

# Point of View

## FREEDOM TRAIN SLOWED THE POOR GET — POORER

By John E. Jacob

### To Be Equal

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The majority of black Americans are too young to remember yesterday's struggles. but we can't afford to forget. The people who fought



John Jacob — and died — to bring freedom to America just 20 years ago made it possible for black people today to take a giant step on the road to equity, to excellence and to empowerment.

Without their sacrifices there would have been no black presidential candidate in the primaries; there would be no black mayor in Bull Connor's home town, there would be few blacks on construction sites and in corporate offices.

The blood they shed

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was spilled in the struggle for human dignity and human rights. It is a struggle that still continues in other ways and on other levels.

Twenty years ago the Freedom Train was an express that roared through the conscience of America. Its enemies were the Klan and the

racists who stood in the schoolhouse doorways and said, "Never."

But 1984 is not 1964. Our Freedom Train today is a local that often seems to be running backwards. Today our enemies wear three-piece suits and honeyed smiles. They tell us people are poor because they are lazy; that they are unemployed because they want the

minimum wage, that they are hungry because they buy liquor with food stamps.

Too many Americans today think that passing a few laws was enough. They think the struggle is over. They think discrimination is a thing of the past and poverty the fault of the poor.

They are wrong. The civil rights laws were the first step toward equity, not the last.

The struggle is not over, and it won't be over until the discriminatory barriers that impose poverty and disadvantage on millions of Americans are torn down.

While some blacks were able to get into the schools, the professions and the jobs that mainstream America always enjoyed, far too many others were left behind. They climbed the first steps of the ladder to equality before they were kicked off — by recessions, by subtle discrimination, by last-hired, first-fired.

Still others never got on the ladder at all. They are trapped by the destructive heritage of racism and ground down by a throw-away economy that refuses to treat them with the human dignity they deserve.

In virtually every index

that counts, we can document the rise and fall of the black hopes:

—In income: In 1960, black family income was 55 percent of white income. By 1970 it was up to 61 percent. But today it is back to 55 percent.

—In jobs: In 1960, 10 percent of blacks were unemployed; in 1970 it was 8 percent, but in 1983 it was 19.5 percent. Even in the midst of this economic recovery, it is over 15 percent.

—In education: In 1960 only 18 percent of college-age black high school graduates were in school. By 1975 it was

See JACOB, Page 13

By Bayard Rustin

It is now more than three years since the economic programs known as Reaganomics were enacted by a compliant Congress and implemented by an over-zealous executive. The Reagan program, we were told by the President's supply-side theorists, would lead to an expansion of opportunity for rich and poor alike.

"A rising tide lifts all boats," was the elegant metaphor used to embellish a program of tax cuts and government

restrictions on social spending. The centerpiece of the Reagan program was the Reagan-Kemp-Roth tax cut of 25 percent. The President's spokesmen, and our Chief Executive assured us that this tax cut was equitable. We were told that everyone, no matter what his income, would pay 25 percent less in taxes than before. Everybody would benefit, the President's aides assured us.

Now, more than three years later, it is fair to take a look at the social consequences. See RUSTIN, Page 13

## Editorial

The Westside political races are pulling into full speed. These races promise to be exciting, and may possibly end in dog-eat-dog political fights.

The fact that so many potential political officials are in the races is exciting and interesting to say the least. However, we hope that the races are being run on the issues and ability of candidates and not on personalities.

This year we have observed that there are more people who have entered the races for the Assembly and Senate seats than ever before. Our question is: Is it necessary for so many people to run for the same political offices? It is very possible, with so many people in the races, that the most qualified individual may not get elected, and our Westside community will be left with less-than-the-best representation.

Also our concerns center on rumors that some are running to diffuse the votes, thus causing a lesser qualified person to be elected. As Blacks, we cannot afford to have this happen in an area such as ours.

Rumor also has it that some are being paid by God-knows-who to run, and that these persons may cause a member of the majority ethnic group to slide in, thus depriving us of fair representation in Carson City.

Very little of this is actually verifiable. However, if it is, in fact, happening, we must come together to assure that our integrity is preserved by finding out and voting for the very best person available.

The views expressed on these editorial pages are those of the artists and authors indicated. Only the one indicated as the SENTINEL-VOICE editorial represents this publication.



## A SALUTE TO AMERICAN LABOR

To Workers Everywhere, We Say "Thank You" for Your Dedication to Free Enterprise

In 1894, Congress designated the first Monday in September as a National Holiday to honor the laborer for contributions in developing a strong free enterprise system... the basic economic foundation upon which this country is built.

We are proud to have played a part in America's growth by providing a necessary and useful service to the people and by creating jobs for hard-working men and women who seek their share of the American dream.

To earn an honest living is no small accomplishment in this day and age. So to our workers, and to workers everywhere, we salute you for your hours, months, years of service to your job and to the American people

who have benefitted from your labors. We believe that American-made still stands for quality-made because the American worker won't stand for anything less. It's pride in a job well done that keeps us going strong through the good times and through the tough times.

Enjoy yourselves this Labor Day on your family picnics and outings. But while you're having fun, take a few moments to reflect upon the contributions of those who made this day possible.

Here's hoping you and yours have the best Labor Day ever and continued prosperity to American workers from coast to coast!

From all of us at

