

Point of View

Editorial

It has come to our attention that negotiations are being held between the CETA officials and the Clark County Community College administrators to transfer the training portion of the CETA program to the community college.

At first glance this might look as if it is a noble gesture on the part of the community college to take over the training aspect of the program. However, a closer look reveals some interesting sidelights.

It is a well known fact that many of our Black citizens are reluctant to approach an institution of higher learning. Because of previous negative experiences with educational institutions, many Blacks are intimidated by them and refuse to become associated with them.

Educational institutions are also considered by many Blacks to be highly bureaucratic in nature, and tend to be very selective in choosing those persons who will receive the training offered.

The Clark County Community College is controlled by the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada System. This body establishes policies for the programs offered by the institutions of higher learning within the state. If all of the training programs for Clark County were placed at the Clark County Community College, or any other such institution, this board, or their representative, would dictate policy for the programs with the possibility that persons from other parts of the state would have direct control of what takes place in Clark County, make for possible confusion within the programs.

The community, as a whole, appears to be quite satisfied with the present CETA method of selecting and placing trainees in programs suited to the needs and desires of the applicants.

We urge our CETA Board of Directors to take a close look at all of the ramifications before final approval for program transfer is made.

The national political arena does not lack for players who are willing to stir white emotions with racially coded terms. A few years ago it was Affirmative Action or reversed discrimination. Today it is teacher competency.

Competency is a basic thread which permeates the human condition. We all like to have competency in something. So when we are told that a lack of competency in our schools impedes the growth and development of our children, it becomes a great concern to us. I frequently hear persons say, "I want my children to go to a school where they have competent teachers." The basic thought underlining such a statement is one of survival. What we are really saying is, "I want my children to be able to survive."

Survival is an emotional concern which is subject to exploitation by unscrupulous politicians. Some years ago, it was Affirmative Action or reverse discrimination which was used to stir the emotions of whites who were concerned with the progress of blacks in the job area. The emotion which was generated around this issue required a resolution from the courts which, in essence, meant that anyone who was involved justiciably could challenge these propositions. The Supreme Court, even though classified by many, myself included, to be the Nixon's Court, turned out to be more independent than one may have thought. It dealt a death blow to many of these reverse discrimination proposals. The racial strategist was left without an issue to motivate large numbers of people in directions they wanted them to go.

Competency in our schools has become the new vehicle which racial strategists are using to reorder their plans of racial superiority. There are about four methods by which this can be done, about which I would like to comment. One method is to create apprehension throughout the country as to the deleterious effects of the lack of competency in our schools. This was done by the appointment of a commission called The National Commission On

PEOPLE, PLACES and POLITICS

By Joe Neal



Excellence In Education. The commission has issued its report, which is entitled "A Nation At Risk: The Imperative For Educational Reform."

It is not by coincidence that the report would have the word "excellence" in its name, nor that the report issued would say that the "nation is at risk." Admittedly, these are terms which would make you take notice. It indeed did have a shocking effect, which kept the news commentators expounding for weeks. In the midst of these reports we were hearing things such as the schools had to lower their standards after integration. This was as if to say that competency only became a problem when blacks had to be let into all-white schools. Such a position can only emanate from those who hold themselves out to be of a superior mind; hence, racists.

You cannot speak of the lack of competency in our schools without establishing culpability. The culprit in this case has become the teachers' organization. Hence, my second point: To eliminate us from a nation at risk, we must have good teachers, so the race strategists tell us. This is hardly an objectionable argument. However, it is the aim and purpose behind such an argument that becomes somewhat disturbing. The proposed plan to get good teachers is to institute a merit pay

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To Be Equal

WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN POVERTY

by John E. Jacob

In the old days, the cry used to be "save the women and children." The new style in public policy though, is to dump women and kids, for the nation is tolerating a situation in which poverty is becoming a fact of life for growing numbers of them.

One out of every four children lives in a family that is poor or near poor. That "near poor" classification by the way, amounts to poverty in the real world -- the so-called poverty line simply defines abject poverty, the poorest of the poor.

With a fourth of America's children growing up disadvantaged, the nation's

future is in jeopardy. Those are kids without the opportunities to make it in the future.

And their numbers are growing fast. In the past three years, the number of poor children has increased by an incredible 25 percent. That's the bitter legacy of the current Depression that will haunt us far into the future.

The shocking incidence of poverty among children is attributed to the growth in female-headed households, but that's no answer. Those families are poor not because they are headed by women but because jobs and training opportunities for disadvantaged single mothers barely exist.

And female poverty has a racial dimension

too. Over two-thirds of black women family heads with children are poor; only about two-fifths of similar white families are poor.

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But those female poverty rates are high enough for all groups to make the point that poverty is rapidly becoming feminized. In fact, the National Advisory Council on Economic Opportunity stated:

"All other things being equal, if the proportion of the poor who are in female-headed families were to increase at the same rate it did from 1967 to 1977, the poverty population would be composed solely of

women and their children by the year 2000."

Another recent report highlights the tragic plight of poor women

and children. It is by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, and it is aptly titled "A Growing Crisis: Disadvantaged Women and Their Children."

This report details not only the negative effects on such families in employment, education and health, but also the way cuts in federal social programs have worsened their situation.

Children whose mothers are poor suffer most. They are more prone to a host of ills



John E. Jacob

starting with greater risk of birth defects and ending with higher incidence of malnutrition.

So it should come as no surprise that statistics indicate poor children are more likely to do badly in school work and to drop out of

high school. Their unemployment rates are astronomical. It's as if our nation turns its back on their right to full membership in society.

With all the attention recently focused on the failures of the educational system, policymakers have to understand the link between poverty and schooling.

But instead of butressing poor families with jobs, training, food and special education aid, a self-styled pro-family Administration is cutting those programs drastically.

As the Civil Rights See JACOB, Page 14

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