

# Editorials & Comments

## 14 MILLION BLACKS ARE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE IN THE UNITED STATES

# TO BE EQUAL



VERNON E. JORDAN JR.

### New Socioeconomic Report Shows Gains, Lack Of Progress

Black Americans have made progress in education and election to public office during the first half of the 1970's, but their progress in income and employment has been impeded by a variety of social and economic factors, according to a major report released today by the Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce.

The report, eight in an annual series on the characteristics of blacks in America (and, at 205 pages, the longest,) focuses on recent trends (1970-74) and includes some data as current as 1975. The report presents a special section on crime, including entirely new data from a nationwide survey on criminal victimization conducted in 1973 as well as data on jail inmates and capital punishment. Other new subjects are blacks in the Armed Forces, sources of income of black post-secondary students, blacks-owned business and ownership of major appliances by black households.

A 56 percent increase in black college enrollment between 1970 and 1974 highlighted black gains in education, according to the report. White college enrollment increased only 15 percent over the same period. However, the proportion of young blacks (18-24 years old) enrolled in college was still below that for young whites—18 and 25 percent, respectively.

Black political gains during the 1970's were "impressive", the report says. Between March 1971 and May 1975, the number of blacks holding public office increased by 88 percent to a total of 3,503. Black officials newly elected in 1974 include one member of Congress, two lieutenant governors, and 40 other state legislators and executives. The number of black mayors increased sharply from 81 in 1971 to 135 in 1975.

Inflation and recession have adversely affected both blacks and whites, the report says. Unemployment increased sharply for both during the economic downturn of 1974, and the situation of blacks relative to whites did not improve. In 1974, the average annual unemployment rate was 9.9 percent for blacks (including all races other than white) and 5.0 percent for whites. The rate had reached 13.7 percent for blacks and 7.6 percent for whites by the first quarter of 1975 (seasonally adjusted quarterly averages). Further, the unemployment rate for black teenagers reached 39.8 percent for the first quarter of 1975 compared to 18.0 percent for white teenagers.

The black unemployment rate in 1974 was about twice the white rate, the same relationship that has generally prevailed since the Korean War, according to the report. However, the 1974 unemployment rate for black teenagers was 2.4 times the rate for white teenagers, while for women the black rate was 1.7 times

the white rate. Median income in 1974 was estimated at \$7,800 for blacks families and \$13,400 for white families. Adjusted for inflation, the data shows some evidence of a decline in real income among black families since 1975. This decline, about 3 percent, is not significantly different from the 4 percent decline among white families.

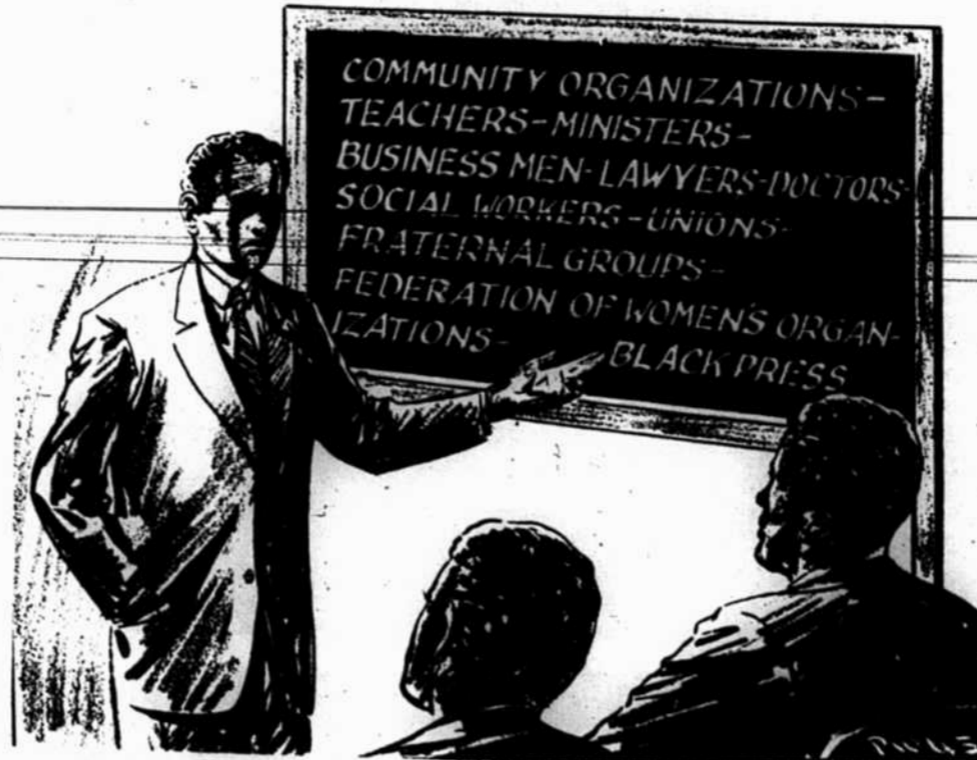
Over a longer period, from 1970 to 1974, the income position of black families relative to white families became worse as measured by the median income ratio, in contrast to the late 1960's when the black-white income ratio narrowed somewhat. Black family median income was 61 percent of white family income in 1970 but only 58 percent in 1974.

