

Editorials & Comments

Walton Shows Courage, Statesmanship

By Hoyle H. Martin Sr.
Post Editor

Mecklenburg County Commissioner Bob Walton exemplified courage and political statesmanship last Thursday when he decided to change his vote on the amount of the school budget.

Specifically, Walton showed courage in a willingness to admit that he didn't fully understand what he was voting for in agreeing to support cutting in half a \$4-million increase in the school budget. Furthermore, Walton reportedly said the budget cuts problem was caused in part by promises that commissioners, including himself, made about the schools during the political campaign.

More significantly, Walton's action set the stage for decisions by the Commission that eased the conflict with the School Board. This was an act of statesmanship that may have averted court action and damage to the image of the school system.

The end result of these developments was a \$144.7 million county budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, a \$41.5 million local school budget share and a tax rate at 79½ cents per \$100 valuation, a half-penny below last year's rate.

The Post salutes Commissioner Walton for his preception, unselfishness and devotion to duty.

Poetic Justice For Dr. Jones

On the hot night of August 18, 1976, an important item on the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Board agenda and without prior warning to anyone resulted in a 6 to 1 vote to fire then school superintendent Dr. Roland Jones before television cameras and the general public.

Since that inhuman event nearly two years ago, Jones has reportedly sought numerous jobs and, upon being repeatedly passed over for other candidates, became understandably discouraged. He said earlier this week, "there were disappointments, and I had to fight depression."

That statement was made two days after Jones had signed a \$50,000

per year three-year contract to head the Baldwin Union Free School District, Long Island, New York. Ironically, Jones signed his contract with the Baldwin School District the same day he received his final check from his two-year, \$40,000 annual contract with the local school system.

Since Jones was fired from his \$40,000 a year job as head of the 109-school Charlotte-Mecklenburg system and experienced considerable difficulty in finding a new job, it appears to us that poetic justice has prevailed with Jones getting a position paying 25 percent more and 90 percent less in school system size and responsibility. Good luck Dr. Jones with the Baldwin school job.

Progress Or Disappointment?

Recent studies indicate that black Americans' annual income now exceeds \$70 billion annually. Furthermore, nearly 4,000 of the nation's 525,000 elected officials are blacks including 17 congressional representatives. While this number represents less than one percent of the nation's elected office holders, black voters nevertheless were a prime force in putting Jimmy Carter in the White House, Jim Hunt in the Governor's Mansion and Kenneth Harris in the Mayor's Chair.

In addition, there is a black man on the U.S. Supreme Court and many on lower court benches, another in the President's Cabinet, another is our U.N. ambassador and there are other blacks in similar positions. There are also a number of blacks on corporate boards.

In spite of these apparent signs of progress, over 25 percent of all black families still live below the government defined poverty level (5,815 for an urban family of 4), unemployment among black teenagers remains at 42 percent and for all blacks its 14 percent or more than twice that of whites. Minority owned businesses too face nearly insurmountable problems in their attempts to participate in the free enterprise system.

Thus, 13 years after the civil right and equal opportunity efforts of the mid-1960s blacks are asking the question, has it been progress or disappointment?

There has been some progress upward for the professional or college trained black but little for the less educated and these represent the majority of the black community.

The collective views of the nation's black leadership that aims toward progress calls for a renewal commitment to educational values and discipline, especially for black youth, and more reliance on black self-help endeavors than on government programs.

In this regard, we believe the possible birth of Urban League chapter in Charlotte, the low scores of blacks on competency tests, and the local black unemployment level should be enough to remind us that progress for blacks can occur if we heed the problems we face as a people and prepare to push open the doors to prosperity and opportunity. This means for many of us changing our attitudes, disciplining our bodies and training our minds for living in an environment of economic, social and political progress.

BLAMING THE POLICE FOR THE ILL-TREATMENT OF BLACK JUVENILES DOESN'T STOP THEM FROM KILLING OLD MEN AND WOMEN. SITTING AROUND DOING NOTHING WON'T HELP EITHER.

FACTS THAT ARE NOT FRANKLY FACED HAVE A NASTY HABIT OF STABBING US IN THE BACK.



Blacks' Destiny In Own Hand

Focusing On The Other Economy

By Bayard Rustin
Anyone concerned with the economic squeeze on workers and poor people should read Gus Tyler's penetrating new study entitled *The Other Economy: America's Working Poor*. Appearing in a recent issue of a small - but spirited - magazine known as *The New Leader*, the study lays bare the poverty, deprivation, and glaring inequalities that co-exist with affluence and wealth.

