

# Editorials & Comments

## Voter Apathy Is Costly

By Hoyle H. Martin Sr.  
Post Executive Editor

Ron Leeper, a District 3 candidate for City Council, has been knocking on doors to find out the needs and concerns of people and to solicit their support in the September 27 Democratic primary. Leeper has also found behind these doors many citizens who don't know what district they reside in and lack a basic understanding about district representation. Leeper's campaign manager, Richard Williams, reportedly responded to this somewhat depressing state of affairs by saying, "We've got to do something about that."

Doing "something about that" may be too little and too late as far as our first experience with district representation in 32-years is concerned. More to the point, the many years of apathy by blacks toward the local political process may be about to have its biggest and most devastating cost. This possibility arises because too many blacks have failed to recognize that if you can't change the system from the outside, you should labor diligently from within until the fruits of your labor are evident, and eventually - maybe not as soon as you'd like - a change will occur.

The opportunity for district representation is just such an eventuality; however, blacks may not be able to capitalize on this opportunity. The possibility of a lost opportunity arises from blacks not being registered - and eventually voting - in sufficient numbers to force any candidate, black or white, to respond to black citizens needs and concerns. In specific terms, the failure of blacks to register in impressive numbers means that in two districts where blacks should control political power, and in a third where they should be at least co-equals, uncertainty exists. The uncertainty emerges from the fact that blacks constitute 70, 65 and 50 percent respectively of the populations of districts 1, 2 and 3, yet they comprise only 41, 62 and 44 percent of these districts' registered voters. Furthermore, if history repeats itself, not more than 50 to 55 percent of those registered will vote in either the primaries or the general election.

Such a low voter-turnout will result in blacks not being the deciding voice in whatever candidates are elected in either of the three districts. Our view, based on an analysis of the facts, assumes that white voters will go to the polls in comparatively larger numbers than blacks as they usually do.

## Respond To Needs

Paradoxically, black voter support of the concept of district representation was based on the view that it is the only way to get local

government to respond to needs. This is evident too in the fact that the primary issue of all candidates, both black and white, from districts 1, 2 and 3 is the issue of more responsiveness from local government. The POST applauds these candidates for their awareness of the problem and concern of all westsiders. However, we continue to be concerned with voter indifference, an indifference that will be reflected in the strengths and weaknesses of the district Councilmen regardless of how sincere they may be in their efforts to serve their constituencies.

To those of you who have not registered, who feel indifferent or apathetic, or who feel as a District 1 resident who said, "We're nobodies to them folk downtown," it's time to begin believing that you are somebody. A good start in this direction of acting like somebody is to register and vote. (The last day to register for the November general election is October 10.) When you do that "them folk downtown" will begin to realize that you are somebody. Don't be discouraged either by Jimmy Carter's failure to give priorities to welfare reform, jobs and a workable urban policy, because just as 94 percent of the black voters helped put him in the White House in 1976 they can help move him in 1980.

## Vote Your Convictions

To those of you who are registered, be sure to vote your convictions in the primary and in the general election. The POST urges you to be strong in your commitment to making district representation - the people's form of government - work. Be demanding of yourself and of those who serve in public office for it is only through such demands that good government can become better government.

Finally, the POST believes if you do these things, district representation will become truly a government of all people regardless of race, sex, social position or place of residence.

Furthermore, if voters act as responsible concerned citizens, our elected officials - both district and at-large - will understand that they must honestly and intelligently be responsive to both their districts and the greater community's needs, or you, knowledgeable active voter, will replace them the next time around.

## Something On Your Mind

"Something On Your Mind" is the name of a column devoted to our

readers of this newspaper - as long as it relates in some way to young people, regardless of age.

It will be written by you and about whatever is on your mind!

So, if you have something to say...WRITE ON!



IT IS UP TO US, BLACKS WHO CARE ABOUT THE BLACK FUTURE, TO IMPOSE ORDER WHERE NONE EXIST TO DAY, AND WE HAVE TO DO IT, FOR OUR LIVES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN WORTHLESS THAN WHITE ONES IN THE EYES OF OUR COUNTRY, AND OUR COUNTRY DOES NOT REALLY CARE ABOUT THE CHAOS IN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS AS LONG AS THAT ANARCHY DOES NOT SPILL OVER THE LINES OF DEMARCATION. WE HAVE TO DO IT BECAUSE WE CANNOT ASK OUR OLD PEOPLE TO SPEND THE REST OF THEIR LIVES PASSING THROUGH A GAUNTLET OF MUGGERS.

The Level Of Fear Is Shocking

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Redefine Purpose

Dear Editor:

No race can be any stronger than its weakest link. The civil rights movement has concerned itself with equal housing, equal education and equal employment. Because these ideas, we have ignored the necessity of looking at the individual Black American.

