

# Point of View

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## TO BE EQUAL

# CUT BLACK UNEMPLOYMENT NOW

By John E. Jacob

The unemployment crisis in the African American community ought to be at the top of the national agenda.

Rhetoric about diversity, the long-term beneficial effects of cutting the deficit, and the need to make modest investments in the economic infrastructure are all meaningless to people with no jobs and no hopes of getting jobs — and that's the situation in which too many African Americans find themselves.

The old theory that if the

economy booms, wealth and work will trickle down was disproved by the experience of the 1980s, when a booming economy largely bypassed black workers.

Today, black unemployment is well over double the white rate. And the official unemployment figures grossly understate true black joblessness, since disproportionate numbers of African Americans have dropped out of the labor force.

There are many reasons why people who want to work are not

in the labor force — school attendance, home responsibilities, health, and others — and the percentages of blacks and whites citing those reasons are comparable.

But over a million Americans aren't looking for work because they think they can't get a job. Proportionately far more blacks than whites are represented in the category, suggesting that significant numbers of African Americans have a negative outlook about their job opportunities.

For many, that reflects a realistic assessment of the job market and their place in it, and it also reflects past experiences with a discriminatory job scene.

Surveys show that twice as many blacks as whites believe that people often miss out on jobs because of their race and that there aren't enough jobs to go around.

But while those perceptions are accurate, there is a danger that such a negative outlook can become a self-fulfilling prophecy, discouraging people from

trying to find work or the training that can qualify them for jobs.

Another disturbing aspect of America's skewed labor market is the worsening employment prospects for black youth.

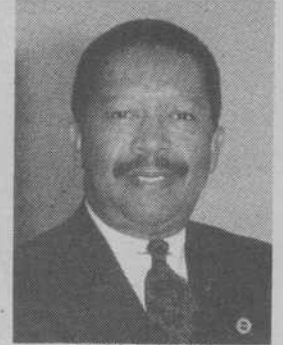
In 1992 the number of unemployed black youths increased by over 20 percent, while the number of unemployed white youth actually declined by almost ten percent.

Officially, the black youth unemployment rate stood at an incredible 39.6 percent at year-end; among young black males, it was 42.2 percent.

Such troubling numbers can lead some people to throw up their hands and say that the problem can't be solved.

But in fact, the numbers are very manageable. Or at least, they would be manageable if job creation efforts were sharply targeted to the areas of greatest need.

That's why I'm dubious about the effects of scatter-shot training, job creation, and infrastructure programs. They don't tar-



JOHN E. JACOB

get. Therefore they are relatively ineffective in bringing people back into the labor force and utilizing their potential.

And I'm especially concerned about the horrendous unemployment among black youth — a problem that could be solved with real commitment from the government and from the private sector.

Official statistics claim that the total number of unemployed young African Americans is only 316,000. Obviously, that's just the tip of the iceberg, but it certainly puts the problem in a better perspective.

Is it beyond the ability of this giant economy to find work and training opportunities for so few young people? Obviously we can do it, and just as obviously, doing it should be a national priority.



## — "AS IS" —

Almost every economist and financial expert agree on one thing; that the purchase of an automobile is one of the worst investments that an individual can make. In fact, they claim that of all major purchases, the auto loses its value faster than all others. Because of this most people would prefer to buy a brand new one. However, because of an array of different reasons, including income, budget, high cost and many others, many of us seek out to buy a used car. This of course makes a bad investment an even worse one. Because it boils down to buying something that for one reason or the other, someone else does not want. And regardless of how nice the price is, the one thing that quickly brings you back to reality is when you look on the window stickers and see the words "AS IS." In other words what you see is what you get. Sometimes we will have to roll with that because of our situations but sometimes we don't. So the times that we have to, its O.K., but times that we don't, we shouldn't.

Life is no different. Our so-

ciety could stand many changes to make it better and we should not accept things just because of the way that they've been. We must remove as many "AS IS" factors from our lives and our future as possible. Just because "AS IS" was accepted and tolerated in the past, due to certain conditions, does not mean we should not stand up with backbone today. In fact, many people would prefer that things would remain the same; some are even attempting to turn back the hands of the clock, while some would rather throw away the whole damn clock. Let's take a look.

On last week in the Nevada Legislature, the Assembly approved AB209 which has been sitting on our books "AS IS" for decades backing up improper use of deadly force by police officers even though the U.S. Supreme Court ruled differently back in 1985.

When I first introduced this measure, some said it was "unnecessary because law enforcement in Nevada is well trained." Maybe they are, but they sure have plenty of weak laws to back them up when they take the life of someone unnecessarily. Back in 1985 the case, Cleamtee Garner vs. the Memphis Police

Department, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of Garner whose unarmed son was shot by a police officer as the son was fleeing from the burglary of an unoccupied house. Acting under the authority of Tennessee statute, the police shot the fifteen year-old as he fled over a fence in the backyard of the house he was "suspected" of burglarizing. The officer, convinced that if the child made it over the fence he would elude capture, the officer shot him. The bullet hit Garner in the back of the head. Garner was taken by ambulance to a hospital, where he died on the operating table. Ten dollars and a purse taken from the house were found on his body.

1) The Supreme Court ruled that apprehension by use of deadly force is a seizure subject to the fourth amendment's reasonable requirement, and 2) deadly force may not be used unless it is necessary to prevent the escape and the officers have probable cause to believe that the suspect poses a significant threat of death or serious physical injury to the officers. 3) Tenn. statute under the authority of which the police officer fired the fatal shot was unconstitutional



Assemblyman  
Wendell P. Williams

in so far as it authorized use of deadly force against an apparently unarmed, non-dangerous fleeing suspect. And 4) the fact that the unarmed suspect had broken into a dwelling at night did not automatically mean that he was dangerous.

In other words, to seize a suspect, an officer may not always do so by killing him. The use of deadly force to prevent the escape of all felony suspects whatever the circumstances is unconstitutionally unreasonable. Nevada's current statute gives authorization for an officer to use deadly force totally disregarding the 85' Supreme court ruling. Plus every time an officer kills someone based on an "AS IS" outdated law, taxpayers pay the price of the state having to go into court to defend the law as Tennessee had to.

Surely we can't change everything that is unjust in society but we are sure blessed that those who came before us did, such as Nat Turner, Fannie Lou, Malcolm, Martin and countless others who did not settle for "AS IS."

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To Whom This May Concern:

Can you tell me, please, what is going on? Why do white Folks hate Black people, so? Why the teacher, who was J.R. Rider's Tutor, didn't stop him then and tell him he wasn't passing his English class? Why she waited until now to say something about it? Something is wrong. I've noticed that every time J.R. tries to do right, those white, blue eyed, devils keep pulling him down. I know he will be glad to get away from U.N.L.V. if they let him graduate. It is a shame. I think it is out of fear that white folks, just don't want our people to get ahead at any cost. The teacher (Bertolino) needs to  
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Betty Brown, President & Publisher  
Lee Brown, General Manager / Editor  
Ramon Savoy, Advertising & Marketing Dir.  
Lourdes Cordero-Brown, Office Mgr.  
William G. Ramirez, Assistant to the Editor  
Willis Brown, Production  
Ulysses Palrose, Distribution  
Don Snook, Graphics

Contributing Writers:  
Assemblyman Wendell P. Williams  
Ray E. Willis (CCSD)  
Rev. Jesse Scott (NAACP)  
James S. Tate, Jr., M.D. (NAARPR)  
R. K. Brown  
Gwen Walker  
Kimberly Bailey

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(608) 238-7550

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