

Editorials

Tax Reform, A Beginning

The U.S. Senate gave final congressional approval last Saturday to the most comprehensive changes in the federal tax system in over 40 years. The landmark legislation is expected to have an impact on nearly every household and business taxpayer in the nation. President Reagan is expected to sign the bill into law quickly.

The vote was 74 to 33 with 41 Republicans and 33 Democrats "for" the bill and 12 Democrats and 11 Republicans "against." In the House of Representatives, the winning margin was 291 to 136 votes. However, the votes by individual Senators and Congressmen were more indicative of the mixed impressions about the ultimate short-term meaning and long-term effect of the legislation as seen by economists and news analysts.

Conservative Jesse Helms, (R-NC) voted against the bill while his other conservative Senator from N.C. Jim Broyhill, joined with South Carolina Senators, conservatives Strom Thurmond (R) and moderate Ernest Hollings (D), in supporting the bill. Likewise, liberal Democrat Senator Bill Bradley of New Jersey voted "for" the monumental bill.

The bill's primary author, Sen. Bob Packwood, (R-Orre.), said, "We did something good for America." President Reagan said the bill will provide Americans a "tax code they can be proud of: one that encourages and is pro-family." Nevertheless, those "for" and those "against" the bill raised many questions about whether the bill will hamper an already weak economy and whether it will be a bill that is equally fair to all taxpayers. Because there are no clear answers to these concerns and many others like them, there is an apparent feeling of uncertainty about the legislation.

The sense of uncertainty is evident by the fact that there are few hard consensus opinions about the bill. Sen. David Boren (D-Okla.) states, "It will further weaken our economy by making it harder for Americans to compete in world markets." What Sen. Boren means is that in the short run, up to two years, the absence of tax

incentives for business will reduce new investments, thus halt the potential for economic growth and increased job opportunities for our citizens. Some believe too that such a damper on the economy would seriously hinder any new prosperity even in the long run, beyond the two years.

The bill leaves some mixed feelings also about real estate taxes and lower tax rates for lower income households. The point is that with depreciation allowances and similar tax benefits for real estate investments substantially reduced by extending the write-off time in increased years, residential construction is expected to be greatly reduced. In a related development, the increased disposable income that lower income households are expected to receive through lower personal income taxes are expected to be lost through higher rental rates in a tighter housing market resulting from the loss of the investment tax credits.

While there are good and bad features in the tax bill, depending on your particular interest and perspective, and it is without question a fair bill in that all sections of our nation - business and consumer at every level and in every conceivable financial situation - is sharing in and being affected by the bill. It is undoubtedly for this reason that the 1986 tax bill has received such broad-based bi-partisan support from Democrats, Republicans, liberals and conservatives and all those in between.

Yet, because of the worrisome uncertainty about the bill's full impact, some Congressman are already preparing legislative amendments for possible introduction in the next session of Congress.

This is a logical move because it is our view that many provisions of the bill, if not the entire legislative package, received some, if not most, of its support because the Congress was convinced that any tax bill would be better than the federal tax system we had with all of its special interest tax loop holes that enabled some to pay no taxes at all. Therefore, any amendments to the bill in the next session of Congress should not be surprising.

The Politics Of Drugs

In response to a growing public demand for federal action to curb the drug problem in the United States that has reached near epidemic proportions, Republicans and Democrats are reportedly in a rat race to see who can provide the presumed toughest response to the problem.

Except for some controversial provisions involving the death penalty, mandatory drug testing as favored by President Reagan and the use of the armed forces to combat drug smuggling, the Senate and House are in basic agreement on an anti-drug bill. The two Houses agree that millions of dollars should be budgeted for law enforcement, education, treatment programs and related efforts to combat drug trafficking and drug abuse.

However, Congress is already saying that it doesn't have the money to finance an

anti-drug war. Sen. Mark Hatfield, (R-Ore.) said it will be very difficult, if not totally impossible, to fund this measure.

This sounds like another game to give the American people the impression that Congress really is concerned about the drug problem but won't do anything about it. Frankly, if we don't combat drugs at home, we won't be able to combat communism abroad because we will simply decay from within and they, our political enemies, will win the war without firing one shot or dropping one bomb. Think about it.

Speak Out

Something on your mind. Write it down and address it to: Letter To The Editor, The Charlotte Post P.O. Box 30144, Charlotte, N.C. 28230

Miller Says:

Must Politicians Resort To Racial Divisiveness?

By Sherman N. Miller
Special To The Post
Many people might view the elections of ethnic lieutenant governors in Delaware and Virginia as evidence that the concept of "Equality of Opportunity" is not just rhetoric in the USA. Yet these achievements may be short-lived if some purported political juggernauts have their way.

Some political pundits are flirting with racial divisiveness as a tool to win elections. Namely, they are altering or circumventing party election rules to create an atmosphere conducive to the reincarnation of American racism.

The September primary election in New Castle County, Delaware, was an excellent example of this new racist thrust. Eleven of the 23 polling places in the white community in the city of Wilmington, Delaware, were closed. A white candidate and a Hispanic candidate and a coalition of black ministers successfully challenged most of these poll closings in court.

