

Editorials & Comments

Are We Political Racists?

by Hoyle H. Martin, Sr.

A Charlotte News front page story on Sept. 8, liquor-by-the-drink election day, was headlined "Everyone Voting On Mixed Drinks." "Everyone," as it turned out, did not include most black voters because most blacks simply did not vote. For example, in Precinct 25 only 623 out of 2,500 registrants took the time to vote on the mixed drink issue. The Precinct 25 voter turnout represented only 24.8 percent of their voters and was characteristic of black voting in other predominately black voting places.

Significantly, the black voter turnout for the mixed drink issue was predicted to be low. The predictions were based on two assumptions. These are that (1) blacks only vote in large numbers when black candidates are on the ballot and (2) blacks only vote in large numbers when there is a perceived direct benefit from such voting. These assumptions appeared to be evident in the mixed drink vote. For example, both before and after the election, Elections Board Secretary William "Bill" Culp said he predicted, based on past voting patterns, that the black voter turnout would be low because blacks tend to vote heavily only when black candidates are on the ballot. Furthermore, many people, both black and white expressed a viewpoint that there was nothing in the mixed drink issue to benefit blacks, thus most won't bother to vote.

New Negativism

We tend to believe that these assumptions are true, and if they are, black people are contributing to what the Urban League's Vernon Jordan has called the "New Negativism," a "basic renegeing on the promises (by White America) of the 1960s." It appears to us that black people are contributing to such "negativism" when they fail to do as much as they can to make themselves a part of mainstream America.

For example, for good or bad, liquor-by-the-drink is going to affect the quality of life in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, therefore, every citizen should be actively involved in helping make those decisions that affect our lives. Secondly, and probably more significant, is the fact that an established show of force at the voting booths on any issue would give black voters a new respectability and some degree of leverage when issues do arise that they feel more directly affects them. There are in fact, no black or white issues, per se, only issues that affect people. Too often negatively black people, in part because a poor overall voting track record gives them little respectability among elected officials and the behind-the-scenes policy makers. We are certainly mindful

of the single shot" voting days when

blacks felt compelled to vote only for the black candidate because racist thinking whites would not vote for a black under no circumstances. Fortunately, we have made substantial progress away from that kind of mentality as evidenced by a recent Gallup Poll. The poll revealed that 77 percent of white Americans say that they would vote for a black candidate for President of the U. S. As recently as 20 years ago, 1958, only 38 percent of the white polled took that position. Furthermore, the poll showed a "dramatic decline" among whites' prejudice toward blacks who move into "their" neighborhood.

Moral Courage

Thus, to avoid contributing to the "new negativism" and to avoid the drift toward becoming political racist ourselves, we as blacks must use our voting power out of a sense of civic duty, moral courage, and pride in ourselves. We must not forget the statement made by Charlotte NAACP Branch President Allan Rousseau recently "When one neglects to vote, he hands over the right to others. He weakens the political system. Whatever one's politics may be, it is his duty to vote."

In commenting further on reports that blacks were being told by some do not vote on the mixed drink issue, Mr. Rousseau added, "For years black leaders have been doing everything they could to get blacks to register and vote. They've not said how to vote that's no one's business but the voter's - but we all know that blacks can't afford the luxury of not voting."

Again we think Mr. Rousseau has said well what we think needs to be said to the black community. We can't afford the luxury of apathy, indifference, political racism, or abandoning our civic responsibility if we expect to get a fair share of whatever America has to offer.

Employment, education, health care, crime control, viable neighborhoods and the responsiveness of elected officials are all made available to us in proportion to how we attempt to make the political system work and work well.

Therefore, it is not only your right to register and vote, it's your duty! To do less, for whatever reason, makes us political racist wherein we imprison ourselves and encourage the "new negativism" of whites. We believe this to be true because in America a man is what he does, that is, if he labors to make the system work it will work, if he does not labor, the system does nothing or becomes reactionary. Do something. The system works for you if you work (vote) for the system.



Time To Deal With The Real!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Police In Bogus Fencing Operation?

Mr. Bill Johnson, Editor The Charlotte Post 1524 West Boulevard Charlotte, N.C.
Dear Mr. Johnson:
On August 27 the police announced that they had dealt a major blow to crime in Charlotte by arresting hardened criminals who sold stolen goods to undercover police officers in a bogus fencing operation. The mayor and the news media rushed in to congratulate the police and called for stern swift justice.

