

EDITORIAL

By Paul C. Smith

MINIMUM WAGE RAISE A MUST

The true measure of elected officials concern for little people is reflected in how they vote on issues.

One of the most important issues effecting poor people is the minimum wage bill before Congress (HR 7935)

Failure to vote for (HR 7935) or to vote FOR any of the proposed Amendments-would be traitorous to millions of Americans. Seven years ago the federal minimum wage was set at \$1.60 per hour; the buying power of that \$1.60 has decreased to \$1.19, the \$1.60 rate equals \$64.00 gross net for a forty hour week.

What with the cost of living rising faster than wages - the proposed Dent Bill (H.R. 7935) would only increase the minimum to \$2.00 per hour or \$80.00 for a 40 hour week. Not much-but at least a step in the right direction - MOST IMPORTANT - this bill will bring protection to six million federal, state, local and domestic employees, low wage earners included in this group are Non-white females, 56% of whom are not covered now.

Again this year the Eklenborn proposed amendment would not only keep millions of workers outside the door of protection- it would provide a sub-minimum wage floor on 16-17 year-olds. This would encourage employers to hire more teen-agers in place of adults.

There is no reason for Congress to vote against the Dent Bill (H.R.7935).

Powerful big business interests are against this bill. There are many big firms who would like to keep low wages.

We will keep a close watch on our congressional delegation - to see IF they are pro business or pro people.

The Meaning Of The Bradley Election

By Bayard Rustin

Of the many undeserved setbacks aspiring blacks have endured, few have been as painful and disillusioning as the one suffered by Thomas Bradley in 1969. The campaign of demagoguery and radical-baiting that deprived him of the mayoralty election in Los Angeles was a discouraging blow to the political hopes of blacks; Sam Yorty's ultimate victory was enough to convince those who wanted to believe it that the passions of racism and fear were the dominant impulses of American political life.

Thus Bradley's recent victory over Yorty is a profoundly satisfying personal vindication as well as a genuine reflection of an improved racial atmosphere. That Yorty resorted to the same racist tactics, and failed, is further evidence that politics is becoming less and less a conflict between black rage and white fear.

To conclude that what happened in Los Angeles represents the final triumph of reason over intolerance would be premature, just as in 1969 it was premature to assert that America was irredeemably prejudiced. There are, however, some lessons for the future.

Just because the campuses are no longer revolutionary battlegrounds and because the Black Panthers have checked in their guns doesn't mean that there is a "new urban mood." While this may partially explain the election, it is superficial and incomplete.

Perhaps the most important lesson is that permanent political success requires the unheroic work of organization. Black Americans are often compared to other immigrant groups who have somehow--so the myth goes--"made it" on their own. Time does not permit me to dwell on the shallowness of this line of reasoning as it is generally applied to blacks. But there are important parallels between how the Irish and Italians approached politics, when they were down and out, and how blacks look at politics today. These groups had the most to

gain or lose from politics--the stakes were quite personal.

Because of this, they responded by organizing. They registered voters, and mobilized voters and made certain that if they did lose it was not because they failed to exercise their democratic freedoms to the fullest extent.