Tyler's study effectively challenges two dangerous political trends that seem to be sweeping America. The first - which is especially popular among some intellectuals and politicians - is a curious and premature celebration of universal or near-universal "affluence." According to the proponents of this new social myth, we need only "mop-up" the remaining vestiges of poverty by either motivating or quietly abandoning those who cling so stubbornly to the nefarious "welfare ethic." America, we are confidently told, has achieved plenty in our own time.

This smug complacency has given birth to a second disturbing trend - the ever popular idea that social problems are best solved by the nimble fingers of the market's "invisible hand." Neo-conservatives and business figures solemnly lecture us about the limits of government, and the great untapped potential of an expanding private sector (i.e. profit-motivated enterprise) as it displaces a parasitical, inflation-producing, and morally corrupt public sector. For conservatives then, affluence is best preserved and expanded by a gradual

"withering away of the state" and the gradual elimination of "unnecessary" social services for the poor and non-affluent.

Tyler shows these myths for what they are - simple myths. All is not so rosy, according to the study, and the root causes of our social problems won't be found in bloated federal budgets, fat workers, welfare chislers, or a tax system which unfairly penalizes business activity. Quite the contrary, many of our most serious social problems have deep roots in the very economic system which conservatives claim has been efficient, so egalitarian, and so victimized by government "interference."

By illustrating the endemic and almost radical inequality that characterizes the American economic system, Tyler reminds us that the problem is so serious, and so broad-based, that it requires a social solution, not a "trickle-down" strategy. By a social solution, I mean far-reaching efforts directed toward the transformation of our economy from a system based exclusively on private profit to a system far more responsive to social needs.

A social solution, of course, presupposes the existence of a strong political coalition - including black people - capable of mobilizing mass support for fundamental change in the American economic system. But in light of recent political events (i.e. Proposition 13 in California, the defeat of Senator Case, etc.), I fear we will face increasing difficulties in protecting and enlarging the pro-

gressive coalition, a coalition which is, ironically, losing the votes of many Americans who live and work in Tyler's "Other Economy."

Here is the central paradox arising from Tyler's study: because of apathy, internal division, and simple confusion, the political power "The Other Economy" is either under-utilized or unwittingly aligned with forces committed to the continued subjugation of "The Other Economy." In a very real sense, "The Other Economy" is its own jailer and prosecutor. But it also has the potentials for becoming its own liberator.

As I see it, those of us concerned with the problems of "The Other Economy" must once again become the molders of political debate in America. Through our own intellectual exhaustion, we have virtually abandoned the field to the slick "anti-tax" hucksters who contend that every decent social welfare program of the last twenty years has somehow been a disaster for the economy. And the fact that so many in "The Other Economy" eagerly buy these new economic fallacies is, in large measure, our own fault.

If we are to succeed in reversing the conservative trend, a trend which will perpetuate and aggravate the problems of black workers in "The Other Economy," we must vigorously confront the essentially regressive policies of the so-called New Right. We must unmask the blatant injustices of the present tax system, and advocate meaningful reform.

By Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

TO BE EQUAL



Tuition Credit Threatens Schools

The drive for a tax credit to offset tuition costs has gathered momentum with the passage of a version of the plan by the House of Representatives. Many people think the Senate will follow suit.

Fortunately, President Carter has promised to veto such ill-advised legislation. But that doesn't end the threat. Congress still might override the veto. Or, if it doesn't, the issue is bound to surface again next year.

Superficially, the tax credit is appealing to many middle income families. In reality though, it's a form of shell game that won't materially aid middle class taxpayers, will probably drive up education costs, and seriously threatens the system of public schools.

The House bill would allow taxpayers to deduct \$100 from the federal taxes they owe for each college student in the family and \$50 for every private school pupil. The credit will then grow yearly until it hits \$250 and \$100 respectively in 1980. That would amount to a whopping \$1.2 billion federal subsidy.

The Senate is considering a bill that would be even more generous - costing four or five times as much as the House measure.

But such savings to taxpayers are likely to dissolve since private schools and colleges are bound to raise tuition fees. Beyond that, this so-called attempt as equity for taxpayers means that the bulk of tax money will be returned to affluent families most able to pay high tuition fees. And for all the concern about the hard pressed taxpayer, families whose children are not in private schools will wind up paying higher taxes to fund the tax credit for other families - even though they may be earning less.

Some versions of the tuition tax credit dodge peg the credit to a percentage of the tuition payments. That means affluent families whose children attend high tuition schools get back more than families whose kids are in lower-cost colleges.

So while the plan is presented as an effort to bail out financially-pinched middle class families, the real beneficiaries are the affluent. They'll be getting a half-billion dollar welfare moderate income families, traditionally reliant on public schools and taxed at low rates, will wind up with almost nothing from the tuition tax credit although they're the ones who need help most.

