

# Editorials & Comments

## We All Live In "Public Housing"?

We "cannot be a dumping ground for the city's rejects." This sounds typical for an irate, emotionally up-set white-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant citizen expressing opposition to the City's scattered site housing program. However, these are the words of Malachi Green, a Third Ward resident and community leader, as spoken at a City Council public hearing last week on the City's 1980-83 community development plan.

If Mr. Green's statement in any way reflects the sentiments of other black community leaders, then people, most white, in south and southeast Charlotte must be pleased because it in turn reflects accurately their general attitude toward scattered site housing for the poor. However, it should be noted that there are significant differences between Mr. Green's comment and what the opponents of scattered site housing think he means.

Green's point is that Third Ward has been inundated with poor people relocated from the Brooklyn, Greenville and First Ward urban renewal areas dating as far back as 1962. Data compiled by Green indicates that 90 percent of the residents of Third Ward are relocatees directed there because there were few other areas in which the blacks could find housing in the days before the City's policy commitment to scattered site housing.

On the other hand, the people who oppose scattered site housing have few if any low-income households residing in their areas. Those who have opposed the Muddy Pond site, for example, have argued that within a 1 1/2 mile radius of the site there are 614 "public housing projects." There are two important facts that nullify the low-income impact point of view in the Muddy Pond area. First, the 1 1/2 mile radius from other "assisted housing" sites is fully consistent with the "Locational Policy Statement" as noted in the City's Housing Assistance

Plan" which calls for a radius of 1/2 to 3/4 of a mile between sites.

Secondly, and more significantly, only 48 of the 614 housing units with the 1 1/2 mile radius noted are in fact conventional public or assisted housing in terms of what assisted housing is. That interpretation or definition refers to multi-family housing developments with hundreds of low-income families living in high density areas in poorly designed dwelling units with high rates of crime, unemployment and a host of other social ills.

It is precisely because of these kinds of impressions, whether fact or fiction, that the City's housing policy calls for a lower density or fewer units per site. The Muddy Pond site calls for constructing only 35 housing units on a tract of land containing 4.32 acres.

Furthermore, 568 of the so-called "public housing projects" with the 1 1/2 mile radius are in fact not public housing projects. Four-hundred and four of the units comprise two single family housing developments where the tenants are in a home buyers' program. These units are located in the developments called Windsong Trails and Pine Valley. Another development, South Park Terrace, has 164 units that house the elderly and handicapped. Neither of these developments fit the traditional definition of "public housing" per se unless we want to stereotype people simply because they are elderly, handicapped or seek a non-traditional way to become a homeowner.

Finally, millions upon millions of American families have or are attempting to purchase a home with FHA or VA or other federal assistance of one kind or another. Many such families are among those opposing the Muddy Pond site. They don't consider themselves living in public or assisted housing and neither do the Pine Village or Windsong Trails residents. Maybe the question really is, who does not live in (federally) assisted housing?

## Move The Olympic Games

One of the instant reactions to the Soviet Union's "invasion" of Afghanistan has been to boycott the summer Olympic Games to be held in Moscow. Much of this argument centers on the point that the Soviets plan to exploit the "Games" by using them as a propaganda mechanism for spreading communism.

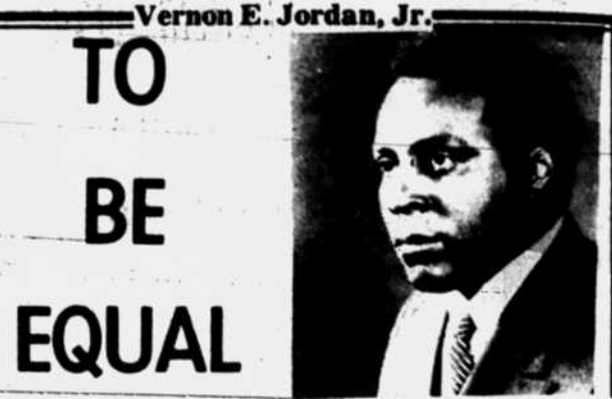
That argument appears ill founded as a basis for boycotting the "Games" since we've known long before now about the Soviet's political use of the planned historic event. Secondly, since we like to boast that American athletes are truly amateur in that they are not paid to participate and no public

funds are used to support their participation, it seems unfair that after months and even years of training, often a great personal sacrifice, that the participants should be denied this competitive opportunity for political or ideological reasons.

