

editorials

& comments

Destiny And The '83 March

As even the most uninformed citizen must know, on August 28, 1963, a quarter of a million Americans, mostly black, had "marched" to stand in the shadow of the Lincoln Memorial in 98-degree heat to physically express their support of the civil rights movement.

The spiritual leader of the March On Washington was the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. As the final and most eagerly awaited speaker, King electrified the crowd with his "I Have A Dream" speech. In the midst of that emotional address King said, "Those who hope that the Negro needed (to march to Washington) to blow of steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual..."

The focus of the 1963 march to end "business as usual" was a straight singleness of purpose aimed at ending the second class citizenship of black Americans through hastening civil rights legislation and the removal of official signs and symbols of segregation and discrimination.

Fortunately, the March had a significant impact as change did occur as the remaining decade of the 1960s was characterized by the passage of civil rights legislation, civil rights and voting rights laws.

Income Disparity

With these laws as the foundation the 20 years between the 1963 and 1983 Marches on Washington can be summed up primarily as years when black Americans gained significant freedom to go and do as they please as do most Americans.

However, much of this "freedom" continues to be limited or denied by the absence of equality, that is, opportunity in the marketplace where jobs provide the income to give true meaning to much of what we call freedom. For example, integrated schools are now providing equal educational opportunities for black youth; however, unequal job opportunities have eroded the motivation and initiative of too many black youth. These factors have contributed to a shocking 56.8 percent unemployment rate among black youth.

Furthermore, while Affirmative Action Programs have resulted in a 20 percent growth rate for minority employment among 20 to 30,000 companies doing business with the federal

government between 1974-80, black families' incomes still averaged on 56 percent of that of whites in 1981, a drop from 60 percent in 1971. Ironically, this economic disparity is destined to get worse because the Reagan Administration plans to issue new rules to weaken the Affirmative Action Program. Thus even those business not under such programs which have had a minority employment increase of only 12 percent in the same six year period will be even less inclined to hire minorities in years to come.

Budget Cuts

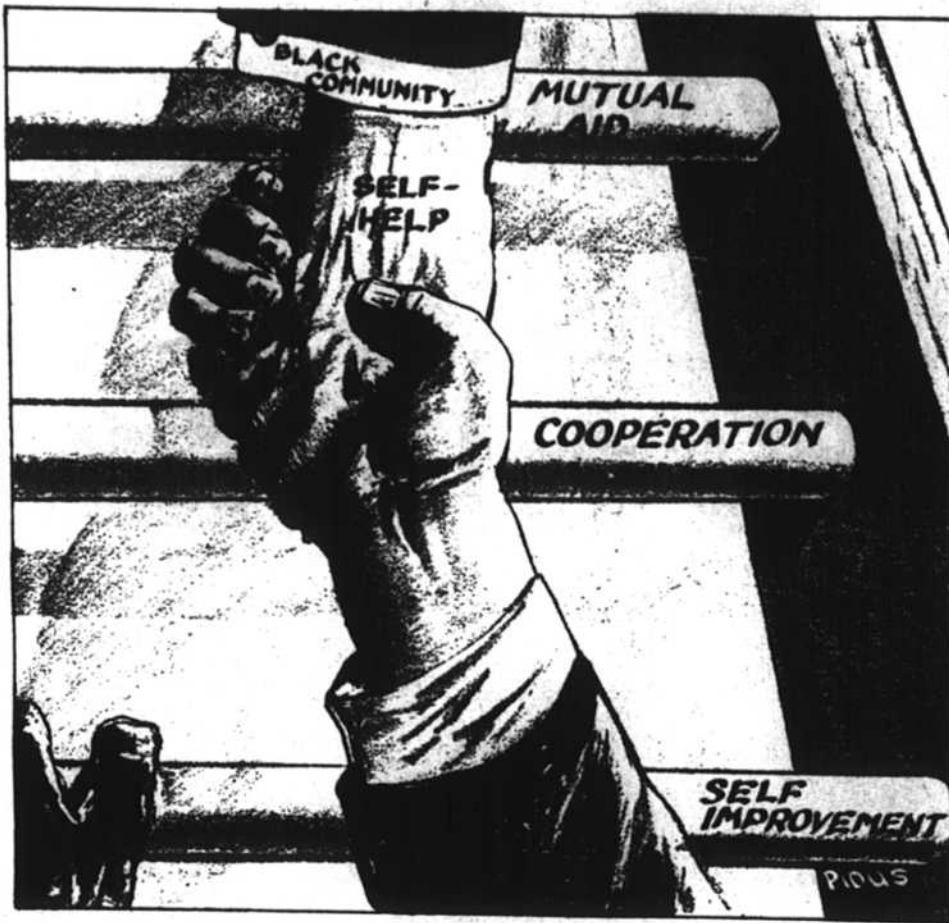
In summary, while black married couples made significant financial gains in the 1970s, economic conditions brought more poverty and unemployment to blacks overall, the Census Bureau reports. The Bureau notes that blacks living in poverty increased from eight to nine million in the decade of the 1970s and black joblessness remained twice that of whites.