The real threat in the House bill comes from its inclusion of private elementary and secondary school students in the tax credit. That represents a grave threat to the public schools - it's virtually an invitation to parents to desert those schools thanks to federal subsidies.

Many public school systems are strapped for funds and voters have been wary about voting school bond issues. If federal subsidies accelerate the movement of middle class children into private schools, voters would be even less likely to support public education. And once a tuition tax credit passes - at whatever level it is set - it's very likely to be increased.

So the tax credit provides incentives to desert public schools at the very time when those public schools need more aid to improve their services.

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as i see it

Bakke Wins: Affirmative Action Wobbles

By Gerald Johnson
The Supreme Court in a 5-4 decision declared that the Medical School of the University of California at Davis was guilty of reverse discrimination and that the university must admit Allan Bakke, the plaintiff of the case.

The opinions regarding the Supreme Court decision were varied and mixed. Most Black people took offense to the decision and most white's applauded the result.

But before you completely formulate your biased opinion, let me give you some unbiased facts about the case.

The University of California at Davis Medical School maintained two procedures for admitting students; one for white students, one for blacks students. The rigidity of the program was structured to admit 16 black students come from hell or high water.

The law states that no person can be denied admissions to a university because of race, color, creed, or national origin.

The UCD Medical School denied admissions to Allan Bakke based on race. This was proven when the school couldn't show any other reason for denying Bakke admission.

Consequently Bakke won.

The effect that will result from the Bakke case is somewhat obscure. But it can be said that affirmative action was not on trial. By this, I mean that the courts ruling was directed towards a specific case: Bakke and the UCD Medical School. The higher court went so far as saying that race could be a factor in determining admissions. Later on in the week they refused to hear similar reverse discrimination cases. This to me means that the higher court is keeping a watchful eye on how affirmative action is being administered. Hence, the Bakke case should not affect the affirmative action programs.

However, because of the general terms of the courts ruling there is a lot of room for interpretation. What is going to happen is those institutions and industries that are firmly committed to affirmative action by conscience and not by law will continue to strive aggressively and positively toward equality. Those that are committed to the law and the law alone will use this opportunity to test the rigidity of the law. Thus the affirmative action programs will feel



Gerald Johnson
a ripple of sorts and possibly will wobble a little, but I think it will maintain a sound footing over the years to come.

There are several points of interest surrounding the decision on Bakke. One point is that the courts rendered quotas as unconstitutional. I firmly agree with this point. To rigidly stick to a set number is discriminatory as well as stupid. Even though it might seem that it helps blacks it really hinders blacks. If more than the set number of blacks were qualified to fill the positions then the set number is discriminatory.

If there are fewer qualified blacks then it

becomes a burden to actually recruit the set number. If the set number is recruited at all cost then quotas become discriminatory against white people. To aggressively recruit qualified minorities and women does not mean bringing in a set number but rather making concerted efforts to recruit minorities and women.

Secondly, the court said that race cannot be the only consideration, but it could be used as one of many factors in considering candidates. Before this ruling it was unconstitutional to use race at all. This will give admission offices a little more flexibility in recruiting minorities.

ERA Advocate
Even though I am an era advocate I must say that those individuals spouting off about equal work deserves equal pay are a little off base.

To demonstrate the irrational conclusions that are drawn from this assumption, let's take an absurd example. Suppose you wanted your lawn cut. A boy of 12 years offers to do it for \$6, while an adult with a lawn service charges \$15. The lawn is a fixed entity and basically both people will have to do basically the same work to get the job done. However,

there exist a disparity in price.

There are several points that can be logically concluded from this point: 1) the boy is working for spending money and his needs for money aren't as severe as the adult's. 2) If the boy charged \$15 he wouldn't get the job. Consequently, work, like any other commodity is based on supply and demand.

Using this example as a basis about work in general, it is easy to demonstrate that an employer pays according to need and supply.

This economical fact has led to what happens to be discrimination against women. But women are newcomers to the job market. Being newcomers women accept employment at a lower paying scale. Moreover, since most employed women are working to supplement another income the aggressiveness toward monetary achievement isn't as acute as it is for males. Here again is reason for women to actually accept a job at a lower rate of pay.

These are just a few reasons why women average less than man on the salary scale. As time passes the salary gap between men and women

employees will disappear.

However, women must realize that the same work does not receive the same pay. Look at Barbara Walters and Harry Reasoner. The jobs are identical but Walter's salary is more than doubles Reasoner's.

What else can I say.

Streets To Close For Improvements

Beginning Friday, July 7, three streets in the Fourth Ward area will be closed to construct drainage improvements. Streets being closed are Poplar Street between Seventh and Eighth Streets, Pine Street between Seventh and Eighth Streets and Eighth Street between Poplar and Church Streets.

