

## EDITORIALS & COMMENTS

### Self-Help: The Hope Of Blacks

The dual impact of inflation and a depressed economy have resulted in a decline in black family median income in 1981, and as might be expected, an increase in the number of blacks below the poverty line, according to a report released by the Census Bureau. This makes the second straight year that inflation and a recession had combined to create a significant decline in real family income and simultaneously increase the number of families eligible for the poverty population.

Ironically, in the decade 1970-80 the median family income for the nation as a whole rose by \$180 in constant 1980 dollars to \$21,904. Blacks on the other hand, lost ground; however, as their median income went down by \$650 to \$12,674. Census experts are quick to add, however, that because of a decline in black family size from 4.26 in 1970 to 3.66 in 1980, much larger than whites, they made some small progress toward closing the wide income gap between blacks and whites.

As one probes deeper into the census data we find that after adjustments for inflation, black families even with a reduced size had a median family income of \$13,270 in 1981 or a 5.2 percent decline in their real median income. Hidden within this data is the fact that 70 percent of 1.4 million black families headed by women fell below the poverty line in 1981.

### Elderly Blacks

More recent studies reveal more bad news for blacks - elderly blacks. The National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, Inc. notes that cuts in Social Security, food stamps, Medicare, Medicaid, housing, rent subsidies and employment in federal fiscal year 1983 (beginning October 1, 1982) will have a devastating impact on the minority elderly, particularly the black elderly. Again, it is elderly black women who carry a major share of this problem. In fact in 1980, 81.9 percent of all aged black women were poor or marginally poor.

The bottom line of all this is the historic story of blacks continuing to carry a disproportionate share of the nation's hard times when inflation and a sluggish economy set in. Thus, even blacks cannot even depend on government for aid and assistance when the economy is in a downward spiral.

The only real hope then for black Americans is to become less dependent upon the public purse and more dependent upon themselves. Therefore, black Americans must and should develop their own self-help plans and strategies. The need for such

action becomes even more imperative when we face the reality that many of the gains blacks achieved in the 1960s have been eroded away by well organized white communities that are not necessarily anti-black but rather simply taking care of their own self-interest in the absence of a master plan and strategy by blacks to maintain their gains and build from that for future gains.

### Own Agenda

Then, too, there has been a significant number of misinformed blacks who took the gains of the 1960s for granted by assuming that the struggle for justice, equality and fair play was over and that racism had somehow ceased to exist. Well, the hard reality is that in time of general prosperity it costs little for others to cease injustice and racism, in fact it's often to their advantage to enable blackst to experience in gains in jobs, for example, because it means more profit and income for them. On the other hand, in times of economic decline those same power brokers, employers, bankers and the like will cease to respond to black needs and concerns in part for the same reason that blacks were made slaves when white indentured servants deserted their own exploited economic situation.

A feature story in *The Post* last week noted that an overwhelming 71 percent majority of a television opinion poll approved a "Black Family" self help plan proposed by the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC). The poll was taken in Cincinnati, Ohio during a live telecast of "Tony Brown's Journal" while utilizing a two-way talk back system. Some aspects of the plan call for strong support for black businesses, stronger voter education and voting campaigns, and greater support for black churches and other black institutions.

Next Week: A How To On Self Help.

### Voice Of Blacks

We stand here as an institution willing to echo the voice of the black community; and that voice comes from many different directions - not from one group or organization. We stand here as an institution willing to work with MOVE, police officers, churches, black businesses and any other organization or institution working for a positive goal in the black community. And as far as we are concerned no organization has a padlock on the right way; they all have their way. That is the way it should be and will remain with *The Charlotte Post*.

A CLEANER NEIGHBORHOOD IS UP TO YOU...



THE STREETS ARE MADE FOR YOU, NOT FOR TRASH OR GARBAGE.

### Letters To The Editor

#### Let There Be Music

Dear Sir:  
The arrival of summer has naturally increased the number of people on our cities' streets, yet, amid the cacophony of conversations and the blare of horns, rises the sound of music. If one is perceptive enough to identify the direction from which this music is emanating and then follow the stream of notes and voices to their source, we will very likely come upon a compact electronic mobile unit, emanating a sound previously thought to be produced only by the most sophisticated stereo component system. But the age of modern electronics coupled with an unparalleled demand for music has brought about the creation of a vast variety of portable music systems. I have seen the most frail persons carrying music systems which appear to weigh upwards of 50 pounds, yet, they totter to the beat seemingly unaffected by the enormous load. Oh, what a love for music. To many of us this obsession with musical mobility may seem arcane at best. However, with teenage unemployment hovering at the 50 percent level, it is not surprising to find the victims of this national catastrophe soothing the pain of unemployment with the absorbing sound of music.

