

Point of View

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

DECISION 88

Dear Editor:

The Democratic Party has just closed a history making convention in Atlanta, Georgia. In this convention, Jesse Jackson, a Black American captured one-third of the voting delegation for the office of President of the United States.

The city of Atlanta provided an excellent backdrop for this history making event. Atlanta, the heart of the old South, once decimated by war as General Sherman marched through Georgia, also became the symbol of the new South. Within this rebuilt modernized city we find the home of Martin Luther King Jr., many black millionaires, banks and insurance companies. The Black population of 70 percent now works shoulder to shoulder in all occupational fields with their white counterparts.

Andrew Young, the present mayor, welcomed the delegates (22% of them Black), and started a new chapter in American History. A day when a man will no longer be judged by the color of his skin, but by the content of his character. Many Blacks were featured in the proceedings: Barbara Jordan, Michael Lomax, Coretta Scott King and many others. Jesse Jackson will not become President or Vice-president this November, but the heart of America is changing, and the door has been opened for November 1992. This nation will then be ready for Jesse Jackson as Vice-President. In 1996, Jesse Jackson will have an excellent chance of becoming the first Black President of the United States of America.

Yours for his service,
Claude H. Parson

EDITORIAL

THE BLACK PRESS AND THE BLACK VOTE

The Sun Reporter
Editorial

A word of caution must be sent to Vice President Bush and Governor Dukakis telling them that the Black Press of America is irritated by their failure to respond to either

written or verbal requests that those two important candidates come to the 48th Annual Convention of the National Newspaper Publishers Association—the Black Press of America, held in St. Louis, June 15-18.

For the last 40 years, the

**OUT,
DAMNED SPOT!**



To Be Equal

FULL EMPLOYMENT

by John E. Jacob

There are lots of economists around who'll tell you we now have full employment. Politicians and others have joined the chorus too. Don't believe them.

Overall unemployment rates are pretty close to rates considered recession-level twenty years ago. Black unemployment is still in the double-digits and 2½ times the white rate.

This is the tenth anniversary of the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act that set a four percent interim goal for unemployment. The Act called on the executive and legislative branches of government and the Federal Reserve Board to coordinate policies that would lead to private sector job creation.

It also mandated the executive to set a timetable for reducing unemployment and to establish goals, something that's never happened. In



John E. Jacob

fact, the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act may be the most ignored law in history.

The excuses are that unemployment is disappearing on its own and policies to end it cost more than we

can afford. Both excuses are without factual foundation.

The much-vaunted job growth in the economy, for example, is illusory. In the 1980s, the economy created about thirty percent fewer new jobs than in the late 1970s.

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Official unemployment rates have been rising. In the 1950s, average unemployment rates were at 4.5%; in the 1960s, 4.8%; in the 1970s, 6.2%. So far in the 1980s, it's 7.7%.

It's even worse too, since a greater proportion of the workforce is now working in part-time jobs paying lower wages and offering fewer benefits.

The nature of unemployment has also changed. Years ago, much of it was due to cyclical causes — downturns in the economy caused layoffs and upturns brought rehiring and more job growth.

But today, a lot of unemployment is structural—with jobs wiped out by imports, by labor-saving technologies, and by shrinkages in major industries.

Structural unemployment can be cured by retraining displaced workers and by better preparing young people entering the work force, through strong education and skills training and job preparedness programs.

Those are the programs that some people say we can't afford, as if we can afford the economic costs of

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Black Press has usually invited the leading Democratic and Republican nominees to its national conventions prior to the fall campaigns. The Democratic alumni of such conventions include Hubert Humphrey, Eugene McCarthy, George McGovern and Walter Mondale and the Republicans include Vice President Nixon, Nelson Rockefeller and Governor Ronald Reagan.

The leading candidates are usually surrounded by their palace guard to protect them from ordinary citizens. Such was the case in the 1980 campaign. However, the candidates have become lean and less accessible, and no one was able to reach either candidate or his wife to try and reactivate the policy of having the leading candidates of both parties speak to Black America through the forum of the organized Black Press. This time, even Jesse Jackson failed to appear at the convention; however, later he explained in a long statement that his absence was due to work he was doing on the Democratic platform.

We from time to time have to remind our friends and enemies that the Black press has a big responsibility which we cannot meet if the candidates feel they can ignore Blacks without cause or

reason. When will Dukakis and Bush have another opportunity to speak to from 95 to 100 Black publishers assembled in one place?

The Black publishers must convince both political parties and leading black politicians that Black publishers must be taken seriously and that they are prepared to treat politicians in the same cavalier fashion, if they continue to treat Black publishers as children who do not understand how to seek power. Therefore, we take this opportunity to define the role of the Black Press in the USA. The dean of the Black Press, W.O. Walker, the late editor and publisher of the Call & Post, of Ohio, described the mission of the Black Press best:

"The highest tradition in journalism is service to the people, service by informing and interpreting; service by giving voice to the goals, aspirations and needs of the people. Service by calling attention to injustices inflicted on the people by demanding an end to these injustices. Service by rallying the indignation and the action of the people when the need arises.

"Such has been the role of the Black Press in America and no other mass communication medium has been more effective in serving freedom's causes than the

Black Press. For its crusaders, it has directed its attention to the practical realities in the life of the people it serves.

"For the past 160 years, the Black Press has acted as a herald, a champion and an advocate and as a vanguard for Black America."

We also remind these candidates that the Black publishers of California sent a message to Tom Bradley on his first campaign for governor when he lost by less than 50,000 votes. Of the 16 Black publishers of California, 13 decided that they would not accept the same treatment from Bradley as was given to them by white politicians; therefore they completely ignored Bradley's campaign. Not only was Bradley guilty of trying to ignore the Black Press, but he was also trying to escape the fact that he was a Black candidate. Consequently, he did not shore up his house and thousands of people in his own mayoral district did not even go to the polls.

The Black Press has received rather cavalier treatment from the Republican Party since the '36 Roosevelt campaign when Blacks, who for 52 years had given

the majority of their votes to the Grand Old Party, formed a new coalition. To this day, the last of the old Roosevelt coalition continues to be the Black voters and in 1984, 90% of the Black vote still went to the Democratic nominee.

The possibility of Republicans making inroads into the Black constituency in the old Democratic coalitions is great. It hinges on how well the Democratic leadership treats Jesse Jackson at the Atlanta Convention. This would have been a great opportunity for Bush to build inroads into a disappointed Black constituency, which has become very disenchanted with how the Democrats treat Jesse Jackson.

The truth of this prediction was shown by a shift of 10,000 Black votes from the Democrats to the Republicans in three states: Pennsylvania, Ohio and Mississippi and Jimmy Carter won by a very small margin with white Southerners giving Ford 54% of the vote and Carter getting 87% to 90% of the Black vote.

Let the Republicans and Democrats know that they ignore the Black vote at their peril!

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.