The alternative, that is, to denying the Soviets an opportunity to propagandize the "Games," to demonstrate world displeasure with their invasion of Afghanistan and to enable the American athletes - who have little or no voice in the nation's political decisions - to fulfill their training ambitions, the Olympic Games should be moved to another site.



What A Happy Birthday It Would Have Been



## King Tribute Overdue

Congress' calculated insults to blacks and minorities are becoming more frequent, the latest being its rejection of the proposal to make January 15, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, a national holiday.

Passage of the bill in the House of Representatives seemed possible, but then, when the bill hit the floor, all sorts of phony excuses were invented for not voting for it. After a counter-proposal to make the holiday one of those Sunday non-events was introduced, the sponsors of the bill rightly withdrew it.

Making the King Birthday a Sunday holiday would put it on par with other routine "Days" ignored by all. Martin Luther King, Jr., black people, and all believers in the message of non-violence and racial equality deserve better.

In fact, the nation would be well-served by making January 15 a national holiday.

It would be an act of homage to the greatest American of modern times, a symbolic assertion of the vast contributions blacks have made to America, and a substantive commitment to the humane values that inspired Dr. King and, for a brief time at least, his fellow citizens.

King's stature is indisputable. His moral leadership inspired the nation. His courageous non-violent strategies toppled the institutions of segregation.

His contributions to the entire world, a world hungry for spiritual and humane leadership, was recognized by his 1964 award of the Nobel Peace Prize.

There are those who object to a national holiday in his honor on the grounds that he was an ethnic leader and if Dr. King is so honored, other groups will come forward with parochial claims.

That's the kind of argument that can't be taken seriously, even if its adherents are temporarily in the majority on Capitol Hill.

The very fact that he led black people, the nation's largest and most influential minority, through a period of peaceful revolution, is a strong claim for honoring him.

This American that has treated its black citizens so harshly needs to make a strong symbolic gesture that reaches across the troubled past with new hope for the future. A Martin Luther King, Jr. Day would do just that.

Through such a gesture, the nation would be striking a great blow for the pride of all its neglected people. It would be saying in the most effective way, that it too honors and venerates the memory of this great black leader.

But Martin Luther King, Jr. belongs to all Americans. His efforts to free black people from the vicious heel of segregation resulted in freeing all Americans from the economic, social and moral wounds inflicted on the nation.

Our America still needs to learn his lesson; it still needs to heal its racial wounds and become whole again.

And an important step toward the wholeness would be to make January 15 national holiday honoring the birthday of true national hero -- Dr. Martin Luther King.

The South, especially, should exalt Dr. King and support a national holiday in his honor.

## As I See It

### A Childhood Memory

By Gerald O. Johnson  
Post Columnist

I have fond memories of my childhood growing up in Oaklawn Park. I grew up with a great bunch of kids from the neighborhood, all of whom were retarded. But there is one incident that stands out from all the rest and I thought I would share it with you. Why? Because there is nothing else to write about...That's why!

It was a mild summer night and I had just left my girlfriend's house. I decided to go to the "Igloo" and talk to my buddy, ole man Howell. Mr. Howell and I were having one of our rap sessions when all of a sudden we heard footsteps rushing past us. I looked up and asked isn't that Steve (Steven Chiles)? Mr. Howell said, "I think so, but he was moving too fast for me to tell." Moments later five boys, a few years younger than Steve, came rushing past. I looked down Russell Street and realized that Steve was in hasty retreat while the boys were in hot pursuit. Well, after a half hour of laughter, I regained my composure and went home.

