

Editorial

Hope For A Better Durham

Durham voters elected some new folks to help run our city's government on Wednesday.

We hope the new representatives will keep in focus the responsibility to they owe to ALL of Durham — and not just to those who voted to put them in office.

It is past time for our elected officials to rise above political shenanigans, pettiness, partiality and selfishness that have appeared to characterize some of those previously elected to represent the citizenry.

We believe we've got a chance to show the world that government can be responsive to ALL of its citizens, irrespective of the race, color, creed or condition of those citizens.

We're depending on our new mayor and council representatives to use their influence to bring about a better Durham with opportunities for ALL and more harmonious relationships.

Guest Editorial

Turning Adversities Into Assets

©By Eddie N. Williams, President

Joint Center for Political Studies

It is often said that necessity is the mother of invention. When the need for something is great enough, people will be motivated to find a way to get it. And when pain and suffering get to be too hard to bear, people will try to find relief.

The needs of black America become painfully clearer with every budget cut, with every retreat from affirmative action, with every rise in unemployment, in inflation, and in the consumer price index. Those needs stand out in bold print when we read that the bottom is being cut out of the safety net of social programs and that what funds are left are being put in the hands of governments and leaders that do not always have our best interests at heart.

We realize we are not the only victims of today's bitter economic medicine. We realize, too, that there are indeed grave economic problems and that all of us must contribute to their solution and share some of the burden. But those who are on the lowest rungs of the economic ladder are being asked to bear a disproportionate share of the burden. Moreover, this disproportionate impact comes at the very time at which the federal government is stepping back from its promises and responsibilities in the areas of equal opportunity and equal justice. This convergence of discriminatory economic policies and the retreat from affirmative action gives the appearance that what is unfolding is a conspiracy to renege on this nation's fundamental commitment to equal opportunity and equal justice.

In the face of adversity and necessity, what are we to do? Dry up like raisins in the sun? No. We must do what we have always done in the face of adversity and necessity. We must invent ways to protect our gains and to further advance our social, economic, and political interests.

Whatever new approaches are discovered, however, our efforts must be undergirded by the exercise of political power. Elections are still the primary way of achieving popular goals in America. The ballot does not always guarantee improvement, but it does create opportunities for change.

As social and economic programs are turned over to the states and localities for administration, we must use political organization and political action at the state and local levels to make sure we are not overlooked. To those who say "get the government off the backs of the people," I say, "put the people on the back of the government. Make it work for all of us."

If members of Congress vote against our interests, then we must use political organization and political action in congressional districts to elect people who will pay attention to our needs. Certainly, we can become a more credible force in the 93 congressional districts where blacks are twenty per cent or more of the population.

If Presidents do not behave the way we think they should, we have the chance, every four years, to change Presidents. We are 11.7 per cent of the national electorate and have substantial political potential in a number of major electoral states.

I believe that our leaders and organizations can turn today's adversities into tomorrow's assets. They are in an excellent position to turn black people on to politics the way they used to be turned on to protest. The motivation now, as before, flows from our instinct to survive. The goal is quite simple: protect the right to vote, and then get out and vote.

We must mobilize as never before. This mobilization can begin in the hearts and minds of each and every one of us and move right into all of the organizations and institutions in our communities. As we mobilize from the grassroots up, as our people are motivated to help themselves, I think we will rediscover that spirit which has brought us this far along the way. As we pull together to fight for our rights and interests — beginning with voter education, registration, and participation — I think we will find ourselves in command of a mass citizens movement to pursue our political and economic objectives, a movement that can neither be ignored nor denied.

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

To Be Equal

Sadat: Statesman And Leader

By Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

The brutal assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat has led many to reflect on leadership and on the qualities that lift politicians and heads of states to the honorable and respected title, "statesman."

There is no doubt that Sadat earned the "statesman" title through his extraordinary leadership of Egypt.

A soldier and a man of war, he came to stand for peace. A man who was expected to be a short-lived figurehead after Nasser's death, he became a powerful force in his country's history. A partisan in one of the world's longest-lived and most bitter international disputes, he became the initiator of a process that promised to end the conflict.

