

EDITORIALS

The Moral Imperative-Self Interest

Since, and indeed even before the November 6 national elections, literally millions of words and articles have been written, speeches given and news conferences held on the national debt and Presi-

dent Reagan's budget plans. Only a few paces back and in the shadows of this national attention has been the post-election Catholic bishops' pastoral letter on poverty and economic justice in the United States.

Referred to eloquently by one writer as "...a breathtaking, revolutionary and deeply Christian document that can leave few people unmoved by the depth of its com-

passion," the basic tenets of the letter were nevertheless soundly defeated on November 6, and ironically, with the aid of another group of Christians - conservative fundamentalists.

The bishops' letter says that no one can ignore the poor, "no one can claim the name of Christian and at the same time acquiesce in the hunger and homelessness that exists...in our country." Yet, this is exactly what happened on election day as 70 percent of the 53 million people who voted said no to the needs of the poor.

Crime: The Shame Of A Nation

Recent news reports indicate that in the city of Chicago violent street gangs have been responsible for the deaths of 130 youth between the ages of 11 and 20. Attention was focused on this crisis in the news media was the shooting death of 17 year old Ben Wilson, one of the nation's premiere high school basketball players, and a youth described in the Illinois Legislature as a person of "mild demeanor and clean character."

Wilson, a 6'8" senior at Simon High School, was shot while walking with two girls on his lunch break at school.

Young Ben Wilson's death, an all too common occurrence on the streets of many large cities, and many lesser crimes - auto theft, snatched purses, the robbing of convenience stores - a clerk was recently shot and killed in a Charlotte store recently, gang rapes and attacks on school teachers are shocking on the rise. The city of Detroit ranks number one in murders, 49.2 per 100,000 people, and New York City ranks

laid off and is, therefore, unemployed by choice or lazy. What this worker is faced with is a loss of his job due to textile imports.

And there are other unemployed people who are committed to the work ethic and economic self-interest in the same and dedicated manner as those Reagan team members. However, too often because of racism, sexism, ageism the distance factor, and little opportunity for retraining - the middle-aged jobless textile worker - people must resort to a new application of economic self-interest.

With a commitment to the economy's driving force of self-interest, workers forced out of the work force by circumstances beyond their control often find it necessary to use, and sometimes abuse, the social welfare system within the context of self-interest. However, when this becomes known those persons fortunate enough to have jobs too often among those, in the bishops' words, who "...have a tendency to blame poverty on laziness, to stigmatize welfare recipients (and)...that anyone can escape poverty by hard work and that welfare programs make it easier for people to avoid work."

One way or another, America is either going to have to return to a full employment policy or have a permanent force of unemployed people that the society must be cared for, thus adding to social pressures for others and probably less appealing economic reforms.

Economic and social justice in the final analysis mean jobs and opportunity for all those willing to work and or no job and dependency on the welfare system.

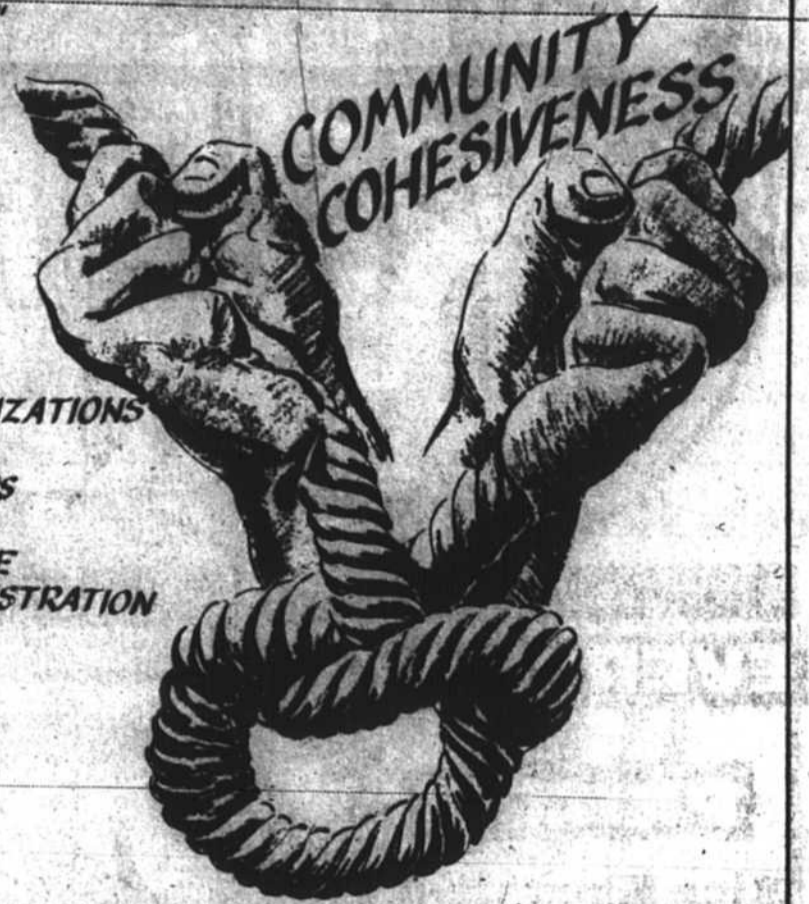
a surprising low 18th with 22.8 murders per 100,000. Without a doubt, unemployment and poverty are major contributors to these disturbing statistics.

