

editorials & comments

The Olympics: Our Last Hope

The Russian pull-out of the 1984 Summer Olympic Games accompanied by some of its allied nations should be no surprise to any. Non-participation by a nation or nations is not exactly something new except that the U.S. government raised it to its highest level when foolishly America's youth was denied the opportunity to participate in 1980 allegedly because of Russia's invasion and occupancy of Afghanistan.

Jimmy Carter made a tragic mistake when he ordered a boycott of the Olympics in 1980. Politicians don't pay for the blood, sweat and tears by America's youth who seek only the right to free uninhibited competitive sports on a world stage. Yet every gold, silver or bronze medal won is viewed by most national government more as an ideological political victory than a sports event.

It doesn't really matter who is really at fault - the Russian government, the Reagan Administration or whoever - for the escalating 1984 Olympic boycott. What does matter is that the Olympics, one of the last two real hopes for world peace is rapidly deteriorating and slipping away.

In all fairness, the decline of the Olympics reaches far beyond the interruption created by politicians. The games have become the victims of international terrorists, corruption by big money, the use of drugs to enhance one's competitive position, avenues for spying, and of course motivation to win for all the wrong reasons - politics.

More Bureaucracy?

For a number of years the University Park Improvement Association and a number of other homeowner neighborhood organizations have been opposing plans to extend and widen McArthur Avenue and widen LaSalle Street through University Park to Brookshire Freeway to accommodate commercial truck traffic.

Ironically, the local entity that has final recommendation authority to the state on such road projects is not the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners nor the City Council but rather something called the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Stranger still is the fact

Any soul-searching on our part as a nation may lead us to conclude that Russia's charge that their athletes' safety would be endangered should not be labeled as a political smoke screen, even though it probably is. Yet, we have made it convenient for them to make such allegations by the way we manage or don't manage our cities, or more importantly our values about decency.

Let us face it, in the words of The Detroit News: "What guarantees do we really have for their (Russian athletes) safety? We can't even keep our own streets safe - how could we possibly assure them of their safety? Not even our own stadiums are safe anymore..."

Thus, as long as politicians can't promote moral values, deny our sons (not theirs) the right to free competitive sports participation, yet send them off to war for purely political reasons, our sane society is on the brink of total decline.

Ironically, there are only two reasons the Olympics as a world class event should continue. One, strangely enough, is political, that is, as long as the world's youth can come together every four years in competition we have a glimmering hope for general world peace. The other is the opportunity for the personal pride and feelings of self-worth that the athletes get from the game and the moral values it may carry with it.

Thus, let the youth play games, it may be the only real hope we have to survive to the year 2000.

that the majority of the votes in this organization are held by representatives from the small town in the county outside the city.

Recently MPO voted, over the objection of the City's (a Council member) representative, to extend and loop Ashbury Avenue around a cluster of streets to connect with LaSalle at Statesville Avenue. We wonder how in a representative democracy can people who do live in the city, were not elected nor appointed by the citizens affected, and are not even familiar with the neighborhood, how can they vote to run a road through or around a neighborhood. That's the new bureaucracy.

BLACK BUSINESS MEN AND POLITICIANS SHOULD BE IN THE FOREFRONT OF LONG-RANGE PLANNING FOR IT IS ONLY THROUGH ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CLOUT THAT ETHNIC GROUPS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MOVE UP THROUGH SOCIETY.

FROM THE CHRONICLE



Letters To The Editor:



Well Deserved Recognition

Dear Sir: Congratulations on your recent Community Service Award presented by Barber-Scotia College. It was a well-deserved recognition from my point of view. Your history of 90 years makes The Charlotte Post one of the oldest weeklies in the nation.

During these present times, it is still important that newspapers are maintained to serve the black community. The mainstream media features us, but often from a "fishbowl" perspective. A case in point is the recent coverage about studies on preserving the black family.

An April 30, 1984 article in The Charlotte Observer highlighted that nearly half of all black households are headed by women and more than half of all black babies are born to unwed mothers. It noted a breakdown of traditional family structures that scholars and politicians consider a threat to blacks' economic gains.

The question of economic gains for the black family-at-large has hardly even been seriously debated in the mainstream press. Yet, the general news slant is usually one that implies blacks "were making it big" or "on welfare."

I too am concerned about the black family, all of us, particularly at a time when the economic scene is

one in which many Americans, black and white, realize that people can turn less to the government to provide for their needs.

