

editorials

& comments

Color Of Politics?

While American historians may never adequately document the issue, the nearly 350 years of slavery, segregation and discrimination imposed on our nation's black citizens have left deep psychological and emotional scars on both black and white people. The most visible evidence of these scars can be seen in the income and rate of unemployment gaps between blacks and whites, and in the forces that appear to be shaping and influencing contemporary politics.

It is a clear and well documented fact that for every dollar the typical American white family earns, a black family earns only 59 cents, down from 61 cents in 1970. Furthermore, unemployment among blacks consistently is twice that of whites. In the area of politics, there is a disturbingly high percentage of white voters in the nation who will not vote for a black candidate for public office no matter how well qualified he or she might be. This in turn has led many, too many, black voters to be overcome with a feeling of a moral obligation to support a black political candidate purely for reasons of race or skin color. These unfortunate political realities are the basis for the alleged political pressures being placed on Charlotte mayor Harvey Gantt.

Reverse Racism

We applaud and support Mayor Gantt in his objective judgement to stand by his convictions to attend the Democratic National Convention as an uncommitted delegate for the Presidency. The group of N.C. black political leaders who have endorsed Jesse Jackson have every right to do so. However, for them to be critical of Mr. Gantt for not doing likewise, or as has been reported, to suggest that Gantt would be put on a political "hit list" and that black support for Eddie Knox, Gantt's choice for Governor, would be withheld is the worse form of blunt reverse political racism.

It is difficult enough to know that in spite of Mr. Gantt's unequivocal qualifications for the Office of Mayor, 60 percent of the white people who voted did not support him, and now for blacks to suggest possible non-support in the future because Gantt does not submit to their wishes is ludicrous.

What all this suggests is a not

too new and a damaging force in American politics that is too often encouraged by the white news media. This damaging force is in the efforts of too many white and black political activists to build black political office candidates purely on a so-called black issues basis and to make the candidates' race, or skin color, the real issue. White segregationists used the race issue in the past as a political weapon not only to hold blacks back but also to divert poor and often ignorant whites from demanding better conditions for themselves.

