

Editorials & Comments

A Perspective On Progress

By Hoyle H. Martin Sr.
First Editorial Writer

Considering the uncertainty of the Bakke decision's impact upon "affirmative action" programs and the implications of California's Proposition 13 tax revolt, it is not surprising that U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young told the Progressive National Baptist Convention recently that "a new negativism" is sweeping across the nation that aims to erode the civil rights progress of the past 14 years.

On the other hand, extensive comparative surveys by Gallop Associates involving asking the same set of questions every few years reveals that blacks as individuals are reasonably well pleased with their progress, current status and are optimistic about the future. However, when blacks view themselves as a group there is a sense of pessimism undoubtedly encouraged by reports that white Americans give the problems of black Americans a very low status among 31 domestic priorities.

This pessimism is rooted in part, in the Census Bureau's 1973 Survey on the social and economic status of black Americans. The survey concluded that the significant economic gains made by blacks in the 1960's had vanished by the early 1970's. More significantly, the lack of past economic gains for the masses of American blacks has hardly changed five years later and may possibly be worse. For example, the

income gap between blacks and whites (black income about 59 percent of that of whites) has changed a little and unemployment among blacks remains more than twice that of whites. Yet, a reason for optimism that many individual blacks feel is justified through all this by the Census data's additional conclusion and its continuation in 1978—that young black husband-wife families in the South where both spouses hold jobs have made substantial gains in narrowing the income gap.

It appears to us that what is most important in these observations is not why or where whites rank on any list of priorities, but rather how blacks perceive their own progress on their own terms. It has been the absence of such self evaluation, self esteem, and self pride that has led to the need for blacks to be told by other blacks that "you are somebody."

An "I am somebody" attitude, and the courage to prove it, is the most underlying factor in measuring and determining black progress. If enough blacks adopt positive attitudes and a commitment to "I can do the impossible," progress will and can be made against the tide of racism, sexism, economic exploitation and the psychological chains that limit our true potential.

Progress then for black Americans should be measured in terms of our commitment to a positive attitude, ethnic, trust in each other and have faith in God, with this kind of perspective progress will be made.

Why Students, Teachers Skip School?

One "of the two calamities that has recently befallen the intellectual life in America," George F. Will has said, is the idea "that there is no difference between the teacher and the taught, an idea expressed in

bromides about 'both being students, learning from each other.' Our initial reaction might be to dismiss this statement, however, a recent development in our local public school system gives a freshness to Mr. Will's comment.

We are referring here to school truancy as practiced by both students and teachers alike. As school administrators found that high school absenteeism on an average day had risen from 10 percent in 1972-73 to 14 percent in 1977-78, they also found that over half of such absenteeism were unrelated to illness or other justifiable causes.

As school administrators expressed a growing concern in student absenteeism they began seeking a solution. It became apparent that a part of the problem stemmed from the absenteeisms among teachers. Sup. Jay Robinson put the problem into perspective when he told the School Board last week, "We're putting a lot of emphasis on the attendance of

children. But if they get to school and there's no teacher, we haven't made much progress.

Students miss or skip school for a variety of reasons - outside interests, boredom, limited income, fear of classmate intimidation, fear of failure, poor teaching and the home environment - to name a few. While teacher absenteeism in one four

month period last school year was five percent, the representatives of teachers' organizations did not take kindly to Dr. Robinson's charge that teacher absenteeism has become "a serious problem..." no one has apparently asked why teachers are absent.

Without being asked, we would suggest that teachers are absent for some of the same reasons that students are - boredom, poor teaching, intimidation (by students) and the inability to cope with various situations on a day to day basis.

Until these issues for both students and teachers are resolved, grades will fall, competency test scores for both students and teachers will decline and the credibility of public education will suffer. These are our schools and our children let's act now!



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Alexander Says Vote "Yes" Sept. 8

August 8, 1978
Bill Johnson, Editor
Charlotte Post
1524 W. Blvd.
Charlotte, NC 28208
Dear Editor:

Charlotte-Mecklenburg has developed into the vigorous economic center of the Carolinas, through the vision of its leaders and the hard work of its citizens. We have embraced planning as the torch bearer of national development; the maintenance of good race relations and the creation of a multi-ethnic-multi cultural community. Charlotte-Mecklenburg is a place that wants and needs economic growth, but never wants to get too big to be neighborly.

