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Ndubisi Egemonye
Co-Founder

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Ernest H. Pitt
Editor/Publisher

Donna E. Oldham
City Editor

Robert Eller
Sports Editor

Elaine L. Pitt
Office Manager

Member



**Audit Bureau
of Circulations**

A Community Opportunity

Recent reports concerning the East Winston Local Development Corporation prompted us to investigate the Local Development Corporation concept. What we found was most interesting.

First of all our Community Development Corporation is a community based organization. In this particular case, non-profit which qualifies it to obtain initial funding from Community Development money.

Part of the overall problem that some people have with the city providing initial Community Development money to the East Winston Local Development Corporation is a lack of understanding of the use of Community Development money. The Community Development block grant program was amended in 1977 to permit Economic Development activities. And yet, we could find no indication that the city of Winston-Salem has used any Community Development money for Economic Development.

We think it is perfectly logical for Community Development money to be used in this case because of the goals and objectives of the East Winston Local Development Corporation. One stated goal is to provide increased economic opportunities for low and moderate income persons. Also, to strengthen the community internally by means of creating community controlled businesses and industries.

What is extremely important here is the necessity for the black community to increase and develop an economic base and to control it themselves. According to

the Center for Community Economic Development in Cambridge, Mass., the land resources of the community are especially critical to development. Most Local Development Corporations, therefore, have some plan by which they expect to exert influence over the use of local land. Usually, that requires the Community Development Corporation to own and control large parcels of land. Only by doing so will it be possible to carry out other parts of the Community Development Corporation strategy.

For example, let's suppose a Local Development Corporation applied to its local government to donate land to the organization for development purposes. In this case, the EWLDC is not really asking the city to give it anything, only to return some of the community's money back to it. This then gives the Local Development Corporation the ability to leverage private investments with public funds, thereby creating new permanent employment and improving the commercial goods and services available to residents of the community.

This Local Development Corporation concept that the East Winston Local Development Corporation is talking about is not something that was pulled out of the air. This type organization is operating throughout the country. Places such as New York, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Kansas City, Louisville, St. Louis, and Dayton all have development corporations providing the same type of

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By Clifton Graves

King's Dream Party Goal

Last Thursday, January 15, millions across this country marched, rallied and prayed in support of a national holiday to commemorate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Among that number were 200,000 in Washington, D.C., over 5,000 in Atlanta, and nearly 500 here in Winston-Salem.

This tremendous outpouring of support was at once necessary and commendable. Necessary because so many of us - blacks, brown, red and white alike - are indebted to Dr. King for forcing this nation to analyze its moral fiber; commendable, because those who marched on last Thursday have not forgotten that indebtedness, and further realize that King's dream has yet to be fulfilled.

It was in this spirit that nearly 300 concerned citizens from across the state gathered last weekend at the Patterson Ave. YMCA and Goler Memorial AME Zion Church to discuss the formation of a North Carolina chapter of the National Black Independent Political Party (N.B.I.P.P.). The Party, founded at a national convention in Philadelphia, Pa. last November, was established to offer a fresh approach to the pressing problems confronting African Americans today. The basic platform of the N.B.I.P.P. is to organize black communities at the grass-roots level so that we can better impact on the political, economic and social institutions which control our lives.

Delegates to the Winston-Salem meeting heard Rev. Ben Chavis assert that an independent political movement is "needed now more than ever...and even though a national holiday to honor Dr. King is a worthwhile objective, it would only be a symbolic gesture unless Americans of African descent renewed our commitment to fight for the principles Dr. King lived and died for..." Rev. Chavis and most of those in attendance concurred that the N.B.I.P.P. has the potential to be the appropriate vehicle for continuing to wage the struggle for justice and equity in this country.

Some came to Winston out of curiosity. Others, out of frustration with the present state of black America. But nearly all came with a sense that at this juncture in our

history, an alternative approach to deal with existing conditions was imperative.

Whether or not you think a black independent political party is viable, or even necessary, is of relative importance to the organizers of the North Carolina chapter. For while they are actively soliciting members and support from all segments of our communities, they vow that the Party will not be deterred by skepticism and negativism.

And while the organizers are cognizant of the seriousness and difficulty of such an undertaking, they contend that the times are on their side. For they sense a collective frustration with the same old - same old "politics of accommodation"; a frustration with black folks continually being pawns in Democratic and Republican political chess games; a frustration with America's malignant neglect of the oppressive conditions endemic to black and brown communities in this land.

When we add to the above the calls by certain members of Congress (e.g. Helms, Thurmond, and Hatch) for curtailment of the food stamp program, cut backs in affirmative action, and reinstatement of the death penalty nationally; the resurrection of the Klan in white sheets, and of a Klan mentality of those in three-piece suits; the continuing disproportionate number of blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, etc. overcrowding this nation's prisons; the widening disparity between white and black median incomes; and, yes, the growing international crises in the Caribbean, Africa, and the Persian Gulf which most of us fail to fully grasp - signs seemingly point to the need for a novel approach, a unique strategy to combat not only racism in the larger society, but indeed complacent among our own people.

