

Editorials & Comments

City Should Act To End Bus Strike

By Hoyle H. Martin Sr.
Post Executive Editor

Charlotte's 25-day old bus strike, the City's first in 18 years, has significantly affected 10,000 daily riders, disrupted many downtown businesses, left the elderly stranded, idled 132 buses, left the striking workers with little or no income, and a negotiated settlement is apparently nowhere in sight.

Furthermore, the longer the strike lasts the more difficult it will be to arrive at a settlement—a settlement that will in the final analysis be paid for by the Charlotte taxpayers. The difficulty in a strike settlement arises from a number of factors:

—Other city workers will be encouraged to form unions if the drivers are successful.

—To counteract this potential move by other city employees, the City is apparently pressuring the City Coach Line—the bus system's management firm—to hold the line on its offer of a 74-cent hourly raise and an estimated 45-cent cost-of-living increase over two years. The pressure here is apparently in the fact that the bus system's management firm itself is at the point of contract renewal with the City. To come out a loser in the settlement might cost the management firm its job with the City.

—Union leadership is tending to take a firmer position in the dispute

because they recognize the potential for organizing other workers if the strike settlement is successful.

While no one can discount the significance of these issues, they are nevertheless of secondary concern since the primary objective must be to get the buses rolling again at the least possible cost.

Cost should be viewed from the stand-point of (1) the \$3.2 million investment that the taxpayers have in the bus system, and (2) the alternative cost (no buses) of paying for environmental and construction needs to accommodate a rise in downtown automobile traffic. City transit planner Mike Kidd commented on these costs recently. Thirdly, and even more significant, is the cost of the strikers' wage increase as budgeted and adopted by City Council in July. According to unconfirmed reports the City's offer of 74 plus 45-cents is considerably below their own budgeted amount.

Considering these facts, the POST believes that the City should take a hard look at the consequences of not taking the initiative to end the strike quickly. Our view here is based on the assumption that the already budgeted amount for the bus system's employees is an amount above the City's last offer and therefore close to what the union is asking for, thus, a compromise should be possible. We hope the City will see the wisdom in such action.

Minority Enterprise Faces Crisis

In an address to the 8th Annual Business and Cultural Exposition of Cincinnati, Ohio, Dr. Berkeley G. Burrell, president of the National Business League said last month that the development of minority business enterprise in America faces an uncertain future due to the steady deterioration of the nation's commercial centers. He warned that unless minorities can produce a healthy economic climate in their communities, efforts to achieve economic parity may well be doomed.

We may very well be doomed in part because blacks have failed to recognize and understand the range and scope of minority economic development. Blacks instead have tended to accept the narrow viewpoint of Richard Nixon's "black capitalism," meaning the development of a small number of black merchants to operate within—to repeat within—the nation's black communities in selected business ventures.

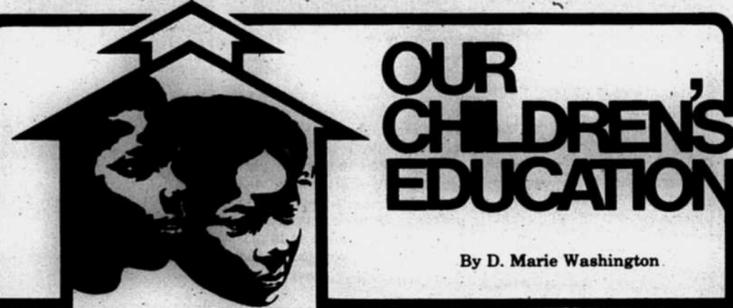
Therefore, as our urban and commercial centers are revitalized, economic parity for blacks will come only if we look beyond the narrow definition of "black capitalism" to

the minimum requirements for viable economic development. These requirements are: (1) black owned corporations, both large and small; (2) black owned and operated community development corporations; (3) black owned and operated banks; (4) the complete end to discriminatory barriers that prevent blacks from purchasing stock, being hired or promoted into private and public sector policy-making level jobs, being hired in larger numbers as professors of business administration and economics in the nations colleges and universities, securing good housing, and educational opportunities; (5) the complete elimination of racism as a basis for profit making; (6) the acceptance of social responsibility on a par with money profit in the policy-decision-making philosophy of white private enterprise; and (7), a public policy based on a philosophy of economic freedom that should be directed toward the above six requirements. These then are the minimum requirements for guaranteeing blacks real equal opportunity in the market place and for being an important part of the revitalization of our urban centers.

