

Editorials & Comments

Apathy Equals Inequality

By Hoyle H. Martin Sr.
Post Executive Editor

A quick review of the political editorial picture to the right of this column, plus all that the POST has said over the years, along with that of other black newspapers, should be enough to jolt Black Americans into a realization of the significance and power of the vote.

One example of the significance and power of the vote - the black vote - was revealed in a survey conducted by the New York Times earlier this year. The survey summary says in part, "the major reason that Jimmy Carter appears to be leading President Ford as the choice of the electorate at this point (just before the last primaries) is the former Georgia Governor's overwhelming support among blacks...The Georgian was chosen by blacks in the survey by more than 5 to 1."

Furthermore, the results of the final primary elections this year reflected the conclusions arrived at in the Times survey. In the Ohio and New Jersey primaries Carter again received large black voter majorities.

Black Support

These facts, in and of themselves, are not surprising since the Democratic Party has been - at least since the 1930's - able to depend on large black voter support for its candidates. However, what makes the black vote particularly significant this year is that white voters appear to be nearly evenly divided between Ford and Carter and they are increasingly apathetic to both candidates.

The N.Y. Times survey concludes that while white voters divided almost evenly - 43 percent for Ford to 42 percent for Carter - black voters preferred Carter by a 73 to 14 percent margin. This large black preference for Carter tipped the scales to allow the Georgian to gain the final edge over Ford by 46 to 40 percent. What is significant here is not the support or preference for Carter, but the fact that black Americans in 1976 quite possibly have the potential to influence the course of events and the pinnacle of American politics for possibly the next eight years.

It is incredible and quite disturbing to have to admit that growing apathy among blacks, too, may deny them this historic and significant opportunity to use their potential political power to take a giant step toward greater equality. As the editorial picture notes, voting is "something blacks can do for themselves."

Yet, the facts in recent years

seems to indicate that black people will fail to seize the opportunity to help themselves. The fact is that in 1972 only 52.1 percent of all voting-age blacks voted (compared to 64.5 percent of whites) and, according to same reports, in 1976 less than half of all eligible blacks are registered to vote. Right here in Mecklenburg County the estimated 27,000 blacks registered to vote represent not more than half of those eligible to register and vote. In the August 17 primary only 23 percent of the registered blacks across the state voted and approximately 27 percent of those in a 14 precinct study conducted by the POST. Why this indifference to registering and voting - apathy?

Lot Of Apathy

A Beaver Falls, Pa., blue-collar industrial worker clearly reflect the extent of voter apathy nationwide when he said, "Yeah, there's a lot of apathy here now, they (the candidates) just don't do much for people. They are leaning toward Carter, but everything is so unclear. He (nor his opponent Gerald Ford) never clarifies an issue, so it's creating doubts in people's minds."

"Doubts and apathy," a recent Wall Street Journal article notes, "are attitudes held by large numbers of traditionally Democratic voters...not only in Pennsylvania but throughout the seven big states of the so-called Industrial Belt. And those seven states, along with California, are regarded by both parties as the elections decisive battleground." Many political observers believe that the next president will without question be the man who wins in the Industrial Belt. These Industrial Belt States have large blocks of black voters. Here too, much of the apathy is among black voters.

In all probability, much of the black voter apathy arises from the fact that the issue of social justice has scarcely surfaced in the national election rhetoric. Even if this is true, blacks are defeating themselves by sinking into a state of political apathy that can endanger the social and economic gains that so many - both black and white - have struggled and died for to make our lives a little more meaningful and a little more equal.

Blacks Urged To Vote

The POST urges blacks to break out of the straight jacket of apathy and indifference and face up to the reality that no one can do for blacks what blacks can do for ourselves.

There is "something blacks can do for themselves - VOTE."



Something Blacks Can Do For Themselves... VOTE



Busing To What?

By D. Marie Washington
Special To The Post

In our zeal to give our children an equal opportunity for a good education, we must not become so distracted by the bus that we completely ignore what is happening at the end of the bus trip.

In 1967, a book was published which gave a vivid account of the education of Black children in a big city, public elementary school. It laid bare many things which were usually concealed, such as the way the children were being "educated" through a filter of racial prejudice and hatred; the way they were physically abused under the guise of maintaining law and order; the way their creativity and intellectual confidence were being systematically stamped out; and how their parents were powerless to cope with the situation. The book, DEATH AT AN EARLY AGE (Houghton Mifflin), was written by Jonathan Kozol.