The Charlotte Equal Rights Council in no way approves of theft, but neither do we approve of entrapment. To entice unemployed, young people, most of them ages 16-25, with a quick dollar for stolen goods stimulates crime rather than combats it.

In their haste to prove that these young men are career criminals, bail was set at over \$100,000 in some cases, though many had no previous arrest record. Now a number of Charlotte youth have a police record that will stick with them forever.

The police fence operation was designed to catch amateurs. No career criminal would have fallen for it. They had the young people fill out "job applications," and paid them by check. Professional thieves would never have accepted check, nor such low prices - \$50 for a 1978 Granada.

That these youths fell for the police trap might prove that they were stupid, and it might eventually be proven that they

are guilty of the crimes with which they are charged, but it is unlikely that they are career criminals.

Most of those arrested were black because the police set their trap in a black neighborhood. An integrated neighborhood or downtown location would have been more logical, unless the police started

out with the idea that most blacks are criminals or most criminals are black. With un-

NAACP Spurred By Lake?

Dear Sir:
Spurred by what is termed an unwarranted attack on the NAACP, by recently retired Supreme Court Justice I. Beverly Lake, Kelly M. Alexander, Sr., president, N.C. State Conference of Branches, issued an executive order, calling all interested persons to the 35th annual State Convention, which will be held at the Radisson Plaza Hotel, Oct. 19-22.

The stand that Governor Hunt took on the controversial competency test and the chiding that media gave the NAACP for its stand is of grave concern. President Alexander has often warned that the state organization could not let the apparent gains lull it into a state of apathy that could result in the winning of the battle and the losing of the war.

Lake's recent attack is a signal that there is an underlying current that could take

employment among black youths at nearly 50 percent, they are a particularly vulnerable group. But entrapment won't solve major crime.

The Sting raises a lot of questions about Charlotte's law enforcement system - whom it protects and whom it traps.

Sincerely,
Tim Lund, Coordinator
Charlotte Equal Rights Council

N.C. back to the days when reactionary forces scattered such racial venom, under the rule of the Ku Klux Klan, that Dr. Frank Porter Graham for the U.S. Senate, is the thinking of many.

All branch presidents and secretaries received hotel reservation blanks. Persons expecting to attend are urgently requested to fill out same and return one copy to the hotel and one to the state office, 112 North Irwin Avenue, Charlotte, N.C. 28202.

A record attendance is expected due to the fact state officers will be elected for a two-year term. Local branches will also hold their elections this year. It is to be remembered that Charles A. McLean, who has served as field director for a number of years, has retired. Even though the appointment is made by the national office local branches can play a valuable role in the selection.

Alexander Barnes, Director

By Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

TO BE EQUAL



Tax Cut Promises Deceptive

Economists are fond of telling us mere mortals that there's no such thing as free lunch. Usually fiscal conservatives preach this truism at liberals, but now it is liberals who have to remind the conservatives of this.

At issue is a bill before Congress popularly known as the Kemp-Roth Bill that would cut all federal taxes by one-third over the next three years.

Its' backers claim that this \$100-billion-plus tax cut would stimulate the economy to the point where the revenues would come back to the treasury in the form of higher tax receipts, even though rates would be lowered. They say the economic boom that would result from lowered taxes would be so huge that we'd have full employment, lower inflation, and other benefits. That kind of pie-in-the-sky thinking won't stand up to the harsh facts of life. A tax cut of that size would take years to result in even partial benefits to the economy. Even if there was a boom, the lower rates would result in an estimated \$100 billion federal deficit, which in itself could trigger a real Depression. The Kennedy-era tax cut often cited as proof of the beneficial effects of tax-cutting is not comparable, coming in a period of low inflation and a very different economy.

Backers of a tax cut don't say anything about cutting the federal budget, but that is the real purpose of deep tax cuts. Political reality dictates that once federal revenues were cut to such a massive extent, the budget itself would have to be slashed.

Now what does that mean? You know the Pentagon's swollen budget won't be touched. And a large part of the federal budget is untouchable - interest payments on the national debt, social security entitlements, and other expenditures. That leaves money going to poor people and to cities as prime targets of budget-slashers. The hidden agenda of the tax cutters is to cut federal spending, especially for social purposes.

That hidden agenda has to be exposed. Promising people a free lunch in the form of massive tax cuts is deceptive if the true intent of the government's services is not revealed.

But even on their own grounds, the tax cutters are wrong. The theoretical underpinnings of a massive tax cut are found in the proposals of economist Arthur Laffer. He says that taxes are so high that incentive has been dulled, and the economy suffers from the accumulated decisions of individuals and businesses not to work so hard because of the tax bite.

