

The Charlotte Post

Published weekly by the Charlotte Post Publishing Co.
1531 Camden Road Charlotte, N.C. 28203

Gerald O. Johnson
CEO/PUBLISHER

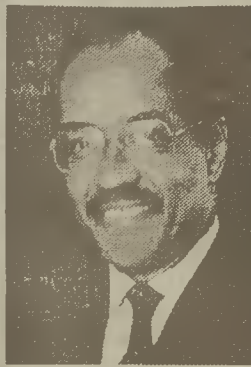
Robert Johnson
CO-PUBLISHER/
GENERAL MANAGER

Herbert L. White
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Black colleges source of leadership, progress, Part II

William Gray
SPECIAL TO THE POST

Recently, the enrollments of HBCUs have grown significantly above the national average. This can be attributed to several factors. First, African-American student enrollment is up at all colleges and universities due to higher high school completion rates and African-Americans' increasing recognitions of the importance of a college education. Recent data shows that African-American youth believe that a college education is important for economic mobility; and new census figures state that a college education does help to overcome the "race gap" in income - the median income of African-Americans with a college degree is 92 percent of that of white college graduates. Newly released figures show that African-American high school completion rates hit an all-time high of 73 percent compared to 81 percent for white Americans. Thus, it is not surprising that approximately 300,000 students are now attending HBCUs (this includes non-Black students). In addition, African-American students at other colleges and universities are at an all-time high of nearly 1.4 million.



Gray

Secondly, the growth rate of HBCUs has outdistanced the national rate because they are educational bargains for a community that is overwhelmingly low-income. With the average African-American family income at \$32,826, access to higher education is usually determined by cost. Although many colleges and universities have attempted to address this issue through special scholarships and government student loans, the fact is that there are not enough resources to meet the demand. With the ever-rising cost of higher education, African Americans will increasingly be attracted to the affordable, high-quality education offered by HBCUs. A recent

analysis by Harold Wenglinsky of the Educational Testing Service shows that the average four-year HBCU student pays 58 percent less tuition than the average four-year student at another institution. The cost factor is also one of the leading reasons why increasing numbers of white, Hispanic and Asian students are attending HBCUs.

Thirdly, HBCUs are centers of excellence with unique capabilities to address African-American needs. Of the 20 colleges that graduate the most African-Americans who go on to earn Ph.D.s, nine of the top 10 are HBCUs. While only 16 percent of African-Americans attend HBCUs, 45 percent of recent African-American Ph. Ds received their undergraduate degrees at HBCUs. The leading four colleges in America placing African-Americans into medical schools are HBCUs - Xavier, Howard, Spelman and Morehouse. When this is combined with the fact that over half of all African-American professionals are graduates of HBCUs, then, increasingly, young African-Americans will be drawn to these centers of affordable higher educational excellence where they can find role models, non-hostile and nurturing environment, professors who expect them to succeed and achieve academic excellence, and where the president and professors know them by name - and sometimes have even memorized their parents' phone numbers.

While only 16 percent of African Americans attend HBCUs, 45 percent of recent African American Ph. Ds received their undergraduate degrees at HBCUs. The leading four colleges in America placing African Americans into medical schools are HBCUs - Xavier, Howard, Spelman and Morehouse.

Indeed, it is in such an environment that HBCUs do their transformational work. These institutions have proven themselves capable of taking students who have received modest or inadequate secondary education - or those whose aptitude was not discovered using traditional assessment methods like the SAT or ACT tests - and producing talented contributing citizens. They know how to take diamonds in the rough and make them more brilliant, as Harvard and Stanford do. But they also know how to do something other colleges cannot do. They know how to take a lump of coal and turn it into a diamond by mentoring, expecting excellence, and hands-on teaching by faculty who have been there and care.

That is why these valuable educational institutions are still important, not just to African-Americans, but to all Americans. Demographers predict that in the 21st century, 85 percent of all new workers will be women, minorities and new immigrants. By the year 2020, one-third of the nation will be made up of African-Americans and Hispanic Americans. By 2050, over one-half of all Americans will be the people we call minorities today.

