn to crime to satisfy unmet daily needs and desires.

Don't get me wrong. . . . I am not saying all criminals aren't responsible for their actions and do not deserve to pay a

debt to society if convicted. What I am saying is I do not support simple-minded slogans as responses to a grave social problem. We cannot ignore the cause of a sickness, and treat only the symptoms. That would be like stopping all efforts to find a cure for cancer, and instead only spend time and money on making it easier and less painful for people to die from the disease.

The answer to crime in America is a full-pronged attack on the causes of crime, together with heightened sensitivity and involvement from law enforcement officials and citizens such as yourselves.

We must educate our young people on how they can resolve conflicts within the system, avoid legal problems, and deal responsibly and effectively with such problems when they do arise.

We have to work as a community together to encourage a more open dialogue between ourselves and law enforcement officers. We must continue in our neighborhoods to expand Crime Watches and similar efforts which have proven very effective in reducing crime in local areas.

But law enforcement is only one aspect of the problems; community improvements, better schools, economic development, welfare reform, training programs and job creation, strengthened family life, full employment. . . . these are but a few of the substantial things we should be supporting; because they are right in themselves and at the same time would play an important roll in any crime reduction program. Certainly, nothing would be lost if we did the right things anyhow.

**Affirmative Action:**

**Blacks and T.V.**

Gerald C. Horne, Esquire

That television is no longer considered a cultural cornucopia is far from being news. Many have railed at parents for using it as a baby-sitter and as substitute for interaction with their children. But blacks in particular should be leary of the "boob tube" because it is no longer an exaggeration to say that TV is a ticking time bomb sitting in the living room.

The educational value of prime time shows on the major networks is virtually nil. A recent survey in California confirms this truism by showing that the more a student watches television, the worse he/she does in school. Wilson Riles, the black educator who serves as California Schools superintendent has said that no matter how much homework the students did, how intelligent they were or how much money their parents earned, the relationship between television and test scores was practically identical. "The verbal dialogue that goes on in many of those programs is of very low quality and the educational value would be nil," said Riles.

Not only do these TV shows have no educational value, but often they are plain offensive. "Sex sells" seems to be the main theme of TV producers as they shamelessly pander to the prurient interest. Buxom lasses in wet t-shirts are on the air more frequently than commercials and "jiggle" shows have joined "sit-coms" as a discrete TV category.

What effect this has on the spiralling rate of sexual assault and rape one can speculate, as the networks hide sanctimoniously behind the not too steady shield of the First Amendment to justify their crass exploitation.

But the effect these TV shows have on the exploding rate of teenage pregnancy is

now coming clear. Approximately one million teenage girls become pregnant each year with 600,000 births resulting — thirty per cent of these outside marriage. All too often, because of the nature of this society, these births are not celebrated but deemed tragedies, as girls must frequently drop out of school, take a job and curtail educational advance.

Now recent studies demonstrate the effect of certain television shows on this group. They tend to watch more TV than those who do not become pregnant and tend to identify more with "romantic" portrayals. These data suggest that TV viewing habits and TV program content influence adolescent sexuality and a pilot study undertaken by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory is expected to confirm this.

It would be reductionist to point to TV as the villain behind every social problem — obviously a number of factors are at play — but it would be myopic to ignore its powerful impact on society.

The black community should be doubly outraged about television. Not only does the content of the shows have a devastatingly negative impact on black society but this is done more often than not without hiring black performers and technical crews.

Take "Dallas" for example, the highly popular tale of sex and sin that has made CBS millions. Not only does it not feature any black characters (in fact it has not cast a black performer on the show since it was first televised in September, 1979) but when Tom Bishop, publicist of Lorimar, the company that produces the show, was asked if there were plans of casting a black in future roles, he

(Continued on Page 20)

**The Carolina Times**

L.E. AUSTIN  
Editor-Publisher 1927-1971  
[USPS 091-380]

Published every Thursday (dated Saturday) at Durham, N.C. by United Publishers, Incorporated. Mailing address: P.O. Box 3825, Durham, N.C. 27702-3825. Office located at 923 Old Fayetteville Street, Durham, N.C. 27701. Second Class Postage paid at Durham, North Carolina 27702.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE CAROLINA TIMES, P.O. Box 3825, Durham, N.C. 27702.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: One year, \$12.00 (plus 48¢ sales tax for North Carolina residents). Single copy 30¢. Postal regulations REQUIRE advance payment on subscriptions. Address all communications and make all checks payable to: THE CAROLINA TIMES.

NATIONAL ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVE: Amalgamated Publishers, Inc., 45 West 45th Street, New York, New York 10036.

Member: United Press International Photo Service, National Newspaper Publishers Association, North Carolina Black Publishers Association.

Opinions expressed by columnists in this newspaper do not necessarily represent the policy of this newspaper.

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