According to the report, many social and economic factors have an impact on the ratio of black to white median family income. These factors include the number of earners in a family, the work experience of family members, and the proportion of families headed by women (who generally have lower incomes than men) as well as economic forces like the inflationary and recessionary pressures of 1974.

For example, the report notes that one factor which has partially contributed to the decline in the ratio of black to white family income is the decline in the proportion of black families with both husband and wife present—61 percent of all black families in 1975 compared to 68 percent in 1970. Black husband-wife families had a higher median income in 1974 (\$12,982) than black families headed by a male alone (\$7,942) or by a female alone (\$4,465), primarily because husband-wife families are more likely to have more than one earner. Thus, a decline in the proportion of husband-wife families has a downward influence on the median income of all families.

About the same proportion of blacks and whites were victims of crime in 1973, according to the new data included in the report. This finding is in contrast to studies conducted during the 1960's, which showed a higher victimization rate for blacks. However, the 1973 survey did show that a much larger proportion of blacks than of whites were victims of violent crimes—47 per 1,000 population for blacks compared to 32 for whites.

The report also includes sections on population, labor force and business ownership, education, family and fertility, health, housing, criminal offenders, voting, and Armed Forces. Each section includes both text, detailed tables, and graphs, a new feature.



BLACKS HAVE THE TOOLS

## REPORT FROM Washington

### Food Stamp Reform

By Congressman Jim Martin  
9th District, North Carolina

Earlier this year, when I joined with 75 of my colleagues in the House and Senate in the introducing the Welfare Reform Act of 1975, I said other measures would be written to help stem the extravagant growth of social programs. At the same time, I said the major theme in any such program should be to insure that those Americans who are genuinely in need of assistance will continue to receive aid, but without the abuses.

Our latest proposal, introduced as the National Food Stamp Reform Act fills these requirements. Fifty-eight Members of the House and sixteen in the Senate have joined in sponsoring this measure.

The Food Stamp Program was designed to supplement incomes of America's poor. At the same time it was to subsidize their food purchases, helping them to attain a more nutritionally adequate diet.

Loose eligibility standards in the program have triggered an explosive growth which prompted the Deputy Commissioner of Welfare to comment, "we're giving away food stamps like crazy". He added, "There are virtually no controls."

The growth in the food stamp program has been phenomenal since it began ten years ago. In 1965, one in 439 of us was receiving food stamps. This year we are down to one in eleven. The cost of operating the program over ten years has grown by over 14,000 percent. While one of every eleven is receiving food stamps, it is estimated that one in four Americans is eligible for the subsidy, so the program could triple

again. The question might well be: "Are you getting yours?"

Under current regulations, which are based on net income, it is possible for a family with an income of \$20,000 a year or more to qualify for food stamps if it can calculate enough deductions from its gross income. Utilizing such allowances as those provided for income taxes, union dues and work related expenses, tuition payments for private school educations, and expensive homes, a high income family may qualify for monthly food stamps.

