

Editorials & Comments

70's Chart 80's Agenda

As our city and the nation slipped into 1980, the events of 1979 were nearly lost in our greater concern with the end of the decade. Likewise, our thoughts about 1980 barely survived the same fate as we attempt to crystal ball a glimpse of the entire next decade.

Historian Robert L. Heilbroner tells us, and rightly so, that the future is a mirror of the past. Therefore, if star gazing into the '80s is to have any meaning we must pause to look back and see where we have been, that is, to review our contemporary history.

A CHARLOTTE NEWS story put the decade of the '70s in perspective in saying, "as the decade began, Charlotte had no condominiums, no SouthPark, no Eastland, no 24-hour banking machines, no busing to achieve racial balance, no civic center, no Carolina Chargers, no Carowinds, no Spirit Square." We now have all of these as visible signs of growth.

However, the most symbolic signs of the '70s would have to be in the urban renaissance that has so clearly changed the skyline and shape of downtown (or uptown) Charlotte. In addition to the Civic Center and Spirit Square we see the three massive bank towers, the Radisson Plaza Hotel, the Southern National Center, the Sheraton-Center, the Overstreet Malls, the emerging Discovery Place and continuing bumper-to-bumper traffic.

Less visible than the bricks, mortar, steel and glass, but no less significant to these developments was that the '70s gave us a population explosion reflected in a growth of 40 percent for 241,178 in 1970 to 343,500 in 1979. Hidden within these numbers is the accompanying growth in business as 1970 gave us 49 new firms with investment of \$134.8 million that created 1,271 new jobs. In the last year of the decade 215 new firms had come to Charlotte to invest \$299 million and create 4,365 new jobs.

Significant Impact

Significantly, the '70s was the decade when women and blacks began to have a significant impact upon the political scene. As a result of the organizational efforts of Betty Chafin, Liz Hair and others, Mrs. Hair launched a successful bid for a County Commissioner's seat and rose to the chairpersonship. Ms. Chafin has had similar success in serving as Mayor-Pro Tem. Four women now sit on the City Council and two on the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners.

Blacks, too, have made gains in the political arena. After being appointed to fill an unexpired term, Harvey Gantt was re-elected two times with large city-wide voter support and just missed being elected Mayor by a mere 1,200 votes. Two other

blacks now hold seats on the City Council.

It was in the '70s too that race relations were strained to the brink as U. S. District Judge James B. McMillan handed down the 1970 decision which called for extensive busing to achieve school desegregation.

It was these things that highlighted the '70s. Next week we'll see what they mean as an agenda for the '80s.

Housing Needs

Vision And Action

Guest Editorial

The American dream, owning a home, should be our objective in housing. We all know what ownership does for neighborhood stability, pride, spirit of oneness, and dignity to and for the family unit in our city.

We have just had a flurry of publicity about the location of 165 government assisted housing in southeast Charlotte. 2000 more units are needed now. A lot of thinking, planning, and negotiating went into design and location of these units. These multi-family units are going to cost about \$40,000 apiece. There is going to be adequate open or buffer land around them. Only 4 units to the acre or only 4 units on a 200 x 200 ft. lot. With this approach to meet the minimum requirements of public assistance housing today, we would need 500 acres.

The city, you and I are going to pay an additional \$400,000 on top of the \$400,000 that we are paying as Federal Government Income Tax payers for this additional land. We are paying over \$800,000 for land to sugar coat this scattered site housing pill. With this approach Charlotte will need millions of more dollars of Charlotte money to meet the minimum requirements of housing needs. This approach is wrong, wrong for you, wrong for Charlotte.

Now let's look at the 2000 government assisted units that are needed now. If these units are built to the same standards as the 165 units just announced, 500 acres will be required and if the same costs of land prevail - \$12,000 per acre, the land cost will be \$6 million. And the city's charge of this could be 3 million dollars, depending on where the units are located. The total cost based on the same standards used for the sugar-coated 165 units of \$40,000 per unit would be \$80 million - and it doesn't matter whether the money comes from city, state, or federal funds...It is all our tax money.

What are our objectives? Should they not be meeting the housing needs of our people of the elderly and the fixed income population rather than satisfying a bureaucrat in Greensboro, Atlanta or Washington.



YOU HAVE A BIG JOB AHEAD BUT I KNOW YOU CAN DO IT!

