

# Editorials & Comments

## A Question Of Power

### Vote "No" On At-Large Council

"The powers of ordinary men are circumscribed by the everyday world in which they live, yet even in these rounds of job, family and neighborhood they often seem driven by forces they can neither understand nor govern. Great changes are be-

yond their control, but affect their conduct and outlook nonetheless." These are the words of the late eminent sociologist C. Wright Mills as stated in his book, "The Power Elite."

What Dr. Mills is saying is that people in mass society from the local community to the legislative bodies of Congress often "feel that they are without purpose in an epoch in which they are without power."

Until District Representation became a reality in 1977, many Charlotteans also felt that they, too, were driven by forces they could neither understand nor

govern and therefore sensed that they were "without power." The absence of power was a reality reflected in a City Council that had for years been composed of and dominated by one section of the City - Southeast Charlotte.

Thus, the April 28 Special Election petition proposing returning City Council to a seven-member, at-large governing

body is not a black versus white vote issue. It is, however, an

### Vote For Charlotte Bonds

In recent weeks we have expressed support for the City's \$53.9 million general obligation bond for a variety of municipal project needs and desires. While the nine ballot questions cover a wide range of improvements and land purchases, we recognize

that in spite of the City's commitment to use 11 cents of the 90.5 cents property tax rate to pay for such bonds, there are voters who will support some but not all of the bond proposals. It is for this reason that we are listing the bond proposals in what we believe should be a priority order.

**-Transit Facilities - \$4 million.** Purchase 50 new buses and provide City's share of funding for a new Operations Center and Transit Garage.

**-Street Improvements - \$14.2 million.** For the construction of a Transit Mall stretching along Tryon Street from Stonewall Street on the South to Eighth Street on the north and on Trade Street near the Square.

**-Water and Sewer Improvements - \$10.6 million.** For improvements in the Utility De-

partment including a 12 million gallon storage tank and 13.5 miles of new water mains to serve residential homes and businesses. Also five miles of new sewer mains.

**-Parks and Recreational Facilities - \$1.2 million.** For a public plaza or park to be built on the Square.

**-Land Acquisition - \$4 million.** To purchase land and complete planning for a multipurpose Coliseum.

**-Land Acquisition - \$1.5 million.** To purchase land in the 200 block of North Tryon Street for a Performing Arts Center.

**-Museum Expansion - \$10.4 million.** For an addition to the Mint Museum involving the building of 68,000 square feet of exhibit galleries, educational and administrative areas.

We hope that you will vote "FOR" some if not all of these bond items to make a "good" Charlotte a "better" Charlotte. Vote "FOR" the bond issues.

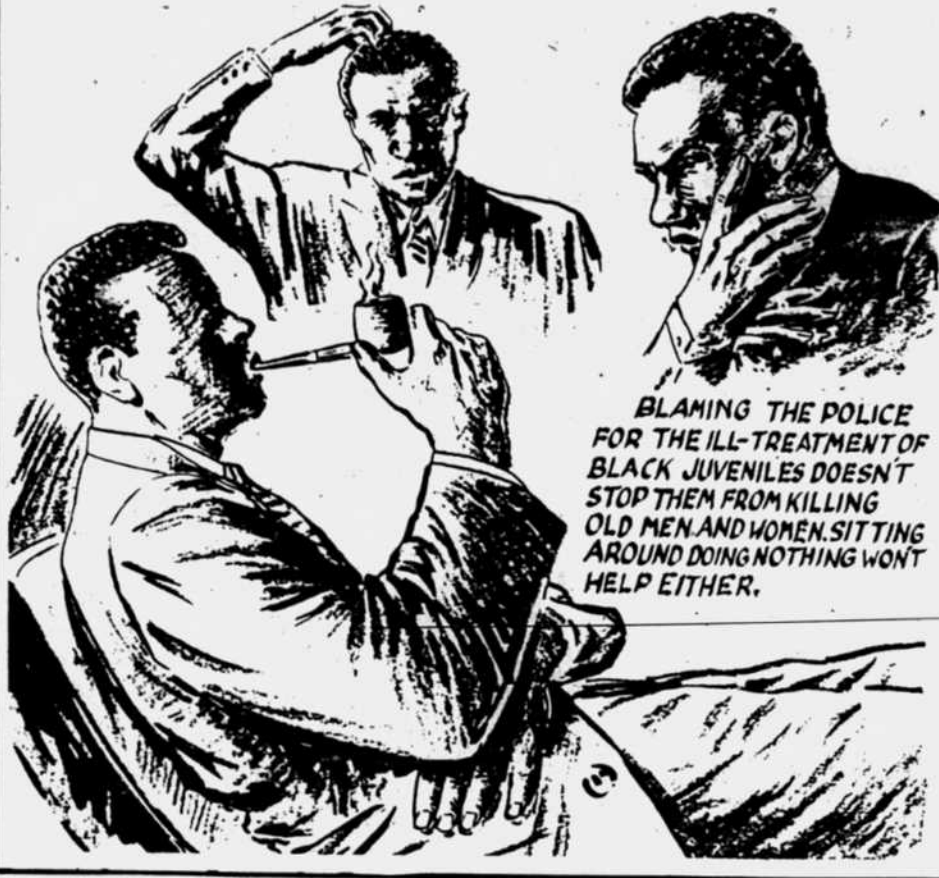
issue that will determine who will have power - political at least - in our City for the next two years. It is an issue that reminds us that those who have power will defend their desire to keep it while others seek to at least to share it. Thus the real issue involved in the April 28 Election centers on whether political power will at least in part be equally shared by all sectors of our city or will one and the same area - southeast Charlotte - recapture power through an at-large Council by their ability to afford the higher financial cost of at-large political campaigns.