Seven years after the book was published, an event took place which raised the eyebrows of the nation. A city which has been closely associated with America's quest for liberty, freedom and democracy, exploded violently over the integration of schools through the use of buses. The city was Boston, Massachusetts, where ironically, Jonathan Kozol gathered the material for his book, DEATH AT AN EARLY AGE, while working as a teacher in that city's public schools.

Those who had read Kozol's book were not surprised when racism ran naked through the streets of Boston, for the book had revealed the schools to be the closet where racism had been carefully hidden all along. It was also no surprise to the thousands of Black youngsters who were "dropouts" from the Boston public schools, for they had had the experience of wrestling with racism in all its subtle forms

while trying to get through the school system. Even though the book was about a school in Boston, it actually described urban schools throughout the country; and even though the event occurred in Boston, the hatred and prejudice it exposed are by no means peculiar to that city. Somehow, the book and the event should tell us something about the busing issue.

Integration does not mean equality, and integrated schools do not necessarily give equal education. The destructive effects upon a society of segregated schools is not diminished by simply placing the children in schools together, for this frequently only removes segregation from the public view and tucks it away in the schools. The "tracking" system has shown us that it is possible for one group within a school to receive a first class education while another group of students within the same school get nothing but rubbish. Those attitudes held by adults which caused children to be placed in separate schools in the first place will also cause them to be separated within a school

and even within a classroom. Many schools which are completely integrated have their own set of unwritten policies labeled "For Whites Only" and "For Blacks Only." When the children are brought together and yet kept separate according to society's prejudices, the children simply feel the injustice of the segregation more acutely, suffer more painfully, and the boomerang effect of that suffering upon society becomes more devastating.

This does not mean that we should move backwards toward segregated schools; for a competitive system within a democracy must have free and open schools which offer all the children an equal chance to compete, and we have already learned that segregated schools are not equal.

THE CHARLOTTE POST
"THE PEOPLES NEWSPAPER"
Established 1918
Published Every Thursday
By The Charlotte Post Publishing Co., Inc.
2606-B West Blvd.-Charlotte, N.C. 28208
Telephones (704) 392-1306, 392-1307
Circulation 11,000

57 YEARS OF CONTINUOUS SERVICE

Bill Johnson.....Editor-Publisher
Sidney A. Moore Jr.....Advertising Director
Rex Hovey.....Circulation Manager
Gerald O. Johnson.....Business Manager

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

Member National Newspaper Publishers
Association

North Carolina Black Publishers Association

Deadline for all news copy and photos is 5 p.m.
Monday. The Post is not responsible for any
photos or news copies submitted for publication.

National Advertising Representative
Amalgamated Publishers, Inc.

45 W. 5th Suite 1403 2400 S. Michigan Ave.
New York, N.Y. 10036 Chicago, Ill. 60616
(212) 489-1220 Calumet 5-0200

as i see it

Golden Bulls Need Support, Not Criticism

By Gerald O. Johnson

The Golden Bulls' football team is embarking upon one of its worst starts in recent history. It is because of this tragic start (1-4) that many spectators are beginning to ask for the coaching staff's heads. In exiting the last two home games the fans were mumbling such things as they (coaching staff) need to be crucified, and that it was time for McGirt to step down.

Well, I must admit that the Bulls' season leaves a lot to be desired but let's be realistic. It is quite easy to coach a game from the stands because the only burden one has is spilling beer on your pants. Win or lose, you've lost nothing but your voice.

Though I do not agree with everything the Bulls' coaching staff does, I do think they do a very respectable job.

Before you criticize the coaching staff, there are several things I think you should know. Mr. McGirt and Mr. Cox are full time football coaches. They spend a considerable amount of time work-

ing with the football team, believe it or not. But more important, Mr. McGirt and Mr. Cox teach several classes in physical education. Moreover, Mr. McGirt is the Athletic Director for the entire sports department. Compare this with a school like S.C. State where the coaching staff, the P.E. faculty, and the Athletic Director are all different entities. It doesn't take a Ph.D. to realize that a much better job can be done if one can concentrate in a particular area.

The time that the JCSU coaching staff spends in the classroom and in the everyday teaching routine could be better spent watching films, coordinating plays, and organizing a winning football team.

Do you think Woody Hayes spends his days worrying about who's absent from class on a given day? Of course not.

Even with a work load that is absurd Mr. McGirt managed to put together a respectable team last year. His efforts didn't go unnoticed, however, because he captured



Gerald O. Johnson the NAIA coach of the year honors. How soon we forget.

So, maybe instead of criticizing Mr. McGirt's coaching ability, we should come up with ways and means to let him exert his ability to its fullest capacity.

