

# Editorials & Comments

## Urban League And Urban Challenge

By Hoyle H. Martin Sr.  
Post Editorial Writer

Last week a study was presented to the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce that showed the overall gap in the quality of life between blacks and whites in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

The presentation was in effect a successful bid to gain Chamber support for the establishment of a local chapter of the National Urban League, a 67-year old organization that seeks to help blacks get more and better jobs in business and industry and aids people in adjusting to urban living. In more recent years the League has put considerable emphasis on job opportunities for college trained minorities.

The study itself is a socio-economic needs analysis survey that is a required part of any application to establish a local Urban League Chapter. The 65-page study, prepared by the Sociology Department of Johnson C. Smith University and the Institute for Urban Studies at UNC-Charlotte, relies heavily upon secondary data sources and has little comparative information.

The study shows, for example, that 67 percent of all area blacks held low-skill jobs in both 1970 and 1976 but that black males in such jobs dropped from 75.8 percent in 1960 to 64.2 percent in 1970.

Furthermore, 46.7 percent of black Charlotteans lived in "low value housing" in 1960 but this fell to 44.9 percent in 1970.

In the area of unemployment, the study revealed the well known fact that blacks continue to have a jobless rate of more than twice that of whites. For blacks the jobless rates is 9.6 percent compared to 4.4 percent for whites. In addition, the study showed that black Charlotteans are far behind whites in income, home ownership and years of formal education.

While the local needs analysis study of blacks is admittedly lacking in comparative data, a glance at the national scene reveals what is quite apparent in nearly all of the nation's urban centers. Our point is that in spite of the civil rights legislation and improved economic opportunities in the 1960s and early 1970s, and some noticeable gains by some middle-class black families, the harsh reality is that most black families are worse off today than they were before the "Great Society" programs of the Kennedy-Johnson administrations.

As we passed the mid-1970s, unemployment among blacks lingers at 12 to 14 percent or twice that of whites, 50 percent of all black births (41.1 percent in Mecklenburg County) are to unwed mothers, integrated quality education has escaped too many black youths, black family incomes are only 59 percent (slightly better in Charlotte)

of that of whites, the urban environment is further destroying black family life and blacks have only a 50-50 chance of living to age 65 while whites have a 3 to 1 chance.

This sad state of black affairs began most assuredly in 1970 when former Harvard sociologist and a past assistant secretary of labor Daniel P. Moynihan issued a controversial call for a period of "benign neglect" of black people's problems.

This "neglect" appears more than evident today as witnessed by the National Urban League's Vernon Jordan and Congressman Parron Mitchell's comments.

In commenting on President Carter's urban policy, Jordan said, "If indeed the urban policy commits no massive infusion of funds and creative innovation, it would amount to a declaration of defeat; and admission that our cities will be left to die." More recently, Rep. Parron Mitchell (Dem., Md.), chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, told President Carter that a trend toward right-wing thinking may threaten federal programs aiding the poor. "We've seen destructive attacks being mounted against human survival programs..." he said.

## Black Control

Yes Urban League, need analysis certainly indicates that Charlotte needs a local branch of the organization. However, neither the Urban League, nor any other organization, is a pancea to the problems and needs of black Charlotteans.

If anything, an Urban League branch will primarily heighten the challenge we as black people face in our quest for an improved quality of life. We must give more support and recognition to black owned business as the Charlotte LBDO did last week, we must establish credit unions and similar black controlled financial programs as Friendship Baptist Church has done, we must encourage our youth to prepare for the future in spite of the odds against their chances for success as the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Youth Council is attempting to do, we must pool our brain power to develop a local urban strategy that will bring more and better jobs and housing to blacks and we must believe that with hard work and commitment we can make the system work better for us.

Fellow black Charlotteans, we should welcome a branch of the Urban League, but its success in creating more and better opportunities for us will depend largely upon us. If the League is to help us get better jobs, many of us will have to get better training, a new attitude and prepare to embrace new challenges.

Are you ready to accept these new challenges, if not why not?

WE MUST GIVE OUR CHILDREN  
A SENSE OF PRIDE IN BEING  
BLACK. THE GLORY OF OUR PAST  
AND THE DIGNITY OF OUR PRESENT  
MUST LEAD THE WAY TO THE  
POWER OF OUR FUTURE.

REP. ADAM CLAYTON POWELL



Knowing Their History Will Give Them  
A New Found Sense Of Identity

## The Meaning Of The Rand Report

By Bayard Rustin  
Special to the Post

In more than a few respects, the current discussion of racial quota systems has acquired an almost theological flavor. Rather than focusing on earthly realities, the debaters prefer to discuss abstractions such as white guilt, the meaning of equal opportunity, and the legacy of black slavery.

