

Editorials & Comments

An Act Of Maturity

By Hoyle H. Martin Sr.
Post Executive Editor

In spite of opposition by most public officials and a number of business leaders, Charlotte voters expressed a desire to participate in local decision-making by endorsing district representation on Tuesday. As a result of this action, the November 8 election will result in a City Council of 11 members, with seven elected from districts and four elected at-large.

We view this approval of districting by the Charlotte electorate an act of maturity because it required of many individuals, organizations, ethnic, economic, and geographic groups the courage to rise above past differences for the benefit of a common good, that is, a better, more representative form of local government.

In many past local elections, affluent white southeast Charlotte precincts were joined by black precincts in support of bond and other issues while middle-to-lower income whites in northeast and other parts of Charlotte opposed such issues. On other issues, too - desegregation, busing and open housing, to name a few - blacks have been noticeably divided from middle-to-low income whites, because it was these groups that would be most affected by such changes.

In spite of these lingering differences, Charlotteans in sufficient numbers from all parts of the city

went to the polls to end over 30 years of southeastern sectional domination of local government. In this move the voters said, "Let us practice and not just preach representative government."

However, we must hastily add that district representation does not guarantee good or better government. The challenge and the responsibility is now more directly upon each of us as citizens to seek out and develop individuals of high moral character, leadership and a sensitive concern for helping to make the quality of life better for all Charlotteans. We must elect as district representatives individuals who will keep sectionalism in proper perspective; we must recognize that past sectionalism has been partly the fault or responsibility of all; and we must recognize that district representation will not solve all our problems and, in fact, it may create some new ones.

What we are attempting to say is that it will take even greater acts of maturity to make good government better government.

The seven-district, four-at-large system of government will undoubtedly bring a number of changes in city government. Let us hope that with the active and constructive support of the electorate ours will truly be a better government. This can only happen if we all share in the courage that enables us to exhibit acts of maturity now and in the future.

Foot-In-Mouth Diplomacy Doesn't Work

Shortly before being confirmed as ambassador to the U.N., Andrew Young admitted he had no answer to a CBS-TV news reporter's question as to why he (Young) had expressed opposition to U.S. involvement in Viet Nam but applauded Cuban involvement in Angola as a "stabilizing influence."

Since that time, however, Young has had plenty of answers, and ironically, the right answers for questions that were stated in the wrong setting. What we mean is that Young has been using what his critics call "open-mouth diplomacy" to express his personal views as a black American from a U.N. platform designed to communicate some aspects of American foreign policy.

For example, when Young said earlier this month that the United States "shouldn't get paranoid about communism" in Africa and should avoid "knee-jerk reactions to it," he was saying that people in underdeveloped ill-fed nations can't afford the luxury of debating ideologies when death from starvation and malnutrition is a daily event. Black Americans have long understood this; whites, particularly affluent

whites, fail to get the message.

On the other hand, when Young apologized after accusing Britain of having "institutionalized racism more than anyone in history" and when he said the white-rule government of South Africa is "illegitimate," then reacted to criticism by calling it "unrepresentative," we witnessed "foot-in-mouth diplomacy." The point is, Young's statements about both nations are historically true, yet for reasons of foreign relations, he was forced to modify his original statements. In these instances Young gave credibility to two lies, lies that will be perpetuated in the history books of the western world even more than in the past.

The Post hopes that in the future Ambassador Young will choose his words more carefully. We say this because it is better to have not uttered a truth, than to do so, and in the process of retracting it for reasons of diplomacy, giving validity to a lie. No Mr. Young, we don't need "foot-in-mouth diplomacy," it's bad for you and your credibility, it's bad for America and it's bad for minority people, at home and abroad.

DEATH

THE DOPE TEMPTER

DRUNKENNESS OF DOPE IS A FLATTERING DEVIL, A SWEET POISON, A PLEASANT SIN, WHICH WHOEVER HATH, HATH NOT HIMSELF WHICH WHOEVER DOTHT COMMIT, DOTHT NOT COMMIT SIN, BUT HE HIMSELF IS WHOLLY SIN.