It is sad to think that in a world so recently led by men of gargantuan proportions, men like Roosevelt, Churchill, DeGaulle, and a handful of others, only Anwar Sadat among our immediate contemporaries is likely to stand in their company.

Sadat's genius was the ability to look far into the future while his peers contented themselves with short-range objectives. He saw the futility of the prolonged Arab-Israeli conflict and the terrible suffering it caused his country.

And he did something about it. His visit

to Jerusalem, the historic flight that broke the pattern freezing both sides into attitudes destined to lead to more wars, was a stroke of boldness unique in our times.

That extraordinary step went beyond the conventional rhetoric that passes for "leadership"; it went to the core of the problem by creating a new psychology and a new set of realities that all sides had to deal with.

Sadat was fond of talking about the need to deal with the psychological factors in disputes. He recognized that what people say and what people feel are often quite different, and that breaking through psychological barriers was often as important as purely diplomatic initiatives.

So it was by force of his personality and his acute sense of the buried desires of the people of his region that Sadat was able to inaugurate a peace process most people believed impossible.

The glacial pace of that process is hardly a criticism of Sadat. Rather, it reflects the failure of other actors in that fateful drama to rise above their own ambitions and rhetoric. It demonstrates the gap between great leaders who have a vision of the future and act upon that vision, and lesser men who muddle through as prisoners of short-range considerations or to preserve personal power.

With Sadat's death, a new period of uncertainty grips the Mideast. The area is a potential tinderbox, a deadly mixture of Cold War rivalries, oil politics, fanaticism, and fragile political structures.

But pessimism is something that comes all too easily. As Sadat understood, an optimistic frame of mind can help shape optimistic outcomes. Since his death, we have been treated to a steady stream of doomsday predictions that new outbreaks of war are inevitable. That was the conventional wisdom before Sadat's great breakthrough; such predictions may once again be proved wrong.

Sadat risked all, and in a sense lost all, since his assassination deprived him of life. But that awful event merely demonstrates the force of irrationality loose in the world, and the dangers to freedom and peace of fanaticism and terror.

All of the world's leaders, from desert princes to revolutionary generals, from the White House to the Kremlin, ought to heed Sadat's wise words that: "I've been able to do with my head what I've never been able to do with guns."

Sadat will be sorely missed by a world to which he sought to bring peace. We needed more Sadats, now we have fewer. Leadership is in short supply.

Spectacles: A Closer Look

North Carolina: A Glorious State

By Ada M. Fisher

It was only in my junior year of college that I fully appreciated what a marvelous and beautiful state North Carolina is. From the mountains to the sandhills to the sea, North Carolina has it all. Though many may say Hawaii is beautiful or the mid-west is breath-taking, few have the climatic variety of North Carolina without overdoing it — three months of spring, summer, fall and winter without too much snow and highlighted with spell-binding autumn foliage.

The red clay soil, through occasionally bothersome to irate wet weather drivers, nonetheless produces crops which help sustain us all. Not many people realize the distinctions the state has in agriculture which include tobacco, a billion and a half dollar industry, soybeans, strawberries, blueberries, and the scuppernon grape. The scuppernon grape is now the basis for a revitalized wine industry in this state. Pickles reign supreme as well where Mount Olive's folks boast of being in the 'pickle capital' of the country.

Outside of Durham, going toward Roxboro are the Long Meadow Farms which have provided tours and a look at farm life for many city-kids. Now cows and dairy farms are increasingly dotting the rural landscape. Few realize that this state

claims the distinction of poultry capital, producing one-third of the consumable fowl for this nation. In addition, turkeys are king in Duplin County and Frank Purdue has added a poultry plant to the state's northeastern landscape; hence, there must be something to the chicken industry here. Hogs and pigs run a close second in the southeastern areas. It's not uncommon to see pigs running alongside cars down some of the southeastern interstates.

Bassett, Henredon, Drexel, Thomasville, and many other furniture companies located in the High Point area, at one time gave this state the distinction of producing eighty per cent of the furniture made in the U.S.A. Burlington Industries, J.P. Stevens and Cannon are leaders in textile production here. The Research Triangle has opened up opportunities from computers and complex machinery to pharmaceuticals.

