

Editorials & Comments

THE POST - 101 Years Of Service

By Hoyle Martin Sr.
Post Editorial Writer

We have observed in this column before that John Russworm and Samuel E. Cornish pioneered the field of black journalism in America. These men co-founded the *Freedom's Journal* in 1827. In their first issue they wrote, "We plead our cause," that is, the cause of freedom from servitude to a freedom of self development through education, thrift, and hard work.

From these humble beginnings, the Black Press in America today comprises about 385 weekly and five daily newspapers. These newspapers employ nearly 6,000 people and have a circulation of approximately 11 million. Included in this brief historical summary, we are proud to note, is the 101 years of service provided by The Charlotte Post.

Created in 1877 as a church newspaper called the *Messenger*, the paper was shortly thereafter re-named *The Charlotte Post* and transformed into a general black-oriented weekly publication. Thus, since before the turn of the century, the *Charlotte Post* has been a vital voice reporting on the events and activities of special interest groups. However, the *Post*, like many similar publications, has through the years protested Jim Crow laws and other forms of racial, social and economic injustice.

Through the years, beginning with A.M. Houston, the late Dr. Nathaniel Tross and the current managing editor-publisher Bill Johnson, the *Charlotte Post* has continued its commitment to providing news coverage of areas too often overlooked, ignored, misunderstood or distorted by the larger white-oriented daily newspapers. Furthermore, the *Post* has maintained a dedicated commitment to dignity and human rights for all people.

Black Community

When Bill Johnson purchased the *Post* in June of 1974 from the General Publishing Company he said, "The Charlotte black community needs a voice that mirrors the opinions of the community. We want the *Post* to provide services which the daily papers do not offer. These services to the black community will include information, education, and entertainment. We hope that the *Charlotte Post* will be able to influence community life."

Thus, as the *Charlotte Post* celebrates its fourth anniversary under the leadership of Willie L. (Bill) Johnson and its 101 year of service to the *Charlotte* community, we believe the mission - to mirror community opinion - is being met.

Since the success of the *Post* has had to depend upon the efforts of many, we wish to "thank you" - our

readers - for your generous support, patience, understanding and constructive criticism. We hope that you will continue to contribute to the *Post* in this way so that we might make a good newspaper a better newspaper.

We wish to thank also the *Post's* 16-member staff for the dedication to the production of a newspaper of the highest quality. Their untiring efforts are seen in the growing number of subscriptions, letters-to-the-editor, comments, and advertising sold that are such a vital part of the success of any newspaper.

Furthermore, we wish to thank those who advertise in the *Post* as without their interest and business there would be no *Post*.

Job Well Done

Thus, as we pause this week to reflect on our past and say thanks for a job well done, we are nevertheless mindful of the continued existence of injustice such as the recent Supreme Court decision that allows police search of newspaper offices. These developments and other like them remind us that the *Post* cannot and will not sit on its success, but rather must seek to do an even better job of educating and informing our readers of those events that will have an impact upon their lives and that of their children.

Finally, we wish to note, as we did in this column on the 150th anniversary of the Black Press last year. A newspaper, like any other business, cannot survive on its past accomplishments; it is what it is doing today, and plans to do tomorrow, that determines its success or failure. Black people, we believe, must do more to insure the continued existence and success of the black press. To do less would be to abandon a vital voice in your never-ending struggle for equality of opportunity and human rights.

The *Post* salutes you one and all for being in some way a part of our efforts and thus the reason for our existence. We hope for this reason that the *Post* has in some small way made your life none fulfilling and productive. We remain your community servant.

Something On Your Mind?

Something on your mind is the name of a column devoted to you - the young at heart readers of this newspaper - as long as it relates in some way to young people, regardless of age.

It will be written by you and about whatever is on your mind!

So, if you have something to say...WRITE ON!

Some subjects that may be of special interest to you are: Drugs, Generation Gap, Welfare, Gangs, Schools, Going Steady, Police, Revolutions, Whites, Blacks, Integration, Busing, Draft, God, etc.



Thoughts On The Bakke Decision

By Bayard Rustin

Contrary to our worst fears, the Supreme Court's decision in the controversial Bakke case clearly upholds the principle of affirmative action. While firmly rejecting the racial quota system used by the University of California at Davis, the Court simultaneously approved flexible and equitable affirmative action programs. The decision was, to use the words of Benjamin Hooks, "a clear-cut victory for voluntary affirmative action, not only in the field of admissions to schools and universities, but in other civil rights areas as well."

