

Editorials & Comments

Gun Legislation Needs Your Support

Black leaders should go on record in support of the gun legislation pending in the 94th Congress. The Judiciary Sub-committee last week concluded the first phase of extensive hearings which saw a number of Congressmen go on record as supporting stiff gun control measures.

The Judiciary Sub-Committee is expected to report an effective proposal for curbing the high incidence of gun crime to Congress in the near future.

Since more Blacks are victims of firearm accidents than any other race, it would appear that Black leaders in this community would make their views known on the highly volatile gun control issue. Our representatives in Washington should know how this community and its leaders feel about this very important bill.

The gun control issue certainly will get strong opposition from the gun lobby in Washington. This powerful group has not neglected to flex their muscles when gun control was considered in past years, and there are reasons to believe they will strongly oppose all gun control measures in this congress. Their reason has profit making implications.

The Post believes the so-called "Saturday night special legislation" should be strongly supported by all citizens simply because the records show that more than 67 percent of all murders in 1973 were committed with firearms. The records also show that the great majority of these murders were the results of Blacks killing Blacks.

We, however, do not feel that the bill should ban the manufacture.

Blacks Listen Differently?

There is a new bugaboo among us. If you aren't tired of being proven different from the other races, you probably will be interested in knowing that we listen to the radio differently than the general population.

According to a special analysis by Arbitron Radio based on listening of the Black population in 10 major markets, the listening patterns among Blacks are "distinctly different from the general population."

It is difficult for us to believe that. However, we do concur that Blacks spend more than 50 percent of their listening tuned to stations programmed specifically for Black audiences. Arbitron says "A demographic breakout by station format across all the 10 markets surveyed showed Black men 18 and older and, for teens from 12 to 17, the Black stations' share is a whopping 73 percent.

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The ability of Black stations in a market to attract the Black population ranged from a high of 78 percent in Birmingham to a low of 39 percent in Chicago for total persons 12 and older. Among teens, the range was from 95 percent in Birmingham to a low of 45 percent in Chicago.

There was no mentioning of the

sale and possession of all handguns as some have indicated.

Some Democrats on Capitol Hill are strongly urging the subcommittee to enact legislation that would ban the manufacture, sale and private possession of handguns except for law enforcement officers and pistol clubs. Representative Walter Fauntroy (D-District of Columbia) sums up the concerns of Members who represent large urban areas where the presence of a handgun is more often than not the deciding factor in whether a human being will live or die. "He said, 'I have buried law-abiding citizens who were the victims of handguns used in the commission of crimes, and I have officiated at the funeral of a very fine police officer who was a member of my church, who was senselessly gunned down while handling a routine traffic violation.'"

It is reported that during 1974 a total of 669 handgun homicides occurred in the city of Chicago, representing 73 percent of the total. The records further show that national statistics indicate that the percentage use of the handgun in murders across the country does not differ significantly from the Chicago experience.

We believe a strong bill should be enacted that would provide stiff penalties for the use of a handgun in the commission of a felony. The obvious answer to this serious problem can be found in tougher gun laws and not in banning firearms.

It is our feeling that most Americans, even those against gun control, are questioning the utility of the statement, "guns don't kill, people kill."

Charlotte audience.

The survey shows that away from home listening among Blacks during morning and afternoon drive-time, combined, was 45 percent lower than that of away from home listening among all persons. The percent of away from home listening was 18 percent for the Black population, 12 and older, compared to 18 percent for the total population.

One reason to explain why Blacks do more at home listening than other population groups is related to the fact that a significant number of the Black population live in highly urbanized areas. In such areas access to work on mass transit plus generally shorter travel time to work tend to reduce the amount of in-car listening for Blacks during drive-time. The geographic concentration of the Black community also decreases travel time spent in shopping, visiting friends, etc. with corresponding decrease in the opportunity for in-car listening at other times of the day.

The number of Black persons, the survey continues, that listened to a given Black station and to no other station during a given time period was higher than observed for other station formats based on a special analysis of listening done for the New York metro.

