

Editorials & Comments

The Challenges Of Change

By Hoyle H. Martin Sr.
Post Executive Editor

The tears of defeat are dry, the smiles of victory have faded into a note of seriousness. Charlotte has its first known Republican mayor in recorded history, and the City Council's return to district representation after nearly a third of a century has as a result become a relatively inexperienced body. Furthermore, "The new City Council," a POST story noted last week, "can properly be described as more of everything - more blacks (3), more women (4), more Republicans (4), more Democrats (7), and more youth with the average of office holders being only 42."

Now, more than a week after the election, many political observers and ordinary citizens are so perplexed by the magnitude of these changes that they are, for example, referring to Ken Harris' victory as an "upset," and they're asking what happened, and how? The POST believes these questions can best be understood and answered within the context of a more significant question, that is, what do the election results mean for Charlotte's future and thus the quality of life for its citizens?

The "what happened and how" questions were answered in part earlier this year when John Belk decided not to seek re-election as mayor and when a mere 11 1/2 percent of the city's voters made district representation a renewed reality.

Viable Candidate

Belk's decision appeared ideal for Jim Whittington to make his quest for the mayor's seat. Patiently waiting for the Chamber of Commerce and "Big Four" university types to temporarily leave the political scene, and assuming the Republicans lacked a viable candidate, Whittington sought the city's highest political office on the assumed strength of his 18 years of past experience on the City Council. Secondly, in spite of a valiant effort by Sam Smith and the Westside Community Organization, there appeared to be little real interest in district representation, a movement that Jim Whittington had strongly opposed.

What happened? First, a small but vocal minority of city voters said they wanted district representation because local government was not adequately responding to their needs. Consistent with the widespread apathy toward districting, only 27,698 citizens took the time to vote. However, 13,889 votes "for" and a 13,809 "against" gave districting an 80-vote margin of victory. Secondly, Ken Harris, acting like an underdog and trying to stop Whittington from becoming mayor by default, mounted a carefully planned campaign that enabled him to

capture southeast Charlotte and a sizeable portion of black and white votes in other parts of the city who traditionally vote the Democratic ticket. Furthermore, Harris capitalized on Whittington's initial opposition to district representation.

In the City Council races, the voters elected a more youthful and inexperienced group of lawmakers including three blacks and four women.

What does it all mean as we move from the threshold of the last quarter of the 20th century? First, it means that with 61 percent of the votes cast, Mayor-elect Ken Harris, has a mandate from the people to provide the kind of forceful and innovative leadership that has campaign rhetoric promised. Secondly, Harris will need to give the City Council a sense of direction that allows for meeting the needs of both the city at large as well as the seven districts.

District Concerns

Thirdly, we believe the election results will place greater demands upon the City Council to respond more directly to specific community concerns without becoming involved in districting tug-of-wars. Thus, the district council persons must be knowledgeable and alert to their district responsibilities but pursue their district concerns within the context of the greater needs of the entire city.

Fourthly, we believe that because the mayor and the majority of the council members are newcomers, a greater burden will be placed on the citizen to be actively involved in and aware of what local government is and should be doing. The history-making 42 percent voter-turnout on election day was in itself an indication of citizen involvement and awareness. This must continue if districting is to become the viable force for an improved quality of life in Charlotte.

Finally, the election shattered some of the apathy among black voters as a record 38 percent of them not only voted but exercised their independence of their tradition Democratic Party loyalty by giving substantial support to Ken Harris. Furthermore, black support of Harris and traditionally loyal Whittington white supporters who voted for Harris prove once again that Charlotte voters are bi-partisan and not hung-up on straight party loyalties.

Thus, Charlotte's future will not be one of the status quo and survival on the achievements of the past, but rather one of encountering the challenges of change for a better Charlotte for you and me. Let's hope that the government we have created has the wisdom, insight, patience and determination to meet these challenges.

"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



Blacks' Destiny In Own Hands

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

An Open Appeal

To Belgrade On Human Rights In The USA

McCain, N.C. Prison
October 1977

It is from a torturous prison cell in the state of North Carolina where I make an urgent open appeal for human rights to the world community and to the assembled conference in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. As only one of many victims, I shall not keep silent for I am compelled to speak out concerning human rights violations of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act by the United States of America.

Please permit me to emphatically state that I in no manner wish to embarrass or unduly criticize my country. I love my country. And it is because I love my country that I come to publicly decry the domestic exploitation, persecution and imprisonment of innocent citizens for political, economic and racist motives.

No doubt I will face reprisals and retaliatory punishment for daring to write and speak these truths which actually are self-evident but I take the risk accepting what may come with courage.

poverty, high unemployment and unjust imprisonment.

