

# Editorials & Comments

## Jesse Jackson's New Conservatism

In a recent issue of a nationally known black weekly newspaper, a writer said the Rev. Jesse L. Jackson is often characterized as a "trouble maker, loud mouth, publicity hound, clothes horse and phony..." Other media reports note that some so-called black leaders are "suspicious" of segments of the white community's acceptance of what some call "the new Jesse Jackson." Even before these rather recent developments, rumors had it that Jackson parted with the inheritors of Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference because they felt the young and talented "Jackson was getting too big for his britches."

Ironically, these criticisms of Jackson for embracing certain values of the larger white society are themselves an example of black acceptance of another white value. This latter value is the growing tendency of Americans to build up our leaders and then work overtime to destroy them through character assassinations, innuendo, gossip or the magnifying of small relatively insignificant issues. Contemporary examples of this have been in the manner which the media hounded Bert Lance from office, tried to destroy Andrew Young for opposing world-wide racism, monitored every act of baseball hero Reggie Jackson and is now turning its guns on President Jimmy Carter. The eloquence of the recently retired Eric Sevarid puts this in perspective when he said, "ignorant and biased reporting has its counterpart in ignorant and biased reading and listening." Thus, the abuses of free speech and freedom of expression are not limited to the media, we all share the weakness.

## The New Jackson

The "new Jesse Jackson" is being criticized because he has adopted a philosophy of change "when the situation calls for it." He has said also "I concede to change." In the past Jackson met people in a tacky run-down office in a store front or social center. He would be dressed in mod clothes - bell bottomed trousers, shirt opened to his bare chest half way down to his belt buckle, and a medallion with a Martin Luther King Jr. profile on his chest - and a defiant tone in his voice. Now Jackson wears a vested business suit and greets visitors at a modern concrete community center in an office outfitted like that of a corporate suite.

These are but the superficial trappings of Jackson's "new conservatism." They are designed to provoke comment and inquiry so that people - especially black people - can begin to see and understand the true nature of his change. That change,

stated simply, is to encourage black youth to become smarter, more disciplined, more able to take advantage of opportunities and thus to "PUSH For Excellence." Specifically, Jackson contends that the economic programs and the black awareness movement of the 1960s has had little effect on black youth and their parents in the 1970s. Thus, as a result of the coming and going of social programs the hopes of poor blacks have risen only to fall in a sense of despair and demoralization. It has been partly for this reason that Charlotte blacks have not supported fully the financial drive to erect a statue of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

## Alcohol Epidemic

Jackson's "new conservatism" grows out of concern that "many (black youth) have been victimized by the alcohol epidemic...the drug epidemic (and) there is an unusual high level of premature pregnancy." He says further, "kids walk around not with books under their arms, but with radios up against their heads... they can't read or write, but they can memorize whole (music) albums."

"What does it matter," Jackson concludes, "if the doors of opportunity are wide open but you're an alcoholic and can't go through the door? What does it matter if you have the right to go to graduate school but you can't read, write or count?" Thus, Jackson is preaching a "new conservatism" that is as old as the history of our nation, that is, it is youth's - black youth's - responsibility to "PUSH For Excellence."

In summary, the "new Jesse Jackson" is telling black Americans that it's time to express their sense of blackness in a new way. The dashiki, the "Black English" of the 1960s, the raised fist (full of hot air), the "Superfly" lifestyles and the "do your own thing" ethos of the immediate past must be exchanged for the pursuit of excellence in our personal and academic lives.

If Jackson's "new conservatism" means breaking economic apathy and moral decay, if it means re-discovering a sense of community and commitment, if it means redefining relationships with one another to fit the urban environment, if it means freeing the mind as well as the body from chattel slavery, if it means overcoming institutionalized racism through an emerging economic self reliance, and if it means an increasing degree of self determination; then it behooves all blacks to abandon their pre-occupation with labels and embracing Jackson's "new conservatism."

As we seek an inner meaning of Jackson's conservatism, we might reflect again on the wisdom of Eric Sevarid. He said, "Democracy is not a free ride. It demands more of each of us than any other arrangement.

## BLACK HISTORY

"A RACE IS LIKE A MAN-UNTIL IT USES ITS OWN TALENTS, TAKES PRIDE IN ITS OWN HISTORY, AND LOVES ITS OWN MEMORIES, IT CAN NEVER FULFILL ITSELF COMPLETELY."

JOHN W. VANDERCOOK



Give Them A Sense of Pride

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Racism, Not Bakke, Is The Real Issue

Dear Mr. Johnson:

The Bakke case is of particular significance to the struggle of minority and oppressed persons in this Country. If the decision is upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court, the civil rights movement will be set back more than 200 years. The media, along with certain institutional administrators and others, have disguised this court case as involving reverse discrimination. I challenge such an assessment.

