

The Charlotte Post

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Editorials

A Retreat From Strength?

By HOYLE H. MARTIN
Editorial Writer

The November 1988 presidential election may be recorded in history as one of the least interesting, lacking truthfulness and unbeneficial from the standpoint of what the voters can expect from the nation's next president. From the very beginning, the two men chosen by their respective political parties as presidential candidates appear to be showing signs of weakness in character, questionable judgment and lacking the coverage to stand up and tell the nation truthfully what their party platform policies will be and how they propose to implement those policies and at what public cost.

We noted in this column after the National Democratic Convention last month that beneath the surface tensions in the Dukakis camp over how to deal with Jesse Jackson, little of any significance occurred. What did occur involved Dukakis' choice of a vice-presidential running mate, his deliberate attempt to avoid talking about the party's platform and related policies and his acceptance speech that focused on an ambiguous attempt at inclusionary politics.

Dukakis' inclusionary politics began with his ridiculous choice of Sen. Lloyd Bentsen as his vice-presidential running mate. Bentsen is a long-term conservative Democratic who has political views far more in line with that of Republican George Bush, a fellow Texan, than he does with Dukakis.

Dukakis, who apparently likes to give the impression that he is a liberal, went to great lengths to avoid any meaningful reference to his party's platform and policies under his possible administration.

Tony Brown has noted too that while Jesse Jackson is campaigning to get black votes for the Dukakis ticket, he, Dukakis, is "running a GOP-Southern strategy of white inclusion." Brown added that Dukakis opened his campaign in the state of Mississippi where exactly 24 years ago to that day three civil rights workers had been killed. By ignoring this historic loss of life, the New York Times was moved to call it "a breathtaking omission."

Dukakis' civil rights omission, his inclusion of a near ultra-conservative as his running mate, and his avoidance of stating a clear-cut position on what the Democratic Party's platform policy issues would be, has

left many moderate and liberal Democrats wondering what, if anything, the party stands for and where it is going.

Likewise, at the Republican National Convention, George Bush's long awaited decision on a vice-presidential running mate not only shocked his fellow Republicans, but selected someone that he had not even personally interviewed and, as it turned out, has a politically explosive military record in his background. These two points alone appear to show that Bush failed to understand that the voters have a strong desire to have a vice-president fully qualified for the job of the presidency. Political ideologies notwithstanding, Dukakis did have sense enough to select a VP choice with the experience and skills to assume the presidency. Thus, George Bush himself, in his first major decision leading to a possible presidency has made a decision that has raised a new issue, his own level of competence.

Bush said in his convention acceptance speech that his goal is to continue the basic policies of the Reagan administration. These policies have included attacks upon the civil rights gains of blacks over the past 20 years and Bush's poor image among female voters (polls consistently show women voters favoring Dukakis over Bush by a range of a low 17% to a high of 32%). Therefore, we foresee little substance in Bush's statements that he will battle Michael Dukakis for black voters because "I'll make clear that my conservatism has nothing to do with racism." Call it what you will, but when civil rights gains are placed in jeopardy that's racism. Likewise, Bush appeared so awkward in speaking to the Business and Professional Women's (BPW) national convention last month that BPW's president Betty Forbes commented, "No wonder women are uncomfortable with him (Bush)."

Thus, with Dukakis and Bush both carrying a vice presidential candidate for the wrong reasons, both campaigning from hidden agendas on their party platform issues and both insulting minority voters by saying one thing and doing another, we may be approach one of the weakest, untrustworthy, indecisive and uninspiring set of presidential candidates to have ever been placed before the American voters. The next four years could then be bad for the western world, bad for the nation and even worse for the typical American family.

Blacks Should Offer Bonds

A recent *Charlotte Observer* story about Sam Foster has resurfaced a long standing problem for minority owned and generally small construction business firms.

Foster resigned from a banking position to start a construction business four years ago. He had apparently anticipated that by this time he would be building small office complexes. However, his firm has been limited to pouring concrete foundations and small renovation jobs.

Like many other small and minority owned construction contractors, Foster has been unable to secure bonding-a guarantee that a construction project will be completed in the event that a contractor becomes

bankrupt or for whatever reason cannot finish the job - from insurance companies.

