

Point of View

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TO BE EQUAL

CLINTON AND THE COURTS

By John E. Jacob

When Bill Clinton becomes president next January he will have a plate full of decisions to make, many of which, such as a national health program, job creation efforts, and comprehensive job training programs, will shape our national life for years to come.

But long term, among the most important and lasting effects of his Administration will not come in the first hundred days but will evolve over the course of his term.

That is the effect the Admini-

stration will have on the federal judiciary.

As president, Bill Clinton will become the first Democrat in a generation to appoint Supreme Court justices and to have a significant opportunity to reshape the federal judiciary. Thurgood Marshall was the last Supreme Court nominee of a Democratic President.

Since Lyndon Johnson's presidency, every High Court appointment has been made by Nixon, Reagan or Bush.

As a result, we have the most ideological Court in memory,

seemingly dedicated to pushing an activist conservative philosophy that devalues civil rights and individual privacy.

It is a Court that has progressively weakened the impact of civil rights laws and undermined the effectiveness of affirmative action and set-aside programs.

Recent decisions have made it more difficult for poor women to choose to have abortions, weakened local anti-bias laws, and undermined local government attempts to help minority businesses.

Any single one of the Court's

decisions might be rationalized as correct under traditional standards of constitutional law, but taken together, the Court's record in recent years suggests a definite trend toward eroding long-established rights.

One sign of how conservative the Court has become is the way justices formerly thought of as conservative are now labeled liberal in the context of today's Court.

That not only tells us how meaningless such labels are, but also how Justices Rehnquist, Scalia, and Thomas have staked

out extremist positions that pushed the Court rightward.

Observers predict that the Clinton Administration is likely to have several opportunities to fill vacancies on the Court.

Most often mentioned as possible retirees, however, are Justices identified with the moderate wing.

The Court's far right line-up is younger, and will be with us for many years to come. That places an even greater responsibility on the new president to appoint Justices who will ensure that the Court does not tip over to an activist conservative majority. Now, only one vote is enough to destroy established privacy and civil rights.

But the Supreme Court is not the only federal legal institution in need of appointees more in tune with the modern world and with the nation's needs.

There are 846 federal judges, all serving for life. Almost two-thirds of them were appointed in



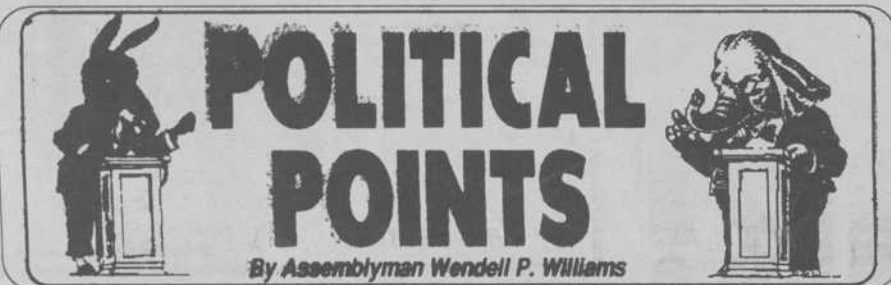
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the Reagan-Bush years, and had to pass the litmus test of a restrictive view of what federal courts could do to protect individual rights.

Those judicial individual rights.

Those judicial appointees of the 1980s were almost exclusively white males. President Jimmy Carter made a determined effort to place African Americans, women, and minorities on the federal bench, but his successors have kept the judiciary a white male preserve.

We can expect a Clinton Administration to remedy that with appointments that reflect the full diversity of the nation. And we can expect Clinton's judicial appointees to be committed to preserving the civil and personal rights embedded in our traditions and our constitution.



By Assemblyman Wendell P. Williams

TRUE TO THE GAME

One of the most unfortunate things happened last Tuesday. Unfortunate for the people of Clark County and for the integrity of the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District. Very questionable integrity I might add. On Tuesday, Library board trustee Steve Schorr, while appearing before the Clark County Board of Commissioners, resigned his appointment as a member of the library board. Back during the early part of October at the regular meeting of the library board when citizens complained about the operations of the district, Mr. Schorr stated on record, that if he found and determined that the district was not operating in the best interest of the people, then he would resign. On Tuesday, Mr. Schorr resigned.

Again I feel that this is unfortunate because he has been the only person on the board that has shown any degree of responsibility to his appointment. It was Steve who was the only member of

the board who spoke out against the trashing of over 800 library books every month opposed to giving them to organizations to use to fight illiteracy. His response "Whatever we can do to get children to read benefits the entire community."

Also, when the library director Charles Hunsberger wanted to give 20% of space of the new downtown library to KNPR Radio, in exchange for airing public service announcements, Mr. Schorr was the only trustee to question this rip-off. Yes, with all the problems that exist with the library district, now its lost its conscience. At least, Steve Schorr was true to the game.

With all the hype concerning the just released movie Malcolm X, many people will have to re-examine their commitment to the uplifting of human rights and dignity. Since the murder of Malcolm, race relations in America is reaching an all time low. For too long now, too many have adopted the mentality of "I got mine, you get yours;" completely has lost all signs of backbone; the kind of backbone of Mal-

colm, and the kind of backbone needed to deal with today's injustices. With this in mind, it is important that we move with intelligence and structure as we approach the upcoming NAACP election. In these times, the people deserve nothing less. In past years the grassroots participation at NAACP meetings have been minimal and memberships are stagnant. For whatever reason memberships have gone down while at the same time the number of African Americans living in Clark County has increased, this needs to be corrected. Whoever becomes the president next month, something has to change. In 1992 we cannot expect to see people flock to the organization because of what happened in the 1960's and 70's. Its a new day and time and we must adjust to the 1990's. However, this will never happen if we continue to live like crabs in a barrel, no one really wins and the big losers are the children and the community. So don't turn off even more people by running an Amos & Andy campaign. We demand only those



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that are true to the game.

Its no secret that President-elect Bill Clinton, as well as every other Democratic candidate who has won a place in the White House since 1964, got there because of the African American vote. In fact, Clinton lost to Bush among white voters and African American voters gave Clinton his margin of victory with 82% of their votes. Even here in Nevada as well as throughout most of America, Democrats went over the top because of the solid, consistent African American vote. This presents, once again, the need for the Democratic party to practice what it preaches, when they talk about a platform built on inclusion and expansion for the good of all people. African Americans should expect and demand no less. Its time for the Democrats to show in practice what they talk about in principle. Its time for Mr. Clinton and Democratic big wigs everywhere to be true to the game.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

GREETINGS! from the Staff and Management of KCEP FM 88.1 radio. Without appealing crasp, we'd like to get directly to the point of this letter.

Over the last few months we heard continuous reports of a program which has it's origin in the Bush Administration. The majority of our reports have not been positive and to be frank about it, we were at some what of a loss as to who to ask about

it. The reasoning was simple, if we, a Community Based Media entity, didn't know about Origin and Motive of this program, how could the average guy on the street know?

The program that we are referring to is the Weed and Seed program. While discussing this, "The Minister of Information and the Station Manager felt there may be something worth dis- (See Letter to Editor, Page 3)

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