

# viewpoints



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## Outrage In Greensboro

By Clifton Graves

Some were shocked, others saddened; but most, outraged, at the "non-decision" in the Klan-Nazi trial. I say "non-decision" because a not-guilty verdict for those six hoodlums was in effect no verdict at all.

Some will contend that the technical legal aspects of the case were the determining factors in the non-decision. They will cite the failure of the CWP witnesses to testify against the Klan; the non-appearance of the federal government agent who allegedly "set-up" the Klan and Nazis; and the unprecedented (in a case of this import) decision to let the jury go home during deliberations. Granted, these are valid observations - points which will be commented on for decades to come.

But unfortunately for North Carolina and America, the average Black, brown and red man don't see it that way. They do not give a damn about this legal tactic or that legal technicality. All they know is what they see; and what they see is the "same old-same old..." a perpetuation of America's racist two-tier system of injustice!! To the oppressed elements in this society, the Greensboro debacle is added to an ever growing list of "deja vu" scenarios. They have seen it all before... Names, dates, and faces change, but the verdicts are almost always the same.

From this day forward, a collective of concerned citizens of all races must increase - with great diligence - the efforts to bring true justice to this land of no justice.

Time is running out on North Carolina and America, for today literally thousands are screaming inwardly and outwardly: How long!!! How long!!!

How long can we idly watch innocents like the Wilmington 10 be marched off to prison, while red-neck murderers like the Klan Nazi 6 go free!!!

How long can we condone the vindication of white policemen like the ones who murdered Mr. McDuffie in Miami, while black 17-year-old Terrance Johnson sits in a Maryland prison for defending himself from a racist policeman's attack!!!

How long can we passively watch the selective persecutions of a Charles Diggs, Carl Russell, or Jean Burkins while hundreds of their white counterparts go barely admonished!!!

How long will we let America dictate to us that it is more important and newsworthy to discover who shot that fool J.R. Ewing, than to find out who shot Vernon Jordan, the brothers in Buffalo, or those children in Atlanta!!!

The collective answer to the questions should be resounding: NOT LONG!!! But emotional rhetoric alone is insufficient. Immediately, yet deliberately, we must begin to develop plans of action to counter the right-wing tidal wave that is engulfing us. Tactics such as calling for Justice Department and/or congressional inquiries into the Greensboro horror story are necessary - but these are only tactics!! What we need is a long term STRATEGY, that will effectively counter the Reagan-Helms reactionaries, as well as the forces behind the Greensboro

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"WHATEVER HAPPENED TO 'DIRT CHEAP'?"



William Raspberry

Reagan As President

Liberals--and especially blacks--are consumed with gloom and despair over what a Reagan presidency will mean for their interest.

It will be months before anyone knows for sure, but it is hard to see, at this point, the justification for the gloom. Indeed, it may turn out that in a year or two, Reagan will be viewed as not really so bad--if only because the expectations are so negative.

I've been questioning, listening to and reading some of these forecasters of doom and trying to figure out just what the peculiarly anti-black consequences of a Reagan presidency are like to be.

For instance, I've just finished talking to a man who acknowledged that he is in a deep funk. He is afraid, he says, that Reagan will shortly begin to dismantle all the programs that have been designed to help blacks.

Like what for instance? He thought for several seconds, then said: "Like CETA, for instance."

But as we talked he acknowledged that even a conservative President is unlikely to shut down a program that employs the hard-core jobless without creating some alternative for putting them to work. And since the Reagan predisposition would be to put them to work in the private sector, that might turn out to be a plus.

"What about welfare?" he said. But Reagan's celebrated (and perhaps overrated) slashing of California's welfare rolls when he was governor of that state was accomplished by training recipients and moving them first into public and thence into private sector jobs. My gloomy friend agreed.

And so it has gone in a number of conversations. Some blacks have expressed fear that Reagan would not be kindly disposed toward federal minority business programs. But those programs are the creature of another conservative President, Richard Nixon, and seem to fit with Reagan's general notion that the best thing that can be done for minorities is to move them into the economic mainstrea.

None of these is to say that there is no cause for concern. Those who favor the Equal Rights Amendment or who oppose school prayers or who see busing as the solution to the educational problems of blacks have no basis for optimism in the wake of Reagan's massive victory. But

these things were not at the heart of black concerns even before the election.

A Reagan presidency bids fair to put roadblocks in the way of government-funded abortion. But whether this will have the dire consequences predicted by pro-abortion liberals remains to be seen.

The clearest threat to the interests of minorities and liberals is in the judiciary. The fear is that Reagan will be inclined to appoint Rehnquist-type judges to the courts, and since the Senate has been denuded of its liberal wing (with South Carolina's Strom Thurmond to replace Ted Kennedy as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee) it will be more difficult to wage effective battle against some of the more reactionary appointments.

But even here, there may be some surprises. Nothing in Reagan's history suggests that his inclination will be to the Haynsworth/Carswell type of judges--unless he senses a need to throw a bone or two to his most right-wing supporters.

The best guess, based on what is known of Reagan, is that his Cabinet will be chosen on the basis of experience and demonstrated competency, and that it will likely include at least as many blacks--one-as Carter appointed. Nor is there any reason to suppose that he will place substantially fewer blacks than did Carter in important sub-cabinet posts.

Most of the fears I have heard expressed are based on the fact that, during much of our history, conservative politics has tended to mean racist politics.

But for all his attempts to do so during the campaign, Carter was unable to sell the image of Reagan as racist.

Overall, it strikes me that the predictions of disaster are based more on emotion than on a realistic assessment of what is likely to happen.

The more prudent course, it seems to me, is for blacks, other minorities and liberals to gird to fight on specific issues rather than react to a Reagan administration as evil incarnate.