It's Up To You...

As I See It

Social Programs Have Failed

By Gerald O. Johnson
Post Columnist

Note To Readers: Last week's article on "Crime in the Church" was not printed because of the editorial board's censorship. The article was felt to be too critical of a very sensitive area.

In 1953 the Health, Education, and Welfare Department was formed as an official department of the executive branch of the U.S. Government. The department was created after a recommendation from the Hoover Commission on reorganization of the executive branch.

Prior to this organizational change, social welfare programs were completely controlled by the states. The Social Security Act of 1935 created many federal programs and many welfare agencies acting independent of each other. By 1939 the Federal Security Agency (FSA) was created to administer the major programs in the area of welfare. As the programs grew in complexity and in numbers the FSA functions were incorporated in the newly formed HEW Department.

It should be realized that the bulk of social programs subsidized by the government were spin-offs from the depression years. The great depression placed this country in an economic crisis that is still well remembered by many people today. As a stimulus to a sagging economy the government tried numerous programs. The Social Security Act of 1935 was legislation introduced and passed to insure that mo-



Gerald O. Johnson

ney would be available for people if hard times would occur in the future. The "Act" was an insurance policy against hard times. From this the Social Security Department was created.

This historical account of social programs was given here to indicate that welfare programs were created with good intentions. The legislation was passed in times of national hardships. What happened to the detriment of every taxpayer today was that when the nation was economically stable, the government failed to review the programs. Today, legislation is on the books as law that should be scrapped. However, new laws are being added daily to fit the current scenario of the country. Laws that will be irrelevant in the future, but that will remain on the books forever. This is why the government is a big mess.

Social programs should not be administered by the Federal Government. In fact social programs should not be administered

by any governmental agency. The government is too far removed from the actual problems in the community to be an effective agent to solving the problems. The necessary paperwork involved is a deterrent from immediate aid to needy individuals. Because of limited monitorability the government is susceptible to fraud and corruption. Moreover, the financial and decision making is done in Washington and the problems are nationwide. It is inconceivable that effective management is possible when management is in Washington and the problems are nationwide.

A major improvement to the social problems of our society is a distributed management approach rather than a centralized approach. The decision making and the finances should be controlled at the community level and not at the federal level. Churches should be the focal point of administering these programs. This would not be without problems, but it could be made to work. But the problems of the community can best be solved by the community and the church should be the pillar of the community.

We, as taxpayers, have put a tremendous burden on the government by requiring it to handle situations that aren't geared for governmental intervention. It is a fact that social programs fall into this category. Since current administration policy is not working, it is time to try something new.

Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

TO BE EQUAL



Crucial Year Coming Up

We're entering one of those years that come along every decade or so in which decisions are made that will affect the course of the future.

One such decision, of course, will be made by the electorate - choosing a President.

Both parties are embroiled in heated primary campaigns, a sure sign that this election won't be a routine one. The stakes are big. America's position of world leadership, a faltering economy, future energy policies, and the course of minority aspirations to equality are all in the balance.

Black people will be the targets of vote-hunting politicians searching for support of a key group that holds the balance of electoral power in many important states.

Carter partisans are pointing to the Administration's generally good record on minority-oriented issues, while glossing over some unfulfilled promises. Kennedy and Brown backers are saying they can and will do more.

On the other side of the political fence, Republicans are still trying to decide how far to go to attract blacks to their banner. In the past, their national candidates have generally ignored blacks. But all too often Democrats have just taken black voters for granted. So the field is wide open for a real scramble for the crucial black vote.

Thus, 1980 will find candidates coming to America's ghettos in search of support. That support should not be given lightly. Black voters shouldn't slide silently into anyone's hip pocket.

Black bargaining power can be maximized by two strategies. First, black leadership at all levels and in all fields, should be demanding concrete, ironclad commitments to key elements of the black agenda. It is no longer enough for candidates to make promises in private. They've got to make them out front in full public view, and thus shift the center of gravity of national debate away from national indifference to minority needs.

A second, perhaps more important strategy, is to sharply boost black registration. In 1976, when black voters elected a President, less than half actually went to the polls. Unless that figure is increased, politicians will continue to believe that the black vote is not central to their campaign strategy.

