

Editorials & Comments

Lancing, The Issues In 1978

By Hoyle H. Martin Sr.
Post Executive Editor

Among the ups and downs of President Carter's first year in the White House was the Bert Lance affair. Lance, the Georgia banker who became Carter's budget chief, eventually resigned under pressure because of his questionable banking practices while heading the Calhoun National Bank. Interesting, the closer Lance came to actually resigning the more vicious the news media became in its criticisms and allegations. In fact, a media mentality arose that appeared more concerned with character assassination than with merely forcing Lance to resign. We must add too that the media was not alone in its assault on Mr. Lance. The recently retired commentator Eric Sevareid noted this when he said, ignorant and biased reporting has its counterpart in ignorant and biased reading and listening." The entire Lance episode appeared to convey a mentality that said people at the top in whatever venture must be brought down.

We wonder too whether President Jimmy Carter, Mecklenburg County Commissioner Liz Hair, National Urban League head Vernon Jordan and others in both public and private life may be facing the Lancing mentality. We are all familiar with the manner in which the highly popular Liz Hair was ousted from the Commission Chairmanship but few of use are aware of the unconfirmed report that some Carter administration sources are attempting to use the retiring congressman Barbara Jordan to weaken the leadership influence of Vernon Jordan (not related).

Search-And-Destroy

The most obvious and clearly seen example of the search-and-destroy-leaders mentality appears to be what is facing the President. We noted in this column in June that many black leaders, congressional liberals and organizations had begun to express growing dissatisfaction with President Carter's domestic economic policies. We thought then and we think now that the jury is still out on Jimmy Carter because

six months and even a year is not long to make valid judgments about the effectiveness of the highly complex job that the presidency of the United States is.

While Carter himself has indicated considerably more failure than success in his first year - and it takes a good man to admit failure - his critics keep attacking his efforts with a Lancing mentality. Carter's less than successful efforts to reduce unemployment, hold down inflation and deal effectively with energy crisis and the welfare problem led him to say publicly, "My biggest

mistake has been in inadvertently building up expectations too high...I have dashed some hopes and disap-

pointed people that thought we might be quicker." Significantly, however, "building up expectations" is the stuff - the political rhetoric - that gets people elected to any public office.

Economic Recovery

We do not feel that Jimmy Carter's presidency needs to be defended by us, however, we believe that politics aside, \$977 was not as bad a year economically speaking as many would have us believe from the standpoint of the White House's contribution. It's true the economic recovery begun under the Ford administration has continued at a slow pace and unemployment has dropped only slightly (7.3 to 6.9 percent) since Carter took office, nevertheless, these trends are on the plus side and moving in the direction of greater recovery. Even the rise in the inflationary rate from 5.3 percent in 1976 to 7.3 percent in the first three quarters of 1977 may be offset in part by the new federal minimum wage of \$2.65 per hour, up 35 cent per hour.

Delays in energy policy and welfare reform are more a problem of congressional inaction and failure to compromise than in the Carter administration itself. The administration's tax reform pledge is still largely just a pledge and his national health insurance program has just begun to become visible.

Carter's first year wasn't bad by another standard too, this is, our output of real goods and services - six and one-third percent - for each of the four quarters in 1977 was greater than Carter expected. All these developments together mean, economist Paul A. Samuelson says that "3 million more people have been able to find jobs (and these) should be weighed in the scale of economic pluses and minuses." of the Carter year.

With this in mind we think it's time for black leaders to do a little less attacking of the Carter game plan and spend more time and energy attempting to put something into the plan that is realistic and helpful. If 1977 was the year Carter didn't deliver, let's make 1978 the year of delivery. To do that rhetoric must turn to action. Leaders must spend more time getting the masses to write their congressman demanding action and in writing and submitting alternative approaches than in just say Carter isn't doing the job.

If we do these things, the 1977 that began with promises and ended with doubts can become a 1978 of action, hope and confidence.



Cuban Intervention

Threat To Africa's Integrity

American support for the well-being and political integrity of Africa is being undermined by a trend of thought in this country that minimizes the significance of the massive and widespread Cuban intervention in Africa. Rather than providing insights into one of the gravest political crises to threaten Africa since independence or proposing a positive and constructive American response, this approach avoids or prefers to wish away the problem.

Many statements from African leaders forcefully express grave concern over the extensive presence of Cuban forces on the continent. In January 1976, Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda warned of "a plundering tiger with its deadly claws now coming in through the back door," a clear reference to the intervention, with Soviet backing, of over 20,000 Cuban soldiers in the Angolan civil war. On April 19, 1977 a spokesman of the Zaire government charged that the invasion of Shaba province of Zaire "was masterminded by the Soviet-Cuban alliance using Angola as its puppet."

Among the other African leaders who have strongly expressed alarm over Cuban and Soviet intervention in Africa are President Leopold Senghor of Senegal, President Omani Bongo of Gabon, President Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, President Houphet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, and Morocco's King Hassan. Moreover, at the meeting of the Organization of African Unity held in Libreville in July a resolution introduced by Senegal was adopted "inviting" all member states of the OAU "not to permit the use of their territory for foreign military bases."

