

Editorials

The Charlotte Post

Bill Johnson, Publisher Emeritus
Gerald Johnson, Publisher Bob Johnson, Co-Publisher
Jalyne Strong, Managing Editor

Dangerous Journalistic Politics

Gary Hart, the leading Democratic Party presidential hopeful is suddenly gone. In responding to the news media's "womanizing question," Hart said, "Follow me around. I don't care. I'm serious. If anybody wants to put a tail on me, go ahead. They'd be very bored." The Miami Herald accepted Hart's challenge. They staked out his Washington townhome and reported that a beautiful woman named Donna Rice was seen entering the house with him and spent the night alone with him.

Some, including media people, have been severely critical of The Herald claiming that "Peeping Tom" journalism borders on being unethical and unprofessional. However, the Florida-based newspaper justified its actions on three key points. First, as a presidential candidate, the public has a right to know about any flaws in the character and moral judgement of a person who is seeking a public office that requires the full faith and trust of the American people. Secondly, it was the allegations of womanizing that led The Herald to accept Hart's invitation to follow him around. Thirdly, notwithstanding the moral question, it was important for all to know about Hart's judgement skills.

The Herald's original report that Ms. Rice spent the night with Hart was later discredited when the newsmen admitted that they had not watched both entrances to the townhouse. While Hart was claiming innocence of any wrong doing, it was revealed that the same young woman had spent another questionable night on a boat with Hart and two other couples last year.

These developments led Gary Hart to withdraw his potential candidacy for the highest office in the nation. It means too that from the very moment of Hart's withdrawal, the direction of America's political stance has changed from an unknown what might have been to what now is and possibly through the very actions of the next president. This is and will be at least partly the result of the actions of The Miami Herald.

An example is evident, too, in a related development being influenced by the news media. With Gary Hart out of the presidential hopeful picture, it would appear that the second most notable candidate for the Democratic Party's nomination would move up to the number one spot. This is not happening be-

cause neither the Democratic Party leadership nor the news media believes the candidate in question can win the presidential election in 1988.

The candidate we are referring to is Jesse Jackson. While a distant second to Hart, Jackson has name recognition, it is believed that he can influence a major portion of the black vote, and a few white liberals, and he has considerable presidential campaigning experience. Yet, the sad and somewhat embarrassing fact is that neither the Democratic Party nor the news media truly believes that a black candidate can win in 1988.

Jackson has said and done some things that have upset some blacks and some Democrats both liberal and conservative. These concerns aside, if Jackson were white, the media with or without the encouragement of the Democratic Party, would be heavily courting Jackson as the new Democratic Party front-runner. We have referred to this as an "embarrassing fact" because it implies some racist feelings attitude which may or may not be real.

Most voters don't know these other long shot candidates. Beyond the borders of their respective states - Rep. Richard Gephardt of Missouri, Gov. Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts, and a few lesser known hopefuls - these candidates lack instant name recognition and even less presidential planning and campaign strategy.

Again because of the media's action, or inaction in this case, the direction of political history is and will be changed from an unknown what might have been to what now is and may possibly be through the presidency of 1988 through 1992.

These are examples of journalistic policies because in different ways and for different reasons, the media is not simply reporting the "news that's fit to print," but rather is acting as a king maker. We would like to think that in free society with a free press that newsmen would be pleased to just report the news and not be the news makers. Furthermore, at the very least let a national political convention select a presidential candidate; and at the very most let the voters decide who shall be our next president. Journalistic politics is dangerous because its wider use could lead to government regulation and thus threaten the loss of our free press.