Alan Bakke is not the issue at hand, nor is his rejection from the University of California at Davis. The real issue is racism and how it should be applied. The fact that Mr. Bakke was twice rejected from UC Davis, as well as being rejected by more than 10 other schools, seems on its face to imply that there are serious doubts about Mr. Bakke's qualifications (one of which is that he is white). Is Mr. Bakke suggesting a new strategy for gaining admission to medical school - find someone with lower "qualifications" who has been admitted? What are "qualifications?" Is it possible to apply an objective test that in and of itself is not biased? I am sure that most of you are aware of the fact that there were other white students who were admitted with lower qualifications than Mr. Bakke. Why didn't he challenge their acceptances? Will this case decide whether or not it is constitutional (or American) to admit students because they made the "special list" of the dean, president, or some other influential person?

It is alleged that Mr. Bakke was "encouraged" by officials at UC Davis to bring suit (remember the Flanagan case at Georgetown University Law School?) Does such conduct qualify as a "real case or controversy?" Why wouldn't UC Davis admit that it had engaged in past discrimination in order to make a better and more effective argument in the California Courts? Whose interests are being tested? At present, more than 50 amicus curiae briefs have been submitted.

The term "affirmative action" was introduced in the late sixties and was publicized as a lowering of standards and qualifications to allow minorities to participate in the "mainstream" of America. The purpose for affirmative action was not to lower standards of qualifications, but to broaden them in order that more minorities might be included. Affirmative action meant that employers and institutions would make an attempt to actively seek out qualified minorities. Prior to present day affirmative action programs, I would submit that there were unofficial "affirmative action" programs directed at keeping minorities out.

It has been suggested by the media and many others that affirmative action was proposed initially to include persons who had been excluded because of past discrimination. Its purpose was not to exclude anyone. However, at the time affirmative action was introduced, there was an expanding economy in Ameri-

ca. Today, we live in a shrinking economy and, therefore, the competition is increasing. It is the increasing competition that is keeping Mr. Allan Bakke out, not minorities. More and more white students are seeking admission to predominantly black professional schools. Not only is there a race struggle taking place in America, there is also a class struggle. It is in the interest of the ruling class that whites fight against minorities for a limited number of positions rather than fighting together to expand opportunities for all.

Another term that is being mentioned concerning the Bakke case is "reverse discrimination." This is definitely a misnomer. In no way is this a case of reverse discrimination in light of the real practices of UC Davis or the ruling class. If there were other white students admitted with lower qualifications than Mr. Bakke, how is it that he can allege his rejection was based on race? The "but for" test of Mr. Bakke being white does not apply in this case on the merits alone. It is contended by many that the affirmative action programs have gone too far and resulted "reverse discrimination." Even with these minority programs, there is still quite a margin between the percentage of minorities in institutions of higher learning (Howard and Meharry really help the statistics for medical students) and that of the overall minority population.

Julian W. Pyles  
1720 Miles Court

By Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

## TO BE EQUAL



Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

### Humphrey-Hawkins Bill Underrated

The compromise Humphrey-Hawkins Bill goes to the Congress with considerably less enthusiasm among fighters for full employment that it should have.

Its critics don't like the removal of such features of earlier versions of the Bill as the establishment of a legally enforceable right to a job. Nor do they like the fact that the Bill contains no specific job-creation provisions. And many quibble about this or that part of the Bill.

Such yearning for absolute perfection does credit to the critics' idealism, but it severely hampers the effort to pass the Humphrey-Hawkins Bill intact. And it seriously underrates the value of an important Bill which, for the first time in history mandates federal full employment policies.

As it now stands, the Humphrey-Hawkins Bill represents an indispensable first step toward a full employment economy and anything less than an all-out effort in support of the Bill would be a tragic mistake.

Critics on the right are under no delusions about the potential of Humphrey-Hawkins. A determined effort is being mounted to sink it in Congress. If the Bill is really as weak as some people say it is, why are the enemies of full employment fighting it so hard?

The Bill mandates the federal government to pursue policies leading to a three percent unemployment rate for adults and an overall four percent unemployment rate within five years. From the standpoint of real full employment, especially in providing jobs for subgroups like blacks and minorities, this seems modest for a national goal.

But with current joblessness at seven percent according to official figures, these targets are reasonable approximations of what can be accomplished in a five year span. Adult unemployment would be cut sharply while the overall four percent rate could not be achieved without massive reductions in youth and female unemployment rates.

The Bill's four percent jobless goal is an interim one, and it refocuses public policy discussion, which had been struck with a general consensus that 5 or 6 percent unemployment was acceptable.

The Bill lets the President come up with his own mix of programs to bring the jobless rate down to the goal, but it does provide that if traditional means don't do the job, then enough public service jobs should be created to reach the goal of four percent.

