

Reagan On-Again Off-Again In South

By Andrew Young

It would be hilarious if it were not so serious — Ronald Reagan's on-again, off-again courtship of the South.

First, candidate Reagan kicks off his campaign in the Mississippi county which most symbolizes violence and repression in the South, and speaks of restoring "states' rights." Then, he displays anger when the very people who have been victimized by the obsessive exercise of "states' rights" understand his message.

Following his insensitive identification with Neshoba County, Miss., he moves on to Detroit and maligns Tusculumbia, Ala., never realizing that there is a difference.

It is indeed serious that Gov. Reagan and his advisers obviously don't understand what has happened in the states of the Old Confederacy during the past 20 years.

A visit by Reagan to Jackson, Greenville, Biloxi or Clarksdale, Miss., along with an appropriate speech, would have raised no fear or questions about his commitment to voting rights and racial justice. He could have gone to Oxford, the scene of riots over James Meredith's admission to "O' Miss," a Southern university that boasts a higher minority student enrollment than most U.S. state universities.

There is progress in the South. Major gains have been made against the violence and lawlessness which threatened the region. The threat of racial division was real, and the Southern governors who demanded an apology from Reagan remember those times. They are themselves the victors over the forces of fear and repression. Today, Alabama schools are far more integrated than those of the Northern suburbs, and "New South" politics is a result of a coalition of black and white voters.

But the forces of reaction still exist. There is a resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan. The South's problems are far from being solved, and



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national leadership must join the new Southern leadership in attempting to move us forward. There can be no tolerance of signals of a return to "the good old days," which were never good for anyone.

The Klan's resurgence represents a failure to bring white working-class citizens into the mainstream of Southern progress. They are rightly concerned about their children's health, education and future, but they are wrong in anticipating a drift back to a 19th-century racial analysis of their dilemma, which blames their station in life on the progress of black people. This was the mind of the Old South — the South of the past.

Old South politicians' like Sens. Herman Talmadge of Georgia and Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, have managed to remain in office in part because they have embraced this new South and have publicly confessed the error of their previous deeds.

Gov. Reagan's flip-flops on the South, like his confusion on China and his nostalgia for "a noble cause" (his description of the U.S. war in Vietnam), clearly point out the essential difference for American voters. Are we to live in the past, or move confidently into the future? Reagan's tendency to "play to the crowd" with pithy one-liners seemed to work well in the suburban ghettos of Republicanism, but it will continue to create problems among the

broader spectrum of voters.

I hope it is not possible to win a national election in 1980 with divide and conquer tactics, pitting North against South, black against white, city against suburb; but even if that strategy succeeds, I am convinced that one cannot govern in such an atmosphere.

The 1980s require leadership that breeds trust and inspires confidence that national difficulties can be overcome. The complex problems of energy, inflation, re-industrialization and the internationalization of our economy — the problems of this decade — cannot be solved by one-line, single-issue politics, but only by a news consensus on the total strength of our nation and faith in our future.

REGISTER NOW!

VOTER REGISTRATION LAST CHANCE

Local residents have until Saturday, October 5th to register to vote. Woodrow Wilson Campaign Headquarters located at 511 E. Bonanza Rd. is among the locations which will be open for voter registration all day Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. until 10 p.m.

Potential voters should be aware that this is their last chance to register and to make themselves heard in this election.

NAACP Office, 1040 West Owens, is another location for registrations. Exercise your right to vote today — REGISTER NOW!!!

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By Bayard Rustin

There was something immensely invigorating and exciting about the recent strikes by workers in Poland. Although the strikes occurred in a faraway country whose people live under a dictatorial regime, every American, black and white, could identify with the drama that daily unfolded on our television screens and in our newspapers.

What began ostensibly as a strike for higher wages, and against the Communist equivalent of inflation, was transformed into a struggle for democratizing an authoritarian society. When finally the strike was settled and the workers went back on their jobs, they had succeeded in extracting wide-ranging concessions from the Polish government involving the right to trade unions independent of government control. If the

Polish government lives up to the terms of this agreement. Poland will have taken a significant step in the direction of democracy.

However, there is a distant danger that the Polish leadership, pressured by the Soviet



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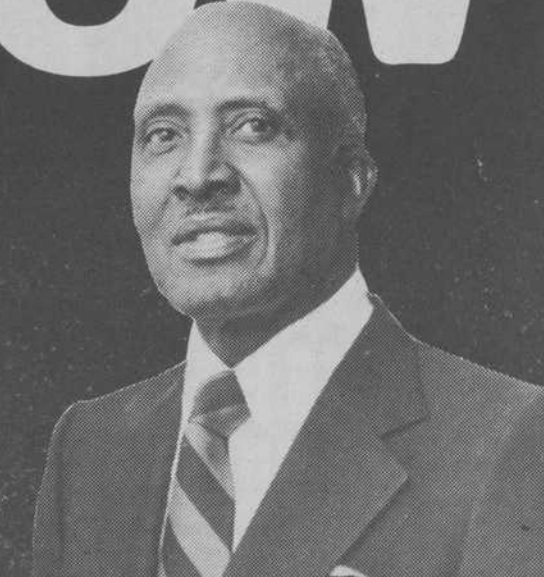
Union, may revoke the terms of the strike settlement and plunge Poland into a period of social unrest and harsh government repression. This is why newly-formed Polish free trade unions need the support they are getting from American organized labor, now more than ever.

Blacks who remember the days of the freedom rides and of the murders of black civil rights activists in the fifties and sixties understand the true heroism of the Polish strikers. They literally were risking their lives for a better, more democratic, and more human society. Of course, the repressions and harassment which black and white civil rights activists suffered in the United States was not the consequence of official federal government policy, and so the situation is not entirely equivalent. Yet the courage that was required to take on Jim Crow is similar to the courage that was required in 1980 to force the Polish Communist Party to relinquish some of its dictatorial control over Poland.

The strikes in the Polish shipyards are a significant historical event because they remind us all of the commitment of workers and

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