If America is to prosper in the global marketplace and maintain our economic strength, we will have to rely on the skills and productivity of that 21st century work-force. Thus, we need to support the educational institutions that know how to take the best and brightest, but also the talented and intelligent, and give them the skills that America will need.

Since 1835, these colleges and universities have persevered through difficult and challenging times to prepare leaders for America. Just as the religious and ethnic colleges of early immigrants - Georgetown, Yeshiva, Brigham Young - provided doorways for their rejected community, HBCUs continue to serve all of us. They have a vital role to play. From their halls have come - and will continue to come - the business persons, physicians, scientist, engineers, architects, teachers, public servants and artists we need to be strong in the 21st century.

In 1900, 1,700 Negroes attended college.

In 1944, 40,000 colored people attended college.

In 1970, 522,000 Blacks attended college.

In 1992, 1,393,000 African-Americans attended college.

As Maya Angelou has said, "Still I rise."

William H. Gray, III is president of the College Fund/UNCF. This article is reprinted from the *The Washington Post Education Review*.

Between dog and fire hydrant

GERALD O. JOHNSON

As I
See It



Well the Republican party has just completed its convention and Bob Dole and Jack Kemp got the nod to try to replace Bill Clinton in the White House. As I review the possibilities, I find myself wanting. There is no party, no ticket that suits my fancy. My problem must be that I am a black business man.

Being black and from the 60's south automatically gives me a democratic party perspective on social issues. The total conservatism of the Republican puts me at odd with most of its social agenda. The party has gotten even more exclusionary since

the Christian right has much more influence. The social agenda has even gone to the point of being harsh as it relates to welfare reform, abortion, and education.

However, being a business man makes it difficult for me to relate to the Democratic party. The heavy influence of the unions on the party puts small businesses in a bind on many issues such as minimum wage, and investment tax credits.

As the election draws near, here I sit between the dog and the fire hydrant. It makes no difference which way I choose, either way I lose.



Clinton

All of this is a consequence of too

"As the election draws near, here I sit between the dog and the fire hydrant.

"It makes no difference which way I choose, either way I lose."

much money going into setting the platform agendas. Both parties are becoming less moderate and more extreme. Even worse they both are becoming less tolerant of differing viewpoints. As special interest groups continue to push the parties to extreme positions, more and more people are pushing politics out of their lives. The mere fact that fewer and fewer people are finding

their way to the polls indicates that a lot of people are being left out. Maybe not for the same reasons that I am being trapped, but more and more people feel like they are not stakeholders in the system.

If this trend continues, there will be no system to become stakeholders of.

Peace.

Gerald Johnson is publisher of *The Charlotte Post*.



THE CHARLOTTE POST
COPYRIGHT 1996
JIMMY HUNT

Blacks must lead third-party move

By Ron Daniels
SPECIAL TO THE POST

When the dust settles after the November 5 presidential election either Bob Dole the conservative Republican or Bill Clinton the moderate-conservative Republican will occupy the Oval Office in the White House.

Given the anti-Black and people of color reactionary tide that has come to dominate the public policy perspectives of both establishment parties, the issues of vital concern to Black people and the oppressed will continue to be watered down at best.

It is this lack of responsiveness to the interests of Black people and the oppressed which has led to the alienation of millions of potential voters in this country.

The tragedy is that the lack of participation of the disaffected by default leaves the control of the electoral political system in the hands of those who have little or no empathy/sympathy for

the interests and aspirations of Black people and the oppressed. In practical terms this means that those who control the electoral political system also control the distribution of goods, services and opportunities which abound in the public sector.

The millions of people who are increasingly locked out and left out of the public policy deliberations and decisions in this country urgently need a new political party that will uncompromisingly and unapologetically promote and defend our interests.

