

Forum

Officials: Crisis of confidence?

COLUMBUS, Ohio -- Marion S. Barry Jr. was one of the outstanding youth leaders of the civil rights movement a generation ago.

Growing up on a farm in Itta Bena, Miss., Barry emerged as a dynamic and brilliant spokesman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. After his active involvement in local political issues in Washington, D.C., Barry was elected mayor of the nation's capital in 1979. But in recent years, Barry's success story has turned quite sour.

In late May, Washington former Deputy Mayor Alphonse G. Hill pleaded guilty to defrauding the city's government. Significantly, Hill was the 11th public official in Barry's administration to be imprisoned and convicted of crimes in office.

A federal investigation led by U.S. Attorney Joseph E. diGenova is studying "allegations of bribery, fraud and racketeering in awards of millions of dollars in municipal and federal contracts" charged against Barry's associates.

The mayor has also admitted having "a personal relationship" with a drug dealer, Karen Johnson, who was jailed for refusing to give evidence before a grand jury.

FROM THE GRASSROOTS

By DR. MANNING MARABLE

Is it any surprise that thousands of District of Columbia voters have become disillusioned with Barry's administration?

Last fall, in an embarrassing political campaign, civil rights veteran John Lewis defeated Georgia State Sen. Julian Bond for an Atlanta House of Representatives seat. Lewis' most effective weapon was to challenge Bond to take a drug test. When Bond refused, rightly terming such public antics a crude violation of one's civil liberties, a majority of voters turned against him.

Now Lewis' insinuations are being buttressed by allegations by Alice Bond, the estranged wife of the civil rights activist. Mrs. Bond claimed that her husband was "a habitual cocaine user" to the police, and that even Atlanta Mayor Andy Young was known to have snorted the white powder at least once.

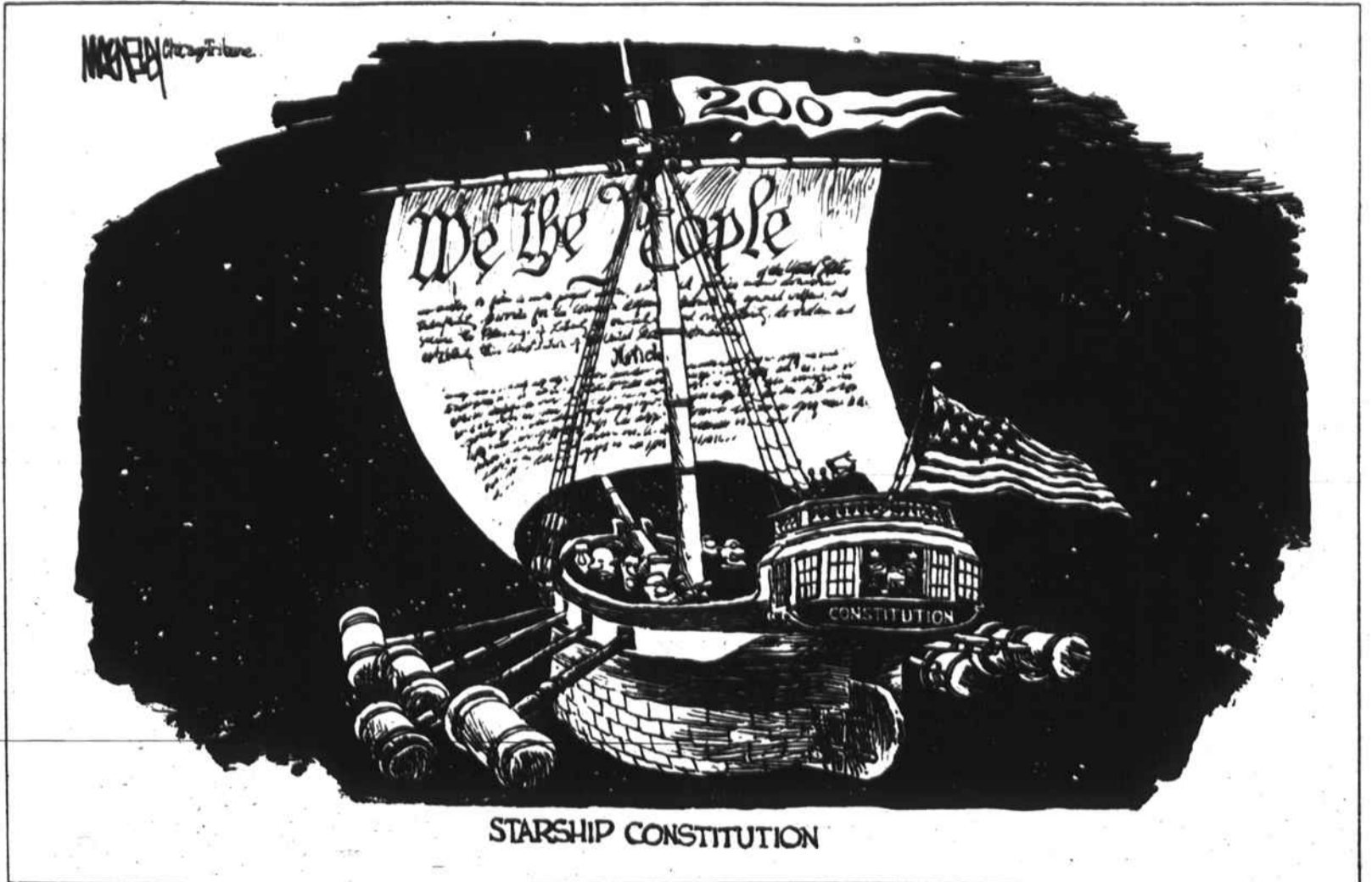
Mrs. Bond has since denied before a federal grand jury that Young played any part in the retraction of her original accusations. But the damage to both black politicians has been done,