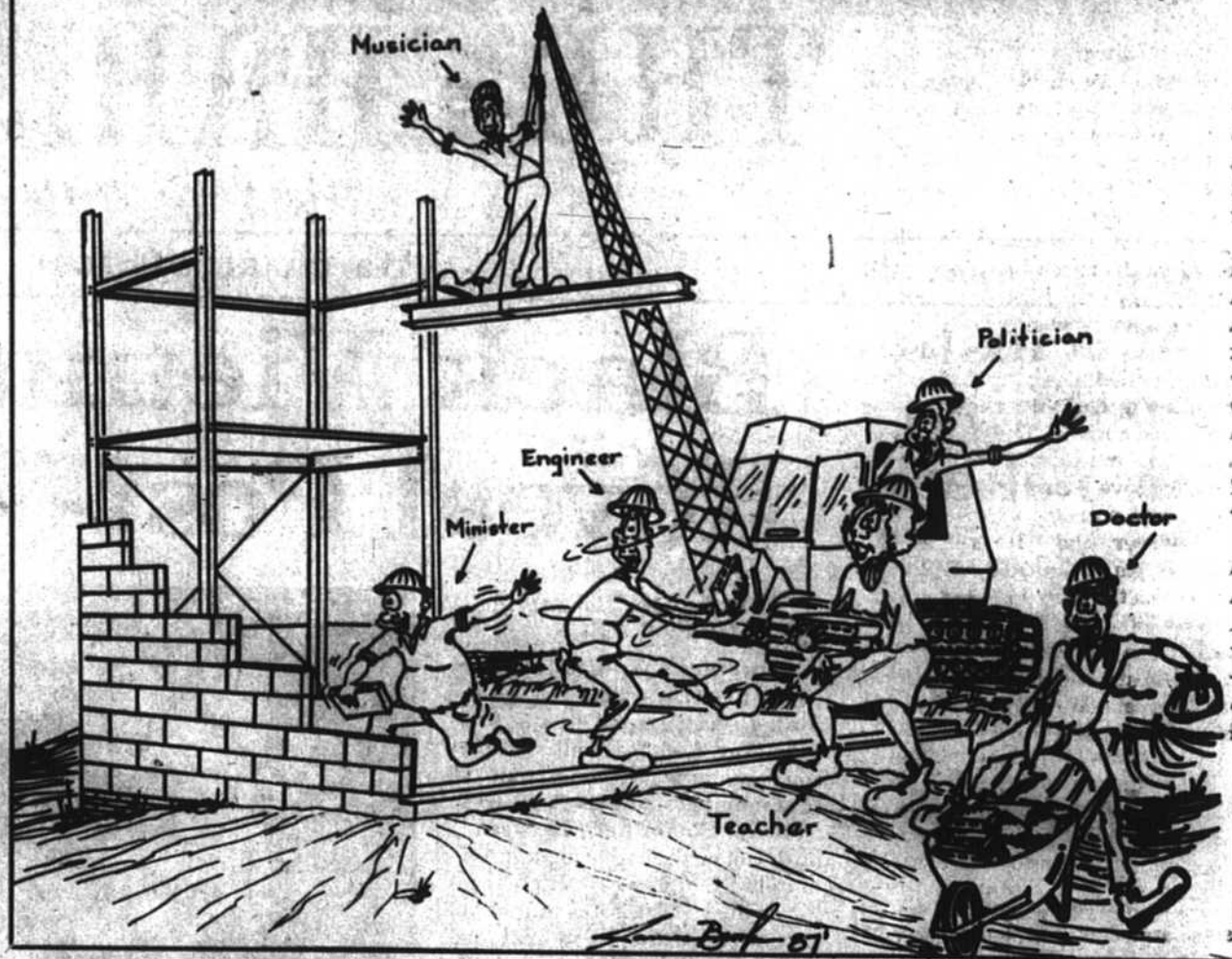
Re-Evaluate American Moral Standards

Ted Kennedy, Jim Bakker, Gary Hart. Two of these men lost opportunities to become President of the United States. The other, Jim Bakker, lost a \$140 million a year television evangelism ministry and first class hotel and amusement part facilities. In addition, the multi-million dollar newly built American embassy in Moscow is said to be awash with listening devices that would allow the Russians to be fully aware of all our embassy dealings.

Each of these missed presidential opportunities, the loss of a worldwide television ministry and a totally useless foreign embassy are all the result of sexual behavior in-

volving these three men and two U.S. Marines, one black and one American Indian, each with women of some questionable character and purpose. Indeed, the affairs raise serious questions, too, about the character of these men in whom the public is asked to place great trust and the two young Marines who lacked the sense of discipline to be a first line of defense for our nation by not letting the Russians have free reign to "bug" our embassy in exchange for monetary sexual favors from a few Russian women. All of this appears to show a great need for America and Americans to re-evaluate their moral standards and not sell their souls to the devil, be they Russians or others.

WE AS BLACK PEOPLE MUST RECONSTRUCT AND REBUILD OUR DESTINY... IF WE CONTINUE AT OUR PRESENT COURSE, OUR FUTURE WILL BE A VERY DARK ONE, FULL OF POVERTY, ILLITERACY, TEENAGE PREGNANCY, DRUGS AND SELF DESTRUCTION. BUT IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO CHANGE AND REGROUP OURSELVES. SO LET'S BEGIN TODAY, A "RENAISSANCE," A NEW ATTITUDE FULL OF HOPE AND PRIDE. LET'S START TODAY!



Good News In The News Room

Special To The Post
By Rev. Ben Chavis

They were told they couldn't win. They were told the lawsuit would ruin their careers. Still, they continued. And now, four African American reporters on the staff of the NEW YORK DAILY NEWS have been vindicated. They have won their law suit. A jury has found that the four journalists were given lower salaries, fewer promotions and worse assignments because of their race. It is Predicted that the outcome will have major national impact. For it is the first time that a discrimination suit, filed by newspaper editorial employees, actually went to trial, and thus so fully exposed the racism in that industry.

The evidence presented at the trial was overwhelming. For example, the editorial department of the DAILY NEWS hired only 36 African Americans since the late 1940's through 1981 - a period of over 30 years. And it wasn't until 1981 that one was promoted into a management position. According to the testimony of Vincent Donato, a former Equal Employment

Opportunity Commission (EEOC) manager, in the two short years from 1979 to 1981, the News hired or promoted 47 People into management positions. Yet none was African American.

As Mr. Donato, testified, "We found whites, as a group, were paid more than Blacks. White employees were likely to get merit increases and the increases they got were likely to be higher." Based on

its findings the EEOC has now filed a class action discrimination suit against the DAILY NEWS on behalf of 25 African American employees.

