



Education Is Power

By Thomas E. Wilson,
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What are the real purposes for getting an education? Are all of the years of study, sacrificing of fun-things, and sometimes being abused worth the trouble it takes to get a college education? What are the payoffs both monetary and otherwise? Will the present American system react more favorably towards one, especially Blacks, who receive an education than towards one who does not?

These and other questions are being asked by young Black people involved in the present educative process. Before attempting to answer any of these questions, let us first establish a working definition of what we believe is an education. For the purpose of this discussion, receiving an education means the acquisition of skills at a level which allows the recipient of the skills to earn a livelihood for himself and his dependents, and to secure those things which allow him to live most and serve best. This definition says nothing about a series of experiences at a high school, college or university, or other formal institution, but about the quality and quantity of life's experiences.

Then, what are the real purposes of education? In our opinion, the main purpose of education is to prepare one to earn a livelihood. A second purpose may be to provide one with the skills which would enable him to secure for himself and his posterity those things which he deems essential to his happiness. Another purpose of education may be to provide one with the skills necessary for coping with the present American economic system. By this is meant that one is able to comprehend the small print of contracts, forms, etc., and can make the right decisions where economic matters are concerned. A fourth purpose for education may be to prepare one for the wise use of his leisure time. This is time we have on our hands when we have made a living for the week, month, etc., we have set aside for a "rainy day", and have done all necessary chores.

This usually includes watching T.V., reading, fishing, golfing, etc. It is our opinion that the quality and quantity of our use of leisure time depends, to a great extent upon the quality and quantity of our education experiences.

There are other purposes for education, but the above will give us some idea of a few of the purposes.

Are all of the years of sacrificing, study and sometimes abuse worth the trouble it takes to secure a college education? Yes, they are if these years lead to employment that is satisfying emotionally, financially and socially. Otherwise it is not. If a college education does not lead to an occupation or profession that provides emotional security and stability, financial rewards over and above those financial rewards rewards for those who do not attend college, and enhances one's social standing, then one cannot justify the time and effort spent in attaining the education.

This is why, especially among Black students, that it is so important that they are advised "correctly" from the beginning. To pursue a college education with no thought of the possibilities for securing a job in one's chosen area of study is pure folly. This writer has seen many Black students who were ill-advised in their pursuit of a college education. Yes, a college education within a well-advised area is worth all of the years of study, etc., necessary to attain the proper training.

It is the opinion of this writer that when Black persons realize, as do some other minority groups in America, that the American system will react favorably towards a group who promotes education among its members. Blacks must take lessons from other minority groups and secure all of the education that they can.

**EDUCATION TODAY!
FOR A BETTER TOMORROW**



Benjamin L. Hooks

FCC

Commissioner

Last week I tried, in my humble way, to tell my readers how I felt being unable to answer their many queries in respect to rumors regarding my future at the Federal Communications Commission or with the NAACP.

It is true I had no concrete answers to give for there had been no concrete offers made. But let me tell you, I was exuberant. I was doubly blessed, I felt, to be the center of real speculation for positions of power and esteem that any man or woman dedicated to public service would be proud to assume.

This was a humbling experience. It gave me pause. What, I asked myself, have I done to deserve this? Am I big enough for either chairman? Both posts carry with them awesome opportunities to do good or ill. Great opportunities always carry with them enormous responsibilities.

Was I equipped spiritually, morally, ethically to assume both? These questions, of course, cannot be answered definitively -- not until the mantle is assumed and the job is done.

I looked back over my life. As a youth in Tennessee I was taught by my parents to always do the best I could at any job I undertook. There was no excuse for sloppiness or doing a thing half way just because the task at hand was small or seemingly insignificant. Do it right, do it to the best of your ability, they sternly warned, or don't do it at all.

If the attention span was short, sterner measures applied to the seat of the pants, usually was enough to bring it back into sharper focus. And so the lesson became deeply embedded, an internal part of me and I have certainly had no reason to regret that it has.

I have tried to train myself by academically and morally to play a leadership role in the civil rights movement and as such have played such a role as a lawyer, minister, businessman for many years.