What is clearly known and often hidden in these terrible crimes, as in the murder of Ben Wilson, is that most of these big city crimes are crimes of blacks against other blacks. Thus, as much as black Americans express shock over the high percentage of blacks who are electrocuted in our prisons, it hardly matches the rate at which we kill and hurt each other.

Charlotte fortunately does not have nearly the crime problems of many large Northern cities, for this we can be grateful. However, if just one person is hurt or killed in an act of violence, it's one too many. We need to be aware of this and teach our youth in schools, churches and through organized constructive activities with some positive value attached that crime does not pay - it only destroys.

"BLACKS' RETICENCE TO SEIZE THE INITIATIVE TO ORGANIZE THEIR COMMUNITIES" SAID DOUGLAS G. GLASGOW, DEAN OF HOWARD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK, IS A MAJOR FACTOR AND AN IMPORTANT FACTOR CONTRIBUTING TO OUR COMMUNITIES' UNDEVELOPED STATUS"

- POLITICAN
- BUSINESS MAN
- DOCTORS
- LAWYERS
- ARTISTS
- TEACHERS
- MINISTERS
- WORKERS
- COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS
- SOCIAL WORKERS
- FRATERNAL GROUPS
- FINANCE
- COMPUTER SCIENCE
- INSTITUTION ADMINISTRATION
- ENGINEERING
- PLANNING
- ARCHITECTURE
- BLACK PRESS



New Definition Of Black Interest

The message to blacks from the November election is very clear: stop asking for something of special interest to you. Reports of the Democratic post-mortem in the Virgin Islands suggested that the Party, trying to find ways of wooing whites back, views attention to 3.5 million poor people, of which blacks make up 15 percent, as a political handicap. The presence of a white woman on the ticket is not attractive enough to erase the fear of catering to particular groups.

Yet, as Roger Wilkins writes so clearly ("Bad Advice on Blacks," the New York Times, November 18), every President recorded as "great" in American history has the characteristic of "moral grandeur." That is to say, they were able to move people to think beyond themselves. While this thinking beyond themselves did not mean the ready acceptance of unwashed masses getting off the boat on Ellis Island, it aroused in the general population a feeling that everyone deserves a chance to do better.

Doing better in 1984 admittedly differs from the upward struggle faced by the poor in 1900. The days of the ragged street peddler have



Sabrina

Sabrina's column will return to this space next week.

been replaced by a time in which jobs for the unskilled decrease daily. Sharing meager earnings with hungry relatives has given way to public assistance, jobs created by the government or crime as a way of life. Organization to avoid these dreadful alternatives get punished, however, at the polls.

Punishing organized efforts to obtain benefits was reflected in the presidential vote. White male voters throughout the country turned thumbs down on the Party that seemed to attract large numbers from the NAACP and the National Organization for Women. In the South, white voters, regardless of sex, said "no" to the image of special groups.

What, then is the route to development and growth for blacks in a society which refuses to deal with them at the issues level of political pressure? Events of the past year suggest less emphasis upon rhetoric and greater concentration upon the doing level. This new thrust will require black organizations to tackle with renewed vigor the tough job of training their young to compete more successfully in a high-information, high-technology society.

Economic survival will be the initial stage, requiring a vigorous attack upon inadequate education and low-skill development. Beyond the eating and housing levels, black groups will have to give time and energy to training the young in what Dr. Jonas Salk describes as evolutionary life.

In other words, in order to have communities characterized as dignified and respectful, we blacks must teach our young to cooperate in making neighborhoods and communities healthy, pleasant places to live.

Life in evolutionary communities encourage individuals to respect the rights of others and to insist upon common standard definitions of critically appropriate behavior. The takeover of neighborhoods by persons committed to crime will never end until new ways of thinking are supported by black commitment added to law-enforcement efforts.

Since the prospect of massive support cannot be expected to come from allegiance to the Democratic Party, blacks will be forced to use their organizational strength more creatively, doing what their realistic, progressive leaders have urged since Emancipation. Training every black child to earn a living in a socially acceptable manner is equal in importance to selling memberships in the NAACP and the Urban League.

