

Point of View

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MINORITY REPORT

PEROT CONDEMNS USING RACE ISSUE IN ELECTION, SO WHAT MUST THE BLACKS CONSIDER BEFORE VOTING?

By James E. Alsbrook

One reason why George Bush and his rich, far-right supporters are so upset with Ross Perot is that this unorthodox newcomer has taken a race-neutral political stance. Perot leads Bush in many polls and has carefully condemned the successful, racist vote-getting techniques of Bush, Reagan and Nixon.

"If you hate anybody, I don't want your vote," Perot has repeated. "I want to heal and bring together a divided nation with no more Willie Hortons or David Dukes."

If Perot wins on the platform of healing a wounded, divided nation and bringing together the various ethnic and racial groups, he will have accomplished what neither Bush nor Clinton could do. Since 1968 the national Republican ticket won largely by arousing a racist backlash

against Johnson's civil rights programs. But before Johnson, Democrats dominated Southern politics and strongly influenced national policies through House and Senate tenure based on elections won by courting the Klan and campaigning against millions of black people not allowed to vote.

The issue of race therefore colors both major parties. Nationally, the Republicans have opposed new laws protecting blacks and used "window-dressing" and "token" blacks to present a false appearance of fairness. On the other hand, the Democrats since the sixties have advocated racial equality and voted to support equality-guaranteeing changes. Nationally, the Republicans have tended to appeal to those who want black people as obedient servants. Nationally, the Democrats have tended to appeal to and support

those who view black people as equals deserving law-enforced equality.

Perot's advantage is that he brings a new and evidently neutral stance into the equation.

For whom should Blacks vote? Before voting, they should remember these basics:

1. The Black voter can never change the color of his or her skin. He or she will always be Black and will be judged by all people to a large extent on the basis of that unchanging fact.

2. But the Black voter can always change his or her political affiliation and vote for whichever person or whatever policies most favor the best interest of that Black person or group.

3. The Black voter should look first at the candidate and his record rather than vote blindly for a political party. When I was a graduate student in Iowa, my Norwegian landlord, a retired

superintendent of schools, fought and won against a new Southern barber's proposed segregation of barber shops. The landlord was a staunch Republican. In the meantime, Republicans in Washington, D.C. were opposing the Democrat-supported Civil Right bills.

Locally, the Republicans were good for Black people, but nationally, they were bad for Black people. Blacks must vote accordingly. They can change their voting pattern but they cannot change their skin color.

4. The Black voter must distinguish between the Black politician who is interested only in feathering his own personal nest and the Black person who is genuinely interested in all Black people. Blacks like the late Clarence Pendleton and the present Clarence Thomas have displayed interest only in their personal welfare and were will-

ing to "go with the flow" of policies that hurt most other Black people.

5. The Black voter must distinguish between the term CONSERVATIVE and the term LIBERAL. When the White person identifies himself or herself as a Conservative, he or she means that existing conditions are all right and that political and social changes are not needed. When a White speaker identifies himself or herself as a Liberal, he or she means that changes are desirable for the good of the



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community or nation. The true, White political Conservative tends to see blacks as equals.

6. Conservatives and Liberals appear in both political parties. Today, however, Republicans nationally are more Conservative and racist and the Democrats nationally are more Liberal.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

FREEDOM

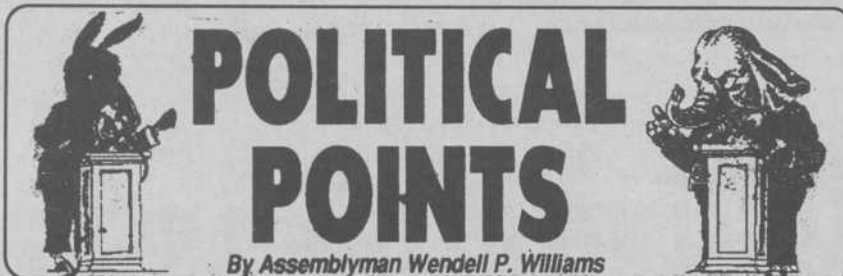
Freedom! What does this really mean? According to Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary it is the state of being free: as liberation from slavery or restraint or from the power of another. Mr. Webster, you obviously came across this definition in conversation with white men.. Freedom has been attributable to the Black man. We've been negotiating for our freedom for centuries and this illusive right has yet to be secured.

The argument is made frequently that this is America and as Americans everyone is free: free to do as he chooses, free to live where he chooses and free to aspire to his highest potential. I beg to differ with you white man for this is your assessment not mine. Being Black in America mandates that we do what Mr.

Charlie says or else, that we occupy predominantly black neighborhoods because you move out whenever the black population exceeds 8% in your neighborhood and that we aspire to be janitors and maids because you feel that we don't possess the intellectual capacity to be anything else.

As was mentioned earlier, we've been negotiating for liberation for centuries but mediation has always been on the enemy's battlefield, the enemy's terms. It is time that the venue be changed in order to facilitate Black freedom. For too long we have implored Europeans for our emancipation.. This is a dangerous dependency. As Dr. John Henry Clarke asserts, "The most dangerous of all dependencies

(See Letter, Page 9)



NOT JUST FOR EXERCISE

The Las Vegas City Council, without blinking an eye, vote to spend almost one million dollars to study the idea of revamping downtown. While at the same time, create more committees to analyze the conditions of West Las Vegas. Absurd.

The LAPD is caught on film doing what they do best, and the victim goes on trial not the cops. Absurd.

Valley Foods and places like the Main Street Station received grants of taxpayer dollars designed for redevelopment, while the real redevelopment needs go on being ignored. Absurd.

As immoral as the political injustices are, the reality points out that these types of things

happen mainly to people that have not formulated a strategy of maximizing the power of their votes.

Las Vegas can never be a first-rate city and continue to treat its people as second-rates.

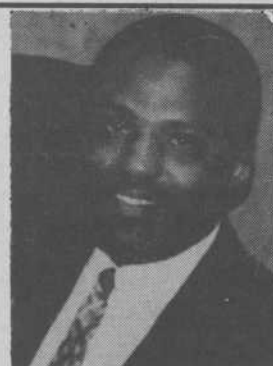
For decades, since the right to vote was attained, our communities have failed to exercise the right to vote as a means to collectively bring about change and progressive political power. It seems that maybe because the right to vote was such a hard fought battle and won at such a terrible cost, that voting along is enough. Absorb.

Voting is more than a badge of citizenship and dignity, it is an effective tool for change. Voting is the foundation stone for political action.

With it we can eventually vote out of office public officials who bar the doorway to decent housing, public safety, jobs, fair economic opportunities, and decent education. It is obvious that the basic elements that are so vital to advancement can only be achieved by seeking redress from government at local, state and federal levels. To do this vote is essential.

In the 1990's to say that you are a registered voter is simply not enough. We all must become students of the process. Our votes must be ready and able with the potential of a cocked gun. However, not just any cocked gun, but one with an identified target and clearly focused plan.

Even electing persons to



Assemblyman
Wendell P. Williams

office is not enough, solely. We must elect those who understand and can articulate and bring your viewpoint to fruition. However, these things should not be attempted without each voters participation before and after the elections.

Politics is not a spectator sport. Nor is it a field for arm chair quarterbacks who hang on the rail of bars talking about how someone else plays the game while they are on the sidelines.

Its a new day, and saying that you are a registered voter is just not enough. We must exercise the right to vote, but we must not just vote for exercise.

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