

# Point of View

## EDITORIAL

### Political Races Pick Up Steam

While still in its early stages, the political picture as relates to West and North Las Vegas is rapidly mounting. All eyes and ears are turning in that direction with much interest and concern.

The veteran legislators have now filed and there are some new faces on the horizon. The new aspirants have thrown their hats in the ring principally against the present legislators. At this point, it is interesting to note that there is not a candidate for the City and County seats.

A week ago there was interest shown for the County seat held by Sam Bowler but that now is for naught. Leonard Mason tested the "winds" over the holiday weekend only to find that the "votes were not there." He said that the necessary support and/or interest was not there. It takes money to run a decent campaign, the finances, according to Mason, are not there.

Some activity is being generated to draft Woodrow Wilson for the County seat. Wilson, a veteran legislator, is moving with some degree of caution and we don't blame him. The right chemistry and support must be there for him to make this supreme personal sacrifice to again get politically involved.

The road for anyone holding political office is not easy. It takes one of strong character and fortitude to succeed among that body of lawmakers.

We hope that more in the community will take that "giant step" before the registration deadline and seek out those seats which will be more beneficial to the "total constituency" instead of a select few.



CARL ROWAN

### Few Things Are Crueler Than Economy's Statistics

WASHINGTON -- Few things are crueler than the statistics of the American economy.

Report that in a single week in April a record 605,000 Americans filed for jobless benefits, and Americans yawn. For those who still have jobs you might as well write that 605,000 sparrows laid eggs in cypress trees.

Put General Motors Chairman Thomas A. Murphy on CBS' "Face the Nation" and mention that unemployment in the automobile industry is running around 25 percent, and his response is that "the recession, if there is one, will be short and mild." Murphy says he opposes a tax cut, and that "we need the discipline of reducing federal spending," and furthermore, "hopefully, we've seen the worst of it." Murphy earned \$366,667 last year and will earn a princely sum this year, no matter how far GM's profits fall.

Statistics are the new opiate of the masses. Those who go on living the luxurious life during periods of economic calamity use numbers to delude ordinary people in-

to believing that a recession is just an interlude in some magically inevitable process of lifting poor people to prosperity.

We ought not forget that the kind of recession we are moving into is not an interlude. Economists speak of "the recession of 1973-75," but recessions do not die in times and places that economics professors assign to them.

From March to April, unemployment jumped by 827,000, the largest one-month rise since the Jan. 1975 leap of 867,000. But the statistics hide the human tragedy of a child of one of those newly-jobless Americans who will have to drop out of college, never to return. That young American's future will be changed forever.

Long years after Murphy dismisses the sickness of the automobile industry with political cliches about the discipline of reducing federal spending, some former automobile dealer will twist his gnarled hands and tell his grandchildren how, "We used to be rich, until the gover-

nement and Detroit tycoons drove me into bankruptcy."

The victims of bankruptcy will be many -- remembering into their dotage. And late this year, perhaps, a male auto worker laid off in Detroit will find his TV set, his refrigerator and his automobile of all things, being repossessed because he is reduced to welfare and can't make the payments.

His wife will say to him, by eye, attitude or voice, "I know that you've read 'The Sensuous Man' and Dr. Reuben's 'Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Sex...,' but that's not enough. If you're not a

good provider, you're not a MAN."

So there goes one more separation or divorce, and there comes one more tragic one-parent family.

The recession of 1980 will never die for such ex-workers and their families.

But there is a new group of middle-class and pretending-to-rich Americans who will be testimony to their last days that recessions leave a permanent curse upon this society. The Washington Star reports what I am convinced is a national trend: This society's economic woes have produced an army of (See Carl Rowan, page 22)



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### Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor:

I am still somewhat fascinated with the models that appear regularly in the Las Vegas Sentinel. Those appearing on the front page of your June 20 issue, all I can say is "Wow."

Are the models from the Las Vegas area?

Jacob Owens

Yes, all of the models appearing weekly in the SENTINEL are from Las Vegas. The SENTINEL's Fashion Editor Lei Stroughter along with the models come up with those weekly gems. Photographer John S. Riley is the "magic eye" at each scene. We are proud of their superior professional work.

Editor

## School Testing Is Being Questioned

One of the more pathetic American traits is the naive faith in test results. We give tests for almost everything under the sun, most especially for entrance to colleges, graduate schools, and jobs. And we think the results of those tests actually predict behavior in the real world.

So college entrance exams are believed to predict how students will do in school, and job tests supposedly measure how well people will perform on the job.

Actually, all those tests measure is how well

people take tests. Framing and producing tests is a time-consuming, expensive business, and so is

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scoring them. But if a test is of the short-answer variety, it can be scored by a computer.

So most tests just measure how well people take multiple-choice tests. People in control of school admissions or hiring often seek security in the misleading ac-

curacy of numerical results. And large portions of the public confuse test scores with "merit."

Tests are also a good indicator of class background. There's a link between high scores on college entrance exams and high family income. Middle class kids are exposed to tests earlier, trained to take them, and given expensive coaching on how

to perform well on them.

Minority youngsters or students from poor families don't have that background, and tend to score lower. The result is often to deny access to higher education to young people who would otherwise succeed in their careers.

Although the fallibility of tests is widely admitted, excessive reliance is often placed on them. Testing is a useful tool for discovering gaps in knowledge, but it cannot be taken as a valid predictor of future success or be confused with some ob-



Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

jective standard of merit.

Some medical schools have found, for example,

that black students who do poorly on written exams do superior clinical work. Minority law students who score lower on law aptitude tests are often superior in classroom work and in the practice of law.

The fact is that tests serve one purpose — to screen people out. Whatever the scarce commodity in question — places in a school or a valued job — the tests serve to narrow down the applicants to the favored few.

In the process, many (See Vernon, page 22)