325 BLACK AMERICAN JUDGES ON THE COURT BENCH.

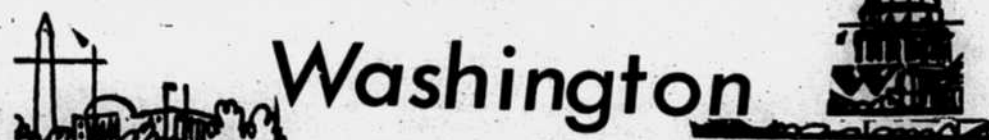


"WHENEVER YOU HAVE A COMPETENT BLACK PERSON IN A POSITION OF POWER," SAYS JUDGE SMITH OF LOS ANGELES, "IT HAS A (FAVORABLY) RESTRICTIVE, RESTRAINING INFLUENCE ON HIS WHITE COLLEAGUES"

N.Y. TIMES

Black Judges...A Force For Justice

REPORT FROM



Elimination Of Oil Depletion Allowance

In a rush of enthusiasm and self-righteousness, but with little idea of the consequences, the House of Representatives has voted to cancel the oil depletion allowance. The vote was 248 to 163, with North Carolina's delegation favoring the amendment 6 to 4. I believe it was a mistake.

I have no great love for the oil depletion allowance. It does encourage exploration and drilling for oil—but it also encourages consumption—by holding prices lower than they otherwise would be.

The Ways and Means Committee was about to begin hearings on the entire range of taxes related to energy in just a few weeks. Chairman Ullman was absolutely right when he argued for leaving the depletion allowance alone until then. Tying it to the tax cut bill was not necessary, unless you approve of blackmail; it may endanger the tax cut (which is OK with me, since it has enough other problems to earn my opposition); but most importantly—the depletion allowance should not be eliminated until hearings can show what the consequences will be and what new tax policy should substitute for it.

If there is to be no substitute tax incentive to replace it, then eliminating depletion allowance can have only two results: (1) an increase in oil prices or (2) a decrease in oil wells, or both. I have made some very rough estimates that in order to keep even the present inadequate pace of exploration and drilling—and pumping—the tax break of the oil depletion allowance would have to be replaced by a price increase of 4-7 cents a gallon. That's as much as

the impact of the President's import duty of foreign oil. Or, if prices are frozen at present levels, the loss of the tax break ("loophole" if you want to call it that) would result in 3 million barrels per day less oil. That's as big a loss as the Arab oil embargo in 1973.

After all, think what happened the last time the depletion allowance was reduced in 1969. Exploration and drilling for oil and gas dropped off sharply, and we had to face rising oil imports and steadily rising shortages of natural gas. The last thing North Carolina needs is a further cut in the profitability of drilling for gas in Louisiana and Texas.

People who benefit from the depletion allowance are rich, independent oil men. Sure, they're the ones who win in the very risky business of drilling for oil. The ones who hit a series of dry holes lose. And if the financial rewards are cut too low then nobody will take the enormous risk.

It's popular to blast the big oil companies and pretend that this bill will punish them for their sins, real and imagined. But the curious thing is that the major oil companies won't really be affected much. They'll just raise the price to make up for the lost tax break. It's the independents, the wildcaters, who will be put out of business. They'll just sell out to the major oil companies. So, oddly enough, ending the depletion allowance will decrease the competition.

But, there are a lot of other people who benefit from the old oil depletion allowance. That's the people who enjoy having adequate supplies of oil. That's you, brother.

TO BE EQUAL



VERNON E. JORDAN JR.

Seniority Vs. Affirmative Action

Who will be laid off? That's a question on a lot of people's minds these days as the economy continues to deteriorate and unemployment continues to climb.

It's also a question that could be an explosive one, deepening the already troublesome fissures in our society.

And it is a question of immediate significance to employers, unions, minority employees, federal officials and the courts, because of the conflicting claims of seniority and affirmative action.

