

Editorials & Comments

Black Reflections

Once again it is February - Black History Month - a time to pause, reflect and reassess where we have been and where we are going as 22 million black Americans.

In over three-quarters of the 20th Century we have come through the ravages of Jim Crowism, a technological and cultural revolution, progress in civil rights - laws and moral commitment, a black power movement and into the era of the new racism and new challenges.

The new racism is evident in continuing state of economic depression that most black Americans find themselves in. Urban League head Vernon Jordan, reminded us of this recently in his State of Black America statistical report. In summary, he said the typical black family's income is only 57 percent (down from 61 percent in 1970) of a white family, black youth unemployment is nearly 60 percent and blacks are three times as likely to live in the grip of poverty.

The new challenges blacks face is in the need to recognize the wisdom in psychologist Kenneth Clark's observation that "black children...can't develop pride by just saying they have it, by singing a song about it, or by saying I'm black and beautiful..." Racial pride, Clark insists, come from "demonstrable

achievement."

Therefore, more important than planning projects and programs to commemorate past historical events and highlights, blacks need to plan strategies and programs that will provide opportunities for determining our own destiny in the remaining decades of the 20th Century and beyond.

This will require a renewed commitment to the value of education, keeping sports in proper perspective, actively supporting black economic enterprises, re-enforcing our political strengths, establishing and

maintaining relations with Third World nations, strengthening the black family and reaccessing the positive role the black church can and should play to improve the quality of life for black people.

Therefore, black history observance is only meaningful to the extent that we use it in part to access where we are today, where we want to be tomorrow and a plan for getting where we want to be.

Thus, while America is in the view of many experiencing an age of diminishing expectations, black Americans need to develop the philosophy of "entitlement" that has traditionally enabled whites to have a greater share of the "good life."

Housing & Political Consciousness

Over the past few years when the City Council was finalizing in its mind a moral commitment to scatter public housing throughout all areas of the city, there was a consensus among knowledgeable political observers that the commitment was unwavering. Council reaffirmed this commitment by having some of their members join with some Housing Authority Board of Commissioners on a housing liaison committee last year to assist in the search for suitable scattered sites.

However, when City Council finally voted on the scattered housing sites issue last week, a single vote resulted in the loss of a crucial rezoning request for one of the sites. This action has been interpreted by many to mean that City Council has altered, if not abandoned, its commitment to scattered site housing.

Thus, while Council secured the required three-fourths favorable vote for the contested rezoning of two sites - Sharon and Marsh Roads - they failed to be one vote to approve rezoning for the proposed Providence Road site. (The fourth site, on Muddy Pond Lane, did not require rezoning.)

As a result of this action, City Council has been both praised and condemned, and applauded and defiled by people caught up on both sides of the emotional and illogical reaction to scat-

tered site housing. Council member Pat Locke attempted to put the issue in perspective when she said, "We made promises to other neighborhoods five years ago to put sites in southeast Charlotte, which we haven't done." Ms. Locke should probably be thanked for her thoughtfulness. However, consistent with the democratic process which we like to believe still exists in America, the City Council of five or even one year ago is not the City Council of 1980.