Dreams of social about-face on the part of the haves is risky for the have-nots. The prospect for returning to the good old days (whites were never really good for blacks) is too bleak.

The majority of the voters have said "no" to the special interests of blacks. Now is the time for all blacks to focus upon their unique needs and promote goals selected for their capacities to develop economic and social progress.

From Capitol Hill

Black Voters Must Be Politically Educated

By Alfreda L. Madison
Special To The Post

The voter war which ended on November 6 has Party leaders and the media analyzing and strategizing the election. Both the Republican and Democratic Parties spent millions of dollars on voter registration. The Republicans were mobilized by a number of conservative groups closely allied with the Reagan Administration. Most notable among these groups were the Moral Majority, National Political Action Committee (NPAC), and a group called Americans for Responsive Government which calls itself a non-partisan group. It sent out a letter saying that it must not only aim at the Jesse Jackson supporters and AFL-CIO, but they must register the free enterprise supporters who understand the importance of the private sector. People were also asked in the letter to attend a reception at the Republican Convention. The National Wholesale Hardware Association aimed at registering the white collar workers.

The Democratic registration focused on voters who would most likely support moderate to liberal candidates.

In spite of the Reagan landslide, with its very short coastal success, blacks are pondering their next move. The Joint Center for Political Studies held a press conference to analyze the election outcome. While Reagan got 64 percent of the white vote, seven percent black, 27 percent Hispanic; Mondale 35 percent white, 89 percent black and 64 percent Hispanic, race played a great part in the election. This was caused by the subtle racism of Reagan Administration campaign-



Alfreda

ing, and by the President's erosion of civil rights - being against the Voting Rights Act, the 1964 Civil Rights Act, affirmative action, busing and his New Federalism - which can only be viewed as a return to states rights. It was shown at the press conference that Mr. Reagan is bringing into fruition the predictions in the Kerner report of two separate unequal societies.

While blacks lost one black congressional seat, they suffered no losses or gains in state and local elections. Yet, they elected three senators. They returned to the Senate Senator Heflin of Alabama, Cral Levin of Michigan and they elected first term Paul Simon of Illinois to replace Charles Percy who changed from a moderate to a conservative Reaganite.

At the press conference, it was emphasized that the Democratic Party was victimized by a liberal label, because it was depicted as the Party of minorities, women and the poor, while GOP aimed at the rich.

White America shot arrows at the Jackson campaign which caused

some black leaders to severely criticize him for running. Some said the time wasn't right. He can't win. The same criticisms that were hurled at Jackson were made against King. Many blacks and whites said that the time was not right for his stand, and many prominent blacks supported white America against King's anti-war position. Later, majority America came around to his way of thinking. Jesse Jackson met all the constitutional requirements for the presidency, so why not as a bona fide American he would have to wait until white America decides that his time has come? There has never been an equal rights and justice time for blacks according to white America. Now in 1984, it was proved that whites don't vote for black candidates.

Dr. Barber, political science professor at Washington University (St. Louis), analyzed Jackson's campaign effects. He said Jackson called attention to the inequities of the Reagan Administration policies geared to rich America, while cutting programs that remedied these conditions. He attempted to change those situations by advocating voter registration and forming a rainbow coalition which brought into the political process the left-outs. Even though he appealed to all segments of society, he received very little white support.

Dr. Barker stated that downside of Jackson's candidacy aroused fears in white racists. He asked the question should Jackson be denied the presidency because of this? At the Democratic Convention Mondale seemed assured of black support. One reason was the lack of unity

among black leaders, which was used by Mondale to ignore Jackson's requests. The Democrats did not strongly direct their campaign to its natural constituents - blacks, poor, Hispanics, working class.

Barker said Jackson opted for direction in the electoral process. He was the most liberal of all the candidates. His candidacy was symbolic because it caused scrutiny, increased inspiration, accorded respect for all people in this society, challenged certain rituals and myths, challenged voting rights official procedures, selection of delegates, at-large-voting, and disproved the myth that blacks are not aspiring, articulate and knowledgeable.

The question of where blacks go from here was discussed at the press conference. The discussion hinged on just which Party will be most meaningful to blacks. This will be based on the Party's reaffirmation and commitment to justice and equality, if not blacks might consider becoming an Independent Party.

Both the Republican and Democratic Parties are facing a new leadership crisis. It seems necessary for both Parties to capture the black vote. Arguments are leaking out that Republicans cannot ignore blacks because of black influence at the state and local levels and that Democrats cannot continue to take their support for granted. Even though Jackson's rainbow coalition was ignored and played down, a rainbow coalition consideration is beginning to take root. Emphasis was also placed on the necessity for a voter education program for blacks, which should begin now.

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