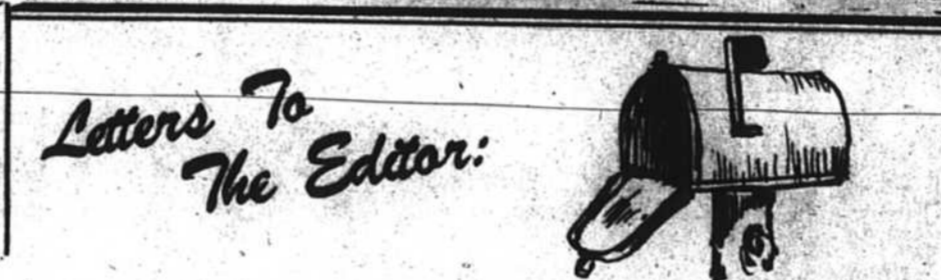
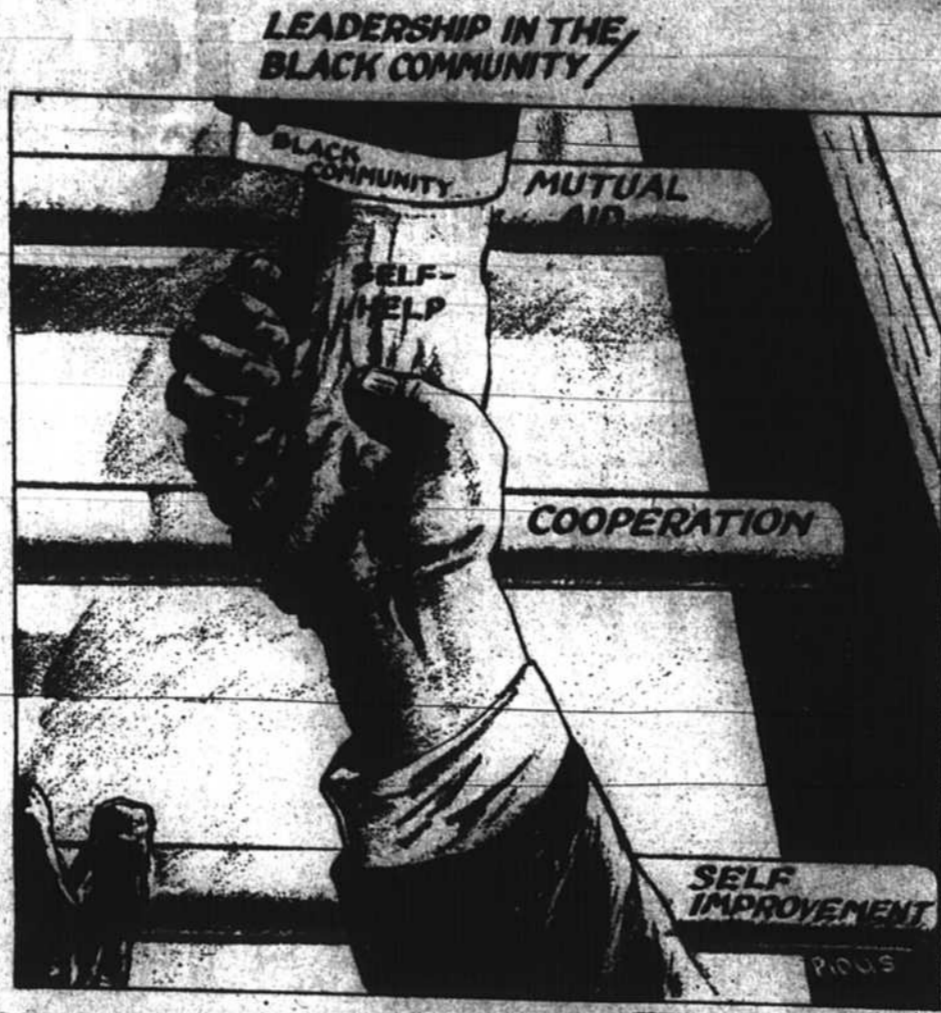
In these hopefully enlightened times, we don't need to deny nor promote support of political candidates based on their race or sex or similar characteristics because such superficial concerns leave too little time, if any at all, to address the real issues confronting all citizens ranging from nuclear war, adequate health care, unemployment, educational values, traffic congestion, urban decay, and crime.

Black Leadership

One result of promoting or exposing a candidate along racial lines and the consequences of such action is clearly seen in Jesse Jackson's candidacy. First, while the nation's black leaders were attempting to address the advantage and/or disadvantages of a black Presidential candidate, Jesse Jackson decided that he would be that candidate (without an official primary and certainly no run-off primary). One result of his actions has been little criticism from blacks for the moral reasons noted, and little criticism from whites for fear of being called racists.

Now Jackson, with apparently little or no input from the nation's pre-Jackson candidacy black leadership, is proposing to attack the run-off primary system. Again, there is a largely silent voice from among the nation's black leadership while the issue could lead to a bolt from the Democratic Party by whites and further assure the reelection of Ronald Reagan.

There is no doubt the need to change the run-off primary system but there still needs to be some form of a national black strategy on issues of a magnitude that may affect the political and economic welfare of blacks for years to come.



Tison's Knowledgeable On Issues

April 18, 1984
The Charlotte Post
P. O. Box 30144
Charlotte, N.C. 28230

Dear Mr. Johnson:

How difficult is it to write an objective letter to the editor when your husband is running for Congress. I just want to be sure you know the qualities which so many people feel make Ben the obvious choice for the 9th District Congressional seat, and also to point out some differences between Ben and his County Commissioner opponent, which I, as a voter and avid observer of this race, feel need stating.

The depth of Ben's knowledge on political issues and what makes North Carolina tick is truly impressive. His leadership abilities have been proven over and over again in his legislative experience. Ben's advice is sought after in the General Assembly, and many a legislator and association leader have told me how impressed they are by his ability to cut to the core of a problem. This may be one of the reasons he was named by journalists and legislators as this session's most effective freshman senator and was ranked in the top ten of the House.

