

Point of View

We The People

Celebrate By Voting

Throughout the country last year, commemorations were held honoring those who gathered in Philadelphia in 1787 and crafted the U.S. Constitution. Additional celebrations have been held (or have been planned) around the country this year and next in recognition of the 200th anniversary of the ratification process.

All of these various events are certain to be worthwhile and rewarding to all who participate. But the best possible celebration of the Constitution is to participate in democracy by registering and voting in the upcoming presidential election.

The right of every adult to participate in choosing the country's leadership is the heart and soul of the U.S. Constitution. It is a cherished right longed for by millions of people around the world. The modern struggle for the right to vote in other countries is constantly on the front pages of today's newspaper as voters are sometimes shot on the way to the polls and candidates are assassinated in the midst of their campaigns for office.

Our system of government was bought with the blood and sacrifice of Americans throughout our history. The only way to repay our debt to the men of genius who wrote the Constitution and the men and women of valor who have fought to preserve it is by exercising the right to vote. Through that simple act, you will have reaffirmed the greatness of America, which recognizes that the people . . . "We the People" . . . are the source of all power in our unique system of government. **il**

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United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

by Benjamin F. Chavis Jr.

JESSE JACKSON'S VICTORIES

Jesse Jackson's victory on Super Tuesday was a victory not only for the Rainbow Coalition, but also for all those who believe in equal justice and freedom for all. Jackson won 5 to 6 states outright and came in a strong second in 7 to 8 states. There is no greater testimony to the political empowerment of the disenfranchised than that people who were previously locked out of the political process are now included with such significant impact.

As a volunteer campaign supporter who travelled briefly with Congressman Ronald Dellums (D-Mich.) and activist Dick Gregory in the South prior to Super Tuesday, I could sense a renewed awareness about the power of the

vote. For the power of that vote has put in place, throughout the South, numbers of influential Black elected officials and more sensitive white officials.

In Selma, Alabama on the Sunday before Super Tuesday, the 23rd Anniversary of "Bloody Sunday" was commemorated by the National Celebration of the Right to Vote. On that day in 1965, marchers who were marching for the right to vote attempted to begin the Selma to Montgomery March and were brutally beaten by Alabama state troopers. Sheriff Jim Clark and other white officials were determined to use whatever violence they thought necessary to deny African Americans the right to vote.

During the commemoration those like Albert Turner, Amelia Boynton, James Orange, and Marie Foster — all of whom were on the original march — were in the front line. All were wearing Jesse Jackson buttons. But this time as we marched across the Edmund Pettis Bridge, instead of being beaten we were escorted by Alabama law enforcement officials. And all along the line of march we were cheered by African Americans and whites who shouted, "Jesse Jackson for President."

Jesse Jackson's increased support among white voters was also obvious in Columbus, Georgia. At a local textile factory African American and white workers greeted the campaign caravan with enthusiasm. Congressman Dellums explained to the

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IS THE BLACK PRESS NEEDED? . . . YOU BET!

by Chester A. Higgins, Sr.

Come March, the month we set aside to commemorate the Black Press, when there are things done — and not quite done, the annual question is raised: Is there a need for the Black Press? You mean now, 135 years after the Emancipation Proclamation?—And after the adoption of the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution of the United States, —34 years after brown, and more than 20 years after the passage of some of the most significant and sweeping civil legislative laws in the history of this country?

really, is the Black Press still needed?

Like a noxious weed in a fertile and pristine garden, the question sprouts—unnecessary, uninvited, intrusive and obtrusive. It is sometimes asked subtly, or abrasively, in contemplative reflection or barely restrained rage. It is never asked carelessly or with an air of indifference.

So each year it is answered with a chorus of resounding editorial 'yeas.' A joker or two might play the devil's advocate and say 'no.' But they are jumped and pummeled quickly into submission.

Yet the question comes up and, to change metaphors, it is like a Syssiphan stone that has to be pushed laboriously to the top of the mountain of public opinion each year, only to have it roll down and force Black Press supporters to a pushing confrontation the following year; and the year after that and . . . ad infinitum?

This raises another question: Will it ever end? The answer to that is 'no' — a resounding no. And it shouldn't.

In a free and democratic society our institutions should be questioned — indeed, they must be. Part of the ongoing problems in this country have to do with the fact that many

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To Be Equal REAGAN PUSHING SOCIAL AGENDA

by John E. Jacob

The Administration appears determined to use its final months in office to secure its social agenda — an agenda most Americans have consistently refused to buy into.



John E. Jacob

The latest step in that campaign to impose its social views on the rest of us came when the Department of Health and Human Services issued a new set of rules. They would infringe the rights of poor women to have abortions, interfere with doctor's rights to provide medical information, and violate con-

stitutional rights of free speech.

That's quite a bundle of rights infringements for one rule, and the federal courts have already put enforcement of the rule on "hold." Most likely, this issue won't be resolved until Congress acts or a definitive ruling is

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made by higher federal Courts.

The Administration's new rule would do three things:

First, it bars family planning agencies that use federal money from even mentioning the option of abortion to clients who are pregnant.

Second, it would force agencies such as Planned Parenthood, that run family planning counseling services with federal money and abortion services with private funds, to keep the two activities totally separate. ties totally separate.

They wouldn't be able to use the same building or per-

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DON'T YOU WISH POLITICIANS CARED AS MUCH ABOUT CHILDREN AFTER THEY'RE ELECTED?



Children's issues like preventive health care, child care, and a quality education are important to the future of our country. Make sure the candidates you vote for pay them more than lip service.

THE CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND
Kids can't vote. But you can.