

# Point of View

## To Be Equal

# VOTING FOR A CHANGED COURSE

By John E. Jacob

The 1982 election has come and gone, and however experts may interpret the results, one thing is clear: voters clearly indicated they don't want to "stay the course."

The vote is a mandate for changing the economic policies the electorate deems unfair, inequitable, and responsible for the Depression.

How else can we interpret Democratic gains in the House of Representatives double the normal gain for the opposition party in a mid-term election? What else explains the strong showing of Democrats in gubernatorial elections? Or the capture of the majority of newly created Sunbelt seats by moderates?

Then there are the surprising elections where strong, popular Republican candidates went down to defeat, clearly victims of voter anger at national economic policies.

When so strong a candidate as New Jersey Republican Millicent Fenwick loses to a little-known opponent, you know that voters are demanding a change in course.

If the election of 1980 marked a swing to the right, the election of 1982 marked a shift back to the center.

For blacks, the economic policies.



John E. Jacob

tion results confirmed two truisms — that the black vote can make a difference and that race is still a factor.

In countless elections around the country, the black vote was crucial. Blacks were a

key factor in Mark White's gubernatorial victory in Texas. And it was a strong black turnout that helped tip the scales for Mario Cuomo in his close race against Lewis Lehrman, a candidate who advocated a state-based supply side version of Reaganomics.

But offsetting any complacency about the importance of the black vote was the bitter blow of seeing Tom Bradley defeated in his quest

the official nomination of the Democratic Party, all should have made him an easy choice to replace the retiring Democratic incumbent of a traditionally Democratic district.

But Clark lost. Clearly, he did not lose because his district's voters suddenly discovered a new-found allegiance to the Republican Party. He lost because white voters in the Delta

### John E. Jacob is President Of The National Urban League

for California's governorship and Robert Clark losing his bid to become Mississippi's first black congressman since Reconstruction.

If anyone had a good shot at becoming the nation's first black governor, it was Tom Bradley. He is a former policeman, mayor of Los Angeles who successfully guided the city through the hardships of Proposition 13 economics, and an acclaimed moderate elected with white votes in a city with a relatively small black population.

But Bradley lost. Was race a factor? It will be hard to convince blacks it wasn't. Bradley's lead in the polls melted away as many people who told pollsters they would vote for a black candidate, voted their prejudices in the privacy of the ballot booth.

If Californians blew the opportunity to demonstrate their racial maturity, Mississippians confirmed the strong hold racism retains in the supposedly New South.

Robert Clark was a congressional candidate with a strong track record. Years in the state legislature, a generally moderate political stance, and

could not bring themselves to vote for their own party's black candidate, despite his endorsement by state leaders of both races.

Nevertheless, the number of black Congressmen increased to a record high, and the Congressional Black Caucus should be a potent force in a new, more pragmatic Congress.

Two other races bear comment. George Wallace is again governor of Alabama, this time elected with the help of the votes of black voters he once tried to keep segregated. I don't approve of forgiving and forgetting but black Alabamans obviously decided to choose the lesser of two evils, since Wallace's opponent espoused the radical right.

And Lowell Weicker's re-election against an attractive opponent vindicates the importance of courage in politics. Weicker fought strongly for civil rights, mounting a one-man filibuster against an anti-busing bill in the Senate, something observers said was political suicide. Well, it turned out to be a prescription for victory.

Perhaps his example will put some backbone

## PEOPLE, PLACES and POLITICS

By Joe Neal



Today is Thanksgiving. It is also, as the phrase was coined in "Jesus Christ Superstar," "the first day of the rest of your life." And two more years of Reaganomics. It will be a difficult beginning. But, even in bad times, such as we have now, there is always hope.

We can be thankful that our hopes are still alive. And as long as we have hope, we will overcome any economic adversity which threatens our economic well being. Hope has kept us going. It has been the vehicle of our dreams of a better world and has not permitted us to vanquish in the sea of dispiritedness.

Hope has buttressed our dignity. It has not allowed us as a people to succumb to the quick fixed of our dreams. No matter how tough the times have and will become, we will not allow them to strip away our dignity. Of course, we had a few among us to go astray and become involved in pursuits which are not becoming to us as a people. We can expect some of that to happen. But as black people, our banner of dignity still flies high in the minds of most of us.

We have style. If you don't believe it, join me some Saturday night in the back room of the Elks Club on Owens Avenue. You can see our style in the way that we dance, in the hair-dos, in the dress and the way we "walk and talk that talk." Some of us get named according to our style. It makes no difference what Mother or Father have decided to call you; we will call you by what is most prevalent about you. In other words, you are subject to be named according to your style. It is a cultural carry-over from our African heritage that makes this so.

We have identity. The whole world knows who we are. Our blackness sets us apart and enhances our hope, our dignity and our style. We are a people who are bound together by the predisposition of color. It is our color which has enhanced the atmosphere of brotherly love and caused us to create our own cultural tools such as the "Afro Comb," Sta-Soft hair spray, the blowout, music and many other things which signify the identity of a people. We wear our dignity up front for the world to see and the world knows we are a distinct people. Even though we are a religious people, it is not religion which keeps us together, but the predisposition of color. It is our color which has forced a universal bond of friendship among us.

Let's be thankful that we still have hope, dignity, style, and identity. These are the major ingredients of our own self-determination. So, in these hard times we will continue to look ahead, because, as a people, we have never been afraid of the future. It has been stated in this column before and we will say it again. Quoting from the lines of the Harlem play, "When hell freezes over we will skate."

**HAPPY THANKSGIVING!**

into the long-dormant forces in Congress who have so shamelessly acquiesced in the war against the poor.

The views expressed on these editorial pages are those of the artists or authors indicated. Only the one indicated as the Sentinel-Voice editorial represents this publication.

## Editorial

The President of the United States, Ronald Reagan, recently announced his intention to deploy the MX missile system in a series of Wyoming silos.

The question is not why the President decided to deploy the missile system, but where he decided to put it. The question is why did he not deploy the system in Nevada?

Nevada has one of the highest unemployment rates in the nation, and the deployment of the missile system in this state would certainly have created more jobs, thus helping to decrease the deficits of our several governmental entities.

Senator Howard Cannon stated that Wyoming had lobbied harder for the system than Nevada. What hindered Nevada from lobbying for the system? Are we too conservative and/or rich a state to admit that our unemployment rate needs a boost in the downward direction? Maybe our politicians were too busy politicking and lost sight of what their job really was/is. If so, then they should be held accountable for losing this employment opportunity and increasing the unemployment rate.

The argument has been raised that with such a system in our state, our state would be more vulnerable to an outside attack. It should be considered that anywhere in the United States would be vulnerable to a missile attack.

Now that the announcement has been made as to where the missile system will be placed, it seems that we in Nevada should send a congratulatory message to Wyoming, or should Wyoming send a message to us telling us how stupid we were?