



We see the world
through Black eyes

Let them retire

Congress is moving toward amending the nation's mandatory age retirement law. Although this change is designed to allow the elderly poor to continue to work between age 65 and 70, it will have serious repercussions on the labor force.

Keeping elderly workers on the payroll for an extra five years will adversely effect affirmative action by tying down many positions that could be filled by minorities. In many job areas -- where positions are limited -- upward mobility of younger workers is determined by the number of positions vacated by retirements.

Many older workers are alert and able to perform responsibly. Others are merely holding a position and management is letting them ride until retirement. We all have known older workers who have failed to perform but no one would be mean enough to fire them after years of good service and with retirement so near.

The real issue is not whether the person between 65 and 70 years of age should be allowed to work -- the issue is whether they will have to work to eat. It is a crime that older people, having worked for 45 years or more, can not have a happy and satisfying retirement. With good health care and money to spend, they could continue to contribute to society in whatever way they choose.

The real answer is not raising the retirement age but providing a guaranteed annual income for all citizens.

Sounds like Portland

The termination of C. Delores Tucker, Secretary of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, by Governor Milton Shapp should bring to mind current and past events in Portland.

Mrs. Tucker, a Black woman, was told that she was fired because she had made more than 150 speeches in a 28 month period, earning \$65,000 in fees, and that she had used her staff to write her speeches.

She was called from a meeting of the National Association of Secretaries of State, of which she was to be elected president, and confronted by the Governor and the Attorney General, who asked her to resign. She refused to resign and was fired.

Mrs. Tucker told the press, "The charges made against me have already been explored fully by the State Legislature, the State Ethics Board and the Governor's office in the past. They are now being dredged up as an excuse to cover the real issues...Among these issues is whether or not a person of principle and fairness supervising the state election machinery is a threat to a power-hungry gang."

Unable to find anything against her performance in office, the Governor said she "did things no other Secretary ever did. She revitalized every department."

As another in a series of attacks on Black officials, Mrs. Tucker's fate strikes home. Nearly every Black elected or appointed official of any significance has been attacked and slandered. Some have been driven to resign just out of sheer exhaustion from their self-defense. Some have been rendered ineffective and others have chosen to ignore the accusations or fight back.

Mrs. Tucker's statement that all accusations had long before been investigated and dismissed -- then dredged up again to be used against her -- reminds us of recent references in the daily press to fountain pens and expensive tape players -- issues that have long been laid to rest.

We have to agree with Cleveland Gilcrease's associates in Washington, D.C. that the press has chased 3,000 miles across the country just to continue its harassment of him. Surely there are more important issues right here at home that could bear some investigative reporting -- like racial discrimination. Let's see a good, hard investigation of racism right here in good old Portland.

Revolution closer

The government of South Africa has banned nearly every Black organization in that nation and has closed its two major Black newspapers. At the same time, at least eleven Black leaders were arrested and homes, offices and churches were raided. The organizations and persons banned are considered moderates since their more militant counterparts have been banned earlier.

The arrests followed pressure in South Africa resulting from the murder of Steve Biko, a Black activist, in a prison.

Carter Administration spokesmen have said that the actions have brought about a reassessment of the United States' relationship with South Africa. A good beginning would be banning the sale of the South African Krugerrand and the presence of South African citizens in this country and halting all tax breaks for U.S. corporations doing business in South Africa.

South Africa is rapidly moving toward revolution and the sooner the U.S. cuts its ties with the white government the better.

Credit, not blame

Commissioner Jordan is getting the blame for the city not getting involved in the "War on Poverty" because he and Commissioner Ivancic insisted on citizen participation. Mayor Goldschmidt offered to appoint a committee to look into forming a city-wide agency. Jordan and Ivancic wanted that committee selected by the affected communities.

They should be commended for their effort to keep people programs in the hands of the people.

The necessity of allies

by Bayard Rustin

A curious thing about politics is its puzzling inconsistency. It is not unusual for something to be given with one hand and to be taken away with the other. Recently, for instance, the Senate passed a minimum wage bill which was a definite improvement over the version passed by the House of Representatives. The Senate then turned around and voted to deregulate the price of natural gas, a move that would hurt most Americans and inflict special hardships on the poor. Ironically, this time, the House voted for a superior bill.

It would probably take a genius to make sense of the way the Senate and the House voted on these two issues. There are, nonetheless, some important lessons to be learned from these two recent votes. The first is the tremendous diversity of issues which affect the Black community. Limited resources means that we can tackle only some issues. Thus, while many Black organizations actively worked for the passage of an improved minimum wage bill (and are continuing to work for the superior Senate version), I doubt whether there is a major Black organization which has made a determined effort to affect the natural gas vote.

The price of natural gas at first, may not, seem to be a civil rights or Black issue. Certainly, the proponents of deregulation were not motivated by some anti-Black spirit. Rather, the attraction of deregulation is that it appears to provide a simple, sweeping solution to a complex problem. There is, however, strong evidence that deregulation will

lead to considerably larger consumer expenditures and only a negligible increase in natural gas production. If this view is correct, then, as the Congressional Budget Office observed, "the question becomes primarily one of income distribution." If natural gas prices are deregulated, an additional \$76 billion will flow from consumers to the industry between now and 1985. If oil prices are also decontrolled, the effect could be as devastating to the economy as the four-fold increase in oil prices imposed by OPEC which was a major cause of the recession. When we recall the staggering and continuing damage inflicted on Black Americans by the recession, it becomes clear that the issues of energy and economic growth may be as important to our future as the traditional civil rights agenda.

