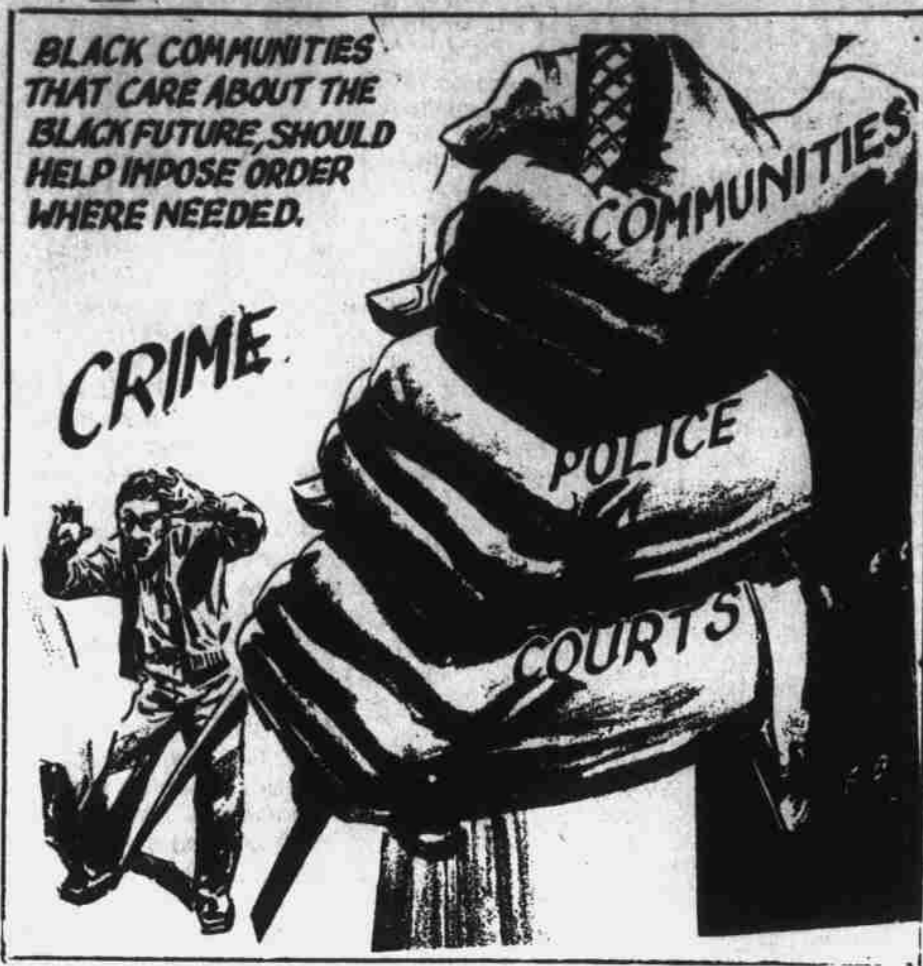


LET'S WORK TOGETHER FOR A SAFE COMMUNITY



Editorial

The Durham Committee Erred

The Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People can meet privately whenever it wants to, for as long as it wants to, and to discuss whatever it wants to. It cannot legally use public facilities for private meetings.

Our position is based on the spirit and intent of the public meetings law, and policies of the Durham County Library system.

The issue arises from the fact that the Committee voted to oust a reporter for *The Carolina Times* from its regular meeting last week.

For years, the Durham Committee has had a stated confidentiality policy, especially regarding its endorsement meetings. In these meetings, Committee officials dutifully ask participants not to discuss the proceedings when they leave.

But almost just as dutifully, Committee endorsement decisions and other particulars about the meetings are often reported the next day in local media.

To our knowledge, *The Carolina Times* has not reported a Durham Committee endorsement prior to an election, which essentially is the basis for the so-called confidentiality policy.

The thinking, according to Committee officials, is that "if the white folks know who we have endorsed before election day, they (the white folks) will turn against those candidates."

The record does not justify this position, certainly not in recent years.

Consider the most recent elections. It was known, and dutifully reported in local media that the Committee had endorsed, for example, Ms. Karen Galloway, Mickey Michaux, Mrs. Elna Spaulding, Kenneth Spaulding and the Durham Civic Center referendum. Each of those candidates won, as did the civic center bond issue. As a matter of fact, the bond issue probably would have failed except for the overwhelming black vote "delivered" by the Durham Committee.

So, the truth of the matter is that even the Durham Committee's own members don't respect the organization's policy of confidentiality. They all say they do. They all pay lip service to it. But someone almost always anonymously reveals what happened in the meetings.