Although the courts found no underhanded deeds in this case, the perception of mal-



Miller

intent will leave a taint on the Wilmington Democratic Committee for some time to come. But it is also fair to point out that there were other polling places combined in white neighborhoods outside of the city where the voter turnout was expected to be low.

Since Delaware State Senator Herman M. Holloway Sr. was considered to be the black beneficiary of this perceived reverse racism, he was asked to comment on the black ministers' action. He railed out, questioning where these black ministers were during

"IF THE GOVERNMENT WILL NOT PROTECT US AND IF THE POLICE CANNOT, IT FOLLOWS THAT BLACK CITIZENS MUST PROTECT THEMSELVES."

"WE CANNOT WAIT UNTIL DISCRIMINATION ENDS BEFORE WE RID OUR COMMUNITIES OF CRIME. WE CAN NO LONGER EXCUSE CRIME BECAUSE OF SOCIETY'S INEQUITIES. WE STAND MENACED BY OUR OWN KITH AND KIN. IT IS INCONCEIVABLE TO ME THAT WE WHO HAVE PREVAILED IN SPITE OF THE BARBARISM OF WHITE PEOPLE SHOULD, IN THE LAST QUARTER OF THE CENTURY, STAND AS MUTE SPECTATORS TO OUR DOOM."

ORDE COOMBS
N.Y. MAGAZINE

As I See It

The Problem With Parents

By Gerald O. Johnson
Special To The Post

I watched with great interest the other day a show on HBO called "Kids In Sports." This show was a documentary on the pressures kids in sports have to face in the name of winning. The bulk of the pressure comes from demanding parents. The reason the show was so intriguing to me was because I fell into the same trap with my kids. The undo pressures we put on our kids in all areas, not just sports, might be the reason a lot of them are turning to drugs, suicide, alcohol, and other means of escape.

My own experience started with my youngest daughter, Patrice. When Patrice was six, she fell in love with the piano. Everyday after dinner, she would quietly excuse herself from the table and go into the living room to bang on the piano. She knew absolutely nothing about what she was doing. She just enjoyed banging on the piano. I personally thought it was the Lord's way of punishing me for some sin I committed when I was her



Gerald

age. This ritual continued for months until my wife, who has some familiarity with the 88 keys, began to tutor her a little. Gradually, the banging began to represent something tolerable to the ears. Finally, I decided it was time to enroll the kid in a piano class. She objected vehemently, but I enrolled her anyway. In very short time, the banging became music to my ears as she learned the lessons with ease. After a

year of formal training, she began to win competitions; she got high marks on national recitals. She was being asked to perform for banquets.

As her musical career progressed, she got increasingly better, and I got increasingly prouder. I never had to ask her to practice, she was self-motivated to learn all she could. Her skills got to a point where she could hear a tune once, and sit down to a keyboard and play it by ear. As her skills improved the more involved I got with her progress. I started to push her to perform in public places. I wanted to display her talents in any arena that would have her. All of this was with little regard for what she wanted.

As my intrusion increased, her enthusiasm decreased. Finally, this past year she informed me that she did not care to continue with her piano lessons. I was furious. "God gave you all this talent, and you're going to throw it down the drain," I said. The more I talked the more frustrated she got until finally she said, "My greatness in piano is your dream, not mine." Well, that statement struck home with me. It was then that I realized how wrong I had been. I was trying to relive my hopes and dreams through my child. I was probably responsible for her pre-mature burnout with something she really loved.

As parents, we must learn too guard against pushing our kids too far. It is indeed difficult to determine when your involvement as a parent becomes interference. Children will go to great extents to try to please parents. It is not always apparent when they are doing things just to please us as opposed to doing things they really want to do. I was fortunate in that my youngest daughter is an independent thinker and speaks her mind. (Wonder where she gets that from?) But for kids that aren't as outgoing, it becomes the parents' responsibility to guarantee that your pushing and prodding is in the direction that your child wants to be pushed.

The common mistake most of us make as parents is we do what we do in the child's best interest. We feel like father knows best. After all, my child needs this prodding to succeed in life. The truth is your children only need your love and your support, the rest they can figure out on their own.

Department of Elections.

Reports coming out of Chicago suggest that similar games are being undertaken by Chicago's political bosses. Mayor Harold Washington's foes hope to get the mayor's office elected in a non-political party campaign. Thus they can circumvent this black mayor's mastery of the city Democratic machine.

Will a non-partisan Chicago mayoral race translate into a political strategy of pitting a single white candidate against a single black candidate, then forcing laden racism to be the deciding factor?

Mission Air

Mission Air Ministries, a professional nonprofit ambulance service, is seeking donations to help pay for Friendship III, a Cessna Citation business jet outfitted as an air ambulance. The \$500,000 aircraft enables Mission Air to serve the entire nation with quick, flexible service.

Donations from people in Charlotte-Mecklenburg account for almost 80 percent of all Mission Air operating funds. But with fuel costs at \$400 per hour, plus the cost of this new jet, donations are needed more than ever. Checks made to "Mission Air Ministries, Inc." should be mailed to Mission Air, P. O. Box 589, Monroe, NC 28110.

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