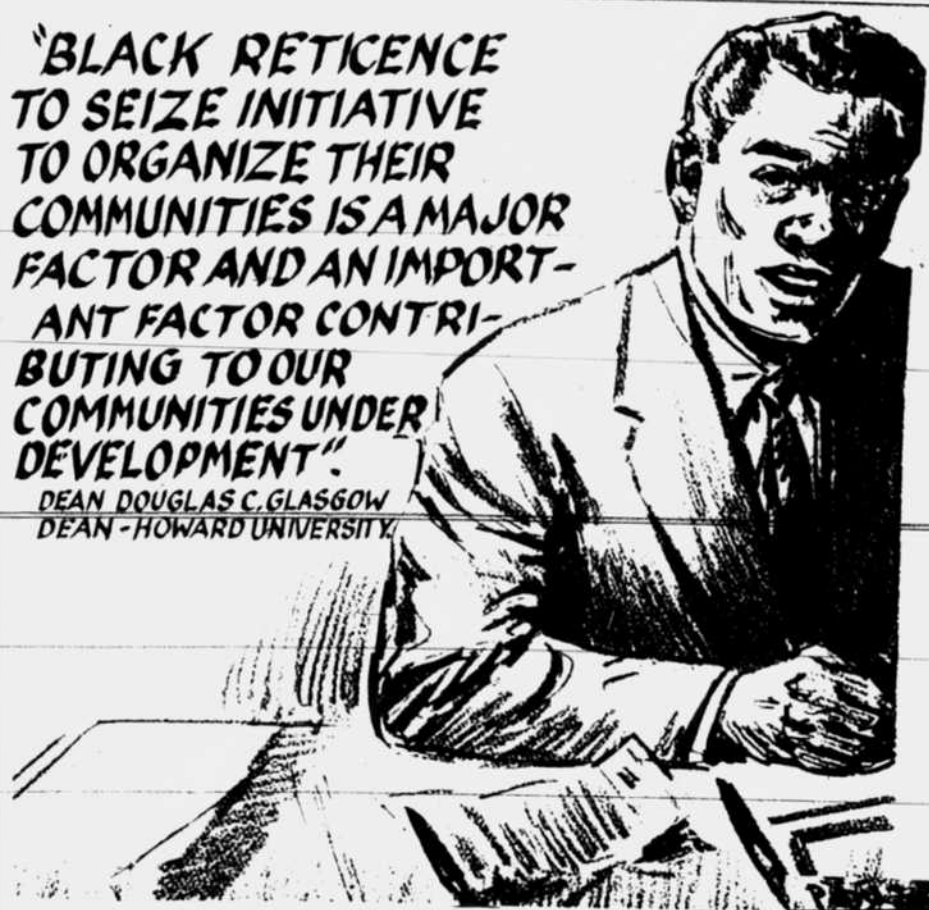
Council members were not on the Council five years ago and two of them were not on the Council last year. Therefore, the democratic process and the American political system allowed these new Council members to successfully seek public office with a commitment, we presume, only to vote their convictions and therefore not necessarily to support prior Council commitment on any issue. Thus, it is our political system that affects the Council's credibility and efforts to develop integrity with the public, not the voting decisions of any Council member.

These observations are not intended to imply that we are satisfied with the decisions that City Council made on the scattered site issue, but rather to put in perspective the "why's" of why things often happen as they do.

79,000,000,000.00.
(SEVENTY NINE BILLION DOLLARS INCOME OF BLACK AMERICA 1979).

"BLACK RETICENCE TO SEIZE INITIATIVE TO ORGANIZE THEIR COMMUNITIES IS A MAJOR FACTOR AND AN IMPORTANT FACTOR CONTRIBUTING TO OUR COMMUNITIES UNDER DEVELOPMENT"

DEAN DOUGLAS C. GLASGOW
DEAN - HOWARD UNIVERSITY



Black Boot-Straps

by Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

TO
BE
EQUAL



Guns Or Butter?

The Administration's budget projects large increases in military spending over the next five years. It says defense spending will be \$100 billion higher than "would be needed simply to maintain the 1980 level in real terms."

That's a lot of money. It will come from foregone tax cuts, domestic programs, and other sources.

The five-year total military spending would be in the neighborhood of one trillion dollars, double the preceding five years.

A change of that magnitude reflects a change in national priorities. Yet it has not been accompanied by the kind of debate one might expect to precede such a drastic decision.

The easy assumption is that the military budget's jump is a response to the brutal Russian aggression in Afghanistan and to the irrational Iranian holding of American hostages.

Not so. The budget was locked in place by the time the Russians started marching, and most of it was agreed on before the hostages were taken. The jump in military spending was largely the result of promises made to secure the SALT Treaty's passage, when it was still alive.

