

viewpoints



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Hunt's Concern Commendable

Tuesday's announcement by Governor Jim Hunt that he had appointed a committee to investigate why Blacks don't serve on juries as often as their white counterparts should reinforce the vote of confidence that blacks gave him in last month's election. It also prevails with concerns he expressed during a meeting several months ago with the publishers and editors of the state's seven Black-owned newspapers.

Hunt, as promised during his campaign is not standing idle and watching his term. Instead, he is attacking problems head on making us feel that perhaps he is not afraid of stepping on a few judicial toes.

Hunt's concern is a trifle too late. The events during the Klan-Nazi trial in Greensboro last month are evidence of that.

Had all the Blacks not been eliminated from the jury in that case, the verdict would have perhaps been different.

Even if the jury had had a "token" black who wouldn't have changed the verdict at all, Black citizens would have felt better knowing that they had a hand in deciding the fate of the six members of the Nazi Party and Ku Klux Klan who were standing trial for murdering members of the Communist Worker's Party, some of whom happen to be Black.

Instead, we watch daily as all-white juries systematically free whites who kill blacks, sometimes in cold blood, as was the case in Miami last summer.

When pressed, District Attorneys and defense counsels retort with charges that the blacks summoned to jury duty just did not qualify as suitable jurors. We reply to this sentiment by simply saying that anything can be justified. Hunt in his effort to rectify the situation has enlisted the aid of the state Human Relations Council

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Reagan Shift on African Policy

A recent attempt by Reagan forces in the government to influence foreign strategy on Africa is a bad omen if it is a model for a formalized Republican policy. Though Democrats defeated the legislative effort, it would have put the United States squarely on the side of racist South Africa and jeopardized a delicate United Nations proposal in the works to end minority white rule in that country through democratic elections.

Led by Republican Senator Jesse Helms from North Carolina, Reagan supporters tried to override a law banning military aid to Angolans rebelling against their government.

During the campaign President-elect Ronald Reagan had favored military aid to Jonas Savimbi, the South Africa-backed insurgent who seeks to overthrow the present Angolan regime.

Though Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos is backed by the Russians, he has opened his country to American oil interests, and perhaps more importantly, exercises an influence over black guerrillas fighting South Africa that is favorable to the U.N. proposal for a negotiated settlement.

The move by lawmakers supportive of Reagan, many experts on Africa fear could torpedo the Angolan arrangement and further incline the South Africans to balk on U.N. negotiations.

There is widespread fear that their legislative action may set the pattern for the Reagan Administration's policy, which could mark a sad return to the United States' approach to Africa prior to the initiatives of Jimmy Carter.

With the point man U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young, who had the credibility of African blood, the Carter Administration sought to aid the forces of change on the continent and bury perceptions of the U.S. as a white country naturally allied through race with Apartheid regimes, and one which was eager to rape the continent of mineral wealth and cynically viewed Africa as a staging-ground for counter-moves against Russia.

And for most of its four year term the Carter Administration avoided the stratagems of the Cold War years and sought instead negotiated settlements to African disputes with a policy based on majority rule through democratic elections. These initiatives resulted in

the election of Robert Mugabe to Prime Minister of Zimbabwe and the diplomatic opening in the South African conflict.

But there was always opposition from Congressional hawks, and by the end of 1979, the Carter Administration wilted under pressure and Andrew Young was forced to resign. In areas where there was little interest, conservatives pressured the Administration to show force in reaction to Russia. Military hardware was shipped to Morocco which was in a land dispute with the leftist Algerians over the Spanish Sahara. And Somalia, in a territorial feud with Soviet-backed Ethiopia over its Ogaden region, was granted aid and the U.S. established bases there.

The damage to U.S.-Africa relations, particularly in the Moroccan case, resulted because that country's posture on the Sahara had alienated most of the pro-

AROUND THE WORLD



by
Lawrence Muhammad

gressive African states, including Nigeria, on whom America depends heavily for oil. And U.S. support was justified only through a vague concept of outmaneuvering the Soviets.

