

reform movements. Reform movements in the United States have been dominated by intellectuals--men with no concrete commitment to the system, men with no close relationship to any of society's institutions, men without responsibility. Without a connection to a social base, the intellectual reformer feels no direct responsibility to a clientele. The reformer is free to speculate and propose without limit. His thinking tends to be erratic, emotional, compulsive, and abstract. The reformers' isolation from a social base means that they have never been able to stick to a basic agenda for change. Reformers have never made their primary objective the transformation of the economy because they are not responsible to a social constituency. When they have made economic issues a concern, they are too quickly diverted to other trendier causes before economic change can be completed.

The question in 1876 as today is whether the economic needs of blacks will be met. Viewed with hindsight, history always appears more inevitable than it might have been. Yet it is hard to conceive of reconstruction succeeding. If the program of the Radical Republicans had been implemented there would have been a steady, if extremely troubled transformation to a multiracial society in the South and in the nation. But economic and social conditions were not ripe for the success of the Radical Republican program. Indeed, the Radical Republicans themselves were not ripe for the kind of changes that would have had to have been made.

Reconstruction was doomed by its failure to provide an economic base for freedom. Legislation to provide each ex-slave with forty acres and a mule never had a serious prospect of being passed by

the legislature.

And today the triumphs of the civil rights revolution are still not secured because the economic dimension of the civil rights struggle has not been completed.

In a primitive, naive, and anachronistic manner some of the black radicals of the nineteen sixties understood this. On the fringes of the black radical and nationalist circles there was a discussion of the "land question." Similarly James Forman's demand for repatriations was motivated as an attempt to win forty acres and a mule after a delay of one hundred years.

These demands were essentially gimmicks. Not only were they politically impossible, but they failed to redefine the economic preconditions for equality in terms appropriate to our complex industrialized economy. Today, the economic condition for true equality is jobs--a full employment economy.

It was not difficult to see the necessity of forty acres and a mule in the 1860s. It is not at all difficult to draw up an agenda to solve the problems of blacks and the poor today. What is difficult is to act upon a political strategy that makes the economic agenda politically feasible and attractive.

Like all analogies the one between 1876 and 1976 cannot only inform, it can mislead. The similarities of 1876 and 1976 do not mean that we are condemned to repeat the same abandonment of democracy. Rather it points to the similar dynamics of successful and flawed attempts at fundamental social transformation.

The political alliance between Republicans and southern blacks

was an uneasy one from the beginning. Blacks flocked to the GOP because it had given them political and civil rights. Moreover, southern white Democrats were overtly hostile to blacks. Thus, blacks did not join the Republican party because they found Republican policies on other postwar issues particularly attractive. There was little agreement between the economic interests of blacks and the interests of the leaders of the Republican party. Blacks were small farmers, tenants, sharecroppers, and unskilled urban laborers. The Republican party generally deferred to the interests of northern business leaders when it came to economic policy.

Only a massive land reform program could have established a firm base for the exercise of Negroes' civil and political rights. Without that economic base only the presence of federal troops stood between blacks and the intention of southern white landholders and other propertied interests to regain control. Land reform failed for many reasons. Not the least reason was the failure of even the Radical Republicans to understand the necessity of giving emancipation economic support. But there were more fundamental reasons. The Republican party, even the Radicals, were ideologically opposed to government "paternalism" as stifling initiative. Any substantial program of land reform would have collided with the economic interests that the Republicans represented. Confiscation, even of former Confederate landowners, was an obvious attack on property rights. Finally, many business friends of the Republicans saw the propertyless black as a labor reservoir for northern industry or southern industry and agriculture in which they might invest.

Reconstruction collapsed when the Republican party lost the will

to intervene against the physical violence of the Ku Klux Klan and similar groups that were an integral part of the crusade against the radicals in every Southern state. The bonds between northern Republicans and southern blacks had never been particularly strong. By 1876, in order to exist as the dominant national party, the Republicans no longer needed the votes of Southern blacks.

The second reconstruction differs from the first in many important respects:

first, the alliance of blacks and the Democratic party is more genuine and should be longer lasting;

second, the second reconstruction emerged from the masses of black people organized into political action;

third, it took place within a society that had undergone a period of immense social reform since 1932;

fourth, blacks have newly-won political leverage;

fifth, blacks have made important economic gains;

sixth, there has been a concerted and effective assault on the practice and philosophy of racial discrimination.

