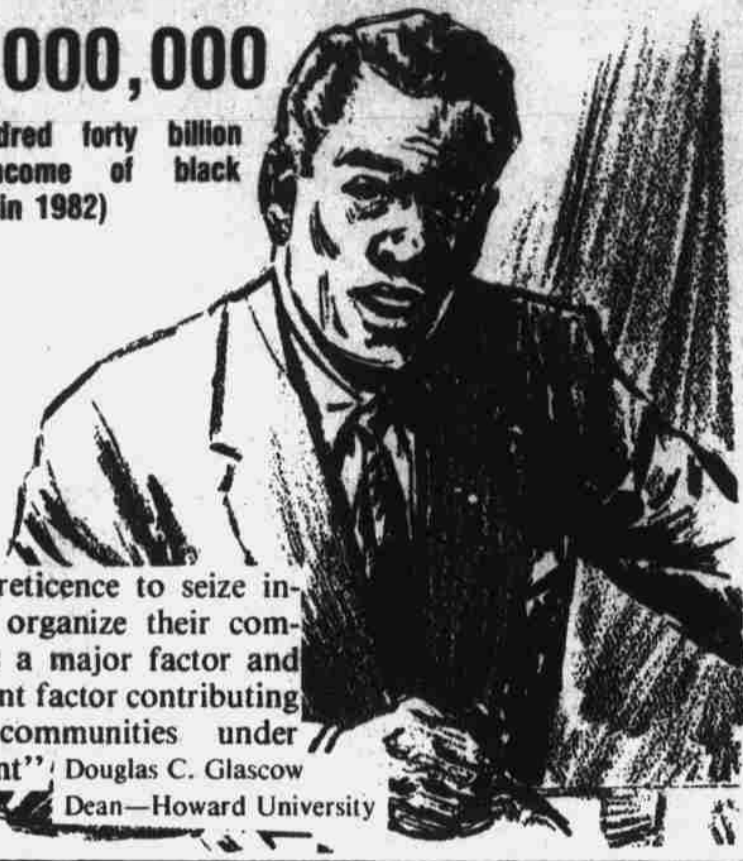


BLACK BOOT-STRAPS

140,000,000

(One hundred forty billion dollars income of black Americans in 1982)



"Black reticence to seize initiative to organize their communities is a major factor and an important factor contributing to our communities under development"

Douglas C. Glasgow
Dean—Howard University

Editorials

Hats Off To An Enduring Institution

America's Black Press marked its 155th year last week, and we take this opportunity to tip our hats to a proud and enduring industry that wrote the book on serving the most special of America's special markets.

At *The Carolina Times* we are proud to have been a practicing member of this industry for more than six decades.

America's Black Press has always faced its purpose proudly and courageously. That purpose, stated simply and eloquently on March 16, 1827 in the industry's first publication, by its founder, John Russwurm, says: "We wish to plead our own cause. . ."

But for all that that statement says, it's implications are even broader. The "we" and the "our" imply a unity that many, even some among us, would deny. But locked as we are in a long and arduous struggle, we can no more deny the commonality of our cause than we can the multi-hued sameness of our color.

The desire to plead a cause certainly implies that there exists a cause worth pleading. And the stark clarion ring of that truth has never been more evident than it is today.

We plead with those who have given up to understand that failure comes only with the stopping. We plead with those who have arrived to understand that a comfortable way station does not a journey's end make. We plead with the criminal and the shifty among us to cease and desist, or face the righteous wrath of our indignation. We plead with the lazy to produce, or be plowed under as a fruitless vine.

And while we plead with you, we will continue to issue demands for respect, justice and equal opportunity to the rest of America in your behalf.

And so for those of you who might be wondering if America's Black Press is dead or dying, or even if it serves a worthwhile purpose on this threshold of Century 21, we say unequivocally: We will be here until our cause is complete, and even a few years beyond that just to make sure no one reneges.

If It's Not Broke, Don't Fix It!

When we consider the current race for Durham County Sheriff, an old saying comes to mind that advises wisely: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

And while two challengers for the office have cried vociferously about the problems plaguing the current operation, they not only have not proved that there are problems, they have not offered any specific solutions.

But, by the same token, incumbent Sheriff Bill Allen need not smile smugly because this year's crop of challengers appear not to offer any improvements. Public safety outside of Durham's city limits is not a mere matter of politics. For citizens numbed with the fear of rampaging crime, public safety is a crucial survival issue. How the jail is run, and how people are served with court citations and other papers are more than just administrative triviality. They are vital parts of how this community views itself in the matters of justice and fair play.

And so, while little appears to need fixing in the sheriff's operation today, we assure you that next time around, the status quo will not carry the day. Because if by then things are no worse, we will have serious problems if they also are no better.

Things You Should Know

Rev. James W. C. PENNINGTON



...Under General George Washington, born February 22, 1732, some 5,000 Negroes slaves and free; fought in the Revolutionary War. When he crossed the Delaware, in 1776, two Negroes, Oliver Cromwell and Prince Whipple, were with him. J.W.C. Pennington found such facts as these as one of the first Negro Historians. He had a D.D. degree from Heidelberg University and preached against slavery from New England to Europe.

