

Point of View

Editorial ON FATHERHOOD

What is a father?

One might say simply that he is a man who begets a child or one who is regarded as a male parent. This in itself covers a very large territory.

A father might range in age from 13 to 113 or more. He can be any size, any shape, any color, any race and can belong to any creed. He can be healthy or he may be sickly. He can be rich or he can be poor. He may work at any one of a million or more jobs, or he may not be fortunate enough to have a job right now. He might be a happy and gay person or he might be sad and depressed. No matter which of these categories characterize your father, he is much more than the sum of these attributes.

And what do we expect of our fathers? We depend on him to be the bread winner of the family — to provide us with our food, shelter and clothing. And when we're young, we usually ask him for money, a car — or the use of his, and for other luxuries.

But our father gives us much more than this. He is the backbone of the family. We look to him for strength, leadership and guidance. And most of all, we look to him for understanding and love.

We would do well to think long about black fatherhood. Of black people in general, Ralph Ellison once said: "Any people who could endure all of that brutalization (of slavery) and keep together, who could undergo such dismemberment and resuscitate itself, and endure until it could take the initiative in achieving its own freedom, is obviously more than the sum of its brutalization. Seen in this perspective, theirs has been one of the great human experiences and one of the great triumphs of the human spirit in modern times; in fact, in the history of the world."

These words are especially true of black fathers,

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AFRICA, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND REAGAN

By Bayard Rustin

It is thirty years since Africa began to emerge from the shadows of European colonialism. The overwhelming majority of African states have had national independence for nearly two decades. Enough time has passed for drawing up a balance sheet on Africa and the state of African democracy.

And a brief survey of the extent of human rights and freedoms on that large continent reveals a disturbing state of affairs. By the reckoning of Freedom House, a respected monitor of human rights throughout the world and an organization on whose board I serve, out of the 46 nations in Africa only 3 are assessed to be free. 17 are judged by Freedom House as partly free, and

26 are rated "not free." The most recent annual report of Amnesty International, a human rights organization which monitors the treatment of political prisoners, is a virtual catalogue of tortures and atrocities in Africa.



Bayard Rustin

The world is well aware of the carnage

Bayard Rustin is President Emeritus of the A. Philip Randolph Institute and one of the founders of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

By Norman Hill

A project administered by the A. Philip Randolph Educational Fund — the Youth Employment Program (YEP) — has fallen victim to the Reagan budget cutting ax.

At first glance, this might not seem in the least surprising. Dozens of other programs funded by the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) were slated for reductions or elimination. A number of such programs were run by civil rights organizations.

(Norman Hill is Executive Director of the A. Philip Randolph Educational Fund, which administered and developed the Youth Employment Program.)

The program successfully placed young blacks into meaningful jobs in the private sector. For a cost of a little over \$1,000 per placement, half the cost

committed in the Central African Republic by the deposed tyrant and self-styled "emperor" Bokassa and in Uganda by deposed dictator Idi Amin. But the Amnesty report singles out many other African states for flagrant human rights violations. The Cuban-backed Leninist regime in Angola continues to ruthlessly suppress dissidents and to execute political opponents.

Ethiopia, another Soviet and Cuban-backed regime, has had a succession of "Red Terror" campaigns against political opponents. These campaigns have involved, according to

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REAGAN VS. REAGAN

of most government-sponsored and private training and placement programs, young blacks were counseled and placed in jobs with a future.

The yearly million-dollar budget of YEP was lean. Most of the money went to pay for staff and office expenses in ten cities. In two-and-a-half years, this modest program succeeded in placing nearly 2,500 young people in full-time jobs. It provided an essential mechanism for young blacks by which they could escape the cycle of poverty and enter into the productive workforce. The program provided a needed service for employers, as well. It pre-screened young blacks on the basis of training, ability, and work habits.

All of this, one would think, is precisely the kind of approach the Reagan Administration should be encouraging if it is honestly committed to including blacks in the private sector.

Interestingly enough, several months ago, the Institute for Educational Affairs — an organization whose Vice-Chairman is neo-conservative political scientist Irving Kristol — wrote in glowing terms about the Youth Employment Program. The organization's newsletter referred to YEP as "a refreshing alternative" and contrasted it favorably to "youth employment programs with pie-in-the-sky goals and built-in inefficiency." YEP, the report asserted, "is based on fiscal soundness, incentive, and realism." This, then, was the assessment of an organization which included among its officers a substantial number of members of President Reagan's transition team.

On April 12, in an address delivered at the Tuskegee Institute, Vice President Bush asserted the new administration's commitment to equal justice for blacks. Yet

such assertions ring hollow when in practice the administration refuses to recognize the legitimate role of government in sustaining programs which facilitate the entry of blacks into the private sector.

Mere reliance on market forces to resolve social problems is not enough. Even in the expanding economy of the 1960s, black progress would have been impossible in the absence of creative programs designed to redress the injustices of the cycle and culture of poverty.

In a very real sense the Reagan administration is undermining its own avowed goals when it allows for private-sector programs such as YEP and for other job-training programs to fall victim to overzealous budget slashing. Such shortsighted cutting will not significantly reduce government spending; rather, it will exacerbate social injustice and heighten tensions.

National Concern Over Atlanta Killings

By Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

The special horror of child killings is one that all people can understand, and the way green ribbons have sprouted on people's lapels all over the nation is a vivid and meaningful indication of national concern and of solidarity with the people in Atlanta.

The Reagan Administration has recognized that this is more than a local police issue. It has assigned the FBI to the case. It released almost \$2.5 million to help the city pursue the investigation and to help meet the needs of the city's black

President Bush did more than symbolize the Administration's concern; it reflected the nation's



JORDAN

interest in ending the terror.

The ultimate solution to the plague of fear in Atlanta is to capture the killer or killers. The

But, as professional crime fighters know, catching the kind of crazed person that commits crimes like mass child-killing is extraordinarily difficult. With few clues and with little evidence to link victims and killers, police are often in a bind.

Even considering such difficulties, it is important to keep up the pressure and to solve these terrible murders. The safety of Atlanta's black children is at

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children, including support services such as mental health programs.

The visit made to Atlanta by Vice

massive police investigation now taking place may be the most concentrated such effort ever made.