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## Income And Food Gaps Continue To Grow Between Rich And Poor

### Food Stamp Participation Increases

Special to the Post  
RALEIGH—Elimination of the purchase requirement for food stamps which became effective on January 1, 1979, resulted in a 19.5 percent increase in the number of low income North Carolinians participating in the program in January compared to December. During December, there were 382,862 participants. This number climbed to 457,577 in January.

The elimination of the requirement that people have to pay a certain amount for food stamps in order to receive additional bonus stamps was one of several major changes in the program adopted by Congress. Another major change was lowering the income level for eligibility to the federal poverty level. This change did not become effective until March 1, 1979.

"We are not sure how many participants will no longer be eligible for food stamps because of the new income limitation. It will take several months to determine this," said John Kerr, chief of the Food Assistance Section of the Division of Social Services of the N. C. Department of Human Resources.

He said North Carolina's increased participation of 19.5 percent was higher than the national increase of approximately 10 percent. Nationwide, some 17.8 million people participated in the program during January compared to only 16.1 million in December.

In December, participants in North Carolina purchased a total of \$16,625,081 worth of food stamps. They paid \$5,148,052 and received \$11,477,029 in bonus stamps. In January, \$14,076,022 in food stamps were issued at no charge to the participants.

"One of the major reasons Congress eliminated the purchase requirement was to allow more of the really poor to participate, especially the elderly.

### Equal Rights Council To Meet Here Tuesday Night

by Eileen Hanson  
The Charlotte Equal Rights Council will meet Tuesday, April 17 to discuss building community support for the City workers' union organizing drive. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. at the Main Library, 310 N. Tryon.

Also on the agenda will be Southern ERC coordinator, Ted Quant of New Orleans, who will speak about efforts to oppose the Ku Klux Klan in other parts of the South.

Members of the Laborers' International Union (AFL-CIO), which is trying to organize Charlotte's 1,000 blue collar workers, will present their campaign for better wages and working conditions.

"We need to have public opinion with us," said union organizer Wadel Johnson, who was recently appointed business manager for the new Local Number 64.



Members of the Meatcutters Union Local 525 negotiating committee are demanding that Harris Teeter pay its employees \$500,000 in back wages. Pictured l-r are James Mobley, Carol Stoekel, Margie Kiser, Richard Burch,

J.B. Grier, union representative Manny Coutlakis, Steve Cole, Charles Treese, Brenda Fowler, Ken Bailey, Arthur O'Shields, Frank Sullivan and John LeGrand. (photo by Eileen Hanson)

### Harris Teeter Employees Demand \$500,000 In Back Wages

by Eileen Hanson  
Special to the Post  
The employees at Harris Teeter warehouse are angry. They say the Charlotte-based supermarket chain owes them \$500,000 in back wages, stemming from a 2½ year old labor dispute. On April 18 employees and employer will again meet in union negotiations to try to resolve their differences.

Last December the National Labor Relations Board ruled in favor of the employees, represented by the Amalgamated Meatcutters and Butcher Workmen Local Nbr. 525 (AFL-CIO), upholding union charges that Harris Teeter Company violated the labor law during and after the union's successful election at the warehouse in August 1976.

According to the ruling the company threatened, coerced and intimidated employees for union activity. The ruling also said union supporters William Huntley, James Wright,

Jerome Little, Jimmy Martin and Earl Nixon were illegally fired in 1976. The union also charged surveillance of its members.

These unfair labor practices sparked a 4-month strike at the warehouse at 4017 Chesapeake Drive from Nov. 17, 1976 to Feb. 27, 1977. Pickets were set up at many Charlotte-area Harris Teeter stores.

When the NLRB upheld the union's charges, it ordered the company to reinstate the fired workers with back pay and benefits, and to pay wages to 130 strikers from the end of the strike to when they were rehired to their old positions.

"We estimate they owe us at least a half million dollars," said John LeGrand, a warehouse worker and union member.

The union claims the company has not remedied past unfair labor practices, has not reinstated all strikers to their former or comparable jobs, has not paid back pay to strikers and that the company

continues to disregard employees' rights by their unfair labor practices.

Last summer the union distributed handbills at selected stores. "Our best response was in the black neighborhoods like at Freedom Mall," said one union member.