But the reaction of candidates and public alike seems to be favorable to the hike. The assumption is that the Russians have been building up their forces and we've got to play catch-up.

That assumption can be questioned, and it ought to be before the nation commits itself to such a radical change in priorities.

Some defense experts have pointed out that the U.S. and its NATO allies outspend the Russians and their partners in the Warsaw Pact. They also say that a large part of Russia's strength is pinned down by China, while whatever increase is necessary for Western defense could be supplied by our allies. Their current spending levels are relatively low and their dependence on Mideast oil is greater than ours.

The real question isn't whether we should match the Russians in military spending. It is whether our defense posture is commensurate with our national security needs.

Looked at that way, it is debatable whether security is enhanced by over-reliance on highly sophisticated weapons systems that incorporate costly advanced technology of questionable reliability.

Such systems regularly result in astronomical cost overruns and use resources that might otherwise buy items that would enhance our defense capabilities more effectively.

Recently, Secretary of Defense Harold R. Brown told a Congressional Committee: "We've paid too much for the last ten percent of performance, not only in investment but also in maintenance and operating costs." And he admitted that "there is a tendency in the military services and in my own office for people to be entranced by technology."

So there's ample reason to take a hard-fisted approach to the military's \$40 billion want-list of new weapons systems and to the overall jump in defense spending.

Few have pointed out the inevitable inflationary effect the spending rise will have. Prices of scarce materials and manpower will escalate.

As I See It

Controversial Issues

By Gerald O. Johnson
Post Columnist

The political climate has created several interesting controversial issues. There is nothing I like more than controversy. I have always been tolerant of those who disagree with me - after all, they have a right to their ridiculous opinions. But this is As I See It.

THE DRAFT

Everybody is griping about the possibility of a draft. President Carter is proposing a registration procedure that would require people 18 to 26 to register with their local Draft Board. The registration is - it is said - for standby emergency to allow quick mobilization of forces if necessary. It will lead to a draft.

But this is necessary to reinforce the security of the country. Unfortunately, no one is convincing anyone of this. Blacks are screaming that it's not our war. White folks are saying that it's o.k. as long as their kids don't go. So, it's settled - we can have a registration as long as no one is required to register. That is the American way.

Black people (Negroes) feel that this country is not worth fighting for. After all, it is the U.S. that has oppressed Black people for over 100 years.

White people (Caucasians) feel that giving up their cars, girlfriends and weekend jobs for the army just isn't worth it.

Fact: Since the abolishment of the draft, the armed services have continually deteriorated.

Fact: In an attempt to meet quotas, recruiters il-



Gerald O. Johnson

legally accepted unqualified applicants.

Fact: The ratio of professionals (doctors, engineers, etc.) all to enlisted men has dwindled to the smallest it has ever been in this country. The fact list goes on and on.

This country might not be perfect but there is a whole lot right about it. Moreover, when it's compared with every other country on earth it stands head over shoulders. What a lot of us forget it is through military force that gave us this advantage and has made it possible for us to maintain it. It shouldn't be taken for granted that it has to be this way always.

The rotational draft is needed as before to guarantee the quality and quantity of the armed forces. The recent aggression by the Russians in Afghanistan is only an indication on how weak our armed forces really are. The next test may not be as mild.

Oh, the women, you ask. Of course, they should be drafted. I can think of no better way to boost morale

in the fox holes. Might cause us to lose the war, but the soldiers wouldn't care.

THE OLYMPICS

Since the government does not sponsor the olympic team it shouldn't have any say on if the athletes should participate or not. I do feel the athletes should not participate. But it should be by their own choice, not the government.

After years of preparation to compete for the gold it has to be difficult to accept that you can't participate for political reasons. But to participate would, in a sense, condone the Russian aggression in Europe. It will hurt the Russians financially, not to have countries like the U.S. participate. It will demonstrate that this country will not sit idly by and watch Soviet aggression take place. Moreover, the aggression is a direct threat to the control of the Persian Gulf - oil capitol of the world. So, it is not a question of the spread of communism, but rather the question of the shortages of oil.

