

For decades the civil rights and labor movements have argued for greater social justice and for safeguards which could better protect workers from the recessions which recur in any free enterprise economy. Such arguments have been based upon a humanitarian impulse, upon the view that all human beings are entitled to an adequate standard of living and to the right to lead a dignified life.

Today, a mountain of evidence appears to suggest that greater social justice, increased social spending by government, job security, and greater protections for workers, not only are morally laudable, but are good for economic growth. Such is the evidence contained in a critically important new book, *Minding America's Business* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982), co-authored by Robert Reich, of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, and Ira Magaziner, a consultant to business and labor.

In essence, the book makes a persuasive argument for adopting much of the agenda favored by organized labor and the civil rights movement. Through imaginative and concise use of charts and statistics the authors document the decline of the U.S. economy. In 1960, the U.S. was first in the world in terms of standard of living. Today, we are no better than tenth, behind such countries as France, Holland, Denmark, West Germany, Norway, and Belgium, with Japan quickly approaching us and significantly outpacing us in productivity increases and economic growth.

Letters to the Editor: On The Hayti Issue

I read with interest your recent coverage of the Hayti-Downtown Development issue. The questions you raised were very serious and important for the consideration of the larger Black community. In this regard you have rendered a valuable service.

Let me assure you that the Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People has not retreated on the issue. The Task Force on Downtown Development which I chair has been meeting regularly and intensively to make certain the needs of the Black community are addressed. The committee's official position as reflected in the previous statements still stands.

The issue of economic development requires serious attention and consideration. It is not to be addressed lightly. We are very seriously and specifically looking at the various factors that are key to maximizing Black community input and participation in economic development in the city of Durham, "Downtown" and Hayti.

The committee has not taken a position on the pending "Bond Issue". The position will be taken at the appropriate time by a vote of the full committee. The Task Force will be prepared to make recommendations at that time.

I urge you to continue careful and extensive coverage of this and other matters of crucial importance to the Black community. Your role in education and awareness can not be overstated. The Black community has always depended on *The Carolina Times*, for information, and truth.

John L. Hudgins

On Hayti Redevelopment

Over the past several months, your paper has kept me informed of the continuing debate on the redevelopment of Hayti. I was impressed with the article appearing in the May 1 issue of your paper ("Black Political Leaders Seem To Have Retreated From Hayti Confrontation"). It gets, I feel, to the heart of the matter. Namely, Durham's relationship to the Black community and the role of Black leaders.

As the article so ably pointed out, Durham did not deal honestly with Blacks during the conception and implementation of its Urban Renewal Program. While many of our leaders endorsed the concept, it seems they lacked sufficient information and insight to be able to make an accurate prediction of the outcome or that they negotiated with the system on their own behalf. Either way, the Black Community was left holding the bag.

Now, over a decade later, the support of the Black Community is sought for the construction of a new Civic Center. Hayti, however, remains undeveloped. There are no guarantees that it will ever be redeveloped. There are only vague implications that Hayti will receive funds if the Civic Center, is approved, an unwritten "gentleman's agreement". Most current black leaders, either unsure of the correct road to take or co-opted by the system, have failed to take a strong uncompromising position of behalf of Durham's Black citizens.

The time has come for us to collect old debts before we allow the City to make new ones. I favor the position advanced by J.J. "Babe" Henderson, that we should have "assurances on Hayti" before we support the Civic Center. Further, we should have written guarantees that Blacks will participate in the construction, maintenance and operation of the Civic Center, and not just as housekeepers. Durham's treatment of its Black population during the "liberal era" is proof that, in this era of ultra-conservatism, we cannot expect to be dealt with fairly and in good faith. We should, therefore, withhold our support of the Civic Center unless we receive those guarantees in a manner which makes them legal and binding.

For those "leaders" who are offended by your coverage of the Hayti story, I say if our leaders had taken strong, well-informed positions initially, we wouldn't be having this difficulty now. Again, I commend you and your coverage because I feel it will help make Black "leaders" more accountable to the people they claim to represent.

A Concerned Citizen
Isaiah Singletary, Jr.

Social Justice and Economic Progress

By Norman Hill
A. Philip Randolph Institute

What, ask Reich and Magaziner, do these countries have in common? What policies have their governments and industries adopted to achieve economic growth?

The evidence shows that those Western democracies which outperform our economy have a higher, not lower, degree of government spending expenditures than does the U.S. In each of these countries there is a higher degree of *per capita* social spending for such programs as social security and unemployment insurance. Workers in these countries receive on the average four to five weeks annual paid vacation (while U.S. workers average 2.5

weeks time off). In each of these countries there are substantial government- and industry-financed health insurance programs.

Job security also is one of the cornerstones of industrial productivity. As Reich and Magaziner suggest: "It is difficult to gain worker's commitment to a company if they know that the company is not ultimately committed to developing their careers." They assert, on the basis of evidence from such countries as Sweden and Japan, that "it is in a company's best interest to be concerned about the career development of all employees, not just the few at the top." In this regard, the authors argue,

"It would not only be more humane but also less costly to develop the employees they have rather than bear the substantial cost of employee disaffection and high worker turnover."

Significantly, Reich and Magaziner suggest that government could promote job security by reimbursing companies for keeping workers on the payroll or in training during recessions.

Finally, the authors indicate that unionization is not an obstacle to economic development. Rather, by creating more decent work conditions unions help to spur productivity. In countries which outperform the U.S. economically, levels of unionization are from fifty per cent greater than ours (Japan) to 400 per cent greater (Belgium and Sweden).

Minding America's Business is a book which deserves serious attention from labor and civil rights communities. Its evidence flies in the face of President Reagan's supply-side and free market pieties. Government is not the problem. Rather, when it reflects the popular will, it is a responsible and indeed essential part of the solution.

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AMERICA'S HEROES



In 1918, these black National Guardsmen soon found themselves with a new name... "Hell Fighters from Harlem." For their heroism the entire regiment earned the Croix de Guerre.