BUT America's taxes are among the lowest in the industrial world. Only about 30 percent of America's Gross National Product is taken in taxes which, let's not forget, are returned to the public in the form of necessary services. But almost half the GNP of the Netherlands goes to taxes, and even West Germany, considered the prime example of a free enterprise country, takes over 35 percent of its GNP in taxes.

The same goes for tax rates on earned income. The top rate in America is 50 percent, but in England it is 83 percent, and even in Japan, another example of a free enterprise state, it is 76.5 percent.

as i see it

Another Period Of Enlightenment?

MR. JOHNSON:
I just read your column, "THE PERILS OF BEING A BLACK HOMEOWNER," and I don't have one iota of sympathy for you. Having said that, let me hasten to explain: (1) Being a presumed intelligent man, you realize the problems you have had with discrimination. (2) You know whites don't love you any more now than they did when you were younger. (3) White Realtors don't want you in a white neighborhood to insure them from possibly being your next door neighbor because that is, where they live.

You Brother Johnson, could have avoided this very easily and still bought a home in a predominately white neighborhood. Your first mistake was calling a white Realtor. You see, in your column you mentioned certain markets. The market you unforgivably forgot was the market for Black Realtors. The reason it is unforgivable is that you deliberately and obviously forgot them. Several com-

petent Black Realtors belong to the Multiple Listing Service and therefore can show and sell you any home on the market. Not only that, but they could have shown you how to save money in the process. So you see, it was not the White Realtor that was an idiot. GERALD O. JOHNSON WAS THE IDIOT.

I say this Brother Johnson without malice or rancor but with disappointment in you and other blacks for whom the Black Realtor depends upon for their livelihood. And yet the Black Homebuyer avoids them deliberately even though they are your neighbors, fellow church-members, club members, lodge members, and etc. I'm sure you get my point. Therefore, the next time you and your black friends attempt to spend your money, remember, you are looking for GOOD SERVICE, EFFICIENCY, DEDICATION AND PROFESSIONALISM. And you can find it in the aforementioned groups.

Please consider printing this letter, after all, it may be



Gerald Johnson the beginning of another period of enlightenment.

YOUR BROTHER

J.E. HENDERSON

Dear Mr. Henderson,
My Realtor is Julius 'JC' Cousar who, as far as I know, is black. The white Realtor that your letter makes reference to represented the seller of the property.

After re-reading the article I don't understand how you got so turned around on your thinking. I guess that just proves that there is always room for one more member in

the 'Idiot' club. Welcome!
Gerald O. Johnson

THINGS I HATE!

I find it disgusting that insurance companies use mottos to promote their policies but in reality don't practice what they preach. The good hands people use those hands to collect premiums, but squashes you with them when it's time to pay out. Or guess where you will get that piece of the rock if you have an accident; up side your head.

Automotive insurance is as long as you don't have an accident, but if you do, rest assured that your policy might be cancelled. So, tell me, what good is it if when you need it, it's gone?

To save money on auto insurance you might try cutting out your collision insurance. You can do this if your car is paid for and over 4 years old.

I own a 1971 Chevelle which has a book value of about 500 or 600 dollars. Hence, if I totaled my car \$600 is all the insurance company will pay. I

was paying \$50 a year in collision insurance. If I put that money in the bank instead of giving it to the insurance company, I am well ahead of the game. If I wreck my car, I have the money to pay for it. If I don't wreck it, then I have money drawing interest for me.

Don't try this if you aren't good at saving money. But saving money is my favorite pastime. Now, if I could only get my hands on some.

Another thing I really hate is the Charlotte News subscription department. Every other day for a solid month they called trying to get me to take a subscription. I said no at least 40 times. It would seem that with all the money they have that they could list the people already contacted. But this isn't all. I decided that I would give the news a try, so on 41st call I said, "yes". Two weeks later I received a bill, but to this day I have not received a paper. Even after numerous calls, I got no results.

I hate trains. It seems every

morning when I'm late for work, I'm stopped by a train. If this isn't bad enough the train always stops after half of it has gone by. It then backs up for ten minutes (just to get your dandruff up) and stops again. Then it starts forward again and after 15 minutes of waiting, you decide to try another route. You slap your gear in reverse, press on the gas, slap the gear in drive, press on gas, and so on, until you finally get the car turned around. You're boiling mad, now. Just as you get started in the other direction, you see everybody on the side laughing at you. Without looking around you know what has happened. The train is gone.



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