

Point of View

MONDALE, JACKSON, AND ALABAMA'S BLACK DEMOCRATS

By Normal Hill

A December decision by black Alabama Democratic Party activists to back Walter "Fritz" Mondale for President sent shock waves through the newspaper and broadcast media. What was hard for reporters and political analysts to understand was how an independent group of black Democrats could have overwhelmingly endorsed a white candidate over a black by a margin of some three-to-one.

But the decision of the black Alabama Democratic Conference could only have been a surprise to someone who believes that blacks make their political decisions solely on the basis of race. In point of fact, blacks are viewing the Jackson candidacy like that of any other Presidential candidate. They are making their decision about whom to back on the basis of the candidate's personality and abilities, on the basis of his program, and on

the basis of his chances at winning. In short blacks are doing what any voter would do. To suggest anything less is to engage in a subtle patronizing form of racial stereotyping. And while Rev. Jackson commands substantial support among blacks, he does so more out of his stands on the issues and his personal charisma than on the basis of the color of his skin.

While many journalists were surprised by the outcome, the decision of black Democrats from Alabama was consistent with that voiced by large numbers of black community leaders, black trade unionists, and black elected officials. In fact, a significant number of black public figures have already voiced their reservations about the Jackson candidacy or have backed other candidates. Among such leaders are: Benjamin Hooks, Vernon Jordan, Coretta Scott King, Atlanta Mayor Andrew

Young, Detroit Mayor Coleman Young, and New York Congressman Charles Rangel.

Yet, without question, the strong support voiced for former Vice President Mondale was a major setback to the Presidential efforts of Jesse Jackson. Jackson sought to diminish the effects of the setback by claiming that the black Democratic leaders did not speak for rank-and-file blacks. He also suggested that Mondale was endorsed because, "The strong arm of the AFL-CIO and the long arm of the National Education Association" were being felt in Mobile. Yet the endorsement of Walter Mondale by the largest black political group in Alabama reflects the sentiments of large segments of the black electorate, who see in the former Vice President a longstanding support of full employment, civil rights, and economic justice. It also reflects the sentiments of many black workers who are impressed by Mondale's commitment to a national industrial policy which would create new

jobs, retrain workers displaced by a changing economy, and make America better able to compete in the international marketplace.

It is for such reasons that many leading black trade unionists and rank-and-file black union members have voiced support for the Mondale candidacy.

Clearly, the black community is united in its opposition to Reaganomics and Ronald Reagan. However, blacks are not a politically monolithic group which will flock to a candidate on the basis of the color of his skin. Make no mistake about it, Jesse Jackson will gain large numbers of black votes. But he may well be matched or even surpassed in popularity among blacks by Walter Mondale. While many blacks are eager to chant, "Run, Jesse, run!" it is increasingly clear that large numbers of blacks are equally eager to join in a chorus of "Win, Fritz, win!"

Normal Hill is President of the A. Philip Randolph Institute.

PEOPLE, PLACES and POLITICS

By Joe Neal



Oh, spare me the expectations of the Christmas Season. I can take the church goings, listen to the priest for an hour or two, and a few Christmas carols, but having to express Christmas love with the buying of gifts and bestowing presents upon someone can escape me forever and a day!

Let's face it! Christmas has become a merchant's holiday filled with enticing lights flickering over colors of red and gold, beckoning to the unsuspecting public to buy an object to be placed under their Christmas tree. Sometimes, their subliminal seduction can cause injury to the unsuspecting buyer, as was the case with those foreign looking creatures called the Cabbage Patch Dolls.

It is worth nothing, how an ugly creature called the Cabbage Patch Doll can cause injury to a person trying to get one, or a fellow flying all the way to England to buy one. A psychological interpretation of these actions seems to suggest that human nature in this country is opposite from the idea of Christmas, which is peace and harmony. The scramble for the Cabbage Patch Dolls is primarily motivated by our desire to be different from our fellow human beings, a desire which culminates in the statements "I got mines" and "damn the rest." It is a desire which eventually will make Santa Claus extinct.

It is sad to learn that this year Santa Claus in many cities will be unemployed because the merchants no longer have a need for him. The long lines of children in these various stores, waiting for the opportunity to list their Christmas demands with ole' "Saint Nick," were taking up too much space which was needed for saleable merchandise. Santa Claus has been banished to the Malls of Department Store U.S.A. His staff has been cut. The news media are carrying vivid pictures of Santa Claus with signs saying he is unemployed. Yes, even Santa Claus has taken a back seat to the greed of corporate America at Christmas time.

Christmas is a time of high expectations for many. When these expectations are not realized, it causes mental let-down for many of us. This is a period when we usually have an increase in suicides. I guess you might say it is nature's way of telling us we have strayed too far from the roots of Christmas.

The little story of Bethlehem was a very simple one. It was a story of peace and caring for human beings and other life. Maybe, this Christmas we should re-dedicate ourselves to the simple Christmas and withdraw from the syndrome which leads to the popularity of the Cabbage Patch Dolls.

the threat of war disappear; or that poverty would decline if people would just go out and work.

It's not that simple. It will take long and serious world negotiations to get mutual reductions

in arms that produce more security and less vulnerability. Both of the superpowers have to get off the escalator of the arms race before they wind up bankrupted by the expenses or, worse,

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Editorial

Christmas season television usually features a variety of commercials with a yuletide theme. One of these which caught our attention is the "commercial" concerning the Candlelighters. This organization benefits the childhood victims of cancer. Seeing these "commercials" brings many thoughts. First, a sadness that these little ones should experience suffering at such an early age. Second, an admiration for the remarkable way that many of them cope with their problem. Third, a desire to help in some way. The most obvious way of helping is to give to the fund. Those of us who work with these children as teachers, health care professionals, relatives, or friends can give understanding and love.

Christmas is a great time for giving thanks. Sharing is a way of thanksgiving, sharing our talents, money, time, friendship, and love.

Research is being done with the hope that a cure for childhood and adult cancer may be found. We do not know nor can we tell at this time just how close the researchers are to finding a cure, but we hope and pray that a cure will soon be found.

The medical expenses encumbered by the families of the children with cancer are sometimes staggering. Some of these expenses are paid for by the Cancer Society. However, the society's funds are limited.

Christmas will be better for all of us as we reflect on the fact that we have shared of our resources which just might have helped a child with cancer.

Merry Christmas to all from the staff and management of the Las Vegas SENTINEL-VOICE.

To Be Equal

A SEASON OF HOPE

By John E. Jacob

The arrival of the Christmas season is a welcome reminder that in a world brimming with nuclear weapons and racked by hunger, the human spirit not only survives but struggles toward fulfillment of the seasonal promise of "peace on earth and goodwill to all mankind."

It is a season of hope, and that is in short supply for many of the world's peoples.

The war-torn lands of the mideast, the famine-

stricken lands of Africa, and the perpetual problem of the threat of nuclear war and the continued blight of poverty, all seem to be intractable.

But such problems can be defeated by people of goodwill who practice the morality they preach.

The first step toward rekindling the warm fires of hope is to identify the problems accurately. It's not enough, for example, to assume that unilateral disarmament will make