

Editorials & Comments

Vocational Aspirations Of Black Students

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A study was done recently that showed that the Black movement, civil rights gains and increased job opportunities have caused a rise in the vocational aspirations of Black students. This should give the lie to opportunists and crepe-hangers who want to grab media space by stating that Blacks have made no significant gains in improving their living status. We admit that there is still a lot of road to cover, but improvements have been made and duly noted. Let us stress that these gains are not in any way to be considered tokenism.

Ironically, vocational aspirations of Black students do not agree with their actual vocational plans, as some investigations have shown. For example, they will talk in glowing terms about the high desirability of a profession - medicine, engineering, law, accounting or even teaching, just to name a few - but their individual educational plans are directed toward securing employment that does not require the academic training, discipline and length of time necessary to attain the stated objective.

Why this divergence? A number of reasons have been advanced. A trio of researchers investigated the matter in studying the responses of a group of West Coast high school students who are Black. They found that one of the causes is low self-concept. The explanation is that Black students, in entirely too many instances, do not see themselves as efficient learners and doers and willing to take risks without high anxiety over the possibility of failing to succeed. They are not willing to invest the time and energy in attempting to reach goals which, in a historic sense, have been deemed extremely difficult of attainment by Blacks. They are not aware that failure to reach an upper-level goal at a certain point in time does not mean total failure and that there are manifold opportunities for specific goal attainment that are just as legitimate and acceptable over a longer span of time than what is ordinarily considered as optimum. The current thinking in career development makes this point quite dramatically. It is becoming increasingly apparent that students must be encouraged and supported in working toward chosen goals and that they have an obligation to make the helpers in the educational delivery system more keenly attuned to their ambitions whatever they may be.

Many students live in a world of fantasy which they mold to the possibility that things will be better in the future. However, what they appear to ignore is the reality that they are the only ones who can make this dream world come true.

Quite often we hear the comment that a certain student has unrealistic vocational expectations. Without going into detail, we will say briefly that we don't know what an unrealistic expectation is except in the case of the superlative achievement.

We do know that the proven mental defective is incapable of maintaining a behavior repertoire adequate for what is conceived to be normal functioning in most areas (although some have shown that they are quite adept at mastering certain skills). We also know that physical handicaps impose performance limits. But let us think about what is usually perceived as the average person. Here again we don't know who the average person is. Average in the way of demonstrated performance? Average in potential for achievement? Average in drive or motivation? Average in creativity? There are just so many questions to be asked and answered.

Within the experience of all of us there have been people who have accomplished deeds even beyond their wildest dreams. These feats have certainly stirred wonder in many observers. This "overachievement" is a widely accepted phenomenon. Were these people operating beyond their powers as the result of divine intervention or some other extraterrestrial force? Of course not! The

answer to this seeming puzzle can be very simple and acceptably stated. We just have not been able to measure ultimate capacity and therefore accurately predict behavior. This fact must become a matter of common knowledge.

A partial solution to the problem of understating goals with reference to Black students is an insistence that they acquire mastery of basic educational skills that are the foundation for learning the more abstract materials that are part and parcel of higher education. This must be pursued with determination. People who know that they can do something well are not hobbled by anxiety that is grounded in doubts arising out of unproven abilities. Students, Black and white alike, usually proceed on their self-perceived skills and interests. A student who cannot read and write well will not attempt tasks that demand these two skills. A student who cannot compute basic math would not dare to attempt the more difficult math necessary to become an engineer or physicist.

A student who has not developed habits of precision, attention to detail and inductive reasoning certainly would not even consider accounting as a remote possibility. In the main, confidence grows out of proven abilities.

A lack of agreement between vocational aspirations and vocational planning is due to a variety of reasons. Still, this lack of congruence could be reduced somewhat if students are educationally prepared to meet the challenges of the highest vocational goal accessible to them. They will have the confidence (strong self-concept) to walk the road they choose without undue fear of failure and willing to take the risks necessary.

You Can't Afford To Get Sick

Failure by the Congress to pass the Carter Administration's hospital containment legislation would be another cruel blow for minority, poor, aged, uninsured and unemployed persons.