Here, too, conditions will get worse before they get better as recent studies show that budget cuts by the Reagan Administration over the past two years have been largely absorbed by low income families. For example, 40 percent of the cutbacks have affected households with annual incomes of less than \$10,000. These cuts include retirement and disability payments, health care, education and social service programs and unemployment benefits.

Thus, while the 20 years since the 1963 March On Washington has resulted in substantial political freedom, economic inequality is still very much a part of the character of America. It should therefore be easy to understand why "jobs" was one of the themes of the 1983 March.

Yet, blacks' failure to fully exercise the freedoms they have gained are partly the reason for economic inequality. By this we mean that unequal economic opportunities can in part be changed by registering to vote and the voting out of office those who would oppose affirmative action, and economic policies that would increase job opportunities for all Americans at all educational skill levels.

Therefore, the destiny and successful impact of the 1983 March On Washington is in your hands through your voting. Register and vote.



As I See It

Run, Jesse Jackson Run!

By Gerald Johnson
Special To The Post

So, the Rev. Jesse Jackson plans to run for the presidency of these United States, you say! His plans are causing concern among the country's black political leaders, you say! His running is going to cause disunity in the Democratic Party and cause Reagan to be re-elected, you think. Well, lift up your head, my boy, and never give up, never give up the ship. Sounds like a song, doesn't it?

Little has been said about the positive aspects of Jesse's running for the presidency. Most accounts of this historic and unprecedented occasion have been negative. But, since I am an optimist (smile), I am going to tell you why Jesse should run.

First of all, this is the only country where any citizen can aspire to be numero uno hunch, at least that is what we've been told. But any kid who is born black or born female would find this statement difficult to believe. The difficulty in the belief is not because we have never had a black or a female president, but from never having a serious candidate to vie for the position. I think Jesse's candidacy, if it materializes, would be a positive step in paving the way for women and minorities to seek national political positions.

It is true that the time is not right for a black person or a woman to win the presidency. But the time is ideal for blacks and women to pursue the position. The pursuit of the presidency and being president are completely different. One

is a means to an end, the other is the end itself. I take exception to those who contend that since you can't win, you shouldn't run. You can't undermine the statement "Blacks are ready to become directly active in national politics" that will be made by Jesse's candidacy.

Secondly, the success of the black registration drive underway in the South is a consequence of Jesse's running for national office. This effort alone is enough to justify the candidacy. How can the negative aspect of disunity of the Democratic Party (which was not unified in 1980 before Jesse-by the way) outweigh the long range affect of registering millions of black voters.

Finally, and most importantly, I think if Jesse can get a large following and make a good showing in the primary, he will have enough political clout to have an influence in politics. This clout is effective



Gerald Johnson

Blacks Shouldn't Run For President?

Dear Editor:
I am black, but I do not think that a black person should run for president.

I am not racial against my own color, but, if there is a black President, what will he do?
Now we all know how money-hungry black people are. Once a law has to be passed, and some money flashes in his face, what do you think he'll do?

We all know how it is being black and poor. What do you think a black president will do for his people? He will have to realize there are more than just black people in the United States.

What America needs is a poor white president.

Charles L. McNeil

From Capitol Hill

Blacks Not Included In Rights Policy

Alfreda L. Madison
Special To The Post
President Reagan is asking the State Department and the Pentagon to report on his foreign policy successes.

Larry Speakes, White House deputy press secretary said the greatest successes were in Southern Africa, El Salvador and Soviet arms control. In all three areas, White House success must be measured by increasing deaths and destruction in El Salvador supported by, not only the 55 men we have training El Salvadoran soldiers, about whom the President spoke in his press conference, but the El Salvadorans that we are training in this country and the training camps we are setting up in Honduras to train soldiers, increased arms build-up with a goal of being able to kill more people than the Soviets and our support of apartheid in Southern Africa. This is a record of which no person who is concerned about human rights, can be anything but ashamed.

In communicating these so-called successes, the public must be on the alert for substance, rather than idel rhetoric and part truths, from the "great communicator."

South Africa is certainly the world's most repressive regime, based on skin color alone, and the Rea-



Alfreda L. Madison

gan Administration's policy is one of "constructive engagement." That is apparently, he will continue to support South Africa, economically, and sell them supplies that can be of great use by the South African military and its police force, until the four million white South Africans become good, and decide to give the 20 million blacks justice and equality. There is no such move in that direction, at present.

Recently, when three South African students were executed for protesting, there was no outcry by this Administration, neither is anything said about the many political prisoners being detained without a trial, and some are even killed in prison. The Administration is quiet about the South African raids in Mozambique, Angola and neighboring countries.

