

editorials & comments

Blacks Need An Agenda

Rewritten from
The Carolina Times

One way to end the traditional "vote-buying" concept is for blacks to develop a clear, achievable and progressive agenda, and evaluate politicians according to each politician's ability to move the agenda forward.

Consider that concept in the light of the fall elections for the Charlotte City Council, and the Charlotte City School Board of Education.

First of all, blacks here should end the era of nebulous and traditional political objectives. It is no longer good enough just to say blacks want elected officials who will be "progressive," or who will "do right by the black community," or some such generalization.

No, we must begin to state political objectives in clear, easy to understand and achievable specifics.

For example, in the city council race, here are some questions that should be put before candidates for the council and the mayor's office.

How will you as an elected official stop the tide of neighborhood deterioration that has plagued Charlotte for more than 20 years now? How will you help Charlotte's citizens, particularly black people, protect the viability of their neighborhoods and the livability of their communities from the wholesale invasion of commercial and industrial concerns?

How will you as an elected official approach the issue of controlled and orderly growth. We understand that Charlotte must grow, but what will you do to make sure that the benefits of growth, as well as the prices of growth, are evenly distributed across the city?

Efficient System

It has been proved that dependency on the private car exacts a high price on the urban environment, but how will you work to give Charlotte an efficient and effective public transportation system that serves well the needs of all of the city's citizens?

On the issue of long range planning, what steps will you take to make sure that all citizens have complete and far-reaching input into the planning at the conceptual stage, and that trade offs and compromises are based upon clearly defined

benefits, rather than political shenanigans?

These are but a few of the questions, but these are the questions that can form the basis of an agenda for Durham's black voters -- really for all its citizens. These are issues that cut across the wide divide that has been the racial battle line in this town for years. These are issues that affect people. These are issues that determine the quality of your life, no matter the color of your skin, or your social views.

Similar questions can be asked of candidates for the city board of education. Consider.

Teamwork Needed

Specifically what will you do as a member of the board of education to build the teamwork that is needed between parents, educators and the business community to insure quality education for Charlotte's students?

If we realistically must curtail some of the things the schools are now doing in order to improve the quality of education, what do you believe the schools should drop?

How can we make sure that teachers are paid more, but by the same token, what do you propose we do to insure that we are getting quality education from teachers?

Physically, the city schools need some serious upgrading. What do you believe should be done, and what should the priorities be?

Again, the issue here is to establish a political agenda, an agenda that transcends the traditional views of oppression and racism, an agenda that speaks to the basic issues that are critical to educational success, irrespective of race.

We believe that quite honestly black people do themselves a serious disservice politically.

On the one hand, black candidates must be almost "super-qualified" to be elected, or they will not get votes from whites, and in some instances they still don't get white votes.

On the other hand, we allow white candidates, both of them characterized as "evils" to come to us so we can choose the "lesser of two evils."

In effect, we send highly qualified blacks into office to contend with less qualified whites, and then chastise black officials because they don't perform miracles.

That's politics without an agenda.

BLACK'S DESTINY IN OWN HANDS



Letters To The Editor:



Lonely Widows Must Learn To Survive

To The Editor:

They can hardly get the rent together, food, medical cost, etc. ...

A lonely and perhaps ill old lady sits in her dingy little apartment or boarding room, somewhere in a rural desolate neighborhood, trying desperately to make do on her meager monthly check.

While all across the country big business moguls and celebrities earn untold millions and giant corporations talk billions. All the while these lonely, forgotten widows must learn to survive. Many are veterans' wives whose husbands are dead. Their meager veterans' checks are sometimes taken from them due to receiving too much Social Security.

What a sad joke that is. The President, at the same time, gives away billions in hard-earned tax dollars to radical countries, trying to buy their untrusting friendship. Meanwhile, the widow tries to open and feast on a cheap can of condensed soup. Her husband has fought bravely for his country and sometimes is highly decorated.