Minorities on average are least likely to be insured against spiraling hospital costs. They are more likely to have low incomes. And they are twice as likely to be unemployed. That makes them especially vulnerable to increases in the cost of health care.

And these costs are going up. Based on recent data from a sample of American Hospital Association hospitals, we know that in 1978 inflation-fueled hospital costs jumped 12.8 percent. In comparison, energy costs climbed eight percent, food 11.8 percent and the Consumer Price Index nine percent.

THE REALISTIC, flexible 9.7 percent cap on hospital costs increases proposed by President Carter would save the nation nearly \$53.4 billion between 1980 and 1984. Of the savings, \$21.8 billion would be in federal taxes and \$5.9 billion in state and local taxes.

The savings would include \$5 billion in lower health insurance premiums for workers. Employers would spend \$15 billion less for hospital coverage—savings that could be passed on to workers in the form of higher take-home pay.

Also, the average cost of a hospital stay would be \$500 less, and the deductible a Medicare patient must pay for the first day of hospital care would be \$44 less.

Safeguards in the legislation exempt wage increases for non-supervisory hospital workers from the guidelines. They also prevent hospitals from improperly shifting poor patients to municipal or other hospitals.

NINE STATES with mandated controls have proved hospital cost increases can be slashed. Average increases in these states were 9.9 percent in 1978 compared with 12.8 percent in all states. One-third of the nation's 6,000 community hospitals proved in 1977 that cost increases can be held to 9.7 percent or below without affecting the quality of health care for patients.

The hospital industry insists on being left free to voluntarily cut its cost increases to an acceptable level. Congress bought this self-serving argument last year. The 12.8 percent cost increase in 1978 proves it won't work.

"THE MIDDLE CLASS BLACKS MUST RETURN TO THE GHETTO, WE KNOW WHERE THEY ARE, MOST OF THEM CAME FROM THERE."

THURGOOD MARSHALL



Blacks' Destiny In Own Hands

"The Wonderful Christ"

by Dr. Maggie Lamb Nicholson

When the Angel of the Lord (doubtless none other than the Son of God) appeared to Manoah, and was asked his name, he said "Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is a secret or wonderful?" Now this is the very title the Evangelical prophet is here applying to the Redeemer. His name shall be called Wonderful. How truly applicable is this title to Christ. He is wonderful in every respect in which He can be contemplated.

As to Deity, He must, of course, be past finding out. But He is wonderful in all that relates to his mediatorial person, offices and work: Jehovah-Jesus, GOD manifest in the flesh, eternity united to a span of human existence; Omnipotence dwelling in the weakness of our manhood; the great and most high GOD assuming human form - and really allied by the most mysterious of all unions, to a nature which had become degraded and worthless by reason of transgression. Then too, how wonderful, that notwithstanding that union His own purity and dignity remained unaffected.

How marvelous indeed that the glory of Jehovah of hosts was enshrined in a tabernacle of flesh and dwelt among us, that the splendor of divinity was beheld as the glory of the only begotten, full of grace and truth. In the mysterious formation of Christ's human nature, the Holy Ghost employed His miraculous influence in a way unknown before, and thus produced a divinely glorious personage, who is the wonder both of heaven and earth. Let our thoughts be on the real and abiding welfare. Here is a



DR. NICHOLSON

mystery which prophets and apostles have endeavored to explore, but in vain.

The wonderful office He assumed in previous ages GOD had given His servants various duties and pursuits: Some the prophetic, some priestly and others kingly offices, some rulers over people, some teachers, others generals or leaders, (men and women) "your sons and daughters shall prophesy," Joel 2:28 and Acts 2:17. All gifts of authority come from the Wonderful One.

Christ Himself mastered all the gifts and duties that He gave His people, because He was Prophet of the Most High GOD, a Priest after the order of Melchizedek and Zion's great and glorious King. He came to rule over His people, to instruct the ignorant, and be the illustrious captain of salvation. He passed all the requisites for these various offices and in the most perfect degree.

He was anointed with the spirit of prophecy and knew all things. His rule was with perfect knowledge, spotless justice and equity. As a teacher He spoke and taught as no man else did; He spoke with divine authority and

power, so that the people were astonished at His doctrine and exclaimed that never a man spake like this man with greatness and humility, courage and meekness, and power. He voluntarily assumed glory omnipotence and eternal power.