Perhaps we should consider ourselves fortunate that music is the outlet for such severe frustrations brought about by a federal policy that totally ignores the needs of people. Unemployment has a most devastating effect on one's being, as well as one's economics, which may

manifest itself in a most unpredictable and perhaps violent manner.

Let us keep this in mind as we make fruitless attempts to avoid the sounds of this new form of public expression and free speech. I for one fear what

may happen if the music stops--so let there be music.

This is Charles E. Cobb of the United Church of Christ for Civil Rights Journal. Thank you.

Dr. Charles Cobb

#### School Prayer Issue Is Serious

Dear Editor:  
Phil Jones is right -- the school prayer issue is in serious danger of dying a dolorous death.

But, fortunately, public pressure is intensifying.

Recent polls from Gallup, Harris and a host of others, indicate that a full 70 percent of the American people strongly support the right of children to voluntarily pray in public schools.

And now, to demonstrate that support -- thousands of concerned citizens are preparing to join hands and hearts at a mass rally in the Nation's Capitol. The rally, sponsored by a coalition of Protestant, Catholic and Jewish organizations, will be held on the mall from 3-7:30 p.m., Saturday, September 25, -- "School Prayer Day, 1982."

As events unfold in the days immediately ahead, we'll keep you informed of the latest developments. Suffice it to say, for now, that a full afternoon of musical entertainment will be followed by a keynote address and the symbolic lighting of candles and ringing of bells.

The bell-ringing ceremony -- scheduled for precisely 7:30 p.m. -- will be duplicated by similar ceremonies in cities and towns across the country.

The school prayer rally,

it should be noted, is not an endorsement of specific legislation. It is simply a symbolic means of applying the "public pressure" needed to allow the American people once again to keep the scriptural charge, "Suffer the little children to come unto me."

Sam Walker, Chairman  
School Prayer Day

#### Letters Welcomed

Do you have something to say? Then do so for everyone to hear. *The Charlotte Post*, the only other voice in town, welcomes all letters on various subjects.

Letters to the editor must include your signature and address, both of which may or may not be used per request. For purposes of identification only, writers should include their telephone numbers.

All letters are subject to editing for grammar, libelous content and, when necessary, brevity. Please limit letters to 500 words. Letters should be addressed to: Editor, *The Charlotte Post*, P. O. Box 30144, Charlotte, N.C. 28230.

#### Mail Order Books

Americans spend \$1.3 million on mail-order books and \$478 million on mail-order records and tapes each year.

### From Capitol Hill

## Administration Must Substitute Sense For Racism

By Alfreda L. Madison  
Special To The Post  
President Reagan is flipping and flopping in such a confused manner until he is having trouble finding a landing place. In his 1982 budget the Administration took off in complete ecstasy, having accomplished a full overhaul of the country's economic policy. The supply-side plane was loaded with huge tax breaks for the rich which Mr. Reagan said would be reinvested in industry, thereby stimulating the economy and creating jobs. The heaviest baggages

aboard the plane were filled with cuts in education, benefits for the elderly, handicapped and dependent children. Cuts for food stamps, job training, legal assistance for the poor, all resulted in losses of homes, businesses and jobs. Now after nearly a year's flight, the supply jet is coming in for a turbulent landing.

David Stockman, speaking of the Administration's 1982 budget, reported Mr. Reagan as going on the air with a non-analytical budget, that had no relevancy to the people's needs. Yet,

the President says his policy has succeeded because interest rates and inflation have come down. He failed to say that these were lowered by a trade-off of lowered inflation for unemployment.

Mr. Reagan stated that the tax increase is only about 20 percent; 80 percent is collection and correction of flaws in the system.