And if Reagan is able to do half of what he clearly expects to do in terms of setting the U.S. economy straight, black America's unrestrained tears may turn into restrained cheers.

The advice here is: Let's wait and see.

## Black People and Conferences

By Allen Johnson  
Special to the Chronicle

Americans are notorious for holding conferences.

We rent rooms in Ramada Inns, assemble our best minds, socialize in conference suits adorned with decorative name tags, go on sightseeing tours of Atlanta or New York or wherever the conference is held, and leave agreeing that there is a problem and something ought to be done.

There is a wide variety of American conferences. Among the more prevalent of the species are:

**The Bi-Racial Race Relations Conference:** Usually these conferences are called retreats and involve a group of black and white people who share a cabin in the country for the weekend and play volleyball and scrabble together. They also meditate and play "I'm Okay, You're Okay" games. When the weekend has ended, they wonder why other black people and white people can't live together in harmony as they did.

Then the white people go back to their high-paying jobs and big houses and the black people go back to their lower paying jobs and not-so-big houses--until the next retreat.

**The Black Intelligentsia Conference:** This get-together is the perfect time to argue such earth-shaking literary questions as whether Richard Wright had a mole his left or right ear lobe.

**The Black Leaders Conference:** Noted black leaders congregate and talk about how racism still exists and needs to be crushed.

Who elected these black leaders?

Well, nobody really. The white media got together and said they were black leaders, so they must be.

**The Devoted Fan of Something or Other**

**Conference:** Since the 20th century is so boring and unfulfilling, many of us have the tendency to latch onto anything available to make life worthwhile--especially since television is so bad and movies cost a month's rent.

Whether you're a devotee of "Star Trek," "Dallas," checkers, chess, ant farming, nuclear waste disposal, old Godzilla movies or underwater basketweaving, there is a conference for you somewhere.

If not, you've just as much right as anybody else to start one.

**The Wear-A-Three-Piece-Suit-and-a-Skinny-Tie-and-Get-a-job-with-a-high-Paying-White-Corporation Conference:** Young, black Barbies and Kens bring sparkling resumes to huge conferences attended mostly by white recruiters from white businesses which have no openings.

Why these recruiters bother to come at all has long been a mystery to me.

A friend of mine who regularly wears suits and skinny ties (so he should know) once told me that the companies send representatives because it's good public relations.

Now excuse me for being ignorant, but I never could quite figure how giving encouraging interviews to people for jobs which do not exist can be good public relations.

Rumor has it that the conference was invented by Thomas T. Conference in 1775. Conference was an English statesman who figured that the perfect way to keep the uppity colonists in their place was to have them meet at taverns, try to impress each other, agree that the sky will probably continue to be blue and get drunk.

Although Conference's plan didn't work quite as fast as he would have hoped, it seems it finally be making headway. Heck, even our systems of government is based largely on conference.

They call the Congresses.

## Chronicle Letters

### Being An American Citizen

It is a pleasure to be a United States Citizen.

Even though we are frustrated by Bureaucracy, and the citizens are exasperated by inflation, hardship and government originated misfortune, we can look forward to future elections to replace the people in office in hopes that situations will improve.

This year, the voters showed their need and concern, by their spirited

attendance at the polls. However, the referendum concerning judges requirements, whether to, or not to be lawyers, was of importance enough to be placed on the ballot, but no emphasis was exercised to make the voter aware of how critical the outcome might become. The need for better government was their prime concern, and the referendum was a strong unrecognized part of

it. The State of North Carolina has removed another one of the "People's Rights" by mixing it into a panel of confusing final decisions. The voters have been misled by a coincidental "side effect of the election process. Justice administered by professional patterns leaves little chance for the unfairly accused. Profes-

sional people are, usually, educated machines, not necessarily accustomed to mercifully dealing with the compassionate phase of true Justice.

Attorneys have led the people to believe every judge had to be, first, a lawyer. This misconception kept the lawyers and judges in the same syndicate. The State's judges become judge and jury and they are

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## To Be Equal

Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.



The Reagan  
Landslide

The morning-after shock effects of the Reagan landslide are beginning to fade away, and a more realistic attitude is being taken by many people who fear the worst from a self-professed conservative Administration.

The Reagan campaign rhetoric--"let's get government off the backs of the people, etc."--led many to fear a wholesale dismantling of social programs and a rollback of civil rights measures come next January.

But there's a big difference between campaign rhetoric and the reality of governing a large, pluralistic nation in which the judiciary, the Congress and permanent civil servants all serve as brakes on even the most ideologically-oriented president.

And there is considerable evidence that Mr. Reagan is more pragmatic than his reputation leads people to believe. It's not unusual for presidents to adopt a right-wing or left-wing rhetorical stance while actually running a middle-of-the-road administration.

Clearly, a Reagan presidency will have a strong tilt to the right, as did Nixon's. But all presidents move to the center after they are elected, and the hard realities of governing mean they are largely unable to touch the vital

core interests of major interest groups.

The courts will continue to stand as bulwarks against erosion of black constitutional rights--even a conservative Supreme Court backed affirmative action in the Weber and Fullilove cases.

And the coalition that splintered during the Carter Administration because of competition for influence with a friendly president, will regroup and strengthen in the coming months. Such coalitions are always more united when defending basic interest.

Every president-elect enjoys a honeymoon period, especially when he comes to office in an electoral victory of such massive proportions. It makes sense to suspend judgment until Mr. Reagan announces his major appointments and the basic program he intends to carry out in the first months of his presidency.

In his August speech to the National Urban League, candidate Reagan came out strongly for urban revitalization, welfare for the truly needy, equal opportunity and "jobs, jobs, jobs." And he promised not to fight national problems "on the backs of the poor"--a clear pledge not

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