Almost as important for black people in 1980, will be the census. Past census figures grossly undercounted the true number of black people in the population. The result has been to shortchange blacks and the cities they live in, since most formulas for federal aid are based on census-derived population figures.

Those census figures also are used in reapportioning legislative districts, from Congress on down to local councils. That means some Congressional seats will be lost in areas where blacks predominate, as black voters may be diluted by the addition of suburban areas to existing urban districts.

That is the likely outcome if the census undercounts black urban populations. So it is in minority interests to make sure the Census Bureau gets an accurate black and Hispanic count, and every minority person has a stake in being counted.

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From Capitol Hill

Senator Kennedy Is Standing In Martin Luther King's Shoes?

Alfreda L. Madison
Special To The Post

Senator Kennedy is really taking a lot of flack for saying that the Shah conducted "one of the most repressive regimes in history". Sure it's true and no one can deny it. Kennedy is standing in the same shoes in which Martin Luther King stood when he first came out against the Vietnam War. Later everyone without saying it, conceded that King was right. Kennedy still constantly backs the President's actions to get release of the hostages. For the news media and politicians to constantly refer to the statement, seems nothing more than a political ploy.

Politicians seem to become irritated quickly at any reference to the Shah's mistreatment of his own people. One wonders if they are not misreading the American people. The entire public supports President Carter in his efforts to bring the hostages safely and soundly home, short of war. The complete case which led to hostage-taking

gives rise to many questions, and when the hostage case is settled, there will be intense efforts to get those answers. If we should go to war answers will be sought before the hostages case is disposed of.

It does seem that our leaders, don't even want the citizens to reason why, but just keep quiet and do or even die if it should come to war. The average citizens are reasoning even if they can't talk to the leaders. Some congressional staff members, who happen not to be on Senator Kennedy's staff have said it's a shame Ted is catching it for nothing more than speaking the truth. Some members have expressed alarm over the politicians' seeming irritation over any mention of the Shah's actions. One reporter has said that of course the Shah supported us while suppressing his own people, but all through history powerful countries have taken advantage of less powerful ones. So we have been just following history. Another reporter in talking



Alfreda L. Madison

about the likelihood of war said "it is time for another war because the world is becoming over populated." He said "No" to the question if he would like to be one of those disposed of to lessen the crowded world.

A taxi driver, said the Iran situation is leading to a war in the East and no one can prevent it because it is spoken of in the Bible. Because of the wickedness of the world it will be destroyed. He said this signals the near-coming of Christ when the righteous will be saved and all heads

of government, including the law-making bodies will be put in jail. Even though I was elated when I realized that I'd be saved in that deal, I detected a sense of hopelessness and helplessness, in this driver. The same that American slaves felt when they had only their strong religious beliefs for consolation. In concentration on the morality of the masters, they expressed their feelings in

the spiritual "God's Going to Move This Wicked Race."

One has to question the United States human rights policy and its moral consciousness when it is protecting the Shah from punishment, which in all likelihood would mean death. Yet we've reinstated the death penalty for anyone who takes another's life when it is not done in self-defense. The

Shah killed thousands and not all in self-defense. At also seems it we are harboring a criminal. Yet our laws say it's illegal to do so. The question is do we believe in the death penalty or not? Is it illegal to shield a fugitive from justice or not?

Now that the Shah has left the country, we hope the hostages will be released and both countries will be able to save face.

Wachovia Offers High Yielding Certificates

Wachovia Bank and Trust Company said last week it will offer a new high yielding 30-month savings certificate beginning January 2. The certificate will have a minimum deposit of \$500 and a rate which will be based on Treasury instruments. The rate will be guaranteed for the 2 1/2-year term.

"This new certificate offers and opportunity for consumers to assure themselves a high return for an extended period of time," said James T. Brewer, head of Wachovia's Retail

Banking Department. "Based on the recent yields on treasury instruments, our certificate would currently have an effective yield of more than 11 percent."

Brewer said the new certificate will also appeal to consumers who have less than the \$10,000 required to invest in the popular six-month certificate.

The new certificate was created December 14 by federal regulatory authorities to replace a four-year money market certificate which has been offered

since July. The Treasury Department will announce monthly the maximum rate that can be paid on certificates issued during that month.

The federal action also included a 1/4 percent increase in rates which financial institutions are allowed to pay on 90-day certificates of deposit.