Black people must take the lead because it is our people who have been among the most affected by the ravishes of racial oppression and economic exploitation in this society.

Black people must take the lead because throughout history the Black Freedom Movement has led the way in producing significant gains not only for Black people but for other people of color and poor and working people in general in this nation. Black people must take

the lead because when we move other oppressed people move other people of color, women, lesbians and gay men, senior citizens, the disabled.

Black people must take the lead because in a racist society the interests and aspirations of Black people, people of color and the oppressed must be at the very center of the agenda of any new political party. Indeed, the most critical challenge confronting Whites who would join a Black and people of color led, multi-racial political party is to develop strategies and initiatives to overcome racism in the White community. Defeating racism in the White community is a vital pre-condition to forging genuine multi-racial unity within a political party with a "rainbow" character.

Black people and the oppressed must join hands to build a new political party, and that new political party must advance a basic core platform/agenda of issues of vital concern to the masses of the disadvantaged and dispo-

sessed in this nation: Full employment/good jobs with good wages; Resources for economic development (the most pressing need of Black people and people of color is good jobs and the creation of an economic infrastructure to nourish our communities); Housing, decent places to live for our people; Quality education to ensure that our people have a fair opportunity to realize their full potential in this society and the world; Affordable and accessible health care to rid our people of crippling and life threatening diseases; And, a safe and clean environment to allow our families to thrive in wholesome and healthy communities.

It is for these kinds of basic human rights that Black people and the oppressed must march on ballot boxes and march in the streets as a part of a new visionary, fighting political party. Neither the Democratic or Republican Party can be counted on to fight for such an agenda.

Ron Daniels is a New York based columnist.

Higher standards for black business?

By James Clingman
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER
PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

Why do we hold our brothers and sisters to a higher standard than that to which we hold others?

Have you ever thought about that? Like me, you have probably heard a brother or a sister say, "I'm not doing business with any more Blacks; 'they didn't do what they promised' ... 'they charged me too much' ... 'they messed up my order.' And the beat goes on.

It is unfortunate that some of us start immediately to measure, compile, analyze, and chronicle the mistakes and, admittedly, the malfeasance of Black business persons and never do the same thing for businesses owned by others. Certainly most of us have

been "ripped-off" at least once in our lives, and many of us are at least once a week. However, we tend to punish our own people for their transgressions and serve as apologists for everyone else.

That does not make much sense, especially if we want to gain parity in the marketplace. Don't get me wrong. I am not saying we should overlook bad service or an inferior product - from anyone. But, I am suggesting that we apply the same yardstick and the same punishment for any business that betrays our trust.

For instance, while we are railing against Black-owned businesses, we should also be aware of the fact that Black people give 95 cents of every \$1 we make to businesses other than our own. Do we get a fair return? Do those businesses

hire our sons and daughters? Do those businesses participate in and support Black communities?

Do those businesses, as a matter of policy, see that a portion of their business goes to Black-owned businesses? Now some might say this is an unfair comparison, but is it?

Our greatest economic strength, as one of the largest consumer groups in the world, is our buying power - at least for now. We must take into account our \$400 billion contribution (and that is exactly what it is) per year to this country's economy. What do we get for it?

If we can criticize and institute a virtual boycott of our own businesses because of a few dollars, in most cases, what's so outlandish and unfair about applying the same rules to others? An excellent example of

what I am talking about is something a friend told me. He said a Black friend of his refused to buy his gasoline from a Black-owned station because he could get it five cents cheaper per gallon at a White-owned station, in another neighborhood. Keep in mind the Black-owned station had black employees, the other did not. My friend asked the "brother" the capacity of his gas tank. "Twenty gallons," was his reply. My friend then asked if supporting another brother's business was worth \$1 per fill-up to him. "Hmmm," the brother said. "I never thought of it that way." Too often we fail to see the big picture when it comes to economic empowerment. In this case it was not about the cost of fuel per gallon, it was about the collective cost of 20 gallons; one dollar.