

EDUCATION AND THE POOR

by Bayard Rustin

In recent days, the issue of education and its relationship to the social and economic stability of our nation has once again come to the forefront of press attention. A front-page article in the June 9, 1983 issue of the New York Times announces that "education is emerging as a major issue in the 1984 Presidential campaign," with Walter Mondale and Ronald Reagan both moving quickly to advance their views of the proper role of education in our society.

Other public figures also are joining this debate. In his recent maiden address to the U.S. Senate, New Jersey Senator Frank Lautenberg, likewise, focused on education in its relationship to the poor. The Senator warned that the technological and computer revolution now sweeping our nation and the advanced industrial democracies threatens to create a new class of poor people. Schools in poor districts have fewer computers and computer programs than schools in wealthier districts, Lautenberg noted. And while computers are reaching the homes and classrooms of the wealthier, more privileged children in our society, they are threatening to make the poor technologically illiterate in a world in which such literacy is vital for advancement. "The concept of computer literacy defines a new type of illiteracy, and the potential for new and distressing divisions in our society," Senator Lautenberg said. In the final analysis, the educational gap between the computer literate and the computer illiterate is fur-

ther "reinforcing disparities in opportunity," between rich and poor, he concluded.

Regrettably, such an understanding of the critical importance of education in providing equality of opportunity for minorities and the poor is lost upon the current Administration. In a recent education forum in Hopkins, Minnesota, President Reagan revealed a disturbing ignorance of his own



Bayard Rustin

Bayard Rustin is President Emeritus of the A. Philip Randolph Institute and one of the founders of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

actions in the education field. The President incorrectly asserted that the Administration had not cut federal outlays for education. In point of fact, in the proposed budget for 1984, Federal education expenditures for 1981 were \$15 billion but have been reduced to \$14.4 billion this year and \$13.5

billion next year. When inflation is factored in, these cuts are even more substantial.

The President apparently believes that any increases in the wages of already low-paid teachers should be funded by cutbacks in other school expenditures. Whether these cuts would come in the areas of school books, the purchase of computers to train students in new information resources, or in future cutbacks for school lunches for the poor, Mr. Reagan does not specify.

President Reagan's entire approach to education suggests that he is woefully unaware of the fact that our economy is undergoing significant structural and technological changes which require a massive federal commitment to education in order to create a qualified and productive workforce, and to help blacks and the poor gain necessary skills for productive employment.

Clearly, on the evidence of recent years, no one can argue that education is the cure-all for our economic and social problems. Clearly, during this recession, even the well-educated have been locked out of meaningful work. A college diploma does not automatically guarantee a well-paying job at a time of high unemployment.

Yet, when and if the recovery comes, minorities and the poor may find that they are permanently locked out of equal participation in our nation's economic life. They may find that they are the permanent victims of this Administration's disastrously inadequate commitment to education and skills training. They may find that, thanks to Ronald Reagan's education program, unemployment is a permanent and not a temporary phenomenon.

Lower Your Food Bills

Because of today's high food costs, you want to get the most nutrition possible for your money. There are ways to ease the strain on your pocketbook and at the same time help the hearts of every member of your family.

Foods that probably claim the biggest chunk of your grocery dollar are those highest in cholesterol and saturated fat: fatty meats, whole milk, cheese, butter and eggs. Scientific research indicates that a diet high in saturated fat and/or cholesterol increases your risk of developing heart and blood vessel diseases, because it tends to raise the level of cholesterol in your blood.

Buy "good" or "standard" grades of beef. In addition to being less expensive, they contain more protein and less fat than "prime" or "choice" grades. For good nutrition, the American Heart Association recommends you eat no more than six ounces of lean meat, fish or poultry each day.

Skim Milk Costs Less

Buy low-fat or non-fat dairy products. Fortified skim or low-fat milk costs less than whole milk or cream, and is better for your heart. Instead of butter, use margarine that lists liquid vegetable oil as the first ingredient on the label. You can eat as many egg whites as you desire, but the AHA recommends you limit your intake of egg yolks to three per week, since they are high in cholesterol.

Whole grains, legumes, fruit and nuts are nutritious foods that are often reasonably priced. The AHA suggests you eat four servings or more per day of bread and cereals (whole grain, enriched or restored).

Billy Preston Now At Sahara Casbar



Multi-talented singer/songwriter/musician Billy Preston, who has toured with such greats as Sam Cooke, Little Richard, Ray Charles, and the Beatles in addition to his own tours, television and movie work, stars in two shows nightly - 10 p.m. and 12 midnight - in the Casbar Theatre lounge of the Sahara Hotel and Casino for a special limited engagement through July 10. Preston alternates nightly, Tuesday through Sunday, with Cook E. Jarr & The Krums. Monday night is Sahara Talent Showcase night in the Casbar.

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