

# editorials & comments

## The Campaign Against Dr. King

by Bayard Rustin

A. Philip Randolph Institute  
It is no surprise that J. Edgar Hoover hated Martin Luther King, Jr. But even in this cynical age accustomed to dirty tricks and deceit it is shocking to learn the desperate and despicable lengths Hoover and the FBI went to in order to destroy King.

During the time when I worked with Dr. King, we knew that the FBI had sent spies into the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and we suspected that we had been bugged as well. In recent weeks it has been revealed that the FBI went much further - that they organized and carried out a campaign designed to destroy Dr. King. The FBI tried to prevent a college from giving King an honorary degree, they hatched a plan to keep the Pope from granting him an audience, and tried to undermine the financial support for the S.C.L.C.

The FBI did not stop at trying to destroy King as a civil rights leader, Nor did they stop at a slanderous whispering campaign planned to destroy King's personal reputation. They went so far as to send a note and tape recording to King in late 1964 in an effort to drive him to suicide.

Paradoxically the revelations about Hoover's six-year campaign to destroy Dr. King make it clear that it was not King's reputation that was damaged by this effort but the reputation of Hoover and the FBI. Hoover's suspicions about King, if they could be called that, tell us more about him than about King.

Certainly in his later years Hoover was a petty man, jealous of his reputation and deeply resentful of any criticism. It is unclear what aroused Hoover's suspicion of King, but perhaps it was the very largeness and charity of King's character.

If it could be said that King and Hoover were foes, the way in which they conceived of their contest and the manner in which they reacted to

each other shows the stark contrast between the quality of man that each was. While Hoover used a federal agency to carry on personal vendetta against King, Martin was engaged in a great battle for social justice through non-violence and Christian love.

One incident during my ten year association with Dr. King illustrates this difference. Apparently angered by Dr. King's criticism of the FBI for appointing conservative agents to investigate civil rights violations in the South, Hoover publicly attacked King as the "biggest liar" in the country. Many of King's advisors, myself included, urged Martin to make a counterblast at Hoover, demanding that Hoover produce evidence to back his charge.

But public denunciation was completely alien to Martin's character. Whenever someone was in error and especially when they wrongly attack-

ked him, Martin always sought a personal conference to attempt to reconcile the differences. Thus he met with Hoover and asked the FBI chief to explain just what he had done that Hoover considered deceitful. Hoover, of course, was unable to supply any basis for his attack.

I don't imagine that Martin would have been too alarmed at the knowledge that the FBI was out to destroy him. What would have disturbed him and what should disturb us today is that all the time and effort devoted to tearing down King could have saved the lives of many people who were killed during the great crusade to gain civil rights.

The good that men do does live long after they have died, Dr. King did much good in his life. It is our responsibility to make sure that that good continues and that it be expanded. For what King did will be regarded one hundred years from now as one of the greatest contributions to mankind. Martin took the strategy of non-violence a step even beyond Gandhi attempted but failed to achieve in South Africa. He showed that it is possible to secure justice and realistic dream of a better world.

### What Happened To Rights Movement?

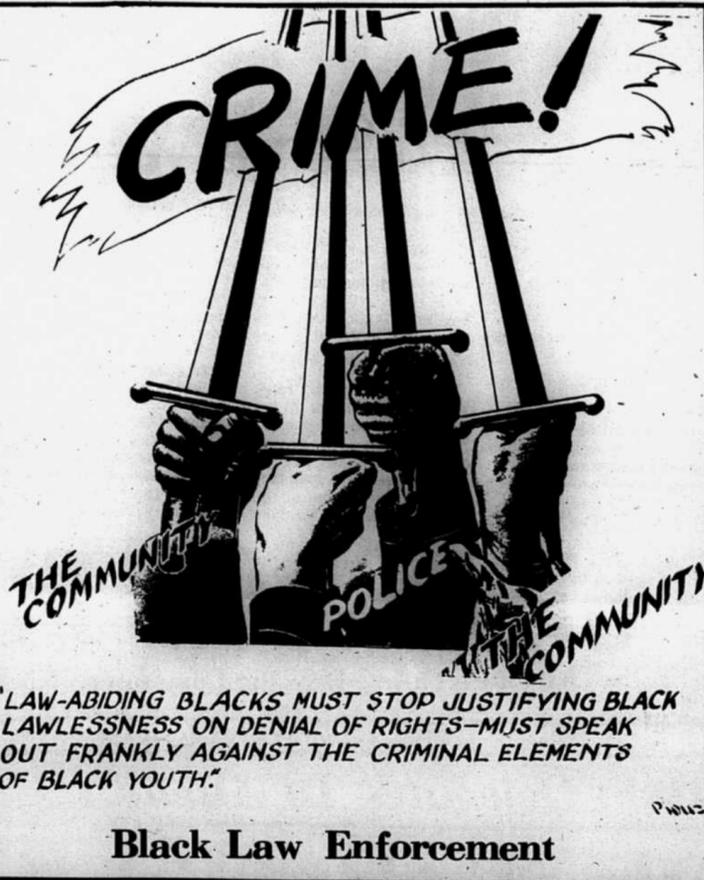
What happened to the Civil Rights Movement? Where is the leadership today and who are their replacements?