But the Bakke decision is in no way a definitive statement on all aspects of affirmative action. True, the Court decisively rejected strict and rigidly-imposed racial quota systems. However, the Court's opinion is filled with dozens of unresolved ambiguities and gaps. Just as the 1954 Brown decision did not end litigation regarding school desegregation cases, we can be certain that the Bakke decision will not end legal challenges to varying forms of "reverse discrimination." We are only at the beginning.

As I see it, we in the civil rights movement are now confronted with one overwhelming challenge: We must use the Court's decision as a foundation for advancing authentic affirmative action programs. In the wake of Bakke, we have unparalleled opportunity to counter the widespread and destructive belief that racial quotas and affirmative action are the same thing. As a result of the Bakke discussion, Americans - both black and white - are at

least beginning to understand that minorities do not seek "preferential treatment." Quite the contrary, they seek fair treatment.

Now that the Court has ruled on the Bakke case, supporters of affirmative action must once again seize the initiative. As a start, I propose that we free ourselves from the old obsession with quotas and numerical targets. The Court has clearly ruled that racial quotas are illegal and unconstitutional. If we now attempt to cleverly devise de facto quota systems tailored to fit the legal limits set by the Court, we will only deceive ourselves. Strict legality, as black people have cruelly learned is never a guarantee of fairness, or effectiveness.

Rather than relying on discredited and highly unpopular racial quota systems, the civil rights movement now has a serious obligation to examine and develop creative forms of affirmative action. For in destroying the popular misconception that affirmative action systems are designed to advance "incompetent blacks" at the expense of white people, we will be creating the proper atmosphere for the expansion of authentic affirmative action.

When I speak of authentic affirmative action, I have in mind several highly successful outreach programs such as the Recruitment and Training Program, Minority Women's Employment Program, the Urban League's LEAP, the Human Resources Development Institute and the paraprofessional program sponsored by the United Federation of Teachers. These programs, unlike simple quota

systems, provide blacks and other minorities with valuable job skills that facilitate fair and equal competition in the labor market. All this is accomplished without stigmatizing blacks as "special cases," without diluting fair and acceptable standards, and without provoking widespread anger about "preferential treatment" and "reverse discrimination."

Because of our preoccupation with quotas, we in the black community have never organized a thorough discussion of the goals and techniques of affirmative action. In the past, our approach has been overly narrow, and emotion-laden. Now, however, it is imperative that we have a discussion, not only among ourselves but with our allies in the labor movement, the liberal community, and other ethnic groups. As we learned from the civil rights struggle, black Americans are powerless without allies. Unless we build a solid constituency for affirmative action, we will have only ourselves to blame for its failure.

Black Caucus

Washington, D.C.-The Court's decision in Bakke today is complex, and there may be a tendency to focus on the order that Bakke be admitted to the Davis Medical School. However, the real impact of the Bakke decision is in that the majority of the Court upheld the use of race as a factor in university affirmative action programs. The practical impact of today's decision is to uphold most university affirmative action programs.

TO BE EQUAL



Bakke Decision Has Positives

Why the great rush to interpret the Supreme Court's Bakke decision as being bad for blacks? "We Lose" headlines in the black press and gleeful "Bakke Wins" headlines in the majority press both miss the point of the decision.

I don't think the Court should have turned down the admissions program at the University of California at Davis, but it did. The real importance of the decision however, was not the striking down of a single program, but the Court's affirmation that race may be used as a factor in admissions programs.

Not only did the Court give its constitutional blessings to the kinds of affirmative action programs in effect in nearly all of our nation's educational and employment institutions, but it clarified the limits of such programs. By setting such boundaries, the Court's action should result in increased use of affirmative action programs.

In the larger context then, whether Bakke gets into the school of his choice or whether the University's program is upheld or not becomes less important than the preservation of the principle of affirmative action programs that use race as a factor in allocating entrance to schools.

Sure, it would have been a lot better if the Court upheld the admissions system in question. It almost did just that. Four justices would have approved the University's program as constitutional. The swing judge in the 5-4 decision, Justice Powell, didn't go along.

Justice Powell rejected rigidly-based affirmative action programs but went out of his way to cite some examples of successful programs that meet the Court's standards of constitutionality. In effect he was saying: "Look, you can't do it this way, but here's an example of how you can give minorities preference." So the Court's majority, in rejecting one such program, gave most present affirmative action programs its seal of approval.

So blacks and minorities didn't "lose" the Bakke Case. We may not have won the victory we wanted, but we averted the defeat that would have invalidated race as a factor in affirmative action.

