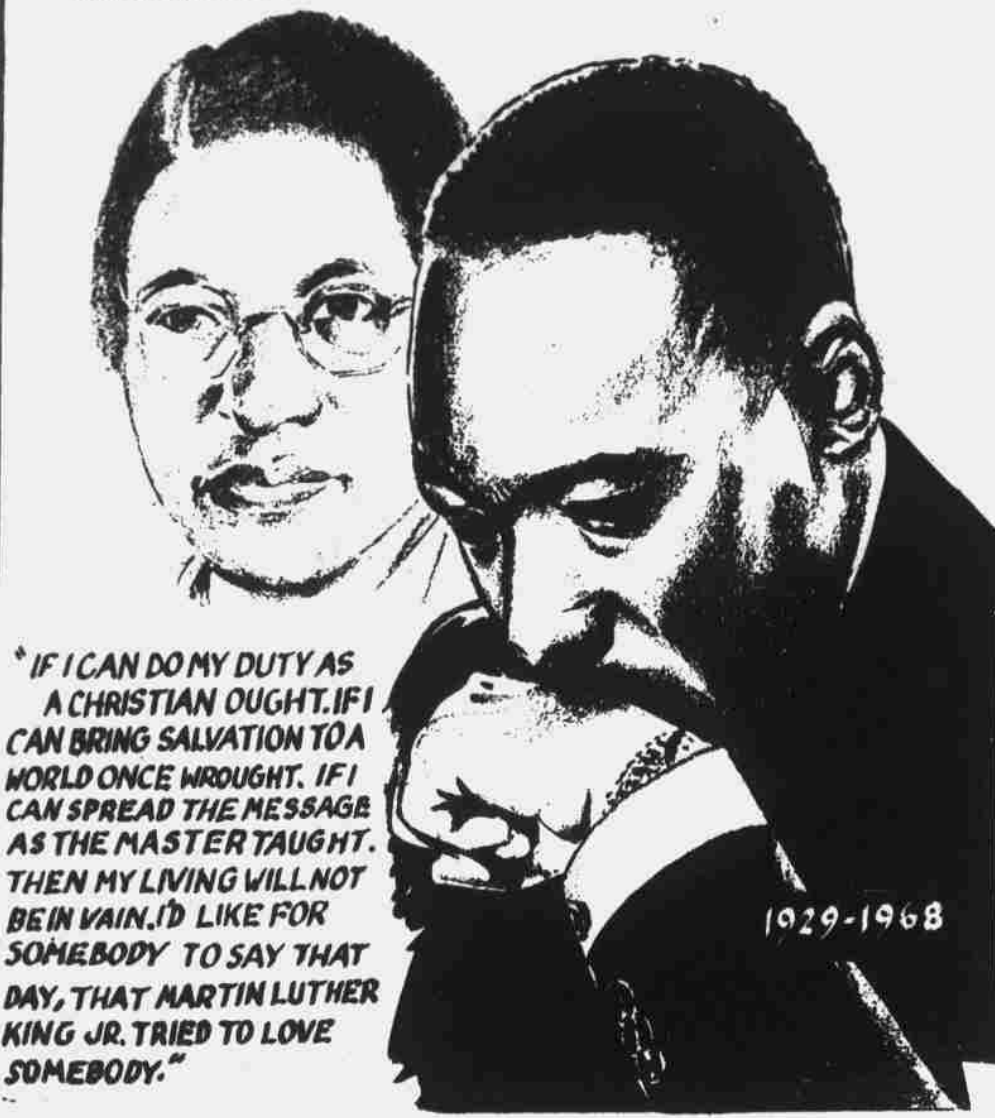


## LESS WE FORGET

MRS. ROSA PARKS  
WHO REFUSED TO  
GIVE UP HER BUS SEAT

"IF I CAN DO MY DUTY AS  
A CHRISTIAN OUGHT, IF I  
CAN BRING SALVATION TO A  
WORLD ONCE WROUGHT, IF I  
CAN SPREAD THE MESSAGE  
AS THE MASTER TAUGHT,  
THEN MY LIVING WILL NOT  
BEIN VAIN, I'D LIKE FOR  
SOMEBODY TO SAY THAT  
DAY, THAT MARTIN LUTHER  
KING JR. TRIED TO LOVE  
SOMEBODY."