Because we are engaged in a great civic debate on the merits of an improved method of alcoholic beverage control, we must not lose our perspective. The passage of the September 8 referendum is as important to the steady economic, social and cultural development of our community as was the yes vote on the airport bonds. The new airport will help us attract non-polluting industry to the country, while improving the tax base, and keeping our general level of unemployment low.

Mixed beverages will generate tax dollars that will help improve the services received by all citizens, while helping

hold down the overall property tax rate. Under the present system nearly two million dollars was returned to Charlotte-Mecklenburg in 1976-77. This money went to support our library system; the city and county general funds. Some of the money was even given to the townships outside of Charlotte in an county revenue sharing. No authoritative estimate of how much additional tax revenue mixed beverages will generate has been made. It is clear, however, that we can expect well over the two million received in 1976-77 - perhaps twice as much.

A great city. A cosmopolitan city needs a lively cultural and entertainment life. Discovery Place, Spirit Square, restoration of Fourth Ward are all public-private joint ventures to help reinvest up-town with life after 6 p.m. But where are our great restaurants...our impressive hotels...our renowned private clubs? A yes vote on September 8, will not bring these improvements overnight. It will help create the economic conditions under which these positive developments can be initiated. It will signal to the world, that Charlotte-Mecklenburg is not an area basking in the glories of past achievements, but a forward looking dynamic place to live, to work and to invest in.

Invest in our future. Vote "yes," with me on September 8.
Sincerely,
Kelly M. Alexander, Jr.
Co. Chairman
Mecklenburg Mixed Beverage Committee

Seminars Set

To Discuss

Air Quality

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Technical Coordinating Committee on Air Quality will hold the second of two seminars to discuss Charlotte's air quality. The seminars will be held in the auditorium of the Main Library, 310 North Tryon Street, on August 29 at 3 p.m.

Charlotte has been notified by the federal government that certain national health standards are being violated, and a plan of action must be prepared to clean up the air. Interested citizens and elected officials are invited to attend the seminars to discuss the problem and possible solutions. Suggestions and comments will be included in a report to be submitted to local elected officials next month.

The Technical Coordinating Committee is the staff arm of the Transportation Advisory Committee.

TO BE EQUAL



Myth Of Big Government

I'm getting tired of hearing constant complaints about so-called Big Government. Sure, there's plenty that can and should be done to make government more responsive and more efficient. But the thrust of a lot of today's complaints goes far beyond that.

The attack on government actually represents an effort to shrink the size of the government and render it incapable of providing the services the nation, and especially poor people, need.

Further, many of the charges about government growth are simply not true. The myth that government has grown at the expense of the private sector is, for example, just that - a myth.

The share of federal, state and local government spending as a percentage of the gross national product, the conventional way of measuring government's size, is actually smaller today than it was three years ago. Federal spending as a share of the GNP continues to be in the 21-23 percent range, right where it has been historically in peacetime.

All the talk about that federal army of bureaucrats is just talk. Federal civilian employment has actually declined slightly while total employment, including the military, is what it was back in 1961.

Complaints about bureaucratic meddling should also be taken with a grain of salt. It's probably true that there may be too much regulation in some areas of the economy. And many people, especially businessmen, have their own horror stories about encounters with people in public offices who aren't doing their job.

But that's hardly a blanket condemnation of all regulation. Some criticisms are inspired by the desire to weaken gains made by labor, minorities and poor people. There have been attacks on measures designed to cut the loss of life and limb among working people, and on measures designed to protect the environment. There may be instances of abuse of power or just plain bad sense in enforcement, but regulation itself shouldn't be a target.

That's especially so since many of the complaints relate to federal enforcement of civil rights laws. We hear sob stories from colleges and corporations about the mountain of federal forms they have to fill out to meet EEOC and other compliance regulations.

They ignore the fact that such regulations have become necessary because of persistent discrimination and evasion of the civil rights laws. When discrimination is no longer rampant in our society, those forms will wither away. Until then, the sad fact is that federal regulations against discriminations and federal, state and local civil rights laws are not being enforced to the extent necessary.