Ben is not only intelligent, but he has, and

uses, his gift of common sense. He is totally honest, has great integrity, and a very great capacity for work. Susan Green's repeated statement that she is the "hardest working candidate" is absurd. I'm sure that Harriet Martin and I would be happy to debate her on that. Susan arrives late and leaves early for many of the candidates' forums. Obviously her busy schedule leaves her no time to stay and listen to the people she proposes to represent.

Ben is as forthright in his campaigning as he is in his personal life. He does not resort to emotional plays such as Susan's "It's family time" theme, which she uses in Pineville, Lincoln, or wherever she happens to be, and which I find insulting not only to my

intelligence, but to the voters of the 9th District. Neither does Ben orchestrate events to gain personal media attention. He is directly honest with the voters, and presents his case with facts and figures which no other candidate seems able to produce. Ben is noted in our delegation, and the General Assembly for his ability to work with people, unlike Susan Green, whom fellow County Commissioners describe as difficult to work with. Ben's 12 years in the legislature have been training him for this job which no other candidate has.

What better endorsement of Ben could I give other than to say after 12 years of marriage, I am STILL impressed.

Roma Wornall Tison

GBMPC Endorses Griffin

Letter To Editor
The Charlotte Post
P. O. Box 30144
Charlotte, NC 28230

Dear Sir:

The Session (governing body) of Memorial Presbyterian Church has taken action to endorse Mr. Arthur Griffin for election to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education. Mr. Griffin and his family are

members of our church. We feel that Mr. Griffin has a serious and sincere concern for the educational program of our area.

He has sound ideas, and he is able to speak plainly about those ideas. We invite our fellow citizens to give him an opportunity to serve on this vital board.

Rev. Edward B. Newberry

From Capitol Hill

Black Strength Disturbs Whites?

Alfreda L. Madison
Special To The Post
Whenever blacks step out of the crucible in which whites have placed them or when they act contrary to the white's mythical views of them, many white folks become so frustrated that they look for straws to support their distorted opinions.

All blacks who have failed to be eternally relegated to the outmoded antiquated inequitable path laid out for them have been victims of assaults, innuendoes and trumped-up charges. W.E.B. DuBois, Adam Powell, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, the NAACP are just a few of those who have fallen into that vicious category. So naturally it's Jesse Jackson's time now. Especially is this true, since Jesse is saying something different from any political person on the scene today. He is shocking people's conscience to the unjust treatment of people in this country and awakening in them the audacity of our insane foreign military policy. Jesse is making the overlooked left-outs aware that this land is their land too. He is arousing them to utilize their voting power. Rev. Jackson is spreading a message that peace cannot be attained by killing a majority of the people hoping that the remaining



few will be scared into submission. He offers a plan of dealing justly with all nations, through realizing their rights, economic aid and negotiations. Naturally a policy that makes this kind of sense is greatly accepted, because everyone realizes that America's present nuclear build-up, with its reliance on military solutions, seems leading to world human destruction.

All of this talk about Rev. Jackson's calling Jews Hymies which he has explained to the Jewish people, together with Rev. Farrakhan's statement are in reality a "stop Jesse tactic."

after it was reported that black politicians, including Jackson, had a problem with getting financial support from Jews. Did Coleman consider, after learning that blacks were not getting money from Jews, to release the story because he considered it to be an obstacle to Jewish financial support? So he made the story known just before the New England primary. Was the timing to report late news, to affect Jackson's financial support or to influence voters?

The Reagan Administration and media cry for Rev. Jackson to disassociate himself from Rev. Farrakhan has been blown all out of proportion. Rev. Farrakhan says that his statement was distorted. He made the statement in Chicago in February. Why did it surface just before the New York primary? This was 30 days later. Was The Post providing protection for Coleman during those days? All of the allegations seem to be rhetorical so no crime has been committed. While no one can endorse violence, it will be wise for the media to find out the good that Rev. Farrakhan has done. Just one example would be to visit the Temple of Islam at 116th Street and Lenox Avenue in New York. The Muslims who have not taken part in the political affairs, paved the street

themselves around the Temple, which houses a school, temple, market and one of the cleanest and best looking restaurants in the city. Muslims have their own factories, farms,

wholesale businesses. They have taken black youths off the street, some were addicts, some who have been jailed, schooled them, given them jobs and turned them into profitable citizens. This is the first time the Muslims have been known to take part in the voting process. Should the entire nation stop them from exercising their civic duty because of one mistake? Will Rev. Jackson or anyone else turn away 15,000 or more voters?

