

# Editorials & Comments

## Low Income Families Face Major Cutback

In the midst of rising prices and the highest unemployment in years, America's elderly and low income families face a major new cutback in federal food assistance. The Ford Administration has announced plans to cut food stamp benefits for over 14 million Americans, beginning March 1.

The cut in food stamp benefits will result from a drastic increase in the prices elderly and other poor families now pay to purchase food stamps. (Families in the food stamp program must pay for their stamps, and are charged an amount based on their level of income.) At present, the average household in the program pays 2.3 percent of its net income to buy food stamps each month. Many households pay much less than this. Under the Administration's plan, nearly every household in the program will have to pay 30 percent of its net income to purchase food stamps. This means that the average household will have to pay nearly one-third more to obtain the same amount of food stamps. (The stamps of course buy less and less food as prices increase in the stores.)

In effect the Administration's action will condemn millions of poor Americans to hunger and starvation. The cutback is in direct contrast to other Administration efforts to get the economy moving by putting more money in the hands of consumers.

### ELDERLY HIT HARDEST

Elderly people and others living in one and two person households will be hit the hardest. Up until now elderly people have been charged a smaller percentage of their income for stamps than have people living in larger families, because they also get a far smaller amount of food stamps each month. The Administration's new plan will require many of the elderly to pay nearly twice as much as they are now charged for their food stamps. Some will have to pay as much as eight times more.

For aged, blind, and disabled poor who participate in the federal government's Supplemental Secur-

ity Income (SSI) program, the new plan will be devastating. A large proportion of these people will have to pay so much for a small amount of stamps that they will be unable to remain in the food stamp program.

An elderly person with a net income of \$146 a month, the standard federal SSI payment to individuals, now pays \$30 for \$46 worth of food stamps, for a benefit of \$16. Under the new plan, this person will pay \$43 for \$46 in stamps, for a monthly benefit of only \$3.

### EFFECTS ON THE VERY POOR

Larger families with very low incomes would also suffer greatly under the new plan. For some very poor households, food stamp prices would more than double. Because family budget items like that and rent are fixed, the price rise may force many of the very poor out of the food stamp program.

A family of four with a net income of \$37 to \$39 a month now pays \$4 monthly for stamps. Under the new plan the family would pay \$11, or nearly three times as much.

Many working families now qualify for modest but important food stamp benefits. Under the present system, these families have been getting a benefit of at least \$5 to \$10 for each person in the family. The new plan will slash these benefits to almost nothing:

A household of four with a net income of \$500 a month now pays \$130 for \$154 in stamps. Under the new plan, these households will have to pay \$150, cutting the monthly benefit from 24 to \$4.

Each additional dollar required to buy the same amount of food stamps means a dollar lost to local businesses, because it reduces the amount of income families have left to spend on other items. In addition, thousands of people in every state will be forced to drop out of the food stamp program because their benefits will be reduced to such small amounts. Each 1,000 people who leave the program in a local area means a loss of \$250,000 a year to that area's economy. Local businesses will suffer, and many workers will lose their jobs as a result.

ment officials. That's not all. Every year for the next three years that same raise is automatic. You see, it's all part of the President's budget. That way, Congressmen don't have to go on record as having voted themselves a raise that nobody wanted them to have.

But Congress can choose to turn down its automatic raise and try to live on the pay they are now receiving. It might not keep them in the style they are now receiving. It might not keep them in the style they are accustomed to, but it would certainly endear them to the hearts of those who keep them in office.



## Black History Is Featured Each Week In The Black Newspapers

## REPORT FROM Washington

### Oil Import Tariffs

By Jim Martin  
9th District Congressman

The House of Representatives has voted to strip President Ford of his authority to impose fees on oil imports which was part of his plan to cut energy consumption and reliance on Arab oil producers. The measure must still win approval in the Senate, and face a probable veto.

President Ford's method of reducing oil import dependency may be unpopular (and politically unsound), but it will be far more unpopular if we squander valuable time, doing nothing about reducing consumption, until war again returns to the Middle East. The potential for another embargo still exists. I voted against the stripping bill in Committee and did again when it was presented for House approval. The power this bill would strip is that of the so-called "national security" clause of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962; in one form or another, it has been on the books since the early years of the Eisenhower Administration. The power was fought for and gained by that Administration and then fought for and retained by the Kennedy Administration. The question is now whether the power to restrict imports in the interest of national security will now be revoked because it is used. Did those Members of Congress who voted to support President Kennedy - and earlier President Eisenhower - with regard to this power think it would never be used or that, if used, the burden of its use would be non-exis-

tent? Why would the Congress give President Kennedy a blank check because he asked for it, and then deny a subsequent President the authority to fill in the blanks? Ironically, this is the third exercise of this authority. President Eisenhower first established import quotas, and more recently, President Nixon applied an import duty of 63 cents on a barrel.

This country cannot - absolutely cannot - endure dependence upon potentially hostile Arab oil producers for our energy supplies. At the very least, we must curtail our consumption of foreign oil enough so that we can exist through future embargoes.

It is my belief that President Ford's fee impositions will lead to reduction in oil imports. It will mean less oil than we would otherwise have, and less than we would want. But, it would mean one giant step toward being immune from foreign policy dictation by Arab leaders. Reduced oil imports mean cost and discomforts. We have a choice between that and remaining in that picturesque but untenable position of just waiting for the guillotine to drop all at once. While we wait, the foreign oil import dollars continue to increase by the billions.

