

Point of View

PEOPLE, PLACES and POLITICS

By Joe Neal



On Monday, O'Callaghan wrote a comment in "Where I Stand" about Claude Perkins' expected appointment as Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education under the Reagan administration.

O'Callaghan, who seemed very supportive of the positions which Claude took when he resigned from the School District some months ago, is now taking on the characteristics of a bigot. What happened to the Perkins who was lauded in the editorials of the Sun when he resigned, that he has now become a person who is apparently not qualified to be Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education? O'Callaghan told us on Monday that this new job to which Perkins is aspiring is "a \$60,000 a year plum which should be filled by some rather strict standards."

We are lead to believe that the "strict standards" to which O'Callaghan has reference, are that they do not entail the appointment of a black from Nevada to the position of Assistant Secretary of Education. Furthermore, we are lead to believe that O'Callaghan attempts to disguise what appears to be his bigotry by quoting the U.S. Department of Education employee as reported in the Sun by Mary Ann Mele, that Perkins "is not distinguished in any way in education. We are not impressed at all. He is deceptive and dishonest. We just don't need that kind of loose administrator here."

The point I make is, if O'Callaghan felt this way about Perkins, why couldn't he be man enough to state it himself instead of using the quotation of an unnamed employee of the Department of Education?

I will not stand by and allow O'Callaghan to impugn the integrity of a man like Perkins, who has not had the added benefit of being white, but has achieved more educationally than O'Callaghan.

We know what the probable problem is with Perkins. O'Callaghan could not use him. Since O'Callaghan's nature appears to be a vindictive one, apparently what he cannot control, he will attempt to destroy.

Well, we have a surprise for O'Callaghan! We will advise the black people that maybe they should not subscribe to the Sun as long as O'Callaghan is present there. Just maybe Mr. Greenspun would get the idea that black people do not appreciate "yellow journalism," the kind of journalism where you throw a brick and hide your hand.

I have not been a great fan of Paul Laxalt since he has been on the Federal level. One thing, however, I have come to appreciate about him is, that when he was governor, his black appointees were not treated any differently from his white appointees, I do believe that if Paul Laxalt recommended Perkins for the position of Assistant Secretary of Education, it was because he felt that Perkins was qualified for the job. In this instance,

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To Be Equal

REFORMING WELFARE

By John E. Jacob

Current federal welfare policies punish the poorest and, by tearing supplemental benefits and Medicaid away from the working poor, create disincentives to work.

The terrible impact of the budget cuts on welfare recipients was documented in hearings sponsored by the Urban League in March. A cross-section of recipients and administrators testified to the cruel hardships imposed on the weakest among us.

I would hope that such suffering could be avoided by reconsidering misguided national policies, and by implementing a welfare reform that may sound radical but has won the support of many conservatives.

True conservatives have favored a solution

that puts cash directly into the hands of the poor, reduces the red tape and regulations that have such arbitrary power over poor people, and gives the poor the same freedom of choice and responsibilities en-



John E. Jacob

joyed by others.

So a truly conservative solution to welfare points to the plan the National Urban League has advanced — an income maintenance system based on the refundable income tax.

That plan would ensure that all people have minimum income levels and maximum freedom. It is a realistic alternative to the monster system that serves both the nation and poor people badly.

The basic components would include:
:A basic annual grant, or tax credit, to all.

elimination of means tests and coercive regulations would do away with stigma.

:Almost everyone would pay taxes at a flat rate. But because everyone gets a tax credit and because all loopholes would be closed, the tax system would be far more fair than the pre-

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:The grant would be taxed away from the affluent, while those below a certain income level would keep all or part of the grant. So working people of modest incomes would get the income assistance they need but for which they do not qualify under the present system.

:Automatic payments through the tax system as a matter of right. The

sent system.

The essential point is that the universal, refundable tax credit offers a way to rationalize an irrational tax system that favors the rich at the expense of working people, while reducing the numbers of the poor.

The cost of such a program depends upon the amount of the tax credit and the level of the primary tax rate, but See WELFARE, Page 11

MRS. BOZEMAN, MRS. WILDER AND THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT

by Bayard Rustin

After months of hesitancy and opposition, President Reagan has at last agreed to support the essentials of legislation which will extend the provisions of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

The plan, which has won the support of civil rights and legislative leaders, endorses the concept of examining the effects of local laws and practices to determine whether discrimination has resulted, but wisely goes on to specifically deny that minorities must be elected precisely in numbers equal to their proportion in the population.

President Reagan agreed to accept this Voting Rights extension only after pressure was exerted upon the White House by Republican moderates who are fearful of a 1982 disaster at

the polls. His recalcitrance has been roundly condemned by those who are dedicated to equal rights under the law.

Yet despite evidence of clear and widespread support for extending the Voting Rights Act, for many Americans, the issue of voting rights seems to be a relic of the past. Indeed, there is a widespread indifference to the obstacles minorities face in their efforts to fully participate in the political process.

One frequently hears expressed the sentiment that black Americans no longer face hurdles in participating in the selection of their governmental leaders. Occasionally this indifference is eloquently answered by a profoundly moving and disturbing event. One such

recent event highlights the difficulties and frustrations blacks continue to encounter when they seek to participate in



Bayard Rustin

our democracy. It is the case of Maggie Bozeman and Julia Wilder, two voting rights activists from Pickens County, Alabama.

Pickens County is a throwback to the old South. The county's towns are quiet. There is little activity on the streets of Carrollton, the county seat. Pickens County seems unaffected by the passage of time, particularly in the area of race relations.

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