Augustine

Needed Now - An Aroused Black Community

OUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

By D. Marie Washington

The Old Days Are Gone

Parents, in general, are somewhat bewildered by today's relationship between parents and the school. Black parents especially recall that in the small communities of the south, everybody knew the teachers and held them in high esteem, and there was mutual understanding and respect between teachers and parents. The community kept a close watch over the teacher's conduct and moral behavior, and in return for the strict standards which they imposed upon teachers, the parent community gave teachers almost complete authority over the child during school hours. Under these conditions, parents had no need to go to the school, and the school did not expect the parent to visit except when they were invited to see the child perform in a school play or for some similar occasion.

Times are different now. Today, the child is often placed under the charge of complete strangers. Strong teacher unions have taken teachers from under the control of community approval, and teachers no longer have the authority over the child which parents once automatically gave to them. The old foundations for the mutual respect which existed between parents and teachers have all

but disappeared. Nowadays, parents and teachers have to make a special effort to become acquainted.

Many parents don't visit the school voluntarily because they have not realized that the old traditional way of handing the child over to the school is no longer effective, and they may not realize the importance of getting to know the teacher before the child gets into difficulty.

When parents and teachers do not know one another, it leaves a gap where the child can play the teacher and parent against each other. Many parents, meeting a teacher for the first time, have been quite shocked to find that the teacher was not Johnny had made them out to be, and many teachers have been equally surprised to find that parents were not at all indifferent to the way Johnny behaves in school.

It is especially important for teachers and parents to become acquainted in newly integrated schools. Frequently, parents are worried about racism. Meeting the teacher, in many instances, may help to dispel some of these fears. Teachers also benefit from these meetings because quite often they carry images of the

black parent which are inaccurate and grossly distorted.

Parents need not feel hesitant about visiting the school, as most schools expect and encourage parents to become acquainted with the child's teacher, and will often arrange parent-teacher conference hours for this purpose.

In the event that the school does not arrange for such meetings, it is a good idea for parents to arrange to visit the teacher by first sending a note asking the teacher to suggest a time when it would be most convenient to have a conference. During the visit, the parent may want to talk over the child's progress and find out how the child is getting along in the classroom. The parent may also be interested in learning of the teacher's plans for working with the children and in offering support and help.

Parents who work during school hours may wonder if it is worth while to take time off from work to visit the school when everything seems to be going alright. But such a meeting is never a waste of time. It helps the parent, it helps the teacher, and it goes a long way toward establishing those mutual bonds of respect which are so necessary for the child's success in school.

TO BE EQUAL

Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

The Electoral College

President Carter has proposed some sweeping changes in the electoral process designed to make American politics more democratic.

Some of his proposals would do just that, but one could cause more problems than it solves. That is the plan to abolish the electoral college and replace it with the direct election of the President.

At present voters cast their ballots for slates of candidates pledged to support one of the contenders for the Presidency. The slate that gets the majority of votes in a state gets all that state's votes in the electoral college. It's an unwieldy process, but it has served us well in its almost 200 years of operation and it should not lightly be cast aside.

The major flaw in the process - that electors might vote for candidates other than the one they're pledged to - can be corrected by simply doing away with the electors and crediting each state with the appropriate number of electoral votes.

Do away with the indirect election of the President through the electoral college mechanism, and you open the door to the end of the two-party system. It could also lead to election of a president by a minority of voters unless a run-off election takes place, and a run-off would be in itself an incitement for minor parties which could bargain away their endorsements to the highest bidder. Remember George Wallace?

For blacks, abolition of the electoral college would severely limit our political leverage in national elections.

The larger states have the most electoral votes. No one can become President without taking at least some states from among California, New York, Illinois, Texas, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Ohio.

Take another look at that list. All of those states have significant black and minority populations. Black support in some of those states is essential for victory in the Presidential race. Take away the electoral college, and the importance of that black vote melts away.

Blacks, instead of being crucial to victory in major states, simply become ten percent of the total electorate, with reduced impact. The same is true for other minorities and for city-dwellers. The one national arena where large groups of people deprived of influence in the Congress and in local governments can make their interests felt would be stripped away.