As interesting as these subjects might be, they overshadow the real questions: Are quotas and other forms of affirmative action really effective means for advancing the economic and social position of minority groups in America? A new report just issued by the Rand Corporation says No. And its conclusions are well worth examining.

Contrary to the dominant social mythology, the Rand report concludes that affirmative action programs have been "a relatively minor contributor" in raising black income relative to white income. "Our results," the report states, "suggest that the effect of Government on the aggregate black-white wage ratio is quite small and that the popular notion that these recent changes are being driven by Government pressure has little empirical support."

What then accounts for the gradual narrowing of the black-white income gap? "Blacks and whites," according to the study, "are simply becoming more alike in those attributes producing higher wages." Specifically, blacks have made significant gains in the area of education, in proving their competitive position

in the labor market. In 1930 the average black worker had nearly 4 fewer years of formal education compared to white workers. By 1970, the gap had dropped to a little over 1 year.

Another major factor, the report points out, has been the steady industrialization of the South. The transformation of the south from a backward, tradition-bound province into a modern industrial region has produced steadily increasing wage rates for blacks who were once confined to the fringes of the southern economy. "There is no question," the researchers said, "that blacks are at least equal participants with whites in the recent economic resurgence in the south."

While the report contains some good news for blacks, it also describes some persistent problems, especially economic inequality. Even with steady economic gains, the incomes of black males are still only three-fourths of those earned by white males. And, even worse, the report predicts that white-black income will not approach full equality during the current century.

Like all statistical reports, the RAND study should be treated with a fair amount of skepticism. But, the report—even with all its flaws—deserves thoughtful consideration within the black community. It should not be dismissed automatically as another "establishment" attempt to ignore the problems of black Americans.

As I see it, the RAND study offers the black community an opportunity to reexamine old strategies and preconcept-

ions. Most importantly, the report strongly suggests that a civil rights movement concerned exclusively with racial issues will soon become obsolete. While few will deny that racial discrimination stubbornly persists in certain industries and regions, it is no longer the major determinant of black economic well-being.

Rather than concentrating on issues like the Bakke case, and the further advancement of quota-oriented affirmative action plans, the Rand study suggests another, more promising strategy for the civil rights movement—that strategy simply stated, the formation of a racially integrated political coalition around the issues of full employment, improved education, and expanded social services.

As we all know, there are dangerous political forces in America that thrive on racial conflict. For many of the more doctrinaire conservatives, racial issues serve as a convenient cover for their disastrous economic policies.

Unable to win on a platform promising high unemployment, unfair tax policies, and cutbacks in social services, conservatives can frequently win votes by appealing to widespread opposition against quotas and other devices perceived as instruments of "preferential treatment."

Now, with the needless re-emergence of racial issues in the form of a bitter and highly divisive debate on quotas, the progressive political coalition is once again endangered.

## WASHINGTON REFLECTIONS

CONGRESSMAN  
JIM MARTIN



## 1978 Questionnaire Results Released

For the sixth consecutive year, people in Iredell, Lincoln and Mecklenburg counties have responded to my annual questionnaire, to speak out for themselves on issues of the day. Once

again, over 20,000 individuals responded to the questions in the poll. Over 350 included their additional comments about the issues in separate letters or on the questionnaire itself. As expected, the selection of controversial topics encouraged people to express themselves on the issues.

Some respondents commented that the subjects were too complex to answer with a "yes" or "no"; while others protested that the questions were too simple. I tried to bend in the direction of simplicity in order to get a wider range of

participation. Complex or simple, a "yes" or "no" is the only option I have when casting a vote in Congress.

The Panama Canal elicited comments from respondents who thought the wording of the question "too biased" or inaccurately stated. It boils down to an individual's interpretation of the issue. The vital canal, with its locks and controls, is just as much U.S. "property" as my mortgaged house is my property. To dispose of it without compensation is to "give" it away. More important than the wording is that the people in the 9th District were given a chance to express themselves on the issue. Who else in Washington has asked their opinion?

On Saturday mail delivery, a surprising 61 percent majority favors discontinuing the service in order to forego a postage increase. The Postal Rate Commission should look at this sentiment and give the matter further airing before increasing first-class mail rates.

Strong opposition was expressed against the government banning saccharin and hair dye (82-14), and against paying the costs of Congressional elections from taxes while prohibiting supporter contributions (81-16); against creating jobs to put welfare recipients and unemployed to work (60-37); against compensation victims of crimes. Respondents also rejected a cut-back in enacted social security tax increase.

