

EDITORIALS & COMMENTS

Strange Kind Of Democracy

In April of 1983 the City of Chicago elected Harold Washington as its first black mayor. With his election came the end of "boss-style" rule of the Richard Daley era as characterized by greater public scrutiny of the budget-making process, the appointing of a true "rainbow cabinet" of blacks, whites, Hispanics and women, a new system of checks and balances between the legislative and executive branches of government, and a number of important symbolic gestures that have offered black people a new sense of hope for a better future. Among these was the appointment of the first black police superintendent, an important symbol for those concerned with charges of police brutality against blacks.

In spite of this presumed sense of practicing democracy leading toward renewed progress for the Windy City, Chicago is being desecrated by widening political tensions between Mayor Washington and coalition of City Council members headed by Edward R. Vrdolyak, the leader of Chicago's old-guard Democratic Party political machine.

The rift between Mayor Washington, Vrdolyak supporters was communicated to the whole nation via television at the Democratic National Convention. To the shock and dismay of Windy City residents and the national TV audience, while the convention was trying to promote an image of unity, Washington and Vrdolyak responded to a TV newsmen's question as to whether they could work together with words and acts that said political warfare is the order of the day for Chicago.

The fact is political warfare has been evident since Mr. Washington took office 17 months ago. As might be expected, it is the City of Chicago and its citizens who are being most hurt by the power struggle.

Other Kind Of Hero

In a historic first, American Joan Benoit won an Olympic gold medal for running the all-woman, 26-mile marathon on Sunday. Opening a substantial lead over her nearest competitor before the 3-mile mark and finishing the run in 2 hours, 24 minutes and 52 seconds, the third fastest time ever for a woman and fastest time ever in an all-female marathon.

Memories of 27-year old Benoit's historic run will undoubtedly be shared by the courageous non-medal winning run of 37th place finisher Gabriela Anderson-Schiess, a Swiss-born U.S. resident. While Benoit was still responding to the applause as a gold medal winner, Ms. Andsen-Schiess staggered into the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum slowed to an agonizing walk as observed by the thousands of spectators and millions of TV viewers.

Obviously in agonizing pain and leaning to her left in apparent temporary paralysis, Ms. Andsen-Schiess continued in a wobbling walk all over the track. For every step forward she made three steps sideways weaving in this manner for the final 550 yards.

Crime and corruption appear out of control, Chicago-based corporate headquarters are threatening to relocate, the City bond rate and Wall Street standing have been lowered, black people's hope for a better quality of life are being undermined and white people feel that their position in the city has been threatened.

In all fairness to Mayor Washington, he inherited a declining tax base, a big budget deficit and a patronizing and large bureaucracy. In one attempt to cope with this Washington has reduced the City's payroll by 3,500 workers. On the other hand, the Vrdolyak-led Council bloc has killed off a number of worthy and needed projects proposed by the Mayor. This has driven away potential investors and further hindered Chicago's economy.

Thomas Roeser, president of the City Club of Chicago, put the City's political war and its broadening implications into perspective when he said, "Chicago is a test-tube case, a microcosm of the whole country. It shows the result of the disintegration of political parties, of the struggle of diverse constituencies that don't work through party lines."

Chicago, one of the nation's largest cities, is demonstrating for all to see how a city should not be operated and how democracy may possibly be its own worst enemy when good men fail to work together for the common good. Let's hope that Chicago and other large nearly unmanageable urban centers with similar problems can get it together and survive or we may be seeing a looking glass reflection of the fate of many other cities or the foundation of the nation.