BLACK COMMUNITIES THAT CARE ABOUT THE BLACK FUTURE, SHOULD HELP IMPOSE ORDER WHERE NEEDED.



Better Team Work: The Answer To "Black On Black" Crime



By D. Marie Washington

What Is Parent Involvement?

When a school is mired down by problems, one of the reasons generally stated is that it is due to the lack of parent involvement. This statement carries images of parents who are disinterested, impassive, and uncaring toward the institution which holds their children for a large part of the day. Gradually, one begins to draw the conclusion that parents who don't actively support the school also don't care anything about their children. Actually, one has nothing to do with the other. A parent's lack of cooperation and support for the school does not mean that the parent is not interested and involved with his child, nor does it measure the value which a parent places on education. It is more a reflection of the relationship which exists between the parent and a particular school, and his relationship usually tells more about the school than it does about the parents.

Universally, parents are deeply involved with their children and with all the various aspects of their children's growth and survival.

This is what it means to be a parent. This fact is not altered one bit by the color of one's skin, the community one lives in, the amount of education one has, or the size of one's bank account. All human beings share the same basic instincts, and the instinct of the parent is perhaps one of the most basic of all. Of course there are exceptions, but there is no concentration of these exceptions among any particular group, as they cut across all races, communities, educational and economic levels. The exceptions only underline the rule which says that it is natural for parents to want to protect their children, to want to see them treated fairly, and to want them to have every opportunity for a good life. Schools which recognize this fact are able to relate positively to their communities, and in doing so, they get a positive response from the parents in return.

On the other hand, there are schools which operate out of a set of negative assumptions and generalizations which are usually expressed through such statements as "They

don't care anything about their children," or "They don't know the value of education" or "We need to educate the parents first" etc., etc. A school which has allowed itself to form an image of its parent community as "bad," "uncaring" or "unintelligent" finds it impossible to relate to that community in an attitude of service, respect, or with any degree of accountability. It assumes the role of missionary to the community, placing itself above the parents and treating them accordingly. The treatment which results from this false attitude of superiority manifests itself in numerous ways, some of them too subtle to pinpoint. But every contact which the school has with the parent forms a general aura of respect or disrespect which a school gives to the parent, and this determines the total relationship between a school and its parent community.

In such cases, it is the school which is responsible for the lack of parent cooperation and support, and to cry that the parents are not "involved" is just another way of blaming the victim.

TO BE EQUAL



Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

Time For A New Realism

As I travel around the country and talk to people, especially in the black community, about the coming Carter Administration, I'm increasingly disturbed by what appears to be a lack of realism.

Conscious of the debt owed to the black vote by President-elect Carter, too many people expect miracles to come to pass after January 20. Some seriously believe their local councilman, who's a nice fellow, will be named Secretary of State. Others think they just have to sit back and wait until a golden horn of plenty is emptied by Washington, full of money and programs that will end poverty and discrimination overnight. It's not going to happen.

This is no time for flights of fancy, it's a time for serious thought and developing strategies to get the programs black people and all poor people need. And it's a time for a new realism that helps us understand the way our government works and the way we can influence it.

No matter how concerned the President-elect may be about race relations—and there's ample evidence that he's very much concerned about improving it—the fact remains that once he gets to the White House he will face the immense political pressures from various groups that will influence his decisions.

And it's very possible that these pressures and the necessary compromise that are part of the democratic process may make it expedient for him to defer programs of vital importance to black people.

So this is hardly the time to relax and wait for the fruits of black political support for the Carter candidacy to fall. Instead, it is a time to bring pressure to bear on the President-elect and the key people around him to make sure that Cabinet, sub-Cabinet and regulatory agency posts go to appointees who will favor social reforms. And it's a time to prepare program proposals and public policy positions to present to the new Administration, and also to start now to build the alliance that will get those proposals passed.

The new realism also should recognize that government action is not enough. Even if everything black people want passes the Administration and Congress, we'll still face formidable barriers. We can't let ourselves fall into the same trap as in the 1960s when federal activism resulted in raised expectations followed by deepened bitterness and frustration.

We can't look to Washington alone when the private sector has so far to go to satisfy legitimate economic needs. If we dump it all on Washington, that just helps get the private sector off the hook.

