

## EDITORIALS & COMMENTS

### Who Speaks For Blacks?

At a recent private meeting of largely unnamed black elected officials and a few other black people, Arthur Griffin, a 34-year-old local office supply company owner was endorsed as a candidate to replace Phil Berry on the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Board.

We applaud the interest shown by any segments of the black community for showing an active interest in any public office because of the role such an office plays in setting policies that affect the quality of life of all citizens in our community.

However, we have to admit to having some serious reservations about the manner in which a candidate should or might be endorsed by any group that suggests that a candidate, as in this case, might have difficulty getting broad-based black support.

Our reservations are numerous. First, in the absence of a public announcement that a meeting was to be held to consider a possible candidate endorsement for the School Board post denied the vast majority of black citizens an opportunity to participate in any possible meaningful endorsement.

Secondly, while we certainly favor any legitimate efforts to elect or appoint black persons to public office, especially with an awareness of disproportionate

lack of black representation in public offices generally, particularly state and nationwide, we believe that an endorsement that is apparently based solely on race is—pure and simple—a form of racism.

Four factors led us to this conclusion. One is the extensive background in education that some of the black people have who were considered at the private meeting but not endorsed. Another was the bypassing of a two-time unsuccessful black candidate for the School Board who at least has demonstrated a firm understanding of public school issues and problems and is a known quantity.

In addition, the group's endorsed candidate reportedly indicated he'd rather be appointed than face an election. For an unknown, unproven public office seeker this does not sound like a candidate brimming with confidence or interest.

Lastly, on racism, if a segment in the white community said they want a white candidate to fill Berry's vacated School Board post in order to increase white representation, would not the same private black meeting group allege white racism?

We would like to believe that in Mecklenburg County in 1983 most citizens have matured beyond this kind of mentality.

### Political Immaturity Must Stop

We have observed with considerable interest the developing efforts of the Young Democrats of Mecklenburg County to recruit black people and other minorities in an effort to strengthen minority involvement in the Democratic Party and hopefully will become active in politics in general.

The Young Democrats, composed mostly of white professionals, is an arm of the county Democratic Party. They should be commended for their thoughtfulness and interest in broader-based political participation by all citizens in our community.

However, we would hope that before they gallop off into the sunset that they would look inward at some of the internal problems their Party has and help to get their house in order before soliciting new supporters.

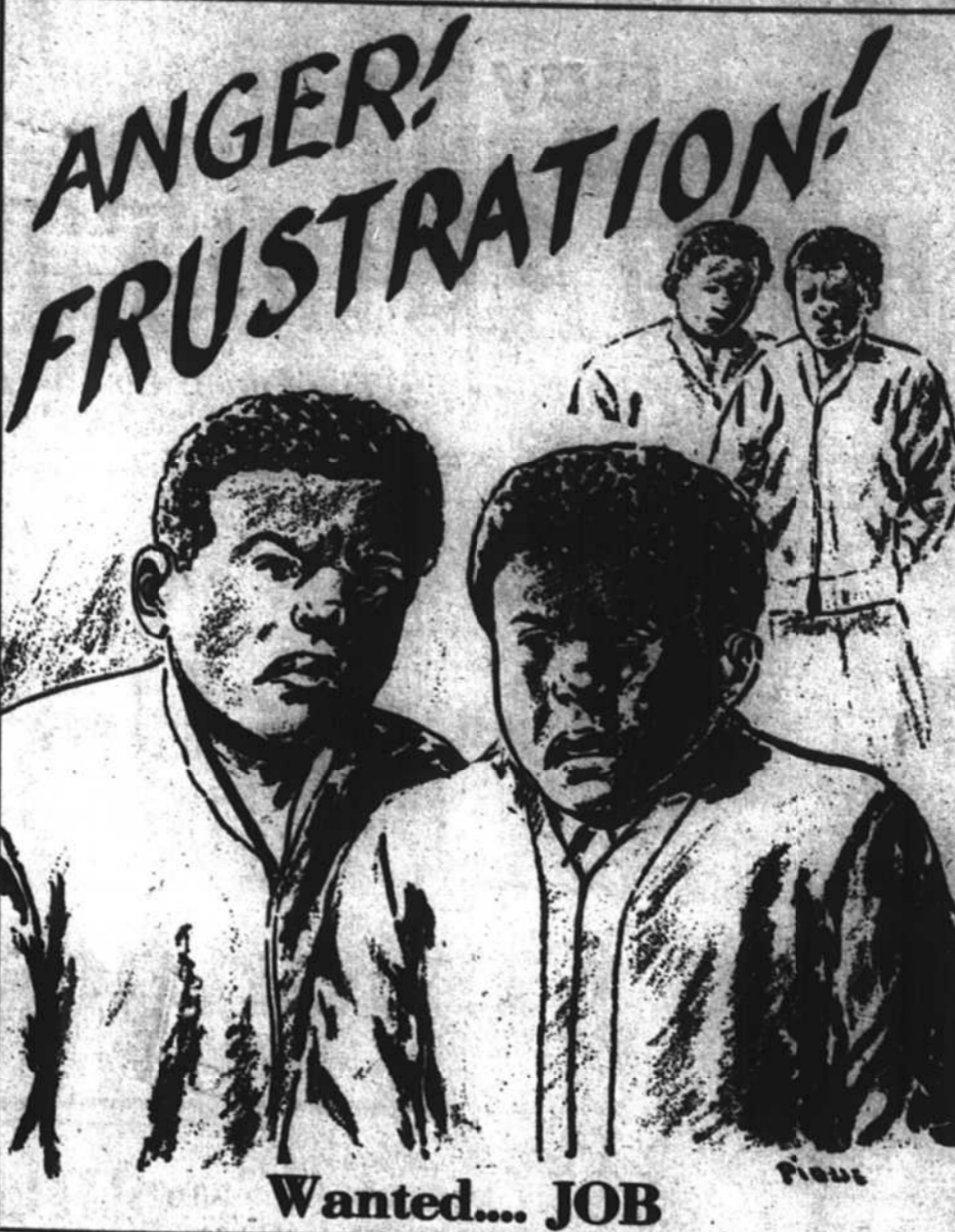
The Party has a number of internal problems, not the least of which is adequate financial support. One outstanding example of this, and an issue that is in reality petty and shows immaturity, has been the flop that

