

EDITORIAL/OPINION

U.S. Senate stonewalls Title IX

The recent tabling of Civil Rights legislation aimed at reversing a Supreme Court decision that would withhold federal funds only to a specific department where discrimination took place, and not the entire institution, is testimony to the truism that American democracy is subservient to the economic and political interests of those who hold power.

Opponents threw up enough procedural roadblocks, stonewalls and smokescreens that Senate activity was at a standstill as deadlines for actions on a money bill and as congressional adjournment approached.

By a 53-45 vote, the United States Senate killed legislation aimed at broadening the Supreme Court limits of the application of Title IX, a federal anti-discrimination law. Title IX

prohibits sex discrimination at any college or university receiving federal assistance. Prior to February 28, 1984, any college or university found discriminating could have had all its federal monies withdrawn. The Grove City College case challenged and changed the application of Title IX. The Reagan Administration supported this narrow interpretation and the Justice Department quietly closed 23 Civil Rights investigations.

The residual effects of legalized scholastic discrimination will deprive people of color, the handicapped and mature citizens of their rights to a higher education. They stand helplessly by while education becomes a privilege instead of a right.

"Constructive engagement" a farce

by Bayard Rustin

In recent days, our nation's press and evening news reports have been filled with accounts of protest marches, election boycotts, and widespread violence in South Africa. Some thirty Blacks in the townships of Sharpeville, Evaton and Sebokeng have been killed by the South African police. Protest marches against rent increases have been brutally suppressed. Leaders of election boycotts have been arrested and detained.

The new wave of violence is further evidence that no progress has been made toward majority rule in South Africa. The South African government's new constitutional "dispensation," which provides limited political rights for Indians and those of racially mixed descent ("coloureds"), has been repudiated by an election boycott by some 80 percent of eligible voters. The government's attempt to drive a wedge between Black Africans and their non-white counterparts has demonstrably failed.

Recent economic trends also suggest that South Africa is in for a period of greater Black worker unrest. In 1982, for example, while white earnings (already more than 4.5 times those of Blacks) rose, the average

Black South African workers' earnings fell by seven percent.

Yet, despite the economic and political setbacks visited upon Black South Africans, despite the suppression of Black trade unionists, despite the brutality of the police in combatting demonstrators, there has been no public expression of outrage or criticism from President Reagan.

When he assumed the Presidency, Ronald Reagan inaugurated a policy of "constructive engagement" with the racist regime in Pretoria. The stated purpose of this policy was to convince the government of P. W. Botha to move toward resolving the question of Namibian independence and to encourage the government to take concrete steps toward increased representation for Blacks, Asians and "coloureds." In the service of this policy of cordiality, U.S. Ambassador Herman Nickel has invited some of the most brutal South African government officials to U.S. Embassy functions. For example, P. G. J. Koornhof, the architect of South Africa's evil policy of forcibly relocating Blacks from areas in which they have traditionally lived, was shown on the front pages of South Africa's

newspapers joining a smiling Ambassador Nickel in an Independence Day toast at our Embassy in Pretoria. Such travesties have been motivated, Reagan officials claim, in the interests of greater U.S. leverage to plead for better treatment of Blacks. Now, nearly four years after the launching of the new course of cordial relations between the Reagan Administration and South Africa it is clear that "constructive engagement" has yielded nothing for South Africa's Blacks.

If President Reagan indeed was sincerely pursuing the policy of "constructive engagement" with the goal of encouraging the South African government to move toward improved conditions for Blacks, it is time that he acknowledge that this policy has failed. It is high time, as well, that the role of the U.S. in combatting apartheid become a matter of debate between the Presidential candidates.

Editor's note: Bayard Rustin, chairman of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, recently returned from a fact-finding visit to South Africa, where he participated in a conference on strategies for non-violent change.

THE SUPREME COURT TIGHTENED THE RULES FOR POLITICAL REFUGEES WHO WANT TO STAY IN THE U.S.



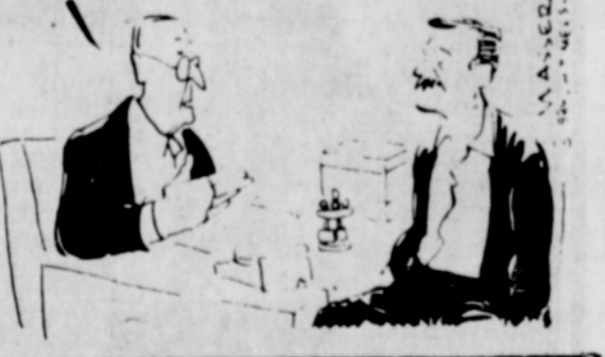
A WELL-FOUNDED FEAR OF PERSECUTION IN YOUR COUNTRY IS NOT ENOUGH



WHAT KIND OF EVIDENCE WOULD BE ENOUGH?



A NOTE FROM YOUR DICTATOR



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Street Beat

by Lanita Duke and Richard Brown

The Street Beat team asked the question that both Presidential candidates are asking: "Are you better off now than you were four years ago?"



