

Editorials & Comments

Black Press Catalyst To Economic Development

With Black people shunted aside by the Nixon administration, in some measure taken for granted by the Democrats-who think they have no place to go-the two major political parties, somehow reflect the society around them. It is in this climate that the Black Press of America observes its 148th birthday. It is in this state of national crisis that the Black Press finds itself and faces perhaps, its most challenging moment.

With unemployment hitting a high for the majority of Americans, figures show Black Americans at three times the figure. The Black youth hits a four-times level, far beyond what economists rate as "depression figures". Despite this, however, Black people have managed to survive, becoming in the meantime, highly skilled economic strategists with limited resources in a land of plenty.

As President Ford and economists urge more active spending to help alleviate the recession, statistics show that Blacks have long been consistent supporters of a viable and active economy. Having literally invested in the whole of America, Blacks spend, proportionately, more than any other group in America. This priming of the economic pump by Black Americans has been refined over the years by the guidance provided by the Black Press.

As never before, Blacks have become sensitive to those corporations and companies that have recognized their social responsibilities in turning back to minorities portions of the financial strengths of this country.

The Black Press, founded to protest the evil of racism and slavery, nourished on a crusade to bring legal equality to its readership, now finds itself fighting to bring Black Americans into the economic mainstream.

The Black Press, through its pages and its personnel, has taken the message to the corporate board rooms, seeking economic parity. It is no longer a seat at a lunch counter or a soda at a dime store fountain. It is now room for a Black supplier, a Black insurance broker and an offer to merchandise goods and services in its widely read columns.

This is the role of the Black Press today, speaking to its readership as only it can. This is the articulate and credible spokesman for 25 million Americans who still find the American dream something to be hoped for and fought for.

The Black Press will continue in this role, because the complete and ultimate freedom of this country depends upon the freedom of us all. That is the challenge that faces the Black Press, still true in the spirit of our founding fathers, John B. Russwurm and the Rev. Samuel E. Cornish.

Martin Offers Crime Control Bill Legislation

The Post is happy to note that a political leader has offered a crime control legislation that has teeth.

Jim Martin, the Ninth District Congressman, has a plan that should considerably reduce crime in the Charlotte area. According to Mr. Martin, a review of the figures contained in the 1973 FBI Uniform Crime Reports reveals an alarming trend. He points out that during the period 1968 to 1973, there was a 42 percent increase in the number of aggravated assaults, and a 60 percent increase in the number of armed robberies. Firearms were the type weapon predominantly used in the commission of these crimes. In 1973, 67 percent of the murders, 86 percent of the robberies, and 26 percent of the aggravated assaults were committed with the use of a firearm.

Martin proposes to do something about this. His legislation, imposing more severe sentences for the use of a firearm while committing a crime, was introduced in the U. S. House of Representatives last week.

The bill provides that anyone convicted of a crime with the use of a firearm may be sentenced to an additional prison term of five to 15 years. A second offense would result

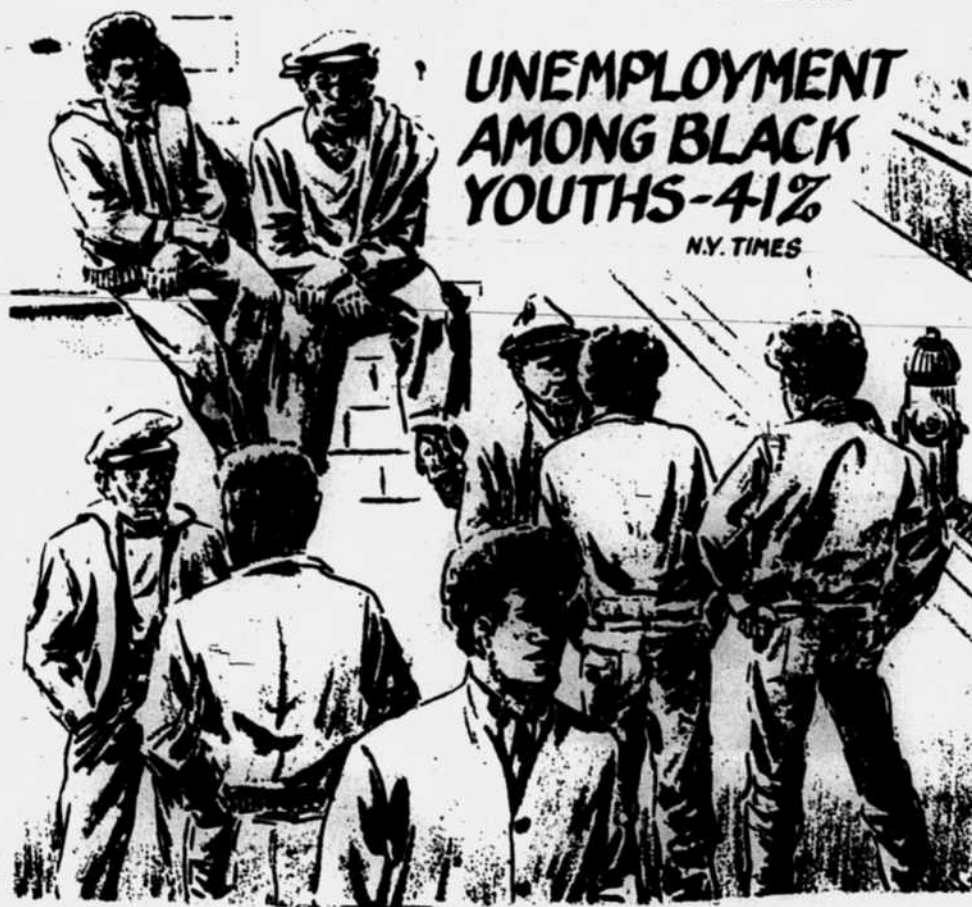
in a 10 to 30 year sentence. The courts would not be allowed to reduce the term by imposing the sentences concurrently with any term of imprisonment imposed for the actual commission of a crime.

