

# Editorials & Comments

## Urban Policy Won't Meet Needs

By Hoyle H. Martin Sr.

After nearly 14 months of public promises, numerous delays and heated disputes between White House aides and HUD Secretary Patricia Harris - who strongly supported expanded inner-city housing - President Carter unveiled his new urban policy last week. The two-year project, billed as a "new partnership" involving the federal, state and city governments and local neighborhood groups, is aimed at "making cities healthier and improving the lives of the people who live in them."

The \$8.3 billion program, if approved by Congress, would include \$2.7 billion in new funds for urban programs, including \$1 billion for public works programs aimed at helping the unemployed; creation of a new national development bank to provide upwards to \$2.2 billion in low interest loans to firms willing to return to the inner city; and tax incentive programs under which state governments would get extra funds - over \$200 million yearly - for devising new ways to channel more money to urban areas.

Furthermore, the program offers \$550 million for the economic development units of the departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Commerce; \$150 million for neighborhood rehabilitation projects and \$150 million for social services such as day care for children and hot meals programs for the elderly.

In summary, the Carter grand strategy policy design calls for spending relatively little new money, getting more help from the state governments, of which some reportedly have large budget surpluses, help from private business, and through better planning of federal government funds. For example, increasing the government commitment to purchasing more goods and services from minority-owned business. The Carter administration strategy has followed this line in order to keep the lid on inflation and by so doing maintaining the stability of the dollar in the world market and maintaining, hopefully, the support of those opposed to increasingly bigger government.

### President's Concern

We share the President's concern about inflation and we believe it would be helpful if state governments that have surpluses would commit themselves to solving their own problems. We further believe that a sincere commitment from the corporate community would go a long way toward reducing the need for federal outlays. However, we don't think state governments nor American business will make such commitments without receiving very large incentives from the federal government.

Public reaction to Carter's policy, especially among big city mayors, urban specialists and black leaders

has been negative for two reasons: too little money and the complex nature of the needs of different cities and geographic regions.

"It's a question of how much money. The President must understand that this is a great problem," said New York City's deputy mayor Herman Badillo.

National Urban League's Vernon Jordan said, "If indeed the urban policy commits no massive infusion of funds and creative innovation, it would amount to a declaration of defeat; an admission that our cities will be left to die."

Secondly, Carter's grand strategy for a National Urban Policy is lacking the WALL STREET JOURNAL said, "for a simple reason: It is not possible. America's cities are different places with different problems...Trying to devise an urban strategy to fit these and many other variations defies the imagination."

While we recognize that there are no quick or easy solutions to the problems that impact upon the quality of American life, Vernon Jordan's comment about "creative innovation" may be what we need more of so that variations don't defy our imagination.

### Urban-Rural Policy

Our point is, we believe the Carter administration can have a non-inflationary urban-rural policy and program if we eliminate the political rhetoric and allow government to mature, if at all possible, beyond pressure politics.

This would then allow for an urban-rural policy that would put money where it's most needed. For example, policy should be designed to respond to valid studies that say poverty in rural areas is usually more severe than in urban areas because of the absence of social welfare programs. In addition, tax incentive programs for business follow the "trickle down" theory leading to more jobs for the disadvantaged unemployed. However, too often business benefits from the tax reduction but the poor do not get jobs.

Policy should be designed to quickly alter this problem. Furthermore, tax incentives to businesses as well as families and individuals should be used to encourage a more evenly spread-out population and to reduce both urban blight and rural poverty.

Finally, policy should be designed and monitored so that those with the greatest need get service first, not those with the greatest political clout.

Thus, a careful designed urban-rural policy designed to meet the varying needs of different neighborhoods, cities and regions would probably reduce cost, increase efficiency, and most important, improve the quality of our urban or rural lifestyle.

## IT'S GOD BLESS AMERICA...NOT JOBLESS



### Budget For Jobs Instead Of More Guns

By Rep. John Conyers

Congress is now working on the federal budget for 1979 for which the President last February recommended \$500.2 billion in spending. The budget affects everyone and every place in America. But most of all the people and places that depend on federal assistance are: the poor and the elderly who receive welfare and social security, youth seeking job training and employment, the cities that require federal funds for housing, social services, and economic development.

Federal spending affects local economies. Money spent on building highways that circle cities is money lost to mass transit projects within the cities. The billions spent on weapons, most of which are made in factories in the south, and west, is money that is not working to rebuild industries in northern cities.

Nearly one-quarter of the budget - \$117.8 billion - goes to national defense. If the current rate of defense spending continues, in only 10 years the military budget will have doubled and over the decade nearly \$2 trillion will have been spent on weapons and military forces. This staggering amount will not be available for additional job programs, aid to cities, and other vital social needs.

