

On the right . . . William F. Buckley Jr.

Julian Bond runneth over

I have never understood how it came to be that it is to dignify the Black people of America to suggest that they should all vote the Democratic ticket. From way back, the enemy of the Blacks has been the stereotype: the notion of the undifferentiated Black—the cotton picker or houseman, Tom, or Joe, no last name given because no last name is thought necessary, there being nothing in particular to distinguish between Tom and Joe.

Along comes Mr. Julian Bond, the young Black legislator from Georgia, working himself into quite a pitch of excitement last week at the suggestion that there are Negroes who plan to vote for Richard Nixon in the fall. Black Republicans, he says, are "political prostitutes." And those Black Republican leaders who lately urged Blacks to vote either for Nixon or to stay at home "are the willing accomplices of the Fascist forces in America who believe the only good Black voter is one who does not vote."

Now Mr. Bond is not renowned for precision of speech, or charity of sentiment. But there is no alternative than to

examine closely the statement in question.

Obviously anyone who is for Nixon desires that other people will, next November, vote for Nixon. There is nothing inherently wrong with that, surely. What is it they hope people who can't bring themselves to vote for Nixon will do? Why, obviously, that they will stay at home.

Now if one is addressing people in the context of a particular affinity: farmer to farmer, say; or banker to banker; or Irish to Irish, Californian to Californian, Black to Black, it is characteristic that one's rhetoric should slide into what us-folks should do or not do concerning the problems of farmers, or bankers, or Irish, or Californians, or Blacks. There is nothing in the least unusual, therefore, about a Black leader who is Republican advertising the benefits to Black people who are not Republicans of staying home rather than voting for McGovern. What I want to know is: what's Fascist about that?

Julian Bond has been living by the sword for quite a while now. He pronounced American virtue quite dead upon the assassination of Martin Luther King, for individuals, different human beings, with

which we were all to blame, remember? (By the way, how come nobody has said that we were all to blame for the attempted assassination of George Wallace?)

Presumably there was just enough virtue left in America to re-elect Julian Bond to the Georgian Assembly a couple of times since his dismissal of America. In the apex of madness in 1968, Eldridge Cleaver was denouncing Julian Bond as a "pig," a pig being defined, in Cleaver usage, as anyone who cooperates with the System. Cleaver's use of language at the expense of Bond is no looser than Bond's use of language at the expense of Negro Republicans.

But the larger question, for Black Republicans or Black Democrats, is whether it is altogether dignified to call on them to vote for or against Nixon in their capacity as Black men and Black women. By doing so they surely encourage the survival of the stereotype. As Black men, they have something in common.

But surely what they have in common—the color of their skin—is much less binding than what it is that makes them, as

differing views on what is best for America, for their communities, for their families, and for themselves. In times of total oppression against a people of any single race or creed, they can band together to assert primary allegiances, declaring themselves first, say, as Christian, as was done in Rome many centuries ago; or as Jew, as was appropriate in Nazi Germany only a few decades ago.

But it is neither true that the Black people of America today are a people persecuted in the sense we speak of. Nor is it by any means obvious that if one contends that they are persecuted, using the word metaphorically, that the Democratic Party is the obvious instrument of their deliverance. My own feeling is that no Negro Republican has in recent weeks said anything quite so inimical to the interests of Negro Americans as Mr. Bond has done. If I were a Negro I would ask him please, stop addressing me in tones quite so hortatory; indeed, come to think of it, as a fellow American, I tender to him the same request, in behalf of other fellow Americans.

Nicholas Von Hoffman

The American Party meets

LOUISVILLE (KFS)—Dale Wofford of Richmond, Ind., sat by himself and held up a sign that said enigmatically, "Aug. 5, 1964." That was the date, he explained, when the first American airman was shot down and captured in Vietnam. Wofford added, "he's still there and we're still here passing resolutions."

The resolutions were being passed at the convention of George Wallace's American Independence Party or, more simply, the American Party, as it now wishes to be known. Wofford, who works for a mortgage company, wasn't entirely pleased with the proceedings. "I came here to find a forum," he said "but I've been advised that my message is too controversial so I sit here with my mute sign."

Wofford's displeasure goes to show that no organization can satisfy everybody's politics, but, on balance, you'd still have to say that, if there is such

a thing as the New Politics, they were practicing it here in Louisville last week. This was a convention of non-professional, citizen politicians coming together in their candor to nominate their party's candidate.

It requires an effort of the will to take them seriously just because they are not slick, they are not standard brand and they are unauthorized people who have the eccentric temerity to believe that they, too, are entitled to butt their noses into how the country is run. It requires an extra effort to get over the suspicion that they all must be racists, that they all must be closet anti-Semites.

Get the Reds Out

They do howl frighteningly when welfare gets denounced, and they do love to hear their speakers tell them that "the only way to get the government out of the red is to get the Reds out of the govern-

ment"; and there is a sentence in their platform that reads, "Most of the wars to which America has been a party . . . not excepting Vietnam, have resulted from the machinations of international finance in their (six) centuries-old drive toward world government."

Maybe that means Jews, but then again Karl Marx had similar sentiments. Anyhow, there are racists and anti-Semites in the two major parties and we don't judge them solely on that basis. No, the real problem for the American Party is that it says a lot of things Americans believe, and it says them in unfuzzed, understandable words. Take this excerpt from the preamble to the Party's platform:

"The average man today does not think of himself in ideological terms, such as liberal and conservative. . . he is concerned with . . . an equity in taxation which makes him neither the victim of those who

by refusing to work have no income to tax, or the multi-millionaires who use tax loopholes to avoid the payment of any taxes. He is concerned about the never-ending use of his sons for gunfodder in futile international involvements."

Such words make us nervous because so many of us believe them to be true. It strikes us as rash, impractical and even dangerous to say them. It is somehow reassuring to go back to the two-party system we have no faith in and listen to it tell us stuff and nonsense.

These people are disturbing. They sell copies of George Washington's Farewell Address in the lobby, and that leads them to write in their platform, "... our country is being changed from a Republic to a world empire in which our freedoms are being sacrificed on an altar of international involvement. . . war has become an integral part of the domestic economy of both the Democrat and Republican administrations."

Mostly Working People

There were a few richies among the 1,500-plus delegates here, but most were working people. Consequently the convention had a feeling of folk politics about it. Thus there was an edge of cruelty to some of the things that were said, but there was also a lot of folk wisdom. It's hard for us fancy Easterners to recognize it, because the folk style of expression is tinged with the paranoid while we color our speech with the modalities of the social sciences.

Yet often the folks understand what's happening sooner and with greater clarity. You don't have to tell these people the Rockefellers are menaces; they and the John Birch Society knew the Council on Foreign Relations was a pernicious influence long before the American Left found out. Even now while they're mistakenly calling for a return to the gold standard, they are also wise enough to say that, "the American Party advocates the abolition of the Federal Reserve system—a private corporation—and a tyranny of the International Bankers."

Hot language for cool Ivy college grads. It puts off tweed people just like the party's tight sphincter control politics that censures pot and unmarried sex, but the folks still have smarts and the rest of us might have the humility to listen.

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Moonlighting