Children fell to drugs and Vietnam. Now alone, she grows worse with each forgotten day. Because some cigar-chewing slob from the Veterans Bureau coldly said she wasn't entitled to any benefits. She must resort to the last measure

of surviving, selling off her life insurance policies to live decently for a while longer. She has no one to turn to. The world is hurried and cold with blindness; a country forgot what her husband and children perhaps died for since World War II, Korea, Vietnam.

A nation that is too selfish and down-right greedy to help one of its own first. Alone, she is now nearly broke and exhausted from the will to live. She becomes gravely ill. Rushed to the hospital, she receives little attention or proper care in the poor-poverty emergency section.

She dies on a cold table, while others coldly walk by without feelings or remorse. She is sadly buried within the potters

field of the poor and unknown. She is sadly gone and others will soon follow in the same tragic footsteps. This government and leaders must awaken now and fulfill the needs of its elderly widows and widowed wives of honored veterans who made this country possible for those giant business moguls and sports stars and celebrities to flourish and live well beyond their dreams, wealthy politicians must help and let these poor widows keep all that is coming to them, which still amounts to hardly anything. The Veterans Bureau better awaken to the harsh shame and reality they caused so many.

James E. Kelly

Would Vote For Gant

Dear Editor:

My name is Robert Corbett and I am a seventh grade student at Cochrane Junior High. During the summer I participated in a Summer Enrichment Program at Mount Olive Presbyterian Church, and as part of an awareness activity we tried to contact the candidates running for mayor. We made several phone calls to Mr. Ed Peacock but we were unable to talk with him. On our first call to Mr. Gant,

his secretary was very nice and scheduled a day for me to interview him.

I was very nervous at first but I found Mr. Gant very easy to talk with and he answered my questions very honestly. I feel that if Mr. Gant were able to take time away from his busy schedule and talk with me, a kid, I also feel that he would be able to talk with you. I'm not old enough to vote, but if I were, I would vote for Harvey Gant.

Robert Corbett



Jackson For President?

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States." At noon on January 20, 1985 a man will repeat these words in front of the nation and the world. This man may be an astronaut, cowboy or civil rights activist, but then only time will tell. One possible candidate for the 1984 Presidential Elections has gained an enormous amount of attention - he is Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, a black man.

Jesse Jackson is not the first black to run for this office, but he has gained more of the public's attention. Shirley Chisholm ran in 1972 and is the only black to receive a close amount of the public's attention: Mrs. Chisholm gained her notoriety because she is a black female. The nation focused on her since she represented political change - women and blacks holding more political offices.

And like Mrs. Chisholm, Rev. Jackson is an opportunist: an opportunist in a different way. He is an all-engulfing flame that heats up every man's passions with no regard for the after effects. Rev. Jackson has the ability to get people moving - all in different directions! For example, some months back Jackson was advocating a boycott of Coca-Cola, but, did he stop to think if every black person on the continental United States stopped buying Coca-Cola products that a substantial amount of black folks would lose their jobs due to decreased profits? Has he considered the fact that boycotts do not solve all problems. What if this country boycotted the president -- odds have it that he would not change for the better.

This is not to say that Jesse Jackson is not qualified to be president of this great nation; but it is saying should not black forces be stronger before electing a black as president? Currently the black community is suffering from severe disenfranchisement. Priorities of issues have not been set, black voter registration and turn out is not 70 plus percent and only 1.5 percent of Congress is composed of black men and women. For Jackson to successfully run and win, there must be strong backing from the black community.

For anyone to successfully undertake the office of president, he or she must possess a great amount of support and political clout. This is done by having key people in key positions. If Jesse Jackson won the presidential seat in 1984 he would merely be a figurehead - a political puppet of Congress because his influence would not be supported.

"Oh, what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive," may well be what Jackson is blindly doing. He believes that a black president will solve black folks' problems. Buffalo chips! How can a president evoke change in the nation in one swift motion if the people do not change. Yes, Jackson could contrive budgets that pump more spending into the Department of Health, Education and Welfare; he could contrive schemes to increase employment; he could even proclaim ghettos as posh places to dwell. But what will happen to black folks? Everybody will depend on Jackson to do everything. Well, people, no one person can do everything and solve all problems.

