

EDITORIAL/OPINION

Replace Africa's stolen resources

Africa is a continent in trouble. Agricultural output is lower than that of 1970 and economic development has been hampered by high oil prices and interest rates. Over half of the proceeds from exports are used for oil and food imports.

Of the 31 least developed nations in the world 22 are in Africa. Estimates are that 69 per cent of the population is seriously poor and 39 per cent destitute.

Industrialization has contributed little to economic and social development. The predominance of light industry, coupled with high transportation costs, means that only 0.8 per cent of the world's manufactured goods come from Africa.

Eighty per cent of the people live in rural areas where 44 per cent of the land is subject to drought and 55 per cent to desertification.

The population growth is greater than in the rest of the world, with a 2.9 per cent average annual growth between 1975 and 1980. The labor force, suffering from extreme unemployment and underemployment, grew 2.2 per cent. To ensure adequate employment for the projected 585 million people by the year 1987, more than 39 million jobs need to be created.

Lack of transportation hampers the economy.

There are few all-weather roads, 40 per cent of the road network being partially improved or unimproved dirt tracks. Railroads vary in gauge and size, precluding inter-connections between countries.

Economies are based on colonialism—producing raw materials for export rather than food and material for consumption at home. The high cost of manufactured goods and food imports, coupled with low income from natural resources, ensures that the African nations—like other Third World nations—do not have the economic resources for development.

Many of the new governments are emphasizing food crops, a necessary step to feed people now starving and to cut down the expenditure of funds for food imports. Another great need is the development of solar power to minimize the enormous expenditures on oil. Although the bulk of the work to build the economies must be borne by the African nations themselves, their survival also depends on the world economy. The developed nations, especially the U.S., which raped Africa of its human and natural resources, should be in the forefront of the race to provide African nations with technical assistance and economic aid. This aid must be provided without subjecting them to economic or political control.

Television teaches racism

Television could have been the most powerful vehicle of education and communication known to man. It could have been a leader in the quest for human understanding and human rights. It could have been a means to show children all of the wonders of the world and to encourage them to seek knowledge.

Instead, television maintains a stagnant communication, playing to the lowest common denominator with its soap operas, game shows and violence.

Programming for adults is awful—violence, sex, racism and ignorance. But programming for children is worse.

A recent study by Action for Children's Television revealed that children's programs are worse than adults in not showing minorities and in stereotyping minorities and women.

• 3.7 per cent of the characters in the programs surveyed were black; 3.1 per cent were Hispanic; 0.8 per cent were Asian. Native Americans were represented only by Tonto.

• Only 16 per cent of the major dramatic

characters were female.

• Blacks are more likely to be cast as heroes than as villains but this is offset by the infrequency of minority portrayals.

• Women were portrayed as younger than men, more likely to be married, less active, and with lower self-esteem.

Programs targeted to children—the most vulnerable of our population—portray a world of white males. Those with accents are villains or stupid. These programs provide a daily dose of education that ensures that the racism in our society will survive and grow.

Far too many parents use television as a babysitter and never look to see what their children are seeing and hearing. Few bother to tell the networks that the picture must change.

Television is a commercial product. The best way to reach the policy makers is not to buy from the corporations that pay the bill. When the advertisers find that parents want change—and feel it in their bank accounts—change will come.

"If I Helped You, I'd Have to Help Others!"



Dick Bogle

by Dick Bogle

New targets and new strategies are part of the goals set by the nation's oldest civil rights organization at its recent Boston convention.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is planning greater activism in bringing black Americans into the economic mainstream.

One of the symbolic targets in this effort will be the motion picture industry. The convention passed resolutions requiring executive director Benjamin Hooks to conduct a campaign for jobs and upward mobility in the industry and asking the industry to portray blacks in more positive roles.

Hooks was also authorized to organize boycotts of movies which exclude blacks "in front of and behind the camera," if that is deemed necessary.

The year 1982-83 also will see other specific efforts directed by the N.A.A.C.P. in the fields of education, criminal justice, and political

action.

The organization plans to continue legal and other efforts to desegregate schools at all levels but will put most emphasis on quality education, rather than busing and the achievement of strict racial balance in schools. It will also study testing not only in education but in job selection testing.

The N.A.A.C.P. will become more active in starting rehabilitation programs both inside correctional institutions and for former inmates.

Althea Simmons says the organization plans to boost local chapters where they may be sagging and form coalitions with other organizations to make candidates aware of the needs and aims of black Americans.

Months ago, in this column, we wrote about the need for an extension of the National Voting Rights Act. Well, Congress passed it and President Reagan signed it into law. That fact plus a recent U.S. Supreme Court Decision paints a much

brighter picture for blacks to gain elective office. Both the Voting Rights extension and the decision will make it easier to prove in court that an election system discriminates against minorities.

