

Why We Need A Third Political Force

A Position Paper On The 1980 Election

BY REVEREND JESSE L. JACKSON
National President, Operation PUSH

Politically, the United States is shifting dangerously to the right. At the same time, domestically, her economy continues in crisis with high and rising unemployment and inflation (called stagflation); school systems are in trouble and threatened with collapse (e.g., Chicago, Cleveland and New York); our urban centers continue to deteriorate through neglect, rot and decay; our people (especially the poor) are ill-housed and ill-fed; and the health care needs of our people are threatened because of staggering and escalating health care costs, while the U.S. remains the only industrial nation in the world without a national health insurance system.

Internationally, we feel threatened from without, but seem to think that increased military spending (i.e., "might is right"), rather than seeing a longer-range perspective consistent with our national ideals (i.e., "right is might") as the dominant approach we should use.

A third political force must emerge and raise a political agenda that is tough-mindedly realistic, but at the same time militantly committed to peace and justice, both at home and abroad.

Our present options are too limited. We are philosophically open to the Republican option, but the candidates who have thus far emerged as the front runners leave us with no live options in the Republican camp. Bush, Reagan, Connally, Dole and Crane have made their appeal around such narrow political issues and interests that there is no room for us in their vision or their political house. Baker is better, but only a possible option. Anderson is a real option, but has been able to gain only minimal mass support among his fellow Republicans.

On the Democratic side, the options are greater — Carter, Kennedy and Brown — but even here each of them represents a mixed bag of positive and negative political factors.

In some ways, Brown has many visionary ideas and has been courageous. On registration for the draft, he has been forthright and progressive. On energy, he has warned us of the costly economic, health and safety factors relative to the continued use of nuclear and other forms of non-renewable energy supplies. He argues for a transition to more benign forms of energy use. On economics, he argues persuasively for more economic interdependence and cooperation through a North American Common Market comprised of the U.S., Canada and Mexico. However, he has also appeared to be without political conviction on occasion, such as his about-face on Proposition 13.

He seems to align himself with the "new conservatives" with his call for a constitutional convention in support of an amendment to force a balanced budget and limit federal spending.

Senator Kennedy also seems willing to shift with the political winds. In the days when Governor George Wallace had a little following, he sought an accommodation with him. Even though he has accumulated a liberal record in his seventeen years in the Senate, when it appeared that he was positioning himself to run for the presidency in 1980, he shifted his emphasis to projecting a more conservative image. Then on January 28, 1980, at Georgetown University, he again tried to light the liberal torch.

In spite of the rekindling of his liberal torch we must not forget that Senator Kennedy is still a co-sponsor, with Senator Strom Thurmond (name the last time Senator Thurmond did anything for the people, especially black people), of SB-1722, the Criminal Reform Act, that contains some very repressive and dangerous threats to our constitutional liberties. Senator Kennedy has no blacks in his inner-circle of advisors. Senator Kennedy enthusiastically and aggressively helped to defeat Senator Edward Brooke — the first and only black senator to be elected to Congress since Reconstruction — in his time of personal difficulty and political weakness. Senator Brooke did not act in the same manner and campaign against Senator Kennedy when he was faced with a similar personal tragedy. Senator Kennedy's position on the Middle East, the most volatile area threatening world peace and the flash-point for both hot and cold war, is based on an unworkable formula. He can no longer afford to ignore the Palestinian question.

Also, Senator Kennedy has had relatively little to say and has not been particularly aggressive regarding this country's need for a positive relationship with the nations of Africa, nor has he spoken out forcefully about the U.S. partnership with the apartheid regime in South Africa. So, though Senator Kennedy's liberal domestic and generally progressive foreign policy is appealing, it is not different enough from President Carter's to automatically command our support.

President Carter, as an incumbent president, is also a live option. He came to office because of the black vote, yet he too has been very disappointing in many ways. He has virtually abandoned his domestic agenda and program. It is contradictory for him to say that his "number one priority is

inflation," and then increase military and defense spending by five per cent beyond the current inflation rate, since the military and spending on the Vietnam War is the root cause of our present inflationary problems, and, economically speaking, non-cyclical military spending generally is one of the major contributors to the spiraling inflation rate. The prospect of the 1980's being similar to the 1970's, under the present Carter economic and domestic policies and programs, is not a very bright future indeed.

