

# Editorials & Comments

## So You Think You've Got It Made!

by Hoyle H. Martin, Sr.  
Post Editorial Writer

In 1963, the little known newly elected governor of Alabama seized a share of the national political spot light when he said in his inaugural address, "Segregation now! Segregation tomorrow! Segregation forever!"

In demonstrating support for his words six months later, the governor literally stood in the school house door to block two black students from entering the University of Alabama.

Now 18 years later, and after an unprecedented three terms as governor and four presidential campaigns rooted in racist rhetoric, Governor George Wallace says, "I will admit and can understand now that the things that the federal government forced upon us, such as doing away with segregated eating places...has turned out for the best."

Before you are lulled into thinking that the Civil Rights, Equal Opportunity and Voting Rights Acts of the past 14 years, and the change in thinking that George Wallace's words represent, mean that blacks have it made and the struggle for justice and equality is no longer necessary, you are sadly mistaken.

Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall reminded us that the quest for justice and equality is a continuing process when he told a Howard

University audience recently, "We have not got it made. In fact, while society in general has come a long way from where it used to be, the gaps between blacks and whites have widened."

Justice Marshall's words are evidenced in actions taken by the high tribunal on which he sits. We are referring here to the Supreme Court's vague decision in the Allan Bakke alleged "reverse discrimination" case and their decision to review a similar case wherein a white man successfully sued his employer for selecting blacks with less seniority for a training program.

Vernon E. Jordan too has reminded us that we don't have it made. He said recently that a "new threat" to Affirmative Action programs comes from a new definition of the term "minority" that substantially deludes the special help blacks have in the past received from the public sector.

These observations should be enough to remind us that the quest for justice and equality is an on-going process. Thus, the gains blacks have made can be easily lost if we are lulled into a false sense of security in the belief that we've got it made. The struggle for your rights and my rights continues. Join our daily army for equality.

## The Need To Be Responsible

Literally millions of words have been written to describe America's greatest tragedy, the so-called Jonesville mass suicide in which over 900 members of the Peoples Temple religious cult drank Kool-Aid laced with cyanide at the command of their leader, "Father" Jim Jones.

Ironically, while the People's Temple leadership was primarily white, much of its philosophical foundation and about 75 percent of its membership is or was black. Jones had studied the theological views and practices of the late Father Divine and other black minister-evangelists before founding the Peoples Temple.

A confirmed supporter of socialism, and racial equality, Jones believed that the communal life, which was being practiced and expanded throughout his Temple's establishments was an attempt to carry out the mandates of the New Testament. He relied heavily upon the Book of Acts 2:44-46 to explain his underlying beliefs. These verses read, "And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart..."

In practice, for one female member in San Francisco, this resulted in giving her \$1,000 salary per month as a programmer to the Temple in exchange for a shared room, meals, and a \$2 weekly allowance. Furthermore, if additional clothings were needed or extra lunch money to treat a prospective temple member, such funds had to be requested a week early.

In addition, Jones apparently used this passage of scripture to justify public beatings of Temple members for the slightest infraction of rules; the confiscating of all personal property including real estate and social security checks; the required signing of documents such as stating you'd molested your own children to show your loyalty to Jones (the documents were then used as blackmail to bind the signer to the Temple); the relinquishing of authority over your own children; spying and reporting on others; and requiring all members to do anything Jones told them to do, including practice suicide drills, the killing of others and actual suicide.

The Peoples Temple and Germany of the 1930s each represent people who did not want to assume a responsibility for their own actions nor make any decisions for themselves, thus the emergence of paranoid leaders, unpredictable consequences and the loss of personal freedom.



It's Time The Black Community Did Something About It!

## Social Security Benefits

### First Five Months Of Disability

People who apply for social security disability benefits are often surprised and disappointed when they are told there is a 5-month waiting period before disability benefits can begin. "It shouldn't take 5 months to tell if I'm disabled," is a typical reaction.

In most cases it doesn't take that long to make the medical-vocational determination of disability. Rather, the 5-month waiting period reflects the purpose of the social security disability program which is to insure workers and their families against the loss of income caused by a long-term period of disability.

UNDER SOCIAL security, disability means inability to do any substantial work because of a physical or mental impairment that will last for at least a year or will result in death. This is different from some other programs, like veterans benefits, that pay for partial disabilities, or from some State-administered programs that provide for temporary disabilities.