At *The Carolina Times*, we have not sought to solicit help from "anonymous" sources in covering the Durham Committee. We have sought to cover the organization openly, fairly and honestly.

But apparently our prior efforts have not been sufficient, as Committee president Willie Lovett said recently: "I have some concerns about the newspaper's motives."

We have a number of regrets about this situation.

First, it is regrettable that Committee members chose to act emotionally rather than reasonably in implementing its policy. They, according to Lovett, asked our writer to put the Committee's confidentiality rule above his responsibility to do his job, which is unfair on its face. We don't believe that either Mr. John Edwards, who apparently raised the issue, or Mr. Maceo Sloan, Jr., who apparently supported it, would be willing to put their jobs and careers on the line for the organization.

Secondly, it is regrettable that the organization didn't exercise its option of moving its meeting to a private facility, and then closing it to anyone it didn't want there.

While we disagree with the Committee's so-called yen for secrecy, we recognize, as a matter of law, that our access to the organization and the public's right to know its business, ends at the door of its right to privacy.

But we, black people, must practice both the spirit and the letter of the law, as we are prone to insist that white people do. In ousting the reporter, we believe the Committee made a serious error in judgment.

We only hope that the organization will correct its course and when it wants to meet privately, it won't meet in a public facility.



William HARRISON

Born in 1874, on a farm in Clay County, Mississippi, he studied at Roger Williams University, Nashville, Tennessee, and at Chicago University. He was admitted to practice law in 1902! He practiced in the U.S. Supreme Court and was Special Judge of the Superior Court, (Oklahoma), and was president of more than one important Negro civic organization! Continental Features

CONTINENTAL FEATURES

To Be Equal

Black Voting Power

By John E. Jacob
Executive Director, National Urban League

The black vote has been described as a "sleeping giant" whenever elections are the topic of discussion. It's time for that sleeping giant to wake up.

There is no task of greater immediate importance for the black community than the job of getting every eligible voter registered and voting. That is especially important in 1982 for a number of reasons.

First, a strong black voter turnout in this November's elections will send a powerful message to leaders of both parties that they'll have to adjust their policies to attract black voters in 1984. That crucial Presidential race effectively begins the day after this year's election.

Second, the stakes are high in 1982. Every member of the House of Representatives, a third of the Senate and many governors' offices are on the block.

Third, this year's vote is being seen as an indication of America's acceptance of current policies of both parties. Observers will be reading the results for signs of the political costs of high unemployment, rising poverty and shrinking government. The black vote takes on greater importance as the media and the politicians scan it for signs of apathy or activism.

Fourth, new coalitions are emerging between blacks, other minorities, women and labor. The black influence on those coalitions directly depends on

demonstrating power at the polls.

Finally, whatever the election results, the policy cards are in for reshuffling. Big decisions are waiting to be made — on future budgets, the fate of domestic programs, New Federalism, social security, and others. The bigger the black vote, the better chance blacks have of being at the table when the cards are cut.

The stumbling block to higher levels of black voter participation has always been apathy due to feelings of powerlessness and the realities of poverty. Many people feel their vote doesn't count, and many others are simply too busy with the daily struggle to survive to participate in the electoral process.

But powerlessness and poverty are the reasons why all eligible black people should register and vote. A large black vote means political power, along with the opportunity to do something about changing policies that lead to poverty and unemployment.

A recent study by the Joint Center for Political Studies shows that blacks make up twenty per cent or more of the population of 86 congressional districts. That means high black voter turnout can determine the outcome of those races.

Sixty of those districts are in the South, the cradle of the New Right. In twenty of those districts, the Joint Center finds that the current representatives have voting records opposed to the sentiments of the

majority of black people. In many other districts, the incumbents' records demonstrate varying degrees of indifference to black interests.

Congressmen — and local officials too — can ignore black interests because the black voter turnout in their districts is so low they can win without black votes.

It's up to black voters to teach them that this view is mistaken. If a few representatives from districts with significant numbers of black voters lose their jobs this November, it could have a very healthy effect on the thinking of their colleagues.

But is it not enough simply to talk about the importance of the black vote. Each and every black person has a responsibility for maximizing that vote and the power that flows from it.

We can begin at home, by making voter registration and voting a family project. And just as every adult has to take his or her citizenship responsibilities seriously, so too should each parent make sure that the family's young people are taught the importance of voting. Less than 40 per cent of black youth 18 to 24 register, so we will never have enough political clout unless we get those young people to the polls.

There's a lot more that can be done and is being done by black communities to increase the black vote, and all blacks should take part in those efforts.