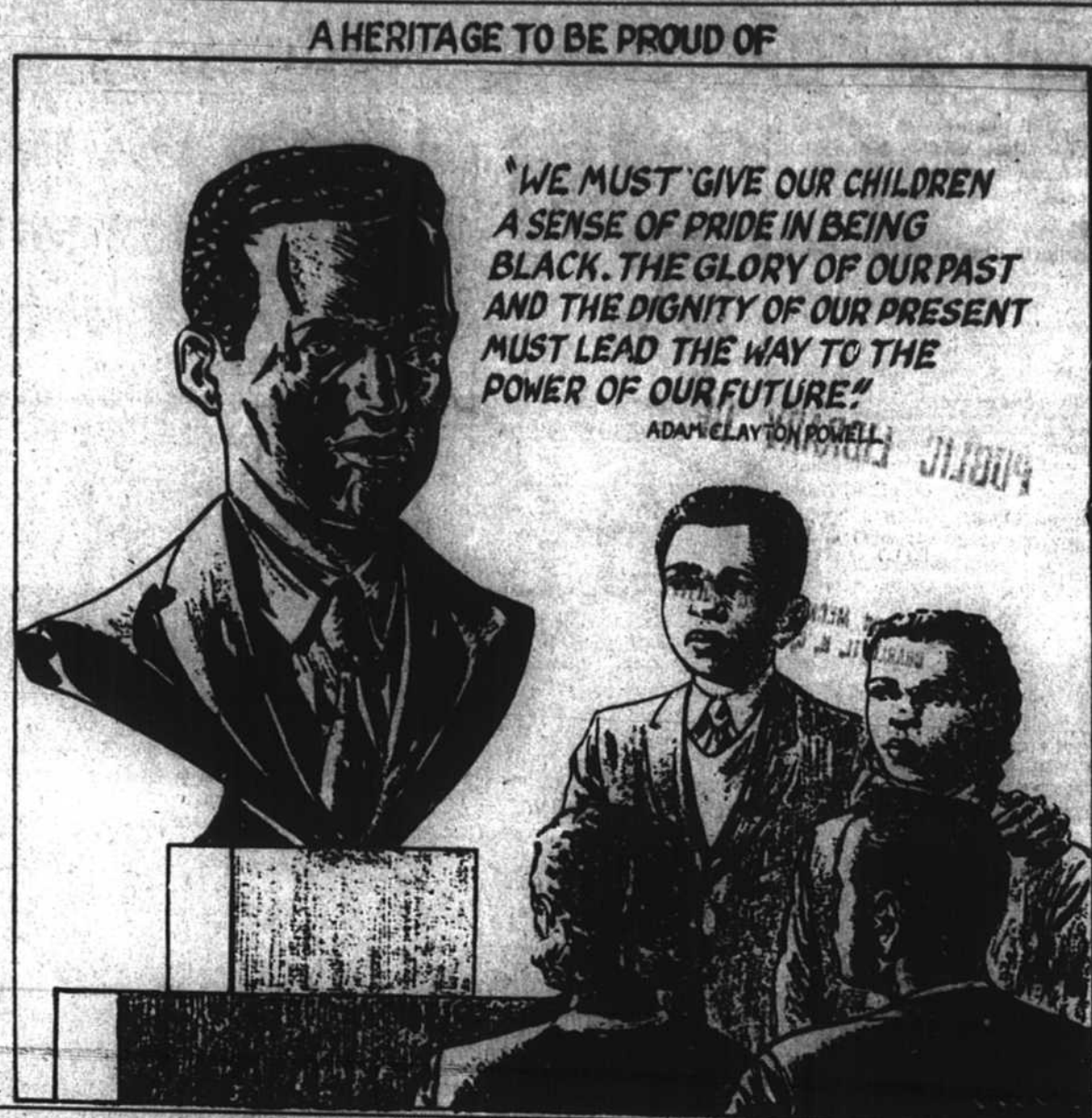
One thing is for sure, when politics is placed ahead of the will and needs of the citizens of a community, failure is assured. This is the plight of Chicago which should be a good lesson for others not to follow.

Not in contention for any kind of medal, but strongly desirous of completing the marathon, medical personnel on the Coliseum infield stared at her and each other uncertain as to what to do since the rules prohibit anyone from touching the runner to avoid a disqualification.

In an apparent effort to well represent her country and encouraged by Joan Benoit's historical record, Andsen-Schiess pushed on to the finish line and then collapsed into the outstretched arms of medical personnel. A victim of dehydration stroke and carried out on a stretcher, Ms. Andsen-Schiess later returned to the athletes' village under the care of a physician.

While some may wonder why Ms. Andsen-Schiess was allowed to suffer the agony and pain she endured in those final 550 yards as she stole the crowd's attention. Why, because it was her right and her desire to finish the race in her own dignified manner no matter what the long term consequences.

