

# Editorials & Comments

## Vital Issues And The Candidates

With the mayor and city council campaign just about at its end, it seems more apparent than ever that some of the most profound issues raised in its course will not be addressed....And there's little hope of a last minute showdown on proposals which will capture the major attention of the voters.

For those who see election as a time to be educated about the realities of the political game, this one was truly an honors seminar. There have been few moves to articulate issues of key concern to Black people. If so, they have not been spoken loudly in this campaign.

The Post challenges all of the candidates to become more aware and attuned to the wants, needs and desires of the Black people for we, too, have problems. Our problems are the same as anybody else's—drugs, crime, poor housing, unemployment and high taxes. Our problems are perhaps exaggerated more than any other race.

We also challenge the people in the Black community to go out and vote on Tuesday. Make your desires known with the ballots. If you do not go out and vote for the candidates of your choice, you will have no right to complain after the election for you would not have exercised your rights as a responsible citizen in this community.

It is your civic duty to make your demands known for the cutting of high crime rate, more assistance for youth and the elderly, economy in government, greater educational advantages, better housing for all citizens, jobs for the unemployed and reductions in taxes.

The Post believes the elected officials should be made aware of the fact that neighborhoods organize volunteer patrols have proven effective in preventing crime in other major areas and that there should also be some type of program which will provide for coordination between the citizen patrols and police patrols.

As responsible citizens of this great city, we must all be mindful of

the reality that Charlotte has become a city of discarded and disenfranchised youths who fail to achieve in school, commit crimes at an early age, and provide a market for narcotics pushers. There is a great need for a youth development program which could be organized with the cooperation of the numerous neighborhood groups that are now surfacing in every section of our city.

The candidates should also be made aware of our keen concern for our Black neighborhoods. These areas should be rebuilt and revitalized with home owners. Home ownership should be made available to more families as it would provide jobs for those who need work. We recommend some type of program that will rehabilitate whole neighborhoods rather than individual homes.

The Post would also like to project our concern for the unemployed. It seems to us that some efforts should be made on a local level to provide jobs for those who are out of work here. One way to do this would be to revive some of the neighborhood shopping areas which, at one time, provided thousands of jobs to this city. As more and more small shops close their doors because of inflation, and because they are robbed too often or unable to get adequate city services to maintain the area where they do business. City Hall has shown little or no interest. While the power and resources of City Hall have been concentrated almost exclusively on building center city business or promoting large shopping centers, the neighborhood small businessman has been ignored.

The knowledge and expertise of City Hall should be directed to Federal programs and funding to develop programs and provide funds to revitalize neighborhood business districts.

These are vital issues to which both the politicians and the community leaders should immediately address themselves.

## Should Blacks Celebrate Bicentennial

Two schools of thought have surfaced lately as to whether blacks should or shouldn't celebrate the Bicentennial. My position is that blacks should "participate" in but not celebrate the Bicentennial.

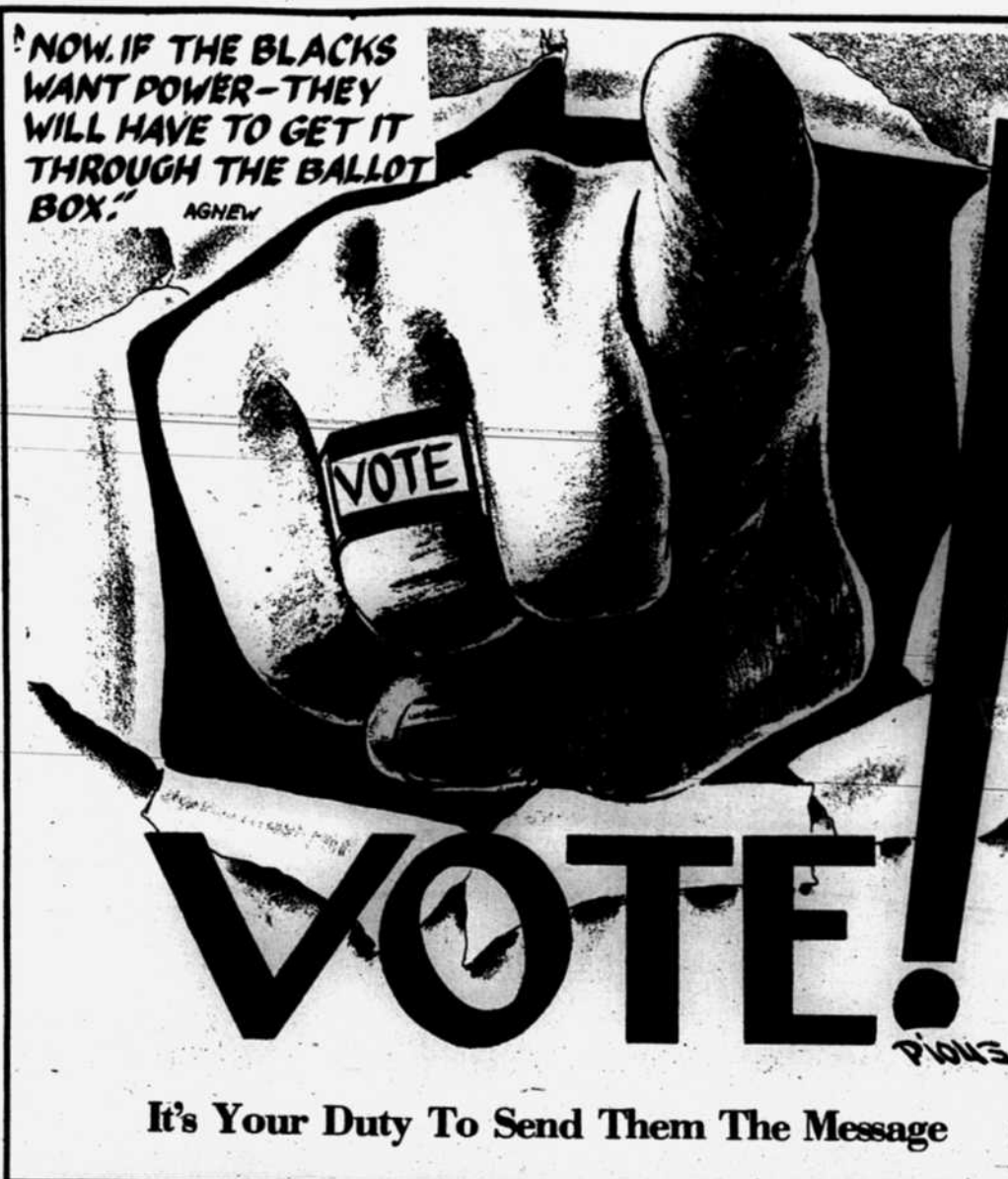
I hasten to say that I am not advocating the wearing of wigs, knee-length pants or the traditional flag-waving. I do say, however, that some sort of educational-informational push should be undertaken to inform black kids as well as white adults of the many contributions that blacks have made in the development of this country.