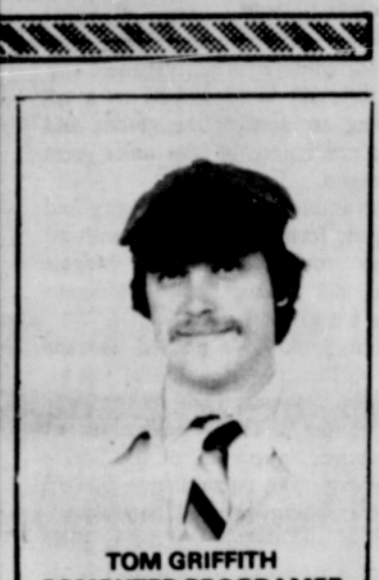
Henry Johns
Retired

"I'm worse off because of the President that we have. The Democrats might make it better."



Julio DeVila
Landscaper

"In some ways things are better because I'm older and more stable. Financially, it was easier for me. Now, it's harder out there. I'm a retard. I still can't find a job."



TOM GRIFFITH
COMPUTER PROGRAMER

"No, the local economy is not near the national level. I may be better off four years from now but it will have nothing to do with who's president."



Mary Button
Unemployed

"No. I don't have a job and my husband is not working too regularly. I don't believe in the kinds of things Reagan stands for. I'll never vote for him again."



John Washington
Retired

"I'm both. Money-wise I'm better off, but bill-wise I'm worse. I don't see any party making a difference."



Barbara Brown
Postal Worker

"No. Times are just a lot harder. It will be the same no matter who gets in."

Stop the radical right

by Dr. Manning Marable
"From The Grassroots"

The greatest misconception about the Reagan Administration is the notion that it is philosophically "conservative." Nothing could be further from the truth. Reaganism at its core comprise the most militant reactionary currents in American life — the Eagle Forum of Phyllis Schlafly, the Moral Majoritarians of Rev. Jerry Falwell, former segregationists like North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms, union busters, rightwing capitalists, right-to-lifers and others. Traditional Republican conservatism has tried to "stop the clock" of social and economic progress for Blacks, Latinos, women, labor, and other oppressed groups. The Reaganites, conversely, are aggressively attempting, and succeeding, at moving the nation and the world backward in a vicious and demagogic manner. These reactionaries are not conservative; they are radicals who demand social inequality at home, and war abroad. As Republican Congressman Jack Kemp proudly asserted at the Republican National Convention, the Party's 1984 platform is "the most radical party document in years."

The GOP platform offers a monstrous vision of society, remade in the distorted image of the radical right. On domestic economic policies, the radical Republicans call for the elimination of a graduated income tax, and the creation of "enterprise zones in urban and rural America," which would require the waving of environmental protection laws and the minimum wage. In Reagan's first two years in office, the corporate tax rate was slashed 50 percent, and anti-trust laws were relaxed to foster huge corporate mergers which generate profits but no new jobs. Reagan's 1981 budget cuts increased the number of Americans below the poverty line by 2.2 million, according to a recent

study by the Congressional Research Service. Taxes on the poor increased 23 percent in 1984 alone because of Reagan. If Reagan is reelected, we can fully anticipate a political escalation of attacks on the poor, and greater welfare for the rich.

On social policies and civil rights, the GOP platform is even more radical. The Republicans call for capital punishment — despite the fact that not a single study has ever shown that the death penalty reduces violent crime. On welfare programs, the Reaganites call for greater social service reductions and promise to "employ the latest technology to combat welfare fraud." On housing, the platform urges the federal government to halt all housing funds "to any community which erodes its own housing supply by rent control." On abortion rights, the GOP reaffirmed its support for an anti-abortion Constitutional Amendment, stating that "we oppose the use of public revenues for abortion and will eliminate funding for organizations which advocate or support abortion." The Reagan Administration's bitter opposition to racial equality has been clearly manifested in its 1983 purge of the US Civil Rights Commission, opposition to affirmative action, and its concern for "reverse discrimination" against whites. The 1984 platform denounces the "twisting" of civil rights enforcement in what it terms the "excessive interference in the education process. We support tuition tax credits" for private, usually all-white schools.

On international issues, the radical Reaganites embrace an agenda which reinforces racism, imperialism and global war. Promising to "keep the peace by keeping our country stronger than any potential adversary," the Republicans call for unprecedented increases in nuclear

and conventional weapons spending. The platform applauds "the liberation of Grenada," and warns that "Nicaragua cannot be allowed to remain a Communist sanctuary, exporting terror and arms throughout the region." The Republicans denounce the Soviets as "a threat to freedom and peace on every continent," but are mute on the vicious racist state of South Africa. The document even goes so far as to "reaffirm our commitment to the rights of all South Africans," which is simply another way of defending white minority rule.

In short, the reelection of Ronald Reagan will mean almost certainly a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua in the next two years; the strengthening of the apartheid regime and its criminal wars against Zimbabwe, Angola and Mozambique; the destruction of civil rights laws; the reduction of Social Security payments to the elderly; the introduction of fundamentalist religious dogma into our schools; and the erosion of the environment and health safety standards in the workplace. Millions have already died or been hurled into poverty and joblessness under Reagan; now millions more face the same fate. The Republican platform represents a "united front" of all radical reactionaries and the corporate elite, from the Ku Klux Klan — who has again publicly endorsed Reagan — to Wall Street. Indeed, the Wall Street Journal recently declared, "anyone who would dismiss the controversial parts of the platform is simply declaring how out of touch he or she has become." The platform is "meaningful" and should "guide government for a good while." The Wall Street Journal's editorial illustrates just how far to the right the GOP has moved. The radical right must be stopped on election day at all costs, before the very existence of U.S. democracy is sacrificed.