A side note - If the price of gold keeps rising then I will be compelled to compete in the '84 olympics myself. Maybe I could win in the mouth-off competition.

QUOTE

One's perspective on any issue is directly affected by the issue affecting him directly or indirectly

From The White House

The White House And Black Reporters

By Alfreda L. Madison
Special To The Post

The purpose of the press is to inform the public about events. So media people do have an important job. Since the United States is one of the leaders of the world - a super power, news about the activities of our government and its relationship to the other governments around the world are very important. This does affect the lives of all of the citizens of this country. This being a democracy, all citizens have a right to information about the activities of all branches of government, so they can participate, intelligently, in the democratic process.

White House and congressional correspondents have the tremendous task of getting the news to the American people about the activities of these two branches of government.

Since there are just a few reporters that represent black media, and because the white press is not sensitized to issues as they



Alfreda L. Madison especially relate to blacks, the few members of the black-owned press have an added task of analyzing issues very carefully, since racism is still very much a part of our government's operation.

I've been asked often, by the black public, why blacks aren't called on more at the President's press conferences. The only answer I can give is that the President's press conferences are just like everything else; we are overlooked by being both

black and not rich, we deem ourselves extremely lucky if one of us gets recognized.

Just after the November press conference, when none of the blacks were called on, one black correspondent, remarked when the conference was over, "President Carter just held another lily-white racist press conference." Surely, there are many answers that we want to know in addition to all the general problems. Yet, we find it hard to get a White House response. I did get called on at the last press conference. I was called on in March of 1978, 23 months ago. I certainly hope it won't be 23 more months before I'll be able to ask the President some of the questions that you, my readers, would like to have answered.

Before the Iran situation, Jody Powell's daily briefings were announced several hours ahead of time and those of us, who because our media are not rich and having many other things to do, were

able to schedule our duties so that we could at least get to some of the briefings. To get an appointment with or a returned phone call from Jody or his assistants is a matter of impossibility.

The reasons we get for the short announcing of briefings is because of Iran. While freeing the hostages is certainly important, there are serious domestic questions also, so we can't stop everything until the hostages are returned. Since the Rose Garden is spoken of as the President's hiding place, Jody Powell must be sitting there with him too until a few minutes before he decides to hold a briefing.

Some of the members of Jody's staff don't seem to realize that taxpayers are paying them only because the press is there and that they do have a duty to the press members as well as the White House. The only way the public gets any knowledge about the administration's activities is through the press. While blacks read white printed news and look at television,

they are influenced, almost wholly, by the black media. With blacks comprising around 12 percent of the U.S. population, and because of their extremely valuable citizenship participation since the beginning of this country, every branch of government must recognize them equally.

I, being the only White House and Congressional correspondent representing any black-owned written press - 114 newspapers, I realize the importance of my job. Yet, because racism exists in every facet of American life, it is easy for me to believe that some of the unpleasant experiences I've had with the White House press staff are due to racism. However, since having been in the racial fights in the fifties and sixties, nothing deters my course. It is highly necessary that I get news out from the White House to my black readers. That I will do - and just as I stood up to school boards in Virginia and New York, police, bus drivers and rail-

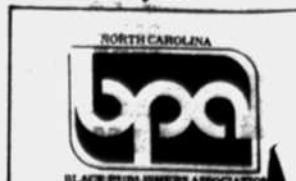
road conductors, I'll certainly stand up to the White House press staff.

YWCA To Present

"Sportswomen Of The Year"

This spring, the Charlotte YWCA, once again, will be presenting its "Sportswomen of the Year" awards. Female amateur athletes in Mecklenburg and Union counties are eligible; nominations may be made by anyone in both counties.

Applications may be obtained at either Park Road or Trade Street YWCA centers and must be returned to Wanda Geer, Park Road YWCA, 3420 Park Road (28209) no later than April 1. The awards banquet will be held May 19.



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