President Houphet-Boigny said recently that "in less than two years, the Cubans have killed thousands of Angolans - our African brothers murdered in cold blood. More victims fell in this short period than in the 15 years of guerilla war against Portuguese colonialism. Yet the West rarely notes this gruesome reality."

In recent weeks, the Carter administration has begun to demonstrate a firmer grasp of African realities. Ambassador Andrew Young, who once described the Cuban army in Angola as "a stabilizing force," now realizes that "what we are seeing is a continuation of death and destruction almost everywhere there is a Cuban military presence. It's a new kind of colonialism."

This shift cannot be explained as the product of some design to gain political support in the United States. Rather the Carter administration has had its mind changed by a year of contact with the views of Africa. In the minds of too many Americans, however, Africa remains an abstraction. Consequently, their attitudes toward Africa are shaped largely by the priorities and symbols of American politics. There is a powerful impulse to ignore African realities in order to preserve certain illusions about the Soviet Union and to advance domestic and foreign policy views unrelated to Africa, to maintain that the normalization of relations with Cuba might be slowed if the United States took even the most minimal, moderate, and restrained steps to express our opposition to Cuban

behavior in Africa.

Some have contended that if you just ignore the massive presence in Angola, Cuban involvement in Africa resembles a conventional foreign aid program. Cuban involvement is compared with earlier Israeli aid efforts, although it is hard to think of two more dissimilar programs. While the Israeli aid program was limited and primarily technical, Cuba's role is primarily military and without any self-imposed limitations. The Cuban involvement in Angola and over a dozen other African states, along with the presence of East German, Soviet, and other Communist "advisors," forms a menacing pattern which must be considered as a whole. To refuse to recognize that Cuba operates as an extension of Soviet power in a region that has always sought to avoid entanglement with the great powers, and to dismiss the Cuban-Soviet threat to Africa, ignoring the warnings of African leaders, demonstrates a shocking disregard for the well-being and political integrity of nations of Africa.

Leaf Program

To End Soon

Charlotte's leaf collection program by vacuum trucks will be ending soon. Residents are urged to rake their leaves to the curb as soon as possible for collection.

The vacuum collection began in mid October with trucks moving in a clockwise direction around the City. More than 7,500 tons or 2,100 loads of leaves have been collected.

again and the cycle continues. Corruption, crime and the works will come in at this point and take over the city.

Hence, there is a very fine balance that must be maintained in dealing with tax increases.

To increase the tax base means bringing more people into the system at the given tax rate. This is a very sound means to get extra revenue without ruining the tax balance that exist. With this added revenue the city is guaranteed a healthy existence. It can maintain higher revenues than expenses.

Moreover, with annexation the city is creating more jobs. Since the expanded areas will require city services, the city will have to beef up its staff to give these services. Note that this method works in reverse of the tax rate increase method. The tax rate increase method has a tendency to deplete and deteriorate the city structure, whereas the tax base increase tends to replenish and expand the city structure.

Also, the city puts itself in a position to get subsidies from the federal government more easily because of its healthy

By Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

TO BE EQUAL



Prospects For The New Year

What kind of a year will 1978 be? I'm not peering into any crystal ball so I won't make predictions. But there are some major issues that will be coming to a head in 1978, and their resolution has great importance for our cities and for minority citizens.

The first of these is jobs. Congress will get the Humphrey-Hawkins Bill and its passage will be essential if there is to be a serious attack on mass unemployment. The Bill's modest targets can only be met through expanded federal job-creation programs, including incentives to the private sector to train and hire workers.

This is the number one priority for 1978. Just about every other major public issue hinges on the success of efforts to get more people into jobs.

The nature of the expected tax cut will have a lot to do with job-creation possibilities. Sharply targeted cuts tied to formation of new jobs and investments in urban areas may generate more private sector hiring and training. Across-the-board cuts in the hopes of encouraging expanded purchasing power to "trickle down" to cities and the poor most likely will not make much of a dent in the problem.

A second major issue will be the Administration's promised urban policy. A team of top officials has been working on a federal package of aid to the cities. So far, reports about the package are discouraging. Indications are that the programs will be limited in scope and nowhere near the necessary funds will be allotted to it.

Reports out of Washington indicate that the planned urban package has already been chopped down to only about \$2.3 billion in new monies, just a fraction of what is needed for a real attack on urban problems.

If that's true, then it indicates a serious failure to come to grips with national problems and a tragic acceptance of poverty and its consequences. Patching together a handful of new programs and better coordination of old ones doesn't constitute an urban policy. It will take a massive infusion of funds concentrated on prime problem areas such as jobs, housing and schools to break the trend of urban deterioration and declines in living standards and opportunities for city dwellers.