Most people who become ill or suffer disabling conditions recover in less than 5 months. Others who may take a little longer have a condition that is unlikely to last a year and is therefore not a long-term disability.

People who suffer short-term disabling conditions often rely on personal income and resources such as private insurance or savings to tide them over. Such State-administered programs as workers' compensation insurance and unemployment insurance as well as veterans benefits may also be available.

WHEN A person's condition is so severe as to extend beyond the protection provided by such programs, then

social security disability insurance can be most helpful. Most people who receive social security disability benefits continue to do so for the rest of their lives, or until the benefits shift to retirement benefits at age 65. People who do attempt to return to work in spite of their condition are permitted a trial work period up to 9 months to enable them to determine if they can perform substantial gainful work on a regular basis.

The waiting period is measured from the onset of the disability, not from the date of the application, so that in many cases a person who applies for benefits after the 5-month waiting period only has to wait the time it takes to process his or her claim. Retroactive benefits may be paid for up to 12 months preceding the month you apply.

However, it is important that you file for disability benefits as soon as you realize that your disability is expected to last 12 months or longer so benefits can start with the 6th full month of disability.

MORE THAN 4.9 million workers and their dependents are currently receiving disability benefits at the rate of \$1.1 billion a month. The average disability benefit for a single worker is \$285; the average for a disabled worker and family is \$566.

People who don't have enough credit for work under social security to get disability benefits and who have limited income and resources may qualify for benefits under the supplemental security income program, which provides payments to the needy, aged, blind and disabled. SSI is also run by the Social Security Administration and the medical eligi-

bility requirements are the same. However, there is no 5-month waiting period, since SSI payments are made on the basis of need rather than credit for work under social security and it is assumed that the payments are needed immediately. Thus, a person in need may qualify for SSI disability payments while waiting for his or her social security claim to be completed. SSI payments cannot be made before the month of application.

If you feel you need more information about social security or SSI disability payments, call or stop by the office. The telephone number is 375-8861.

## City Council

### Needs Your Help

During the month of December, the Charlotte City Council will be meeting the following positions:

Auditorium-Coliseum-Civic Authority-Nominations to fill the unexpired term of Ann Thomas will be made at the City Council meeting on Monday, December 18. Ms. Thomas resigned after being elected to the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners. The term will expire April 25, 1979.

Civil Service Board-Nominations to fill the unexpired term of Mary Rogers Watts will be made at the City Council meeting on Monday, January 8, 1979. Ms. Watts resigned due to moving outside the City limits. The term will expire May 15, 1979.

Persons and organizations with recommendations for these appointments should contact any member of the Charlotte City Council.

By Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

## TO BE EQUAL



### Federal Budget A Battleground

The Administration is sending strong signals that the next budget will be an "austerity" budget, with deep cuts all across the board.

Well, almost all across the board. Military spending will go up. Some federal operations will be held to an increase roughly comparable with inflation.

But the axe is being sharpened to slash federal job and housing programs.

When you consider the enormous waste in some federal spending programs—shoveling out huge sums of money to affluent suburbs and mile-wide tax loopholes and tax subsidies that benefit the rich—cutting social programs is outrageous.

If sacrifices are demanded to restrain inflation, they should not be borne by the poorest among us. And that's who would take it on the chin if the rumors coming out of Washington are accurate.

Poor people depend on federal job creation programs and subsidized housing. They need the health, income maintenance and training programs government provides.

And those programs aren't just frills, icing on the cake. No, they have become essential for survival. Cut those programs and you cut the few strands left on the inadequate safety net our society places beneath the poor. Cuts in those programs would deliver a fatal blow to many people's lives and hopes.

If the government is serious about trimming federal spending, those programs should be the last to be cut, not the first. Other targets are far more inviting, and would not result in worsening the already desperate situation many people find themselves in.

A Brookings Institution study found that the Pentagon's civilian payroll includes an estimated billion dollars of waste in unnecessary personnel and in inflated salaries.

Some analysts suggest military spending could be cut drastically with no loss in defense firepower. Whatever the merits of such analyses, most people agree that the defense establishment could be leaner and still retain its effectiveness.

While calling for "austerity," the President signed a bill raising pensions for non-wounded veterans, an act that will add billions to the budget over the next few years.

And while the Administration works on cutting social expenditures that aid the cities, it is planning a multi-billion dollar civil defense program. No one suggests such a program would be effective in case of nuclear attack. But by going through the expensive motions of planning a civil defense program we're supposed to be convincing the Russians that we're tough.