More than anything else, the country (and blacks, Latinos and the poor in particular) need a jobs plan. Yet an adequate one is not forthcoming from the Carter administration. Even with inflation, those workers with jobs are better able to cope than those without jobs. Carter reluctantly supported the Humphrey-Hawkins Bill as a candidate, then helped to gut it and reduce it to a full employment policy (not a plan) when it came to passing the legislation — and now he even wants to water that down through a two-year delay in its full implementation.

We, too, are extremely concerned about inflation (since we suffer the most from it), but Carter has chosen to fight it through the use of monetary and fiscal measures, which have been ineffective. So, in effect, he is fighting inflation through higher unemployment, or at the expense of what we need most — jobs. So we are

extremely displeased with Carter's skirmish against inflation.

Two years ago he declared energy to be "the moral equivalent of war", yet he has proposed solutions that exacerbate, rather than solve the energy crisis, and contribute to both inflation and unemployment. His solutions perpetuate inflation and unemployment because they are capital-intensive (reliance on nuclear energy, non-renewable resources and synthetic fuels are his primary means), rather than the safer, cleaner, cheaper and more labor-intensive renewable energy sources.

Thanks to Carter's decontrol of natural gas and crude oil prices, a family of four will be forced to spend an average of \$2,000 a year for the next ten years in additional fuel expenses. Decontrol represents the biggest consumer rip-off of the decade, as oil companies will reap \$988 billion in additional profits over the next ten years, and the excess profits tax does not recoup it on behalf of the American people.

A third political force must emerge around the theme, "Jobs and Justice — Register and Vote," that will entice both parties and all political candidates to compete for our agenda and our vote. All politicians will respond to a political constituency. Our challenge is to build and surface such a constituency. We must build, from the bottom up, a sane, sensitive, just, humane and peace agenda



SYMPOSIUM HELD AT ST. AUG'S — Saint Augustine's College presented its Seventh Annual Health Careers Symposium on March 13 in the Fine Arts Auditorium. Dr. Georgia Jones, R.N., Ed.D., (center) owner and director of Manson Rest Home, Inc., delivered the keynote address. Dr. Johnson, chairman of the Science and Mathematics Division at Saint Augustine's, and students joined the speaker in a rap session following the program.

that is broad based in leadership, comprehensive in perspective and determined in will.

Who will constitute this "third political force"? The black, the Hispanic, the youth, progressive labor, women, environmentalists, the poor, the dispossessed, the oppressed and all those seeking a more just, humane and peaceful society and world. In what form should their presence be manifest? Essentially through a combination of direct action and political action. We will be among

the leadership in mounting marches and other forms of drama and direct action campaigns to educate the people during the primaries in key states in 1980.

Also, we shall stimulate voter registration and participation campaigns, including the PUSH-EXCEL high school diploma/voter registration idea. There are 3.1 million high school seniors graduating this spring, all of whom will be eligible to vote in November. We contend that every high school senior should come

across the stage with a diploma in one hand symbolizing knowledge and wisdom, and a voter registration card in the other symbolizing power and responsibility. The month of May should be declared citizenship education month and students should be taught how to operate a voting machine, taught the difference between a primary and general election, taught what a ward and precinct is, and other things pertinent to citizenship education and the political process. In addition,

a concerted effort must be made to conduct voter registration drives and encourage the political participation of the 11.2 million students pursuing a higher education in the U.S.

We will encourage persons who identify with the third force political movement and agenda to campaign and run for election as committed and uncommitted delegates to the political conventions, and then leverage their votes at the conventions on behalf of our and the nation's in-

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President Appoints Seven Blacks To U.S.-Liberian Relations Group

WASHINGTON—President Jimmy Carter this week announced the appointment of seven blacks to be among eleven members of the President's Commission on United States-Liberian Relations. They are:

Theodore R. Hagans Jr., a Washington, D.C. businessman, developer of the New Fort Lincoln residential community and president of the National Business League.

James H. McGee, mayor of Dayton, Ohio. Dayton is the sister city of Monrovia, Liberia.

Frank E. Pinder, a former official of the U.S. Agency for International Development with extensive experience in economic development in Liberia.

Thomas Queen, executive director of California Regional of Oakland, California, an investment banking firm.

Prezell R. Robinson, president of St. Augustine's College, Raleigh. He is former scholar in residence at Nairobi University.

Randal M. Robinson, executive director of TransAfrica, a Washington-based lobby for Africa and the Caribbean.

Congressman William H. Gray III will serve as chair and Andrew F. Brimmer, an international economist, will serve as vice chair.