

Editorials & Comments

Power Of The Ballot Box

The power of the ballot box is grossly underestimated by many Black Americans today, especially in this election year where the tide of events reshape the political race almost daily. Every four years, the presidential election affords us an opportunity to replace national disenchantment over the government, the economy, the judicial process, social issues and international relations with positive action. Almost every year we get a chance to vote in state or local elections.

The general trend toward focusing on our personal problems permeates all levels of this society contributing significantly to voter apathy. Yet, still another more serious attitude dominates the thinking of the 17 million potential Black voters in towns and cities across the nation. That attitude is a sense of "powerlessness" or the inability to change many inequities inherent in our American system creating the framework for a type of voter apathy which is, in some cases, extremely difficult to combat.

Voter apathy among our Black constituency is as prevalent as the latest disco beat, a condition that reflects in our total voter strength. Black voter statistics from recent years indicate that less than half of our potential voting strength has ever been realized, with only 49 percent turning out for the last presidential election. Yet, if we had 85 percent of all registered Black voters casting their ballots on November 4th - this would result in a total of 10.6 million votes.

The Black electorate in this country can and does influence elections, and provide in some cases the margin of victory. Two years ago, Black voters in Philadelphia responded to what they considered to be hostile, racist remarks by former Mayor Frank Rizzo, when a public referendum that would have allowed Rizzo to seek re-election was under consideration. With assistance from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's Registration-Get Out The Vote campaign, some 80 percent of the Black voting population flocked to the polls resulting in the overwhelming defeat of that referendum. Today Frank Rizzo is no longer in politics and the new mayor is considered to be more sensitive to Black concerns.

The NAACP Registration-Get Out The Vote campaign is in full swing today, and this year's effort has developed into the largest and most comprehensive commitment of financial resources and manpower in history. Radio and television public service announcements, "door-to-door" registration, voter registration discs and a series of get out the vote

activities are now in progress to sensitize Black voters from coast to coast about the importance of voting this November. With the major push coming from NAACP branches across the country, the campaign projects that as many as 11 million potential Black voters can be reached by Election Day.

For instituting change that will represent real progress for Black Americans, the political and legal processes are the best weapons available. One of them, voting, doesn't cost a dime. But if we don't exercise our voting privileges, we run the risk of seeing longer unemployment lines, higher inflation rates and even more substandard and unequal educational institutions.

Black youth in particular are facing staggering unemployment levels, so they clearly have the most to gain from aggressive participation. Yet, although they comprise nearly a quarter of our voting age potential strength (approximately 22 percent), they have the worst voting record of any age or ethnic group.

The voting process is fairly simple today. We should not forget, however, the struggles and harassment that Black voters endured as recently as the early 50's to preserve the sanctity of "the right to vote."

WE SHALL OVERCOME, the title of our illustrious Black marching theme, will never ring true until we begin to combine our efforts in attacking the injustices in the American system. Black power begins at the ballot box.

We Applaud Knox!

We applaud Mayor Eddie Knox's determined effort to rid West Trade Street of its pimps, prostitutes and winos. We think his efforts to organize the business in the area, getting federal officials to beef-up policing of the federal court building and Post Office, and exploring the idea of locating a public building on a site in the West Trade Street area represents positive steps toward at least removing, even if not solving, a complex social problem.

In order for the Mayor's program to work for the benefit of the entire city, citizens must be alert to any attempt to shift the activities of these undesirable elements to other parts of the city. It means, too, that local citizens (men) must not encourage these unwelcome elements by soliciting their services.

To rid our city of any undesirable elements will take strong support from all citizens to make the Mayor's program a true reality. Thanks to Mayor Knox for an excellent beginning.

"Blacks Have Always Been Concerned About Crime, But Hesitated To Crusade Because of The Negative Meaning of Crime In The Street And Law And Order Said Andrew Barrett Executive Director Of The Chicago N.A.A.C.P. 'But The Situation Is So Bad Now That Action Is The Only Thing Left.'"



It Is Up To Us Blacks, To Impose Order - NOW

After Years Of Campaigning

What's New In A Debate?

Alfreda L. Madison
Special To The Post

Some are saying that the Reagan-Anderson debate in Baltimore may be the last one in this election year. If that is true, the public will save some boring hours.

Public opinions vary, but among congressional reporters, if there was a winner, it was Anderson. It is generally felt that Anderson answered the questions, while Reagan responded with campaign rhetoric, with an almost complete disregard for the questions.

The black person on the street possesses more wisdom and he may have a greater knowledge of the political issues facing this country today than he is given credit for having.