If the Court had ruled, for example, that such programs must be open to all disadvantaged people, the sheer numbers of the white disadvantaged would have squeezed out minorities from those programs, freezing minority disadvantage into intolerable permanence.

The Court wisely rejected such a step. It understood that, as Justice Marshall eloquently wrote in his opinion, "It is because of a legacy of unequal treatment that we must now permit the institutions of this society to give consideration to race in making decisions about who will hold the positions of influence, affluence and prestige in America."

And Justice Blackmun, widely regarded as one of the Court's conservatives, backed the University's system of outright numerical set-asides for minorities. He wrote: "In order to go beyond racism, we must first take account of race. There is no other way. And in order to treat some persons equally, we must treat them differently. We cannot - we dare not - let the Equal Protection Clause perpetrate racial supremacy."

as i see it

Proposition 13: No Laughing Matter

By Benjamin L. Hooks
Special to the Post

As the story goes when Howard Arnold Jarvis launched his crusade for a drastic cut in property taxes 15 years ago, politicians laughed at him. They felt certain that residents of the Maverick State would not want to see any such action that would lead to sizable reductions in public services.

Well, as we have seen from the nationwide rush to jump onto the bandwagon following California's adoption of Proposition 13 last month, politicians are not laughing any more.

Across the nation, public officials and private citizens alike, are earnestly assessing the causes that led to the overwhelming success of the Jarvis-Gann movement. The first reality they must face is, with the loss of \$7 billion in revenue, Californians must scramble to find alternate funding sources. But, did Proposition 13 have to happen?

One mistake factor in the approval of Proposition 13 was racism. Proposition 13 leaders were most outspoken

against the use of public funds for welfare and other services that were targeted for the poor.

Many voters also cast their ballots under the mistaken notion that Proposition 13 would affect the poor and not them.

But although welfare has always been a favorite target for conservatives and insensitive public officials, it is doubtful that the Jarvis-Gann movement could have succeeded without the burdensome impact of exorbitantly high property taxes.

Looking at other factors in California, we see that the State had a whopping \$5 billion budget surplus. At the same time public officials showed little or no concern for the skyrocketing increases in property assessments and taxes each year.

With one of the most efficient tax assessment systems in the nation, they simply kept on raising taxes each year to pay for needed as well as unneeded services. For it should follow that, with a budget surplus as large as California's, there would be little incentive to be cost conscious.



Benjamin L. Hooks
...NAACP Director

We have it, so let us use it, brothers and sisters, seemed to have been the byword.

Under such circumstances it is little wonder that California did not move to roll back taxes much sooner.

The only tragedy is that by taking such sweeping action as adopting a constitutional amendment, voters are striking at those least able to bear the burden of their anger as well as at those most responsible for the revolt. These were state and local public officials.

So, faced with an increasingly rebellious mood within the state and the nation, minorities as well as teachers, firemen, police, and municipal workers of all categories can expect even more difficult times ahead.

Minorities must therefore be careful about attributing the California Revolt primarily to racism or classism. Certainly racism was a factor. But it was not the only one. Neither was it most the most important one.

As responsible citizens, blacks will therefore have to assume a more vigorous role not only in the area of civil rights, but also in working for responsible, effective local government. Blacks have always been concerned about the operations of their government, of course.

But, as the large number of unregistered voters will show, we as a people can do much more to ensure that public officials at all levels spend our tax dollars with greater care. Blacks must enter even more fully the mainstream of their communities, creating watchdog committees and civic groups. They must

become ombudsmen and seek election to more public offices. It is only through such exercise of responsible citizenship that we can be better prepared to help temper such destructive currents as are now spreading under the guise of taxpayer revolts.

Public Hearing Set On Water Rates

The Charlotte City Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, July 24 at 3 p.m. in the Council Chamber at City Hall for the purpose of hearing citizens' comments and suggestions on proposed changes to the rate structure for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utility Department.

The proposed rates have been developed following a cost of service and rate structure study conducted by the Arthur Young and Company for the Community Facilities Committee (CFC). The CFC is a five member committee appointed to advise local government on proposed changes in rates and policies of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utility Department.

Persons who wish to speak at the hearing should contact the Office of the City Clerk, City Hall, 600 East Trade Street, telephone 374-2247, by noon the day of the hearing.

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Copies of the Arthur Young report and the proposed rates are available for public inspection at the Public Service and Information Department located in the basement of City Hall.
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