

# Editorials & Comments

## Political Forum:

### Too Little Too Late!

The Rev. Leon White, a Raleigh civil rights leader and head of the United Church of Christ's Commission on Racial Justice, was in Charlotte recently to announce the formation of the N.C. Black Political Forum. White said the forum aims to organize blacks throughout the state to demand that both black and white politicians make firm commitments on the issues which black and progressive people deem important and non-negotiable before throwing our support to any political candidate.

While we agree with this noble intent and the forum's alleged goal to strengthen black political power built on a grass roots foundation, we have to wonder is not Rev. White's call for a political forum too little and too late? To suggest, for example, that a new political group formed less than two months before the November elections could have any significant impact is to be politically stupid or to set forth a hidden agenda.

We believe the Rev. White has the latter in mind based on

unconfirmed reports that the forum will be used to solicit support for Jim Hunt's gubernatorial opponent, conservative Republican I. Beverly Lake. Thus, when Rev. White talks about ending alleged get-out-the-vote money," accepted by black politicians, we have to ask where is his forum organizing money coming from?

More significantly, since the problem of black political unity or power - or the lack of it - it is not a new concern, we have to ask where was Mr. White and his forum idea a year ago, where was he when the call for a national black agenda was issued some months ago, where was he when the mayor's political parties were planning and molding their party platforms and what has he done to solicit local black political support for his forum?

Until Mr. White gives meaningful answers to these questions, few if any black or progressive people should give serious consideration to his too little and too late call for black political unity.

### Politics And Religion: A New Formula

In the above editorial we have noted a black minister's call for a political forum to strengthen the black community's power base. In fact, the whole history of black Americans has been laced with a relationship between politics and religion. For example, on January 2, 1800 Absalom Jones, a black Episcopal priest, submitted an anti-slavery petition to Congress.

In the 180 years between these acts many events have occurred involving black religious values of leaders in some interaction with American politics. The late Rev. Adam Clayton Powell was

at the same time minister of one of America's largest black churches and a powerful member of the U.S. House of Representatives. Of course, we are all even more familiar with the influence of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the Rev. Jesse Jackson and the Rev. Andrew Young, former Ambassador to the U.N.

Each of these men and others like them often used the pulpit on Sunday mornings to carry the messages of the black man's political struggles and offered solutions to gaining political clout and influence to aiding blacks. This practice of a religion-political relationship has become so wide spread and necessary to black survival that few people have ever questioned whether it is in any way inconsistent with our traditional view of the "separation of church and state."

However, blacks need to be

aware of the new formula in the politics and religion relationship. This formula involves the relationship between the religious fundamentalists and the Ronald Reagan conservative wing of the Republican Party.

The fundamentalists favor strong national defense and oppose worldwide communism in the area of foreign affairs. On the domestic front, the fundamentalists helped nail into the Republican Party's platform an anti-abortion and stop ERA planks.

The "moral majority" as they call themselves, are opposed to anything that is progressive and they propose to impose their will on all others or brand them as sinners.

Republican presidential candidate Ronald Reagan addressed some 15,000 of these so-called "born-again" evangelical Christians in Dallas last week in a quest for their support in November.

Thus, while the traditional black religion-political relationship has been part of a liberal progressive movement, the fundamentalists' involvement in politics is aimed at highly conservative causes and the support of conservative candidates like Ronald Reagan and Jesse Helms.

Blacks need to be fully aware of these differences and understand that a merger of the right wing in national politics and the religious is neither in their best interest nor that of America.



## Blacks' Destiny In Their Own Hands

### As I See It

### Save The Children!

By Gerald O. Johnson

... Ask a Black kid "Who was Dr. Benjamin Sowell?" Chances are 10 to 1 he won't know. Ask a black kid "Who was Dr. Benjamin Banneker?" and again the chances are 10-1 that he will not know. But ask the same kid "Who is O.J. Simpson or Tony Dorsett?" and chances are 10-1 that he will know.

All of the men mentioned above are or were prominent in their fields. All of them mentioned are black. However, the latter of the two are athletes.

This indicates, to me anyway, that the Black community has failed to adjust its priorities in assessing success. We are still clinging on to the 3 decade old fact that sports is the only avenue available to get out of the ghetto. This is no longer true.

