

# Point of View

United Church of Christ  
Commission for Racial Justice  
**CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL**  
AMERICAN APARTHEID IN ALABAMA

Racist apartheid should not be tolerated in South Africa nor Alabama. We have just recently returned from commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March. Twenty-five years ago, Hosea Williams and John Lewis along with many others were brutally beaten by local and state police officers because they dared to march over the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama toward Montgomery, the state capitol. The issue then was voting rights for African Americans who had been systematically excluded from the electoral process in a geographical area that is predominantly African American. Days later, Martin Luther King, Jr. led the successful march to Montgomery.

When we arrived in Selma a week ago, we were dismayed to find that while some progress toward fulfillment of political empowerment for the African American community has been made, the reality is that another form of apartheid has been instituted. In the local schools, a racial tracking system has been in place for over two decades which has excluded thousands of African American students from having the chance to receive a quality education.

African American students are disproportionately lodged into the lowest academic "level 3" while white students are disproportionately lodged into the highest academic "level 1." This tracking begins as early as the first and second

See JOURNAL, Page 8

NNPA FEATURE

## COPING

by

Dr. Charles Faulkner



### "BLACK KILLINGS DON'T SURPRISE ME"

"Dear Dr. Faulkner:

I have been reading your column for years and have not read a single word about all of the murders that happen in Washington, D.C. Young black men are killing each other in D.C. and in many other cities, but you don't seem to be bothered by it at all. Are you scared to write about it, or do you think that it is alright for them to kill each other? Mr. R., Seattle, Washington."

Dear Mr. R.:

I am neither "scared" to write about blacks who kill each other, nor do I think it is "alright." I must add that I AM NOT SURPRISED, EITHER.

Social scientists and psychologists have made

mountains of money analyzing black violence. My analysis differs greatly from the average point of view.

I think that the anger and violence that exists in the psyche of the young black male is a natural outgrowth of the violence that has been perpetrated upon blacks over the years. I equate it to the pent-up, frustrated, and violent Palestinians; the young, bitter, violent black South Africans; and the bitter, violent young men in the Republic of Northern Ireland.

We have talked about blacks being a "sleeping giant." The black sleeping giant is now biting its own tail. For decades, blacks

See COPING, Page 9

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## POLITICAL POINTS

By

Assemblyman  
Wendell P. Williams



Assemblyman Williams

### The 1990 Census And It's Effect On Political And Economic Power For Minorities

Last Monday night I attended a community meeting, where most of the discussion surrounded the importance of the 1990 Census. Now that the official counting is underway, more people seem to be curious about the process and its importance. I was, to some degree, surprised at how the majority of citizens who were in attendance at that meeting, as well as most of the people to whom I talk, are basically unaware of the importance of African-Americans participating in the Census count, and its effect on their lives.

Back on August 31, 1989 this newspaper ran an article that I wrote in this column titled: THE 1990 CENSUS AND ITS EFFECT ON POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC POWER FOR MINORITIES. Now that the national Census is underway, and because our participation is so crucial, the following is a reprint of that August 31st article.

An accurate census is vital to the political and economic interests of minorities, because the census is used to reapportion seats in the United States House of Representatives and State Legislatures to allocate billions of dollars for Government Grant Programs. Moreover, census data are used by policymakers to determine where to locate schools, senior citizen centers, daycare and hospitals and other vital facilities.

Every ten years, the census bureau of the Department of Commerce conducts a national census of the U.S. population. By April, 1990 millions of us will have completed the 1990 census questionnaire. However, a disproportionate number of African-Americans and other minority groups will go uncounted because they will not have filled out their forms, in part because many are afraid that the information will be used against them. As a result this "undercount" will likely, as in the past, place us at a disadvantage.

For instance, the 1980 census missed counting 3.2 million people. African-Americans were the largest group missed. In fact, each ten years has gotten worst. In 1940 we were undercounted by 19%, in 1980 that figure grew to a whopping 53%. In 1980, 1.7 million African-Americans were not counted, this measures to 6% of the total African-American population. This is equivalent to the combined populations of St. Louis, Baltimore and Atlanta. On the other side of the coin, less than 1% of whites and other races were not counted.

African-Americans have an enormous stake in the entire process. After the 1980 census the 1981 redistricting showed an increase in the number of African-American elected officials. Two noteworthy advances were the new additions of Majority-Black Congressional Districts now held by Congressmen Mike Espy of Mississippi and John Lewis of Georgia. At the state level seats held by African-Americans shot up by 42. For instance, in the states of Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia the number of African-American state legislators nearly tripled between 1980 and 1989, an increase from 14 to 41.

Now on the economic side, the city of Baltimore is a good example of how the undercount can affect public funding. 29,000 of their residents were not counted in the 1980 Census, causing that city to miss \$232 million dollars in federal funds. These funds would have gone toward education, job training, job creations, community development and public housing.

See POINTS, Page 8

## To Be Equal WORKING POOR CAN CLAIM TAX CREDITS

By John E. Jacob

Nearly 11 million low income families are eligible for an Earned Income Tax credit, but many will not get what's due them because they are not aware of their right to

right to their checks, since the credit was established -- and later broadened -- to compensate low income earners for the higher social security taxes that come out of their salaries.

This is one income support program that is quick and easy -- no lines to stand on, no red tape to go through.

In fact, the IRS sponsors

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John E. Jacob

claim as much as \$910 from the government.

In fact, they don't even have to claim their tax credit -- all that's necessary is to file a Form 1040 or 1040-A tax return. The Internal Revenue Service will calculate what the government owes them and send a check.

The credit is available to families that had income from a job in 1989 and have at least one child living at home.

Many are among the millions who work full-time for low wages. But many other workers also qualify, such as people who worked part-time and those who may earn more, but were laid off during the year and whose total income falls below the eligibility line for the credit.

Most low-income working families who earned between \$6,000 and \$11,000 in 1989 now qualify for a credit of at least \$800. In some cases, families with 1989 incomes of as much as \$19,340 can qualify.

As one typical example, a parent with two children who earned \$9,000 in 1989 won't owe any tax, but will receive a check for \$910 from the IRS.

Since the 1986 federal Tax Reform Act eliminated tax liabilities for millions of low income families, many don't owe taxes and think there's no need to file a tax return.

But if they don't file a return, they lose the Earned Income Credit to which they are entitled.

Those families earned their

local tax clinics to help individuals complete their tax returns, so eligible families can get assistance in filing.

But it's important to spread the word and tell people of their right to the credit.

They also need to be informed about their right to get the credit in advance, so that the payments show up in their paychecks through the year.

They also need to be informed about their right to get the credit in advance, so that the payments show up in their paychecks throughout the year.

Again, many low income wage earners who would welcome this opportunity to increase their take home pay, don't know that they have this option.

All that is required is to ask their employer for a W-5 form. Under federal law, the employer must honor the request and add in the earned income credit payments to the regular paychecks.

And those payments don't change the amount of the income tax or the social security tax paid by the employee, since they are not part of the employee's wages or salary but advance payments on a tax refund.

The earned Income Credit is one of the federal government's most effective programs in that it puts money into the pockets of the people who need it most and who worked for it. It encourages work, defrays high payroll taxes, and lessens poverty.

See JACOB, Page 9