Continental Features

Affirmative Action:

Calcutta and the Black Community

By Gerald C. Horne, Esquire

It is estimated that there are 36,000 homeless people in New York alone. Sleeping in subways, in the train station and on the streets — it bring to mind Calcutta. Reports indicate that this is not a problem of New York alone and is spreading like a plague across the country. If the Reagan Administration proposals on housing are passed, expect "Reaganvilles" (ala "Hoovervilles" of the 1930's) to spring up coast-to coast.

Evictions of tenants from apartments are on the rise. According to New York City's Department of Investigation, there were 26,775 eviction orders in 1980, 9,178 more than in 1975. With gutting of the Legal Services Corporation, by the Administration, it has become even more difficult to fight these battles in court.

Simultaneously, the price of homes is rapidly getting out of the reach of all but the affluent. In San Francisco, for example, the average price of a home in 1981 was \$133,900 with average monthly payments a whopping \$1,403 — more than many families earn in a month. Even in Pittsburgh, which had the lowest average home price (\$59,000), the average monthly payment is a hefty \$601.

Not surprisingly, more families are not able to sustain their mortgage payment and are too being put on the street. The Federal Housing Administration says that the number of foreclosures instituted on homes whose mortgages it insures has been running more than 2,000 a month this year, a rate thirty per higher than a year ago, while the Veterans Administration reports that it is averaging about 1,200 foreclosures a month, a twenty per cent increase over 1980.

Though the upward trend is nationwide, the foreclosures and ousting of families from homes is occurring most frequently in the Middle West, though the Northeast and South have not escaped unscathed.

A year or two ago, said N. Cameron Royce, who works for a title insurance company in the fast-growing agricultural center of Fresno in California, he faced the task of having to sell a foreclosed home three or four times a month. This month, he said, he is foreclosing on 22.

While some families are being tossed from their homes into the streets, often homes stand empty because of spiraling interest rates. Almost 7,000 new homes are for sale these days in San Diego County, California — and this is a reflective of the national trend. These are the new ghost towns of "the American Dream".

There are now more than 330,000 unsold new homes across the country that have a total value of \$16 billion, plus about 80,000 new condominiums and more than 90,000 unsold converted condominium units.

The nation's housing industry is now in

the 33rd month of its longest decline since World War II. Sales have been crippled by mortgage interest rates averaging more than 17%. There are so many homes on the market, builders say, that at recent sales rates it would take 16 to 17 months for the market to absorb them. Moreover, high interest rates are preventing many families from selling their homes, which is a denial of the right to redeem the property.

This entire phenomenon hits black families heavily but also strikes black workers. Though spokesmen for builders' associations and trade unions allege that black employment is at record high levels in the construction field, many blacks contend otherwise.

James Haughton of Fight-Back, a Harlem based group active in this field, is one of those who disagrees and pooh-poohs the alleged success of apprenticeship programs. "A guy goes through the program, but then he can't get work. You can't get a qualified minority journeyman into a building-trades union. The real problem is the union hiring hall. It's mired in racism." Racism is also a term appropriate for the Reagan Administration's housing policies.

The Administration is speedily retreating from full enforcement of civil rights laws, which makes it more difficult for many blacks to move into better housing. The October 14 decision clearing Manchester, Connecticut of charges of discriminating against minorities in its local housing policies, marked the first time that the Justice Department, one of the plaintiffs in the class action, has lost a housing discrimination case brought against a municipality under the Fair Housing Act of 1968.

Moreover, Justice has said that it will oppose an appeal of the ruling. Manchester voters in a 1979 referendum decided to withdraw from a federal grant program that required the town to promote integration and housing for the poor. Flying in the face of evidence, the court decided that this maneuver was not racially motivated.

The White House Office of Management and Budget is also proposing no further modernization of public housing, termination of the direct loan program for elderly housing, a complete phasing out of community development black grants, etc.

The Carter Administration, in its last budget proposals had sought funds for 250,000 Section 8 units, but the Reagan Administration, through Congressional approved budgets, has reduced that request to fewer than 150,000 units. As a result, there will be 10,000 fewer units in New York State.

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Samuel Pierce has approved

a revision in rent subsidy rules that will increase rent payments for tenants in public housing; this will affect, for example, 148,000 families in New York.

Reagan cuts will mean that public housing authorities across the country will have to cut back on elevator repairs, janitorial services, building security and social programs for tenants. Vandalism will almost certainly increase and "blaming the victim" for the slums that result will surely ensue.

Reagan's proposed "voucher" system to subsidize the rents of the poor has been also subjected to withering criticism. This system would provide direct cash payments — an unspecified amount — to some low-income families. They could then decide which apartments they wanted to rent on the "free market".

Ten million families would be eligible for vouchers under the suggested income criteria. But no one is proposing that all ten million receive vouchers, and no one has suggested a system for selecting those who would receive payments.

Senator Christopher Dodd of Connecticut has charged that with this proposal Reagan "has offered a worn rope to those drowning in the current housing dilemma". Richard Berman, Commissioner of New York State's Division of Housing and Community Renewal, fears that the proposal will lead to a "statewide crisis".