Short of any legal implications we think its time for the nation's black owned insurance companies, banks, credit unions and similar financial institutions to come together and set up a funding pool to address this problem. Understandably, small firms usually have limited capital, limited experience and limited staff resources to deal with the very large paperwork flow in seeking bonding, nevertheless, the challenge to help minority firms needs to be met. Such is in our view is necessary for making a real contribution to economic growth within the nation's black communities.

Rift Between Blacks And Jews

The polarization between blacks and Jews continues to escalate in major cities across the country as their differences continue to outweigh their similarities. Jesse Jackson's remarks in the 1984 Presidential campaign about New York City being Hymie-Town helped surface a stew that had been brewing for many years. The major cities like New York, Chicago, and others are finding the tension between the two groups rising to feud levels.

A lot of people seem perplexed by this entire situation simply because the Jewish community and the black community have been allies for so many years. Both groups know what persecution and discrimination are all about. Both groups have common issues that make them natural allies. Why, then the rift?

During the era of overt discrimination when Blacks were seeking their guarantee on social justice provided them by the Constitution of the United States, the Jewish community came out in force to support Blacks with this effort. In fact their contribution to the civil rights movement of the sixties was significant.

The obvious reason for the Jewish participation was again their ability to identify with persecution and social injustices in this country and indeed, the world. The not so obvious reason was the black community provided a strong economic base for Jewish businesses. In the major northern cities, the cities that are currently undergoing the tensions, the businesses found in predominately black neighborhoods were Jewish businesses.

As the black struggle shifted from one of social injustice to



with
Gerald Johnson

As I See It

one of economic independence, the issues and the priorities changed for both communities. Blacks were now seeking to strengthen their own neighborhoods by developing their own businesses. Such promotions as "Buy Freedom" by patronizing black businesses cut at the heart of a lot of Jewish businesses that depended on black dollars for their existence. The Muslims, long time advocates of Blacks developing their own businesses and building their own economical support mechanisms, have been quite vocal about Jewish exploitation of black communities. All of this began to create an animosity between the two groups. Jews were being viewed as the enemy because they were no longer the allies, but the oppressors.

Jews lost the enthusiasm to continue to help Blacks get to the next step of freedom because it would put Black entrepreneurs in direct competition with them for the lucrative Black community's dollars.

Consequently, the mutually beneficial relationship enjoyed by both communities for so long has reached its limit under the old rules. Blacks can no longer depend heavily on the Jewish community's help as we seek ec-

onomic independence. It is unrealistic to believe Jews will participate in cutting their own economic throats.

However, once both communities accept the root of the problem, then progress can be made. There is no reason why both communities can't develop programs around an economic interdependence that will allow both communities to prosper.

Blacks can not blame the Jews for providing services to the community when no one else would. You can't blame them for trying to make a buck in a capitalistic society.

Jews can not stand in the way of Blacks trying to reach their own destiny. They should help Blacks establish businesses they could co-exist with their businesses. The two communities should work together in obtaining an economical base that is mutually beneficial for all involved.

Both groups still have too much in common not to be able to iron out any differences that may exist. The bonds that have been made over the years should be to strong to undo because of a shift in community priorities.

The Black community's economic independence can be obtained with the help of the Jewish community instead of at the expense of the Jewish community. It will require the same tenacity and will-power that saw us overcome the overt discrimination of the sixties, together.

Our march has shifted from the racially strided streets of Birmingham and Montgomery to the economically opportuned streets of New York City and Chicago. Together the two communities should be able to reach a mutually beneficial common ground.

Welcome Back To School---And Enjoy It

Guest Editorial
By Scott Scheer

No school bell rang. No teacher or principal stood at the doorway with a long ruler smacking painfully loud against a



large, ominous hand waiting for late stragglers. Students walked calmly, administrators worked diligently and volunteers realized the task at hand and proceeded to get the job done. Freshmen orientation at Johnson C. Smith had begun.

As for me, I was prepared for this week to be one full of excitement, anticipation, perhaps confusion and new challenges. Like many of the nearly 500 freshmen coming on board, I, too, felt like the new kid in town with a lot to learn.