Notwithstanding the rhetorical eloquence of President Jimmy Carter's foreign policy and human rights campaign abroad, inside our country our oppressed national minorities are confronted with the contradiction of continued racial discrimination, injustice, and inequality before the law. Here, equal justice under the law is only prescribed for the corporate rich and powerful. There are literally thousands of innocent people imprisoned solely because of their race and poverty.

Today in the United States, in violation of the Helsinki Final Act, there are in fact many political "prisoners of conscience."

Therefore I make this open appeal for human rights in general on behalf of the millions of oppressed in America and in particular on behalf of the Wilmington Ten and all other political prisoners presently incarcerated in the United States. I send to the Belgrade Conference the details of the Wilmington Ten case not to present a single isolated case of human persecution but to present our particular case as a clear factual example of the existence and continued persecution of the many political "prisoners of conscience" in the nation.

In addition I have compiled a partial list of the names of those I know to be political prisoners and/or imprisoned victims of racial injustice.

Lastly, I am insisting a brief Statement of Appeal to all freedom-loving peoples of the world. I pray that our cry for liberation, justice, human

rights, and peace will not fall on deaf ears.

Thank you.

In Christ's name,
Rev. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr.

Nationwide

Recruitment

Information

Dear Friend,
It's that time of year again - our December issue.

While we join sentiments with good will toward all men and all women, our December issue pursues that theme more actively. It highlights decisions that will affect all our lives through 1978, and beyond.

Included will be an exclusive story on the historic up-coming National Women's Conference, sponsored by the United States Government. Also included will be an article on the State Job Service Centers providing very sophisticated job-finding and placement services to assist both the employer and the employee. This vital service is examined in connection to nation-wide recruitment in the December issue.

Anticipating that extra December rush, could we have your space reservations earlier than usual? Our deadline is still November 20th; but please give us that little extra time we need to do our best for you.

Season's Greetings from
All of us at FORUM,
Jerome W. Vozoff
Publisher

TO BE EQUAL



Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

Role For Black Psychiatrists

One of the hidden issues facing American medicine is the dearth of black psychiatrists. This is an issue that goes beyond the narrow one of ensuring equal access to all professions for blacks and other minorities; it has a bearing on the social and educational issues affecting the black community.

With mental health occupying an increasingly larger role in the public consciousness black under-representation in the field becomes more crucial. There are only 450 black psychiatrists in America today - a mere 1.7 percent of the more than 26,000.

The importance of increasing those numbers becomes apparent when we realize that the mental health needs of minority communities are largely unmet. The stresses produced by racial discrimination, poverty, and deprivation result in many instances where individuals need professional help.

Psychiatrists play a major role in determining the placement of children with special needs, in forensic programs, and direct psychiatric departments in community general hospitals. Such hospitals control large budgets, jobs for new professionals, and often decide in a given community who is "mad" and who is "bad," and who will get what kind of help or treatment.

Help has to come from professionals with a sympathetic understanding of the social roots of personal mental health problems. In most instances, a black psychiatrist who has faced similar social and racial stresses, is better able to help.

At the same time, there has to be greater efforts made in psychiatric training to acquaint professionals with the special problems faced by blacks and other minorities. The black Psychiatrists of America have helped develop a curriculum on black psychiatry that includes studies of the black family, black culture and other areas that impact on the black psyche.

This is a development that should not be limited to centers of black medical education, but should be adopted by predominately white training centers, whose graduates will be dealing with minority patients in a variety of settings, from office consultation to institutional care.

Developing more black psychiatrists and sensitizing white professionals to the special problems faced by blacks will also impact on the educational system. This was brought home by a recent court case in San Francisco that seeks to bar the use of IQ tests to place children in classes for the mentally retarded.

The suit was brought on behalf of 6 black children who scored 75 or less on the standardized IQ tests. Such tests purport to measure intelligence. In actuality they only measure cultural and language experiences. That's why middle class white children tend to score higher on IQ tests than do minority children.

When the six were retested by black psychologists who reworded the tests to reflect the children's cultural and language experience, they scored from 17 to 38 points higher.

With so few blacks in professions like psychiatry, minorities are forced to depend on white professionals who may not fully understand their needs.

as i see it

Early Gold Bowl Predictions?

By Gerald O. Johnson

On December 3, 1977 in Richmond, Virginia at 1:30 p.m. The Winston-Salem State Rams will clash with the South Carolina State Bulldogs in the 2 Annual Gold Bowl Game.

The game will undoubtedly be the best clash between two predominately black schools this season. If there is any way possibly for you to be in Richmond on the 3, then treat yourself and be there.