The truth today is that on a percentage basis to become a success in sports today is more difficult for a black kid than becoming a doctor.

But this fact is not being spread through the Black community. It was true that in the 1950s and 1960s a young Black man could only become economically independent if he was an athlete. However, today the roads have been paved for Young Blacks to be a success in any area they so desire. Moreover, the long term risks are less and the long term rewards could be more than that of an athlete.

The problem of not properly assigning priorities in the Black community stems from several factors. I think the most contributory factor is the low priority education receives in the Black community. Failure in school



Gerald O. Johnson

is less traumatic than failure to make an athletic team. Education is viewed as a hurdle put in the way of our success. The high ratio of competency test failures by Blacks coupled with the high absenteeism by Blacks indicates the lack of appreciation for education.

Another factor contributing to this program is the over exposure of athletes and their salaries. The communication media gives constant coverage. Generally, the only other news about blacks that appears as consistently as sports is bad news. This constant exposure of the Black athlete causes the Black youth to idolize him. It is the one constant positive thing in his life he can relate to.

The key to the re-prioritizing of the Black community is in the Black church. The church could bring together prominent Blacks in the community and the young people on a more frequent periodical basis. The churches could set up educational programs to assist in establishing the importance of education. It is past time, for the churches to stop doing so much preaching, and start doing some teaching.

Integration has placed a high responsibility on the shoulders of the Black churches. It is the only institution left in this country that can reach the majority of Black people. It is the only avenue available that can serve as an adhesive to bring the different factions of the Black community together. The Black professionals are no longer a member of the Black community at large. Hence, there is a separation from the successful Blacks and the community that we want them to influence. This is where the church must come in. It must provide the common ground.

It is time that we save the Black community without needing help from anybody outside the Black community. To start we need to save the children.

Black people are the only minority in this country that did not come to this country by our own will. This fact is used by many Blacks as an excuse for why somebody owes them something. Nobody owes you anything. You are put on this earth to live and make the best of your life. But if you chose to die being owed, then that's see SAVE on Page 11

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### From Capitol Hill

## Blacks Losing Their Leadership In A Carter Sale?

Alfreda L. Madison  
Special To The Post

Just about everyone at the Democratic Convention even the Carter people who voted against the rules change admitted that Ted Kennedy stole the show. No one seemed really happy over the convention's outcome. The Kennedy people were highly elated over the Senator's speech and the reception accorded him, but they were unhappy over failure to get the rules changed. Some young Kennedy supporters yelled, "The fascists have won." The Carter people having won the nomination were unhappy over the platform.

A young man who appeared to be a leftover from the hippie era, was surrounded by a crowd outside of Madison Square Garden while he lectured on the tactics used by the Carter forces. He stated that President Carter used the hostage situation for drumming up a false patriotism for political reasons, and that he muzzled everyone who even questioned his hostage actions,



Alfreda L. Madison

while rushing through primaries during the created patriotic hysteria. He spoke of the Administration's press manipulations - the Mike Wallace Sixty minute interview with President and Mrs. Carter Sunday, preceding the convention and the hour press conference a few days before the convention's beginning. The young man continued, saying that Carter was holding delegates to a commitment, while he, himself failed to keep his '76 campaign

promises of cutting defense spending, lowering unemployment and inflation and not deregulating oil prices. He said, "Carter is requiring the people to do something which he ignored himself."

Some black leaders met in the trailer with the White House staff concerning the Democratic platform. The blacks asked for more accessibility to the President, for a White House commitment to racial justice against upsurge Klan activities and police brutality and more jobs.

Mayor John Ford of Tuskegee said they wanted a black liaison at the White House. When asked about Louis Martin, the mayor stated that he was all right but they want another addition. Ford also said that President Carter had done a good job for blacks; that he is honest, a Christian, is for human rights and that he possesses a high moral character. One reporter asked John if he was looking for a pastor or a president. When Ford was informed that Mr. Carter's

economic proposals were deceptive and misleading to minorities and the poor and that not once had the President uttered one word during his entire term of office against the horrible treatment of black dissidents, his reply was that Mr. Carter just made a mistake in these - that during his first term, the President was learning and that he will do a better job on the second term around. This is the first time the office of Presidency has ever been considered as an "on-the-job training one."

