# Chitorials & Comments

### **Time For Togetherness**

By Hoyle H. Martin Sr. Post Executive Editor

At the height of the Angolan Civil War last year, Roy Innis, executive director of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), suggested that black Americans offer military assistance. Ironically, Idi Amin, chairman of the Organization of African Unity and the man who is currently being attacked in the press as a "butcher," reportedly responded that black Americans could be seated as OAU observers provided they developed a sense of unity and sent a single representative.

Amin, like the late Dr. Martin Luther King, the late Malcolm X and some contemporary black leaders is, regardless to his other alledged shortcomings, being attacked by whites in part because of his call for black unity. The history, past and present, of white efforts to undermind the drive toward black unity is evident for all to see. Our point here is that a great deal of the disunity among black people is created from without, however, this does not dismiss the fact that much disunity is generated from within.

We have made these few observations about black unity - or the lack of it - because of the unusually slow pace with which blacks are apparently preparing to participate in Charlotte's new district representation form of government. While a number of white candidates have announced an intent to seek district seats no blacks have done so. Furthermore, in one district with predominately black voters, whites have organized and selected at least one candidate to-date, blacks have none.

Considering these developments, all the rhetoric about black dissatisfaction with the current quantity of black representation in local government and the fact that the districting plan nearly guarantees blacks at least two district seats by the nature of their voter majorities, the POST wonders why blacks have apparently not united for the purpose of developing a set of criteria as a basis for seeking out a number of able and possible candidates.

The time for togetherness at the borhood, precinct and district level is now, for tomorrow may be

Perhaps our slow pace toward togetherness, and in this instance political unity, arise out of a disagreement or a misunderstanding over the meaning of unity among blacks. "The idea of unity," Ralph Abernathy has said, "is not meant to suggest uniformity. Don't think we all have to belong to the same church, or hold the same beliefs. It's not necessary to belong to the same political party, or even live in the same neighborhood, to have one common goal..." or a set of common interests. Operation Push chairman Jesse Jackson added to this understanding of unity when he noted, "Anybody who wants to organize and unite black people, must appreciate their vastness and diversity.'

Hopefully, black Charlotteans particularly the leaders of civic. social and religious groups - have this kind of understanding of the meaning of unity or togetherness. With that assumption, the POST urges black neighborhood, precinct and district leaders to put their personal ambitions and philosophies aside in the interest of black community needs and, therefore, a better Charlotte for all.

With that accomplished, a major and aggressive move should be made to seek out individuals as possible district representation candidates. However, the POST wants to emphasis that the black community needs candidates for office (1) of unquestionable character and integrity, (2) knowledgeable and concerned about community problems, (3) sufficiently flexible in their employment to be able to serve diligently, (4) who have convictions and cannot be easily led, influenced or intimidated by political opponents and (5) people with the kind of maturity that does not let the glamor of being in the public view cause a loss of perspective or a failure to adequately communicate with the people they are to serve.

For black leaders to fail to act assertively in this regard now will be to invite some individuals, probably incompetent opportunists, to announce for a district seat and thus result in less representation, not more.

Let's act now

## Winning Is Not Everything?

In a Triple County Baseball League all-star game last weekend a player bumped and viciously cursed the umpire and had to be physically restrained by three other players from further assault attempts. On the same weekend Hubie Green played the last four holes of his

winning effort in the U.S. Open golf tournament under a threat on his

These incidents reminds us of what N.Y. Times writer Russell Baker said when he placed the blame for "the American triumph of the bad sport" on the philosophy of the late Vince Lombardi who popularized the view "winning isn't everything; it's the only thing."

It is this kind of philosophy that has hurt little league baseball; made fighting, surgery, law suits and discussions over player salaries more improtant than good sportsmanship and character building in professional ranks. We think its how you play the game that counts most.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Little Disappointed

June 17, 1977

The Charlotte Post 2604-B W. Blvd. Charlotte, N.C.

Dear Editor:

I am a subscriber to your newspaper. I do not subscribe to the Charlotte Observer or News because, in my opinion, they do not reflect positive images of the Black community. Whenever I am approached by one of them for a subscription, I readily tell them why I refuse. I subscribe to the Charlotte Post because it's "Black" and because I once had the opportunity to work there.

But, to my surprise, I am a little disappointed in the lack of news coverage of what Black people in other parts of North Carolina, the U.S., and even Africa are doing in order to survive the oppression we find ourselves in today. It gives us more unity when we know of other's struggles.

