

Point of View

Black Americans 'Slipping Back Into Resegregation'-NUL

By Larry A. Still

The National Urban League's annual State of Black America report "show Americans slipping back into being comfortable with resegregation in the schools, with a retreat from civil rights, with drug abuse, failed economic and social welfare policies, and increased Black poverty," NUL president John E. Jacob declared.

Surrounded by ten outstanding experts in education, health, economic and government affairs, Jacob told a National Press Club audience "America is becoming more divided every day...Divided by the growing gap between the rich and the poor; by the growing gap between Whites and Blacks, by the growing gap between those who have decent jobs and those who do not."

Although he did not urge specific action, Jacob appeared to agree with recent official calls for a new government commission on racism as urged by New York Mayor Edward Koch following the recent death of a black man as he was attacked by a white gang in the city.

The NUL document echoed the controversial 1968 report of a Presidential Commission on Civil Disorder issued after

the outbreaks following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. "Black Americans enter 1987 besieged by the resurgence of a raw racism, persistent economic depression, and the continued erosion of past gains, the new NUL report said.

The leader of the major civil rights organization urged the new Congress to seek a "full employment program...a massive thrust to equalize educational opportunities, trade policies that stop the export of jobs, and close loopholes in the civil rights laws..."

The private sector, which provides the bulk of support for Urban League programs, was urged to "renew its commitment to civil rights" and black citizens were urged "to continue what we have been doing"...by becoming involved in voluntary, community based projects to improve our neighborhoods.

Experts issuing documented statements as part of the State of Black America report included Doctors Andrew Billingsley, University of Maryland; Douglas G. Glasgow, NUL vice-president; Lenneal J. Henderson, Howard U.; Georgia Persons, Howard U.; Beny J. Primm, Addiction and Treatment Corp.; Sharon

To Be Equal

Budget Fails to Meet Needs

by John E. Jacob

Congress ought to put the 1988 Budget submitted by the Administration into the nearest shredder and start fresh to construct a national Budget that addresses the national's needs.

That's because this Budget, like its predecessors, places the ideology of shrinking the federal role in solving national problems above meeting the nation's needs to alleviate poverty, create jobs, and invest in the future.

The gross unfairness of the Budget is obvious when you see that a third of all spending cuts come from programs for low-income citizens, even though such programs are about the ninth of the total budget.

What's more, an analysis by the Center of Budget and Policy Priorities suggests that the \$6.7 billion in poor people's program cuts would mushroom by 1992 to amount to \$22.7 billion below levels needed to maintain even today's underfunded programs.

So much for the "safety-net" concept that was supposed to protect survival programs for the poor. Those programs were heavily slashed over the past several years, and they are still on the slicing board today.

And those programs aren't just frills -- they're the kind of programs that help poor people to survive.

Medicare, for example, is essential for minimal health care for the poor, but the Administration wants to slash it by over a billion dollars next year and almost \$20 billion over the next five years.

At a time of growing

P. Robinson, National Education Association; Barbara Solomon, University of Southern California; David Swinton, Southern Center for Studies in Public Policy, Clark College; and Charles V. Willie, Harvard University, and Julius Chambers, Director-Counsel, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.

homelessness, with up to 3.5 million people estimated as being without shelter, the Administration propose cutting appropriations for low-income housing by half. It want to cut nutrition programs, forcing 80-90,000 low income women, infants, children, and elderly people to go without basic food aid.



John E. Jacob

And the same administration that launched a publicity campaign against drugs last year, now wants to cut drug programs by 20 percent, with the heaviest cuts coming in the area of greatest need -- alcohol and

drug abuse, and mental health services.

Add to this cuts in other crucial programs, the elimination of proven successes like Legal Services, and even the addition of a new training program for displaced workers can't make this Budget even minimally acceptable.

The Budget would also undercut our long-term ability to compete by closing

and eliminated by 1992. Those cuts far out-distance the small non-subsidized student loan program the Administration wants.

That's no way to help young people escape from poverty or to provide the nation with the skilled teachers, engineers, and technicians it needs in a competitive global economy.