In the interest of making us immune from the economic and social disaster flowing from any future embargo - and immune from Arab dictation on foreign policy - I hope the Senate defeats the stripping bill.

## TO BE EQUAL



VERNON E. JORDAN JR.

### New York's "Massive Resistance"

There's very little to be said in favor of people who are outspokenly against desegregating the schools except that they are at least honest about it.

There's no mistaking the feelings of the people of South Boston who hoot at and throw rocks at black children bused into their neighborhood. Nor is there any mistake to be made about the old-line last-ditch segregationists who never heard of the 1960's and cling to their racism.

But all of these people, however mistaken they may be, however vicious the result of their racism is, still say openly what's on their minds. That is something you can deal with - it's all out in the open.

But there's another kind of new segregationist who's made an appearance. And this breed is more subtle and sophisticated than the old. He'll pay lip service to the ideal of integration. He'll even talk at length about what a shame it is that schools are still segregated.

And in an excess of dishonesty, he'll even condemn those who throw rocks and act in such an ugly manner. After all, why throw rocks or drop your good manners when the same results can be accomplished in other ways.

What spurs me to these comments is the most recent - and most blatant - of the acts of what I call the subtle segregationists.

The New York State Board of Regents is the policy-making body for the New York State school system. It has the reputation of being a liberal body that governs one of the most progressive systems in one of the most progressive states. That reputation is worthless today.

The reason is that the Regents recently issued a new policy on integration that, stripped of its double-talk, means that it is adopting the South's old discredited "massive resistance policy." New York's Regents seem determined to demonstrate, to their shame, that there is more than one way to stand in the schoolhouse door.

Their policy statement is framed in such a way as to gain support by using code words. For example, it starts out by saying that "Integration does not, by definition, require that racial quotas be used..." But waving the red flag of quotas backfired. The American Jewish Congress, long opposed to racial quotas, quickly condemned the Regents' statement, declaring:

"We have difficulty understanding how the extent of integration in a school district, and the effectiveness of an integration program, can be ascertained without reference to numerical progress in a school-by-school basis."

I've got the same difficulty, and I suspect anyone who's advanced beyond the third grade could see behind the Regents' double-talk.

"Racial integration," the Regents' claim, does not "imply quantitative balance in all schools..."

What in the world does it imply then? How can you have racial integration without some sort of numerically-fair distribution of white and black pupils?

This statement of policy, which will deal race relations in New York a terrible setback, was opposed by the state's top educational authorities, who were about to launch a series of integration orders to various cities still operating segregated school systems.

## Inflation's Running Wild

You can stop wondering why inflation is running wild and the cost of living is threatening to exceed your income. One glance at the Federal budget for the next fiscal year ought to clear up any questions you had.

The budget will spend some 23 billion ..... that's right..... 23 billion dollars more than the Government will take in during the fiscal year 1975-76. That bothers us. We have always advocated a balanced budget.

The budget includes a seven and one half percent pay increase for members of Congress, Supreme Court Justices, and high govern-

ment officials. That's not all. Every year for the next three years that same raise is automatic. You see, it's all part of the President's budget. That way, Congressmen don't have to go on record as having voted themselves a raise that nobody wanted them to have.

But Congress can choose to turn down its automatic raise and try to live on the pay they are now receiving. It might not keep them in the style they are now receiving. It might not keep them in the style they are accustomed to, but it would certainly endear them to the hearts of those who keep them in office.

## as I see it

### Hats Off To Councilman Gantt

By Gerald Johnson

Back when the city council was searching for a replacement for Fred Alexander on the council, I didn't feel the considerees were qualified spokesman for Blacks.

When the council chose Mr. Harvey Gantt, I stuck my foot in my mouth again, and said that he didn't seem to be familiar with the general problems of most Blacks in this area. "Therefore", I continued, "Mr Gantt was not a good choice."

Now that a few months have past and Mr. Gantt has gotten his feet wet as a board member, I feel I was right on two of the counts. Two out of three is not bad! The third count, however, I am going to change my opinion on as of now.

Mr. Gantt was a good choice for the city council.

I have closely scrutinized his actions as a new council member and I am deeply impressed.

Mr. Gantt has added a new dimen-



sion to the council; reasonability, something the council has lacked since I've been back in Charlotte.

Mr. Gantt weighs each issue brought before the board for its pros and cons and always (at least so far) comes up with a rational opinion.

His recent action, inquiring into the cities revenue sharing plan was an outstanding challenge and it deserves to be applauded.

Mr. Gantt has raised some worthwhile questions that may have detoured a disaster. The revenue program has a major job to be done, the

demolition of substandard housing. This program detailed the tearing down process, but failed to mention where the people living in those substandard houses would relocate.

The program had other major inequities most of which Mr. Gantt pointed out.

Probing, inquiring, and questioning is a vital part of all decision making and at long last Charlotte has someone who is not afraid to play a vital part.

Mr. Gantt, my hat's off to you!!!

### Carl Hunt To Host Classmates Saturday Night

The regular monthly meeting of the class of 1935 of Second Ward High School will be held at the home of Mr. and

Mrs. Carl Hunt of 4620 Meridian Drive on Saturday at 7:30 P.M. Plans are being made for the Class Reunion to be held in

July, 1975.

All members are urged to be present.

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