Another bloated budget area can be found in the pork barrel projects favored by the very Congressmen who yell loudest about cutting urban programs. The President acted boldly last summer when he vetoed a rivers and dams bill, but billions are still spent on those non-priority projects that benefit relatively few people.

Another popular pork barrel federal program is the continuing massive amount spent on highway construction, something that ought to be a state responsibility now that the interstate highway system is in place.

Revenue sharing monies are not targeted and are given to every local government whether it needs the aid or not.

expressed optimism. Furthermore, there are concerted efforts to cut by more than half the federal budget deficit. This action will further restrict the amount of funds available for federal programs.

## No Votes, Then No Jobs

Watergate has run out. Winds of change will bring a cold winter for Black Americans. Political changes on both coasts have been damaging to Black American leadership. Bigots in the ballot box blew not only two existing black political leaders from office, Lt. Governor Mervyn Dymally in California and U.S. Senator Edward Brooke in Massachusetts, but put capital punishment in first place. Governor Edmund G. (Jerry) Brown's margin of victory was the largest numerical gap in the history of contested gubernatorial races in California. The lovable little governor got 3,820,940 votes. Capital punishment code name death penalty produced 4,352,596 votes a mandate for maiming Black American male political prisoners in jail.

While the first and only Black American Associate Justice of the California State Supreme Court appointed by Governor Brown did not as protocol dictates campaign, he nevertheless received 75,000 fewer confirmation votes than the hated and haunted similarly appointed Chief Justice Rose Byrne.

Racism and wander ran a closet campaign against even Mayor Charles Evers in Mississippi. Evers finished trailing third for U.S. Senate seat in a state nearly half black. The Lord helps those who help themselves. In the 1976 election, only two out of five Black Americans of voting age went to the polls. This November was one of the lowest voter turnouts in history, about 37 percent for the nation which was even lower than the 38.5 percent recorded in 1974 in the midst of the Watergate inspired diarrheas.



## Our New Day Begun

### The Choice: Jobs Or Inflation Fights

by Benjamin L. Hooks  
Special To The Post

As the debate continues over President Carter's intensified fight to hold inflation to a seven percent rate next year, the question that confronts the nation is not whether there will be a recession in 1979 but how severe it will be. However slight the economic slump, it seems certain that national unemployment will be deliberately pushed up by more than a full percentage from the current 5.8 to 6 percent range.

For blacks, who hold a disproportionate share of marginal and low-income jobs, and whose jobless rate has been twice the national average since World War II, the prospects are for a worsening economic condition.

In pushing for the recent passage of the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Bill, civil rights leaders and the Congressional Black Caucus were hoping to hold the nation to a moral commitment to keep the jobless rate at a level low enough to ensure that minorities would find jobs. The underlying belief was that the basic cause of inflation is not full employment.

Indeed, in our increasingly complex economy and society,



Benjamin L. Hooks...NAACP executive director so many other factors are involved that full employment should be the last reason that is given. Yet the news media and many national economists reflexively use the job rate level as their favorite whipping boy when they begin looking for reasons behind the wage-price spiral.

Without a doubt, inflation hurts everyone. But it especially hurts the poor, the middle-class and those with fixed incomes and pensions.

Inflation also makes people mean, vicious and selfish. It draws them inward. People worry about, can I eat? Can I buy a second car? Can I send my children to school or college?

Inflation, as we have seen in recent months, makes people conservative. They vote down school taxes, even though it hurts their children. They vote for California's Proposition 13-type restriction on state and local budgets because they feel property taxes are rising much too fast and too high. They become selfish and stop worrying about the underprivileged, especially the black child down the street.

As a minority, black people are the draftees of the inflation fight. Poor people do not make the decision to put a voluntary ceiling on wages. If they are lucky enough to have a job, inflation will be making it even more difficult for them to survive.

Faced with whether or not they should fight inflation or continue the push for jobs, therefore, the choice seems academic. The survival of blacks rests on whether they can find a job, a livelihood that protects them from the humiliation of the unemployment line and the psychological damage of welfare.

Blacks must therefore be alarmed over the prospects of a deliberately created economic slump next year. For blacks to benefit, the national growth rate must be above

four percent. Yet, national economic leaders are now predicting that the economy

will grow no faster than between two and a half and three percent in 1979. Mr. Carter predicts three percent. But, we have our doubts about that

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