Which brings me to why I wrote this letter and the challenge I want to present to you. President Carter is boldly speaking out for human rights of people in other countries. I am ashamed of and outraged at the masses of Black people for not SCREAMING about the human rights of brothers and sisters right here at home. Such as the Rev. Ben Chavis and the Wilmington 10, the Whiteville, N.C. 17, the RNA 11 and nameless others (nameless to us because of lack of news coverage of

I wonder if the POST will take a step towards Black people in this area knowing the real truth about the U.S.'s history on human rights so that we won't let our opportunity slide to make the world focus attention on the human rights of Black people in America, Australia, Figil Islands, Solomon Islands, and in Africa. Field Marshall Idi Amin of Uganda has been given a lot of bad publicity in America

within the last few weeks. Enclosed you will find an open letter to President Carter from him explaining a side of the story we never hear in the News media. This letter was published in the May issue of Black News out of New York. The U.S. has violated human rights of people of color the world over and Black people in particular.

The time is ripe for us to make Carter and Andrew Young address themselves to the human rights of political prisoners who were

sent to jail during the J. Edgar Hoover years. We later find out that Hoover was a racist, as well as mentally incompetent. We have also

found out about unsuccessful assasination plots of the U.S. towards Fidel Castro of Cuba. But, we need to raise more hell about the successful assasination of Patrice Lumumba of the Congo and then teach our children who their heroes are. And, speaking of heroes, the POST did not mention anything of our beloved Malcolm's birthday on May 19. His ideals mean a lot to many of us.

I would like to see the POST help improve the Black community's self image (especially children, our future) and consciousness grow by offering a regular article (even if it's nothing but a "Did you Know?" type history lesson) on our history before slavery because that was during our most glorious time. We know enough about slavery. The conscious among us can still feel the shackles and hear the crack of the whip.

As a teacher of Blacks from elementary to college I have found that the best way to spark an interest in the minds of the young is to explain to them the beauty we had as a people before we were slaves. It makes a child feel good when he knows that we did not just submit to slavery but that wars were fought on all fronts of Africa for a thousand years before slavery became into existence.

It would be a step in the correct direction if the POST publishes historical facts to educate the community. The information is so enormous, but readily available that there are some people with Ph.D's who have to admit they know nothing about true, ancient African history. We know only what the white man has taught us.

African history is my specialty and if you would like facts, I have a library full. The truth is the only thing that will set us free. And, the Black press has always been a vehicle of truth for the Black community.

So, it would please a lot of your readers if you publish Amin's letter in full so that we can form our own conclusions and not rely on the 6 o'clock report.

I very seldom write letters, so I hope that this one does not end up in the trash can.

Sincerely,

**Barbara Harris** 2007 Erie St. Charlotte, N.C. 28206

## TO BE **EQUAL**



Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

#### Family Rights Need Support

By the razor-thin margin of only one vote, the Supreme Court rendered a decision of major importance in enabling the extended family to survive. At the same time, federal planners are sending up trial balloons for a plan that would weaken family life.

In the Court case, an East Cleveland, Ohio zoning law was struck down because, by making it a crime for a grandmother and her grandchildren to live in the same house, it violated their constitutional rights.

The zoning law said that dwelling units in the town could only be occupied by members of a single family, and then defined "family" so narrowly that it would have excluded from her home a grandchild who came to live with Mrs. Inez Moore when her daughter died.

Instead of applauding this example of family love, the town prosecuted the case and won criminal penalties against Mrs. Moore as Ohio courts backed the case against her, deciding that East Cleveland had the right to determine the types of family arrangements allowed and also, of course, to define what a "family" is. That definition was the standard middle-class one, not only ignoring the rights of people to live with their kin, but also excluding common family patterns among minorities.

Although justice was finally done, the very narrowness of the Court's vote and the stony disregard for human rights evidenced in some of the justice's opinions make it hard not to be disturbed.

Justice Byron R. White, for example, claimed Mrs. Moore wasn't denied due process since "she and her grandchildren could have moved elsewhere in the Cleveland metropolitan area."

For the majority, Justice Lewis F. Powell Jr., correctly pointed out that along with the nuclear family, (husband, wife and their children) "the tradition of uncles, aunts, cousins, and especially grandparents, sharing a household along with parents and children has roots equally deserving of constitutional recognition."

It is ironic that such a case should come up at the very moment when discontent with the nuclear family is becoming widespread. Experts have indicated that the nuclear family tends to isolate individuals, deprives the elderly of meaningful functions within the family, and deprives children of the support of the warm ties of the traditional extended family.

Yet another irony is that black people, who have repeatedly been condemned for supposedly "weak family structure," have been the group most strongly attached to the survival of the traditional extended family. One of the basic instruments of black survival has been the strength of the ties binding the generations and kinship.

As the weaknesses of the nuclear family have become more apparent, it has also become clearer that the attacks on the black family have obscured much that other American families could learn from. Attempts to force conformity to a single, monolithic concept of what constitutes a family reflects intolerance and stops us from achieving a truly pluralistic society.

Someone ought to tell federal officials, town fathers and judges that social policy should support family strengths, not tear them down.