It appears quite evident that the number of "NO" vote signs appearing in all sectors of the City except the southeast indicates a strong desire to retain the shared political power that district representation provides. It provides Mr. Average Citizen with a greater voice in his government either as a candidate for office or as a voter for a candidate who is more responsible to the electorate and more aware of their concerns.

A "NO" vote on April 28 will contribute to continuing the present 7 district and 4 at-large make-up of City Council which has given us good government.

Vote "NO" in order to retain our district representation system. You need good government, help let it continue.

## Blacks' Destiny In Own Hands



### Telling It Like It Really Is

### Definition Of A Free Society

"My definition of a free society is a society where it is safe to be unpopular."

—Adlai Stevenson  
The above quote from the late Adlai Stevenson sort of suggests, in view of recent events, that this is not -- at least in Mr. Stevenson's opinion -- a free society. The senseless attempt on Ronald Reagan's life was a mirror we were forced to hold up to ourselves.

Americans did not like, or believe, the image they saw. "How could this happen again? In this day and age? In our country? I thought this kind of thing ended with the attempt on Gerald Ford's life."

These were the reactions of Americans. They address a tremendous ignorance and delusion about ourselves.

I have said so many times in the past (and have been heavily assailed for so saying) that we are a violent people who do not know the range, depth and force of our primitive feelings. Why ought it not happen here?

Prior to the murder of John F. Kennedy, the preceding three of four presidents had suffered assassination attempts. And after the assassination of JFK, there've been two more attempts, and now, three.

In most of the so-called backward nations, the chiefs of state walk around virtually unguarded. In this day and age? This is the age of the most ferocious war the planet has ever known.

This is the day of the most bloody dictatorships, the gas ovens, the concentration camps, the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by a "peace-loving" nation. This is the age of American-style slavery imposed on Americans by other Americans who claim to believe in "justice."

The age of extermination of the Black Panthers, the day of killings of 43 human

begins in Attica prison at the hands of troopers and prison guards who shot down prisoners and even the hostages they were supposed to be rescuing, in their bloodlust.

This is the age when the danger we all face is that the smashing of the atom by man will be followed by the smashing of man by the atom. Whose face is that in the mirror?

In OUR country? Why not, with our staggering homicide rate, our casual and callous attitude toward our own automobile fatalities, our shocking prevalence of firearms, our frontier-like relish for combat and conflict, our contempt for courts, our cynicism about the effectiveness of orderly process, our cowboy cultivation of the "macho" image of ourselves.

Why not here? Here, where our media makes heroes of deadbeat gangsters? Where the media turns mass murderers and assassins into instant celebrities?