Perhaps with a greater knowledge of the black man's contribution to America, whites will cease to view blacks as "loafers, freeloaders and hand-out buffs"—not that any of it's true. However, with an achievement, hopefully comes a deeper sense of pride and self-esteem.

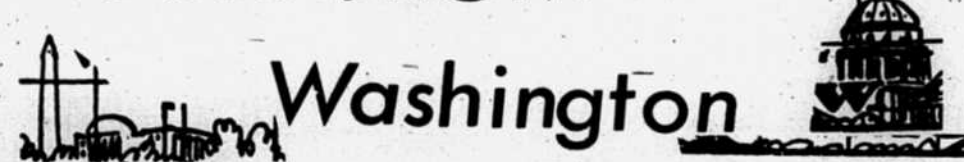
Certainly the black youth can use a good shot of "unsung black accomplishments," whereas now all they're treated to are "Superfly" type movies with their glorified pimps and prostitutes.

No one can argue, with any amount of seriousness, that blacks have not participated in the development of America. Thus it would seem logical that there should be no doubt or misgivings against blacks sharing in the glory and pageantry of the Bicentennial.

So far, all the celebrating of the Bicentennial has consisted of is watermelon eating contests, bluegrass concerts or the staging of some Revolutionary event—all of which to the exclusion of blacks. Nothing I've seen thus far suggest that blacks had a hand in the building of this country.



## REPORT FROM



### The Hatch Act

By Jim Martin  
9th District Congressman

When the Federal Employees Political Activities Act passed recently most people paid little attention since they are not federal employees. Telling them Congress was repealing restrictions in the Hatch Act would not have caused a stir either. Most don't have a Hatch. However, it is legislation affecting everyone from the standpoint of the way in which the government operates, and who runs it.

The Hatch Act passed in 1939 at the height of political abuse and pressures by a growing number of federal employees. At the time, President Roosevelt said it was his "belief that improper political practices can be eliminated only by the imposition of rigid statutory regulations and penalties by the Congress." Since then, over 2 million federal employees have been protected from partisan political activity, such as fund raising, political campaigning and soliciting votes. For 35 years career federal employees have been insulated from pressures and coercion to engage in political activities not of their own choosing. And for 35 years they have been blocked from wielding undue inside influence on politics. The House has passed and sent to the Senate legislation to change all of this.

To give you an idea of the motivation behind removing the Hatch Act provisions governing federal employees, you should know the source of the legislation. You should also

take note of federal employee mixed reactions given to the measures.

The legislation did not originate with the rank-and-file federal employees, but with the leaders of federal employee unions associated with the AFL-CIO. You don't have to use much imagination to get the picture of federal employee and postal union bosses exerting increased pressures on Congress to get what they want. If they are given increased political power they will have increased political influence: for greater spending extravagance, the right-to-strike for federal employees, repeal of Right-to-Work laws, and anything else they want.

A representative of the National Federation of Federal Employees, the largest independent union in its class strenuously opposed the bill, charging that it "is nothing more than the old AFL-CIO pitch for muscle and power." He said it was a move for money and more organizing influence.