Jackson is right in denouncing Rev. Farrakhan's statement of violence. He is also right in negotiating peace between Coleman and Farrakhan, instead of making it a white media event.

Jesse Jackson said it all when he stated that he did not agree with Rev. Farrakhan's statements; that he had tried to get the matter settled between Coleman and Farrakhan without making it a media event. Morally, he said God forgives us when we sin. He separates the sin from the sinner, and that He continues to love us and stays with us.



Sabrina's column, "Scope" will return in this position next week.

Blacks Issue Call For Renewed Black-Jewish Ties

Two prominent black leaders have called for a reaffirmation of the coalition between blacks and Jews. In separate appearances, author, Roger Wilkins and H. Carl McCall, Commissioner of the New York State Division of Human Rights, stressed the communities' shared goals of equality and social justice and called for a strengthening of the coalition between the two groups.

"We blacks and we Jews (have) to find the path back together again," Mr. Wilkins said in a keynote address at the New York State Division of Human Rights conference on the "State of Human Rights In New York State" in Albany in March.

"In this era of candidates with blow-dried hair who tell you that we need new ideas, the black-Jewish coalition may sound like a very old idea, but it was a damn good idea because it was the strongest engine for social justice this country has ever known," Mr. Wilkins declared.

He pointed that while blacks and Jews may have their problems, they are united by ties that are far more important than those which divide them. "By God," he said, "we ought to find ways to put us back together in the interest of those things that we all care about so much."

Echoing this theme, Commissioner McCall, in a speech before the B'nai B'rith Gideon Lodge in Albany, said that "There is ample evidence to indicate that the common friendship between blacks and Jews is as strong today as when blacks and Jews joined hearts and hands to form the NAACP and marched, sang, bled and died together during the long, hard days of the civil rights movement. Frequently, those who proclaim there is an increase in tensions between the two communities are those who would enthusiastically endorse a rupture in a black-Jewish coalition."

Commissioner McCall said that evidence shows that blacks feel more of an affinity with Jews than with any other white religious or ethnic group. Similarly, he said, in recent electoral races involving black candidates, Jews gave the black candidate more support than any other white ethnic group. In Chicago, for instance, the Jewish vote for Harold Washington was twice the overall white vote, even though Washington's opponent was Jewish. McCall also pointed out the reciprocal side of this joint effort, by citing black voter support for Elizabeth Holtzman when she ran successfully for Brooklyn district attorney and for the first Jewish congresswoman from Alabama, who was elected in 1980.

Commissioner McCall said that even if reports of black-Jewish ruptures are "misrepresented and exaggerated," both communities have a responsibility "to be alert to potential points of friction and to maintain a friendship and coalition based on mutual respect."

"Blacks must be on the alert for expressions of anti-semitism within the black community, not only repudiating such expressions but also re-educating and sensitizing those who harbor such thoughts," he said. "By the same token, members of the Jewish community should not automatically equate policy disagreements emanating from the black community with anti-semitism," Commissioner McCall added.

"The common and shared goals of both the black and Jewish communities are equal opportunity, fairness, equity and the eradication of all forms of discrimination in the cause of achieving justice and equality. And friends who have mutual respect for one another and must continue to work in coalition together in pursuit of those goals," he said.

Kroger Pharmacists Join Fight Against Drug Abuse

Kroger Pharmacists are now available for speaking engagements at schools, colleges, PTA and other organizations' meetings in this community.

The Kroger Company announced this week that it will join in the promotion of a national campaign foundation called "Pharmacists Against Drug Abuse Foundation."

This foundation (PADA) is being supported by all state pharmaceutical associations in cooperation with ACTION, the national volunteer agency, McNeil Pharmaceutical and the Johnson and Johnson family of companies, and it is endorsed by Nancy Reagan.

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