We salute the brave and courageous efforts of Gabriela Andsen-Schiess.



WITH SABRINA JOHNSON

Nation's School Bill Increases While Expected Enrollment Drops

This year the nation's school bill will increase some six percent to \$240 billion, while expected enrollment will drop to 56.3 million - 350,000 less than last year. The Department of Education fall report estimates a drop in enrollment and college enrollment and shows an increase in the number of high school students.

The report also predicts that 3.1 million people will be employed as teachers and 300,000 as administrators or other instructional staff members.

Over 59 million Americans will be the primary activity in the school system. Since the nation's population is nearly 237 million, that means that one out of four will participate directly in the educational process.

Last summer the national center for educational statistics predicted the cost for all classes from kindergarten to graduate school during the 1983-84 academic year would cost \$230 billion. Last year government statisticians



Sabrina

have lowered that bill predicted to \$226.5 billion. This year's estimation has increased six percent over last year's to \$240 billion.

How did they come up with this figure? Here is how:

- 1) Public elementary and secondary schools \$134.5 billion
- 2) Private elementary and secondary schools \$10 billion
- 3) Private institutions of higher education \$32.5 billion
- 4) Public institutions of higher education \$63 billion.

Enrollment in K through eighth grade is expected to decrease from 30.6 million to 30.25 million this fall. Elementary school enrollment has been the trend since 1969. However, after 1985 the trend

is expected to reverse, showing annual increases for the rest of the decade. High school enrollment is expected to increase slightly to 13.7 million this fall from 13.6 million last fall. The figure reveals that high school enrollment is changing patterns after years of decreases which began in 1977. College enrollment which reached its all-time high of 12.4 million last fall is projected to decrease mildly to 12.33 million this fall.

The study reveals that state governments will pay 40 percent of the \$240 billion, local governments 24 percent, the federal government eight percent and the remaining 28 percent will come from other sources including tuition, endowments, private gifts and fees.

Also the report forecasts sharp reductions in the operation of private elementary and secondary schools.

Last year, the center estimated that \$16.5 billion would be spent in private schools in 1983-84. However, this year private schools are expected to partake in a smaller slice of \$10 billion. This year the center estimates a 42 percent cut - \$16.3 billion to \$9.5 billion. Private schools will enroll 100,000 less than last year.

The severe cut in private school cost is due not to the enrollment drop, but a decision to stop including low paid or unpaid teachers (NUNS) as part of the overall cost of services.

A final problem facing the public and private educational systems is the fact that qualified teachers are hard to come by. Government studies reveal that 20 percent of the teachers coming into the marketplace of education are not basically qualified to teach. This qualification is not based entirely on the prospectives' grades and accreditation tests, but the teachers' ability to teach.

The study shows they are lacking in discipline over students and themselves. Dedication is no longer the issue, pursuit of excellence is no longer the issue, paychecks rule too many, which is a sad state of affairs.

Enrollment may be dropping and the cost going up but quality is suffering - time to get up and do something about it and make the best of your tax dollars. Johnny cannot read not due to lack of funds, but care of excellence. Think about it.

From Capitol Hill

President Reagan's Fairness Issue Is Unfair!

By Alfreda L. Madison
Special To The Post

The President's attempt in his June 14 and July 24 press conferences to explain his fairness issues ran afoul. The explanation really showed that Mr. Reagan doesn't understand his own policies or else he deliberately distorted the facts.

The Congressional Research Service Study, General Accounting Office Study, Congressional Budget Office Study and the Labor Department Data - all prove that the President gave false information in responding to questions on the effects his budget cuts have on the low income people.

July 24, the President was asked, "Geraldine Ferraro says you're not a good Christian on grounds that your budget cuts have hurt the poor and the disadvantaged. Do you think you're a good Christian and why, and I'd like to follow up?"

Mr. Reagan replied: "not a single fact or figure substantiates the charge that Administration budget policies have harmed the poor, social programs have been expanded, not reduced - more people are being helped and more money is being spent. Administration tax policies have benefited low income workers the most, the wealthy are now bearing a larger share of the federal income tax burden, Black unemployment has been declining at a faster rate than white unemployment, the poorest families are receiving more food stamps, and the drop in inflation has helped low income - working families."