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### Some Tough Questions About District Representation

By Gary Gregg

Some tough questions must be asked about district representation and what it means to black people in Charlotte.

The generally accepted idea is that district representation means more black representation, on the Charlotte City Council but the figures don't support that claim.

Only district two of the seven city council districts has a majority black registration. This district includes most of Charlotte's black westside. neighborhoods such as Five Points, Biddlesville, University Park, McCrorey Heights. Northwood Estates and Druid Hills to name a few. On the white side, the neighborhoods include Enderly Park, Thomasboro, Hoskins and Wesley Heights.

In this district 65 percent of the population is black and there are 7,847 blacks registered to vote, compared to 4,848 whites. These figures include Democrats and Republicans, but the bulk of the voters are Democrats.

The next highest number of registered blacks is found in district three, an area that includes Southside, Clanton Park. Boulevard Homes, Little Rock Apartments and Dal-

ton Village. In this district there are 4,888 registered blacks, compared to 6,262 registered whites. The population in this district is about 50-50, black and white.

Then there's district one, with 4,812 registered blacks and 5,962 registered whites. District one includes Cherry, First Ward, Belmont, Villa Heights, Tryon Hills and Upper Greenville-Double Oaks. About 70 percent of the approximately 41,000 people in this district are black, but only 44 percent are registered voters. while almost 50 percent of the whites in the district are registered. The white neighborhoods in District One Include North Charlotte, Elizabeth, Plaza Midwood

In the other four districts, black registration totals are substantially less: 1,730 in District four; 991 in District five; 321 in District six; and 155 in District seven.

So the figures, as they now stand, show that blacks are "guaranteed" only one city council member under the district representation plan.

Now for the tough questions: what are the black political types doing about the situation? Is there a voter registration drive being conducted in District one where whites have out-registered blacks by 1,150 voters. Is there a concerted search in that district for viable black candidates? One white candidate has already announced in District one.

I guess theorectically district one can be served as ably by a white city council member as a black one. But still some tough questions must be asked. Who will be concerned about

better health care in Piedmont Courts and Belmont? Who will be concerned about moving the main garbage truck garage from across the street in Belmont? Who will see that the housing code is strictly enforced in Villa Heights? Who will fight for the integrity

There are problems galore in District one, the real innercity district, struggling for survival, particularly in the face of a renewed interest in downtown development.

This district, then, with the traffic problems of Elizabeth. the fight for stablity of North Charlotte and the struggle to discourage urban encroachment in Plaza-Mi ood. needs a strong repre stative. The candidates in this district

divergent problems in District one. Candidates must have some background in dealing with local government. The council member elected from this district must be able to hang out at the First Ward Grill, be recognized at the corner of N. Davidson Street and 36th, known along the narrow streets of Cherry. District one's representative must be tough, a fighter of the first order who is able to produce results in one of the most oppressed districts in the

So where is the black political caucus? Where are the blacks who handed out the flyers, bumper stickers and other material urging support of the district representation referendum in April? Have they forgotten that no system is any better than the work put into it: Have they gone back to the relative (security of) their own districts, content to leave District one to its fate, whatever it is?

Where is the black women's caucus? Where are the so-called sophisticated black political types who know everything you need to know about politics? What are you doing. what will you do in District Morehead area, Southside.

In District two, have blacks begun trying to identify good candidates, or are they sitting back smugly, apparently as-sured of a city council mem-

There are 2,999 more blacks

registered in District two than there are white registered voters, but slow work in developing viable candidates could spell disaster for black representation, even in this district. Another thing which could

be disastrous in District two is too much in-fighting among potential candidates.

My view is that there should be a lot of open discussion, honest and forthright, unmixed with emotionalism and personal gain desires. This discussion should center around, not only what black candidates should run in District Two. but what candidates can win and represent the white areas of the district as well. Will District Two overcome some longstanding problems and conflicts over money, politics and personality to join together to elect a good candidate to

the council this year? In District three there are 4.888 registered blacks, most of whom live in the dying West

Clanton Park and from Dalton Village out to the Airport. This compares with 6,262 white registered voters, a difference

Will there be a registration drive in District three?

An even tougher question for these three districts is will there be a turnout drive? For reasons beyond my understanding, Blacks in Charlotte, even with all the problems this community has, aren't notoriously good voters.

Turnout in the black community usually hoovers a round 20 to 25 percent, even with the cars carrying people to the polls.

Just last year, a group of neighborhoods, banded together as the Northwood Estates Community organization and successfully fought the building of a county garage at the entrance of their community along Beatties Ford Road. But in a subsequent battle to

reduce the amount of industrial land surrounding their homes, they lost.

Let's just consider a few of

So there are some of the questions. The final question is, will the black community come up with any answers?