

Point of View

Editorial

"All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost. This promise means that all children by virtue of their own efforts, competently guided, can hope to attain the mature and informed judgment needed to secure gainful employment, and to manage their own lives, thereby serving not only their own interests, but also the progress of society itself."

The above was taken from the report written in 1983 by the National Commission on Excellence in Education which was created by Secretary of Education T.H. Bell in 1981.

The Commission was directed to examine the quality of education in the United States and to make a report to the Nation and to Secretary Bell within 18 months of its first meeting.

All of this sounds good to the ears and looks good on paper. However, further examination reveals some serious flaws in the actual practice of the things included in the statement. Do all people actually have the opportunity to develop their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost? Is there equal opportunity for all children to develop to their fullest potential in our present system of education?

We think not. Many of our schools, especially those in the inner-city areas of our cities, are understaffed and underfunded. Materials suitable for the education of many of our young citizens are inappropriate.

The commitment to educational opportunity on the part of our several levels of government seems entirely superficial and extremely political. Funding has been drastically reduced. Protection for teachers is practically nonexistent. School districts are hard pressed to provide materials that are helpful for all children.

We realize that the Commission was directed to tell us in writing what we have known for a long time — that our schools are not doing everything we think they should be doing. However, the Commission failed to point out that the government had cut off or seriously cut back even the meager funding it once provided.

Political rhetoric must be seen for what it is, and that is just rhetoric. The schools cannot do everything with nothing.

To Be Equal

SPOTLIGHT ON THE BLACK VOTE

By John E. Jacob

Much of the debate on whether a black candidate should enter the primaries as the representative of all blacks turned on whether or not such a strategy would advance black political interests. It was generally agreed that such a candidacy would be symbolic, in the sense that the candidate would not be likely to win the nomination.

Now that Jesse Jackson has officially entered the race, such considerations are academic. There is a black candidate running now, and there is agreement that while that candidacy entails high risks, there may be some positives as well.

The risks are familiar — weakening other candidates with a better chance to win who would favor policies blacks want; disillusionment among black voters, stimulating an anti-black "backlash" vote, and others. The positives too, are familiar, most especially the likelihood of sharply increased black

voter registration and political participation.

The black share of the voting age population that actually votes is lower than the white rate. There is a persistent gap of about ten percentage points. In the 1980 election, for example, about half of eligible blacks and 60 percent of eligible whites voted.



John E. Jacob

As a result, several states slipped into the Reagan column as his margin of victory was far lower than the numbers of unregistered black voters who presumably would have voted for other candidates, as suggested by the voting patterns of blacks who did vote.

In New York, with its big bloc of electoral votes, Reagan beat Carter by 165,000 votes while almost 900,000 blacks sat out the election. In North Carolina, Reagan won by less than 40,000 votes as over half a million blacks went unregistered.

The growing realization of that unused political strength as led to massive voter registration drives that narrow that black-white gap in

running to increase black voter turnout.

But there can be no doubt that a black candidate will help get many to the polls who otherwise might opt out of the political process. It will not be enough however, to simply assume that a Jackson candidacy will automatically result in higher black voting.

Grassroots coalitions to register voters must increase their efforts and not trust to chance, for

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voter turnout. In the 1982 congressional election for example, the gap was down to only 7 percentage points, the lowest in memory.

Many went to the polls to express their feelings about the change in national policies on civil rights and the economy, raising the question of whether it is necessary to have a black candidate

no matter how interested people become in the primaries, it will still take a lot of hard work to make sure they register and then vote next November.

All Americans, regardless of their political persuasion, should welcome Jackson's entry into the presidential sweepstakes as an expression of the right of

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PEOPLE, PLACES and POLITICS

By Joe Neal



John Glenn was in town this past weekend and from all indications the Nevada top Democrats were out to extent im a hand of welcome and a state Democratic chairmanship endorsement.

Even though in my judgement Glenn would make a fine President in comparison to Ronald Reagan, it is not the time for party chairmen of the Democratic Party to play favorites. Brent Adam, the state party chair, endorsed Glenn over the weekend, even though there are two other candidates who have a large segment of the state's voting population favoring them. They are Jesse Jackson and Walter Mondale.

There is no question that Jackson has a large appeal among black voters of this state. Mondale has a large following among labor and the teaching profession. It would seem to me that with the endorsement of Glenn by Brent Adam, it would give Glenn an advantage over the other candidates in the delegates selection process. Brent Adam, as chairman of the state Democratic party, could very well structure the state convention next year in favor of Glenn, to the dismay of the black community, labor and the teachers.

I have said that Glenn would make a fine president. I made this statement based upon the fact that Glenn seems to be a fair and honest person. Nevertheless, any presidential candidate who states at the outset that taxes would have to be raised, is going to have a difficult time beating Ronald Reagan.

Taxes are an issue that many people identify with, as taking money out of their pockets. The other side of this is Ronald Reagan's stomping ground. He says we must cut government spending. This is a proposition which has the same consequences as taxes, that of taking money out of one's pockets, but does not send the signal that everyone will be taxed.

There is no doubt that this country's financial circumstances are in need of additional monetary resources to meet its debt services. Taxing is one solution.

Former West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, speaking on the David Brinkley show, made a very interesting point about the financial condition of the United States.

He stated that we have "a budgetary deficit in the order of 6 percent of the Gross National Product, but your personnel savings quota is considerably less than 5 percent of the Gross National Product. So, even if you leave no capital formation for your industry and housing and so on, you have to borrow from the outside world." To put it very succinctly as to what Mr. Schmidt means, he is saying that instead of our money being turned over in this country by government borrowing from perjsonnel-savings, the money is being drained to foreign countries taking advantage of the high interest rates caused by government borrowing over and above the supply of money available.

In order to solve our deficit, it would seem to me that we must increase our personnel-savings twice that of our deficit. This calls for a drastic turn-about in the way America does business. It calls for the establishing of a National Bank owned by the public. The Federal Reserve Bank could very well serve this purpose by allowing individual deposits and withdrawals and even individual loans. This proposal is not new. We have said it before about two years ago and will keep putting it forward until someone listens.