first vice-chairperson Pat Patton has created over a \$400 expenditure by Party Chairman Bob Davis.

Briefly stated, the Party's executive committee approved a \$400 expenditure for Chairman Davis to attend a mini-party convention in Philadelphia last year and Ms. Patton has been attacking Mr. Davis about it and demanding that he personally repay the money because such an expenditure had never been approved.

While Party Chairman Davis has not stated his reasons, he has announced that he will not seek reelection to his post at the April 30 Party Convention. Nevertheless, this is good reason to believe that one reason he plans to step down is the constant bickering over the minor, legitimate expenditure.

If the Young Democrats want to encourage wider support by black people or anyone else in local Party activities, they need to help the Party in dividing forces.



Letters To The Editor:



### National Black History Month

Dear Sir: Every American can be grateful to the Association for the Study of Afro-

American Life and History for its dedicated efforts to promote both popular and scholarly interest in Ame-

rican black history. From 1915 forward this organization has served to familiarize our citizens with the outstanding contributions of black Americans. Through its work, we as a nation can more fully perceive the meaning of the events that have shaped our destiny.

#### Appreciates The Charlotte Post

Dear Editor: We, the members of the staff and residents of Boys Town would like to extend our appreciations to your very fine staff and newspaper company for the remarkable work you have provided in covering news of Boys Town and related personnel.

have projected us very well and we are extremely grateful and hope that we will be able to establish a well-rounded relationship.

The observance of Afro-American (Black) History Month affords all of us a fine opportunity to recognize further and to appreciate the role of black Americans in the development of our nation. This annual observance promotes heightened awareness of the significant participation of black citizens in every level and aspect of our national life. It is a time when we transcend past struggles for advancement and gratefully acknowledge our rich and valuable diversity. Our heritage lends strength to the fiber of our country.

Your coverage of the Alpha Gamma Psi Teen Fraternity and resident counselor Jazz LaDuke were impressively done and we do appreciate your relating this wonderful news to the public. You

If for some reason Boys Town can be of any assistance to your company, please don't hesitate to call upon us. You have been very kind to us in every way possible and we would like to return the favors.

Understanding black history is fundamental to a thorough comprehension of the full scope and sweep of the American historical experience. By more fully appreciating America's commitment to freedom and justice, we can avoid the mistakes of the past and fulfill the hopes of the future.

#### Have Something To Say?

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

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. 28226.

