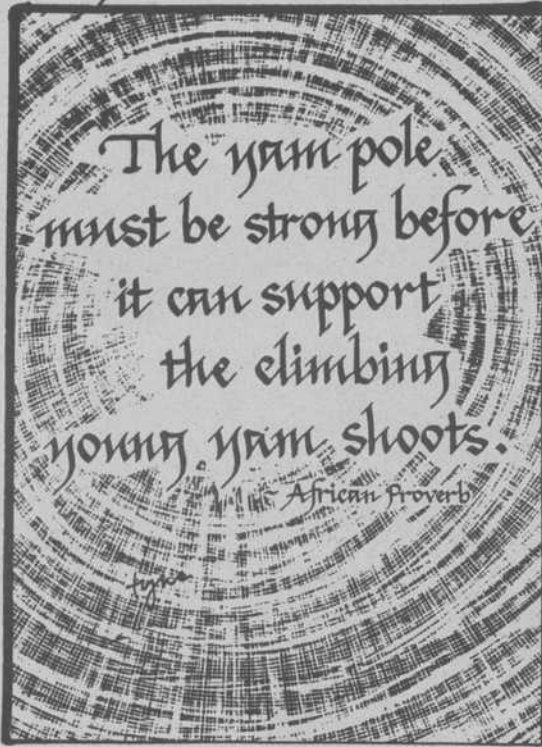


# Point of View

## Babies can't Raise Babies



## Editorial

The ancient Romans had a god named Janus. He was considered the god of doors and gates and, because a person symbolically passes through a door when he enters something new, Janus became the god of the beginning of things. Thus, January, the first month of our calendar year, was named for him.

The most significant fact about this god, however, is that he was depicted as having two faces, one looking forward and the other looking backward. This seems especially appropriate in terms of the beginning of a new year, for it is a time to look back in retrospect over the past year, to assess where we have been and what we have accomplished. It is also a time to look forward to the new year that lies ahead, to make plans and set goals for ourselves.

Shakespeare put it another way, when he wrote, "What is past is prologue." Certainly, what has happened in the past has great bearing on the present and the future.

Therefore, on this New Years Day let us each a Janus be. Let each of us look back at 1985 and take stock of what the year meant to us. What mistakes did we make? How could we have made it better? What did we learn from it? What did we accomplish? What did we do, of which we can be proud? And most of all, what and how did we give of ourselves to others and to our community?

Then let us look forward to this new year of 1986. Let us face it with hope and strong purpose. Let us set goals for personal and community progress. Let us all plan to make it the very best year that we can for ourselves and our fellowmen.

With dedication toward these principles, the staff of the SENTINEL-VOICE sends to each of you its Best Wishes for a Happy, Peaceful and Prosperous New Year.

Have a Happy New Year  
Don't Drink and Drive



## To Be Equal

# CIVIL RIGHTS UNDER PRESSURE IN 1985

By John E. Jacob

The past year was marked by increasing pressure on civil rights. It started with an ill-camouflaged attack on black leadership and ended with a full-scale attempt to revoke long-standing federal executive orders on affirmative action.

Apparently, some Administration figures interpreted the President's landslide electoral victory as constituting a mandate to revoke civil rights laws.

If so, they seriously misread the national mood. True, most Americans seem to have lost their zeal for activist measures. But they also do not want to return to the days when the rights of minorities were grossly violated.

With enlightened leadership they would back sorely needed improvements in civil rights enforcement and stronger anti-discrimination

measures. If the Administration is making a big mistake in backtracking



John E. Jacob

on civil rights, many mainstream Republicans in Congress are living up to the bipartisan history of civil rights legislation by opposing the attempt to choke off federal affirmative action orders, and by supporting the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1985.

The failure to pass that bill is one of the year's biggest disappointments. It would

have repaired the damage done by a Supreme Court ruling that gave institutional recipients of federal aid a huge loophole allowing them to escape from compliance with federal anti-

action. Most large companies are saying that the program works, that it's in their interest to implement it, and that they'll continue to do so.

Another bright spot is the likelihood that whatever tax

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discrimination laws.

That 1985 could end without passage of this vital legislation leaves a mark of shame on the Congress, whose leaders should make the bill their top priority in the coming year. They should also press to correct the massive federal failure to enforce other civil rights measures ranging from housing discrimination to voting rights.

But 1985 had some bright spots, too. One was the corporate community's support for affirmative

legislation passes in the coming year will substantially relieve the tax burden on the poor, whose taxes have risen sharply even as taxes for the affluent have gone down.

The nationwide movement of opposition to South Africa's apartheid was another strong positive. A grass roots revulsion to apartheid has mushroomed to include all shades of political opinion and may yet force the Administration to become more supportive of

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## CHILD WATCH

By Marian Wright Edelman

### All Families Get Government Help

Imagine two American families — one well-off, one poor. Both are struggling with the costly task of raising children. Which of these two families is more likely to be getting more help from our Federal Government?

Popular myth — and it is a myth — would have it that the poor family obviously receives more support from the Federal Government. But that simply is not so.

For example: a family in New York state with a \$120,000 mortgage that is in a 40 percent tax bracket gets more help from the state and Federal Governments — in the form of the mortgage tax break — than a poor family gets in AFDC benefits to meet all of its needs for food, clothing, shelter, heat and other essentials.

How does this inequity

come about?

The average American poor family is getting a small (and rapidly shrinking) share of government support. Only a fraction of such families receive any help at all from the biggest federal income support program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). Even those who do get AFDC barely receive enough to survive: in September 1984, the national average payment per recipient was only \$111.68 per month. All federal health, education, and other assistance programs reach only a fraction of the poor.

Further, the poor family has been denied the recent federal tax relief which has helped the well-off family. On the contrary, poor families' taxes have actually shot up in

recent years — 58 percent from 1980 to 1982 alone.

In contrast, the well-off family is more likely to receive growing government support, sometimes in ways we do not realize. For example, many comfortable American families acquire their housing more cheaply by getting subsidies through federal insurance programs. Millions more receive tax relief through property-related tax deductions.

The poor family is also more likely to be shortchanged when it comes to the public facilities and services our government provides, such as parks and protection of public safety. The well-off family is far more likely to live in a safe neighborhood, to be able to send its children off to a

better quality public school, and to play in a pleasant park or playground.

Who is really getting more from our government? The answer is clear, and only serves to underline the unfairness of further budget cuts in lifeline programs for poor families.

Marian Wright Edelman is President of the Children's Defense Fund, a national voice for children.

The Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice welcomes expressions of all views from readers. Letters should be kept as brief as possible and are subject to condensation. They must include signature, valid mailing address and telephone number, if any. Pseudonyms and initials will not be used. Because of the volume of mail received, unpublished individual letters cannot be acknowledged. Send to: Letters to the Editor, The Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice, 1201 S. Eastern Ave., Las Vegas, Nevada 89104.

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