The Food Stamp Reform Act proposes a number of changes, including:

- curtailing eligibility of persons with high incomes;
- tightening work requirements
- sharply reducing opportunities for criminal activities;
- improving cash and coupon handling methods;
- transferring the program from Agriculture to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; and
- simplifying administration and eliminating duplications.

Enactment of these changes in the food stamp program is designed to substantially increase by 29 percent the benefits which are paid to persons who truly need nutritional assistance. I am sure many elderly people on fixed incomes would be happy to see that one change alone. At the same time while reducing eligibility standards and increasing benefits to those in need of assistance, the Food Stamp Reform Act should save the taxpayers between \$2 and \$2.5 billion.

## Letters to the Editor

### THE CHARLOTTE POST

"THE PEOPLES NEWSPAPER"

Established 1918

By A. M. Houston

Published Every Thursday

By The Charlotte Post Publishing Co., Inc.

9139 Trinity Road - Charlotte, N.C. 28216

Telephones (704) 392-1306 - 392-1307

Circulation 11,000

57 YEARS OF CONTINUOUS SERVICE

Bill Johnson.....Editor - Publisher

Gerald O. Johnson.....Business Manager

Robert L. Johnson.....Circulation Manager

Second Class Postage Paid at Charlotte, N.C. under the Act of March 3, 1878

Member National Newspaper Publishers Association  
National Advertising Representative  
Amalgamated Publishers, Inc.

45 W. 5th, Suite 1403  
New York, N.Y. 10036  
489-1220

2400 S. Michigan Ave.  
Chicago, Ill. 60616  
Calumet 5-0200

### Sponsors Decline To Advertise In Black Media

The comment, Bill,

Aug. 26, 1975

...in your column last week regarding WGIV's apparently not carrying the 1975 Johnson C. Smith football schedule deserves some amplification.

We are certainly trying even at this late date to obtain sponsors for the schedule. We have already signed National Automotive Parts Association for 1/4 sponsorship. But we spent 3 weeks attempting to sign one advertiser for 1/2 sponsorship only to be refused at the last minute. And that's an interesting story.

First Union National Bank has consistently declined to advertise in the black media, including your own publication. I first presented the football schedule to Ms. Lynda Ferreri, vice president for advertising at FUNB. Her reaction was favorable. The presentation next went to the FUNB agency, Cargill Wilson & Acree. (This agency does not use WGIV for any of its clients.) There, phone calls and presentations seemed to be favorably received by account executive Bob Ward. Ward next told us that the proposal had been turned over to someone in their media "evaluating" department.

Then, after 3 weeks after we began talking to FUNB August 15 to be exact Ms. Ferreri called me to say that FUNB had decided not to participate. No reason was given.

There are two ironic aspects of this situation. (1) the weekly cost of FUNB's participation in the Smith football package is no more than the cost of one of the FUNB 30-second prime time TV spots. (2) Robert Walton, the black candidate for city council and the manager of the FUNB Cameron Brown branch has allegedly urged FUNB chairman to make use of WGIV to reach the community.

Frankly, Bill, originating the full 11-game schedule of Smith football is a costly project for us. When one considers that these costs include line charges, travel expense, engineering costs, talent and production fees, we would make more money by simply running music and commercial announcements. But we feel strongly that broadcasting the game is a responsibility we owe the community and we will certainly go ahead on this project if at all economically possible.

Cordially,

Todd Branson, V.P., Gen. Mgr.

### Salvation Boys Didn't Win Title

8809 Windsong Drive  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28210  
August 19, 1975

Mr. Bill Johnson  
The Charlotte Post  
9139 Trinity Road  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28216

Dear Mr. Johnson,

In reference to the conversation we had a few days ago I am sending this letter. Mr. Burton did not have the authority nor was he authorized to give out the story that you printed in your newspaper claiming the Salvation Army team won the championship of our league. This statement was in error and we the Executive committee, of which I'm president, wishes a retraction printed. The Windsong Trail was the League Champion.

Speaking for the Charlotte Community Athletic League we would be most appreciative for your co-operation in correcting this error.

Sincerely

Robert L. Richardson, President  
Charlotte Community Athletic League