

Editorials & Comments

Districting - A Part Of The King Legacy

By Hoyle H. Martin Sr.
Post Staff Writer

While listening to Dr. Beverly Ford talk on the "Challenge of Martin Luther King" at a poorly attended rally for district representation last week, we thought, "What is the relationship between the late Dr. King and our local quest for district representation?"

In seeking an answer to our own question, it occurred to us that the struggle for equality and justice is as old as human history. In that history we have seen too how the acts of statesmen and men in positions of power and influence have been able, through the uttering of a few chosen words, to impede or enhance the pace of equality and justice.

In our view, those members of the City Council who are expressing opposition to district representation is an example of impeding the quest for equality and justice. This appeared quite clear to us when Councilman Harvey Gantt, a pro-districting supporter, said at the "rally," "The debate over district representation is a power struggle," that is, a struggle between those who live in southeast Charlotte and who possess 99.9 percent of the political decision making power, and those who live in the other three-fourths of the city and have virtually no political influence to assure some direction of their own destiny.

Racial Turmoil

Putting the matter in historical perspective, we can see a parallel between the public figures who oppose district representation today and the sanction of segregated public education by Dwight Eisenhower while serving as President of the United States in the 1950's. The memoirs of the late Earl Warren, Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court at the time of the landmark 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education, which declared public school segregation to be unconstitutional, note in clear terms that in Warren's opinion much of the racial turmoil that followed that decision might not have occurred if Eisenhower had, as President, supported the court. His failure to speak out has left a continuing legacy of resistance to desegregation.

Now, nearly a quarter of a century later, we have a President who is calling for human rights for men, wherever they may live and, slowly but surely, positive responses are beginning to appear.

In between this inaction of one president and the action of another, emerged Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a humble Black minister who reminded America of its need to live its creed of democracy and human rights. With roots in the state of Georgia, the home state of President Jimmy Carter, King undoubtedly has influenced Mr. Carter's think-

ing, in part we think, to the extent of his calling for human rights.

The Post believes the need for district representation is a characteristic of Carter's call for human rights and direct voting and Martin Luther King's legacy of continuing the struggle for equality and justice.

Therefore, those who oppose the concept of district representation are seeking to deny justice and equality to the vast majority of our citizens. It is the absence of district-

ing that has led to some neighborhoods in Northwest Charlotte being locked-in by I-85 on one side, I-77 on another, the Northwest Freeway on yet another and dangerous aircraft flying overhead. Furthermore, it is our belief that the lack of district representation has led to many parts of the city having zoning codes inconsistent with the quality of private homeownership in the area.

of the present Council that accounts in part for the same neighborhoods in our city being raped by super-highways, plagued by unsightly maintenance garages and rendered insecure by poor zoning. These things tell us clearly that improving the quality of life at the neighborhood level can and will only become a reality if and when district representation becomes a reality.

Towards Greater Equality

Councilman Harvey Gantt has said, "When a city gets to a population of 300,000 or larger it is difficult for a lawmaking body of seven to be aware of all the problems and adequately articulate them for solutions." It is just such an inadequacy

of the present Council that accounts in part for the same neighborhoods in our city being raped by super-highways, plagued by unsightly maintenance garages and rendered insecure by poor zoning. These things tell us clearly that improving the quality of life at the neighborhood level can and will only become a reality if and when district representation becomes a reality.

As we have said before, the basic concept of district representation is sound and consistent with the basic principles of democracy and equality of opportunity. It is in the final analysis, not a matter of race, income or social standing, but rather it is a plan to provide equitable geographic representation within the City Council.

We believe that the 7-4 plan to be voted on April 19 will, if approved, be the beginning of more than token representation for blacks, beginning representation for all geographic areas and, most significantly, a move toward greater equality, freedom, self expression and human rights.

As we passed the 9th year (April 4) since the assassination of Dr. King, it would appear that part of what he died for was that people - all people - might be treated with dignity and respect as a fellow human being.

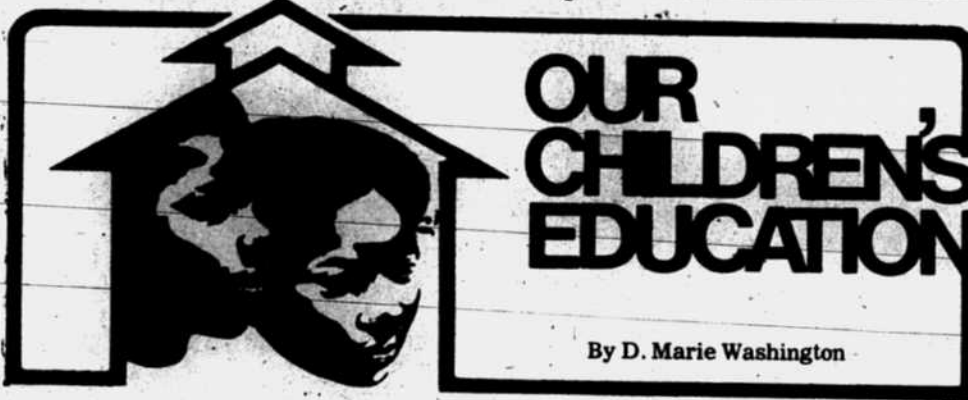
We suggest that anyone who would fail to vote, or not vote "for" district representation would be to forget the commitment and legacy of Dr. King and in some way make his death have been in vain.

"THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING ECONOMIC CLOUT IS OBVIOUS. CLOUT IS NOT MAINTAINED WHEN BLACK DOLLARS ARE GOING INTO BUSINESSES THAT PUT THE MONEY INTO THE SUBURBS INSTEAD OF BACK INTO THE BLACK COMMUNITY ECONOMY."

MICHIGAN CHRONICLE



Black's Destiny In Own Hands



The New Teacher

It is ironic that one of the biggest issues in education today is busing and integration, while television trains children's minds without discrimination, and electronic communication devices are rocking the very foundations of the educational system. It reminds one of the old tale about the man and his wife who sat stubbornly arguing over whose turn it was to lock the door while a thief came in and robbed them of everything they owned.

While teachers and parents blame one another for the breakdown in discipline and the lack of respect for authority, television constantly exposes adult disrespect for social and moral laws, making it equally difficult for both teachers and parents to cope with children who have been schooled in this kind of knowledge.

While we worry over declining tests scores on verbal ability, television has given the children a whole new vocabulary and a new style of communication. Children learn from watching TV that the most valued form of conversation is the put-down, and the most flippant, insulting remark asways gets the most applause.

While we tell ourselves that "children who can't read can't learn anything else," and while we debate over who should receive a diploma and who is "qualified" to receive

training for the highest paying jobs, television uses pictures and sound to teach everything from how to make peanut butter to the best way to rob a bank, and it offers step-by-step instruction on how to become a prostitute, a kidnaper, a hijacker, a black-mailer, you name it!

Due to electronic technology, everything about the kind of knowledge children are receiving today has changed drastically from what we once received as children. The changes, however, are not all bad, there is also a good side to education via electronic technology.

Consider the calculator. It solves in an instant those mathematical problems which took years to learn and hours to do. The miracle of the calculator is not just in the fact that it solves problems quickly, but that the mysteries of mathematics are no longer accessible just to the educated elite - but to all who have the small price of a pocket calculator.

Information which once could be obtained only after hours of poring over pages and pages of print can now be obtained in an interesting and entertaining way within a very short time in front of a TV set. Also, people no longer have to compose letters in order to communicate with someone at a distance, as the telephone and the tape recorder have now become popular

means of communication.

Whether we like it or not, it is inevitable that the new technology will eventually affect the teaching of reading, writing and arithmetic in much the same way that the food processing industry has changed the need for learning

how to cook. These electronic devices also turn other areas of education inside out. It is no longer a question of finding the best ways and means of training children to get information, since they are being bombarded with it. The real question now is, how are we going to teach children - and ourselves - to cope with the

new electronic education? As with all technology, its advantages and disadvantages present us with a choice. We can either face it squarely and try to harness it as a force for good, or we can ignore it while we debate outmoded issues and let it destroy us altogether.

JCSU Alumni Council

Johnson C. Smith University Pre-Alumni Council of the United Negro College Fund in cooperation with the Midnight Special will sponsor an after Easter Disco at the Midnight Special on April 12 beginning at 10 p.m.

Admission will be \$1 with the proceeds going to the United Negro College Fund.

TO BE EQUAL



Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

Carter's Job Program

First, the good news. The Carter Administration has announced a \$1.5 billion youth jobs program that it expects will create meaningful jobs for 200,000 people in the 16-24 age brackets.

And the bad news? Well, the program stops far short of the kind of comprehensive youth development program our nation needs. It's an important first step toward the goal, but no one should mistake the initial step forward for the final destination.

And it's not an unflawed first step, either. Unless Congress and Labor Department officials plug the gaps, the program could well go the way other well-intentioned programs have gone.

That's because the bulk of money will go to some 466 state and local governments for youth work projects. The history of other national programs left to local governments to administer reveals a pattern of neglecting the most serious problem areas the programs were originally intended to deal with.

In the youth job program, the intent is clearly to do something to solve the persistent unemployment of economically disadvantaged young people. Many are black - teenage black unemployment is triple that for whites, and in many inner-cities affects two-thirds and more of all black teenagers who want to work.

Targeting the program to fit the needs of poor and minority young people would mean very strict federal guidelines and the funneling of program funds through community-based agencies with a history of serving the disadvantaged, and with deep roots in the affected communities.

By diffusing the youth job funds to 466 governmental units to distribute, the Administration inevitably leaves the program vulnerable to subsidizing jobs for youngsters not in urgent need of assistance while neglecting other youngsters who desperately need help.

