

HILL

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reason one can confidently predict that blacks will continue to be a solid voting block which backs pro-labor candidates who support policies dedicated to a more equitable distribution of wealth.

Nonetheless, the two-day conference in San Francisco indicates that a debate will have to begin for the first time within the black community on political op-

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tions. This debate in my view will be a healthy one insofar as it helps sharpen the arguments of black liberals and moderates.

Who, then, are the black conservatives and what do they stand for? The two leading proponents of black conservatism are Prof. Thomas Sowell, an

economist from the Hoover Institution, and Prof. Walter Williams of Temple University in Philadelphia. Both of them are strong opponents of organized labor, which they claim limits opportunities for blacks. Their view, however, flies in the face of the evidence which shows that organized labor, more than any other institution in American life, has opened its doors to increased black participation. Indeed, today, over 30 percent of black workers are union members. Rather than adopting a policy of exclusion, the labor movement has sought better working conditions for all its workers, irrespective of race. And, most importantly, unions effectively represent their members, who on the average receive \$2,000 per year more than non-union workers and have better health and retirement benefits.

Complacency can hardly be characterized as indicative of leadership. And the coming Reagan years give little reason for us to be complacent.

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was in large measure a consequence of President Carter's Piecemeal approach to economic matters and to some extent it was also a product of his insistence that the country's problems were too substantial to be solved by the office of the Presidency. A lack of vision was implicit in Carter's assumption that there were great

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limitations on what government could do.

By contrast, the Republicans succeeded in conveying to the electorate that theirs was the "party of ideas," Albeit wrong ones. The Republicans were also successful because they capitalized on serious Democratic blunders in foreign affairs and because they exploited widespread discontent with the state of the economy.

How then is the Democratic Party to rebuild? How is it to regain the initiative once again? Although many party activists are convinced that the answer rests in revising party rules to assure greater participation by professional politicians, I believe that such a necessary revision is far from the real answer. What is even more necessary is the party's careful reassessment of its principles, direction,

and goals. Liberal Democrats, in particular, must demonstrate that they have a vision larger than one which merely seeks to preserve the status quo. With the Executive branch and the Senate in the hands of the Republicans, and with an effective conservative majority ascendant in the House of Representatives, the Democrats have the luxury of reassessing programs and approaches.

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trol, blame social welfare programs for it, and then slam on the brakes.

But the only way, and it cannot be stressed too strongly -- the only way -- to limit federal social programs is to implement full employment with jobs for all who want to work. Those jobs should be productive, real jobs preferably the private sector.

And that inevitably means some form of federal spending or, more accurately, federal investment in developing our nation's human resources. Whether through direct employment and training programs, federal subsidies, or through

federal regulations on hiring the long-term unemployed, the federal role is essential and inescapable.

To suppose that simply unshackling the private sector is going to create jobs for all is a myth. The federal government will still have to shape its tax and regulatory policies in a way that encourages job creation where it is most needed, and not, as at present, in a way that drains jobs from our industrial heartlands to other regions or other countries.

A new policy of benign neglect is an invitation to further erosion of our cities, greater racial tensions in our society, and, ultimately, damage to our nation's ability to restore the economy and America's place in the world.



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