The next day I saw Steve and he told me that he had hustled the youngsters on the pool table and rubbed it in. Steve was a great pool shooter. The 2nd best in Oaklawn Park.

I talked Steve into letting me buy him a drink. So, Steve, Kenny Faulkner, Jimmy Lee Washington and I walked up to Mrs. Holmes' place on the corner of Beatties Ford and St. Mark. Andrew Perry later joined us. Mrs. Holmes' mother always ran the store at night. I told her to give us the usual. "Hold back some of the cherry



Gerald O. Johnson syrup." I said, Well, we all started drinking and I started feeling a little tipsy. The fizzle from the cherry cola always did that to me.

Anyway, five little boys came in and sat in a booth. Steve started nudging me. "That's them, that's them," he kept saying. "Those are the guys who chased me home," he continued. As he walked over to their booth and started selling wolf tickets, "Yeah, you chased me home the other night didn't you, punks," he shouted. He kept taunting the kids and they were visibly shaken.

Before continuing, let me set the scene a little better for you. Mrs. Holmes' mother would always leave and go into the back whenever we came. I think they had a hidden camera back there to catch us stealing. But we never stole anything while she was in the back. We always waited until she came back up front! Andrew and I were sitting at the counter. Jimmy Lee and Kenny were sitting in a booth. Steve was across the room badgering the boys.

One of the boys slipped by Steve and headed out

the door. Andrew, realizing what this meant, got up and left. Now, Andrew was the only fighter in our bunch. Jimmy Lee was in numerous fights but never won one. Kenny was just a peaceful person. I didn't know anyone who didn't like Kenny. So, Kenny wouldn't start any waves. Steve had demonstrated his solution to fighting the day before. I was all bark, no bite. So we were hurting in the self-defense department. Something told me, "Gerald, go home." But, then, I hadn't done anything so why should I be afraid?

Well, the little kid returned with a bunch of not so little kids. Steve had stopped badgering and started backing towards us. The biggest guy (who knew Jimmy Lee) came in and said, "What the ?+!-+! you picking on these ?+!-+! kids for?" Jimmy Lee stood up and said, "Man you are too big to be +?!-+? with these people." The boy said, "If y'all step outside, I'll kick your black +?!-+?!" Jimmy Lee said, "Well we will come out there."

Well, I had taken all I could take so I got up and spoke my mind. I said, "Jimmy Lee shut +?!-+? up."

Mrs. Holmes' mother ran out from the back shouting, "What's going on out here?" Kenny came over and explained what was going on. Mrs. Holmes' mother said, "alright, all of you hoodlums get out!" She told Kenny and Steve that she would take them home. The hoodlums indicated that they would be waiting for us. I immediately ran over and said, "Remember us?" "We are with Steve," see As I See It on Page 10

## From The White House

# Carter's Education - Youth Employment Proposal

By Alfreda L. Madison  
Special To The Post

President Carter has announced a major youth education and employment initiative to prepare the nation's youth for the labor market in the 1980's. The amount of money the President is asking for, including that which is already provided for current programs will total \$6 billion by 1982. These programs will be established in both Labor and Education Departments.

Emphasis in the Labor

Department will be on additional jobs and training for older and out-of-school youth, stringent performance standards for participants and program operators, financial incentives to encourage greater cooperation between CETA sponsors, local employers, and school systems. It also provides consolidation of three of the existing programs under the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act (YEDPA).

Education Department will concentrate on: basic skills for low-achieving



Alfreda L. Madison

youngsters, including help for students with limited ability in English; school-wide planning with the active involvement of teachers, parents, employers and community; using the link between work and classroom-learning as a way to motivate students to stay in school and, finally, a major role for vocational education in preparing young people for work.

It was stated that these new proposals are based on the findings of Vice President Mondale's Task Force and also on experience gained from Youth Em-

ployment and Demonstration Projects Act.

