

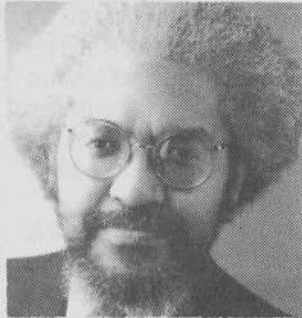
POINT OF VIEW

ALONG THE COLOR LINE

Racial politics in the world order

Part one of a two part series
By Dr. Manning Marable

As we face yet another presidential election year, African Americans once again must confront the dilemma of voting for the "lesser evil." As of this writing, Clinton seems assured of being easily reelected. Although clearly superior to the reactionary Republican challenger, Robert Dole, Clinton nevertheless is the most conservative Democrat to occupy the White House in generations. We cannot begin to develop a progressive strategy for black empowerment in this era of political conservatism,



DR. MANNING MARABLE

unless we understand the global forces toward inequality which form the foundation of the current crisis.

The "New World Order" was proclaimed by former President George Bush upon the fall of the

Soviet Union and Communism. Throughout the entire world, governments and political parties shifted to the right. Even relatively liberal parties such as England's Labour Party moved toward the political center. "Globalization" of corporate capitalism and information revolution have rapidly transformed the nature of work and the character of production. As traditional industries disappeared, and as agricultural production globally moved from labor-intensive to capital-intensive methods, millions of working people were displaced. Hundreds of millions of Third World people migrated from rural areas to cities, and from their own countries into Western Europe and North America, in the struggle for survival. Third World countries with socialist and labor parties had few options except to adopt neoliberal, capitalist policies.

These massive transformations in the structure of the global economy and labor

TO BE EQUAL

The achievement zone

By Hugh Price

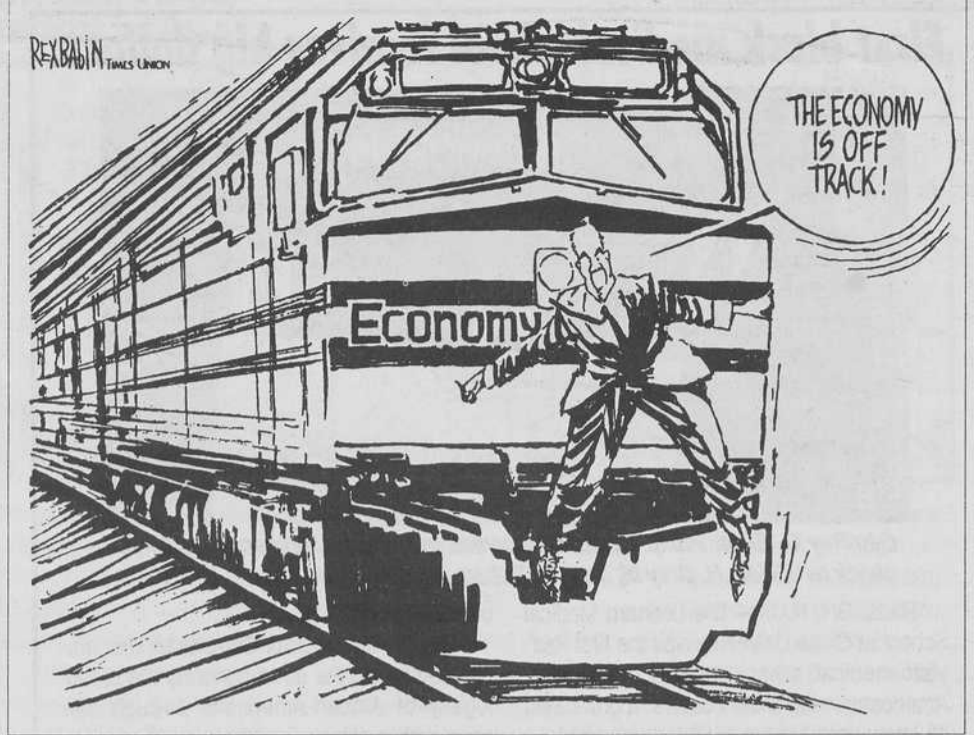
Two recent reports, one from the federal government, the other from a private foundation long involved in educational issues, illuminate many of the reasons why we at the National Urban League are investing ourselves so heavily in working for children. "Our Children = Our Destiny," is the first step. Our annual event "Doing the Right Thing," a campaign to honor youth who are excelling in their schools and communities, is the second step in that process.

Both of these reports show why it is that some young people do well—and why many others do not. They show that all children want to do well in school and make the honor roll, or what I like to call, the "achievement zone," but that many are discouraged from doing so.

The latter is what has to change.

Last month the Census Bureau declared that, for the first time in American history, blacks and whites are graduating from high school at the same rate. The Census study, based on data collected in March, 1995, found that among young adults aged 25 to 29, about 87 percent of both blacks and whites had earned high school diplomas.

