

The Publisher Speaks



U.S. Senate Needs Fair Rules

During the 1960's many young militants complained that American democracy was nothing more than a sham, a mere facade to conceal the real workings of an oppressive system. In Black Power, for example, Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton pointed to "the conflict between the so-called American Creed and American practice." As they saw things, democracy's claims to equality and liberty "are simply words."

While some black people despaired of the democratic political process, others like Dr. King, A. Philip Randolph, Roy Wilkins and many more, grappled with its imperfections and transformed it into a dynamic agent for racial equality and constructive social change.

This transformation, of course, did not miraculously happen overnight. On the contrary, it was the culmination of a long series of painful slow advances, some of them almost imperceptible and seemingly insignificant. We fought hard and long sometimes against terrible odds; but, by and large, we succeeded in achieving many of our most important goals.

Without a doubt, then, the old Carmichael-Hamilton critique of American democracy was proved erroneous. Yet as we toppled one obstacle after another, by organizing a Congressional majority, we never succeeded in eliminating one particularly frustrating roadblock -- the Senate filibuster. Indeed, by establishing de facto minority rule, the filibuster serves as a perfect example of a conflict between the so-called American Creed and American practice," to use the words of Carmichael and Hamilton.

People with good memories will surely recall the 83-day aimed at defeating the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Although the bill had President Johnson's support, and the backing of a clear majority in the Senate, a minority held it captive by corraling it with a filibuster. Eventually the filibuster ended and the bill became law, but many other key pieces of civil rights legislation were either defeated or delayed by minority veto in the Senate. Passage of the Anti-Poll Tax bill, for instance, was delayed for 22 years because of filibusters and threats of filibusters. And the Fair Employment Practices Act was held hostage for 18 years.

Now, after fighting the undemocratic filibuster for so many years, we seem to be on the verge of a major breakthrough. Because of the untiring work of Senate Minority Leader Robert Byrd, a man who himself once used the filibuster in a truly masterful way, the Senate will soon consider a set of new rules designed to curb the veto power of the minority. Under Senator Byrd's plan, an obstinate minority will no longer be able to defeat legislation by entangling the Senate in a web of frivolous amendments, as Senator

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Just the FACTS

BUSINESS IN THE BLACK

By: Charles E. Belle

Housing Conditions Of Blacks

The housing in which Black Americans live is flawed twice as often as the housing of the total population, according to a report released today by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

This is one of the findings in a summary report on the housing situation of Black households in the United States.

The report, "How Well Are We Housed? 3. Blacks," is the third in a series of housing conditions of various groups of Americans. The first two reports in the series deal with the housing conditions of Hispanics and female-headed households.

This latest report reveals that Black people spend more of their earnings than the general population to live in decent housing. It estimates that 37 percent of Black Americans--but only 20 percent of the total population--need to spend more than a quarter of their income to live in unflawed, uncrowded housing.

"The fact that some Americans are still treated as second class citizens cannot be tolerated," said Secretary Patricia Roberts Harris. "I will continue to fight for the right of all minorities to get a fair share of the benefits of this society."

Another finding in the report, which is based on data from HUD's Annual Housing Survey for 1976, is that maintenance and plumbing are the most frequent deficiencies found in Black Households.

HUD Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research Donna E. Shalala, whose office prepared the report for release during Afro-American Heritage Month, said that, "No better time can be imagined to rededicate ourselves to the goal of a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family."

Copies of the report may be obtained from the Office of Policy Development and Research, Room 8124, HUD Building, Washington, D.C. 20410.

Best Buys In Town

Every stockbroker is overly optimistic about an equity opportunity every now and then. This year, there are plenty of common stocks to put your money into at reasonable prices. Americans of all colors have been chastised for consuming rather than saving their dollars.

Since Federal Reserve statistics show U.S. consumers devote 21% of every after-tax-dollar to repaying existing debts there is some truth to the comment. Some economists even believe because U.S. policymakers over the years have discouraged the public from saving, the U.S. now faces the prospects of higher inflation, a weaker dollar, slower economic growth and declining productivity.

Further, belief is that, unless such biases are corrected the U.S. will be unable to get on to a stable high-investment, high growth path. Now let me take the personal prerogative and pay homage to America's self-sufficiency. Some tax reform initiative will instigate a renewed interest in securities investment before election year 1980.

It is a matter of record that the stock market moves several months ahead of the actual economy. The stock market currently reflects the coming recession. On the theory that elective representatives fear unemployment personally as well as for the public, expect economic relief before the federal elections.

Vestaur Corporation, a San Francisco investment firm surveys each quarter some 300 top financial people around the country. For the first time since the survey was initiated in the first quarter of 1976, common stocks are given preference over all other investment alternatives as having the best prospects for appreciation. Over 70% of the respondents said they expect stocks to perform equal or better than real estate, bonds, diamonds or any other investment vehicle for the next 10 years.

Vestaur's track record compares favorably with that of Messrs. Gallup and Harris, the conference board and a lot of other more prestigious prognosticators, including the U.S. Government, Drexel Burnham Lambert, Inc. an

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LAS VEGAS VOICE

NEVADA'S BLACK COMMUNITY WEEKLY
"An Uninterrupted Publication Since 1963"

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

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