These questions are frequently asked of those who were visible active in the Movement during the last 20 years. The questions seem to imply that the Movement is currently leaderless and almost, if not, dead. Could it be because our television screens and newspaper headlines no longer feature dramatic confrontations by charismatic civil rights activists in their daily offerings, that we fail to see the big picture?

One of the most significant developments that resulted from the 1954 Supreme Court Decision on school desegregation, the poverty program and the civil rights legislation of the 1960's has been the emergence of local leadership and spokespersons for minority groups. These individuals are influential and well-known locally but not necessarily known nationally.

They may or may not have an allegiance to major political parties or the established Civil Rights organizations like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Urban League, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, People United to Save Humanity, etc.

Not too long ago, one could assemble approximately half a dozen leaders and or spokesmen in one room and have the complete spectrum of thought and program activity of the struggle against racism, bigotry and poverty.



## REPORT FROM Washington

### Quotes From Congressional Mail

By Congressman Jim Martin  
9th District, North Carolina

In an average week, I get hundreds of letters from constituents about the issues facing this country. Obviously, on some topics there are more letters than others. During the past few months, government spending has been a favorite topic, even though the writer may have written for another purpose, remember that many of these people are your friends and neighbors. Do their feelings express some of your own sentiments?

One constituent writes "the federal government appears to be in head long rush to follow New York City into the abyss of financial irresponsibility." The comparison is apt.

One retired gentlemen wrote about the President's tax cut proposal, as it relates to government spending. He writes, "The President's tax cut proposal, linked to a similar reduction in spending, makes more sense than anything yet proposed. This continued increase in government spending must stop somewhere, and now, if we are to continue as a nation. I urge you to put your great weight behind this tax-spending cut proposal, and do whatever you can to bring fiscal responsibility to our government and our people." I can only say amen to those comments. Others have written the same view, and no one has urged larger deficits.

While the issue of Consumer Agency (which I opposed) is waiting for action from the White House, Consider this letter which reflects what others of your neighbors have said about regulatory excesses. This person wrote that I should "vote consistent with the wishes of most of your constituents for relief from the burdensome cost of federal over-regulation and from the excessive taxes we have to pay to support the federal bureaucracy."

It has been months since the United States pulled out of most of Southeast Asia. Americans have, for the most part put the issue of defense and strong military preparedness on the back burner. I HAVE received a few letters of concern on the subject, One writer notes, "we definitely can reduce the waste in the military but in heavens name, how can anyone think that we won't pay the price if (we) let down our guard against the Russian?"

One of my constituents makes some very interesting observations about the defense question. The comments are worth serious thought. He writes, "my reading has lead me to believe that our strategic submarine weaponry and to a lesser extent, our nuclear missiles are adequate for the moment to counter our enemies' strategic capabilities, but our infantry, navy, army and counter insurgency forces are woefully deficient. In a conventional war the Russians might well defeat us,"

## TO BE EQUAL



VERNON E. JORDAN JR.

### Recruiting Black Scholars

A couple of months ago I was invited to Ohio State University's Annual Visitation Day, a three-day expense-paid program to recruit black students for graduate study. The University invites high ranking students from black colleges to come to the Ohio State campus at Columbus, look the school over and consider going to graduate school there.

The young scholars get to talk to professors, students, and advisors, and get information about scholarship aid, grants, assistantships, and other facts they need to make an informed decision about whether to go to graduate school and which one to select.

Some 250 black students from 53 predominantly black colleges were at Visitation Day program when I was there, and if past experience is a guide, nearly 200 will wind up at Ohio State, most of them with fellowships. There are now 225 blacks on fellowships at the Graduate School, compared with only 12 four years ago.

The program was a brainchild of Dean Frank W. Hale, Jr. and, with other special efforts including scholarship aid, fellowships, and other forms of assistance, has enabled the university to compile a respectable record in producing black graduates.

Thus, it is no accident that Ohio State has graduated more black PhDs than any other predominantly white university in the country. Under Dean Hale's leadership it understands the need for active recruitment of black students, the desirability of overcoming natural suspicions through on-the-spot visitations, and the absolute need for the availability for fellowship aid to students drawn from the poorest segment of our society.

