



Education Is Power

By Thomas E. Wilson, Ph.D.

In America, all persons are supposedly entitled to as much education as they are physically and mentally able to absorb. This is part of the "American Dream," and all citizens should take advantage of the opportunity to receive as much free education as possible.

It appears that Black persons in general, because of past and present experiences, and with conditions under which they have been forced to live in order to survive, have not been able to secure the kind of education they deserve. Circumstances have frequently been of such that the Black student may also have been "pushed out" by teachers and/or administrators with either a real or assumed insensitivity to his needs.

Whatever the cause, the Black population can ill afford to lose the talents of our younger generation through drop-outs or push-outs.

It also appears that now is the time when young Black people must realize that they must "take the bull by the horn" and secure the type of education so necessary for existence in present day America.

Many Black students with adequate potential have been forced to quit school because of inadequate finances. A brief summary of some possibilities for financing and education follows.

In previous years, during this and other presidential administrations, efforts have been made to secure as many funds as possible from the federal government in order to guarantee that all citizens who desire may attain an education. These efforts have not always been successful, however, but some progress has been made. It appears that in this election year more progress will be made.

It is during the years of plentiful funding that the Blacks student could profit most from making out an application for funds with which to secure an adequate educational experience. Applications and/or information may be secured from universities, community colleges, some high schools, some banks, most federal buildings and sometimes from the local postmaster. The funds, which may be secured by a long term loan, coupled with a Basic Economic Opportunity Grant or some other grant, will go a long way toward paying for one's education.

Before securing a loan and/or grant, an application should be submitted to an institution of learning. If for some reason or another one cannot be admitted to a college or university, he may try entering a community college which will admit the student and provide him with help in order that he may receive a suitable grade in his courses. This is also true of our local university. Academic help to the entering freshman is available at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The Dean of the University College usually has charge of these helping programs.

Fraternalities, sororities and service clubs will usually do what they can to help students in need. In some instances monies are diverted to other uses because there have been no takers.

How does all of this apply to the Black student who may still be in high school today? Past experiences reveal that if the student knows that help will be available at the higher level, he will strive harder.

It is not enough to be concerned about wielding that power. Blacks must rise to the occasion, and one may do so through education.

BREAK THE HATE HABIT
UNDERSTAND
THY
NEIGHBOR
BLACK, WHITE or BROWN

VOICE EDITORIALS

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"RIGHT TO WORK" LAWS MUST GO

Some struggles for social justice take place in the glare of national publicity and widespread public concern. Others of no less significance are seemingly shrouded in silence. One of the most important and most promising campaigns for social justice is currently under way in Arkansas. Although it is not the kind of struggle that is well geared to headlines, it is important because of its potentially large impact on American society and because the issues involved are often misunderstood.

The Arkansas AFL-CIO and other concerned citizens of that state have mounted a campaign to repeal the state's "right-to-work laws, it is not strange at all for the laws are one of history's worst violators of truth-in-labeling. These laws despite the propaganda of business groups, don't guarantee anybody jobs. The only rights they provide are the rights of employers to pay lower wages, provide poorer working conditions, and to exploit workers. Defended as protecting the rights of individuals to work without being compelled to join a union, what the right-to-work laws in fact do is institute a compulsory open shop. They are designed to weaken strong unions, destroy weak unions, and prevent unorganized workers from forming a union.

A union that wins certification as the bargaining agent of the minority of workers must, under U.S. law, represent all the workers in the bargaining unit. Thus, in a right-to-work state, unions must represent all workers without receiving dues from all the employees they represent. Some workers receive the benefits of the union without paying their fare share.

There is nothing undemocratic about the union shop when a majority votes to be represented by a union and the union negotiates with manage-

ment a contract that requires all workers to join the union. Repeal of the right-to-work law in Arkansas and the other 18 states which have it on their statute books would allow freedom of choice for employer and union to agree on the most sensible rules for the plant in which they have a common working interest.