That rate has remained relatively constant during the last decade for whites. But during



force have generated a sharp increase in income inequality and greater class stratification. The real wages for working-class people have steadily declined, and job insecurity affects middle-class households as well. In our central cities, millions of jobs which could sustain families have been destroyed. In communities like Central Harlem today, there are 14 job applicants for every available job in the fast-food industry. Members of families confined to the poorest

neighborhoods for several generations have never had the experience of a job in their lives.

When large numbers of people cannot obtain employment, the quality of life for the entire community suffers: Grocery stores and retail establishments close down, social institutions like churches and schools are weakened, the quality of housing deteriorates, and the level of violence connected with crime inevitably increases. Conversely, the same

global economic forces have concentrated vast wealth in the hands of a small privileged elite, which is also increasingly multinational in character.

In the United States, these economic trends created the political space for an extreme version of conservatism to triumph. In the early 1980s, this reaction was symbolized by administration of Ronald Reagan. Reaganism was in many ways the mirror opposite of the New Deal: government was the problem, not the solution. Federal programs were abolished; industries were deregulated; affirmative action and environmental laws were not enforced; the capital gains tax was significantly reduced, and taxes on corporate profits virtually disappeared.

Key elements within the Democratic Party at first tried to attack and reverse the politics of the Right. The 1983 mayoral victory of Harold Washington in Chicago, and the Rainbow Coalition's presidential campaigns for Jesse Jackson in 1984 and 1988, illustrated the potential power of a progressive, multi-class, and multiracial opposition. But liberals, labor, and the left in the United States failed to consolidate an alternative formation or movement to challenge conservatism. As a result, the political terrain shifted even



HUGH B. PRICE

The second report comes from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, long a forceful advocate of quality education. *Years of Promise: A Comprehensive Learning Strategy for America's Children* focuses, as its title promises, on the schooling of children ages 3 to 10.

It does so because "For most children, the long-term success of their learning and

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LAS VEGAS Sentinel Voice

Nevada's only African-American community newspaper.
Published every Thursday by Griot Communications Group, Inc.
900 East Charleston Boulevard • Las Vegas, Nevada 89104
Telephone (702) 380-8100 • Fax (702) 380-8102

Ramon Savoy, *Publisher-Editor*
Lee Brown, *Managing Editor*
Nichole Davis, *Staff Writer*
Willis Brown, *Production Manager*
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Contributing Writers:
Barbara Robinson
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Members:
National Newspaper Publishers Assoc.
West Coast Black Publishers Assoc.

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

CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

More signs of hope

By Bernice Powell Jackson

Even amidst the turbulence of the cities—the lack of jobs, the increase of drugs, the ready availability of guns, the high rate of teenage pregnancy, the growing drop-out rate, the rising number of people with HIV and AIDS, the bankruptcy of urban school systems, the disproportionate number of toxic waste dumps, the number of abandoned homes and factories, the high crime and the looming welfare repeal cuts—there are signs of hope. Often these signs of hope are faith-based. Here are two such stories.



Bernice Powell Jackson

The Covenant Churches Association began when four Toledo, Ohio pastors came together to tackle the problems of the city around them. These four pastors reached across denominational lines to work together for the healing of their community. Six months later they have started a credit union, a foster home and adoption program and have begun plans for programs to address the myriad problems faced by their congregations.

The vision of Rev. Robert Culp of First Church of God, Rev. Duane Tisdale of Friendship Baptist Church, Rev. Rudolph Mckissick of United Missionary Baptist Church and Rev. Edward Cook of New Life Church of God in Christ includes arts, education, counseling and even street witnessing to restore the community to safety and cooperation.

Their joint work includes working with fathers, a voter education and community organization effort, economic empowerment programs together with African American businesses and consumers, a foster care and adoption program for African American children and a domestic violence and abuse counseling program.

The Windsor Village United Methodist Church in Houston, Texas has taken a different approach to working with its community. Under the leadership of its pastor, Rev. Kirbyjon Caldwell, a former businessman and Wharton business school graduate, Windsor Village has developed a 104,000 square foot business center called the Power Center. A former abandoned K-Mart store located near the church, the Power Center houses a bank branch, the Houston Community College which offers computer training and business classes, a federal nutrition program for women and infants, a health clinic, a pharmacy, a 1,900 seat banquet facility and a private grade school founded by the church. In addition, most of the office suites have been rented out to business people.

Before developing the Power Center, Rev. Caldwell started a shelter for abused children and had developed a low-income housing project. These nonprofit ventures employ 125 people, making Windsor Village church one of the largest African American employers in Houston.

Good things are happening in cities across this nation. We cannot give up hope and all of us must help nurture the seeds.