This program is the kind that ought to be emulated by other top universities. Most just make a pass at recruitment, waiting for blacks to apply without any particular encouragement. This, combined with shrinking availability of scholarship funds, inevitably means continuation of the historic exclusion of blacks from graduate training.

It will take special efforts to overcome that exclusion, efforts that are desperately needed. Only about three percent of higher paying jobs are held by blacks, and in almost any of the high status, high pay professions—law, medicine, engineering, etc.—blacks form one to two percent of the total.

Graduate education is the key to access to those jobs and professions. In our overcredentialed society, employers are demanding MAs and PhDs for jobs they used to hire college graduates for, and sometimes even for positions that didn't even demand a BA.

It's the same old story, just as blacks are getting to the starting gate, entrance becomes more restricted, Black college attendance, although still unfairly low, is beginning to approach the black population share, but the dropout rate is far higher than for whites and blacks are grossly underrepresented in graduate and professional schools, even, I should add, at Ohio State, despite the excellence of its visitation days.

Part of the key to increasing minority access to higher education, including vocational education, lies in providing the financial assistance to enable youngsters to concentrate on their studies

## as i see it

### Charlotte Area Fund Weakens NWCAA

By Gerald Johnson

The Northwest Community Action Association (NWCAA) over the past three or so years has developed into one of the strongest community organizations in Charlotte. The NWCAA has used its influence and strength to thwart city priorities. The group was instrumental in the defeat of the airport bond. The group was solely responsible for the stopping of the LaSalle Street expansion. The group has been quite effective in airing their objectives to the City Council and other city organizations and in having their objectives dealt with by these organizations.

One of the major reasons for the NWCAA's effectiveness and success was due to the research they put into defining their particular objectives. Whenever they confronted city officials with their objectives they had facts and figures to substantiate their

claims. It was precisely these facts and figures that has caused city officials to change their lists of priorities. Consequently, it is precisely this aspect of the NWCAA that has recently been dealt a harsh blow.

The NWCAA has its research done by a professional community organizer, Dave Blevins. Mr. Blevins was sent by the Community Action Fund (CAF) in 1971 to help organize the NWCAA. After some four years and many successful campaigns later the CAF has chosen to relocate Mr. Blevins to the Eastside of Charlotte. This relocation will have in my opinion a deadening effect on the organization for two reasons: first, the people in the NWCAA are employed and obviously organizing the community is a secondary responsibility. Mr. Blevins' job was to organize the community and hence it was his primary responsibility. Therefore, acting in a staff



Gerald Johnson

position for the community Mr. Blevins could and did spend his time fact-finding and researching. With Mr. Blevins out of the picture the fact-finding and researching will at best be half as effective, at worst be completely neglected.

Second, there are no professional organizers in the

NWCAA. By removing Mr. Blevins you will be taking away needed expertise in the community.

The question obviously becomes why was Mr. Blevins removed from the NWCAA. The immediate response would most probably be because he was needed elsewhere. Let me dispel this response with a few facts of my own. Mr. Blevins was assigned to NWCAA area to cover census tracts 45, 46, 48, 50, 51, and 52. This area had an estimated population in 1973 of 31,303 people. Later it was decided that census tract 39 (West Boulevard) needed professional help, so it was tacked on to Mr. Blevins assignments. This brought his population coverage to 45,670. Now, Mr. Blevins has been removed from his current responsibility to cover census tracts 6 and 8 with a population of 7,691. It stands to reason that a man quite capable of organizing 46,000 could

easily handle 54,000 with a minimum of additional help. To go from 46,000 to 8,000 is almost synonymous with going from coaching the Minnesota Vikings to coaching the West Charlotte Lions. Hence, I don't doubt the need the Eastside (Census tract 6 and 8) has for professional help. I do doubt the way the CAF handled itself in providing this help. Obviously a professional organization in business to help others organize would not make a stupid blunder like this unless coerced.

Coerced is As I See It. Consider, if you will, that the CAF is a Federal funded office to provide professional assistance to communities. However, the CAF Board is one third composed of City Council appointed members. It doesn't take a genius to figure out that 2 + 2 equal a stinky.

It appears to me that this might possibly be a first

attempt to weaken community organizations. It is a fact that community organizations have been the strongest resistance to political blundering in this area of recent times. It wouldn't be a hard thing for

city officials to pull a few strings to see to it that the heart of community groups get a transplant from a strong body to a considerably weaker one. This will have an effect of weakening all community

groups. Thus, the city can go back to setting up its priority list with few interruptions. This issue is one that should have answers made public. Answers that the Charlotte Post tried unsuccessfully to get from the director of the CAF.

This could very well turn out to be another case where your tax dollars designated for a certain purpose are used against you instead of for you.

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