

# Editorials & Comments

## The Budget Dilemma

In January President Carter proposed a fiscal 1981 budget that called for a \$15.8 billion deficit. Now less than two months later, he wants a balanced budget; that is, \$16.5 billion in spending reduction and a projected \$2 billion surplus.

Those who favor the President's turn-about budget have asked why it took so long, and those who oppose it are talking about demonstrating in the streets. The fact is neither group has much to cheer about or cry about because the new budget is being developed for all the wrong reasons - politics.

President Carter's so-called balanced budget is in reality a reaction to Ted Kennedy's political campaign rhetoric about budget proposals as well as some of the more conservative Republican candidates' fiscal viewpoints. Furthermore, major parts of the federal budget cannot be cut because they represent certain "uncontrollable" or on-going expenses. These include such items as interest on the national debt, Social Security payments, veterans' benefits, pensions, the federal utility bill and, to a lesser degree, salaries for federal workers.

Unfortunately, the political paranoia over defense spending has, for all intent and purposes, placed war preparedness spending in the same category as the "uncontrollable" budget category. The fact is the Carter administration's proposed budget spending cuts would affect nearly every government agency except defense.

## Federal Spending

This means, too, that all other federal spending falls into a discretionary spending category. Therefore, when there are malfunctions in the nation's economy, surgery is performed on discretionary spending. This further means that the poor, the unemployed, the ill-housed, the elderly will, as it historically does, have to carry the burden of efforts to get the economy on a sound up-beat less inflationary track.

Ironically, the President's balanced budget proposal leaves unanswered the question that has led to the planned budget cuts; that is, will a major reduction in federal spending have a significant impact upon the nation's leaping inflationary rate?

The question remains unanswered because most knowledgeable economists apparently believe that a balanced budget for fiscal year 1981 and the federal spending year beginning October, 1981 will not lower the inflationary rate by even one percent. Thus, to create further economic hardship for those already at the bottom of the

economic totem pole in order to reduce inflation by a negligible amount appears to be inexcusable.

The fact is Mr. Carter's proposed budget cuts offer no assurance that the cost of food, clothing, housing, transportation and health care will be reduced. However, it does guarantee greater economic hardship for the poor and middle income families while impacting only slightly upon the rich and the powerful.

While we have expressed concerns about the impact of the Carter budget cuts, we are mindful that with spiraling inflation, the nation must begin to take a stand at some point in order to restore some sanity into an out-of-control economic crisis.

## Proposed Budget

We believe that the only equitable and logical way to deal with the nation's inflationary problem is to develop a long-term - 15 years at least - economic policy that will transcend political parties and presidential administrations. A policy of this magnitude would be workable if we had candidates for political office with sufficient maturity and love of country to resist the temptation to do what is politically expected and in turn do what is economically sound.

Thus, with men and women in political office who have the courage of their convictions and with a citizenry who are fully committed to equally sharing the nation's burdens for reducing inflation, we can begin to see a gradual decline in the annual inflationary rate.

While inflation might only fall one half to one percent a year, it could possibly be achieved with a minimum hardship for anyone. The only real question is whether we are sufficiently mature enough as a nation to make the minimum sacrifices as elected officials or just ordinary citizens to make it work.

## Abject Conditions

Prior to launching the short-lived war on poverty, most Americans were unaware that so many of our own citizens lived under such abject conditions. The affluent in our society were never really aware of the stark reality because the mass media neglected to describe such suffering, hunger, deprivation in all the gory details. The ghettos and the barrios were conveniently circumscribed by the planners of beltways and freeways so that suburban commuters need not come face to face with the misery of our poor.

According to official statistics, over 40 million Americans are hungry and undernourished, 3.5 million white families and 1.6 million Black families are classified as poor.

# SUBJECT CRIME



Let's Work Together For A Safe Community

## As I See It

### Where We Are Headed And Why!

By Gerald O. Johnson  
Post Columnist

If you have ever noticed a child on a daily basis it is almost impossible to realize he is growing. But after a year or two you look at an old picture then you begin to realize how the child has matured over that period of time. This analogy is a good example of what is taking place worldwide right before our eyes. We are in the early stages of a new era that will change our lifestyles forever. I think it is very exciting.