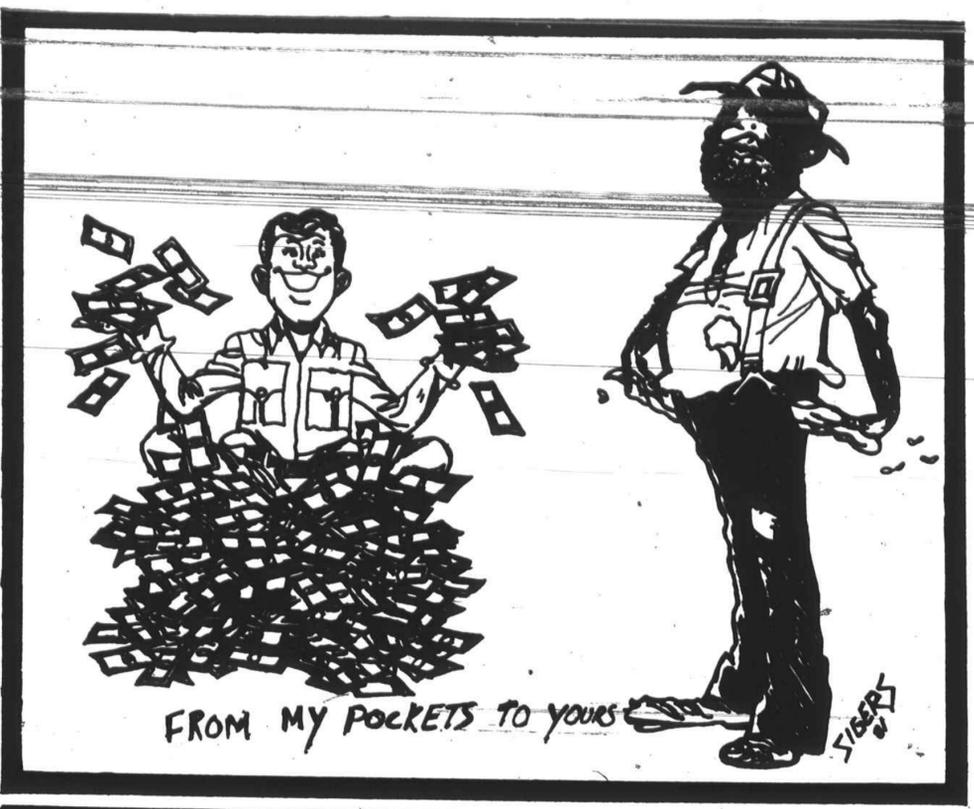
History will be the judge of the effectiveness of this new independent political thrust. But if Dr. King's dream is to become a reality; if "justice is to truly flow like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream," then it should be crystal clear to any intelligent person that the same-old, tired tactics and politics will not do!

history of murder and torture? This account from the *Chattanooga Times* of Feb. 13, 1918, is no isolated incident, but shows what the Klan is really about--still.

"This evening at 7:40 p.m., J.H. was tortured with a red-hot iron bar, then burned...A crowd of more than 2000 people...many women and children, were present at the incineration...After the negro had been bound from behind, a fire was kindled. A little further away, another fire was kindled in which an iron bar was placed. When it was red-hot, a man took it and applied it to the black's body. The latter, terrified, seized the iron with his hands, and the air was immediately filled with the smell of burning flesh...The red-hot iron having been applied to several parts of his body, his shouts and groans were heard as far away as in the town. After several minutes of torture, masked men poured petrol on him and set fire to the stake. The flames rose and enveloped the negro who implored to be finished off with a shot. His supplications provoked shouts of derision."

Since 1866, thousands of blacks have been burned alive, hung, shot, cut to pieces and tortured by the Klan. As the above quote shows, the press duly promoted the Klan, without a word of reproach for the criminals, or a word of pity for the victims. A headline, 5 inches high,

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William Raspberry

*Affirmative Action
in Danger*

Washington--I don't want to absolve the neo-conservatives, neo-racists and opponents of minority progress.

But one of the deadliest assaults on affirmative action has been launched by its friends.

Lawyers for the government and the highly respected Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights are trying to cut a deal that is so manifestly unfair that it bids to cut the moral ground right from under the whole concept of affirmative action.

What they propose is to junk the federal government's Professional and Administrative Career Examination (PACE) and to keep experimenting with new tests until they come up with one that is wholly free of bias.

And when will they know that the bias has been removed? When the proportion of blacks, whites and Hispanics who pass the test is roughly equal to the proportion who decide to take it.

