

Editorials & Comments

Public Education - A New Perspective

Polls continue to indicate a decline in confidence in government, business, labor organizations, the judicial system and the media. "Each has earned our contempt from time to time," writes R. Rich Oppel of the Charlotte Observer, "but they are merely things composed of human beings."

A major institution "composed of human beings" and caught up in this sweeping crisis of confidence is public education, particularly at the elementary and secondary school level. The 1979 Gallup Poll on attitudes toward public schools reflects this decline in confidence. The poll shows that 34 percent of 1,514 adults surveyed in May gave the public schools an A or B rating, however, this rating was down from 36 percent in 1978 and 48 percent in 1974. While 30 percent rated the schools C as they did a year ago, the D and F ratings declined from 19 to 18 percent from 1978 to 1979. The poll also notes that discipline continues to be the school's largest perceived problem.

These conclusions reflect nothing that is new nor any change in the perceived reasons for the declining confidence in the schools, that is, administrative stagnation, student and teacher apathy and parental mistrust.

What is new is largely in a growing awareness of some of the heretofore little mentioned issues or problems that underscore the crisis of confidence in public education.

Undoubtedly, a major new awareness is in the decline role and influence of the church and the family upon school age children. Church affairs or listening in more than a superficial way to youth oriented problems.

Greater Impact

An even greater impact upon the problems of the public schools has arisen from the changing condition of the American family. Increasingly, American homes have become two-parent working families resulting in a quest for substitute means of care for children. This condition, whether brought on by women's desire for independence or self-development and self identity or by the inflationary need to supplement the husband's income, has resulted in the schools being looked upon as a major substitute parent.

These needs for female self fulfillment or coping with inflation are only a part of the American families' need for substitute parents. This is what psychologist Dr. Joyce Brothers said is the problems in the marriages of "quiet hell." In an address to the American Hospital Association, Dr. Brothers said marriage is a "quiet hell" for half of the American couples. According to her own survey, 25 percent of all marri-

ages are ending in divorce while another 50 percent are loveless "utilitarian" relationships to protect children, property, shared careers and other goals.

The pressure on the schools is intensified by the fact that these "utilitarian" relationships cannot provide the day-by-day loving care that children have a right to expect from their parents. In the words of journalist R.C. Smith, "in the quantity as well as the quality of the care of love will determine their children's future stability in society and consequent happiness." The schools should be a support institution to the parent's quest for the child's stability and happiness, not the primary source of the child's stability and happiness.

We have noted that inflationary pressures may be the reason a wife and young mother works. Therefore, in relating to the child or partially attempting to fill the absent parent's role teachers need to know more about the world of work first because their students will someday become working adults and secondly because the psychological impact of the world of work or the two-parent working family may be transferred to the child in a positive or negative way.

Non-Academic World

One attempt to deal with this problem was in part the outgrowth of a program developed by the Greenville (S.C.) County school district and Furman University. High school

teachers spent the summer of 1979 in entry-level jobs in local business and industry. The real aim was to provide the teachers with an appreciation for an renewed understanding of the non-academic world of work.

Ironically, Judith Gatlin, director of the program reports that an English teacher was surprised that the newspaper where he was employed demands accurate spelling and correct punctuation and an art teacher found a television station required considerable imagination and technical ability. If these examples are any indication of what teachers know about the real world then criticism of public education is certainly justified.

Another little reported problem that hampers public school effectiveness is the continued sex bias that denies women equal job opportunities. A study of sex discrimination in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools reveal that women hold 22 percent of the administrative jobs although they comprise 75 percent of the work force.

This problem of course is not limited to the local school system it is nation wide.



An Aroused Leadership Team

as i see it

Black Political Campaign Organizations

by Gerald O. Johnson
Special to the Post

Running for political offices is an expensive and time consuming endeavor. Few people in this area know how to run an effective campaign. Blacks in particular fail to organize their campaigns effectively enough to win. Here is a typical way black political hopefuls go about their duties in running for office.

Initially the person decides to run or is asked to run by some friends. Once the decision has been made to run, the candidate makes a public announcement to that effect.

Then friends and relatives are asked to volunteer their services helping with the campaign. Random appointments are made as to individual assignments. Then workers are recruited. Haphazardly, the campaign goes on its merry way. Fundraising events, public appearances, and new forums are set up. Then comes the time for the elections and the candidate loses.