If anyone doubts this, consider the many instances of Americans who yell "JUMP!" to those attempting suicide from high buildings. Those weren't foreign spies yelling "jump."

Or hark back to the successful attempt on JFK's life. And if any doubt remains, recall the cry of applause that went up from the crowd of Americans gathered outside the Dallas jail when it was learned that the presumed assassin of the president had been shot down in cold blood himself.

That reaction was, to me, more appalling and more revealing than anything that has occurred since, in this elongated American nightmare of violence, baseball and apple pie. Here was a man not known for sure-at the time-to be the killer. He had not confessed, not been brought to

trial, not defended and sentenced.

And he was killed while in the very hands of the police. But the crowd outside joyously shouted its approval of this bestial, stupid and irrational act.

Was this not frightening? It disgusted me. And it also disclosed the profound failure of our society to instill in its citizens any real sense of civilization, any idea of the real meaning of law and justice.

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This is what has turned our country into little better than a jungle. If this dreadful attempt to make an unpopular man unsafe causes us to see ourselves more clearly, forces us to re-examine our feelings, makes us determined to purge the violence within each of us and all of us, it will not have been in vain. Whose face is that in the mirror?

Sorry but I'm not of that breed of animal that feels compelled to sit before the typewriter or go before the microphones and speak of my compassion for Reagan, who is after all, a human being. I don't feel a need to reassure people about my own humanity.

And I heard a whole boatload of hypocritical, phony utterances from people who ought to know that we know better. So I took to the streets, where I knew I might not like or agree with what I would hear, but I knew I would hear something based in sincerity.

How soon we forget. Why are so many expressing surprise? Even if Dick Gregory had not predicted Reagan was going to be shot, we had past experience to learn from.

And there's one thing about experience; it's the only teacher that gives us the test and the lesson at the same time. I hope we have all learned from it, but I doubt it. These days, too many children are afraid of the dark, and too many adults are afraid of the light.

By Gerald C. Horne, ESQ

# Affirmative Action

### Atlanta And The Ultra-Right

The Atlanta child killings have been etched and burned into the collective consciousness of the entire country. The green ribbons, the marches, the telegrams and letters all forced the tight-fisted, heartless Reagan Administration to release \$1.5 million to spur the investigation.

At the same time the Atlanta murders, the Buffalo murders, the New York City slayings, the Salt Lake City slayings and the lynchings in Mobile and Pickens, Miss., cannot be separated from the kind of poisonous political atmosphere that would allow an ex-Nazi and the son of a right-wing oilman to attempt an assassination of the President.

In Atlanta, for example, Earl Shinhoster (executive director of the southeast region of the NAACP) has protested the circulation of a letter by racists that has called for "Open Season" in hunting down blacks. Black women employees of Hertz Rent-A-Car in Atlanta have received similarly menacing letters threatening them with bodily harm if they don't resign. A similar letter was circulated by a deputy sheriff in Okaloosa County, Florida, following a successful discrimination suit by the NAACP against near by Eglin Air Force.

Once again, racists are trying to rally poor and unemployed whites by telling them that their plight would be better if affirmative action didn't allegedly "discriminate" against them.

Some have theorized that the Atlanta children could only be attracted by police or other "authority figures." Please note that the Ku Klux Klan is actively seeking to recruit white policemen in the Atlanta area. A recent NBC documentary featured a Klan leader who bragged that the KKK has several members on the Atlanta police force.

Shinhoster has spoken of an incident involving U.S. marshals at the Richard Russell Federal Building in Atlanta. On January 21, the day after Reagan's inauguration, several white marshals entered the marshals' office and approached black marshals. One of them presented a piece of paper bearing the Maltese Cross Emblem of the KKK to the black man.

Just outside of Atlanta is the headquarters of the National State's Right Party, headed by the notorious racist J. B. Stoner. Stoner, who is presently free on appeal from a 10 year conviction for "setting off an explosive charge dangerously near an inhabited dwelling," (i.e., a black church) has been stepping up recruiting activities lately. The Congressman from that area is Larry McDonald, an old friend of apartheid South Africa and a long-time member of the John Birch Society. Also in this motley congressional district is Lockheed Aircraft, one of the Pentagon's biggest contractors and a staunch foe of spending for food stamps, mass transit and people's needs.