While an urban neighborhood improvement program will be set up, putting your young people to work refurbishing inner-city neighborhoods, more money and jobs will go to a similar program for parks and recreation areas, most of which are removed from central city areas where youth unemployment is highest.

And while a large block of money has been set aside for experimental projects, the Labor Department has to take steps to ensure that the same old universities and think-tanks with no real ties to minority and poor communities won't repeat past performance by skimming-off most of the funds.

Despite these and other faults, the program holds great promise; it's an important first step. Still on the horizon is a comprehensive youth employment program that aims to provide every young person with the education, skills, training and work habits to enable him to become a fully productive member of our society.

That's something that requires more than just creating work opportunities; it means a carefully designed program geared to the needs of youth.

With enlightened foresight and close cooperation with minority groups and community-based national organizations, the Administration's program can be refined and sharpened to ensure success. Then, it can serve as a base from which a truly all-encompassing program to serve our nation's youth can be developed.

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 7,185

58 YEARS OF CONTINUOUS SERVICE

Bill Johnson..... Editor-Publisher
Albert Campbell..... Advertising Director
Bernard Reeves..... General 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. All photos and copy submitted becomes
the property of the Post, and will not be returned.

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

The Relationship Between Black Americans And Black Africans

By Gerald O. Johnson

Recently, I had a talk with Mr. Anade Othow. Mr. Othow is the husband of Dr. Helen Othow, the sister of Rev. Ben Chavis and professor of English at Johnson C. Smith. Mr. Othow is an instructor of accounting and business administration at Johnson C. Smith University. Mr. Othow is an African.

The talk I had with Mr. Othow concerned what seems to be a nationwide problem about the relationship between the Black Americans and Black Africans. Mr. Othow was somewhat perturbed by the fact that Black Americans feel that Black Africans dislike them. He assured me that Africans have the same misunderstanding about Black Americans.

Obviously, the dislikes represent a misunderstanding rather than a fact. What then are the underlying reasons for such a misunderstanding? Mr. Othow believes that the lack of communication and cultural exposure

is the basis for this gross misunderstanding.

The communication problem, Mr. Othow explains, is centered around the slave trade in America and the colonization of Africa. The Black's in America have been isolated from their African brothers by slave trading. Once arriving in America the white man used propaganda tactics to discredit Africa. The films shown here to Blacks depicted Africans as savage, unintelligent, and mean. Thus Blacks in America were led to believe that the whites had done them a favor by bringing them to this country.

At the same time white missionaries in Africa were brain washing the Blacks there about how shiftless and lazy Blacks in America were. These missionaries would also point out that Blacks in America had no roots because of their mixing with whites in this country. Because white people were serving as messengers to give each of us the information



Gerald O. Johnson

about the other, each side got inaccurate information. This in Mr. Othow's opinion was and still is the primary reason for the misunderstanding between Black Africans and Black Americans. Culturally, Mr. Othow thinks both Black Americans and Black Africans do not spend enough time trying to understand each others differences. A conflict of interest exists because both groups

feel that because we both are of the same color we both should have the same thought processes. This is an impossibility because of the differences in culture. Mr. Othow feels that we betray each other by having preconceived ideas about how things should be in Africa and America instead of accepting the way things are and discovering why are they that way. He cites as an example the recent upheavals in Africa. Many Black Americans rushed to Africa to give assistance in this upheaval. Because they thought prior to getting to Africa that they would be welcomed with open arms, many Black Americans were disappointed when some resented them being there. Again, this was because Africa is colonized and each country is influenced by different countries. To understand colonization let us assume that the United States was not united. Further assume that every state was controlled by another country

overseas; North Carolina might possibly be controlled by France, South Carolina by England and etc. Thus natural boundaries mean nothing as far as the ruling of the country. Under these circumstances each state in the U.S. would represent a colony and this country would be colonized. This is what exists in Africa. It has no national government but quite a few colonies. Mr. Othow concluded by saying that to correct the current situation (distrust and misunderstanding) we need to do the following things:
1) Isolate our common factors and use this as a basis for uniting. Currently, Black's everywhere are resisting white dominance. Couple this with our common heritage and we have a good foundation to start from.
2) Bridge the current communication gap that exists between the Black Americans and Black Africans. Discussion groups, church involvement, and a host of other ideas are available to help solve this

problem.
3) Educate each other on facts and rid ourselves of the emotionalism that now exist.
We must come together as people; set common goals to rid ourselves of common problems. Black people worldwide are victims of economic, cultural, and humane deprivation and only when we come together as one can we escape from human bondage.
I would like to thank Mr. Othow for sharing his thoughts with me and allowing me to express his concerns as relative and that we need to address ourselves to the concerns. It should be obvious to the most feeble of minds that it is no accident that Africa parallels that of Black people's oppression in America. We are one, we are oppressed as one, so, I think should unite as one. As Scott-Heron puts it "It's from South Africa to South Carolina."