Both teams have proven to be powerhouses with the Rams carrying a 11-0-0 record and a 15 game winning streak against an 8-1-1 record for the Bulldogs. It is interesting to note that the Bulldogs lost and tie came from white schools.

To get a prediction on this game of the season, I called "Jimmy, the Greek." "The Greek" informed me that he is not up on black football but he referred me to an expert in the area. You guessed it, ole "Ned the Nigger." Well, we've all experienced Ned's predictions from last year. Since Ned was anything but perfect last year, he dropped from the scene.

When I called "Ole Ned" he was happy to hear from me and he admitted being surprised at the accurate predic-

tions being made by the Charlotte Post Sports department. He said that the business is doing well this year at predicting outcomes.

Well, I assured Ned that the reason I called was to get expert advice and that he was the best in predicting black sports.

After swelling Ned's already inflated head he agreed to talk to me about the coming attraction. Here in essence is what he had to say.

Ned feels that S.C. State has not performed well with stiff competition. The two mediocre white schools that forced them into a calamity of mistakes proves that the competition in MEAC is far from competitive. S.C. State lacks a potent passing attack and the kicking game is poor. Fortunately, with the calibre of teams they played most of the season neither weakness had to be demonstrated. However, the strength of the defense and the power of the ground attack will keep them in the Gold Bowl.

The Rams whose offense is versatile and explosive is an exciting team to watch. The defense is suspect, however,



By Gerald O. Johnson

mainly due to inconsistencies. The kicking game is excellent and this is where the game will be won. Kermit Blount the Ram quarterback runs the option as well as anyone and his ability to throw from the option gives the Rams an explosive offensive punch. Add to this good running backs and talented receivers you have the ingredient for a 11-0 season. The Rams conference competition has not been as easy as the Bulldogs in Ned's opinion. The Panthers of Virginia Union is an under-rated ball club in the CIAA. The Panthers gave the Rams all they could handle in Rich-

mond earlier in the season but lost due to a costly turn over in the 3rd quarter. But the Panthers were able to run and pass effectively against the Rams.

Both clubs are excellently coached, but the Bulldogs will be able to prepare for the game more effectively since the coaching staff has no other responsibilities but coaching.

Taking everything into consideration the Rams will win by 3 in Ned's final prediction. The advantage goes to the Rams because of the kicking game and the versatility in the offense.

Before Ned and I ended our conversation he told me that the Golden Bulls dismal football season will soon be forgotten by an impressive looking Bull basketball team.

Well, there you have it, Ned has spoken.

Since we are on the topic of sports, I might as well give you the prediction of this seasons basketball outcome.

With a lot of good talent gone but still a lot remaining, (barring any eligibility problems) this season promises to be very interesting and well balanced. Last year's southern division leader St. August-

ine's will find it hard to repeat their last year's performance of 12-4 conference and 20-6 overall. The basic thing they still have in their favor is last year's Coach of the Year Harvey Heartley. Undoubtedly if the Falcons pull off the number one spot in the Southern Division this year, then he will repeat as Coach of the Year. The Falcons lost 3 key players to graduation, most notably All CIAA guard Sean Powell. They will be in Hampton in February but just barely.

The Rams of Winston-Salem will be hurting in the experience category also losing its backcourt to graduation. Don Helton and George Gibson, All CIAA and All Tournament, will be hard to replace. The Rams, however, aren't crying too much because Carlos Terry, Mr. CIAA, will be returning this will be enough along with Bighouse Gaines mastery coaching of the game to have Winston be number one in the Southern Division.

The Bulls of JCSU could surprise a lot of people if All CIAA performer Herbert Entzinger can perform to his capabilities. Coach Jerome Fitch basically is in the building process but the Bulls

should hold off Fayetteville and Shaw for a bid to the CIAA Tournament.

Livingstone, Shaw and Fayetteville played last year with very young teams. If all goes well these teams should prove a difficult but impossible obstacle to overcome. Shaw was the best of the three last year.

But look for Livingstone to be much improved. The 3rd thru 6th spots are up for grabs but I pick them like this 1) Winston-Salem, 2) St. Augustine's 3) JCSU, 4) Livingstone, 5) Shaw, 6) Fayetteville.

The Northern Division will prove to be a dog fight again this year. The most improved athletic program in the CIAA, I think is on the Virginia Union Campus. Even with the loss of Curvan Lewis at the center spot VU will vie strongly for the number one spot. If Lamont Echols, Derwin Lilly, and Charles Benson return and play up to their potential, then VU will repeat as the number one Northern Division team.

Norfolk State had hoped to build their young team around Ray Epps the outstanding forward. But Epps applied for See EARLY on Page 14

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