Sadly, this approach may become standard now through sympathy from President Reagan, and many policymakers fear that U.S. interests on the continent will be jeopardized. It is conventional wisdom in foreign policy circles that Reagan will only hazily grasp America's legitimate interests in supporting African liberation movements because he views political events on the continent through the prism of a global test of wills with the Russians.

This doctrinaire outlook could be softened somewhat since the President-elect is expected to rely heavily on ad-

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Chronicle Letters

The Direction of America

To The Editor:

I once wrote a letter and forwarded it to the editorial section of the Winston-Salem Journal about the direction in which America is headed. The editorial staff read the letter and returned it to me accompanied with the words "We're sorry we cannot print this letter." From that very biased action, my presumption was that the letter had cut to the heart and revealed the unwanted truth to the editorial staff of the newspaper.

I simply stated that our once great God-given country is on the verge of total social and economic col-

lapse. We know from past history that America was founded on God's truth and prospered through His grace. By those divine attributes we were able to survive, thrive and ultimately become the most powerful and wealthiest nation in the world. But what happened? Slavery emerged during the infant years of America. A people of dark skin were shipped from their homeland across the vast seas for the sole purpose of servitude and back-breaking drudgery for a people whose heart had turned from God. We are all too familiar with the physical and psychological effects that these situations

have had on that dark race. That black race was reduced to the lowest of humiliation and degradation, but yet somehow survived. Had you ever wondered how in God's kingdom did an entire race of people survive such an ordeal. It seems to me that somehow through a flicker of hope and prayer that the race endured. I am reminded of the Scripture in the book of Psalms (37) "Though we fall we shall not utterly be cast down: for the Lord upholds us with his hand". That particular verse brings me up to the current injustices, tricks and strategies conjured to use against a people...It will soon be cut down. The Psalmist, David once said "I have seen the wicked in

great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree". Are we not observing that from the outcome of the recent 1980 elections. Every accomplishment and positive element fought and won by the poor and Black people through the years seems threatened and headed toward a reversed state. But listen to what the Psalmist David said "Yet he (the wicked) passed away and was not to be found. Evil and hatred has never prevailed in America because there are still some people sincerely praying and looking to Jesus and not Ronald Reagan for the answer to today's troubles.

Thank you,

Phyllis Turner



William Raspberry

Youthful Unemployment

If you buy Sen. Orrin Hatch's assumption (that the rising minimum wage has priced teen-agers out of the labor market), then it's hard to resist his solution.

The Utah Republican says he will shortly introduce legislation to permit employers covered by the minimum-wage law to hire teen-agers at 75 percent of the adult minimum.

The result, he predicts, will be to render teen-agers more employable, thereby reducing the disastrous levels of youthful joblessness.

The proposal is sure to be bitterly opposed by labor unions, liberals and blacks. But why?

Are these liberals opposed to doing something concrete about the youthful unemployment that is threatening the tranquility of the cities? Can blacks argue that it is better for a youngster to be unemployed at \$3.35 (the minimum wage beginning next January) than to be employed at \$2.50? Is labor's resistance nothing more than an attempt to save jobs for union members at the expense of teen-agers? What are the arguments against the so-called youth differential?

Some of the arguments are fairly obvious, and Hatch proposes to meet some of them. One objection, for instance, is that employers will hire teen-agers at the sub-minimum (75% of the adult minimum, in Hatch's proposal), then replace them with a fresh crop of teen-agers as the original cohort reaches age 20. Another is the fear that fathers will lose their jobs to their own sons.

Hatch intends to meet these objections by requiring payment of the full minimum wage after a six-month training period, or when the worker reaches age 20. Meanwhile, the youngsters will have had the chance to prove themselves.