Though the job market is currently tight for many areas, with some hustle, and ingenuity, the diversified options in North Carolina are fascinating. The medical industry is a leader here with North Carolina having the distinction of four medical school complexes — Bowman Gray, Duke, East Carolina

University and UNC-Chapel Hill. The significance of this feat isn't appreciated until one realizes that many states don't have even one medical school. General education at the college level is excellent from the state to the private universities which are numerous. The major role of the traditionally and historically black institutions is one North Carolina can be proud of. It is delightful to take a ride and visit the universities here — many are steeped in tradition, southern charm and traditions of excellence.

Now that business and industry are in the arts will blossom and expand. The cultural diversity of its people from the native American Indians to the influx of migrant workers provides rare and often electrifying combinations for the North Carolina populace.

The tragedy of this state is that many of its people know so little of its beauty and its bounty. Whether black or white, for many, opportunity here is just a step away. For those who've tried it, gone elsewhere only to return, they have to admit, North Carolina is a hard place to beat. When you stop and think about it a moment, the jingle has relevance. "I like calling North Carolina home."

Affirmative Action Retreat From

By Congressman Augustus F. Hawkins

It was the dawning of an era of unparalleled hope on the part of the downtrodden and oppressed. A President, Lyndon B. Johnson, was addressing the 1965 graduating class of Howard University.

"But freedom is not enough," he declared, "You do not wipe away the scars of centuries by saying: Now you are free to go where you want, and do as you desire, and choose the leaders you please. You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line and then say, 'you are free to compete with all the others,' and still justly believe that you are being fair."

But more than addressing a graduating class, he was enunciating the principles of the Great Society — principles which would commence the task of alleviating the poverty and oppression of a group of Americans who had few, if any, glimmers of hope for a better life as first class citizens. The President continued: "In far too many ways American Negroes have been another nation: deprived of freedom, crippled by hatred, the doors of opportunity closed to hope."

Nearly twenty years have passed since President Johnson delivered his address. Minorities and women have made progress in the areas of voting rights, employment and education; yet there is still much ground to be covered. The black college graduate who is able to find work earns about the same annual income as a white high school graduate. The median income for all black families in the U.S. in 1980 was \$12,674.00 as opposed to a median income for white families of \$21,904.00, the unemployment rate for black workers is twice that of white workers. The number of blacks in poverty, which had been declining under the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, is again rising. Unfortunately, equality of opportunity is still being systematically denied to women and minorities across our great nation. Such obvious facts are being ignored by

the Reagan Administration. Like the proverbial ostrich, the administration would rather bury its collective head in the sand in the hope that the nation will regress to a time when, as President Reagan asserted, "We didn't have any racial problems."

An obvious reference to slavery when blacks were completely shackled. In recent Congressional hearings, representatives of the administration delivered the foreboding message: We will no longer insist upon or in any respect support, the use of quotas or any other numerical statistical formulae designed to provide to "non-victims" of discrimination preferential treatment based on race, sex, national origin or religion.

It was clear that the issues and goals so well outlined in President Johnson's historic speech had been lost. There are several misconceptions in the Reagan Administration's policy statement which have been stated and restated to the extent that many people believe them to be true. One of the most maddening misconceptions has centered around the question of "quotas". In past years, "quotas" has been used as exclusionary ceilings designed to limit the participation of various groups in certain specified activities such as its use in the now defunct practice of limiting the number of Jewish students who could matriculate at universities. Despite the fact that no responsible person who was truly concerned with equality of opportunity ever advocated the use of quotas, the foes of affirmative action branded its backers as supporting quotas.

Race and sex discrimination are by definition class discrimination. Therefore, correction of these problems must not be on an individual by individual basis, as advocated by the Reagan Administration, but rather on a systematic or group basis. It is patently idiotic to attempt to ignore race or sex in providing a remedy for these societal ills. For not only is the individual victim of discrimination hurt, the entire group to which the victim belongs is grievously wronged. Numerical

statistical formulae or goals and timetables have been common tools in American policy formulation. Putting a man on the moon and reducing unemployment to four per cent were

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