When we ask ourselves, for whom and for what the federal government is spending public funds - what groups and activities the budget is helping and hurting - we are raising the major questions about what the budget does.

In the coming year the President's budget calls for additional CETA public serv-



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ice training and employment positions. It provides under \$14 billion in direct job creation funds, but nearly twice that amount for the purchase of new weapons for the military establishment.

While the defense budget goes up rapidly, the President recommends only minimal increases or even no increases at all for major social programs. Is this the best way for the government to spend its funds? The answer is, emphatically no, and there is a good reason why.

The United States already has in its arsenal some 20,000 tactical and strategic nuclear warheads, that can destroy our adversaries many times over. We really do not need additional weapons and defense spending to provide an extra margin of security. As a matter of fact, developing newer and deadlier weapons will make us less secure, not more, since the Soviet Union will always match us with new weapons of their own. And each new round in the arms race brings the world closer to nuclear disaster.

Unfortunately, the reverse is true because the budget does not now reflect decent national priorities. The sad truth is that when the Congress votes approval of a budget, it does so virtually without any consideration as to whether its policies and programs will accomplish the goals that are intended.

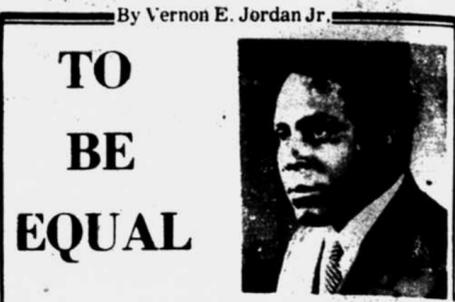
I am optimistic, however, that Congress is beginning to take the first steps in setting budget priorities. Thursday, March 16th was an historic day in this process. The House of Representatives approved the Hawkins-Humphrey Full Employment Bill (H. R. 50) by a vote of 257-152. If the Senate approves it later this spring, the President will sign it into law. This law will provide for the first time a mechanism for coordinating the various agencies to achieve the goals of less than 3 percent adult unemployment and 4 percent for adults and teenagers within 5 years.

H.R. 50 is the mandate we have lacked up until now that requires the government to make full employment the top priority. With it in place the decisions that are made on federal budget will be focused on reducing unemployment and putting the federal budget to work for people.

### Stress Management

The STRESS MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE and EDUCOM will sponsor a workshop on Relaxation and Assertiveness Training. Participants will review stress management procedures and apply them to becoming more assertive.

The workshop will take place on Sat., April 8, 10 - to 4:30. Those wishing more information, call 704-523-1026.



## TO BE EQUAL

### The Middle Class Revolt

The media are full of 1978's first trend - the so-called "middle class revolt." The middle class, defined so broadly as to include almost everyone who's not either dirt-poor or fabulously wealthy, is supposed to be angry.

What about? It seems, according to the pundits, that the middle class is angry about high taxes, about supposed advantages given to minorities, about the high costs of welfare, and about rising inflation.

How justified is this anger - if it actually exists? The answer has to be that the anger is unjustified. It's also not new. It's a reflection of the same old stories we used to get when Nixon was appealing to the "silent majority," which translates into the white middle class and in 1970's terminology, the "middle class revolt."

Anger is distinctly unjustified because the American middle class is the most favored in the world. The beef about taxes, for example, would get laughs in other industrial nations where high taxes support large-scale public services and aid to the poor. In America, by comparison, taxes are relatively low and the middle class is the prime beneficiary.

Their taxes have bought quite a bit for the middle class - subsidized home mortgages, subsidized suburban roads, subsidized college education, and even subsidized jobs, since many are employed in jobs that exist only because of government activities.

The charges that the middle class' tax burden swells an already overlarge federal establishment is false. The federal share of the gross national product is only about 22 percent, more or less where it has been for years and years.

And middle class taxpayers have access to tax exemptions and deductions not available to low income people. Interest payments, capital gains, and other key elements of family budgets and income statements are either charged against taxes due or taxed at lower rates than earned income. If all the loopholes were closed, tax rates could be lower for everyone. The fact that loopholes persist is an indication that the affluent find them more useful than otherwise.

There are supposed to be "breaks" for the breaks minorities are considering to be getting. What breaks? Here's another pernicious myth, enshrined by the phrase "reverse discrimination."

Where's the reverse discrimination when the dollar gap in earnings between white and black families is wider than it was a decade ago and is still growing? Where's the reverse discrimination when blacks still lag in college entrance, when black unemployment rates are more than double those for whites, and when blacks with higher educational attainments than whites have higher jobless rates?

Those so-called breaks for minorities don't exist - there is no category in which blacks and other minorities even begin to approach the access to opportunities enjoyed by the white middle class.

The middle class revolt is also supposed to be enraged about welfare. How to explain anger at the minimal welfare benefits allotted to the victims of this economy, benefits barely enough to ensure survival at less than minimal living standards.

