

Editorials & Comments

"Great White Hope Or New Racism?"

by Hoyle H. Martin Sr.
Post Editorial Writer

Ten years ago, the report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorder - better known as the Kerner Commission - said quite bluntly, "This is our basic conclusion, our nation is moving toward two societies: one black, one white - separate and unequal."

Today, some ten years later, it can be successfully argued that in spite of the gains of a token number of blacks, comparatively little has changed. The report noted this clearly by saying further, "Race prejudice has shaped our history decisively in the past; it now threatens to do so again."

One such threat is in the recent announcement of Mayor Frank Rizzo of Philadelphia. Rizzo said he will not seek a third term as mayor but rather will champion the rights of non-black ethnics. Reportedly, Rizzo said, "I am now going to defend the people, the people of this city that I believe have been kicked around too long. I'm going to defend the rights of American citizens who happen to be ethnics. The whites have to join hands to get equal treatment. When blacks say something, it's to help their people. When the whites get together and ask for something they're racist. Now where's the fairness here?"

Frank Rizzo is in fact interested in becoming a 13th hour Yankee George Wallace by building a power base rooted in racism. Furthermore,

Why The Morality Crisis?

"The America of the 1970's is in a class by itself. Never before has so large a share of the population indulged in an orgy of self-pampering, overdosing, loafing, sponging, splurging, cheating, shoplifting, looting, philandering, (and) even murdering." These are the words of newspaper columnist Jack Anderson in an article dealing with the moral crisis that has gripped America.

There are, undoubtedly, those who disagree with Mr. Anderson and would consider his words just another example of what some would refer to as his sensationalist writing style. Others might argue that there is no moral decline in the United States, but rather simply another cycle of what is a common part of our history. Another cycle not withstanding, when a school teacher engages in sex with a 15 year old boy on the pretext of teaching sex education, when parents prostitute their own children, when businessmen lie and cheat in the name of profit, when wife-swapping occurs,

Rizzo is actually seeking a new career because he cannot legally run for a third term as mayor of Philadelphia and his political advisors have told him he'd never win a nomination for governor.

Rizzo, for many Philadelphia whites, symbolizes the "great white hope" for those who supposedly fear blacks, now one-third of Philadelphia's 1.9 million population. The problem with the Rizzo mentality is that it fails to recognize that the concentration of blacks in most large cities is the result of segregated housing patterns created by whites in spite of laws to the contrary. Furthermore, white people who supposedly don't "get equal treatment" simply don't exist.

Black Americans, on the other hand, have simply been highly vocal in the last decade in their efforts to rectify 246 years of slavery, 100 years of discrimination and segregation, and 12 years of meaningful justice and equal opportunity.

Frank Rizzo, and others like him, appear to be committed to arousing racial fears, real or unreal, if it will serve their purpose of dividing the races for personal gain.

Let us hope that all right-thinking Americans, black and white, will be able to recognize that the Frank Rizzo's of this great country cannot lead us to racial harmony, peace, prosperity, and meaningful equality of opportunity. Let's retire the Frank Rizzos as we move ahead to a better America:

when honest people are ridiculed, when criminals are admired, when television and movies give us heavy doses of crime and sex, and when winning a little league baseball game is more important for a parent's ego than good sportsmanship and character building is for the parent's participating child, to mention but a few, we have a morality crisis.

While there are certainly no simple or easy answers to why this crisis exist, we nevertheless believe that a primary cause is evidence of our values about success, particularly economic success. The profit maximizing system calls for increased output with diminishing cost. For the individual it means maximize what you can get while minimizing your effort to get, thus if you can get a days pay without doing a day's work, so be it.

Until we can get our profit maximizing value back into a proper and rational perspective, the moral crisis we face will continue to plague us and destroy our nation.

"IT IS INCONCEIVABLE TO ME THAT WE WHO HAVE PREVAILED IN SPITE OF THE BARBARISM OF WHITE PEOPLE SHOULD, IN THE LAST QUARTER OF THE 20th CENTURY, STAND AS MUST SPECTATORS TO OUR OWN DOOM."



Community Control...By???

WASHINGTON REFLECTIONS

CONGRESSMAN
JIM MARTIN



Making Federal Workers Responsive

The Federal civil service system is an honorable organization of conscientious, dependable people trying to administer a government of growing size and complexity. It has become entangled in the same red tape that it imposes on businesses. It currently can take up to three years to fire an incompetent worker for just cause. Of the nearly 3-million federal workers who are governed by civil service, only 226 lost their jobs last year for poor performance. The process of removing the incompetent worker is so complex and frustrating to departmental managers, some agencies set up what is termed "turkey divisions" where unsatisfactory employees can be relegated so they will not interfere with normal operations or obstruct changes which are designed to improve a department or agency.