At a hearing of the Joint Committee of the House

Subcommittee on Africa and the International Development Institutions and Finance, consideration was given to our human rights policies at the multilateral development banks. Emphasis was on this Administration's failure to exercise the policy that has made this country great, "reverence for life and a commitment to fairness." It is morally wrong to rage over human rights abuses in some countries and support them in others.

Special attention was given to the Reagan Administration's opposition to \$3.8 million loan requested by the People's Republic of Angola. Out of a total of 80 loans in 1983, of the multilateral development bank, this was the only one the United States opposed.

There is no consistency in the Administration's foreign policy, other than selectivity of what we describe as leftist governments, as sole recipients of its criticism and opposition on human rights. U.S. world credibility depends upon a consistent human rights policy. Tortured victims, illegally detained prisoners and families of executed detainees cannot accept nor understand our policy that makes exception in some cases.

Mr. Reagan is conducting a South African policy of quiet diplomacy to

change apartheid. However, this policy has increased diplomatic relations with the South African government, but refuse diplomatic recognition of Luanda and Angola on human rights grounds. It is ridiculous for the Administration to cite Angola for human rights violations, while stating that we have no diplomatic corp to monitor on the spot human rights violations. Mr. Reagan excuses South Africa's continued control of Namibia because of Cuban presence in Angola.

Treasury Secretary, based upon human rights report it gets from the State Department, instructs the Administration on how to vote on multilateral development bank loans.

In the case of Angola Treasury decided that we requested \$3.8 million loan was for a study to construct a road for opening up agriculture areas. Should the construction proceed it would increase stockraising and establish new farms.

Another Angola loan was opposed by the U.S. because the request for financing a school for training in accounting, commerce, finance, business management, public administration, and agriculture.



Sabrina

Spending On Education

For the United States public schools, the 1950s and 1960s were the good old days. The days were marked by large budgets, new buildings and ever emerging programs for everyone. As sad as it may be those days are long gone. The quality of education has leveled off and in many cases dropped off. Products of this leveling off have been cuts in teachers' salaries, school supplies and maintenance.

Although the American public education system has been competitive with nations abroad, it still falls short in one particular area - teachers' pay. The data comes as a result of surveys and interviews done by the National Center of Education Statistics, the Department of Education, the National Education Associations and the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Total spending on kindergarten through grade 12 is lower today than in 1977 (taking inflation into consideration). The main victim or the decline has been teachers' salaries which have plummeted for 10 years.

One important fact the national average of spending on each public school student has begun to climb again after stagnating and falling in the late 1970s. By that gauge the U.S. remained ahead of other developed nations, but trailed Japan, West Germany, England and many other countries in teachers' salaries. Officials realize that to hire the kind of teachers who demand more homework, harder homework and take the time to grade it, they are going to have to pay enough money to attract that kind of person into the profession.

Recent NEA figures show that total spending for public schools reached \$108.3 billion this year. However, when converted to 1967 dollar figures, dropped to \$36.7 billion-which is higher by 1967 standards than the spending of last year, but below the \$37.6 billion figure of 1977.

One reason for the decline is due to the aging of the post World War II generation. Public school enrollment climaxed at 46 million in 1971 and dropped to 39.5 million in 1982, according to the NEA and National Center for Education Statistics.

In April, 1983, President Reagan's Commission on Education discovered that spending on teachers' materials and textbooks has declined 50 percent over the past 17 years. It was also found that wages were too low to attract and keep a substantial amount of talented people in the profession.

Teachers' average salaries reached their high in 1973. Today's average exceeds \$20,000, which is \$6,984 by 1967 dollars and \$7,852 by 1973 standards.

Spending per pupil was \$937 in 1977, according to the NEA. Then as schools fought with rising costs, the figure hovered around the 1977 figure and dropped in 1979. Today's estimated figure is approximately \$1,000. The money for pupils and students usually comes from the states, less than one tenth from the federal government and the rest from local taxpayers.

In contrast, 1979 figures from the National Center for Education reported that the U.S. spent \$2,275 per pupil, West Germany \$2,158, Japan, \$1,396, France \$1,353, and \$1,040 for the United Kingdom for the fiscal year 1978-79.

At the same time the U.S. seemed tight-fisted in paying its teachers. According to a survey on 11 countries done by the National Center on Education statistics, it found that American teachers were paid less than their foreign counterparts in 1980 - entry level of \$964 a month and top salary of \$1,862 a month.

Japan starts its teachers at a lower rate of \$685 a month but pays its senior teachers \$2,234 a month, second only to Switzerland who pays its senior teachers \$3,562 a month. West Germany starts teachers at \$1,390 and closes at \$2,050. These figures fail to take the cost of living differences and the demands put upon the teachers. When these salaries were compared with the gross national product (the value of all goods and services exchanged) only Japanese, West German senior teachers and the French measure worse than Americans.

A UNESCO study found that in 1979 the U.S. devoted more of its GNP to education than Japan, West Germany, Great Britain and France. Sweden, the Netherlands and Canada were the only nations to devote more.

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