

Point of View

Editorial

To Be Equal

Finally, there is some political movement in the West Las Vegas community. At the pace things are moving one would think there are no political aspirants really interested in winning the black vote.

The races will need to take on a more determined posture if one aspires to succeed and win.

Nothing can be taken for granted. The candidates need to be more visible and lay out positively their programs. The races appear to be taking on a mundane position.

Where are the election battles of yesterday? Who is stepping forward and making aggressive claims to the posts? Where is the real substance in the battles?

We are but weeks away from the moment of victory or the agony of defeat.

Soon all of this will be in the voters' hands. The candidates will now need to be more determined to win. As yet, we don't see that determination coming through!

The Housing Crisis

By John E. Jacob

After four years of economic recovery, shelters for the homeless are a growth industry and affordable housing for low and moderate income Americans is becoming a faded dream.

The national scandal of homelessness has been met with indifference, although it has been estimated that up to

two or three million people are homeless. And that doesn't even take into account the widespread doubling-up as low-income families share apartments.

And in contrast to the traditional myth of the

abandonment, conversion and urban redevelopment.

The comprehensive housing legislation currently before the Congress would do little to change the crisis in affordable housing.

If anything, it could make it worse, since it ends new construction for public housing. This, despite the fact that cities like New York

Congress may also create a new program, the

Nehemiah Housing Opportunity Grant program that would enable low-income families to buy or rehabilitate homes, and would give a prime role to non-profit community agencies.

Such steps are welcome, but they won't solve the

John E. Jacob is President Of The National Urban League



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homeless as disturbed individuals or single male drifters, they are increasingly made up of families, children, the disabled, and the jobless.

Homelessness is a national epidemic that is increasing at a rate the government admits is ten percent a year and mayors in major cities say is closer to forty percent a year.

At the root of the problem of homelessness is the larger problem of the lack of affordable housing. Public housing production has stopped and private builders say they cannot make a profit on low-income housing. Meanwhile, the existing stock of affordable housing is vanishing through

have 200,000 families on the waiting list for public housing, while the lists in Washington and other cities include people who have been waiting for ten years or more.

Congress is considering a plan to allow public housing residents to buy their apartments, another plan to allow tenants in public housing projects to band together to manage them.

Both are worthy experiments, but must not become mechanisms for dumping property and management responsibilities. Prospective buyers must be assured their projects are in good shape and have adequate reserves to meet future needs. And project self-management must give tenants' groups access to technical assistance.

problem by themselves. Without production of housing that low-income families can buy or rent, the best-intentioned programs will not make a dent in the crisis.

With need so great -- and mounting -- it is time to reconsider national housing policy and come up with plans to produce new housing. Unless sufficient units of affordable housing are built, the current housing crisis will become a permanent one.

Funds can be found for housing, just as they were found for Star Wars and other things government really wants to do. For starters, perhaps someone can explain why mortgage interest for second homes is deductible in "tax reform" legislation while millions can't afford to rent a basic apartment?

Or explain why governments complain they can't afford to do anything about homelessness while cities like New York spend up to \$3,000 a month to lodge homeless families in rundown, dangerous hotel accommodations.

Government doesn't have to build it all. There could be partnerships with the private and voluntary sectors, and other creative ways to build affordable housing. What is lacking is not the resources, but the will.

" We ourselves must look after our wives. If we do not respect them, no one else will do so, not even members of our family. "
Patrice Lumumba
1925-1961

Warn 1986 Vote could Repeat Doom of 1880s

By Larry Still - NNPA News Service

Presidents of over 40 major black organizations or their representatives agreed to meet in Washington, D.C., August 13-14 to discuss the critical importance of upcoming senatorial and congressional elections in November, as well as significant local and statewide balloting.

Even more important, black voters could determine the shape of future legislation in the 1986 elections, declared C. Delores Tucker, chairman of the Democratic National Committee Bethune-DuBois Fund which is co-sponsoring the political briefing with the 21-member Congressional

Black Caucus chaired by Rep. Mickey Leland (D-Texas).

Rep. Cardis Collins (D-Chicago) will outline the purpose and goals and Rep. Walter Fauntroy (D-DC), president of the National Black Leadership Roundtable, will provide the election overview for targeted states. The new DNC fund was recently established to help finance more black candidates.

The 1986 elections are as important to black voters now as the 1880 post-reconstruction elections when all political progress was stopped (by a combination of southern

Democrats and Republicans), Tucker emphasized. "We had two U.S. senators and more members of Congress than we have now during reconstruction (after the civil war)," she added in comparing the 1880s to the 1980s.

"...People who forget their history are doomed to repeat it," the DNC official declared in repeating the historical quote.

With all members of the House of Representatives and 34 senators scheduled for re-election, black voters could determine ten senators (including at least four black candidates), elect three to

five new CBC members and choose two black governors and another lieutenant governor. The key states listed by the NDC are Missouri, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Florida, Maryland, North Carolina, California, Pennsylvania and New York.

The importance of electing candidates who support the civil rights restoration act, South Africa sanctions, the new budget and minority business will be outlined by Reps. Gus Hawkins (Calif), Ron Dellums (Calif), William Gray (Pa) and Parren Mitchell (Md).

Democratic party support for black local, state and

congressional candidates will be outlined by DNC chairman Paul Kirk, vice-chairman Roland Burris and treasurer Sharon Pratt Dixon. Other participants included Rev. Jesse Jackson, chairman of the National Rainbow Coalition.

Register VOTE

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