The Bill really puts the President on the spot. Traditionally, Presidents make noises about how they will try to encourage full employment, and then casually accept high jobless rates. No more.

Now the President will have to make annual projections of joblessness tied to the Bill's goals. He'll have to publicly say what policies he will follow to cut joblessness. Even the Federal Reserve will have to report to the Congress on its policies as they relate to jobs. And if the President doesn't meet the Bill's goals, he'll have to say why.

Above all, passage of Humphrey-Hawkins would change the nature of the national debate about jobs. Too many people still harbor the outmoded belief that if you have low unemployment you must have high inflation.

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## as i see it

### The Trauma Of Turning 30!

By Gerald Johnson

The one thing 1977 brought me was my 30th birthday. It was undoubtedly a most traumatic year for me.

Your thirtieth birthday is unlike any other birthday for many reasons. When you reach your 10th birthday you can look forward to becoming a teenager. Yes, you know in a few more years you will be a teenager. Dating, blemishes, driver's license, high school, all those good things come with being a teenager. So, on your 10th birthday you sit back and dream of all those good things. Who knows you might even grow a mustache!

Then there is your twentieth birthday. This is the time you have a deep breath and say to yourself "how stupid I was to think I knew everything as a teenager." You say this because on your 20th birthday you know more than you've ever known and since you know everything, then you had to be stupid to think you knew everything as a teenager. Now you feel that you've reached manhood. Drinking, smoking, cursing and no one can tell you any longer not to do that. Clubbing, staying out all night, oh, the feeling of inde-

pendence. Those were the years.

Then it happens! 28, 29...30. You've reached 30. Oh, my God! Thirty! How can this be. I am to young to die. Where did my time go. What is there to look forward to now? "OLD AGE." "PENSION PLANS."

Now strange things begin to happen. All the people you meet are younger than you are. When you watch T.V. all the athletes are younger than you are. It seems everybody is younger than you are. Then an announcer comes on T.V. and says Joe Doe, All-American in 1967, has retired from sports on his 30th birthday. Retired at 30? Oh my God. You start panicking and smoke up all of your cigarettes. Then you rush out of the house to get some more. While you are standing at the checkout counter, someone taps you on the shoulder and says, Hello, long time no see. You turn around and see an unfamiliar face. The person behind the face says I'm so and so, remember me. I lived in the old neighborhood. "Oh yeah," you reply, "but you were just a pee-wee. Yeah, but now I'm married, I've got four kids one is in Junior High School. You feel



Gerald Johnson

like socking him in the mouth, but you say "oh, how nice. Well, I must be going now, so long, nice seeing you again." Why me Lord.

Then you decide to go out and have a nice time and try to forget your chronological misfortune. A group of well dressed businessmen pass you and one stops and says "Hey guys, there is old man Johnson he taught me during my Junior year in College. "Hello, Mr. Johnson." You try to crawl under the table but its too late. What's next?

You get out on the dance

floor and you notice that you are the only one on the floor doing a particular dance. Not only that but you don't recognize the dances everybody else is doing. It doesn't matter anyway because your feet are killing you.

Then you start hurting in places that you never knew you had; Back aches, leg aches, headaches. Now you realize that it will not be long before you can be cleaning your teeth in one room while bathing in another room at the same time.

Well, 1978 has taught me one thing already. Being 30 was not the worst thing in the world. Being 31 is.

ANTI-SMOKING CAMPAIGN

It is ridiculous that all this fuss is going on over cigarette smoking. What is worse is the money HEW Secretary Callano is spending in an attempt to limit smoking in public places.

What I can't understand is who will police the smoking (or anti-smoking) law. If I go to a restaurant and I sit in the non-smoking area and light up, what's going to happen? Will a police be summoned and cart me off to jail. Will a bouncer run over and give me

a body slam to the floor. The whole thing is ridiculous!

It also, goes to prove that politicians have no idea of things that can and cannot be legislated. It is impossible to pass into law a bill to restrict smoking in any place unless immediate danger is a consequence. Maybe I should re-

Letter To The Editor:

### Likes Post Very Much

Lucy Williams  
2343-D Eastway Drive  
Charlotte, N.C. 28205

Gerald O. Johnson  
Charlotte Post  
2604-B West Boulevard  
Charlotte, N.C. 28208

Dear Gerald:

I very much enjoyed your article in the November 24, 1977 edition of the Charlotte Post of Black Home Ownership.

It was very factual and the kind of information people buying homes need to know. My husband and I would like to have such a list of black realtors.

phrase that to read it is stupid to pass into law a bill to restrict smoking.

It is easy to see why unemployment, discrimination, welfare reform, and other important issues go unresolved. Politicians are going around making issues out of issueless circumstances.

Sincerely,

Lucy T. Williams

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