What better place to begin solutions than within a black perspective? We work for a living, we have black businesses and or-

ganizations. It's up to us to seek economic change and sufficiency among us. One vital source for communication with each other is in the black media. Mildred Dwigliss Swift Professional Financial Planner

Self Interest People?

Dear Editor:

The 1983 Civil Rights March on Washington for jobs, peace and freedom generated a sense of unity among minority leaders; however, when Jesse Jackson announced his candidacy for President, we noticed a breach of enormous proportions in civil rights leadership. Individuals and organizations of renown are coming through as self-interest people, promoting themselves rather than addressing the needs and services of the masses. The time has come when we (as a people) must mobilize our efforts on a much wider basis than civil rights if we are to choose our own destiny. We must learn that sometimes the followers must lead, as it was with Saul, after he was blinded and those who journeyed with him took his trembling hands and led him to Damascus (Acts 9:8).

Let us remember also that every black leader of today, whether elected or self-appointed, came into prominence on the coat-

tail of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

For three and one-half years, times have not been good for minorities and at the worst of times, appalling silence fell upon Joseph Lowery, Andrew Young, Benjamin Hooks, Julian Bond, John E.

Jacob, Coleman Young, Norman Hill, the members of the Congressional Black Caucus and our First Lady of Civil Rights. Since Mr. Jackson broke ranks and came forward as a viable candidate for Presidential nomination and has excelled all expectations,

black leaders are coming out of hibernation and jumping on Mondale's and Hart's bandwagons by using our churches for their political bases to provide a forum for the candidate of their choice and are using voter registration to create the illusion that they will be able to manipulate the black vote in November.

James Brown Rocky Mount

From Capitol Hill

Reagan Cannot Dismantle AA Methods

Alfreda Madison Special To The Post

Again the Reagan Administration has been rebuffed by the Courts, in its continuous persistence to reverse all civil rights gains.

The City of New Orleans with a 55 percent black population, had a police force of 35 percent black with practically all of them in the lower echelon rank. To correct this condition the City and police reached an agreement that would promote on a one-to-one black and white ratio until the blacks reached 50 percent in the upper bracket. The white police, Hispanics and women objected to the decree.

In October, 1981, the district Court Judge Sears concluded that the provision requiring black and white officers to be promoted on a one-to-one ratio until blacks constitute 50 percent of all ranks exceeded the Courts' remedial objectives and seriously jeopardized the career interests of non-whites.

The case was appealed to the Fifth Circuit of Appeals, which overturned the district court's decision and upheld the recent decree. The Reagan Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department headed by William Bradford Reynolds, asked that all 13 Fifth Circuit Court Judges hear the complete case.



Alfreda L. Madison

This action is highly unusual for a Justice Department.

The Court responded to the Justice Department's statement which said that affirmative action remedies in the New Orleans case are contrary to provision of Title VII. Justice said, "The last sentence of Title VII prohibits the use of any remedy which is not limited to actual victims of discrimination, since the one-to-one quota system in the recent decree was designed to benefit all blacks in the plaintiff's class."

In reply to Justice Department's statement, the Court said, "This Court has long upheld the use of affirmative action in recent decrees under Title VII and has not required that relief be limited to actual victims of discrimination." The Court dismissed the women and Hispanic charges, since, at the

time of the suit, they were adequately represented on the police force.

The Reagan Administration which is echoed by his Civil Rights Commission objects to class action and emphasizes that the individual who can prove that he or she has been discriminated against can bring a suit for remedying the case. The panel of judges disavowed the Administration's individual only argument.

The Administration and the present Civil Rights Commission contends that class action is reverse discrimination. Fifth Circuit said, "The burden of remedying past discrimination, may be borne by someone. The ideal goal in this type case is to provide a suitable remedy for the group who has suffered, but at the least expense to others."

President Reagan, in protecting his efforts to reverse civil rights gains, has stated that he has a color blind policy. The Court emphasized that color blind is not a constitutional dogma. "When a vice is inherent in a system, the vice can be eradicated only by restructuring the system."

The Fifth Circuit refuted Justice's argument that the Fourteenth Amendment protects the rights of the individual who has been discriminated against and it does not protect class dis-

crimination. The Court said that the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments take into consideration a pattern of class discriminatory practices. It said the Thirteenth Amendment, "seeks to attain a universal civil rights for blacks. Remedial action must address the needs of blacks as a race."