The Bogus Veto

By Congressman Augustus F. Hawkins

For almost two solid weeks this summer, thousands of Federal workers and, indeed, the nation sat on the edge of their seats after President Reagan vetoed a \$14.1 billion appropriations bill. With many Federal employees and their families dreading payless furloughs, the apprehension and fear brought about by the President's reckless veto will not soon be forgotten.

In much the same manner that millions of senior citizens were horrified last year at President Reagan's proposed changes in the Social Security system (and the actual abandonment of the Social Security minimum benefit — which was subsequently revived by Congressional action), thousands of Federal workers and their families were left to contemplate payless paydays.

Almost immediately, the Federal agencies reacted to the news of the veto by issuing furlough alerts affecting approximately 100,000 workers.

In President Reagan's estimation, the \$14.1 billion appropriation bill was a "budget-buster". However, this was not the view shared by many Republicans in Congress. Senate Budget Committee Chairman Peter V. Domenici denied that the bill was a "budget buster". Senator Mark Hatfield, Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee said, "By no

responsible account can this be called a budget-buster as it has been characterized by the bean-counters at OMB (Office of Management and Budget)." Perhaps most revealingly, though, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Robert Dole was quoted as saying, "I don't suggest we're busting the budget, but I don't want to bust the President either."

Dole's statement is instructive in that it shows the dilemma of many Republicans who are finding it increasingly difficult to choose between the legitimate concerns of their constituents and empty allegiance to their party and President Reagan.

In explaining why he vetoed the bill, President Reagan said the bill would "bust the budget by nearly one billion dollars." The simple fact is that the \$14.1 billion appropriation bill was not a budget-buster. And by their votes on the veto override, twenty-one Republican Senators showed their disagreement with the President's contention. On the House side, eighty-one Republican members of Congress voted to override the President's veto.

The truth is that the bill is \$3.2 billion lower than the budget ceiling established in the 1982 Reagan/Republican budget adopted by the Congress. If the President's proposed appropriation had been adopted, the bill then would have exceeded budget authority by \$250 million

and subsequently would have added more than \$1 billion to the Federal deficit.

The real reason that the President vetoed the bill, however, was that it included money for programs such as education for the handicapped, grants to needy college students and community service jobs for the elderly. The veto was overridden by the House and the Senate and these programs, along with all the other budget items listed in the bill will be getting the necessary funding.

As experience is the best teacher, persons affected by the budget veto will not soon forget the experience in much the same way that senior citizens are still wary of the Administration's intentions regarding the Social Security system.

President Reagan talks about cutting taxes and reducing the Federal deficit, but if one examines his actions we see a President who recently rammed a \$98.3 billion tax bill through Congress — the largest peace time tax hike ever. Further, we see that the Federal deficit has increased 450% in the three short years from 1979 to 1982.

More and more Americans are beginning to see that the Reagan program is nothing more than the politics of fear and confusion designed to deliberately trick the general public while lining the pockets of the wealthy.

Civil Rights Journal

Taking The Bull By The Tail

By Dr. Charles E. Cobb

While Wall Street booms, Main Street USA is overflowing with the unemployed. The latest report indicates that 10.1 per cent of all Americans are unemployed. This number is rivaled only by the unemployment suffered during the first Great Depression. However, even this extremely high figure does not reflect the desperate situation being faced by minorities. The jobless rate among black adults is over 20 per cent while black teenagers are 50 per cent unemployed. This is a national tragedy, and is the true measure of our economic woes.

The Reagan administration's inability to put the foundation back in the nation's economy has become crystal clear. We the people must demand an end to political name-calling and grandstanding and require the president to address our greatest problem, jobs.

The president has side-stepped this issue long enough and unless we take a stand it is almost a certainty that images of 1929 will become a present reality. This

administration's band of economic advisors have failed miserably, and only add insult to injury by asking us to "stay the course". The current course is one of economic disaster.

Inflation has slowed and interest rates have begun to drop, but what does that mean if there are no jobs or food on the table? But even these small improvements are not due to the president's economic policies. Instead they are acts of desperation on the part of the Federal Reserve System, to save the economy.

Most recently our so-called leader has attempted to take credit for what I consider a temporary surge in the stock market. He has galloped across the country in a frail attempt to convince the public that Wall Street has confidence in his economic plan.

The president is grabbing for straws and in the process has taken "the bull by the tail" and is attempting to ride it into a November political victory. Let us hope he ends up with no more than mud on his face.

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 majestice waves without the awful roar of its waters.

Frederick Douglass

The Carolina Times

(USPS 091-380)

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Published every Thursday (dated Saturday) (except the week following Christmas) in 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.

Volume 60, Number 42.

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: One year, \$12.00 (plus 48c sales tax for North Carolina residents). Single copy 30c. 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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