However, statistics never tell the full story. Statistics can't reveal that an assistant night editor told another white staffer that "Blacks are not well suited for journalism [because] they didn't have the background and the education." Statistics can't show how Joan Shephard, a cultural affairs editor, felt after one editor called her a "street-walker". Numbers can't demonstrate how David Hardy, the NEWS' political reporter, felt after he was pulled off the famous Abscam scandal in favor of a white reporter, even though he had exclusive knowledge about one of the Abscam defendants. And figures don't explain the frustration that assistant news editor Steven Duncan, now 63 years old, felt as he was passed over by other white reporters, some of whom he had trained. It was only after he filed discrimination charges in 1983 that he received his latest promotion.

Just as this trial has more than local implications, the situation which it revealed exists in more than just the city room of the NY DAILY NEWS. In newrooms across this nation the percentage of Blacks and other racial and ethnic peoples at the top management level is only 3%. In fact, racial and ethnic employment at daily newspapers, at any level, is a mere 6.3%.

For those who wonder about the skewed and -- dare we say it --

racist coverage of papers like the NY DAILY NEWS, these statistics provide a clearer understanding. However, knowledge is insufficient without action. Our communities must begin to better use their power. In cities with large African American and Hispanic populations, such as New York City, the daily newspapers depend on the newsstand sales in these communities...and on the advertising dollars supported by the business of these populations. If we want our dailies to provide more balanced coverage of our communities, we need to show them how their continued racist coverage will affect their Pocketbooks.

We also applaud the efforts, from the inside, of the interracial Institute for Journalistic Education, a watchdog and training organization. The Institute provides top-notch training for racial and ethnic journalists and has consistently spoken out against the shameful hiring and promotion practices of this nation's daily newspapers.

The greatest credit, however, goes to the four journalists who persevered through five long years of legal maneuverings until they won their day in court. Their battle is far from over, of course. THE NEWS, in all its arrogance, will continue to fight with all the money and power at its disposal. But nothing can erase the decision nor the evidence upon which it was based. As always, it is not only organizations, but also two or three people united in action, who continue the movement for change.

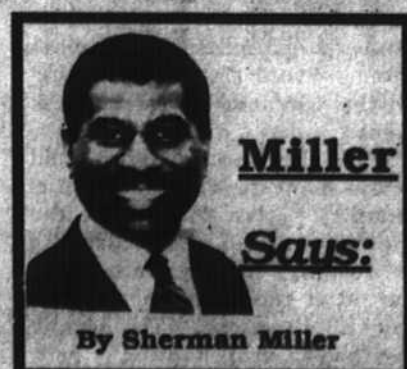
On Politicians And The Constitution

Memorial Day is an opportunity for America to honor her dead. It is also a time to pay tribute to those Americans who gave up their lives to preserve the freedoms guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. Yet, many national leaders demonstrate little respect for the Constitution on its 200th anniversary.

While suffering a bad case of Wall Street Journal Withdrawal in the Philippines during the tenure of former President Ferdinand Marcos, I learned to appreciate the Constitution as a living document. It had been some time since I had read the Journal so I was ready to settle for anything. I asked the lady at the hotel desk where I could buy a paper.

She pointed to some newspaper machines in the hotel's lobby. As I started in their direction, she commented that if I wanted to read the truth I should buy a paper from the boys on the streets. She felt the other newspapers were merely government propaganda.

This small experience highlighted the importance of America's free press. Thus the news media must take a leadership role in the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution. The national media must point out to our political leaders that they need to show reverence for the Constitution.



There is currently a movement afoot to get the U.S. Congress to meet in Philadelphia, PA, the birthplace of the U.S. Constitution, for a 200th Constitution celebration. So far, Pennsylvania's Congressional Delegation is still trying to convince their associates to come to Philadelphia. The mere fact that our national leadership places the U.S. Constitution so low on their priority list is a slap in the face of the American families whose sons and daughters died in foreign wars to preserve this great nation.

Since the leadership of both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate have not seen fit to honor the U.S. Constitution, then perhaps the 1988 presidential candidates will prove themselves worthy of the U.S. presidency. One of these candidates will take the Presidential Oath, "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."

If Democrats like U.S. Senator Joe Biden and Representative Richard Gephardt and Republicans as U.S. Senator Bob Dole and Representative Jack Kemp cannot rally their peers to honor the U.S. Constitution, they do not deserve to be President.

Perhaps non-officeholders former Republican governor Pete DuPont IV or Democrat Rev. Jesse Jackson will seize this golden opportunity to lead the nation in paying homage to our "Founding Fathers" dream.

When I think about the numerous lives lost to preserve our Constitution, I conclude that Congressional members who fail to convene in Philadelphia for the 200th anniversary constitutional celebration should not stand for reelection. These people's actions will have demonstrated their lack of respect for the U.S. Constitution.

Let us hope our Congressional leadership demonstrates to the world that our Constitution is revered by the American people. Hopefully the world will believe us when we claim that our democratic form of government is superior to all others.