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## as i see it

### Editorial Comments

By Gerald O. Johnson

Sunday morning as I read my newspaper, the telephone rang and I answered. The caller was Clyde Brown and he was incensed by the article I wrote last week about Mr. Spears, the National Vice President of the Alumni Association of Johnson C. Smith.

Mr. Brown told me that he was really upset by the article and that the POST constantly criticized Johnson C. Smith. He continued by saying that he was gathering up a petition to have people stop subscribing to the POST. If this wasn't enough, Mr. Brown said I owed Mr. Spears and Ms. Nivens an apology and if I didn't retract my statements that he was going to make things difficult for me on JCSU's campus.

Moreover, Mr. Brown continued, he couldn't understand how I could work for Johnson C. Smith and make such accusations. The one sided conversation went on and on until finally Mr. Brown threatened a law suit against me.

The whole Johnson C. Smith family was completely enraged by my statements, Mr. Brown said.

I do not think it is proper to use an article as a battle-

ground for debate. Ordinarily, I would let the issue drop. But because of Mr. Brown's stature in the black community and by virtue of the fact that the running of JCSU will affect the lives of many individuals, I think it is important that several points be re-emphasized.

I hasten to say that regardless of how this article may be taken, I have the deepest and utmost respect for Mr. Brown and his accomplishments for Johnson C. Smith.

It is unfortunate that Ms. Vivian Nivens' name was brought up in the discussion. I never implied a reason for the malfunctioning of the PR department. How anybody assumed that I said Ms. Nivens is incompetent in the position of PR director is beyond me. The article did say that the PR was not a functional unit on JCSU's campus. This appears obvious. The fact that few knew about the recent golf tournament sponsored by JCSU. Few people know about the tennis team activities currently taking place. Very few know about the six students annually chosen to participate in the Prudential Insurance Scholarship Program.

The list of good things about



Gerald Johnson

JCSU that seldom reaches the public is endless. This is evidence enough that the PR department is not a functional unit. However, the reason is not Ms. Nivens. Ms. Nivens was placed in a position where no directives, structure, or mode of operations existed. Unless she had prior experience in setting up a functional PR department, no one could expect her to perform miracles. Moreover, the schools has not committed itself to a functional PR department. This is to say that once the school found out how it should function, guidelines could be set up to steer a director of the department in some direction.

Ms. Nivens can not be held responsible for the failure of a department that has no structure for succeeding. So, Mr. Brown, I didn't imply Ms. Nivens is incompetent. The problem can not be placed on workers, but instead it must be placed on the shoulders of those individuals who should be telling Ms. Nivens what to do.

It is true that the POST criticizes JCSU. The criticisms are not intended to knock anyone off their proclaimed pedestals, but instead to get those individuals off their assets so that they can stop being liabilities to the community to students which they should serve.

The problems, as I see it, exist at Smith because too many people are soaking in the status of their positions rather than sweating because of the responsibility of their positions. As long as this exists then it is this newspaper's responsibility to criticize, regardless of whose feelings we hurt or whose pride we shatter.

We do this for one reason. We love JCSU and we realize its potentials. But potentials are only realized by people with enough foresight to spot

weaknesses and to make decisions to turn such weaknesses into strengths.

If such criticism is unwarranted we welcome the challenge of other viewpoints being presented. If such criticism can be proven false then we will retract any statements made, with a public apology.

However, any engagements based on fear of the truth, or clandestine actions being brought to light, are not our concern.

This paper is not a farce. We stand for integrity and truth. It does not take a genius to realize that the institution has problems. To ignore this is illogical. We are attempting to see that the problems do not get ignored.

The energy being wasted getting enraged could better be spent working for the school.

I suggest Mr. Brown should talk to the people on the campus and find out what is going on. If he thinks the PR is what it should be then I further suggest he talk to the people in the athletic department. I challenge him to go to other departments and find guidelines on how that department is to run. I strongly believe that he will find departments that are geared to

the individual running instead of to some preset guidelines set up by the institution. There is no organizational structure of the institution. The seriousness of this is evident when new individuals fill positions on campus. They have no indication as to what their job responsibilities are. Consequently, Mr. Brown should be enraged, but not at me.

Hats Off To A Councilman

It is a rare occasion when a political figure merits praise. After spending so much time and effort campaigning for the office they usually spend the time in office resting.

Such is not the case with the 3rd district representative, Ron Leeper. Mr. Leeper is working just as hard while in office as he did campaigning for the office. His innovative ideas in using the public office to help people is both inspiring and necessary. His community involvement is an effort to represent the people that elected him the way it is supposed to be done.

I am taking the liberty of speaking on behalf of all of us at the Charlotte POST in saying, "Mr. Leeper, we applaud your devotion to the responsibility of public office."