As another illustration, a large part of the delay that so frustrates private citizens in dealing with the federal bureaucracy is due to the complicated rules and regulations that the bureaucracies are directed to enforce. President Carter, as stated in his own words, "came to Washington with the promise - and the obligation - to help rebuild the faith of the American people in our government." I agree with his statement that "we need a government that will

respond to the needs of the American people and not be preoccupied with needs of its own."

For many Americans, President Carter's proposal to overhaul the Civil Service system will not be of direct interest. They rarely contend with it. For those struggling against inefficiency, delay and waste, the plan deserves "prime time" attention. The President is to be commended for his recommendations to reorganize the civil service system and restructure its operations. His plan would replace civil service with two new offices: a new merit system protection board which would be responsible for protecting the rights of federal workers, including "whistle blowers" who point out irregularities; and a new office of personnel management which would hire and perform other personnel functions.

These are good ideas. Competent and responsible managers in the federal system must be given the authority and flexibility and incentives to manage their respective operations. At the same time, career federal employees need protection from political pressures. The taxpayers also deserve a day's work for a day's pay. The present personnel system is wrought with so much red-tape that a man-

ager is virtually helpless to discipline, much less dismiss, the employees who are not performing their jobs. A dismissal proceeding can take hundreds of his or her working hours and cost the taxpayers thousands of dollars in lost production time and paperwork.

Any administration must be able to depend on the loyalty and responsiveness of its top managers if it is to properly manage the federal bureaucracy. The MERIT-BASED senior executives as proposed by President Carter, could be moved from job to job, wherever needed; they could be given bonuses for good performance, or they could be quickly demoted without bureaucratic entanglements.

Another 72,000 high-level officials would go on an incentive-pay plan, and would lose their automatic increases. Whether this system based on evaluation of merit can work in the governmental sector the way the profit motivation produces incentive in the private sector remains to be seen. To be given a chance, however, it first has to be tried.

The President does not suffer from illusions of quick acceptance by federal workers and Congress. His plan to revamp civil service is a step in the right direction. The civil service system is 95 years old.

TO BE EQUAL

Black Unemployment Down

Under the leadership of Secretary Patricia Harris, the Department of Housing and Urban Development has moved swiftly to ensure the best use of scarce federal urban funds.

The Community Development Bloc Grant program is the centerpiece of federal efforts to aid the cities. It replaced categorical grants - federal grants for specific projects and programs. Under the bloc grant system, the government transfers money to the cities with few strings attached.

Naturally, local officials preferred this way of doing business. They could use the money in almost any way they felt their cities needed it, without the complex federal restrictions that had tied their hands in the past.

The only problem was, the money wasn't reaching poor and moderate income neighborhoods. The law creating the bloc grant system stipulated that's where the bulk of the money was supposed to go, but there was little enforcement.

In 1975, the National Urban League conducted a survey of how the bloc grant system was working in 24 cities. The results were depressing. Not more than half of the Community Development funds were going to the neighborhoods that needed them most, and of those, about a third were used for land clearance projects to prepare for uses that would generally benefit higher income people.

Then HUD itself analyzed the results of the program and confirmed the Urban League's studies. In fact, HUD found declining resources going to the neighborhoods occupied by low and moderate income families.

That's where Secretary Harris came in. Shortly after taking office she implemented policies to increase the amount of bloc grant funds going to poorer areas. HUD staff all across the country were ordered to follow new targeting policies.

Then, the Secretary proposed new regulations on the use of Community Development funds, requiring that three-fourths of the grants would have to be used for the benefit of low and moderate income families.

Many local officials took a negative view, claiming the regulations would remove the flexibility they once had. Chiefly and flexibility consisted of putting improvements into middle class neighborhoods to win votes at election time, improvements paid for with federal funds intended for lower income neighborhoods.

By contrast, community groups overwhelmingly supported the Department's new thrust. By targeting funds into poorer neighborhoods, the lives of their residents would be improved and the neighborhoods saved from continued decline.

Many pointed out that the proposed 75 percent rule would end past abuses while preserving plenty of local flexibility in the use of the funds. Almost as important, the proposed regulations included stronger administrative controls over the quality of the bloc grant projects. This ensures that, for the first time, resources targeted to low and moderate income areas would truly benefit the people who live there.