When a black employed father will not support his children, civil rights are meaningless to that mother who must provide for the children.

When an ADC mother is content to allow the father of her children to live a carefree life as is the case in too many black communities, can civil rights be the issue?

We need to redefine our purpose. We need to begin looking at ourselves. Improving ourselves will automatically improve our experiences in housing, education and employment.

Sincerely,

William Mayberry

### National Labor Relations Act

Dear Friends:

When Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act in 1935, it established the policy that American workers should be provided with a fair chance to organize themselves into unions and to bargain collectively with their employers.

Since then, the law has been amended twice. Both times swift, stringent penalties against unions were added. The result is a law that no longer adequately safeguards the

rights of workers who wish to organize in the face of employer opposition. In addition, the NLRB itself has become a slow and cumbersome agency which cannot provide timely enforcement to those employees who seek its protection.

Americans for Justice on the Job is a coalition of unions, civil rights, religious, and women's organizations and other civic groups which support pending legislation to restore the legal balance between employer and employee. It is my privilege to chair this coalition.

Early in October, a series of Labor Law Reform Dinners will be held throughout the United States. The largest of these will be here in Washington, on October 4.

I urge you to attend and show your support for this effort to guarantee the rights of American workers to organize and bargain collectively, and their right of meaningful appeal when those rights are questioned or denied.

Sincerely,

Hubert H. Humphrey  
Chairman

### Black Veterans

Dear Editor:

The National Black Veterans Organization, (NBVO), applauded the courageous action of President Carter in authorizing the armed service to upgrade undesirable and general discharges for more than 400,000 veterans.

Richard N. Hamilton, Executive Director, has cautioned that "time is rapidly running out for you the veterans to take advantage of the President's humane act of conscience." The deadline date to apply is October 4th, 1977.

All less-than-honorable dis-

chargee veterans are urged to immediately call (800) 325-4040. This call is free, and there is no charge for this information, nor any charge for further details about this upgrading process.

But, please hurry, the deadline date is almost here, and it does not appear likely than an extension of time for filing of these applications will be granted beyond October 4.

Mr. Hamilton requests all veterans, but especially all black veterans to please call (800) 325-4040 today, tomorrow may be too late.

Sincerely,

Richard Hamilton

### State Wide Meeting

Dear Mr. Johnson:

We are in the process of planning a Statewide Meeting of the North Carolina Black Women's Political Caucus on September 17, 1977 at St. Augustine's College. The purpose of the meeting is to develop a plan of action that identifies and propose remedies for the needs and concerns of minority women.

The Caucus is an outgrowth of the North Carolina International Women's Year State Meeting in Winston-Salem in June, 1977. There we saw the need for minority women to come together in a forum where we can resolve issues directly affecting our lives.

Therefore, we are requesting that you print an article in your paper regarding our upcoming State Meeting. If you can accommodate us, we are enclosing a brochure that you may wish to use as a part of the data. If you wish further information, please contact me at the above number or at 919-832-7800.

Ora M. Coleman

## TO BE EQUAL



Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

## Canal Treaty Is Sound

The credibility of American foreign policy and our position of enlightened world leadership are at stake in the recently concluded Panama Canal Treaty.

If the Senate fails to ratify the treaty, this country will be in deep trouble. One possibility might be a prolonged Vietnam-type guerrilla war in Panama. The Canal, always vulnerable to sabotage, could be closed. And America's prestige among South American and Third World countries would go down the drain.

Despite this, the treaty has become one of those emotional issues tailor-made for demagoguery. We're hearing wild charges that the Treaty is a "giveaway," that it endangers national security, and that it involves territory we own.

None of these charges hold water. The Treaty is no giveaway. It assures U.S. operating control of the Canal and an American military presence there until the year 2000, and we retain freedom of action to assure the Canal's neutrality. It's a sound agreement that will mean continued access to the waterway for all nations and continues America's strong position there.

Rather than endangering national security, the Treaty strengthens it. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and U.S. officers at the Canal all endorse the Treaty. They know it means stability of the Canal's operations and that the agreement is the best defense against sabotage because Panama will have a major economic stake in its operations. Even after the Treaty ends, if our defense interests required it, our armed forces would still be in a position to defend the Canal.

And it is incredible to hear people say that the U.S. owns the Panama Canal Zone. We have rights there, but we don't own the place. The Canal Zone is not like other territories the U.S. purchased and owned forever thereafter.

Our control - not ownership - is based on a 1903 Treaty that was rammed down the throats of the Panamanians during the heyday of colonialism. By renegotiating that Treaty we put our presence there on a legal and moral basis far superior to that now governing our control.

Ratification of the Treaty is essential to avoid bloodshed. I often wonder whether the people so loudly opposed to the Treaty are willing to put their own lives on the line in fighting any war that might result from its rejection.

