

Holland

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known to suffer defeat in the primary election and thereafter they've simply waltzed back to the welcoming arms and comforting confines of the Republican Party, where they felt most comfortable.

And they do this uttering nary a word (at least, not publicly, where it might count for something) of remorse to the black Democrats who squandered their political resources in support of them.

Oh, by the way, these Republicans have another trait which you might find interesting, if not downright dismaying: When a black Democrat runs for political office as a representative of his beloved Democratic Party, which outnumbers Republicans by about 4- or 5-1, the white Democrats disappear, and lo and behold, these Republicans appear in the opposing party's column in approximately the same numbers as the "lost white Democrats."

Boy! What a coincidence! How about that, folks. We lose, say, 50,000 white Democrats in an election, and the Republican Party office-seeker gets 50,000 or more votes than there are registered Republicans (and we've already counted the Independents.) Result? Scratch one more black Democratic political aspirant. And for the doubters, please check the results of the Mickey Michaux primary campaign in the state's Fourth Congressional District in 1982.

Now if all of the aforementioned has not sufficiently rattled your political cages and convinced you of how we've been hustled, then watch what happens when a white Democrat runs for office and his opponent happens to be a black Republican. The Republicans then disguise themselves once again as (yes, you guessed it) Democrats.

And once again they begin to preach to all the Democrats, with special emphasis on the black Democrats, to implore them to hold the party line, to stick together, that "we need each other," "it's us against them" and all that other good stuff.

They "love" the black Democrat so much that they even go to his most sacred sanctuary to request the help of his black preacher in the furtherance of their scheme. And some of our preachers (bless their innocent hearts), fall right in line.

Had blacks used their minds instead of just taking their preachers' advice, we just might have elected Lafayette Jones

(who happens to be a registered Republican and a black man, to the N.C. Senate. But, while he was getting over 30,000 white votes, we black folks decided that we couldn't stomach any of those Republicans, even if one happened to be our only hope in winning a state senate seat.

Now, let's face it, folks (and with all due respect to our "black members of the cloth"), the advice given to black voting parishioners in this most recent election from some of the pulpits was indeed just that -- "the pits."

Just think about it for a second, folks. Damn near 100 blacks ran for political office on the Republican ticket across the state, and (are you ready for this?) only one won. We ought to feel ashamed of ourselves as intelligent human beings to allow ourselves to be so manipulated in the exercise of one of the most cherished rights that we have -- the right to vote.

Finally, dear black voters of North Carolina, I hope that we can someday accept the fact that, rightly or wrongly, most white folk, be they Democrat or Republican, think white-first when they enter the voting booths all across America. Afterwards, they might give party affiliation some thought -- if it suits their needs.

In the meantime, we dear black friends preach party affiliation all over the place instead of looking at our black candidates (most of whom are overqualified for the offices they seek) and supporting them no matter whether they be Democrat or Republican.

To do anything less at this juncture will only magnify our lack of political sophistication when we step inside the voting booths.

In closing, let me state unequivocally that were I a dyed-in-the-wool black Democrat in this political arena, and one of those Republicans (or disappearing white Democrats, whichever you prefer) tried to reassure me that there is light at the end of the tunnel, I would have to let him know that, yes, there is indeed light at the end of the tunnel.

But I have, finally, my dear Republican, developed enough political savvy to know that the light of which you speak is an oncoming train.

(Carlton Holland was a member of President Carter's transition team and served on the Carter Mondale national campaign staff.)

Lucas

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African governments have always said that agricultural development is their first priority, but until recently few have really taken food production seriously. Now that they are, we need to provide the type and level of assistance needed to cultivate Africa's latent agricultural potential.

It is critical that we examine the relationship of emergency food relief, concessionary food sales and food-for-work programs in terms of whether they promote or retard long-term agricultural self-reliance. There is an obvious urgency, in times like these, to keep people alive by providing food relief. The motivation may be humane, but the effect over time may be to erode African self-respect and weaken African resolve to base development on a strong foundation of food production.

There is a clear risk that we may institutionalize African dependence on the international soup line. It has already happened in two or three countries.

If we are truly concerned with resolving Africa's food crisis, we should pledge whatever funding is necessary to support those countries which have crossed the Rubicon of policy reform and indicated through their actions that they are committed to encourag-

ing smallholder food production.

For the balance of this century, we and our African partners have our work cut out for us. There are farm-to-market roads to build, rural storage and milling capacity to establish, extension services to train, and road, truck and tractor maintenance services to strengthen. There are dams and irrigation systems to build, improved seeds to test and credit and marketing structures to develop.

Every dollar spent on agricultural development is a dollar we will not have to spend five or 10 years from now on food relief.

(C. Payne Lucas is executive director of Africare, an all-black, non-profit group formed after the 1977 West African drought. These remarks were taken from a speech delivered before a joint hearing of the U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Select Committee on Hunger.)

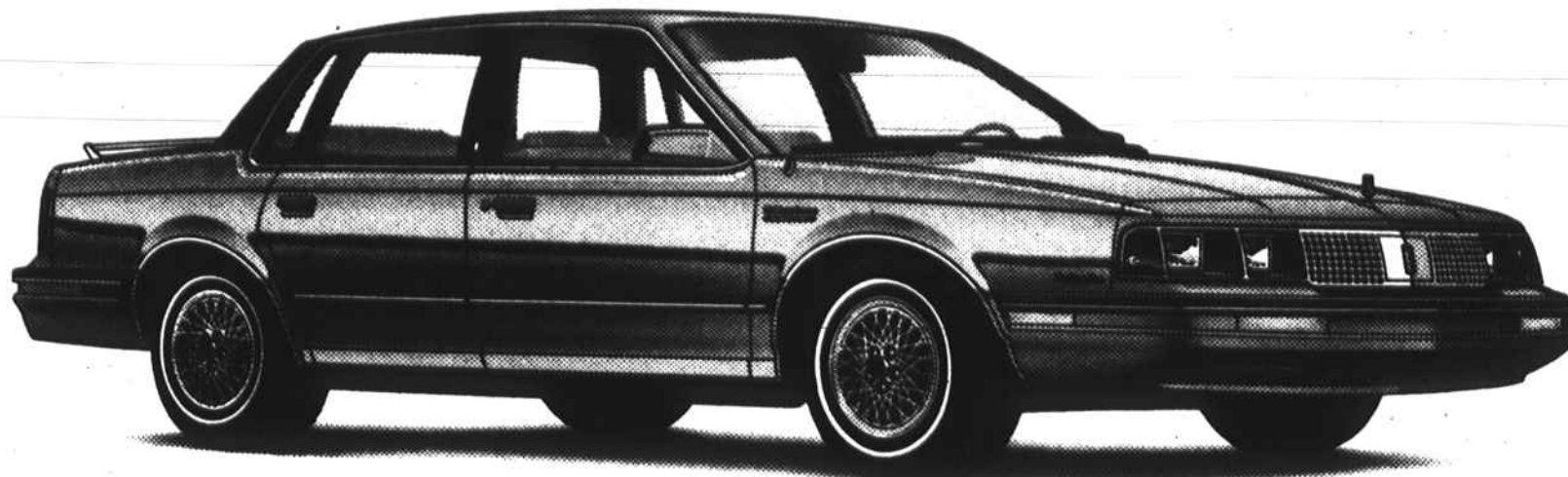


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