One lady said, "where has Reagan been when he said the most unpopular thing he'd do to lower inflation is cut taxes, he certainly showed that he has not been listening to the American people. I just can't vote for a person who doesn't at least know the most popular issues people are concerned about today."

A lingerie clerk in one of the department stores said, "the newspapers are saying President Carter lost by not debating, but I say the American people lost by listening."

A black domestic worker said, "Carter is bad enough but to listen to Reagan one can see he is worse. Anderson isn't going anywhere, so why bother to go to the polls?"

An unemployed black man said, "neither candidate gave any means by which we can get jobs. Reagan talked about big business giving jobs. It's big business that has caused unemployment."

House of Representative doorman said, "Anderson answered the questions, while Reagan exhibited his best stage acting. He can't forget that he took part in plays which was only fictional performing."

A retired school teacher said, "Reagan's two-minute summary reminded me of some of my junior high school kids' compositions. We certainly hope present day Americans don't represent what those pioneers did - robbing the Indians of land and enslaving black folks."

Capitol policeman: "I felt that Anderson really showed that he is familiar with the issues and that he has a plan for dealing with them. He really hurt Carter. Reagan was doing more acting than providing substance."

State Department employee: "I feel that Anderson was sincere and giving the debate all he had, which made him come off great and clearly the winner. Reagan may have been holding back waiting for President Carter."

A lawyer who was in town on business said, "Reagan was great - that he is going to work for his election because he will turn this economy around. When his attention was called to the fact that Reagan may be a little worse for blacks than Carter, the lawyer said, 'blacks must do for themselves and not look to government for a hand-out.' What this fabulous lawyer didn't realize was that he was in town for an appointment at HUD trying to get some money for a housing project. He is also a close friend of one of the members of the Chrysler family and yet he is unaware of the more than two billion dollars Chrysler got from the government. Then there are the Lock-

heed industry, railroads, airlines and other big corporation bail-outs. The differences in minority government and big, big business money are in semantics and size. Money for minorities is called hand-outs or welfare and the sum is a mere pittance as compared to that of big business. When the mammoth corporation get government money it is called bail-out.

The best quote about the debate was from a taxi driver. "I didn't listen to the debate. I've listened to Reagan campaigning two years against Ford and four years against Carter. What else is left for him to say? Then Anderson has been talking for ten months. If these people haven't told us what they can do in all that time, what can they tell us in about a half an hour each? President Carter took two years prior to his '76 election to give us his plans and then for four years he ignored them. So he was right in not debating since he was not going to tell us why he reneged in his promises."

Ambulance Fees

The Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners has approved an increase in the fee for ambulance service, from \$40 to \$75. This \$75 fee does not cover the entire cost of the service, since the cost per call to the County is \$86.

Convalescent ambulance service is available when a doctor orders it, and the fee is the same as that for emergency service.

If you would like to know more about MEDIC, the Mecklenburg Emergency Medical Service, a member of the staff is available to answer your questions or speak to any organization.

Affirmative Action

Unemployment, Health And Crime

By Gerald C. Horne, Esq.

Special To The Post

The spiralling rate of crime is becoming like the weather. Everybody talks about it but no one - apparently - does much about it. And when they try, efforts are often misguided.

But scales are beginning to fall from some eyes, ironically, the Wall Street Journal - not to be mistaken for a radical journal - has seen fit to join the fray.

Section 2 of the August 27 issue featured a lengthy article on how the growing recession is affecting the death rate. Make one fact perfectly clear, however, the Wall Street Journal does not offer any prescriptions or antidotes.

They begin by quoting "experts" who speak on how "unemployed workers run out of health insurance, put off visits to the doctor and eat poorly. They go on to note that the unemployed and those who fear for their jobs or "are having a harder time making ends meet, come under severe stress. Many turn to alcohol and drugs."

Thus, even the Wall Street Journal can see that oft times people turn to drugs not necessarily because they're "bad people," or "gullible," often it is simply because of "objective," so-called "external" conditions.

And what is the result of this increased alcohol and drug use - the impact of more bourbon, beer, marijuana, cocaine, etc?... the death rate goes up. Researchers find out that as a result of the recession, more people die from various kinds of heart diseases and liver problems. Suicides rise. So does the infant-mortality rate, murders and even the number of auto accidents spreading the risks to those who otherwise might not be harmed by the economic situation.

The examples are legion: the laid-off Detroit auto-worker who decides to hang himself; the office employee driven to the bottle by a tyrannical, irrational boss.

Wall Street Journal's major source of this approach is Professor Harvey Brenner of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Md., who is described as "an authority on the connection between recessions and health."