The July 1st Supreme Court case involved Georgia's Burke County, a rural area near the South Carolina border. It allows a wide range of indirect evidence to show discriminatory intent, something not allowed in a 1980 court decision. Now, with the new decision the American Civil Liberties Union will resume filing challenges to at-large elections systems soon. The thinking is that if a county elects its commissioners on an at-large basis, blacks will not as likely win office as they would had the election been conducted on a district basis since blacks could be in the majority in some districts.

Blacks today hold only two per cent of the nation's elected public offices. And the rate of increase in their election has slowed over the past several years.



Washington Hot Line

by Congressman Ron Wyden

Q. What do you think of current television advertisements which give credit to the Administration for "keeping its promises" to preserve the integrity of the social security system?

A. These ads are both misleading and harmful, and I believe they should be discontinued.

The ads are misleading because they give credit where credit isn't due. The ads state that the President has kept his promise to preserve the Social Security system by allowing a 7.4 per cent cost-of-living adjustment to go through as scheduled on June 30.

What the ads fail to note is that: 1) These cost-of-living increases have been provided automatically by law since 1975 (not by any action of the president); and

2) The Administration fought long and hard to have this increase delayed. It failed to do so only because Congress refused to go along.

By giving undue credit to the Administration, these ads make a mockery of the truth, and once

again stretch the patience of the American people.

But they do more. They also threaten chances for the kind of rational, bipartisan solution to Social Security's problems that the President has said he favors.

Only 10 months ago, the President stood before the American people and announced the formation of a bipartisan task force which was to come up with proposals for reform of the system. He said at that time, that this task force was designed to remove Social Security once and for all from politics.

The Republican National Committee (which is sponsoring the television ads) obviously didn't get the message. By giving credit where credit isn't due, the committee has once again removed Social Security from the conference table—and placed it on the political playing field.

The problem with this Social Security game is that the losers are not the Democrats nor the Republicans. The losers are the unwilling specta-

tors—America's working men and women and our retirees.

As the great political game wages on, Americans are forced to sit on the sidelines—never knowing which team will score the points, or whether someone will just drop the ball, leaving them holding nothing more than the memories of a broken contract.

We owe the American people more. We owe them a victory—and we can only achieve that victory if we work together.

In a speech on the House floor this week, I urged the President to assert his authority as the leader of the Republican Party—to demand removal of the RNC's Social Security ads from the airwaves—to demand return of Social Security to a pension program, not a political football.

That is the only way we can hope to keep our pledge to the American people, and to provide them with the retirement benefits they earned and deserve.

Affirmative action feud

(Continued from page 1 column 6)

ney Barry Goldstein, who has represented minority workers in seniority system challenges, insists that equal opportunity sometimes requires abrogation of seniority rules. He argues that rigidly applied seniority often perpetuates the effects of past discrimination.

Only one major labor organization advocates "affirmative retention" of minorities in layoff situations—the Independent National Education Association (NEA), chief rival to the AFT and the nation's largest teacher group. NEA guidelines encourage local affiliates to seek contracts which limit minority layoffs to the proportion of minorities in the bargaining unit. Even within the NEA, however, many members prefer traditional seniority systems and relatively few locals have adopted affirmative retention plans. NEA officials say they will honor any choice made by locals.

The Boston case is not the only such dispute now in court. Accord-

ing to Shanker, teachers in Springfield, Illinois, Kalamazoo, Michigan, and Buffalo, New York, are embroiled in similar controversies. Appeals court rulings have also upheld court-ordered minority layoff restrictions covering public safety agencies in Boston and the Memphis fire department.

Judges stated their rationale clearly in the Boston police and fire case: "We are acutely aware that some white policemen and firefighters who, understandably, regard the seniority system as an inalienable right and who have been innocent themselves of any discrimination will lose their jobs, at least temporarily. We must recognize that whites as a group reaped significant advantages in the past in hiring and promotion at the expense of blacks and hispanics and that a last hired, first fired seniority system perpetuates the past exclusion of minorities. This is not a case of wrong or right; it is a case of two competing

rights."

Nevertheless, a Supreme Court reversal would not surprise many observers. While the court has not ruled on a major "reverse discrimination" claim since 1979, this year's decisions in other cases revealed a growing reluctance to set aside union rules: In the most recent such decision, June 29, the justices overturned a lower court affirmative action hiring order covering Pennsylvania and Delaware construction workers. The high court now insists that union seniority and hiring hall rules may not be set aside unless the challengers prove they were set up with intent to discriminate.

What that interim ruling will mean for current layoff disputes remains to be seen. But a more definitive Supreme Court decision, especially in a case as clear-cut as that in Boston, would almost certainly have a lasting impact on race relations in U.S. workplaces.

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