The signs indicating the radical changes occurring make the front pages of the newspaper everyday. The Afghanistan invasion, the Iranians holding the American hostages, inflation rate nearing 20 percent per annum, prime interest rate his 20 percent, home mortgages tops 17 percent, nuclear power failures, and countless assassinations are just a few.

Through careful observation it can be realized that several factors are contributing to these changes. On the one hand we have skyrocketing energy cost coupled with nose-diving high technology cost. On the other hand we have invisible forces de-centralizing government control.

The impact of the two factors is forcing us into a new era. Politically, the individuals in government are not aware of this change. At least they aren't aware of how to cope with it. Consequently, the issues facing our nation today are being treated with archaic solutions. This will come to pass as more adept and up-to-date people take over government.



Gerald O. Johnson

Some of the consequences are obvious and others are not. Because of the high cost of energy our living patterns will change drastically. We will become a resource sharing nation. This means that single dwelling homes will begin a steady decline and never again reach the rate levels of today. Condominiums will be the living style of tomorrow. A building housing 50 families is much more energy efficient than 50 single dwelling homes. Lawn care is cut drastically. Heat, hot water and cooling is handled more conveniently. The single dwelling houses will be much smaller with smaller lots. The need to travel by automobile will virtually disappear. Mass transportation will be the basic mode of transportation. Cars will be much smaller and much lighter. Advanced technology will allow many things to be done from the home that we currently travel to do. For example, banking could be done at home through a keyboard attached to your television. Shopping by catalogue and

using your keyboard to enter the transaction will be done in the home. Even a lot of office work will be done at home. Interestingly enough, technology will replace the need for a lot of travel. If you feel ill then just type your symptoms with your keyboard to your doctor and he will prescribe a cure over your TV screen.

Washington will not be as powerful as local and state governments. It will still act as an overseer with the constitution, but many laws will disappear. It should be noted that the centralization of our government and our heavy reliance on it is a direct consequence of the Great Depression. The Depression forced many people to rely and gain confidence in government. This fueled the rapid growth of government. But it is the government that is leading us to another Great Depression. Ironically, the very thing that caused us to centralize will be the cause of our decentralization.

The decentralization of government and the associated laws will cause small banks, small colleges, small shops, and other small enterprises to either be absorbed by larger institutions or to disappear altogether. (Black colleges in particular will disappear).

Socially, we will find people relying heavily on other people. Private societies will take over a lot of the social chores burdening the government now. More minorities and women will have key positions in major corporations. So see As I See It, Page 9 b

Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

## TO BE EQUAL



### Minorities Must Be Counted

The 1980 Census officially begins April 1, and it is the most important event of the year for minorities, perhaps even more important than the outcome of the presidential election.

That's because the census results will affect just about every area of minority life. Part of the problems faced by minorities in the seventies derived from the fact that so many were counted out, affecting a wide variety of federal and state aid programs.

The Census Bureau itself admits that it missed five million people in the 1970 census. But while only one out of fifty whites was not counted, one out of fourteen blacks and one out of seven Hispanic-Americans were not counted. Almost one out of five young black men were missed by the census-takers.

Over the course of the decade that undercount cost minority communities billions of dollars in job programs and other social services allocated in part on population figures based on inaccurate census numbers.

Apologists for the undercount claim that minority suspicions of official documents and government papers were the main cause.

But more important was the failure to design procedures to ensure that everyone is counted. Major efforts were not made to penetrate suspicions and convince people that it was in their own interests to fill out and return the census forms.

It is questionable whether the 1980 census will do much better on that score. There's been little evidence of concentrated advertising campaigns directed at minorities. Some urban neighborhoods that are predominantly Spanish-speaking will be mailed forms in English.

This year's census will rely more heavily on mail returns than ever before, although pilot tests show this method results in lower compliance rates.

The forms themselves could be simpler. Most families will get a form that supposedly takes fifteen minutes to fill out, but many will get a longer form taking nearly an hour. But do those time figures reflect the fact that many poor households are disadvantaged educationally? For them, even the short form will be a test of perseverance, and many may just ignore it.

These and other shortcomings place a heavy burden on minority community organizations, churches and others to ensure that people in their neighborhoods are counted. And that means providing information and assistance so that everyone gets their census questionnaires filled out and mailed in.