It is precisely because the changes that have been instituted since 1954 are so far-reaching that it is unlikely that the second reconstruction will come to the same tragic end as the first reconstruction. It is not so certain that the dynamic of change started in the 1950s, already slowed, will not be halted altogether.

To cite just a few of the changes:

Between 1960 and 1970 the median income of black workers more than doubled.

The median income of black families increased from 51 percent of

median white income to 61 percent between 1959 and 1969. By 1970, black husband-wife families whose head was under 35 years old were earning an income 82 percent of corresponding white families.

The percentage of black families living in poverty declined from 56 percent in 1962 to 31 percent in 1969.

Unemployment in the black community dropped from 12.4 percent in 1961 to 6.4 percent in 1969.

While black advancement in the 1960s was undeniable and substantial, progress ground to a halt after 1969. By many measures there has even been a decline in the social and economic status of the black community. Joblessness among black workers has more than doubled. The number of blacks living in poverty has once again begun to increase. The real income of black families has failed to keep pace with inflation, while earnings of white families have remained slightly above price increases. The number of blacks and other minorities moving into higher-paying jobs has declined significantly during the past seven years.

But these reverses were primarily the result of the regressive and reactionary economic policies of the Nixon administration which decreed that nation must tolerate more unemployment in order to restrain inflation and gave us both record unemployment and record inflation. The economic and social decline of the black community since 1969 was not the result of programs that curtailed the rights of blacks. Just as blacks gain proportionately more from full employment and rapid economic growth so they suffer more from unemployment and economic stagnation.

Nixon's Southern strategy was an attempt to adopt the political formula that ended the First Reconstruction to the modern period.

As enunciated by Kevin Phillips and other administration figures, the message was clear--the Republicans don't need and can't get the votes of blacks, so they would build a Republican political majority from those that are opposed to black progress and its by-products. It attempted to play to the resentments that had been created by integration and the social programs of the Kennedy and Johnson years. And, in a political strategy that was not recognized by liberals, the Nixon administration attempted to create new resentments. For instance, the famed Philadelphia plan which required federal contractors to include a set percentage of black workers on projects built with federal funds, was announced on the same day that the Nixon administration cut federal construction funds by 75 percent. The result was that white workers were told that they must share with blacks jobs from a declining pool of work. The Philadelphia Plan made no provision for training, nor did it provide a means for blacks to attain the security of journeyman status within the unions. It was designed to embarrass the unions, to organize public pressure against them, and to divide white and black workers.

The Southern Strategy was not entirely successful. Its successes owed more to the blunders of liberals than to the racism of the American people. The southern strategy did not work in the congressional elections of 1970 and 1972. Congress continued to be overwhelmingly Democratic and liberal. In 1972 only one of the 65 congressmen with outstanding civil rights records was defeated--and that was due to redistricting. Nixon was re-elected not as the candidate of the southern strategy but as the candidate of peace and prosperity.

But if Nixon's southern strategy was not able to institutionalize Phillips' "emerging Republican majority" it did paralyze the movement toward social and economic equality. Watergate has given those committed to furthering equality another opportunity to renew the momentum of the Second Reconstruction. That opportunity will be lost unless we understand the economic and political requirements of equality in 1976.

Once Jim Crow was abolished and an elaborate legal mechanism to guarantee political and civil rights had been established, the problems of blacks became primarily economic. The means to solve those economic problems lay in the realization that the problems of black and white workers were fundamentally the same.

A few of the Radical Republicans had shared this conception in the 1860s. Senator Henry Wilson of Massachusetts explained that "We have advocated the rights of the black man, because the black man was the most oppressed type of the toiling man of this country.... The man who is the enemy of the black laboring man is the enemy of the white laboring man the world over. The same influences that go to keep down and crush the rights of the poor black man bear down and oppress the poor white laboring man."

But however noble and correct Wilson's sentiments, they were at the time more verbal expression of moralism than a reflection of political and economic reality. Blacks simply were not members of the industrial working class, blacks by and large lived in the South, there was little opportunity for white workers and black tenant farmers, sharecroppers, or agricultural laborers to get together.