The White House is working on the package now. There's still time to improve it. It could be the best thing that happens in the coming year, or it could be the year's major disappointment. We'll soon find out.

Another program hanging fire is the fate of the Administration's welfare reform proposal. It isn't the best plan possible, but it does represent an improvement over the present welfare mess. But Congress has been slow to deal with it. Reports indicate considerable Congressional hostility, and with the present mood of blaming poor people for the malfunctioning of the economy, prospects for passage are not bright.

The Supreme Court's ruling in the Bakke Case is also likely to be one of 1978's highlights, but I suspect the importance of that decision will lie more in people's reactions to it than in the ruling itself.

A decision in favor of Bakke probably will not have a great impact on affirmative action programs other than that of the university Bakke wanted to enter.

as i see it

The Realism In Annexation

By Gerald O. Johnson

Annexation seems to be a big concern of people living in the Charlotte area. The city keeps on expanding its boundaries while the people living on the outskirts of town keep complaining.

The people living outside the city limits do not have to pay taxes to the City of Charlotte. By the same token the city offers no services to people living outside of its boundaries. When the city decides to expand its boundaries beyond its current locations then there is little that can be done to stop it. Consequently the people living outside the city limit think it is unfair that they are forced to become city dwellers with little say in the matter.

The truth is annexation is healthy for a city. It is healthy for those individuals living outside of the cities, also. Let's take a look to see how.

Since the city has to pay for police protection, fire protection, help subsidize the school system, city sanitation, local government, and many, many more services, it stands to reason that conditions will occur that will cause more money to be needed to offer

these services. An example of a condition that could occur is giving a cost of living raise to local government workers. In order to get more money to meet such conditions, the city has but three recourses to take.

- 1) Increase the tax rate
- 2) Increase the tax base
- 3) Federal subsidy

Federal subsidies are usually earmarked for special purposes and they can't be spent in any way the city might choose. So we can eliminate it from the list. To increase the tax rate simply means that the city increases the percentage of tax you must pay on your property. If the individuals in the city pay 1 percent of the total value of the property in taxes, then an increase to 2 percent will net the city twice as much money. Unfortunately, this method of getting more money for the city is detrimental. First of all political people realize that this type of tax increase makes them unpopular at the polls. So they steer away from tax increase decisions.

But more importantly tax increases ultimately will start a chain of events that can lead



Gerald O. Johnson

to a complete deterioration of the city. To continue to raise the tax rate will cause industry to look elsewhere to set up shop. Once the industries start leaving this will take a big chunk out of the city's revenue. Moreover, those individuals who worked at those industries are now unemployed and they become a liability to the city. They move out, more and more people will become unemployed and the city is getting less and less revenue. Therefore the city is forced to increase the tax rate yet once

again and the cycle continues. Corruption, crime and the works will come in at this point and take over the city.

Hence, there is a very fine balance that must be maintained in dealing with tax increases.

To increase the tax base means bringing more people into the system at the given tax rate. This is a very sound means to get extra revenue without ruining the tax balance that exist. With this added revenue the city is guaranteed a healthy existence. It can maintain higher revenues than expenses.

Moreover, with annexation the city is creating more jobs. Since the expanded areas will require city services, the city will have to beef up its staff to give these services. Note that this method works in reverse of the tax rate increase method. The tax rate increase method has a tendency to deplete and deteriorate the city structure, whereas the tax base increase tends to replenish and expand the city structure.

Also, the city puts itself in a position to get subsidies from the federal government more easily because of its healthy

position. The local government of Charlotte has been criticized extensively for the unpopular move of annexation. But it is really a very sound governmental decision.

Finally, those individuals living in the country that are complaining do not realize that if the city is left to deteriorate, then they will suffer. The conveniences and comforts they enjoy now at no expense would be lost. The merchants, the facilities, the hospitals, and many things would suffer if budget decisions went unchecked. Those individuals recently annexed are getting city services and guaranteeing a city's existence with a minimum expense.

It has often been the case that the black community has ridiculed the white press for inadequate and/or non-existing coverage of black sports events. However, I am here to say that it is not the press that should be blamed for poor coverage but the organizers of the event.

The press, especially, the white press, expects an abundance of information to be given out prior to the event. Such information is necessary

to guarantee an accurate and informative report on the event. Such information is non-existent in black circles.

For example, in covering a Charlotte Mecklenburg high school football game, statistics are made available to you on both teams. Team Rosters are given out with correct Jersey numbers on each player. Key players are pointed out on 'quick' sheets to make it easier for you to key on special players. When its time to write an article on the actual game, it is child's play for an experienced sports writer.

Compare this with covering an event for a black college. There is no information given prior to the game. The shirt numbers that are given out on the roster do not match the actual numbers being worn by the players. Moreover, you have to search to find someone to give you a roster. By the time the event starts the reporter is red up with the whole thing. Good newspaper coverage is the result of a good sports information director (SID) which is a part of the public relations department. With a good SID person news coverage is always good.

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