

# Point of View

## Editorial

The major thrust of several universities in our nation recently has been a move toward the inclusion of high technology as a top priority. This includes our own local university as well as universities in nearby states.

We would be among the first to agree that training in high technology, which primarily includes mathematics, engineering, and computer science, is becoming necessary to function properly in this nation. However, these same persons who will be trained in high technology areas must also be trained in the basic fundamentals of reading, writing, speaking, and arithmetic. Our major politicians and higher education administrators seem to be ignoring this fact.

Despite all of the hue and cry about the need for better trained individuals in the high technology areas, we still have children who need to be taught the basics. If a major portion of the available funds are used for high technology areas, then the education of the children will be neglected. Children and young people will have to forfeit their God-given right to an education, while our politicians go blindly on their way funding high technology programs with no thought of initial preparation of children to cope with life.

With the changes taking place in society, and the threat of nuclear war always haunting our country, it would appear that funds spent on basic education would benefit our society more than pouring enormous amounts of funds into high technology.

It would also appear that with the heavy emphasis on high technology, the job market for technicians will soon be over-saturated and unemployment will rise.

Before we plunge headlong into programs of high technology, we should take a close look at the long range problems that may be created. Blindly moving into any program without thorough investigation usually creates chaos.

## To Be Equal

# THE HIGH-TECH SOLUTION

By John E. Jacob

The general consensus seems to be that the new high-technology industries will be the engine of our economy's growth, replacing the millions of jobs destined to be lost in the traditional smoke-stack industries.

That's taken as an article of faith, along with

"Atari Democrats" by the press for their faith in the high-tech future. But Atari just closed down plants in California and is moving production of its video games to Asia. Where does that leave high-tech's job promise? In the same boat with steel and autos, that's where.

growth, with an expected 700,000 new jobs. Nurses aides and orderlies are second, and janitors are third. Not until slot number 23 do we find a high-tech profession, computer systems analyst.

some forms of production more efficient, but at the cost of many jobs. No one ever dreams that the auto industry, for example, will ever employ as many people as it used to.

As Nobel prize winning economist Wassily Leontief says: "More and more workers will be replaced by machines. I do not see that the new industries can employ everybody who wants a job."

So this is the time to begin to formulate policies that deal with the implications of the high-tech future. Rosy predictions about a nation of computer programmers won't prepare us for the realities of the new age that is coming.

One reality of that age is the danger of growing inequality in our society, with a favored few holding the shrinking number of

See JACOB, Page 15

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some assurances that it will all work out for the best in the long run, even though some temporary adjustment pains are bound to occur.

So perhaps it's time to look beyond that glib consensus of high-tech future's promise. And what we see is considerably less encouraging.

For example, some leading Democrats have been dubbed

Proponents of the high-tech future say it will result in a mass upgrading of work skills, and therefore higher salaries and more job satisfaction for American workers.

But that's doubtful. The U.S. Department of Labor projects that 25 million new jobs will be created in the decade of the eighties.

Secretaries are the top ranking occupational category in job



John E. Jacob

By the end of this decade, a decade in which our economy is supposed to move into the post-industrial era, there will be a far greater demand for fast food workers than for computer technicians.

The coming of industrial robots will make

# AFRICA'S NEWEST REFUGEES

By Bayard Rustin

No year passes without some great crisis involving refugees. The circumstances of each crisis are now almost predictable. The pattern has been repeated in a variety of settings. Almost always the victims are black or yellow. Almost always they are fleeing abject poverty or some form of political barbarism. Almost always the world stands by unable or unwilling to prevent the tragedy that unfolds before its eyes.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s our attention was successively riveted to the plight of Indochinese refugees — Vietnamese and Cambodians fleeing their cruel Marxist-Leninist dictatorships. Later our attention focused on Somali refugees fleeing the oppression of the Ethiopian dictator Colonel Mengistu. Last year Americans confronted

the dictatorial cruelty and abject poverty which drove thousands of Haitians to our shores. Now it is the turn of the Ghanalians.

Over 2 million Ghana-



Bayard Rustin

ians have lived in Nigeria for years as a result of that country's petroleum-based economic expansion. Because oil prices have plummeted as a result of declining Western demand, Nigerian President Shehu Shagari ordered the expulsion of all Ghanalians working in his country. Shagari accused the Ghanalians of ruining

his country's economy by taking needed jobs and draining the country's resources. He told the estimated two million Ghanalians living in Nigeria to clear out and return to their native land within two weeks.

The result was a

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mass exodus and a refugee problem of staggering proportions. The virtually uninterrupted sea of refugees pouring into Ghana brought with them stories of incredible inhumanity. Ghanalians were robbed of their luggage and other belongings by Nigerian thieves. Near Nigeria's capital in the slums of Ijora, bodies of mutilated young Ghanaian women were found among eight corpses. Many of those who fled did not finish

the 120-mile trek back home, having died of starvation and exhaustion, buried anonymously in the bush and along the beaches.

Once in Ghana, the refugees were faced with starvation in a desperately poor country

whose government already faces severe economic difficulties and is on the verge of bankruptcy.

Some international relief has been forthcoming. The U.S. has committed nearly 800 tons of food; the European Economic Community has granted \$5.5 million in emergency refugee aid.

While some observers recognize that Nigeria could no longer

afford to cope with a huge population of foreigners who strained its economy, virtually everyone believes that the rapidity with which the expulsion order was implemented caused needless suffering and death. Had the Nigerian leadership acted more responsibly it would have enabled international relief agencies to prepare for the influx of refugees into Ghana.

Yet, the blanket expulsion may eventually backfire on Nigeria. Work reportedly has stopped on a number of construction sites which utilized Ghanaian workers. The school system was heavily dependent on Ghanaian teachers who, although formally unaffected by the expulsion order, now

find the atmosphere within the country virtually intolerable. Moreover, such oppression can lead to increased tensions within Africa and may rekindle longstanding ethnic animosities.

In the final analysis the plight of the Ghanalians underscores the fact that the idealized view of racial solidarity is far from a reality in African life. Thus, the fact that this cruelty has been perpetrated by blacks against blacks should not surprise us. It should, however, call forth a vigorous response from both black and white Americans. What is needed at present is refugee assistance combined with a strong public condemnation of Nigeria's inhumane and irresponsible conduct.

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