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### From Capitol Hill

## Equal Employment Opportunity Is Challenge For '80's

Alfreda L. Madison Special To The Post  
 The 33rd Annual Leadership Conference on Civil Rights' theme is Civil Rights Challenge for the 80s with emphasis on equal employment opportunities. The Conference witnessed its greatest attendance ever. The Conference is composed of more than 166 organizations. They include labor, women, elderly, handicapped, blacks, Hispanics, Asian Americans, American Indians as well as all civil rights groups.



Alfreda L. Madison

Ralph Neas, Executive Director, in his Conference opening statement, said, "In the wake of the 1980 elections and of the Reagan legislative juggernauts of 1981, we were threatened from all directions. We faced the distinct possibility of a Second Post Reconstruction in which the civil rights gains of more than two decades would be in a serious jeopardy."

Neas stated that in spite of the Administration and its strong alliance with the Radical Right, Congress blocked them from enacting a single item on their agenda. Neas listed the 1982 achievements. The strongest Voting Rights Act of all

times was passed. "What was enacted," said Neas, "exceeded our greatest expectations." Besides getting Congress to restore the results test and bilingual provisions for more than ten years, the bail-out section was extended for 25 years. The leadership coalition dealt Senators Jesse Helms, John East, their Radical Right and the Administration a terrible blow by defeating their efforts to curb the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts over Constitutional issues. David Brink, former President of the American Bar Association called this attempt, "the gravest threat to our Constitutional scheme of government since the Civil War." This defeat had bipartisan Senate leaders—Packwood, Weicker, Baucus, Bumpers and Moynihan.

Right to repeal or weaken the legislative enactments of the past." He warned the audience against relying on the press about the Radical Right. In 1981, the press spoke of the strength of the Radical Right, and now it gives the impression that it is just about dead.

Mr. Reagan's brazen attempt to prevent the Internal Revenue from denying tax exemption to schools which discriminate on the basis of race served as a galvanizing force for preserving civil rights. Again the Administration's actions started the leadership conference wheels rolling and the President and the Radical Right went down to an embarrassing defeat.

Sar Levitan, George Washington University professor, said, "Staying the course will only result in deprivation of millions of jobless Americans." Levitan acknowledged that additional federal programs would increase the present deficit, but the alternative means higher future deficits, since every one percent rise in unemployment raises the federal deficit by 25 to 30 billion dollars.

Neas emphasized that all of these successes are attributable to direct bipartisan support, well organized broad-based national lobbying campaign and a well established coalition that reached far beyond Washington. Concerning the 1983 agenda said Neas, "We will have to continue our rear guard actions against the attempts of the Radical

Lane Kirkland of labor stated that labor knew from the start that Reaganomics wouldn't work. "It was an economic disaster," he said. "We couldn't afford to wait for damage to be done and politicians to act. We know we were right so we sent a message to the President on election day. Labor leaders were intimidated by politicians, multi-million dollar landlords and corporate managers."

mobile industry 50 percent and steel industry at only 40 percent."

A bi-partisan representation attended the conference breakfast. Some of whom have designs on the White House. Senator Hollings said, "Reagan's disservice makes government the great enemy. Government has always stood for equal justice under law." Senator Bob Dole, who has changed his conservative robe for a moderate cloak said his Finance Committee will begin, immediately, to address health care extension, unemployment and tax credits. Senator Baucus, congratulated the coalition on efforts which stopped Jesse Helms in the 97th Congress, but he advised the group against becoming complacent because Helms is sure to try again in the 98th Congress. Senator Kennedy said, "The Constitution included founding fathers and mothers, human services, equity and fairness in economic policy and civil rights."

Whether I'm murdered intentionally or accidentally, I'm just as dead."

#### Safe Woodstoves

While you can save money heating with a woodstove or fireplace, there are dangers. The Charlotte Fire Department suggests that you follow these guidelines to insure your safety.

—Since more than 1/4" thickness of creosote in a flue can lead to chimney fire, maintain a slight draft of air in a woodstove to prevent a rapid creosote build-up. Have flues cleaned and checked on an annual basis.

—Keep all combustible materials a safe distance from the fire. Use a screen to prevent sparks from jumping out of the first when the firebox doors are open.

—Do not wear loose fitting clothes while starting fires. If clothing does ignite, remember to DROP and ROLL to extinguish the flames.

Benjamin Hooks, Chairman of the conference was asked if he considered President Reagan a racist. Hooks said, "I don't think the President is a racist, but he just lives in a dream world. There maybe some around him who are ra-