In reality, the candidate had lost from the beginning. In politics it is not the candidate that wins elections, but rather the organization behind the candidate. Consequently, the key to winning elections is organization. The above typical example shows how not to start a campaign.

The first big mistake was allowing relatives and friends to get involved. The Black community of Charlotte is a very social animal and most



Gerald O. Johnson

Blacks get involved with campaigns from the social aspects involved. The status, the parties, and the exposure individuals get from being behind the scenes of a candidate make it relatively easy to recruit volunteers.

The second mistake is not getting qualified individuals in key posts. Ultimately this will lead to dissensions and defections within the ranks of the campaign. The poorly organized campaign will have a few people attempting to do all the work and another few trying to get all the credit.

Friends and relatives will start realizing that campaigning is a lot of work and not as much glory as they thought. Because the campaign is poorly organized workers can not see the direction that the whole thing is going. Consequently, they start defecting. Soon everybody is hoping that the whole thing will hurry

up and end.

This is not how it has to be. If you want to run for office you must decide far enough in advance to be able to organize an effective campaign. Then you must structure campaign positions. The structure should be something like this:

- 1) Strategist-responsible for the overall program. Must be a strong planner, good leader, and very responsible.
 - 2) Statistician-responsible for research, fact gathering, and reporting. Must have strong math background, good leader and capable of transforming raw data into meaningful reports.
 - 3) Public Relations-responsible for presenting the candidate to the public. Must be familiar with media, personable, extroverted, and know the current issues.
 - 4) Fundraiser-responsible for setting up programs that will raise money. Must be imaginative and capable of turning ideas into reality.
 - 5) Accountant-responsible for the receiving and paying of all funds and the reporting of all financial matters.
 - 6) Operations Manager-responsible for managing volunteer office workers.
- These six positions are essential to any successful campaign. They can't be volunteer positions. Each position must be filled by a qualified individual and this will require recruiting people. You can't have a person not used to See BLACK on page 5

TO BE EQUAL



An Agenda For The 1980's

Years ago, at the dawn of the 1900s, the great black scholar and activist W.E.B. DuBois wrote that "the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color line."

As our nation enters the 1980s the color line is still with us. The challenge of the coming decade is to dismantle the color line that places a ceiling on black opportunities while removing the floor from the black security. That implies an agenda for action to bring about a greater measure of equality for all Americans. While blacks and other minorities are most in need of major domestic reforms, all poor people would benefit from them. And since fully two-thirds of the poor are white, the "Black agenda" is also one that crosses racial and regional lines.

The core of the black agenda includes a handful of major issues. Prime among them is a national full employment policy.

That takes on added significance as the nation slides into still another recession that will mean escalating unemployment. Black jobless rates are now well over double the white rates. Current unemployment levels are intolerable for blacks and too high for everyone.

So the coming decade ought to see a national commitment to decent jobs for all as a matter of right—in the private sector wherever possible, in the public sector if industry can't absorb all of our workers.

And an indispensable feature of a full employment policy has to be a national commitment to affirmative action. This is necessary if blacks are to achieve full parity in employment and educational opportunities. A vigorous affirmative action thrust in the 1980's will mean no further need for special affirmative action efforts by 1990, because its goals will have been met.

In addition to jobs, the agenda for the 1980s includes an income maintenance system to replace the rotting welfare system. Current welfare reform proposals should be just the first step toward development of a comprehensive, federally administered income maintenance system free of punitive elements and available to all in need.

Another key item is a national youth development program that assures young people, especially disadvantaged youth, of the skills, schooling and services they need participate fully in our society. There are nearly ten million black and white poor children in America, and neglect of their needs can only perpetuate poverty.

Health is a major part of the agenda, especially for black people who have higher incidence of bad health and less access to quality health care. The widespread closing of public hospitals and clinics in the minority neighborhoods of many cities for budgetary reasons shamefully worsens an already serious health care crisis for the poor.

The current debate over health insurance proposals has been personalized and limited. The 1980s ought to see passage of a national health system that is unified, comprehensive, consumer-oriented, and guarantees total quality health care services for all.

From Capitol Hill

Racism Seems To Bar Senate Action In "Best Public Interest"

by Alfreda L. Madison
Special to the Post

In the midst of soaring inflation, unemployment, SALT, energy and other problems, congress seems to always find time to act on racial issues, that even the proponents of these bills and amendments will yell loudly they are not perpetuating racism, but only a mere glance will show that the opposite is the case.