He is wonderful in the titles as the only true God, Prince of the kings of the earth, Lord of all armies and the only true Potentate, King of Kings, Proprietor of the Universe, the first and last, and no man works like Him. Before Him the loftiest seraphims and all the angels of GOD worshipped Him. The Father speaks of Him as His fellow eternal delight forever and ever. All ascriptions of praise and blessings and honor and power and glory and rule and dominion are presented to Him by the intellectual host of glory incessantly. He is wonderful in all His works. He created all things by the power of omnipotent voice and upholdeth all things by the Word of His power. He appears before us in all His greatness and grandeur. The poet puts it this way:

"Our thoughts are lost in reverend awe,
We love and we adore:
The first archangel never saw,
So much of GOD before.
Here the whole Deity is known,
Nor dares the creature guess,
Which of the glorious brightest shore;
The justice or the grace."
Christ's love is so wonderful. He pitied and had compassion on the ungodly. He loved us so much that He sacrificed Himself on the cross. Love passeth all understanding.

By Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

TO BE EQUAL



The Challenge Of Inflation

One of the most damaging effects of inflation lies in the nonsense spouted about it. I often get the feeling that if inflation wasn't a problem, it would have to be invented. Inflation has been used as an excuse to cut federal spending, to induce a recession and to put working people and minorities into an economic straitjacket. Inflation has become the alibi excuse. We can't have more homes, more services, more jobs. Why? Because they'll be inflationary.

Well I don't buy that. This is a rational age, and people no longer accept sweeping statements like that on faith alone. I want to know why we can't have economic justice, decent jobs for all, and an end to poverty. And I don't accept inflation as the shorthand answer to that question.

The fact is inflation is a symptom, not cause of our economic dilemmas. Inflation can no longer be used as the means of deflating people's hopes and aspirations. The inflation that really counts hits poor and working people hardest - price rises in food, health, housing, and energy. As long as the Administration remains committed to symbolic efforts demonstrating its concern about overall inflation rates, those key areas will continue to show rapid price rises. And, as usual, the burden both of inflationary price increases and of fighting those increases will fall on the backs of those least able to bear them.

So I do not underestimate the importance of fighting inflation. It is, first of all, a terrible tax on the poor, and second, a stick with which to beat social programs.

But fighting inflation effectively does not conflict with meeting national needs and priorities. For too long we've concentrated on the demand side in the battle against inflation. We've tried to squeeze the economy, slow growth in personal incomes, induce unemployment, and neglect urban housing, health and education needs.

But why not instead, concentrate on the supply side? Housing costs are going sky high because there aren't enough dwellings to meet the needs of an expanding population. Health costs are going through the ceiling because of a health delivery system that does not meet the needs of the nation while remaining irrational and without accountability. Food and energy costs are affected by the structural makeup of those industries and by governmental actions that tilt the balance toward higher prices.

Cutting federal spending on jobs, on health, on housing, isn't going to have any effect at all on the inflation rate. A lower federal deficit is peanuts in a economy the size of this nation's.

And tightening the screws on the poorest among us won't shave a fraction of a percentage point off the inflation rate. All these actions will do is make the poor poorer, and survival more difficult and more painful.

Indeed, the ultimate cost of such policies, in terms of crime, dependency, health and mental breakdowns, and shattered aspirations will inflict far more damage on the economy than inflation.

So while inflation is a problem, we've got to guard against making the way we fight inflation an even bigger problem.

Americans Have Serious Doubts About "Energy Crisis"

by Bayard Rustin

My grandmother once had a friend who dreaded the prospect of visiting the doctor. As she saw things, doctors did nothing more than cause pain, and overcharge poor people for unnecessary medicines, needles, and additional visits. This poor woman, however, suffered from high blood pressure, and she did in fact need regular medical treatment. Thus, every two weeks we went through the same ritual, assuring her that she was indeed ill, and that the doctor would do everything possible to avoid causing pain or discomfort.