1929-1968

## EDITORIAL

BLACKS FACE NEW  
POLITICAL CHALLENGES

More blacks must be elected to state offices throughout the country if the rapidly advancing wave of political conservatism is to be stopped.

The importance of having more blacks in State Legislatures is easily seen when one considers the trend to "de-federalize" various political arenas where major economic and social battles are to be fought.

For example, state governments largely determine how revenue sharing money is spent, and are gaining more and more power in determining the quality of education and who gets educated as the federal government shrinks from major battlelines drawn in the 60s and 70s.

Facing these challenges, blacks throughout the country might well take a lesson from their compatriots in Mississippi, who fought for more than fifteen years to have single-member districts in legislative elections.

Single-member districts mean that blacks can control certain districts, and therefore can elect more representatives, truly of their choice, than under the traditional at-large, or multi-member district systems. Under these systems, blacks are relegated to permanent minority status at the polls. It is not likely that these systems will produce increased black representation.

The bottom line of the Mississippi struggle is a statewide legislative election plan, based upon single-member districts, which resulted in fifteen blacks being elected to the Mississippi House of Representatives and two blacks taking office in the State Senate.

In other states, blacks have no time to waste, and certainly can't afford to take fifteen years to battle down obstacles to increased black representation. Recently, the U.S. Supreme Court complicated the issue even more with a decision which said that at-large election methods are not unconstitutional if there is no intent to discriminate.

It is not clear now how this decision, rendered in a Mobile, Alabama case, will affect similar efforts elsewhere in the country at the city, county or state levels. In Mobile, blacks were suing to have the city's at-large method of electing city officials changed to a single-

member district system.

In South Carolina, where a similar challenge was being lodged, plaintiffs have stopped action to study the decision's impact on their case.

Though its overall impact is unclear, the decision does point up an interesting contradiction in legal doctrine. The concept of unintentional harm is clearly understood in criminal law. Therefore, a person driving down the highway who accidentally hits and kills someone can be convicted of involuntary (unintentional) manslaughter. Under this legal concept, it is the effect and the situations surrounding the effect that are judged, not the intent.

This principle of jurisprudence must be extended to the civil rights arena, or political equality will be a farfetched dream for American blacks.

What this all means is that the 1980's are likely to be a historical repeat of the 1880's unless blacks marshal all their political forces and launch an all-out war on the resurrection of Jim Crow.

In 1877, blacks were sold down the river in a compromise that removed federal presence from the South and gave control back to unreconstructed states and municipalities. In 1883, the U.S. Supreme Court declared the Civil Rights Act of 1875 unconstitutional, and in 1896, the same court ruled in the infamous *Plessy v. Ferguson* case that "separate but equal" was a constitutional doctrine. It took black people in this country the first half of this century to battle down that concept as a matter of law. So the issue of black representation at the state level (where the laws are made) could be a question of survival.

Frank Parker, chief counsel for the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, and attorney for the plaintiffs in the Mississippi case, sums up the importance of black representation this way: "After the 1980 Census, the legislature will have to reapportion itself again. These seventeen black legislators will now be able to have input into the reapportionment process, and hopefully will be able to insure that blacks are not excluded from effective representation again."

If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who propose to favor freedom and yet depreciate agitation are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the oceans majestic waves without the awful roar of its waters.

— Frederick Douglass

Proposition Nine Promises  
Only Disaster

By Congressman Augustus F. Hawkins

When California's Proposition Thirteen passed almost two years ago, those who voted for it were quite exuberant. They didn't seem to care, at the time, that its passage was going to play havoc with education programs, state-local participation in federal programs, health care delivery, child care programs, various social service efforts, public library facilities and other innumerable community services.