These programs are targeted at the untrained hardcore youth, of which minorities certainly make up a disproportionately larger number. While it was stated that the money will go into the areas of the poor and disadvantages. There is nothing to prevent local, state and community authorities from utilizing it in the same way as previous funds have been used; that is to increase white employment with a continuous widening gap between white and minority youth. There appears to be nothing in this new initiative which requires community-based organizations to plan and oversee these programs and finances.

In these proposals, it appears that more emphasis is placed on combining old projects than there is on additional funding of new ones. Even though the administration says that training America's youth is its most important function, this budget falls short of some of the other budget proposals.

When Secretary of Defense, Brown presented the administrations huge defense budget to the Senate Armed Service committee,

some of the members hailed it but stated that its passage would require a cut in the social programs. So this education and em-

## CHA To Conduct 33 Screening Clinics

By Susan Ellsworth  
Post Staff Writer

The Community Health Association, a United Way Agency, is conducting 33 health screening clinics for people over 60 in Mecklenburg County.

Registered nurses are available to talk with clients about their health and provide blood pressure testing.

For the clinic nearest your home call the Community Health Association at 375-0172 or plan to attend at one of these locations:

- St. Andrews Methodist Church, January 17 from 9-11 a.m.
- Christ Presbyterian Church, January 17 from 2-4 p.m.
- Bethlehem Center, Jan-

employment budget will have rough going in Congress.

Just how much force the administration will put behind getting this program passed remains to be seen.

Is this a parallel to Mr. Carter's endorsement of Humphrey-Hawkins bill, Martin Luther King Na-

tional Memorial Day a

fail to push implementation of them? Since this proposal was presented at the time, with an intense effort on the part of the administration, to get black attention at its launching raises the question whether or not this is a political ploy for black voters.

Spencer Methodist Church, January 21 from 9-11 a.m.

Greenville Center, January 21 from 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Booth Gardens Apartments, January 22 from 9-11 a.m.

Charlottetown Terrace Apartments, January 22 from 2-4 p.m.

Robinson Presbyterian Church, January 23 from 2-4 p.m.

St. John's Baptist Church, January 24 from 9-11 a.m.

Church, January 24 from 2-4 p.m.

Huntersville Presbyterian Church, January 28 from 9-11 a.m.

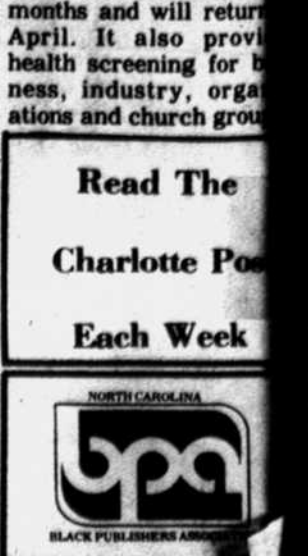
Trinity Presbyterian Church, January 28 from 2-4 p.m.

The Community Health Associations holds health clinics every two months and will return in April. It also provides health screening for business, industry, organizations and church groups.

## Read The

Charlotte Post

Each Week



**THE CHARLOTTE POST**  
Second Class Postage No. 965500  
"THE PEOPLES NEWSPAPER"  
Established 1918  
Published Every Thursday  
By The Charlotte Post Publishing Co., Inc.

1524 West Blvd. Charlotte, N.C. 28208  
Telephone (704) 376-0496  
Circulation, 9,915

**61 Years Of Continuous Service**

**BILL JOHNSON...Editor Publisher**  
**BERNARD REEVES...General Manager**

Second Class Postage No. 965500 Paid At  
Charlotte, N.C. under the Act of March 3, 1878

Member National Newspaper Publishers  
Association

North Carolina Black Publishers Association

Deadline for all news copy and photos is 5 p.m.  
Monday. All photos and copy submitted  
become the property of the POST, and will  
not be returned.

National Advertising  
Representative  
Amalgamated Publishers, Inc.

45 W. 5th Suite 1403 New York, N.Y. 10036 (212) 489-1220  
2400 S. Michigan Ave. Chicago, Ill. 60616 Calumet 5-0200