Berman charges that "past experience shows that the private sector did not enter certain fragile markets — such as low- and middle-income housing developments — without being induced by substantial Government support".

And as if this were not enough, a recent study has found lower-valued homes in poorer neighborhoods — particularly black neighborhoods — pay higher realty taxes than more affluent neighborhoods.

Such is the gloomy picture of housing in an era of Reaganomics. But all is not lost. After mass pressure was generated, the Justice Department decided to press the housing portion of an unprecedented lawsuit filed in the last days of the Carter Administration charging Yonkers, New York with both housing and school segregation.

The potentially far-reaching suit linked residential and school segregation in an attempt to break this vicious, symbiotic cycle.

Initially, the Administration planned to drop this suit but a massive outcry from the civil rights community — lobbying, writing and the like — forced their hand.

Obviously, this pressure needs to be stepped up if the specter of black urban nomads roaming aimlessly is to be forestalled and if the black community is not to become one big Calcutta.

The Pursuit of Equality

By Congressman Augustus F. Hawkins

During the last twenty years our nation has taken the first step in breaking with its past tradition where getting a job depended more on one's race, religion, age or sex than on one's ability to do the job. As a result of civil rights laws and the implementation of affirmative action plans, millions of minorities, women, individuals between ages 40 and 70, as well as people of various religions have equal access to employment, many for the first time in America's history.

The progress which has been made toward insuring equal employment opportunity for all Americans, though significant, remains far from adequate. And at this juncture, as the first significant effects of our efforts to end discrimination are finally being felt it would indeed be a national tragedy if this trend were diminished. However, that is precisely what will happen if the Administration does not vigorously pursue and enforce equal employment opportunity and civil rights laws.

Unfortunately though as the economy worsens and the struggle for jobs heightens, attacks on affirmative action as a remedy to address past discrimination and counter present discriminatory patterns are increasing.

Opponents of the programs allege that affirmative action programs are unconstitutional because they violate the equal protection guarantees of the Fourteenth Amendment. They claim that affirmative action results only in reverse discrimination. But as the Supreme Court has stated, where race and sex have formed the basis of employment decisions for generations and decades, it is impossible to unravel those decisions except by taking race and sex into account.

Critics of affirmative action would have the public believe that affirmative action means giving preferential treatment to certain classes of people. However, the essence of affirmative action is the application of inclusive recruitment practices and job-related standards. Thus, where discrimination is found, and where minorities and women have historically been excluded from positions, changes in personnel systems involving these areas are often required. Closed recruitment systems, which tend to prefer white males, must be opened to include schools and other employee sources that assure a diversity of qualified applicants. Tests and credentials totally unrelated to the job at hand must be replaced by job related requirements.

Affirmative action programs do work. This reality is evidenced by the fact that just a few years ago there were few black, Hispanic, Asian, Native American or women electricians, lawyers, plumbers, doctors, police and fire persons, carpenters or business people. The absence of minorities and women in these professions were not because there were none who were qualified, but because those who wanted to fill these positions were not given an opportunity to compete for the positions in question. Today, largely because of affirmative action, blacks, Hispanics, Asians and women can be found in every profession and at every level.

Affirmative action remedies are not, nor were they ever, intended to be permanent fixtures in the American workplace. They are transitional remedies that no longer apply once exclusionary personnel systems have been corrected. But weak, half-hearted application of affirmative action will have the ironic effect of drawing out the required period of their application. Strong enforcement, together with voluntary employer and union action, and employee cooperation have brought progress in the area of equal employment opportunity — and what we have done must be continued.

The positive effects of affirmative action on minorities and women are clearly visible. For example, the doubling in the rate of annual change in black wages since 1964 is but one significant improvement flowing largely from affirmative action efforts. Such results cannot be achieved painlessly, but they have brought minimal inconvenience to employers and American workers as a whole.

The extraordinary change which continued enforcement of affirmative action programs promises, and the distance these remedies have brought us toward making the American workplace one where a worker is judged based on his or her ability to perform as opposed to the color of one's skin, one's sex or one's religion, argue strongly for concerted action to complete the job of equal employment opportunity.

Letter to the Editor:

The City's March Promises

Beware the Ides of March O' Black people of Durham. It was about this time ten years ago when the business section that I grew up to love, fell to the battle cry, "Urban Renewal", Hayti.

Federal money, which supposedly sticks in conservative Durham's craw, was to be used to better our conditions. Instead, tin city and the refugee camps on Fayetteville Street and Cornwallis Road called "Housing Projects" stand as stark truths as to what the city of Durham's power structure actually thinks of deals that are made with our so-called Black leaders.

It was about this time seven years ago that Durham received more stinking Federal money to refurbish my old childhood swimming hole, Hillside Pool. That money also found its way out of the Black neighborhood.

Now the *coup de grace*. Tie Hayti to the civic center and offer \$1.5 million of their own money and they'll vote for it. They won't know that the civic center and hotel are separate issues. And it was about this time a few years back when the steam rollers got going to get its Mayor and City Council in office to blow away Crest Street.

BEWARE THE IDES OF MARCH!

Willie D. Burt
Durham