By using common sense, and by demonstrating some concern and human sensitivity, my grandmother helped keep her old friend alive to the ripe old age of 87. Without the gentle persuasion of my grandmother, the old lady would never have gone to the doctor and, in all probability, she would have died of a stroke years before her time.

This little story came to mind as I re-read President Carter's speech on the energy crisis. The American people, it seems to me, resemble my grandmother's old friend. Like her, they have very serious doubts about the existence of a disease, in this case

the "energy crisis." And, like her again, they fear the pain and cost of Dr. Carter's treatment, specifically his proposal to eliminate price controls on domestically-produced oil.

While President Carter insists that "the energy crisis is real, (and) time is running out," few poor people and middle-income workers believe in the "energy disease." Last year, for instance, a CBS-New York Times poll found that only 32 percent of people earning less than \$8,000 thought that the energy crisis was real. At the same time, 53 percent agreed that "we are just being told there are shortages so oil and gas companies can charge higher prices." The poll uncovered the same sort of skepticism among all income groups, except the very highest.

As I see it, this widespread skepticism about the "energy crisis," a skepticism which immediately condemns any national energy plan to almost certain failure, springs from a pervasive and healthy sense of outrage about the inequities and outright injustices that have characterized every national energy plan from Nixon to Ford to Carter. In all fairness, of course, President Carter's proposed excess profits tax is an attempt at providing some sense of



BAYARD RUSTIN

equity to his energy policy. But strong corporate opposition to the tax, as well as Carter's own half-hearted support for the measure make the attack on excess profits little more than a symbolic gesture.

By relying almost exclusively on price decontrol, the exact strategy so vigorously supported by the oil and gas corporations, President Carter's energy program further aggravates the sense of distrust and disbelief among poor and working people because they, and they alone, bear the heaviest and most unjust burden in the effort to conserve energy and to achieve independence from the whims of the OPEC nations. Moreover, my

charge of unfairness is not careless rhetoric, it is supported by hard, cold facts. Consider these points: according to one recent study, the average low-income household spends more than 20 percent of its gross - before taxes - income on gasoline and home energy bills. To make matters worse, the same study showed that poor people pay significantly higher rates for energy than do families with much higher incomes. All this, of course, means that poor people will once again be forced to cut-back their other expenses, expenses for food, housing and the basic necessities of life. And this will occur while something like \$32 billion is transferred from consumers to oil companies during the next 28 months. Conservatives who so mournfully complain about "redistributionist tendencies" in our society will, I hope, take note.

Aside from the important issue of "energy justice," we must also take a careful look at the workability and effectiveness of various proposals, especially those favored by the oil and gas industries. Oil decontrol serves as a perfect example. While industry spokesmen, joined now by officials from the U.S. Depart-

ment of Energy, claim that decontrol will result in sizable increases in oil production, numerous studies contradict such forecasts. Charles Curtis, chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, cited a study that indicates that the higher price tag on gasoline resulting from decontrol will guarantee virtually no increase in domestic oil production during 1979. And another study by the Department of Energy on the deregulation of natural gas showed that a 50 percent price rise will cause only a 6 percent increase in production. In light of these facts, then, it seems senseless to have much hope in decontrol as a solution.

Spring Fair

The Children's Schoolhouse Spring Fair will be held Saturday, April 28 at the Davidson Village Green from 10 a.m. til 3 p.m.

There will be basketball shooting and football passing for teens; games, clowns, pony and car rides for children; raffle and attic sale for parents; and entertainment throughout the day for all.

Proceeds from the Fair will benefit the Schoolhouse Scholarship and Education Fund.

to the energy problem.

What can be done about this steadily worsening situation? As a start, I suggest that President Carter follow my grandmother's example by firmly convincing the nation that the energy crisis is indeed a real disease, not some contrived fantasy. But how can skeptical, cynical people be persuaded that a crisis exists? In my view, there is only one truly effective means of persuasion, and that is the development of a national energy program characterized by justice, compassion for the poor, equal sacrifice, and a strong air tight lid on windfall profits. Until we devise an energy policy widely perceived as fair, one of our most serious national diseases will go untreated because the patient is frightened and wary of the unscrupulous medicine man.



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