Least of all did these Proposition Thirteen advocates think that basic services like schools, transportation systems, police and fire protection, would be negatively impacted.

And for a while they were quite smug in their assessments — that nothing too bad was going to happen. Nothing "bad" happened immediately mainly because state surpluses cushioned the negative effects of the Proposition.

But now two fiscal years into Proposition Thirteen, the state has used up almost all of its surplus (nine billion) trying to bail out local governments' loss of funds. Local governments at this point are going to have to go it alone and decide the inevitable question: how to pay for the cost of running government without state help. (The state surplus will be about \$200 million in fiscal '81—barely enough to bail itself out of fiscal disasters).

To make matters even worse—local governments, already punch-drunk from reducing local service levels — are having to contend with Proposition Nine, which if passed will cut the state income tax by fifty per cent and

will in effect reduce the state's operating budget by four billion or 25 per cent.

So in addition to the full force of the mandated seven billion Proposition Thirteen budget cut about to hit cities, counties and special districts, Proposition Nine if enacted, would cause municipalities to drastically reduce even further, their already-reduced services, including police, fire protection, education, street maintenance and sewage disposal services.

This time around no city program or service is going to be immune from the axe, and local citizens are going to see a deterioration in services like they've never seen before.

Emergency services provided by hospitals, police and fire departments will be pared to the bone. In some instances a citizen's call for emergency help may be entirely ignored, because of lack of personnel or workable equipment.

During the rainy season, storm drains may never see clearing or cleaning again because of a loss of funds to keep them operative.

Street repairs will be a thing of the past. Major construction work on schools, public facilities, sewers, airports, roadways, and harbor facilities, for example, will practically cease to exist.

In terms of employment alone, when services are cut the work force, is reduced.

We need look no further than the 100,000 public employees laid-off throughout the state, when Proposition Thirteen passed.

Some people might regard this result as a move toward cutting government waste and promoting efficiency. If efficiency occurs

that's fine, but in almost all of these layoffs, both public and private, the economic health of this state has been placed in serious jeopardy.

For example, financial institutions — who loan the state money, and float bonds for the state's construction needs — are taking a second look at California's financial and economic viability because of the Proposition Nine matter. Standard and Poor's, the bond-rating firm, has recently lowered California's bond rating from AAA to AA.

If Proposition Nine passes, this rating could be reduced even more.

There's no question in my mind that Proposition Nine economics is bad business and bad economics for the state of California.

The economic problems of California cannot be resolved by imagining that cutting state income will somehow produce a miracle, which will give California adequate services for a cheap price.

The key to promoting economic health in California, and throughout this nation for that matter, is increased productivity of goods and services. Only through effective productivity are we going to be able to stem rising interest rates, halt ever-increasing inflation, and whip unemployment.

Putting the squeeze on economic viability is counter-productive; promoting growth and productivity is not only sound, it is the only reasonable alternative we have which will work.

On this basis, I think Californians need to register a resounding thumbs-down on Proposition Nine.

Administrators Say:  
Class, Not Race, Is Desegregation Issue

EAST LANSING, MICH. — Suppose you are a parent in Wilmington, Del., or Pontiac, Mich., or Boston, Mass., and a court ordered your school to desegregate.

You protest. You vote against school board members who support desegregation. You vote down the next millage proposal, and every one after that. Maybe you send your child to private school.

According to a group of school board members and administrators, you're involved in a self-fulfilling prophecy to show the system fails. And the only ones who get hurt are the children.

Fifteen school board members and administrators from across the country recently got together at Michigan State University to talk about that and other problems in their desegregated school districts. They were invited to campus by the College of Urban Development to help draw up a list of possible research issues in desegregation.

For instance, they asked what influence does the socio-economic status of the children have on desegregation.

The school people agreed on one thing: class, not race, is the real issue.

"For some reason, people think that if you're rich, you're brilliant," said Crystal Kuykendall, who has just taken a position as executive director of the National Alliance of Black School Educators.