I recognize that passage of the bill does not signal wholesale political activity but it will eventually lead to subtle coercion in all areas of the federal government. In the minds of many federal employee coercive force would exist. They revealed this in answer to a questionnaire from the Survey Research Institute. The Institute asked whether the repeal of portions of the Hatch Act would "change things like job appointment and job promotion."

Hopefully, the Senate will defeat the proposal and close down the hatch on organized labor.

## TO BE EQUAL



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### Economic Planning Needed

We're passing through an extended period of economic instability, reaching back to the late sixties and including wage and price freezes, devaluation, inflation and now, Depression and joblessness.

It's clear that the old formulas aren't working and the old remedies aren't taking effect. A lot of what was held for so long to be economic truth is turning into yesterday's belief—outdated and overtaken by events.

Just consider a few of those old beliefs. Until recently, economists believed in the so-called "Phillips Curve," which postulated a direct relationship between employment and inflation—when the "employment curve" goes up and passes a certain point, inflation increases.

But now we've got inflation going in tandem with high jobless rates, and more and more economists are convinced that the old equation doesn't give the right answers any more. Not only that, but many are beginning to see that we can have high employment rates without high inflation. It all depends on where those jobs are and what they produce.

Another cherished myth that's fallen by the wayside is that unemployment benefits are so generous that even extended periods of unemployment won't inflict too much damage on laid-off workers.

The catch here is that not everyone is covered by unemployment insurance—half the blacks jobless don't collect any such benefits. And now the point has been reached where even those collecting extended federal benefits are beginning to exhaust them. The Senate Labor Committee estimates that 1.6 million people will lose their benefit rights in the next year and with no new jobs in sight, they'll probably turn up on the welfare rolls.

Another, damaging myth, is the one that says the government is better off shelling out money for unemployment assistance than spending to create new jobs. But the federal unemployment benefits bill will come to about \$20 billion this year. Putting that amount into job-creation would get people to work instead of on unemployment lines, and generate tax dollars and higher consumption.

For every million jobs lost, the government loses \$16 billion in benefits paid out and in lost taxes. Congressman Augustus Hawkins estimates that in the past two decades the nation has lost over two trillion dollars in goods and services and half a trillion in revenues because we didn't have full employment.

The failure of the old economic myths and of the old belief in budget balancing to the exclusion of all other considerations means that it's time to take a fresh approach.

One such approach that's gaining support is for national economic planning. Almost no such planning is being done today. The government has only the sketchiest information about how much oil we'll need, how much we have in the ground, how much of what will be produced in the future, and lacks information on other very important aspects of the economy.

Such planning as has been done is left to market forces, which have proved their instability and their vulnerability to jumps and dips in the economy. A measure of the support economic planning is getting was the recent formation of an Initiative Committee for National Economic Planning, made up of an impressive array of economists, bankers, businessmen, labor leaders, civil rights leaders and community representatives.

### Black Political Dynamics

## Gaining Access To Power

By Eddie N. Williams

Throughout history, minorities have taken political action to gain access to power, influence, and economic benefits. In our country various groups have used political power and public office to open the doors of opportunity. Simply put, the challenge is to leverage a numerical minority into an operating majority which can set and change priorities. This is the essence of politics in America, and politics is the means by which things get done.

The signs of the political time are all around us. The number of black elected officials has grown from 1,185 in 1969 to 3,503 today, an increase of 196 percent. Blacks have moved into positions of unprecedented potential power and through the Voting Rights Act have become more active participants in the political life of this country. Political participation is indeed the new cutting edge of the civil rights move-



ment. Recognizing that politics and economics go hand in hand, the emerging strategy is to maximize our political assets in order to increase our economic assets. Our political assets are considerable and must be counted in ways other than the number of blacks elected to office.

We are 10 percent of the national electorate, 25 percent or more of the electorate in 60 Congressional Districts, and the balance of power in numerous regions, states and cities. In numbers and sophistication, we have the ability to join and build coalitions with others, which will bring about the majority we need to set and change priorities.

"Power Concedes Nothing" Just how we go about realizing this impressive potential is the challenge confronting black leadership. Two great philosophers have left us some food for thought:

Some 2,300 years ago Aristotle said: "If liberty and equality, as is thought by some, are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost."

As if preparing us for the challenge of realizing today Aristotle's

prophecy of yesterday, Frederick Douglass declared years ago: "Power concedes nothing without a struggle. It never has and it never will."

And so today as we readjust our political perspectives and re-think the role of political activity in our communities, we must gird again for struggle—a new version of the old struggle, to be sure, but in a different arena, under different rules, and with different tactics.

The enemy is the deteriorating economic situation but more specifically it is the refusal of the "haves" to reorder priorities to provide relief to those shouldering a disproportionately heavy share of the economic burden—the "have nots." The enemy, at times, is us, especially when we lose the will to overcome the obstacles that confront us, or mistake our conspicuous consumption for the development of a sound economic base.

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