The importance of such issues as natural gas deregulation leads to a second lesson that can be drawn from the Senate vote on minimum wage and natural gas deregulation. Because civil rights organizations are unable to give their full attention to every issue vitally affecting Black Americans, we must have a strategy or set of principles to guide us in dealing with the whole gamut of crucial issues. Otherwise, we will find ourselves outmaneuvered and outgunned. What we win in one vote will be taken away with another.

Our response must be based upon an analysis of allies and coalitions. It has occasionally been suggested that Blacks should apply the philosophy of the British Prime Minister who proclaimed that his country had "no permanent allies, no

permanent enemies, only permanent interests." The difficulty with this approach is that politics within a country differ profoundly from relations between countries. The victories won by the civil rights movement were largely possible because of the power of moral concerns in domestic politics.

More fundamentally, we are part of a community that is concerned with building a more just, decent, and responsible society. It is inevitable that, from time to time, serious differences will arise within that community. However, a disagreement with a friend is different than a disagreement with an enemy. One expects to be able to amicably resolve disagreements with friends and make every possible effort to prevent disagreements from escalating into quarrels. It is no secret that there are today some issues on which the Black community has important differences with our friends. But we must not allow disagreements on this or that issue to obscure the necessity to work together if we are to achieve the goals we believe in.

If, as I believe, new issues like natural gas deregulation are assuming a growing importance for Black Americans, then it is essential to remember the special quality of our relationship with the labor movement, the liberal community, and other elements of the coalition for social justice. The questions which will increasingly determine Black progress -- full employment, economic growth, energy, and economic justice -- cannot be solved unless the coalition is strong and united. The understanding that economic issues are central can form the basis for a renewed politics of equality.

Election '78

State Representative Roger Martin has announced that he is a candidate for the Republican nomination for Governor. Martin, who is a resident of Lake Oswego, is vice president of United Sales Associates and Martin Electric. A six-term legislator, Martin was unanimously re-elected House Republican Leader for the 1977 session.

Evelyn Crowell, an associate professor at Portland State University and immediate past chairman of the YWCA Board, has announced her candidacy for the Democratic nomination for representative in District 16, the position now held by Representative Wally Priestley. Ms. Crowell's activities include the Public Education Research Council of Oregon, the Martin Luther King Scholarship Fund, Catholic Daughters of America, Portland Art Association, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and the City Club. She is an eighteen year resident of Portland.

Arnold Biskar is a candidate for City Council, Position 2, held by Commissioner Mildred Schwab. A certified public accountant, Biskar has served on two citizens budget task forces, the Cultural Resources Committee for the Chamber of Commerce, and the boards of the Portland Ballet Society, Young Audiences of Oregon and the Red Cross. He is Chairman of Radio Station KBOO's financial advisory committee and is a former Little League coach. In announcing his candidacy he said, "I want to go on record at the beginning of my campaign as supporting full and equal human rights for all, a Council more responsive to an increasing self determination for neighborhoods, and as supporting the maintenance and upgrading of our housing stock, including downtown housing."

The Multnomah County Democratic Central Committee will meet on Thursday, October 20, 1977 - 7:45 p.m. promptly, Polish Hall, 3832 N. Interstate at Failing Street. The agenda includes debate of four measures: 1. STATE: Water Development Loan Fund Created; 2. STATE: Development of Non-nuclear Natural Energy Resources; 3. CITY OF PORTLAND: Authorizes Power Contracts; and 4. MULTNOMAH COUNTY: Charter Amendment - Reorganization of County Commission.

Counting the jobless

by Vernon Jordan

Now that the unemployment rate is firmly below the double-digit level there seems to be less national urgency about dealing with the problem of joblessness.

That's a mistake -- and a big one at that. People in and out of government have become mesmerized by statistics and projections that show the unemployment rate moving downward by steps. The Administration has said it expects unemployment to fall below five percent by 1981, and if it believes that, then it is leaning on a very shaky reed.

Actually, unemployment remains unconscionably high and there's no real downturn in sight. Federal job-creation programs will make only a minimal impact on the problem and there's little indication that the private sector will increase its hiring enough to make a dent in the ranks of the jobless.

In fact, the number of jobs in the private sector have been expanding, while the numbers of unemployed have not declined appreciably. What that means is that the private sector is creating enough jobs for skilled and trained people, but the rest of the work force is unable to benefit.

And at the very foot of the problem is the strange situation that few people can even agree on how many people are unemployed at all.

The official statistics consistently understate true unemployment. They are based on survey data that counts as unemployed individuals who are not currently working and who say they are actively looking for work. They count as employed, people who are working part time, even a few hours a week, although they want and need full-time jobs.

Now that may be a way to keep the books, but it doesn't give an accurate picture of the job market. It doesn't count people who have given up looking for jobs because they're not available. It doesn't even count these "discouraged workers" as being part of the labor force at all.

All of this and more will be examined by a new high level commission that will study the official unemployment statistics and make recommendations for changes.

It doesn't take much to figure out that this is a politically explosive area. There's a vested interest in rosy figures. Numbers that show mass misery wind up putting pressure on political leaders to do something about it, at whatever cost to their other interests.

That's why there's so much support for dropping unemployment figures altogether and would make everything come up looking grand.

But putting on blinkers won't make the problem, or the jobless, go away. It's a form of self-deception that can only lead to more suffering and trouble for the country further down the line.



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Civil Rights

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that this type of discrimination can no longer exist. Stevenson expressed the opinion that most current discrimination is inadvertent, the result of outdated personnel practices, but that the effects of discrimination are there.