While the desegregation issue has been around for more than 25 years, there hasn't been much research done on what happens in desegregated districts. The college has a \$93,000 grant from the U. S. Department of Education to identify researchable issues in desegregation. The answers may help school districts succeed.

## Black Politics Under Pressure

By Vernon E. Jordan, Jr

Black votes elected a President in 1976, but you would never know that from the neglect shown black interests by the current crop of candidates.

Some just write off the black vote as beyond their reach; others take it for granted, assuming that come November the black vote will be in their pocket.

Both are wrong. In 1980, it looks like the black voter will not be enthusiastically for any of the candidates, but chances are strong that the black vote will go against a candidate perceived as hostile to black interests.

Perhaps an even greater possibility is that black voters will just stay at home come Election Day. That would be damaging to the country, since massive abstentions among its largest minority damages the democratic process.

But it would be even more harmful to black interests. The limited clout wielded by blacks on the national level is partially a result of traditionally low voter turnouts. Even in 1976, half of eligible blacks didn't register to vote. That just invites neglect by both parties.

And low black voter turnout would be disastrous on the local level. We're not only electing a President this November, but also governors, congressmen, local officials and the state legislators that will redraw Congressional district lines next year.

The already low black vote declines in non-presidential election years and is one cause of the drastic underrepresentation of blacks in local offices. The visibility of competent, articulate black mayors of some large cities leads many to underestimate the degree of black underrepresentation.

"I think the most critical thing is what happens to community support when a school district is desegregated," said Elbert Brooks, superintendent of the Metro-Nashville Public Schools. "When we had the money, we had the programs."

The school people had a lot of questions about what happens: What happens to school board members who support desegregation? What happens to community support? And most of all, what happens to students? Do they succeed, do they drop out, do their parents pull them out of school and send them to a private school? Is white flight a myth or a reality?

"I think that if you look at the population of the surrounding districts who are not involved in desegregation, you will find that they too are having the same kind of decrease in enrollment," said Joseph Johnson, deputy superintendent of the New Castle, Del., School District, where the court ordered 11 school districts in the Wilmington area to consolidate.

"We need to be able to project just what the enrollment would have been five years down the road if the district didn't desegregate," he said.

Under a separate grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, the MSU college is involved in a long-term research study of the effects of desegregation on the students, parents and teachers in the Wilmington district, but the people at the conference called for even more research.

For John Porter, president of Eastern Michigan University and the former superintendent of schools in Michigan, the problem lies in teacher training.

"Probably our biggest error in American society and with the *Brown vs. the Topeka Board of Education* was to assume that those who are college trained, who screen, sort and select children, could change themselves to provide equality, equity and excellence for all children," he said.

The school administrators and board members also saw a need to review the trends in relief in desegregation cases. According to Althea Simmons of the NAACP, when her organization files suit against a district, it also seeks to have the staff integrated.

In the Boston case, the judge ordered the district to hire a minority for every white person hired until the staff included at least 20 per cent minorities.

"If the court had not ordered it, it would have never happened," said John D. O'Bryant, the only black member of the Boston School Committee.

Caroline Davis Gleiter of the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights suggested some research be done on the interrelationship between housing choices and the racial makeup of schools. "Are parents willing for their child to go to any school that gives a magnificent education regardless of its relationship to the location of a home?" she asked.

The school people also cited a need for a group of outside consultants who could come in and offer advice and in-service training to both teachers and school board members. "We need someone to help school boards assume a position of leadership in an atmosphere of great emotion," said Edward Scaggs, president of the Kansas City Board of Education.

the limited gains blacks have made in the political arena.

Those pressures will intensify. An expected outcome of the Census is a population decline in traditional black neighborhoods, which raises the danger that some "safe" districts now represented by blacks will be up for grabs after the district lines are redrawn.

The first line of defense against present and future dilution of black representation is massive voter registration and turnout.

For blacks, far more is at stake this November than simply choosing among the presidential hopefuls.

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