When Martin Luther King addressed the 1960 convention of the

AFL-CIO and identified the needs of blacks with the needs of working people the situation had changed drastically. And it was to change even more in the coming decade. Indeed the most dramatic and largely unnoticed change brought about by the civil rights revolution was a massive transformation in the composition of the black work force. Prior to 1960, black workers were concentrated in the poorest paying occupations offering minimal opportunities for upward mobility: farm labor, unskilled workers, domestic and household work, and service jobs. By 1970, a combination of anti-discrimination laws, federal manpower programs, and a rapidly growing economy acted to pull most black workers out of the ranks of the working poor and into the solid working class. Some 60 percent of all black workers held jobs as skilled or semi-skilled operative and craftsmen or as white collar workers. Between 1960 and 1970 the number of blacks holding working class jobs rose from 2.9 million to 5.1 million, a shift in occupational status unprecedented in its dimensions and rapidity.

This change in occupational status brought with it a dramatic change in the relationship of the black worker to the larger society. The black worker could no longer be said to be an outsider to American life, as he had been during the previous 400 years of slavery and Jim Crow.

The black worker is strategically located in the labor movement, black voter have a strategic political role, and black institutions have a powerful set of allies.

It is a well-hidden fact that over two-and-half million blacks are union members. There are more blacks who belong to trade unions

than to any other institution in American society except for the church. The labor movement is the most integrated institution in American society. Its integration is not limited to the rank-and-file. Increasing numbers of blacks are winning important union offices and occupying policy-making positions in the labor movement.

The labor movement, like every other institution in American life, has its legacy of racism and discrimination. But the labor movement has done far more to set its own house in order than other segments of American life. AFL-CIO President George Meany testified before Congress in favor of adding a Fair Employment Practices section to the 1964 Civil Rights Act which would bar discrimination by business, government, and unions. This section was opposed by the Kennedy administration and many influential liberals as premature and likely to kill the entire bill.

The labor movement has become the principal force for social change and racial and economic justice in the United States. Every civil rights organization will tell you that without the political muscle and brains of the labor movement the civil rights legislation of the 1960s could not have been passed.

The growth of organized labor is perhaps the most important change in the structure of American society in the last hundred years. It has not only transformed social relations through increasing the power of workers at the workplace, it has pressed for the passage of social legislation that built an ever growing quantity of justice and compassion into the very fabric of American life.

The most important change brought by the growth of the American

labor movement is that we at last have a reform movement that is rooted in a mass social institution. The labor movement brings a stability and perseverance to the struggle for social justice which no other institution can approach. The labor movement acts on a consistent set of principles and does not conform to every passing fad and fashion. Liberal and intellectual critics of the labor movement have mistaken labor's consistency for conservatism and have made their own faddishness into the test of liberalism and commitment to social justice. It sometimes seems as if the only consistent principle of these reformers is their devotion to new principles and new causes--even if it means deserting and casting aside fundamental struggles as old hat.

Leaders in civil rights organizations recognize the value of labor's consistency. Clarence Mitchell, director of the Washington Bureau of the NAACP recently sent a telegram to George Meany commending his support for the principle of integrated education. Mitchell said of Meany and the labor movement, "With you on the side of constitutional rights, victory is certain in the end."

If one thing is certain in today's often confused political situation it is that the labor movement is a bulwark against reaction. The labor movement will be there fighting against roll-backs, whether it is the attempt to roll back the welfare state or the attempt to roll back civil rights.

The labor movement is not the principal ally of civil rights because it consists of saints--though there are probably more men and women of principle, dedication, and commitment to justice in the ranks of labor than anywhere else. Although most labor leaders are opposed

to discrimination on moral grounds, they also have highly practical grounds for their position. They know that discrimination hurts the entire labor movement just as it hurts blacks. They understand from long experience that anything which divides workers makes it more difficult for them to struggle together for the achievement of common goals.

Given the character of the American working class, the only possibility for genuine labor solidarity is for blacks to be fully integrated into every level of the trade union movement. If they are not, then they will continue to exist outside the unions as a constant source of cheap labor exploitable by management to depress wages or to break strikes.

The political power of blacks unlike the days of the first reconstruction is nationwide and so strategically located that it cannot easily be ignored in national politics. The Republican party of the 1860s and 1870s was not the natural home of the southern blacks, although they had no real alternative shelter. The Republicans were the political instrument of the northern middle class and northern business enterprise.