Presumably employers would find it more economical to keep experienced workers, even at the full minimum, than to keep training new ones at the sub-minimum.

Meanwhile, there are all these formerly jobless youngsters now going to work every day. That, at least, is what might happen if Hatch's basic assumption is correct. The problem is, nobody can demonstrate that it is correct, and there are a good many economists and labor experts who would argue that it isn't.

Even Hatch himself seems to have his doubts. "Everyone knows," he said in a recent interview,

"that when the minimum wage goes up to \$3.35 an hour, thousands--no, hundreds of thousands--of kids will lose their jobs because businesses just aren't going to pay that much for young people who are only worth \$2.50 an hour."

How's that again? There are these "hundreds of thousands" of youngsters already employed at the current minimum of \$3.10--surely a number of them with at least six months on the job--and they are going to be laid off when the minimum wage goes up by a quarter an hour? Even when their replacements would have to be paid \$3.35 by the time they became fully trained?

Sorry, senator, it doesn't compute. The sub-minimum would do nothing for the youngsters already employed. Nor would it be likely to do much for their jobless counterparts if employers know that, after six months, they'll have to get the full minimum.

The only way it could work, it seems to me, is for the youth differential to be permanent--at least until the worker is no longer a youth. And that would produce either of two results, neither of them terribly reassuring. Either the 20-year-olds would be laid off as no longer worth their pay, and their jobs given to 17-year-olds, or you'd have two groups of employees, equally experienced, doing the exact same job, but at differential pay, based solely on their age.

Try to sell your 17-year-old son on taking a counter job at McDonald's for \$34 a week less than his 20-year-old co-worker, with every prospect that he will lose his job altogether when he reaches that magic age.

Even with these objections, the Hatch proposal might be worth patching up--if it were true that the minimum wage is the major cause of youthful joblessness.

A number of people who have examined the problem think the causes lie elsewhere: in the fact that a growing number of the jobs available to teen-agers are in the suburbs, while the bulk of the jobless teen-agers are in the inner cities, and in the fact that a number of employers simply don't want black, inner-city youngsters around.

I suppose you could fix the second problem by setting pay scales low enough. But then the kid becomes a more attractive employee than his own father with all the problems that entails.

I don't doubt the senator's good intentions, but maybe he'd better hatch up another scheme.

To Be Equal

Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

Shaping
Government's
Role



One of President-elect Reagan's prime campaign themes was a call to "get government off our backs." Like most campaign rhetoric that may not survive the realities of governing, but some concrete proposals to trim the federal role may be serious. If so, they'll rightly face vigorous opposition from people concerned with civil rights and economic justice.

One prime example of a smaller role for Washington is the plan, reportedly favored by Mr. Reagan, to transfer federal welfare and education programs to state control, along with the federal funds to pay for them.

If implemented, such a plan would be disastrous. The record of the states in this area ranges from fair to awful. State welfare allotments have so lagged behind inflation that the real income of many recipients was halved in the 1970s.

Block grants have had a spotty history of accomplishment in housing and other areas. Turning federal programs in welfare and education into block grant programs for states to administer would result in even worse conditions, since many state governments have demonstrated unrelieved hostility to poor people and

minorities.

It's too often forgotten that many such programs became federal responsibilities because the states defaulted in their obligations to their own citizens. "States rights" was a cover phrase for blatant discrimination and deprivation of minority interests and black civil rights.

Today, some of the states with the weakest tax effort provide the lowest welfare payments and per-pupil school investments. To turn over vital federal programs to the tender mercies of such backward states would be an irresponsible forfeiture of federal responsibilities.

The odd thing about the proposal is that it is not a conservative one. If the Reagan administration wants to come up with constructive conservative solutions to national problems, welfare provides a perfect testing ground.

A truly conservative solution to welfare would be one that put more cash into the hands of the poor, reduced the red tape and bureaucracy that has such power over poor people's lives, and grants to poor people the same

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