Congressman Martin went on record opposing a handgun control bill before Congress that would prohibit private ownership of pistols and handguns with the exceptions for antique guns, licensed gun clubs and law enforcement personnel.

Martin's reasons were easily explainable. He states he opposes the bill "on Constitutional grounds because the Constitution says, flat out, that the right to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed. Prohibition would certainly infringe that right."

Martin's bill gets at the problem of illegal use of firearms and serves notice to all people that severe penalties will be imposed for committing a crime with a firearm.

We believe the record will show that the courts have been far too lenient in punishing anyone convicted of a crime with the use of a firearm. It could well be that imposing more severe sentences for the use of firearms is where the problems lie.



The Black Community Must Lend A Hand

REPORT FROM Washington

Conversation With 9th District Residents

Recently, while visiting in my Congressional District of Iredell, Lincoln, and Mecklenburg counties, I had the opportunity to talk with a number of people about their views on the state of the economy and how they viewed the problems of this country. I was pleasantly surprised by the reactions given by those with whom I talked. They were optimistic about the future, even though some had lost their jobs or had been laid off because of the economy.

I asked their opinions on the economy, and the War in Southeast Asia. For the most part, we talked about the economy and the energy crisis.

I was heartened and reassured by the attitudes I found in most people who talked to me in the three counties. While most people were concerned about the economy and knew that we are in for some rough sledding, there was an abiding confidence that we would pull through. It was almost a spiritual confidence in the American system and the economy. Even people who were themselves out of work, or had some member of their family out of work, regarded our economic problems as something they would have to temporarily endure. They felt they could endure the troubled times. One lady who had been working at a textile

mill, had used the time to get her garden started. She felt that would be to her advantage when she goes back to work, saying she would already have the work behind her. I noticed that she did not say IF she went back to work. She was very positive on the subject.

Regarding aid to Cambodia and Vietnam, while in Lincolnton and Mooresville I asked everybody I met the question: "should the U.S. spend money for weapons for Cambodia and South Vietnam with which to defend themselves?"

The response to the question was fairly evenly divided. Some felt we need the money more at home. Others felt we should not abandon people trying to defend themselves from Communist attack.

In Congress, I think it is clear that the majority of the membership wants to end aid to Southeast Asia, regardless of the consequences. The Democratic Caucus, which is pretty much in control, has made that decision, and they've got the votes to do whatever they like. The ironic thing is that after they cut off aid to these countries and they are overrun by the North Vietnamese and the Communists, the Democratic Caucus will probably find some way to place blame on the Ford Administration.

Proposed Food Stamps Price Boost Defeated

Congress' move to block President Ford's attempt to raise the price of food stamps for almost all 17 million users of them was a resounding success. Both House and Senate, by overwhelming margins, passed a bill to stop the price increase from taking effect on the first of this month and to continue the program

unchanged for the rest of the year. The vote in the House was 374-40-38 and in the Senate the margin was 76-18.

Faced with margins much greater than the two thirds needed to override a veto, President Ford chose to let the bill become law without his signature.