The student aid cuts also deal a body blow to struggling black colleges,

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off opportunities for access to college by low-income students. It would slash forty percent from federal spending on student financial assistance.

Translate that into reality and it means thousands of low-income young people will either have to defer going to college or drop out of school. In addition, even the Guaranteed Student Loan program would be cut heavily

where half the students come from families with incomes below the poverty line and some ninety percent rely on some form of aid or loan programs to stay in school.

Perhaps the saddest part of this whole story is that this anti-human needs Budget has been painted by the media as a "moderate" document. It's not. It's a radical attack on the poor and on America's future.

CHILD WATCH

By Marian Wright Edelman

1986 Results Prove That Our Votes Count

The black community had some good news at the polls in November. Our votes made a difference in races across the country, from the United States Senate to local school boards.

We have four promising new black members of Congress coming to Washington in 1987: Mike Espy of Mississippi, Floyd Flake of New York, John Lewis of Georgia, and Kweisi Mfume of Maryland. The total number of blacks in Congress is up, from 21 to 23.

The number of black officials in a whole range of elected positions has grown dramatically in recent years, according to the Washington-based Joint Center for Political Studies. Even before the 1986 returns were

in, the number of black state representatives had more than doubled since 1970. The number of black mayors had increased six-fold. Our representation on local school boards was four times what it had been.

But the recent results proved that our clout at the polls is not limited to electing black officials. According to a New York Times analysis published after the election, "Democrats owe their new majority in the Senate, at least in part, to the black vote." The black vote helped put Democratic candidates over the top in Alabama, North Carolina, Louisiana and California.

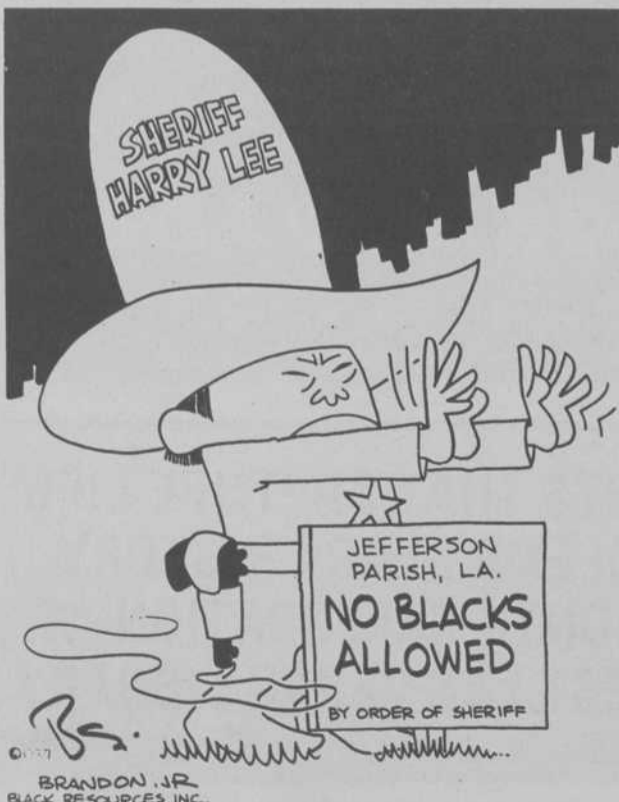
Black voters had three primary concerns in going to the polls, according to Eddie N. Williams, president of the

JCPS. They wanted to elect candidates sympathetic to black economic and social concerns, to prevent the "packing" of the judiciary with foes of civil rights, and to elect more blacks to public office, according to Williams.

While we can justly rejoice in an overall election result that advanced all of these goals, we cannot afford to be complacent. Less than a third of all eligible black voters actually went to the polls in November.

We need to begin working now to increase the black vote in 1988. This means stressing the importance of voting in every public forum: our churches, schools, sororities, fraternities and social organizations.

If we did this well with less than a third of the black vote, imagine what we could do with 100 percent! Perhaps we could help elect a black U.S. Senator or Governor.



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