On July 25, 1984, the Congressional Research Service released a combined report of the different



Alfreda L. Madison

government agencies, which showed the impact of the President's budget cuts. The 1981 cuts pushed 560,000 persons below the poverty line. Of this number, 325,000 were children. These figures don't include the impacts of cuts on the 1981 unemployment insurance, food stamps, school lunches, housing or Medicaid. GAO 1984 report shows that 493,000 single-parent families with children were terminated from AFDC by the 1981 budget cuts. These were either in poverty when they were terminated or were pushed into poverty as a result of the cuts.

The Congressional Budget Office reported in April, 1984 that tax changes enacted under the Administration, households with incomes under \$10,000 a year will lose \$23 billion in income and benefits during the 1983-85 period. The reports state households with incomes over \$80,000 will, by contrast, gain \$35 billion in after-tax income during the same period. The average \$10,000 household will lose \$1,100 during the period, while the average household over \$80,000 will gain \$24,000. CBO also showed that programs targeted primarily at low income persons

were cut \$57 billion over the 4-year period from fiscal 1982 through fiscal 1985.

The President's statement that "programs for the needy that are means-tested programs were \$47 billion in cost when we came here, they're now around \$64 billion. He failed to explain that he had not adjusted these figures for inflation which rose from FY 1980 to FY 1984 to around 30 percent. He did not explain that half of the \$17 billion increase went for spiraling medical cost and not for health care. Reagan ignored the fact that unemployment averaged 6.8 percent in FY 1980, but will average 7.6 percent in FY 1984. Each one-tenth of a percentage point unemployment increase adds 100,000 persons to the food stamps program.

The June 14 press conference response to a question concerning the Administration's reversal of civil rights gains, and its underestimation of the intelligence of the grass roots people whom it does not believe know that they are suffering from his policies, the President said, "we are helping more people and paying more money than ever in the history of this country in all of those social programs." CBO states that this statement is just plain incorrect. Spending for low income programs adjusted for inflation and unemployment has been reduced by over \$16 billion or one-sixth - from FY 1981 to 1984. Nearly 3 million fewer children eat school lunches and 500,000 fewer get school breakfast. There are fewer beneficiaries in AFDC, fewer mothers and children provided health services, fewer low income children screened for lead-based paint poisoning, fewer low income working mothers provided day care

services, fewer low income persons in employment and training programs, fewer low income persons provided legal services.

Under this Administration low income housing appropriations have been reduced by 50 percent.

The President continued, "and, granted, that Blacks in this country had a higher rate of unemployment than whites by the time of the recession. Their rate of recovery is faster than the rate of recovery for whites." The CBO says this statement is flatly incorrect. The rate of recovery for Blacks has been much slower than that of whites. Since November 1982, Black unemployment has dropped 26.5 percent from 20.5 percent while white unemployment has dropped 36.5 percent, from 9.6 percent to 6.1 percent. The gap between Black and white unemployment has widened under Reagan. When this Administration came into office Black unemployment was 14.4 percent and white unemployment was 6.7 percent. Today, white unemployment is 6.1 percent, slightly lower than at the beginning of the Reagan term, but Black unemployment is 15 percent which is higher than when Reagan came into office. Stated another way Black unemployment was 115 percent greater than that of whites but now it is widened to 146 percent difference.

So the President was in error, says the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities report, when he says that the recovery for Black unemployment is greater than whites. "The truth of the matter is: the current recovery is leaving Blacks even farther behind than they were before."

The Charlotte Post
North Carolina's Fastest Growing Weekly
704-376-0496
"The People's Newspaper"
106 Years Of Continuous Service
Bill Johnson Editor, Pub. Bernard Reeves Gen. Mgr. Fran Bradley Adv. Mgr. Dannette Gaither Of. Mgr.
Published Every Thursday By
The Charlotte Post Publishing Company, Inc. Main Office: 1531 S. Camden Road Charlotte, N.C. 28203
Second Class Postage Paid at Charlotte
Member, National Newspaper Publishers' Association North Carolina Black Publishers Association
National Advertising Representative: Amalgamated Publishers, Inc.
One Year Subscription Rate One Year - \$17.76 Payable In Advance