TO BE EQUAL



VERNON E. JORDAN JR.

Whitney Young Remembered

Whitney Young died four years ago this month, and the loss of this great man to the nation is readily seen in this time of faltering leadership and national confusion.

For Whitney was a great leader, a man who could get things done. And he was a man rooted in an assured sense of self and mission that made his every word and deed ring with authority.

Remembering his great impact, I recently re-read some of his books and other writings, many of which are strikingly relevant today. In this time of rising poverty, for example, it is good to recall his profoundly humanist statement: "No one is meant to live in poverty - and no one is meant to tolerate the wrongs of oppression. Where poverty exists, all are poorer; where hate flourishes, all are corrupted; where injustice reigns, all are unequal. Our society is as strong as its weakest link - thus the links that bind black and white, poor and rich must be strengthened or we all will perish. Every man is our brother, and every man's burden our own. Now is the time for the poor, the black, the oppressed, to unite and to turn our society around - for our own sakes and for society's sake."

And participants in the on-going furor over "quotas" would do well to think about these lines, taken from his discussion of the "Open Society" in his book, "Beyond Racism":

"An Open Society has to be based on equality. This means neither the superficial 'equality of opportunity' that gets so much lip service these days, nor does it mean an impossible equality of achievement that assumes everyone will do well as an impossible equality of achievement that assumes everyone will do as well as everyone else, regardless of innate differences. The measure of equality has to be group achievement: when, in each group in our society, roughly the same proportion of people succeed and fail, then we will have true equality."

Washington officials who want to cut corners on federal spending by trimming social security payments to the aged or raising food stamp costs to the unemployed would do well to re-read Whitney's pioneering views about public spending for public needs: "I stand in amazement at a nation that produces about a trillion dollars worth of goods and services per year but feels it cannot afford to end poverty or to improve its schools."

"Part of the reason seems to be that we have a strange notion that investing is spending. When a business borrows money to build a new plant, we call it investment and consider it good. But when a city builds a new schoolhouse - really an investment in the human potentials of its children - we say that's government spending, therefore bad."

"The problem is not mere semantics, it's a reflection of a basically immoral outlook on human development in a nation that simply can no longer afford to waste its human resources the way it has in the past."

"This country has mastered the art of landing a man on the moon, but it remains ignorant of the ways of feeding all its people and teaching all its children."

Above all, Whitney was a believer. He believed in change, and perhaps more important, in the capacity of this nation to change:

"I do have faith in America - not so much in a sudden upsurge of morality nor in a new surge toward a greater patriotism."

as i see it

Black Dominance Hurting Basketball

By Gerald O. Johnson

In a recent article by Doug Smith of Newsday "Black Dominance Hurting Pro Basketball", it was stated that pro basketball is a box office failure because Blacks have dominated the courts.

Some very interesting figures were thrown in to help substantiate this argument. The most interesting vital statistic was that the World Hockey League has had an increase of over 47 per cent of last season's attendance. Pro basketball has had only a 14 per cent increase during the same period.

The article further contended that hockey has become famous because it is an all white sport and that the spectators want whites to idolize as sports heroes.

As sad as it sounds it is true.



Another road for getting Blacks out of the ghetto is being road blocked under the guise of capitalism.

But the reasons, I feel go much deeper than was reported by Mr. Smith in his article; hence I will elaborate.

Imagine a white male with a

daughter 17. Now, if this male was really a basketball enthusiast he

would have to applaud the merits of people like Walt Frazier, Kareem Abdul Jabbar, Earl "The Pearl" Monroe, Len Wilkens, Lucius Allen and the like. These names would become household words. Therefore, the daughter who idolizes her father will naturally idolize people who her father idolizes. Once the father realizes this, he immediately tries to rectify this situation by seeking new sports with whites that can be idolized.

Another consideration is the arena location. In places like Philadelphia, Atlanta, and Baltimore whites will not be caught in downtown areas after dark. Since most pro games are played at night, this can lead to problems. Those arenas located in

suburban areas are having much better attendance records than those arenas in downtown areas.

Then there is that old ego buster... jealousy. Most whites get outraged at the salaries the superstars make. Even Don Crickeet, T.V. Sport announcer made a statement concerning Bill Walton and Walt Frazier.

Crickeet said he admired Walton because he didn't waste his money on clothes and cars like Frazier did. He said this on nationwide T.V. so you can imagine how the ordinary Joe must feel.

So, it looks like basketball is heading for a fate worse than boxing; pro basketball, anyway. I don't know about the other superstars, but I am learning to ice skate myself!!!

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