Campus life, whether at Johnson C. Smith or not, means many different things to differ-

ent people. It was the return to a campus environment; the chance to work with educational and civic leaders; the opportunity to promote a growing sports program and university; and the thought of returning to my hometown and the excitement only a campus setting can produce, that led me here.

As a college graduate, and a veteran of several years out there in the "real world," I wondered would it still be exciting and make me feel like I was the only one going through these feelings of anticipation and excitement? The answer is yes!

My point here is students at Johnson C. Smith University, across the country and world, are all experiencing similar feelings. There is nothing wrong about those feelings. In fact, I can remember laughing many times over how I felt as a freshman, a transfer student and even in the graduation line.

There is excitement in the air. Enjoy it. It even gets better. Campus life, whether on the ele-

mentary, junior, senior or college level is one of the greatest thrills we all can experience. I remember my days in school well and cherish those memories.

So, welcome back to school, Johnson C. Smith University students, and students everywhere. Hey, it's okay to feel nervous and excited. That is part of the education process, growing up and maturing into adults who should know better. But, it's also nice to get excited about the future and to feel pangs of emotions that often escape us; even if we have been off-campus for some time.

School is open and the bells are ringing. Answer the call. Enjoy the year and bright and happy years to come.

Editorial Note: Scott Scheer is the new Director of Public Relations and Sports Information at Johnson C. Smith University. He is a 1980 UNC-Wilmington graduate and native Charlottean who has returned home after 10 years.

Words from Brother Malcolm...

"An outsider can't clean up your house as well as you can. An outsider can't take care of your children as well as you can. An outsider can't look after your needs as well as you can. And an outsider can't understand your problems as well as you can. Yet you're looking for an outsider to do it. We will do it or it will never get done."

Malcolm X, 1963

Honoring The All Black 24th Infantry

Guest Editorial
By Cong. Augustus Hawkins

Changing military history is not an easy task. But through the dedicated efforts of a number of black veterans, notably David Carlisle of Los Angeles, the impossible may become reality.

Briefly, here is the situation. At the start of the Korean War the military still operated with racially segregated units. One of these units, the all-black 24th Infantry Regiment, was instrumental in turning back North Korean communists at Yechon - a village about halfway between Seoul and Pusan. Press dispatches referred to it as "the first sizable American ground victory" of the Korean War. The Department of the Army, however, described this encounter as an insignificant skirmish and referred to the 24th in uncomplimentary terms.

The reason why the official military history version is so important, other than the obvious one of unfairly tarnishing the honor of brave, fighting men, is the history books and scholarly articles are written from them. In fact, one book written by a

British author, uses this faulty account in his biography of the Korean War.

Efforts to reverse this disparaging military history version concerning the 24th have not been easy. David Carlisle and other black war vets have been petitioning the Army to right their wrongs. It was formerly requested of the Secretary of the Army to look into the matter and take necessary steps to correct the military history account of the battle of Yechon. The Army recently established a task force to review the whole issue, and the investigation will include interviews with surviving war veterans, news correspondents, and other military officials. This is a significant response, which I expect to be favorable to the 24th.

The history of the 24th Infantry isn't just confirmed to the Korean conflict. The regiment was first formed at Fort McKavett, Texas, on November 1, 1869. They were assigned to military campaigns associated with the westward expansion of the United States and were stationed at several posts along the southern edge of the Great Plains. The 24th played a princi-

pal role in the assault on, and capture of, Spanish forces at San Juan Hill, and made a major contribution to ending the Spanish-American War.

They were also assigned to the Philippines to help resolve internal disorders in that country from 1899 to 1902. They were then ordered to protect lines of communication during border disturbances caused by Mexican General Francisco Villa, known as Pancho Villa. When World War II broke out, the 24th served honorably and effectively in the South Pacific. After engaging in a number of battles during the Korean War, including their victory at Yechon, they were broken up when President Truman desegregated the military.

Earlier this year I introduced House Resolution 483, to honor the brave contributions of the 24th Infantry Regiment, who last month held a reunion. I expect the bill to be passed next month, which will give them the Congressional recognition they richly deserve. Black Americans have served this nation honorably, dating back to the Revolutionary War.



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