Inevitably, direct election of the President would ultimately mean formation of black parties, voting along racial lines and increasingly separated from the main parties, themselves weakened and dependent upon coalitions with splinter groups. The result would be less democratic in the real sense than the present system.

The rest of the Administration program is just fine. It consists of plans for finally ending the patchwork of local election registration laws that operate to exclude people from the electoral process.

States unreasonably require advance registration and make the process difficult, with registration periods and facilities often arranged to discourage potential voters.

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as i see it

Plight Of Entertainment

By Gerald O. Johnson

I enjoy good entertainment as much as the other guy. Athletic events, jazz festivals, and the like are good entertainment. But I am afraid that somehow in a capitalistic society we have reversed priorities in an ironic way.

It bothers me to see guys like Pete Rose and Reggie Jackson holding out to get a multi-million dollar contract to play baseball. My feelings go beyond baseball, however, because I feel the same way about football, basketball, or any other entertainer making that type of money for entertaining. Television performers, singers, and the like fall into the same category.

What is so disturbing about all of this is based on the social value such activities have as compared to more beneficial activities.

Let me give you some examples. Doctors doing cancer research, legitimately, make far less money than Jack Nicklaus makes playing golf. What is more important, find-

ing a cure for cancer or hitting a golf ball 300 yards? I mean what social relevance is there in golf?

Moreover, work being done in special education with the handicap is a worthwhile social activity. The social value of such an activity is far more important than O.J. Simpson gaining 2000 yards playing football. Yet O.J. is a millionaire and programs with the handicapped are suffering due to the lack of funds.

The comparisons go on and on. At first it didn't occur to me why such a reversal of values existed. But after pondering this matter for quite a while I realized why this is so.

Entertainment is a dream for the majority of Americans, the common folk. Through entertainment the common people can touch, feel, and realize that through it a common man still can make it. It is a form that most people can relate to and understand; through entertainment, which is for the common, by the common, and of the common, we see a reflection of our



weaknesses, our strengths, and a means of getting out from being common. Consequently, we are willing to spend our last dimes for this enrichment, this dream, this thing called entertainment.

But while we throw good money away on impossible dreams, we are letting reality slip away.

To put it quite simply the world would continue to spin without football, but it could spin much better without di-

sease, air pollution, war, and the like.

Maybe I am wrong, but if we, the common folk, spent as much time and money on world events as we do on sporting events this place would be a much better place to live.

Yes Virginia There Is An Energy Crisis

For all of you who might have thought that the energy crisis was a hoax, Carter has some news for you. It is here. To prove it the prices on scarce resources will skyrocket over the next few years.

The crisis is real and your lifestyle will start changing, now. The problem is that people think this is a joke or that it is a political game. The truth is Carter is the only recent President to make an unpopular decision today for a necessary tomorrow.

Because most of us can't see pass our noses, it is easy to see why we can't visualize a shortage. The fuel pumps will not dry up by the end of the week. But if we continue to consume

resources at our present rate we will be energyless by 1990.

Carter will not be President in 1990. He might not be living in 1990. So, he could have easily taken the easy way out and said to Hell with the energy crisis. This way he could remain popular and when 1990 rolled around and we were energyless he would not even get blamed.

Yet, Carter made an unpopular decision because it is best for the country.

You will find a lot about this energy policy that will affect you directly. But before you condemn the policy, think about how you had to wait in long lines during the embargo. If we don't conserve now, the outcome could be much worse.

Tid Bits

Did you know Exxon is the most popular service station among blacks. Do you know why? Exxon was the first major oil company to accept blacks credit. Happy Motoring!

Do you know why blacks

brown bag it when they travel? Until recently, blacks were not allowed to eat at roadside restaurants, hence, on long trips blacks had to prepare their meals in advance.

West Charlotte's 1948

Class To Meet Sunday

The West Charlotte High School class of 1948 is holding a meeting Sunday April 24, at the Dalebrook Barber Shop located on Beatties Ford Road. All members are urged to be in attendance.

McCrorey YMCA

McCrorey Branch YMCA will hold registration for summer swim classes beginning Monday, May 2.

For more information, please contact the McCrorey Branch YMCA, at 394-2356.