Peter Sherwood of Legal Defense Fund who successfully argued the case for the black police in the Detroit and New Orleans cases, said, "The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, soundly rejected the United States Justice Department's attempt to overturn an affirmative action plan." This decision is another of the many adverse decisions that the Administration has encountered in its attempt to reverse civil rights gains.

Sherwood further responding on the Court's decision said, "The government urges us to find that quota provision violates Title VII. We cannot accept this per se rule; the statute does not so require. As we said in "U.S. vs. City of Miami," at this point in the history of the fight against discrimination, it cannot be seriously argued that there is any insurmountable barrier to the use of goals, or quotas to eradicate the effects of past discrimination."



Air Traveler's Rights

There are three sure ways to arouse negative reactions from air travelers - smoking on commercial flights, compensation for being "bumped" and the liability of carriers that lose or damage luggage. The civil aeronautics board (CAB) is facing the task of deciding to what extent to enforce no smoking regulations on commercial flights. Smoking rules have no real home, transportation Secretary Elizabeth H. Dole, suggests letting individual airlines decide how to enforce no smoking rules within the marketplace.

The CAB had initially supported a no smoking rule on short flights. However, on March 19, 1984, it ruled smoking to be banned on aircrafts of fewer than 50 seats, and outlawed the smoking of pipes and cigars on all commercial flights. Henceforth, both rules reflect existing policies rather than toughening rules.

With the onset of the no smoking revolution, the CAB now guarantees nonsmoking travelers seats in nonsmoking areas of the aircraft - provided they check in on time. If the carriers fail to comply, they can be fined up to \$1,000. Under this same rule, the CAB has restricted smokers to a separate section of seats also. In theory, this all sounds wonderful, however, smokers complain that occasionally smoking seats are not available thus forcing them to take nonsmoking seats. Nonsmokers complain that smokers in smoking and nonsmoking sections are rude and intolerable. Both feel that the airlines do not rightfully attempt to accommodate their requests. According to the CAB, carriers occasionally overlook these complaints, since they make up only 2.6 percent of customer complaints.

Although 75 percent of air travelers request nonsmoking sections, major carriers do not want to expand the limits on smoking once airborne and are uneasy of state regulations if federal regulations are eliminated. According to major areas, federal regulations as they stand, work well.

A few carriers, small carriers, have made aggressive moves in the nonsmoking direction. Dallas-based Muse Air Corporation began in 1981 as a nonsmoking airline. Midway Airline, Chicago-based, prohibits smoking (since November 17, 1983), as part of the "Great American Smokeout." When Air Alaska, Inc. has made its mark for converting its business class to complete nonsmoking in December.

Major carriers are not looking forward to the increased customer complaints on the issue. A spokesman for Eastern Airlines, Inc. stated that to tell a business person that he or she cannot "light up" after take off would be suicidal since smoking is a personal preference. If this became true, then mis-assignment of seats would be grounds for complaints and lawsuits.

Smoking is a personal issue that each person must decide for himself. It is only when that personal satisfaction offends or bothers others that it becomes a social and health issue. When and how a person smokes is his business but he or she must be considerate of those around him that do not enjoy that pleasure. Cigarette, cigar and pipe smoke does offend people and taking that into consideration smokers should curtail their smoking when in public areas such as airplanes and restaurants. Blowing smoke in someone's face who is eating, whether or not a smoker, is rude - r-u-d-e. Stop and think, would you like to eat smoke with your steak?

Smoking regulations on airplanes will be a battlefield fight for a long while. Airlines have tried to accommodate everyone by having individual blowers that can be operated by the passenger. However, some smoking passengers do not make good use of the blowers but instead turn them off. The smoke drifts forward to the nonsmoking sections and causes discomfort. Second-hand smoke "ain't no fun." It makes one's eyes water, sneeze and queasy. So do not infest nonsmokers on airplanes, be considerate and think about where the smoke is going.

Another point of consideration that smokers should align is to ask nonsmokers if they mind if one smokes in a nonsmoking section. Being polite never hurt anyone, if anything it enhances one's character.

Whatever the CAB decides to do about the situation, it can be concluded that the decision will be made to benefit everyone, the smoker, the nonsmoker and the airline. In the meanwhile the vice versa is polite - it goes so much further.

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