"Most of our workers are black and the community quickly understands that they shouldn't patronize a store where there's a labor struggle."

The union is again considering how to gain community support and what other actions it should take.

"Give me my \$9,000 (in back wages) or I'm walking again," said one employee who spent four months on the picketline in 1976-77.

Another angry employee compared Harris Teeter to J. P. Stevens, a large textile firm that has been opposing union activities in its 63 Carolinas plants.

"Harris Teeter even hired the same anti-union law firm, Blakeney and Alexander, that represents J. P. Stevens," said Ken Bailey, a leader of the union movement at the warehouse.

(Stevens has been found guilty of numerous labor law violations and has paid thousands of dollars in back wages and fines, but still refuses to sign a labor contract at its Roanoke Rapids, N.C. plant where the union won an election in 1974.)

Local Number 525 union president Tony Muncus said, "Harris Teeter and Winn Dixie are the J. P. Stevens of the food industry, guilty of flagrant labor law violations."

Winn Dixie is the target of a national AFL-CIO boycott because of its refusal to recognize union representation.

Bailey claims that Harris Teeter management illegally put him under surveillance by fixing a TV camera on his work area.

"They said the TV wasn't working, but I found out it was and it seems to be fixed on me," said Bailey.

The December NLRB ruling ordered the company to "stop creating the impression of surveillance of union activists." The union has filed new charges on Bailey's complaints.

For more information about the Equal Rights Council contact Carrie Graves, 374-0557.

### Poor Spends Larger Share Of Their Income On Food

Special to the Post  
WASHINGTON—The income gap between rich and poor widened between 1960 and 1973, with the poor spending a proportionately larger share of their income on food than higher income families.

Between 1960 and 1973 disposable personal income increased nationally, according to economists Anthony Gallo and William Boehm of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, who researched the subject. "Dollar income for all families rose about 83 percent on the average," said Gallo and Boehm "but the increases varied by family income group, with the lowest group showing the least gain and the group already earning the highest income showing the greatest gain.

"The lowest income group's average income rose 40 percent, while that of the highest group doubled and the three groups between rose 66, 86 and 96 percent respectively."

While their incomes rose significantly less, lower income families increased their food expenditures faster than wealthier ones, Gallo and Boehm said. In 1960-61, the lowest group spent about one third of its income on food. By 1973, this percentage had risen slightly. The highest income group spent 17 percent of its income for food in 1960. That percentage declined to 10 percent by 1973.

Family income increased more for higher than for lower income groups during the 1960's, but retail food prices rose equally for all five income groups. As a result, the gap in the percent of income spent on food by each income group widened.

"Food expenditures increased 72 percent nationally between 1960 and 1973. About half that gain reflected increased expenditures for food away from home, which rose from 20 to almost 30 percent. Food-at-home expenditures increased about 50 percent," Gallo said.

In 1960-61, per capita yearly income for the highest group was four times greater than for the lowest. In 1973 it was nearly four and one-half times greater, Gallo said.

Between the two consumer expenditure surveys, made by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, earned income—mainly wages and salaries—declined slightly as a percent of total income, from about 86 percent to 82½ percent, Gallo said. This gap was absorbed by an increase in Social Security and private pensions, which rose from about 9 percent to 12 percent. About 40 percent of the income of the lowest income group was derived from Social Security payments.

Social Security payments, public assistance and the value of federal food programs advanced sharply between the two periods, 1960 and 1974. "Despite an expansion in public welfare payments sources of family income showed little change. Public welfare, excluding food stamps, which accounted for about ¼ of 1 percent of income in 1960-61, rose to about 1 percent in 1972-74," Gallo said. "Public assistance accounted for about ¼ of the income of the lowest income group."

Family size, racial composition and other demographic factors changed also, Gallo

and Boehm said. "Family size fell from 3.2 persons to 2.9 during the period surveyed. The number of single family households increased from one out of seven to one out of five. The average age of the population increased but the average age of the family head declined, Gallo and Boehm said.



Dick Gregory  
...Human rights activist

### Will Speak

### Here April 25

by Sherleen McKoy  
Post Staff Writer  
"There is a great social revolution going on in America today, and the wonderful thing about this revolution is that it is not black against white. It is simply right against wrong. The number one problem in America today is not air and water pollution. It is moral pollution. The same moral pollution which keeps the smoke up in the air also keeps the Indian up on the reservation."