The Washington Times reported three-fourths of the compliance and loophole measures will be derived from repeal of benefits in the 1982 tax bill and increased federal interest withholding. It is wrong for Mr. Reagan to mislead the average citizens into believing they will feel no ill effects from this tax bill. Their write-off deductions for loss in theft, medical

cost will be smaller plus increased excise taxes on telephone, cigarettes, and airways. According to the President's tax plea, the recession is bottoming out and his program will cure the economic ills in the long run, there is no quick fix. The unemployed need jobs now; people who are losing



Alfreda L. Madison

businesses and homes need to save them now, the handicapped whose self-support programs are being cut off, need program restoration now, and those on Medicare and Medicaid need health care now. So Mr. Reagan needs both a quick fix and a long range policy. Ignoring these "now needs" is an admission that either the Administration doesn't care if it is unable to promote the general welfare of the people. The President should go back to the drawing board, scuttle its present economic advisors, for a new group and come up with a program that meets the sufferings of the citizens.

When the Congressional Black Caucus introduced its 1982 Alternative Constructive budget, it was completely ignored by the Administration, Congress and the white media. Again, they introduced their 1983 budget, and after a short debate on the floor of the House it was shelved. Now after all else has failed, many features of the Caucus budget have been incorporated in the present tax bill.

The Black Caucus provisions included in the tax bill are as follows:

1. Individual Minimum Tax; 2. Casualty losses only deductible in excess of 10 percent of adjusted gross income; 3. Corporate Minimum Tax; 4. Basis Adjustment for Investment Tax Credits; 5. Repeal of 1985 and 1986 increases in deductions for recovery property from 150 percent declining balance to 175 percent in 1985 and 200 percent in 1986; 6. Repeal of Safe-Harbor Leasing (giving unused deductions to other corporations); 7. Repeal of Foreign Oil and Gas Credits; 8. Reduction in the Possessions Tax Cre-

**WALK YOUR TALK**



Rev. Perkins

### Serving The Community

As I move around in the black communities of this nation, I am very distressed concerning the church's level of understanding of its responsibility. I wonder whether or not we as black leadership have reduced the church just to a survival or an emotional institution.

Is the black church surviving simply to perpetuate itself? We need to understand that the church is supposed to contribute to the basic life needs of the people in the community. For that to take place the church needs to develop skills that are meaningful to the community.

I am always grappling with the fact that people say to me, "Our people need training and sound teaching." But as I listen carefully to the sermons, they are geared in most cases to elicit an emotional response. The sermons do not deal with the intellect that can move toward development, motivation, and spiritual growth within the people.

We have lost the ability to use the church as a development institution that is used to train our people in a way so they take responsibility for the problems we face. People could say that the white church is like that, too. That is true, but that is not an adequate reason for us not doing what we must do.

I live in my community and I must be responsible for it through the church. But we have a problem. The commuter church concept. We have people living in one area of town driving to another community to worship on Sunday. The problem comes in because the commuters do not have a sense of responsibility for the community. We have got to deal with the concept.

I believe that it is going to be important in the days ahead that we as black leaders must serve the geographical area where the church is located. If people live outside that community, then they must relocate to that community. Doing this we make the people's need our own needs. And then we can begin working to change conditions.

The second step is reconciling people in the community to ourselves and to God. We must believe that the gospel of Christ can bring unity--burning through racial, cultural, social and economic barriers which now divide us.

Finally, we must develop the kinds of institutions that can redistribute the wealth within the community so that the community can be healed. This means we must keep our resources within the community rather than spending them in other communities where they provide no benefit for our people. Our children will then have jobs and skills. The way we can do that is by starting cooperatives. These can be initiated by individuals, families, or churches who pool their resources. Once this is done it would provide job opportunities in that community.

I believe that in the church today, we need to be loosening our young folks' skills and talents, unlocking their minds and allowing them to develop. I don't believe that a light Sunday-go-to-meeting commitment is going to be adequate. We have to call for a total commitment from our people which in fact means a complete commitment to Jesus Christ.

strong opposition to the package because it is saturated with cuts in programs for the needy, and for that reason they cannot support it. Maybe the next budget will contain restoration of funds for the social programs in the Congressional Black Caucus budget and Congress and the Administration will include blacks in their budget-making policy.

### First United

Continued from Page 1  
private and public groups. Her personal commitment to service combined with skill and training have warranted her many honors and recognitions.

The public is cordially invited to attend the forum and the Women's Day program at First United Presbyterian Church, 301 East 7th Street at the corner of 7th and College Streets. Rev. Dr. Raymond Worsley is minister.

Even though many Caucus budget measures are included in the tax bill, the Caucus members have



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