Those familiar with the pathbreaking Hawkins-Humphrey full employment bill might recall the good professor. At that time by way of computer analysis, Professor Brenner discovered that for every 1 percent increase in the joblessness rate, there were 40,056 narcotics violations added for the FBI's total of 468,146; 8,646 more burglaries; 23,151 added larceny cases; 5,123 more embezzlements; 684 more homicides; 3,340 more prison admissions. These projections were based on 1970 figures.

Today, Professor Brenner avers that a mere 1 percent increase in joblessness "causes about 37,000 deaths over the succeeding six months. More than 20,000 of them come from cardiovascular problems which are aggravated during unemployment by stress and poor diet... More than 900 are suicides and 648 are homicides, also products of increased stress. Another 495 are attributed to cirrhosis of the liver, an outgrowth of alcohol abuse... Some of these deaths occur just as unemployment jumps... but others take place over the six year period following the unemployment increase.

From Capitol Hill

United States Must Give Substantial Aid To Zimbabwe

Alfreda L. Madison
Special To The Post
Representative Stephen Solarz, Chairman of the House African Affairs Subcommittee of Foreign Affairs offered an amendment to the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act which will authorize \$200 million for economic aid to Zimbabwe. The amendment requests that \$50 million be made available for fiscal year 1981 which begins October 1, 1980. Mr. Solarz stated that the President's target of only \$38 million for fiscal year 1981 is just \$10 million more than the 1980 amount.

Since coming out of a civil war that lasted over a seven-year period, Zimbabwe's economy has been devastatingly strained. So the economic reconstruction of the country offers the United States a vital opportunity to promote peaceful change throughout the United States.

Mr. Solarz strongly emphasized that Prime Minister Mugabe has impressed international observers and both United States'



Alfreda L. Madison political parties with his steadfast commitment to economic development and peace within the framework of a multi-racial society.

Former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, who appeared before the African Affairs Committee stated that the evolution of events which created Zimbabwe, is of great concern to him since he played a great part in its origin. Vance said that the way the United States, working

with Great Britain, changed the country from minority rule to majority government and from war to a peaceful transition is an important historic event. He spoke of the important part the Front Line States have played in the transition.

Secretary Vance outlined three major steps for the United States. The first is how can the United States foster and support its political and moral investments in Zimbabwe? The second, it must provide substantial assistance to speed Zimbabwe's recovery and to stimulate an expansion of its economy sufficient to benefit all of the people. Third, the Zimbabweans are aware of the promises of assistance made to them by the Nixon-Ford administrations. The 1976 discussions between the United States and Great Britain led to the creation of an international consortium to coordinate aid to, then Rhodesia, for a ten to twenty year period. In 1977 the Carter administration set up the Zimbabwe Development Fund.

Both Secretary Vance and Ambassador Harriman emphasized very strongly that the United States should contribute a very substantial sum - around \$250 million over the next two or three years towards the rebuilding of Zimbabwe.

Mr. Solarz stated that some people on Capitol Hill argue that Prime Minister Mugabe is a marxist and that he might institute a marxist government that will be hostile to the United States. Both witnesses stated strongly that Mr. Mugabe is a marxist but also a pragmatist. He has denied the Soviets a diplomatic mission and has made it very plain that he wants nothing to do with Russia. Mugabe believes in the free enterprise system. He has established a mixed economy and a multi-racial government. He has turned to the western countries for aid.

At these hearings very strong emphasis was placed on the fact that the United States has an opportunity for its own in-

terest to aid, substantially, in building Zimbabwe economically, because failure of the western world to do so will leave Zimbabweans no alternative but to turn to Russia and the Eastern European countries for survival.

Mr. Harriman stated that there is no need to fear Mugabe's marxist ideology. He gave the example

of Tito of Yugoslavia whose ideology was different from ours, in fact communist, but his country was well run and we have a very good relationship with Yugoslavia.

It was also brought out that Zimbabwe's success will play a major role in the freedom of Namibia and, finally, majority rule in South Africa.

Who Gets Diabetes?

Did you know you can get juvenile diabetes at age 3 or 33?

Despite its name, juvenile diabetes (insulin-dependent), can appear at any age. Those afflicted must take daily injections of insulin to stay alive.

Did you know women and non-whites are more likely to get diabetes?

Women are 50 percent more likely to have diabetes than men; non-whites are 20 percent more likely to have it than whites. The chances of developing diabetes doubles with every 20 percent of excess weight and each decade of life.

Did you know diabetes now affects 10 million people in the United States?

Of these, 1.5 million are juvenile diabetics. Its prevalence is increasing by 6 percent annually. Experts predict that by 1985, one in five will be affected by diabetes.

For more information, contact the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation



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