So says Dick Gregory, a recording artist, author, lecturer, actor, human rights activist, social satirist, critic, philosopher and political analyst, who combines all of these roles to serve the cause of human liberation and to alleviate human suffering brought on by ignorance and apathy.

Gregory will be appearing on the campus of Johnson C. Smith University on Wednesday, April 25 at 8:15 p.m. in the Jack S. Brayboy Gymnasium. Admission for the general public is \$2. Smith students, I.D. This event is being sponsored by the Lyceum Committee of Smith.

Dick Gregory was born in the black ghetto of St. Louis, Missouri. While in high school, he became a state champion in track and field and later expanded his honors on the track at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois. He entered the entertainment field and rose quickly to the top. But he soon realized society's definition of success conflicted with his moral passion... "singular and complete devotion to serving one's fellow man." Gregory relinquished the night club life because he felt the late hours interfered with his potential for human service.

During the civil rights movement of the '60's, Gregory participated in every major demonstration for human rights in America.



ATTRACTIVE CYNTHIA COLE  
...Likes to play chess

### Cynthia Cole Is

### Beauty Of Week

by Sherleen McKoy  
Post Staff Writer

Cynthia Cole is our beauty for this week.

A native of Greensboro, 26 year old Cynthia was transferred to Charlotte almost a year ago to work with the criminal justice system here.

In August, she plans to attend the University of North Carolina at Charlotte to complete her degree in criminal justice. She lacks 2 hours.

Cynthia describes herself as a person who is "pleasant, but very frank. I speak what's on my mind," she explained.

Her hobbies are playing chess, gardening (she has a lot of flowers), and writing poems and short stories. She has, on occasion, written invitations and speeches for others.

There are two persons for whom Cynthia has great admiration. One is Barbara Jordan.

"I eventually want to be a politician," Cynthia said, "and she (Jordan) strikes me

as being very good in her profession."

The other person is James "Jimmie" McKee, owner of the Excelsior Club. "When the going got rough and I thought about giving up, he was there to lend his support," she recalled.

One very exciting incident in her life that Cynthia remembers was when she met Martin Luther King, Jr.

"That was about 15 years ago when I got to meet and talk to Dr. King," she reminisced. "It was during the time they marched from Montgomery to the Coliseum in Greensboro. It was very exciting," she added.

The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Willie Surgeon of Pennsylvania, Cynthia, who is divorced, has an 11 year old daughter.

For whatever life presents to her, Cynthia wants "to be the best that I can in everything that I do."

### Demand Increases For

### Food Convenience

Special to the Post

WASHINGTON—A number of trends are contributing to an increased demand for convenience in eating. It costs more but people seem willing to pay the price.

There's an increased demand for eating out, for convenience stores and for added convenience in foods people buy to serve at home. Demand is building for labor saving equipment for home cooking, too. Hot dog and hamburger cookers, slow cookers and food processors are in bigger demand now. Microwave ovens are expected to be in 17 percent of all households by 1980.

What's causing the change? Rising incomes, an increased educational level, increasing numbers of one-person households and more females enter-

ing the work force.

"Assuming average gross profit margins of 18 percent in supermarkets, 28 percent in convenience stores and 59 percent in food service establishments, food in public eating places would cost an average of two times more than if bought in supermarkets and food bought in convenience stores about 14 percent more," said economist Thomas Stafford of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Eating meals away from home, said Stafford, has increased so dramatically over the past 20 years that away-from-home food expenditures now account for about 35 percent of total food expenditures.

"Eating out may not always save time but it does eliminate time spent preparing meals and cleaning up afterwards. It also provides leisure and recreation," he said.

This increase in "convenience" usually costs more than if the food was prepared and eaten at home since the consumer not only pays for the food ingredients but also for preparation, cleanup, rent, supplies and entertainment. But despite the higher cost, the trend toward eating out continues, Stafford said.

Supermarkets want to slow this trend toward eating out or at least capture a share of the growing market, said Stafford.

### TURTLE-TALK



Your troubles are probably behind you - that is, if you're a SCHOOL BUS DRIVER.