One known Klansman in the area is Allan Wayne Roberts, who has been out of prison since 1976. He was convicted and served a ten year term in Mississippi for conspiracy to violate the civil rights of Goodman, Schwerner and Chaney, the murdered freedom fighters. On October 6 he was arrested outside Atlanta at an air strip waiting for the arrival of a plan load of marijuana and other illicit drugs. It is suspected that the KKK is financing much of its activity through the drug trade.

### From Capitol Hill

## Congressional Black Caucus Do Not Get Good Coverage

Alfreda L. Madison I was stopped by one of the white Capitol Hill guards, who said, "Why is it that the televisions and big newspapers haven't carried the Congressional Black Caucus budget? The television only said a few words about it and the papers had a very short article on it; that's the only budget that really makes any sense." This guard also said that he listens every year to the account of the Caucus workshops and the speeches that are made at their annual affair and the news media don't give that good of coverage. He said that what the Caucus is doing and saying is more important to this country than anything else that's done on Capitol Hill.

Ron Nichols, the Black Caucus press secretary, received a letter from a white USA Communications employee in Detroit, who stated, "Black Caucus, you are the only group with insight and guts to challenge the direction our country is going...in service of usury, money and



Alfreda L. Madison war. Please scream louder, we are with you."

A few days ago Representatives Fauntroy and Rangel testified before the Senate Budget Committee. They presented the Caucus' Constructive Alternative Budget, that has been offered to the American people.

In his testimony Mr. Fauntroy stated that the Congressional Black Caucus, over the years, has been seeking to have the nation address the basic problems that confront us; the kinds of problems President Reagan has indicated that he wants to

address through his recovery plan. "However," said Fauntroy, "the Caucus differs with certain aspects and provisions of the Reagan plan." He stated that the Caucus plan, like the President's addresses problems of balancing the budget, reducing inflation, stimulating the creation of jobs and reducing the tax burden. Their alternative plan does all of these things in a much better way than the President's.

Congressman Fauntroy emphasized very strongly that they believe the Administration's solution, which cuts government spending, government regulations is inflationary; that it will increase unemployment and place more people on the federal dole. He also told the committee that the Caucus takes exceptions to the President's policy that foreign problems lends themselves to military solutions. The Caucus views them as social, economic and political.

Representative Rangel made it very clear that while the President had

presented a budget, that constitutionally, the final budget responsibility resides in both Houses of Congress. Rangel also stated that the Administration's shifting the social programs to state and local governments, with a reduction in federal funds for them, without any guidelines will be of little help to the aged and poor.

Senator Armstrong who was chairing the committee during these hearings said to the Black Caucus witnesses, "I could not help but be impressed with the scope and detail of the recommendations that you have presented. I do not know the extent of the staff that is available to the Black Caucus but I have some idea of what the magnitude is of wrestling with the budget document." He also stated that the Caucus instead of generalizing and going off into a rhetorical never-never land, has really put the numbers on paper and applied them to specific budget functions.

Mr. Armstrong asked the Caucus members to explain how \$1.5 billion can be

picked for food stamps out of the three martini lunch, and that being a member of the Senate Finance Committee he might become interested in sponsoring legislation along that line.

Mr. Rangel responded by saying a tremendous amount of revenue would be gained if the type of business deductions under the present law was disallowed; that a 50 percent cap should be put on the allowance. He stated that the other budget acts as though there is no connection between the track that deals with tax packages and the budget cut track. The Caucus cannot see how anyone can look with asstance at a 43 cent lunch and overlook the revenue shortfalls as a result of the three martini business deductions.

The Caucus also explained to the committee that since the Congressional Budget Office has said that balancing the budget would save only two-tenths of one percent, that the budget balancing ploy is more psychological than substantive.

Senator Domenici said that the Black Caucus had done what President Reagan asked those to do who did not agree with his plan and that was to come forward with an alternative.

The Senator said he has seen no other alternative budget. He told Representatives Fauntroy and Rangel that while their proposals will not be passed in their entirety, but that some parts of it will certainly have an impact on the budget process.

Here, again the white news media carried nothing about this particular phase of the Budget committee hearing. The biasness of the white press is unfair to whites by not giving them the highly valuable contribution being made by Blacks.



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