People have to know why their cooperation is important.

One key reason is redistricting. Exactly one year from now the Census will release the official population figures to states and localities for the purpose of redistricting legislative seats. Without maximum minority participation in the census, Congressional and legislative seats may be redistricted out of black and brown communities and given to predominantly white suburbs.

So minorities have a special stake in being counted in 1980.

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## From Capitol Hill

# President's Budget A Colossal Disaster For The Poor

Alfreda L. Madison  
Special To The Post

Six weeks after President Carter sent his first budget to Capitol Hill, he recently unveiled another one. His excuse for this quick new budget, was that so many things had recently changed. In fact the only real change was Reagan's presidential candidacy gains. It's very hard to keep up with the Administration's foreign and domestic policies, because they change with the insecure mood of the White House.

The Congressional Black Caucus which termed the first budget an unmitigated disaster, finds this latest one even though Mr. Carter has not yet revealed his specific cuts, but has just given a drastic overview, calls this new budget diversionary and unjust. They say the President must declare an economic emergency and impose across the board cuts. His policy is devastating to wage earners, taxpayers, consumers and that it undercuts employment. This policy erodes confi-



Alfreda L. Madison

dence in both domestic and foreign matters. This budget which received much bi-partisan congressional agreement, strongly enhances the wealth of big corporations and the most affluent individuals in our country at the expense of a mere uncertain survival of the poor and middle class.

The public is being hoodwinked into thinking that a balanced budget which will cut domestic programs of jobs, housing, health care, education and all human needs will reduce inflation.

The Government Budget Office stated that a \$20 billion cut will only reduce inflation by .1 percentage point.

The Caucus says the President's voluntary wage and price controls have not worked. Since they were in effect in October of 1978 prices have risen very fast but overall wages actually declined more than 5 percent, while corporate profits rose to 20-35 percent. This continuous soaring unchecked inflation leaves the needy in our country struggling for day to day living.

The Congressional Black Caucus proposes to support identified wasteful cuts but it will forcefully reject reductions that are ill-conceived, economically unjustified, and injurious to the welfare of human beings. It also deplores blanket military increases in defense spending where they dictate targeted programs for deprived Americans. This is only burdening the defense costs on those least able to afford it.

These Caucus members propose a remedy for re-

ducing inflation. This can be done by having a healthy economy and balanced budget through full utilization of our human and material resources which will increase productivity. There must be economic growth of not less than an annual 5 or 6 percent economic growth.

The President and congress in order to get a handle on inflation must institute direct wage, price, interest, dividend and profit controls. Both branches of government must address the causes of inflation which are administered prices, decontrolled energy prices, increasing costs of basic necessities, speculation, high interest rates and shortages and failure to adequately plan for full employment.

The House of Representatives Budget Committee wants to raise the President's budget cut of \$13 billion to \$16 billion. Many members of congress and Mr. Carter say the mood of the country is for balancing the budget. This could easily be an illusion created by our leaders

themselves because they either don't know how or don't have the will to take a strong stand for human needs against the business

giant. The people across the country are crying for jobs and inflation reduction, while the leaders are misleading by brainwashing them that the only way this can be done is by cutting programs for the needy while further creating a "Russians are coming" hysteria in order for big weapon manufacturers to fatten their coffers. Jesse Jackson has

## Mecklenburg County Bridge Closes

RALEIGH-The Division of Highways of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has closed Reedy Creek Bridge on Reedy Creek Road (Secondary Road 2804) in Mecklenburg County to through traffic for approximately three weeks, according to Division Engineer David B. Roberts.

The bridge, located four miles east of Charlotte, will reopen in April.

a strong point when he says that we'll have to march on Washington again. The present actions of the President and congress can easily be the start of an Iran and Nicaragua situation here. While those countries had one despot, we have a few wealthy corporations who are gouging the masses to death.

Representative Solars of New York entered the House Budget Committee with a placard on which were printed the words from Dante's "Inferno": "Abandon hope, all ye that enter here."

The temporary closing will allow NCDOT maintenance crews to repair the bridge floor.

Traffic will be detoured on Rocky River Road, also known as Plaza Extension (Secondary Road 2803).