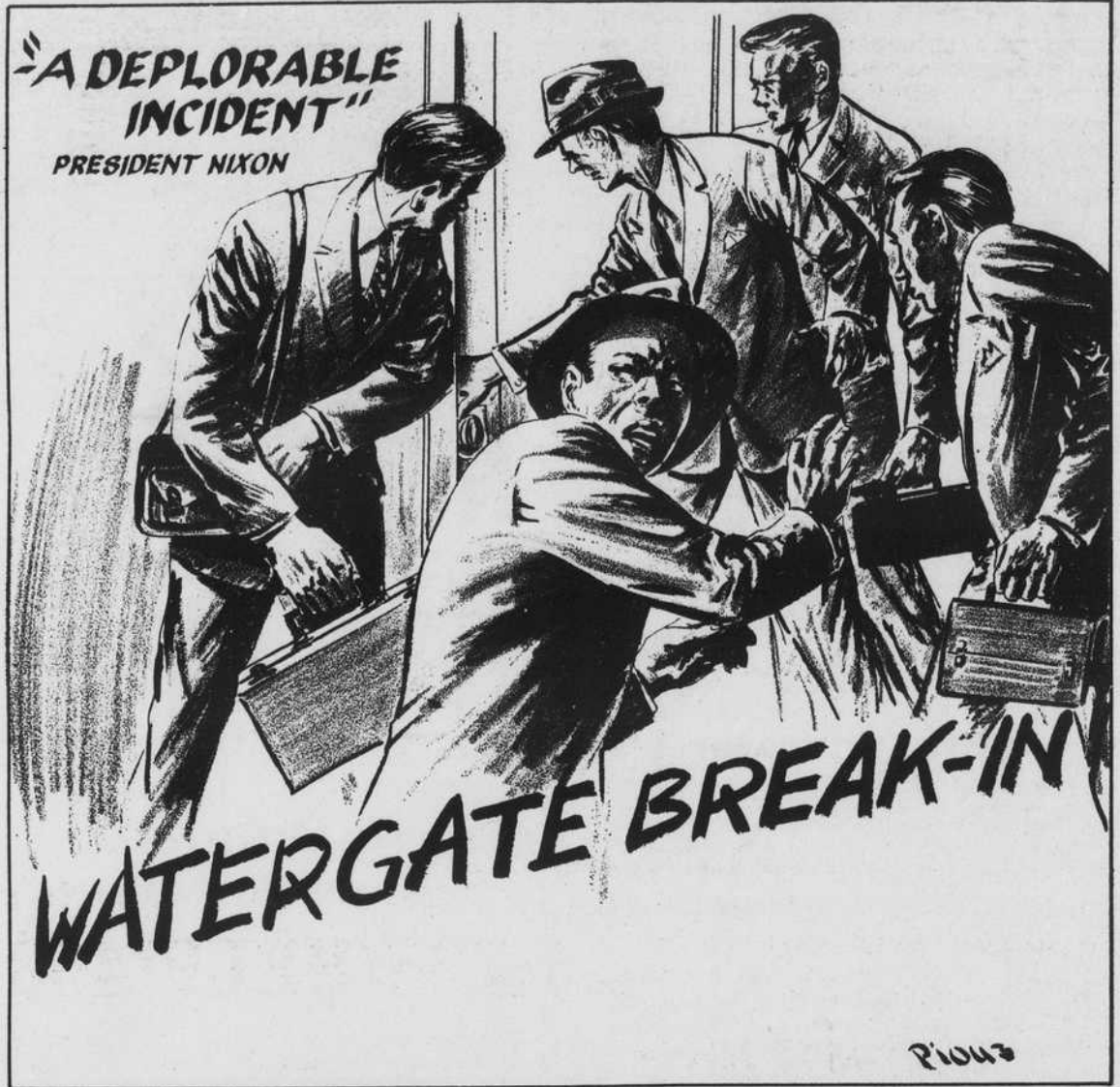
The recognition of the importance of organization was one of the reasons Thomas Bradley won this year. Four years ago he mounted no substantial voter registration effort; this year over 100,000 black voters were registered between January and May. This massive effort to maximize the black political voice may in fact have been the crucial element in the election since Bradley ultimately won by slightly less than 100,000 votes.

Bradley was also successful at piecing together the mosaic of a broad, majority political coalition that cut across racial lines. He was supported by nearly half the white electorates in 1969 the white vote had gone decidedly for Yorty. Mexican-Americans, who, although sharing a common poverty, had often looked on blacks as rivals, voted for Bradley. They, too, had succumbed to Yorty's tactics four years earlier. Large segments of the white working class vote, which Yorty had hoped to monopolize, rejected the incumbent's hysteria.

There are those who insist that the coalition of minorities, labor and liberals that has dominated urban politics since the New Deal is a relic of the political past. Conservatives tell us that as blacks take on more leadership of urban political organizations, whites will increasingly look to the Right. Certainly President Nixon's anti-busing campaign--a major part of the attempt to move the Southern Strategy to the North--is rooted in this assumption. From the other extreme, some ill-advised liberals insist that white workers are too prejudiced to join with blacks; they urge us to look elsewhere for allies.

I do not think that the election of Thomas Bradley will automatically signal the end of racial competition and political division. But it does suggest that polarization is decreasing. Moreover, it is a clear rebuff to those whose political strategies are rooted in the hope of perpetual strife between the races.

"LAW AND ORDER"...?



Traffic Demerits Notification Earlier

CARSON CITY---Beginning July 1st Nevada motorists with 3, 4 or 5 demerits against their driving record will be able to erase three demerits from their record by successfully completing an approved traffic school course.

Howard Hill, Director of the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles, indicated that the present law allows only those motorists with 6 to 11 demerits against their driving record to take advantage of the Traffic School Program and a three point reduction. According to Hill, the new law will cover all motorists in the three to 11 demerit range.

A motorist who accumulates 12 or more demerits in any 12 month period time faces a suspension of his driving privilege until his demerit total drops below 12.

Each month the Department mails letters to motorists who are eligible to attend traffic school for the purpose of losing three demerits from their driving record.

The Nevada demerit system became law in 1963.

LAS VEGAS Voice

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER (Published every Thursday) DEDICATED to the INTERESTS and ASPIRATIONS for a BETTER LIFE for NEGRO CITIZENS of the STATE of NEVADA

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 Rouge Hotel) Las Vegas, Nevada 89106 Telephone 648-2615

ADVERTISING RATES FURNISHED UPON REQUEST

Price per copy - 15¢ * One year - 7.50 * Two years - 12.50
 (Application for 2nd Class Mailing Permit pending at Las Vegas, Nevada)