Senator Jesse Helms, who seems to be bitterly opposed to integration of schools, appears to concentrate intensely on proposals to again return to legalized segregated schools. While he does not openly introduce provisions calling for repeal of desegregation laws, he proposes various methods and states reasons that will again set the country on the road to separate black and white schools.

A few months back he attached an anti-busing amendment to the energy bill, in which he strongly emphasized that busing was costly to the energy program. He blamed black children, who have been denied a fair and just education down through the years. Notwithstanding the fact that busing does afford them an opportunity to have equal education opportunities, he places blame on them for the energy shortage. Why doesn't he

come up with a remedy for North Carolina's all time injustice to the black school children?

Recently, in the senate discussion on some 1980 appropriation measures, Jesse Helms introduced an amendment to call a one-year moratorium on all efforts of the Internal Revenue to deny tax exemption to private schools. Internal Revenue procedures 75-50 set forth requirements for private schools to be tax exempted. Jesse is calling a halt to all of these, making the sky the limit for one year. He said that he is not asking for change in the Internal Revenue procedures, but just that congress should be given more time for debating the matter. According to past debates on issues for racial justice and equality, much racism is generated, and more drastic unreasonable amendments are proposed.

Mr. Helms often injects into his arguments some ideas allegedly attributed to blacks. He often expresses some minority opinion. In his anti-busing stand he stated that blacks shared his views. This time he stated that the Black Youth Coalition was asking black parents not to send their children to private schools, because this would be a backlash to their roots. Mr. Helms said that he has faith in



Alfreda L. Madison

impossible for private schools to have sufficient number of blacks to prove, according to the IRS code, that they are not discriminating. The senator's argument would carry more weight if he consulted with the majority of blacks, black leaders, or black organizations, instead of a mere few. Senator Metzbaum argued that the Helms amendment would allow tax exemption for private school funds even if they were used for lobbying, and that it locks in tax exempt status for private schools for perpetuity.

the people not to misuse the funds, that if any problems do arise the senate would act. He said that he shed no tears over clipping the wings of the IRS where private schools are concerned. The senator extolled the kind of North Carolina people who operate private schools, he says their only aim is to give their children quality education. He stated that these people do not like drug trafficking, violence, and teacher assault in the public schools. These things also occur, perhaps to a lesser degree, in private schools. The reason being these schools usually have smaller classes and even minor offenders are thrown out. This being the case these schools do not seek to prepare all of the children, but just a few.

So Senator Helms and those who joined with him in passing this amendment, seem to have lost sight of the fact that they are elected public officials, who must effect legislation that is in the best interest of the public and not for upholding special interests of private groups.

Why couldn't these senators work on measures that would improve public education which certainly takes care of the majority of the children of their states? Why don't Mr. Helms and his fellow private

school tax exemption senators, concentrate on elimination of drug trafficking, by organized crime into this country, and taking into full account why discipline in the schools is a problem? This Helms' amendment action is

an example of these elected taxpaid leaders, by-passing the problems for which they were elected to find the answers and a failure in properly leading their constituents.

Education Costs Continue To Increase

North Carolina's 145 local school units spent over one and a half billion dollars to educate their students during the 1977-78 school year. That is the most recent year during which the total expenditure figures are available. The figure, \$1,541,955,418.62, includes money provided by state, federal and local governments. The figures are compiled annually by the Division of Management Information Systems of the Department of Education.

The one and a half billion dollar figure represents an increase of over \$200 million dollars over the 1976-77 school year. The state share of the total budget was \$980,481,655.25, or 63.6 percent. The federal share of the budget was \$188,688,911.15, or 12.2 percent, and the local share was \$372,784,852.22 or 24.2 percent.

The budget for the year represented a \$100 million dollar increase in the local share and \$96 million in the state share of funds.

The per pupil expenditure for youngsters in the North Carolina public schools increased from \$1,209.65 in 1976-77 to \$1,313.09 in 1977-78. Ten years ago, during the 1968-69 school year, \$501.87 was spent to educate each child in the state. The state share, 63.6 percent, is the lowest over the past ten years. The federal share, 12.2 percent, is also as low as it has been in the past ten years. The local share of 24.2 percent is almost four percent higher than during the previous year and almost 8 percent higher than ten years ago. Still, the North Carolina state share of public school support is much higher than the national average, which is under 50 percent.

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