It should not be so hard to understand the Panamanian feelings about the Canal Zone. How would we as Americans feel if a foreign country controlled a broad strip of land cutting through the heart of our country? And how would we react if that control was based on a colonial era treaty forced upon us and if the foreign power refused to grant us sovereignty over our own land and operating participation in a canal on our own territory?

It's as if Great Britain had granted independence in 1776 while still holding on to a big chunk of America and refused to give it up 200 years later. We'd be pretty hot about that, and that's the way most Latin Americans feel today.

## as i see it

### Pressure Of Little League Sports

By Gerald O. Johnson

The purpose for little league sports has lost its meaning over the years. I was always led to believe that little league programs were to teach good sportsmanship while giving kids an organized environment to compete in. In this respect, little league sports is a worthwhile project.

But it appears that this purpose has been overshadowed by the desire to win. The pressures that little leaguers are subjected to for the sake of winning makes me wonder if the program should be stopped altogether.

This summer brought about fist fights between parents and coaches. It has been reported that coaches, in conjunction with parents have put kids through weight building and weight losing programs. Moreover, it has been said that kids are taught dirty and cheating techniques all for the sake of winning.

This can not be construed as a healthy environment in which a kid is taught to compete. Also, adult fights is not an ideal way to teach a kid good sportsmanship. Kids at this tender age are easily

influenced and they usually do what has been given to them by example.

Kids at this tender age can not handle the undue pressures put on them by parents, coaches, and spectators. They should not have to. The possibility of being a failure at such an early age can stigmatize a child for life.

Athletics for kids should be fun. In fact, this has to be the primary objective.

If you are a parent or coach of a little leaguer your job is not to make an O.J. Simpson or Rod Carew. Rather, it is to make a responsible citizen for our society. To do this you must teach values while the child is having fun.

He should learn how to work with others in obtaining a common goal. He should learn how to get along with others. He should learn how to play by the rules. Finally, he should learn how to discipline his own desires for the benefit of the team's desires.

By instilling such sound values into a little leaguer, you might not produce an all-star athlete but you will produce an all-star human being.

In conclusion, the old saying



Gerald O. Johnson

"It's not if you win or lose that counts, but how you play the game" is as applicable as ever. It is not enough to just say it, we must live by it.

### A PRAYER

In my readings I ran across the following prayer that was anonymously written. Since it is such a powerful piece and one of the most beautiful pieces I've ever read, I thought I would pass it on to you. I hope you enjoy it.

I asked for strength that I might achieve - I was made weak that I might learn humbly to obey.

I asked for help that I might do greater things - I was given infirmity that I might do better things.

I asked for riches that I might be happy - I was given poverty that I might be wise.

I asked for power that I might have the praise of men - I was given weakness that I might feel the need of God.

I asked for all things that I might enjoy life - I was given life that I might enjoy all things.

I got nothing that I asked for - but everything I hoped for.

Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered. I am, among all men, most richly blessed.

Anon.

### Irresponsible Reporting

The recent tragedy that claimed three lives and injured

several others in Charlotte had more ramifications than called for. The reason is irresponsible reporting by the news media.

The ramifications I am referring to involves the unnecessary exposure of the Nazi party. The exposure has caused ill-feelings, fear, and hate to surface in an area that is just beginning to bury such feelings.

It is without a doubt that freedom of the press has been and probably always will be a necessity in a democratic society. But with this freedom

the media must exercise restraint and become more responsible in its reporting.

In the case of the shootings, the stories that led to such emotional unrest were based on suppositions and possibilities without any sound facts. Consequently, the stories should not have been done until after a police investigation revealed the facts.

The continued unfounded exposure of a sick group like the Nazi party can only lead to more blood shed. If it happens the media can truthfully say that they had a part in it.

### YWCA Sets Registration

Registration for 10 weeks of fall classes at the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) will start Saturday, September 24 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and continue Monday through Wednesday, September 26, 27, and 28 from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Classes start Monday, October 10.

The fall lineup includes swimming, dance, tennis, exercise and skill development classes for all ages and degrees of proficiency.

Registrants are advised, for

their own convenience, to register at either the Park Road or East Trade Street Center, depending on where their class will be held.

Membership in the YWCA is required for all classes, except the one session, Disco Dance Clinic. Membership is a nominal \$7.50 for women or men; \$2 for girls or boys 12 to 17. Sustaining memberships of \$15.00 or more are invited. Children under 12 may register for classes under a parent's membership.

### 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

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Bernard Reeves..... General Manager

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Albert Campbell..... Advertising Director

Second Class Postage No. 965500 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  
New York, N.Y. 10036  
(212) 489-1220

2400 S. Michigan Ave.  
Chicago, Ill. 60616  
Calumet 5-0200