The final regulations were published on March 1, and now have the force of law.

as i see it

Black Unemployment

by Gerald Johnson

Senator Lloyd Bentsen of Texas noted that unemployment among Blacks and Mexican Americans remains high. Bensten said "This country can not abide a situation in which vast segments of our population are effectively excluded from the mainstream of our economic life."

The comments were made at the opening of the joint economic committee hearing on urban policy. Bensten is vice chairman of the committee.

"Every citizen of this country should have a stake in our free system. Every citizen of this country should have an opportunity to make a productive, constructive contribution to our society," Bensten said. The senator went on to say that such staggering rates of unemployment breed crime and costs taxpayers billions of dollars. "More importantly," the senator continued, "they breed despair and frustration. It is a shameful waste of valuable human resources in an era of human rights. It is degrading and debilitating. It is a situation which we can not be permitted to continue."

"We cannot abdicate our responsibilities to these indi-

vidual. We can, and we must, create employment opportunities for the millions of low-skilled, chronically unemployed Americans. There are few items with a higher priority on our economic agenda for the future."

Senator Bensten concluded his remarks by saying, "In addressing the chronic problem of structural unemployment, we must be willing to try new ideas and test out innovative concepts. A job is a vital fact of life to every American citizen. It is a prerequisite to decent, productive existence in our society."

"We have an obligation - an economic, moral and humanitarian obligation - to foster opportunities for unemployment, in the private sector if possible and in the government sector if necessary. For it is surely better to pay to work than to pay them to do nothing."

What a touching speech. It gets me right here (luckily you can't see where I'm pointing). The speech did point out one thing though. It demonstrates the lack of understanding of serious problems by our selected officials. It would seem that with all the resources Senators have available to them, they have never to



Gerald Johnson (my knowledge) researched this problem thoroughly.

Congress passed the minimum wage bill and the increased FICA, both of which has an increasing affect on unemployment. Low skill workers are the first fired whenever company costs go up. Both increased FICA and minimum wage increase company cost. Hence it seems ironic that a congress that would pass into law two bills that increases unemployment among low skill workers would talk about decreasing unemployment.

Moreover Government created jobs are more political than practical. Hence, to crea-

te jobs through government programs will last only as long as it takes a new congress to take office. This is not a solution to the problem.

Instead of throwing good money away, a program needs to be devised that would give companies the opportunity to train individuals to be productive. If the Government will give tax credit for training programs that were developed by companies then the first leg of the situation would be solved.

While the individuals are in training the Government could pay their salaries. After a designated period the company will be responsible for the employment of that individual. This type of idea, though cursory as far as details, has several advantages over Governmental programs. Generally, the government creates jobs that are service oriented and public oriented. They offer no usable training skills and provide no incentives. With the same money put into a program that would allow on the job training these problems would be eliminated. Also, the cost of the training is not an added expense to the company, it is in fact a credit.

This idea could be worked

out into a good program. The benefit of taking low-skilled employees and giving them better skills is much more beneficial than just giving him a job.

Speaking of Government Senator Proxmire, one of the few congressmen devoted to cutting down waste in Government, has recently reported on some of his findings. Take note.

The Department of Transportation spent \$225,000 on a study forecasting transportation needs in the year 2025. The report's findings included 1) If there is a new ice age, very large numbers of people will be forced to migrate south.

2) If a population surge develops because people missed having children around, there would be an increased demand for transportation services of all kinds. 3) If guerrilla warfare broke out in urban areas, then automobile use in afflicted areas would become risky.

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) spent \$46,000 to determine how long it takes to cook breakfast. They spent \$113,417 to produce a report called "Mothers' Attitudes Toward Cotton and other Fibers

in Children's Lightweight Clothing." The report concluded that Mothers' prefer wrinkle-free garments for their children. Now that's a Real Mother Fa Ya.

The list of dubious research projects doesn't stop here. The Federal Aviation Administration spent \$20,000 for a study of the body measurements of would-be airline stewardesses.

With a \$961 million dollar budget, the National Science Foundation has squandered funds on such as the sexual behavior of the dabbling African Black Duck."

The Government gave Washington University \$25,000 to gauge people's reaction to seeing an octopus in a barnyard. The Smithsonian Institute was granted \$88,000 to compile a dictionary of the unwritten Mayan dialect which is spoken worldwide by only 10,000 Mexican farmers.

The list goes on and on and the dollars squandered are massive.

It is quite disturbing, to me, that the Government continues to raise taxes, without curbing the abuses of federal spending. Nothing is currently being done to curb such waste,

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