It has been argued that right-to-work laws aid the economic development of poorer states like Arkansas. But when the facts are examined there doesn't seem to be much of a case. In 1947, hourly wages in Arkansas were 57 percent below the national average. Today they are over \$1 below the national average. The same is true for income. In 1948 per capita income in Arkansas was \$555 below the national average, by 1973 it had fallen \$1,238 behind the national average. A formal counsel to the chairman of the National Labor Relations Board explained this regression by declaring that "right-to-work law states have not received more than their proportionate share of new industry." Rather than stimulating economic growth, the right-to-work laws are used for inducements for companies that can make money off a large defenseless pool of unskilled labor and that can profit from the perpetuation of this backwardness.

Thirty years of right-to-work laws also have been an instrument to perpetuate the informal system of racism in the United States. Dr. Vivian Henderson found that between 1950 and 1960 in only one of the Southern "Right-to-work" states did the earnings of Negro male workers gain in relation to those of white male workers. In the other ten states, not only did the dollar gap increase, but blacks also lost percentage ground.

If the right-to-work provision is removed Arkansas will win a greater degree of equality in dealing with management. They will have a more effective voice in determining wages and working conditions. Moreover, in the process of gaining 100,000 petition signatures and fighting the election battle, a strong and durable coalition between labor and blacks will be forged in Arkansas that will have long range political impact. Finally, if the campaign to repeal right-to-work is successful in Arkansas it will set an example for the other 18 states which still retain backward and regressive measures.

The effort to remove the right-to-work limitations on free collective bargaining in Arkansas is a little noticed struggle for social justice that could reshape American society in a more decent and humane fashion.

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

by

KENYON C. BURKE



ABORTIONS: LEGAL; ILLEGAL

In a shocking miscarriage of justice, Dr. Kenneth Edelin, a black physician was tried and convicted last year for performing a legal abortion no different from those routinely performed by thousands of doctors since the Supreme Court ruling in 1973.

A white, predominately Catholic jury in Boston, found Dr. Edelin guilty of manslaughter of a fetus -- a crime with no previous statutory definition -- a crime which did not in fact exist until the prosecutor invented it.

Regardless of what one thinks about abortion, it ought to be obvious that there is something fundamentally unfair about charging a man with murder without warning him in advance that what he and other doctors have been doing for years is now considered murder.

Only a prosecutor with a low regard for the Bill of Rights and no regard at all for elementary fairness would proceed in such a manner. Of course, the immediate effect of the verdict has been for numerous doctors and hospitals throughout the country to refuse to perform second-trimester abortions for fear their best

medical efforts would end in criminal charges. While abortion and its physical and psychological ramifications are not to be taken lightly, access to medically supervised abortion does bring about significant health advantages to individuals and their families.

Since the 1973 Supreme Court decision gave legal sanction to abortion, the maternal death rate and infant mortality rates have materially declined. Any attempt to interfere with a woman's right to personally make a choice on this crucial matter would reverse that trend.

The price of illegal abortion in the days preceding the Supreme Court's abortion decision, was paid in the currency of women's dignity, women's health and even women's lives.

Though many paid the price, none paid it more often and more cruelly than minority groups and the poor. More than nine out of ten of those who died at the hands of incompetent practitioners in the days before abortion was legal were black and Spanish-speaking.

The 17-year-old black girl from the Boston ghetto who sought the services of Dr. Edelin had every right to expect a medically safe, legal and dignified abortion. What kind of sense does it make to confine her and all those in her situation to the risk of injury and danger from backyard butchering?

The compassionate and soft-spoken Dr. Edelin has been thrust to center stage of a serious controversial issue as a victim and villain. Although not initially a crusader or activist he has demonstrated warmth, conviction and inner strength under great duress. He is an outstanding physician who has been grievously wronged. Hopefully, the appeal process will promptly vindicate this miscarriage of justice.