The real aim of the so-called tax revolt isn't so much cutting taxes as it is reducing government's ability to function. U.S. taxes are lower than those of any other industrial country, and other nations provide far more services for their people.

The drive on big government is fueled by politicians and government officials themselves who make a virtue of running against the very institutions they have to administer. Every President in the last ten years has campaigned vigorously against the federal government, even after winning the election.

as i see it

The Woman's Revolution!

By Gerald O. Johnson
Let us go back now to those thrilling days of yesteryear, when a woman's place was in the home and the man's place was wherever he hung his hat. Yes, the woman of yesteryear was a dedicated woman, a loving wife, and a devoted mother. She found her pleasures in life by satisfying those she loved, never letting her own needs interfere with the welfare of the home. Yesteryear woman was the backbone of the family and therefore the backbone of America. Even though she took a backseat to publicity, she undoubtedly was the adhesive to maintaining the family institution.

However, times have changed. Today has created a new breed of woman. Yes, superwoman, disguised as Claudia Kent, mind-mannered housewife, fights for truth, justice and the ERA. Superwoman, able to leap the corporate ladder in a single bound, is here to stay. Thank God, I might add.

Today woman has become something that women of yesteryear couldn't become. They have become themselves. They have gained identity, pride, ego and an

independence all of which has made them more competitive, more interesting, and self-assured.

But along with the achievements many problems have developed. Some of the problems I am going to address in this article. But before doing this let us take a historic look at the emergence of "superwoman." I think history, more than any other single factor, sheds light on any subject or issue of today.

Historically, the woman's role in the country developed from a frontier setting. During this period the man was involved with physically developing and protecting the household, the woman was maintaining it.

Since men are physically stronger than women the roles were dictated. The man had to cut down trees to build his house, hunt and fish for food and clothing, and fight Indians and wife stealers. These tasks were best suited for men because of their physical strength.

Women were left home to cook, clean, and raise children. As time passed and society moved away from the frontier days to the modern



Gerald Johnson

era, the family institution remained behind. The modern days made life much easier from a physical standpoint. The most physical thing that a man has to do today is mow the lawn. The food and clothing ordeal has boiled down to a menial task. Consequently, the man chose to delegate this responsibility to the woman.

Until recently, with no trace of frontier life remaining the woman has subjected to the same roles of the frontier woman. Even though the make up of society didn't dictate that this had to be, women were forced into these

roles because no opportunities existed outside the home. Hence, in a manner of speaking women were forced to get married and put up with domestic duties for the lack of anything better to do.

But recently, the civil rights movement in conjunction with ERA has opened doors for women. Job opportunities have developed and women are turning in their aprons for a chance to develop themselves to their fullest potential.

Interesting enough was the fact that the women movement picked up impetus during the recession. When the need for money arose the men turned to the women to aid with the bringing of money into the household.

This brings us up to date. Women are here to stay in the job market.

Unfortunately, the progress of women hasn't gone unimpeded. The divorce rate and separation rate have increased drastically. Children are coming up unruly. There is a growing dissension among men about women.

The men of today are from homes where the women were not career oriented. Conse-

quently, they (I am sorry) we are basically spoiled. Today's men have preset concepts of how a wife should be. When she turns out to be something different than a conflict arises.

In the past when the opportunities for women were limited, if a conflict arose the woman was almost always forced to give in. Today, because she is willing and able to make it on her own, she doesn't have to agree with anything. When and if the male decides to leave, she'll help him pack.

Consequently, today's women, by being independent, have become a threat to men.

However, the marriage conflict is due to men. Because today's men are unwilling to accept the fact that this is a new day and that women are to be worked with and not dominated. Husbands are unwilling to help do household chores but expect a woman to do this and work a full time job.

Fortunately, I think the trouble is no more than an adjustment. Once this transition period passes both men and women will settle down and work together once again.

Slowly but surely today men are getting use to not being spoiled. Eventually, he will come around.

I am, personally, proud of the women's revolution. What is least understood is that the new found independence by women makes them less vulnerable to hardship in the later years.

A female that is totally dependent on her spouse finds herself shortchanged in her later years if her spouse dies, flies the coop, or whatever. By not preparing themselves for a future for themselves they find out that if left by themselves they have no future. Being a mother, being a wife are all lovely things to be, but they aren't careers.

I say right on to the "Super Woman."

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