Most large employers are bound by union contracts that say layoffs must be in order of seniority—first hired, last fired. They are also bound by the law, in this case the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which forbids discriminatory employment practices.

It was due to this law that many blacks, women and minorities got their first crack at jobs previously reserved for white males. To make up for past discrimination, many companies have agreed with federal authorities to undertake affirmative action programs designed to increase the numbers of minority employees.

Now a recession-struck company is caught in a dilemma: who to lay off? If they lay off older white workers, they violate seniority provisions of their union contracts. If they lay off blacks who have less seniority thanks to the earlier refusal to hire, the company reverts back to its lily-white work force and violates affirmative action agreements with the government, as well as the Civil Rights Act.

Caught in the middle are workers of both races who face layoffs in a job market that offers no opportunity for alternative employment. There are already some signs of deepening racial bitterness as some workers are victims of layoffs that don't affect the other race as much. If this situation continues, we would see a lethal combination of racial conflict and economic hardship, an explosive mix.

Several cases have already come before the courts, but with contradictory rulings. In one case, the court ruled that a company could not lay off its black workers because such action would perpetuate the effects of past discrimination. In another case, the judge ruled that the seniority system should predominate and it's just too bad if that works disproportionate hardship on black workers.

Ultimately, these and other cases will come before the Supreme Court which may hand down a definitive ruling that sets clear guidelines for employers. But by then it may be too late—and there is always that chance that this Court will issue a ruling that rebuilds the discriminatory walls that excluded black people from equal employment opportunities.

In the Griggs case, which dealt with pre-hiring tests, the Court ruled that employment practices "NEUTRAL ON THEIR FACE, AND EVEN NEUTRAL IN TERMS OF INTENT, CANNOT BE MAINTAINED IF THEY OPERATE TO 'FREEZE' THE STATUS QUO OF PRIOR DISCRIMINATORY EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES..."

I read that to mean the "neutral" operation of a seniority system that operates to freeze blacks into a last-hired, first-fired situation, has to give way to the higher conflicting right of continued black employment opportunity.

as i see it

Being Black Is Not Enough

By Gerald Johnson

The initial period of hiring the first black that walked by the door is over and probably forever. The late sixties saw thousands of companies storming onto predominately Black campuses and hiring any and all Blacks for precisely that reason; they were Black.

During the late sixties with the equality in hiring laws, affirmative action plans, the government forced the hand of many companies into hiring Blacks simply by threatening to cut off federal funds if they didn't. Thus the "Tan Rush" was on. Companies were waiting in line for coloreds. These companies would hire you on the spot place a sign around your neck, "Resident Nigger" and hang you in front of a window so government personnel



wouldn't miss you when they made their rounds. A lot of this is still prevalent today in downtown Charlotte.

Anyway, the government soon got wise to all this when they decided to talk to the Black personnel these companies were hiring. As I heard it

one government official asked a Black male manager of a large steel corporation how often did he meet with his people that worked for him? He replied, "They are with me wherever I go, me, myself, and I."

For whatever that was worth, the 1970's have brought about a lot of changes to the earlier practices of companies. Once justification for hiring was made into an issue companies had to seek qualified minority personnel to work. Doors that for a short while were open to most Blacks are being slammed into a lot of Blacks faces. Being Black is not enough, anymore, to get you through the door.

It alone does not get the door slammed in your face anymore, either. This is to say that if you got something to offer in the way of qualifications you can get in any

door, black, white, yellow, or green.

But don't be like the young girl who came into the personnel office of a company and applied for a typist job and it took her three minutes to type her name. When she wasn't hired she immediately cried out discrimination.

Or a promotion I witnessed where a white girl stayed after work for 4 months learning about jobs other than her own which she had mastered. She was promoted over a young black girl who had mastered the same position but refused to stay after work to learn about other positions.

In closing let me just say oranges aren't sweet because they are oranges, but because of what they are made of. Black isn't beautiful unless we as Black people make it so.

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