The easiest way to do this is for you loud mouth alumni, who criticize the most and support the institution the least, to put up or shut up. It seems to me that instead

of nickle and diming your way through meaningless alumni meetings, you could come up with a program to fund the athletic department. With enough funds the school could split its P.E. department from its coaching staff. But a losing team obviously doesn't bother the school. It does bother the alumni. So, do something about it.

The ball is in your hands, alumni, you can fumble it, you can pass it, or you can take the initiative and run with it.

But remember you are now on the field and the spectators are going to be watching you (I'll see to that). As others blame McGirt, I'll blame you.

MORE P.R. NEEDED
Another problem with the sports department at Johnson C. Smith University is the lack of Public Relations.

Before continuing I want it understood that all my criticisms are intended for insight and not ridicule. It is hoped that what is said will be used for the betterment of the institution and not as a reason for polarization at the institu-

**TO
BE
EQUAL**

Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

The Hidden Issue

We've managed to get this far in the election campaign without anyone really pressing the big hidden issue - the fate of the cities.

Except for the growing metropolises of the so-called "sunbelt," most major American cities are experiencing loss of jobs, deterioration of housing stock, poor transportation facilities, high rates of inner-city poverty, and extreme fiscal crisis.

Large sections of some cities look like bombed-out wastelands as housing abandonment spreads. Crime makes many neighborhoods unsafe and the schools are laying off teachers in the face of the special needs of poor pupils.

Such a situation calls for a Domestic Urban Marshall Plan that would harness the vast powers of the federal government, state and local governments and the private sector for a full-scale effort to save the cities and restore urban vitality.

But neither candidate has endorsed such a program, or even come close to it. Caution seems to be the byword, as both candidates fear scaring off voters with proposals for bold new programs.

But this assumes a conservatism among the electorate that's not justified. True, many public opinion polls show more people willing to call themselves "conservative." But at the same time most people favor social programs like national health insurance and expanded efforts to cut unemployment.

One national poll on federal priorities found only 3 percent concerned about "excessive spending on social problems." The same people who parrot the common complaints about Washington and "big government" also say they want the government to do something about jobs, housing and other issues that affect their lives.

So there's little reason for candidates to misread the polls and assume they've got to soft peddle the issues that really concern the people. Both candidates are being cautious, saying that only a little tinkering will do the trick and shrink from programs of the scale of a Domestic Urban Marshall Plan. Meanwhile, supporters of both imply that once the elections are behind us the winner will take a bolder stance.

But why mistrust the people? Everyone knows that poverty is eating away at the cities like a cancer, and that the numbers of the poor sharply increased last year - an additional 2.5 million people became poor, largely through loss of jobs and the end of their unemployment insurance coverage.

Not enough people are aware that the federal government takes a disproportionate amount of urban resources in taxes and then redistributes much of it to other sectors. Hard pressed New York City, with 7.6 percent of the population paid 11.4 percent of all federal incomes taxes in 1974, is now shutting down hospitals, schools and day care centers.

The federal government has been running an unofficial Marshall Plan program for the suburbs for years, with road-building programs, housing mortgage subsidies, and tax breaks, and the private sector has cooperated by a wholesale movement of plants and offices away from the inner-city.

No one labelled this as a special program, but that's the result of a multitude of federal and private actions.

It is felt that the P.R. at JCSU neglects going out to the public and expects the media to come to them.

It is a fact that good P.R. constitutes a constant digging into the things going on in the college campus and then seeing to it that that information is disseminated to the public. It is a constantly moving position which requires little desk work. Also, the job requires gimmicks and promotion tricks to make the public want to be involved with the institution. It is no more than selling the institution to the public. It is a fact that a school is only as good as its P.R.

The sports department, unlike any other facet of the institution, is solely reliant upon the P.R. for its income. People will not come out and see a team play unless that team has been sold down their throats. Look at UNCC in less than five years.

The Bicentennial game had only 5777 paying spectators. The reason was simple. The people were sold on the historical aspects of the game but

not the game itself. You can't expect people to pay \$5.00 for a ticket on a piece of history. No where was it ever mentioned about what people would get for their \$5.00. No vital statistics on either team was given. No standout performers ever mentioned. Nobody knew what to expect. The game was great. But the game was left out completely as a selling point. Consequently, a poor turnout was inevitable.

Basketball season is right around the corner and JCSU has a superstar in Robert Lewis. It is up to the P.R. department to sell Robert Lewis and the JCSU basketball team to the public. If this isn't done no one will know anything about the basketball team.

It is my contention that a strong P.R. department, along with a strong alumni, can make an athletic department self sufficient. Look at Grambling.

A great team with a poor P.R. department is mediocre at best. A poor team with a great P.R. department is mediocre at worst. Think about it.