Next the problem arises... Who do we vote for? Jackson's running poses the threat of splitting the Democratic ticket into many pieces. This could lead to someone like Mr. "Changed" George Wallace winning the Democratic ticket and Ronald Reagan winning the Republican ticket: Exchanging the rock for a hard place? Unfortunately blacks do not at the present have the strength to ensure Jackson the Democratic, Independent or Republican ticket and it is this lack of clout that may be Jackson's or any black considering running for the seat should wait until 1988.

By waiting blacks are not being complacent or unconcerned, but will be building the forces that push for issues that are most important to the community and nation in the meanwhile. For 1984, choosing the best candidate is most important and his color should have no bearing on the decision. During the four years between elections, blacks should become more demanding and push issues, shake up this country in such a way that it is realized that blacks are the nitty-gritty of civilized society and not something one discusses over champagne in a bubble bath.

From Capitol Hill

Restructuring Our Foreign Policy

Alfreda L. Madison Special To The Post
The Soviets' shooting down of the Korean plane with a loss of 289 lives can only be denounced as an outrageous tragedy. While President Reagan has talked tough about the incident, he needs to be commended for not bowing to pressure recommendations which could only lead to human annihilation.

Mr. Reagan proposed continuous suspension of Aeroflot flights to the United States, refusal to sell tickets in this country for Aeroflot, airlines refuse to sell tickets for connecting Aeroflot lines in foreign countries, and U.S. airlines must refuse to accept tickets sold by Aeroflot by other countries.

As tragic as the situation might be this does not require irrational response by this country derived from a fit of anger and frustration. Listening to responses of people on the street, to media questions, and to many politicians who seem to feel that embracing the Soviet hysteria is the patriotic thing to do, in order to maintain their positions. These can only serve to shift our political sentiment away from arms control, reduction, to the cold war that has been characterized by the Reagan approach to the Soviet Union.



Alfreda L. Madison Congress, upon reconvening after a five-week vacation, immediately voted a \$187.5 billion for military build-up. This bill authorizes production of nerve gas for the first time since 1969, the MX missile and B1 bomber. While Presidential candidates Glenn, Hart and Cranston were not present for this huge military budget, the only senators voting against it were: Hollings, Metzenbaum, Kennedy, Leahy, Levin, Pell, Proxmire and Tsongas. This can only be considered as senseless, since both the United States and Russia already have enough military weapons to destroy the world many times over. The more we increase our kill-power, the more the Soviets will increase theirs, causing each country to become more severely frightened and suspicious of the other. This could quite likely cause either of the

countries acting out its frustrations one day to pull the plug that will set off complete world destruction.

One constantly hears around Congress and the White House that the United States and Russia are the super powers. That idea dominates our entire foreign policy. Each super power is trying to be superior to the other, with superiority concentrated on a military build-up and apparent world domination.

Small Third World countries, that have been victims of ruthless dictators and colonialism and are struggling for more survival are caught between a cross-fire of the United States on one side and the Soviets on the other. Irrespective of the side chosen by one super power and the other chooses the opposite side. Both sides are guilty of killing innocent people in these countries who are helpless, against the huge weapons of those super power. In reality the United States and Russia are engaged in a war by attacking each other in helpless countries.

No one can condone destroying Korean passenger flight 007. Yet, there are no rules in the game of war. The climate that is set by both super powers is re-

sponsible for the loss of innocent lives. Representative George Crockett says, "If congressional investigations of our Central Intelligence Agency have taught us anything, it is that the CIA's covert operations do not rule out the use of civilian aircraft for reconnaissance purposes, including the aircraft of a surrogate nation like South Korea."

There are unanswered questions about the Korean flight. The Russians know that we've been flying spy planes near their strategic weapons sights, and realizing that surrogate aircraft are not ruled out, perhaps they became nervous and decided to take action.

A lesson from flight 007 should cause the Administration and Congress to take a hard look at the television pictures of slaughtered and maimed people in Lebanon, Central American countries and African countries, slaughtered by South Africa with military support. Although we are on the opposite side of Russia, we're still involved in killing human beings.

Our respect for human rights and quest for peace can only be obtained by a complete overhaul of our foreign policy.

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