BAYARD RUSTIN WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

After the ballots have been cast and the winner determined, then comes the analysis of the elections. Almost every election postscript has emphasized that black voters made the difference in Carter's election! But the deeper political significance of the election for blacks has yet to be fully digested. In 1976 black politics emerged from the ghetto. No longer willing to play a subsidiary role and with a clear perception of the requirements for progress, the black voter came of age.

An impressive black turnout in 1976 came despite the fact that Gerald Ford was not an anti-black candidate and despite the lack of a prospect for new break-throughs by blacks into electoral to determine the outcome of elections. The black vote proved to be the margin of Carter's narrow victory in such key states as Missouri, Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, Maryland, South Carolina, and Florida. All in all the black vote may have provided the margin for as many as 219 of Carter's 297 electoral votes.

But if there is reason to be enthusiastic about the results there is also reason to be concerned. The Joint Center for Political Studies estimates that only about 43 percent of all blacks of voting age went to the polls, a significant drop from 1972. The only reason that the black vote was almost as large as four years ago was that a larger percentage of registered blacks voted. Even while we recognize the importance of the black vote in this election we must understand those forces which limit our political influence -- and a low rate of black political participation is certainly among them.

The reasons for lower registration which has

Whether all this is enough, only time and circumstances will tell. I do know there has never been a time, since I was old enough to sort things out for myself, that I have not wanted to serve my people and the Lord, and not necessarily in that order.

Many have expressed reservations over my leaving the FCC amidst rumors of an impending chairmanship. I do not think they should fear that I am leaving the struggle. I do believe my presence at the Commission has had an important impact on making broadcasters more responsive to the states, needs and interests of all segments of their respective communities and that I have been able to be a voice for those previously not heard. I also feel I can do so much more, for so many more people in my new post.

I do believe now I will have an opportunity to address some of the great issues and problems of the day affecting our nation and its minorities -- something I might not have been able to do with as much force and candor as a federal official.

I will not, however, turn away from the great issues inherent in broadcast communications. I intend to do my level best to encourage government at all levels -- executive, legislative, administrative and judicial -- to be responsive to the needs of all the people in such areas as affirmative action, penal reform, overhaul of criminal justice systems, putting an end to massive black joblessness, excellence and quality in education and so many other important areas.

To those who ask: "Will you do what you can to see that another black gets your seat on the Federal Communications Commission?" I answer an unqualified "Yes."

Not only that but I will work to see that all of the powerful federal regulatory agencies -- the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), Federal Power Commission (FPC), Security and Exchange Commission (SEC), Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), etc. -- have a "Black presence" on their commissions.

It is only fair and we must have it. But we will not accomplish this task without making a concerted demand. I expect blacks, other minorities, and women, and fairminded whites to join me in this struggle.

affected whites as well as blacks are complex. One factor is that the new Federal limitations on campaign spending made it difficult to get people excited enough about the elections to register. Early cutoff dates for registration then prevented many from registering when the election got into full swing.

Watergate and other scandals have been frequently cited as reasons for declining voter participation. While this has undoubtedly disillusioned some blacks, it is not a primary cause for lower black participation. The decline in black voter participation which began in 1970 has mirrored a stagnating economy that has meant the slowing or reversal of black progress.

The real measure of growing black political power is not the number of blacks elected to public office, though that is an important by-product. Rather it is the ability of black voters to shape national policies by electing candidates who are responsible to the economic needs that blacks share with other working Americans. Black voters recognize this, perhaps more clearly than some black politicians. In New York, black voters saw through peripheral issues and unfair allegations and voted for Daniel Patrick Moynihan, providing the margin to elect him to the Senate. Over 80 percent of blacks voted for Moynihan, even though he was not endorsed by the Council of Black Elected Officials, because they knew Moynihan was a domestic liberal with a commitment to helping the poor.

Only a political strategy which is national in scope, which reflects the political maturity of black Americans, and which recognizes the preeminence of economic issues can take full advantage of the new opportunities created by the election of Jimmy Carter.