and is to some degree irreversible.

Another legacy of unfulfilled expectations and political failure came to an end last month in Gary, Ind. Nearly 30 years ago, Attorney Richard Hatcher arrived in this steel town and created a black progressive organization called "Muigwithania." The political formation successfully challenged the local, conservative white establishment.

Hatcher was first elected to Gary's city council in 1963, and four years later he became a leader of the National Conference of Black Mayors and the National Black Political Assembly in the 1970s. In subsequent years, he served as vice chairman of the Democratic National Committee and was a key adviser during the Rev. Jesse Jackson's 1984 presidential campaign.

But back in Gary, Hatcher was failing miserably to halt a declining economy. By the mid-1980s, unemployment reached 16 percent. Part of Hatcher's difficulty was that he was blamed for problems beyond his control. Hundreds of white-owned firms and thousands of middle-class whites



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fled to the suburbs. Millions of federal dollars in social programs were cut by the Reagan administration, but Hatcher's messy organizational style compounded his difficulties.

Calumet Township Assessor Thomas Barnes, a black former supporter of Hatcher, challenged the mayor in the recent election and triumphed by 6,000 votes. In white precincts, Barnes outpolled Hatcher by huge margins of 30 to 1; but even in Hatcher's black strongholds, the mayor ran poorly.

Most Gary voters, in short, agreed with Barnes' critical assessment of his former friend: "(Hatcher's) leadership has not produced ... It elevated him to

national fame, but the city has deteriorated."

Across the nation, black Americans sense a lack of direction, an inability to articulate and implement effective policies by many black officials.

Partially, this can be attributed to personal shortcomings, as in the cases of Bond and Barry. But more fundamentally, it is a failure to galvanize support and constructive activities among blacks themselves -- especially young people.

Take the tragic case of Detroit Mayor Coleman Young, who's trying to combat the rising tide of teen-age shootings and urban violence. Columnist William Raspberry recently lamented:

"The city is going to hell, and nobody seems to have the faintest idea what to do."

Other elected officials confront Young's dilemma -- apparently overpowered by local problems, they rely too heavily on stale rhetoric and are too slow to develop new solutions which transcend traditional liberalism. It's a failure of political imagination, but more importantly, perhaps a growing crisis of confidence between black constituents and their elected spokesmen.

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Pregnancy prevention: Ideas for schools

WASHINGTON -- Because our children spend much of their time in school, schools have an important role to play in preventing teen pregnancy.

Schools do not have to duplicate the efforts of parents or churches. There are many things they can do effectively on their own.