Forget actual qualifications. Forget job-relatedness. Forget elemental fairness. If the test doesn't produce the proper racial results, then keep fiddling around with it until it does.

It may be the most absurd affirmative-action proposal since the Cleveland school official ordered that the city's high school basketball teams must henceforth be at least 20 percent white.

Imagine that your city wants to hire a number of drivers for its bus system. Imagine further that a disproportionate number of black applicants for the jobs fall short in the basic skills as measured in the driving test. Maybe they grew up on farms and never had a chance to become adept at maneuvering in city traffic. Maybe the best black drivers have gone to work for Greyhound. Maybe it just happens that this particular crop of black applicants is unusually inept.

No matter. If the proportion of black applicants who fail the test is significantly larger than the proportion that decided to take the test, you'll have to come up with a new test until the proportions work out right.

The rationale for affirmative action is that since racism still exists in America, job-screening devices that routinely screen out disproportionate numbers of non-white applicants are, on that account, suspect.

Fair enough. And if, upon review, it turns out that the screening tests are full of questions that have nothing to do with the work to be performed, the tests ought to be changed.

That is pretty much what happened with the old Federal Service Entrance Examination. Not only did blacks have more trouble passing the FSEE, but many of the questions were demonstrably non-job-related.

That's why the government finally abandoned the FSEE and instituted PACE. But even with PACE, the pass rates for minorities still lagged behind the rate for whites. (Forty-two percent of white applicants pass PACE compared with only 13 percent for Hispanics and 5 percent for blacks.)

Two years ago, a group of blacks and Hispanics who had failed the test sued the Office of Personnel Management on the ground that the test was manifestly unfair. They alleged further that the exam tested for general knowledge not required for the I18 job categories for which it was used.

The case never came to trial. What the attorneys for the government and the lawyers committee are working out now is a consent decree mandating a test that will produce the right numerical results.

The sensible thing, of course, would be to check again to make sure that the questions on the test are realistically related to the work to be performed. If they turn out to be reasonably job-related, then the problem is not in the test.

To keep monkeying with the test until it produces the "correct" arbitrary results is both foolish and unfair. And to the extent that the whole idea of affirmative action depends on a general consensus that it will reduce the amount of unfairness, the newest proposal is likely to work against the long-term interests of minorities.

Maybe the exam ought to ask applicants to tell in their own words why the proposed solution is unfair on its face. Anybody who couldn't explain that satisfactorily doesn't deserve an administrative career in the government or anywhere else.

On the other hand, anybody clever enough to make a cogent defense of the proposal ought to be summarily qualified for selection as attorney general, solicitor general or senior partner in the law firm of his choice.

To Be Equal

Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

Reagan Should
Resist Benign
Neglect



Given the enormous problems facing the nation, President Reagan may be strongly tempted to let the plight of minorities and the poor take a back seat to reviving the stagnant economy and shoring up our international position.

In effect, that would be a revival of the old "benign neglect" approach of the early Nixon years. That approach was based on the supposition that blacks had made great progress and no longer needed special governmental efforts.

A new benign neglect approach would probably be based on a different belief--that by solving the nation's economic dilemmas the Administration would at the same time solve the economic problems of blacks. Therefore, no special efforts need be considered.

The new benign neglect approach would be as mistaken as the old. In both instances, the neglect would not have a benign effect at all. Rather, it would inevitably lead to a deterioration of conditions for poor people while impeding solutions to problems of inflation and unemployment.

One reason for this is that the free-market approach

favored by the Administration would--even if it turns the economy around in the long run--have serious negative short-term effects on the poor.

Low income families, for example, feel the brunt of inflation in sharply rising food and energy costs that take a greater part of their budgets than better-off households, which spend greater parts of their income on non-essentials.

That means the poor depend on government props like food stamps, minimum wages, and unemployment benefits. Few of the poor actually get such assistance, just as few actually get welfare. But their availability is important for many low income families.

If such income support programs were cut sharply or even, as some advocate, abandoned, those families would be in desperate straits. Even if, in the name of fighting inflation, eligibility standards are stiffened or public jobs programs cut, many inner city families would be shoved over the brink.

Theorists may claim that ultimately the lower federal spending and other measures will pay off in private sector

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Chronicle Letters

An Open Letter To Channels 2 And 8

Dear Sirs:

Your media blitz on the Klan was nothing but a recruitment advertisement for the Klan. On Nov. 15, with the acquittal of 6 Klan and Nazi cold-blooded murderers, the Klan was given a green light to shoot down blacks, communists, trade unionists, anyone. Now follows the stepped-up promotion of the Klan in the mass media. The timing is no accident. Now that the government and monopoly capitalists have shown people what the Klan can get away with, these same Klan promoters, who own the mass media, are blatantly recruiting for their reactionary army. We have been bombarded with Klan propaganda coming at us from all over the tube.

Why don't you tell people about the Klan's 115 year