Energy questions offered interesting and gratifying results. By a margin of nearly 4-to-1, respondents favored development of nuclear power to generate electricity. On a close call of 46-to-47, they barely divided against lifting government price controls on oil and gas wells. Although that's a virtual tie, it appears the public is getting the message about the effect of price controls on our energy supplies.

The complete results of the questionnaire will be made available to the Congress and the President so they may have a better understanding of how the people of North Carolina feel about a few of the major issues. Copies of the report will be mailed to each home in the 9th Congressional District.

Thanks for sending in your views.

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## as i see it

### Failure Is A Package Deal?

By Gerald Johnson

When I graduated from high school in 1965, there were few colleges in North Carolina I could attend. These colleges were predominately Black. White universities had just begun to open their doors to Black students. A recruiter from N.C. State came to West Charlotte and told us that the school was being forced to recruit Blacks and didn't much care for the idea. I've hated that school ever since. Even David Thompson couldn't erase the malice I hold for that school.

But now after a dozen or so years have passed schools are opened to all. A Black student coming out of high school today can attend any school he so desires.

When I graduated from high school West Charlotte was considered the finest Black High School in the state, yet the facilities at West Charlotte couldn't hold a candle to any white high school in Charlotte. Science lab equipment, physical ed equipment, books, and what have you were all inferior to the white schools.

When I graduated from high school I had 1001 reasons I could have used to become a failure. But when I graduated

from high I didn't know that I was underprivileged. Nobody told me that I had 1001 reasons to fail. It wasn't instilled in me that I was deprived.

But now after a dozen years failure is a package deal. If you are black, poor, and underprivileged, you are suppose to fail. Even Blacks in education have excuses. If you are Black and dumb pass him on because the little nigger is underprivileged. If you hold him back a couple of years then somebody is discriminating.

In twelve short years with integration thrown in our emphasis has shifted from achievement to appeasement.

Today there can be no excuses for failing. The facilities in all schools are approaching equality. The doors of opportunity are opening wider and wider and the majority of Black youth aren't taking advantage of it.

Needless to say that a lot of blood has been shed, people have given their lives just to provide Black people the opportunity to participate. I find it appalling to say the least that such sacrifices were made in vain.

On The Road With Bob Walton



Gerald Johnson

The Reverend Bob Walton is a man of many hats. He is a banker. He is a Reverend. He serves on various community boards. He is a county commissioner.

Recently Bob Walton has been criticized, victimized, and ostracized by the Mecklenburg Public and the Mecklenburg County Board for abusing Public Funds. Brother Bob has been dragged through the coals and has been likened to the likes of Richard "Tricky Dick" Nixon. Many have implied that this is cause enough to have Bob Walton's seat filled by a Republican. Pop 'e' cock! I must say that I

didn't condone either trip Bob Walton took, but it wasn't a big enough deal to try to discredit the man.

I think the problem stemmed from what is legally acceptable and what is principally acceptable. Though the money allocated was meager it is without question that Mecklenburg County could have survived had not Mr. Walton gone on the trips.

In spite of this error in judgment Bob Walton has served his constituency well. He speaks his mind and stands by his convictions. He is his own man. He is open about his mistakes and Lord knows he is open when he is right. Case in point, Bob Walton still deserves your support for a second bid for a county commissioner seat.

### INGRAM DEFEATS HODGES

In a surprising victory Insurance Commissioner John Ingram defeated heavily favored Luther Hodges for the U.S. Senate. The surprise was even more emphatic since John Ingram reportedly spent far less money.

But rest assured that John Ingram can and will serve the state of North Carolina well. He has political experience

and a proven record of working for the people. The man has a great ability for organizing things.

I was hoping he would lose because I fear who might take over as Insurance Commissioner.

### Task Force Seeks Public Comment

Persons with comments and suggestions on the operations of the Charlotte Animal Control Department will have an opportunity to speak at a public meeting scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 8 in the Council Chamber at City Hall, 600 East Trade Street. The meeting is being held by a three member Task Force appointed by Charlotte Mayor Kenneth R. Harris to study the operations of the City Animal Shelter.

Persons who wish to speak need only to attend. There is no preregistration requirement. Comments may be made orally or submitted in writing.

Task force members are Chairman Laura Frech, Charlotte City Council; Dr. Lawrence H. Dewhurst, Greater Charlotte Veterinary Medical Association; and Thelma Keller, Mecklenburg County Humane Society.

In appointing the Task

Force, Mayor Harris gave the following charge: "To investigate the operating procedures at the Charlotte Animal Shelter; to consider any need for capital improvements at the Charlotte Animal Shelter; to consider the need for an advisory body to the Charlotte Animal Shelter; and, to report to the Mayor and City Council with its findings."

The next regular business meeting of the Task Force is Thursday, June 1 at 2 p.m.

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