

Point of View

The views on these editorial pages are those of the artists and authors indicated. Only the one depicted as the Sentinel-Voice editorial represents this publication

TO BE EQUAL

FINANCE GAP HURTS URBAN SCHOOLS

By John E. Jacob

You would think that big-city schools would have bigger budgets than other school districts.

After all, they face bigger challenges.

The 47 largest U.S. school districts, within 13 percent of the total school enrollment in the nation, educate a fourth of the nation's poor children and a third of children whose second language is English.

They also spend more on security and most of their schools are older, which means more

wear and tear on buildings and facilities, and thus more money for repairs.

But in fact, those big city school systems spend \$873 less per pupil than suburban schools.

The reason is that school funding is a local matter, so school budgets depend on community wealth.

The schools serving communities with very strong tax base have access to more money while the schools in communities that are poorer have to get by with less.

While there's a gross disparity in school funding among the 50 states, perhaps the most striking differences are those among school districts within a state.

And wealthy suburban school districts spend more of their money on classroom instruction.

That's because it's more expensive to do business in cities and because the urban schools have a higher proportion of at-risk children requiring special services.

A visible side-effect of the disparity in resources is that most

urban schools have virtually stripped away the supportive and enriching activities necessary for quality education.

Music, art, and library programs get cut first in cash-short districts.

Next to go are the guidance counseling and social service programs that can spell the difference between school success and dropping out for many youngsters.

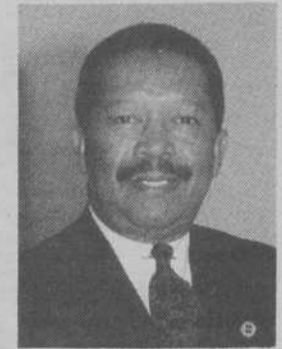
For all the talk about school reforms, perhaps the biggest single change would be to equal-

ize education spending across all school districts, so that urban schools with large numbers of disadvantaged children have the same resources as suburban schools with affluent youngsters.

Politically, that's a hard sell, which is why the disparities have continued for so long, and why states are reluctant to change a system that encourages failure.

And it is also why advocates of equalized spending have taken their case to court.

Currently, 23 states face lawsuits over their failure to close



JOHN E. JACOB

the spending gap between rich and poor districts.

The Texas Supreme Court has rejected state financing formulas three times, and a new effort to equalize school spending will come soon.

One Texas district spends \$20,000 on each student each year; another can barely scrape \$3,000 per pupil.

Relying on district taxing authority results in an unfair, unreal world where children who start life with the head start of affluent homes get an added boost by getting well-funded public school educations, while the children across the tracks attend schools that can't afford to provide minimum quality standards.

There are those who insist that spending doesn't matter — results come from the home, or the way the school is organized, or other factors.

But while those things do count, so does money. If it didn't, we would see those affluent districts resisting sharing some of their bounty with poorer ones.

So the list of necessary school reforms should include equalized state education financing to close the resource gap among districts.

CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

THE STRUGGLE FOR FULL EMPLOYMENT

By Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

The spring of 1993 has now become another critical time for a renewed national debate on the issue of full employment.

The need for jobs in the African American and other people of color communities has reached a crisis stage. This is certainly the situation in many of the na-

tions urban centers. Yet, in addition, we have found from our own survey that joblessness is also a growing problem in rural America.

Joblessness is a civil rights issue because so much of the ultimate impact of racial discrimination on the African American and other people of color communities leads to a displacement from the mainstream of American life, from employment and education to economics. The Civil Rights movement, therefore, must exhibit the capacity to help determine the outcome of the debate now gaining attention on Capitol Hill concerning President Clinton's "Job Package."

Clinton has presented an "Economic Stimulus Plan" which includes a billion-dollar summer jobs program for the nation's youth who have been entrapped in a spiral of continuous unemployment for the last several years. Members of the Congress are now weighing the efficacy of the Clinton Plan. There are many who are arguing against a "stimulus" approach to solving the bad state of the U.S. economy. Those who take that position say that the priority should be on reducing the huge national deficit.

We believe, however, that the economy does need a significant stimulation from the infusion of "new money" for new

programs. Further, we maintain that any national strategy that involves the infusion of new financial resources into the economy should include specific programs that are designed to confront the growing unemployment in the African American and other communities historically disenfranchised.

Although conservative Republicans have been successful in slowing Congressional approval of the Clinton proposals, the Congress during the next thirty days will be taking critical votes that will directly effect the summer of 1993. The call for quick response from the grassroots on this matter should be urgently issued. All the members of Congress should be contacted as soon as possible.

Just look at what is at stake: a \$1 billion program for disadvantaged youths which would add 700,000 extra jobs—including for the first time drills in reading, writing and mathematics. In addition there would be another billion dollars to expand the existing urban job corp programs.

At a time when unemployment of African American youth in some cities is higher than 70%, the crucial timeline of this spending action by the Congress cannot be overstated. The high rate of drugs, Black on Black violence, crime and other self-destructive activities in the African



BENJAMIN F. CHAVIS, JR.

American community are related to high unemployment.

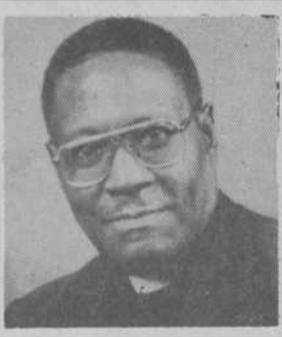
We join with the Congressional Black Caucus and their concerned organizations in order to pass a strong "Jobs Bill." We must not let our children down. We must not let our communities continue to wreak havoc as a result of joblessness.

Full employment must become a rallying slogan of the Civil Rights Movement. Our collective efforts on this issue will not only help to create jobs, but also help to save our communities.

THE NAACP AND YOU



Rev. Jesse D. Scott
President
Las Vegas, NAACP



The Las Vegas Branch NAACP is very thankful to God and the people of Las Vegas for keeping the peace after the Rodney King decision.

NAACP seeks to make Las Vegas a Model City in race relations by transforming the "All of Us Together" image into a "Substantive Reality" that everyone can become more involved in:

1. All parents to insist that their children stay in school;
2. All citizens respect the police and the police respect the citizens;
3. All schools teach the Children to read so that they won't graduate from school reading at the sixth (6th) grade level;
4. All libraries buy more books rather than building more buildings;
5. Reduce high unemployment rates of Afro-Americans;
6. Insist on having fair trades

and Sentencing for Afro-Americans;

7. Insist on fair employment opportunities for Afro-Americans at State, county and City levels;

8. Insist that Block Grant funds be used in poor neighborhoods;

9. Insist that Contracts opportunities for goods and Services be open to all on State, County and City levels;

10. Insist that all shootings and killings be discouraged except in self defense;

11. Encourage the Media to Print, Speak and Publish the truth in the News at all times;

12. To address the Social and Economic conditions that cause people to lose hope in the system and riot;

13. That all forms of Violence lead to more Violence;

14. To love and forgive one another as God loves and forgives each of us.

Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice

Nevada's only African-American community newspaper.
Published every Thursday by Brown Publishing Co. Inc.
1201 South Eastern Avenue • Las Vegas, Nevada 89104
Telephone (702) 383-4030

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

Members:
National Newspaper Publishers Assoc.
West Coast Black Publishers Assoc.
This newspaper is audited by:
Community Papers Verification Service,
6225 University Ave., Madison, WI 53705
(608) 238-7550

Subscriptions payable in advance
Six months \$15.00
Twelve months \$25.00
The rates apply to
Continental United States only