And black people have to keep our own house in order too. Yes, the President and the Congress have to pass job-creation legislation, but realism demands that the President and the Congress can't go to the employment centers for us, they can't take the job-training for us, and they can't learn the skills for us.

Wishful thinking has to give way to a new realism that understands the need for exercising our responsibilities to ourselves and to our communities.

as i see it

Professionalism Lacking In Black Businesses

By Gerald O. Johnson
I have noticed a lack in Black professionalism in Black business in Charlotte. Those businesses catering to a Black clientele seems to be non-chalant about how they present their product to the customer. Let me give you an example. When I first moved to Charlotte I bought a house. I wanted the sun room on the house remodeled. I called a Black construction company to give me an estimate. The owner came out looked over what I wanted done and said he would write up an estimate and get back in contact with me. Three years and one room addition later and I haven't heard from him yet. I called a white remodeling agency that came in and did the job. Ironically enough the white agency subcontracted the job to a Black carpenter who did an excellent job. The point here is that Blacks are undoubtedly qualified to do a professional job, yet they lack the professional diplomacy to contract jobs. It is inexcusable for any business to ignore a potential customer.

My wife started seeing a Black gynecologist for her medical services, but switched after feeling that the doctor was insensitive. She wasn't the only defector. Over hearing conversations my wife would have with friends it became apparent that many felt the same way.

Again professional diplomacy overshadowed professional ability. Clubs, restaurants, insurance agencies, and the like all lack the professional air. Therefore the mood of skepticism about doing business with Blacks is real.

But how real is it? As Blacks needing services rendered we help add to the unprofessionalism of Black businesses. It's a fact we as Black customers give Black businesses a hard way to go. Black workers produce less when working for Blacks. Black customers are less willing to pay Black collectors. Black customers are less willing to pay a Black company for services rendered the same price that they would pay to a white company for the same services. Taking all this in consideration and realizing that a Black businessman's primary clientele is the Black public where as



Gerald O. Johnson
the white businessman's clientele knows no color, the Black business is hurting.

Moreover, jealousy plays a dominant role in Black business. Black customer relationships. A lot of Blacks refrain from helping Black businesses because they don't want Blacks to get ahead. In other words there are those who purposely anchor Black businesses. The reason for this is my theory of "Failure Rationalization." It works like this: These Blacks can rationalize their failings simply by using

race as the reason. By saying that whites have had all the opportunities, they can relax with their shortcomings. But as more Blacks succeed in business it begins to put the reasons for failure where it belongs: in the lap of the individual.

It is obvious that black capitalism suffers because of the skepticism between Black business and Black customer. With a limited customer base a Black business has to be understaffed. The necessary revenue is not forth coming. This causes a situation whereby the owner of the business is likely to be the sales man, the worker, the bookkeeper, and etc. This obviously limits a person's ability at diplomacy. All small businesses lack professionalism for this reason.

As members of the Black community we all should try to help build pride and professionalism in our community. As businessmen we should not use the lack of personnel as an excuse for not giving customers the very best service we can offer.

As Black laborers for Black businesses we should do our jobs the best we know how and

not try to take advantage of the business because it is Black.

As consumers of services rendered by Black businesses we should try to give our support. We should understand the shortcomings and handicaps of the Black businessman and realize that with our support most of these shortcomings can be overcome.

Remember, North Carolina Mutual, Johnson and Johnson, and Johnson Publishing Company, didn't start out as large corporations. All of these companies started as one man operations much the same way as small businesses are in Charlotte now.

With support, hard work, and pride in ourselves as a community we could turn mountains.

NEWS FOR YOU!

Do you have a topic that you would like my opinion on? Write to "As You See It" in care of The Charlotte Post. You may include an opinion of your own if you like for printing along with my opinion. I will give you my honest and candid opinion on any topic. Just think of it, you get my

opinion for exactly what my opinion is worth! Absolutely nothing.

City Completes

Emergency

Number Report

A Report outlining proposals for the 911 emergency telephone service in Charlotte-Mecklenburg has been completed. The report was prepared by the City Manager's staff and the Budget and Evaluation Department.

The three-digit number, 911, has been designated for use nationwide as the central telephone number for reporting emergencies. In January, Mayor John Belk appointed a Study Committee to determine the feasibility of implementing the program for Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The Committee requested a report from the City staff covering a proposed 911 design, related costs and effect on services. The report, which is available in the City Manager's Office, includes three such designs and their financial and service impacts.

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