Here is just a beginning list of ideas. Check to see if your school is:

- making an effort to identify teens that are at risk of becoming pregnant before this happens. Prevention is easier than coping with the complex problems of teen pregnancy.
- providing remedial services to help all children who are behind

CHILDWATCH

By MARIAN EDELMAN

their grade level in reading and mathematics to catch up. These youths are at high risk of becoming parents too soon.

• offering day-care and other support services to help pregnant and parenting teens stay in school. This is key to preventing repeat pregnancies.

• providing family life education to students or parents. These courses should start with young students, be geared to the needs of different age groups and be run by highly qualified teachers.

Our youths must have an opportunity to discuss these issues with

an adult, and polls show that many parents are not offering their children this opportunity.

• working hard to get all teens who have dropped out to return to school. If these youths are not pregnant or parents already, they are at high risk.

• involving parents in helping their children to avoid teen pregnancy or dropping out. Cooperation and input from parents is key to teaching youths effectively and having a real impact.

• getting the word out about the consequences of teen pregnancy by displaying teen pregnancy prevention posters or holding a school assembly on this issue.

• encouraging students to form

their own groups to prevent teen pregnancy and to help each other through peer counseling.

• sponsoring academic, cultural or recreation activities for less well-off children and youths that can help give them a sense of self-esteem and positive things to do.

If your child's school is not doing all it can to prevent teen pregnancy, talk to the principal, work through the PTA, or form your own parent group to press for improvements.

Marian Wright Edelman is a National Newspaper Publishers Association columnist who is president of the Children's Defense Fund, a national voice for youth.

Bravo and thanks to the Easton community for work on cleanup

To The Editor:

The Easton Community, directed and headed by Mr. Larry Womble and myself, would like to thank everyone for a job well done.

Thanks also to the Winston-Salem Sanitation Department for carrying off more than 25 loads on that day.

I want to thank my chairpeople and block captains for all the

CHRONICLE MAILBAG

Our Readers Speak

help and support they gave me during the cleanup campaign. As head of the Community Watch program, I said all the cleaning will aid us to see better and prevent crime. Let's all try to keep our community cleaner and make an example for others.

Lunch was prepared by citizens

in our community and there was plenty of good food to eat. Also it was Mr. Womble's birthday. We surprised him with birthday cake and a \$50 gift certificate from the citizens of our community.

Peggy Sparks
Director
Easton Community
Watch Program

Congratulations

To The Editor:

Congratulations! I am simply amazed that the *Winston-Salem Chronicle* is able to sustain a steady path of excellence by accepting yet another batch of the NNPA's top awards for 1987.

You compete yearly against thousands of weekly newspapers across this great country of ours,

and you keep on winning. Your awards are great and numerous.

Best wishes that you continue the *Chronicle's* rich tradition of excellence.

Shedrick Adams
Winston-Salem

Sincere thanks

This letter was sent to Community News Editor Robin Barksdale.

To The Editor:

You may have forgotten me, as it's been two months since our interview. However, in spite of the time elapsed, for which I apologize, I still want you to know how much your April 23 article has been appreciated.

Possibly you recall how hesitant at first Mrs. Long and Mr. Walker were to open up for Please see page A12

CHRONICLE CAMERA

July 4: Day of independence for African-Americans?

July 4th, commonly called Independence Day, has been a long-celebrated American holiday.

It marks the anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of

Independence which announced the American colonies break from the mother country, England.

Some African-Americans

however say that they have no reason to celebrate July 4th or the 200th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution.

Both have been viewed by

some as being "whites only celebrations."

The *Chronicle* asked local African-Americans their feelings on the holiday. Responses to the

question, "Do you think July 4th is truly a day of independence to blacks?" were varied.

Some people felt that the day signifies a day of independence for all and that African-

Americans should celebrate it.

Others said no, African-Americans should not celebrate the holiday because total independence has not been a reality for them.



"I don't think so. It's something white people started. Our people, we have to go along with these things. But it don't mean much to us."
John Peebles



"Yes. We don't have any other time to celebrate. We need this day."
Ivis Jackson



"I would say no. We definitely are not free, so it's definitely not for blacks. That's it in a nutshell."
Howard Henderson



"Yes. I think every day is a holiday for blacks. It's time for us to sit back and relax and enjoy the better things in life. Every chance we get we need to celebrate."
Terry Samuels



"Yes. I think it's an opportunity for both blacks and whites."
John Watson