Former Ambassador Andrew Young, who has been very dear to the black public, could hardly be heard above the boos and jeers, when he was delivering his convention speech in defense of the Administration. He said, "This Democratic Administration and this Democratic congress passed the Humphrey-Hawkins Act." What Mr. Young failed to say was that after passage, both the Democratic Administration and Democratic congress did nothing

further about its proposals other than shelved them. Some black delegates from Ohio, Michigan and Illinois expressed utter disdain for the former Ambassador and Mrs. King for their endorsement of the President whom they said had ignored all the needs of blacks.

Rev. Joseph Lowery, President of SCLC said that so far he had heard only rhetoric - that President Carter has to come up with real specifics for providing jobs, better health, training programs and more housing. He stated that President Carter can put a dozen black liaisons on the White House staff, but they won't mean anything in improving the conditions of blacks.

Congressman Mikey Leland called a meeting of black delegates with the hope of starving off a black walk-out when President Carter appeared. Leland emerged during the meeting and emphasized that Reagan must be defeated. He was asked if the emphasis is on defeating Rea-

gan or on the needs of alleviating the distressful conditions of blacks. He replied that he was not ignoring the black plight. However, black leaders who are emphasizing a Reagan defeat seem to be letting President Carter off the hook.

Friday morning, I asked two men standing at a Harlem subway looking over the job advertisements in the New York Times if they had listened to the convention on television. They said, "yes, but Andy Young, Coretta King and no other black so-called leader can sell President Carter to us. We look for a job everywhere, everyday and we can't find one. They told us that President Carter will appoint Federal judges who will be more tuned to blacks

## Affirmative Action

### Protest, Politics And Prosperity

By Gerald C. Horne, Esq.  
Special To The Post

It is no exaggeration, nor is it an insult to say that most books published in this country are a waste of trees. The literacy equivalent of "junk food," many of these works have as a primary purpose "escapism"—i.e., making people forget how awful their situation is.

But every so often there emerges a book that with profound simplicity and cutting intelligence distills the nature of an entire epoch. Such a book is "Protest, Politics and Prosperity: Black Americans and White Institutions, 1940-1975."

This valuable work, which is published by Pantheon, was co-authored by a team of social scientists, headed by Dorothy K. Newman, who holds a doctorate in sociology from Yale and has toiled in the vineyards a number of years for the Urban League and Department of Labor.

The study's major conclusion is indelibly imbedded in its title; i.e., that whatever "prosperity" or social progress that has come to the Black community in the last 35 years has come through the route of political protest. This clarion call for activism is not the product of wild-eyed radicals. Indeed, the study was funded in large part by the Carnegie Corporation - an organization not generally known for fire-brand anti-establishment politics.

But after an exhaustive sifting through the relevant data, the authors conclude that no other rationale will obtain. And it should be noted at the outset that this work is not an extended diatribe but a careful, documented analysis that contains over 80 tables dissecting the Black condition in areas ranging from education to housing to health to welfare.

Their specific conclusions may prove unsettling to some and may outrage others. But the burden is on the detractors to overcome the mountain of statistics the authors deploy to hammer home their points. For example, they vigorously attack the notion that a primary cause for the historically high Black unemployment rates are a lack of education and/or training. They conclude that, "only professional, technical and managerial jobs might require education beyond high school; in 1975 they were only one-fourth of all jobs." At the same time that employers rail at hiring Blacks with less than a high school diploma, they have no compunction about hiring whites similarly situated. "White workers without a high school diploma were about half the total labor force in 1950 and 1960 and one-third in 1970." Hence, it is simply wrong to say that Blacks cannot find jobs because of lack of education; the problem is that age-old United States verity—racism.

They do note that there are jobs that require training - e.g., electricians, machinists, plumbers, carpenters, etc. - but they quickly add that in such categories, "learning the skill on the job is paramount." Moreover, noting the growing trend toward automation, use of robots, etc., they aver that jobs, if anything, require "les skill rather than more...The skills are built into the machines."

Their overall conclusion is supported by the United States Department of Labor which has stated time and time again, "most jobs in industrial production do not require a high school diploma."