The Democratic party of the present is the party of the poor, of working people, and of middle class professionals and academics. It is a natural home for the overwhelming masses of black voters. No national Democratic candidate can be elected without the overwhelming support of black voters and without running on issues that can turn out black voters in overwhelming numbers. A recent poll illustrated just how crucial the black vote is to the Democrats. The poll showed Jimmy Carter, the leading Democratic candidate, running

about six points ahead of Gerald Ford. Carter and Ford ran virtually even among white voters, thus the entire margin of Carter's lead comes from his 9 to 1 lead among black voters.

Indeed, one of the clearest signs that, despite all the similarities which I have noted to 1876, something fundamentally different is happening in this reconstruction is the success of Carter's candidacy. For in fact Carter has won the votes of southern whites and of blacks.

The balance of power role of northern black voters in the 1940s through the 1960s fundamentally altered the nature of the Democratic party by neutralizing and then throwing out the Dixiecrats and segregationists. The national Democratic party then passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 which insured that millions of previously disenfranchised blacks in the South would be able to vote. Once this happened the entire political climate of the South was radically changed. Not only have racial moderates and progressives like Jimmy Carter, Dale Bumpers, and Reuben Askew emerged, but the black vote restrains and limits former segregationists.

But all is not well. While the political power of blacks means that no candidate can safely ignore the effect of the black vote, the black vote can be neutralized. The black vote is potentially important, but it can be made impotent. In 1972 blacks voted overwhelmingly for George McGovern, but McGovern was such a disastrous candidate that blacks had no impact on the election result. Because the New Politics movement as the vehicle of McGovern's candidacy alienated so many white working class voters, Richard Nixon could ignore black voters and black needs.

The black vote is crucial only when it is added to enough other votes to reach 51 percent. The political influence of blacks depends upon the exercise at all levels of political power and political wisdom, the highest form of political power, to prevent the nomination of candidates and the adoption of programs which will alienate the potential coalition partners of blacks.

The progressive coalition of blacks, liberals, and the trade union movement, which has been responsible for the major social advances since the New Deal, has been virtually immobilized by internal divisions for almost a decade. There has been conflict between blacks and lower-class whites, but this is primarily the result of a stagnant and contracting economy and the inadequacy of the liberal response to the economic crisis.

A more fundamental conflict is that between liberals and the labor movement. American liberalism has experienced a crisis of unprecedented dimensions in the last decade. The values and principles which for years had been the motivating force for the progressive coalition have been called into question, not by liberalism's conservative critics, but by elements within liberalism itself. Liberals have lost a sense of direction and purpose. The traditional goals of integration, the expansion of the welfare state, and economic growth are no longer thought to be reliable or even desirable. But they lack new goals to replace the ones they have cast aside. A number of new theories and slogans have been created to give this defeatist mood a forward-looking image, but it is really little more than an accommodation to the new conservatism.

Since liberalism is in confusion and disarray, the progressive

coalition can only be revitalized by turning to its most stable and important elements--the labor movement and the civil rights movement. Labor knows what it wants: government policy which promotes healthy economic growth, decent wages and working conditions, and government initiatives to insure that basic social services are so allocated to be within the reach of the working class. The civil rights movement, because it speaks for a constituency of poor and working people, pursues an agenda differing little from labor's.

We have not reached the end of the Second Reconstruction. The agenda for insuring full equality has still not been completed. Nor have the forces of change become so weakened, demoralized, or disillusioned that the accomplishments of the Second Reconstruction can easily be turned around.

It would be impossible for blacks to be pushed back like we were after the end of the first reconstruction. Neither of the conditions that allowed the segregationists to subjugate blacks--terror and denying the vote--are possible today. We have the vote and we will not relinquish it. That is not to say that there will not be slow-downs or temporary setbacks in the quest for real equality.

This is, I believe, a hopeful period for blacks. Despite the ravages of unemployment, there is nonetheless a potential for upward mobility. Today despite the despair of the ghetto, there are grounds for optimism. One sign that blacks perceive this as a hopeful period is the absence of separatist programs. The only periods when blacks have turned to separatist and nationalist programs have been periods of despair, following the creation of hopes and expectations which were then dashed. In the 1920s Marcus Garvey had a genuine mass

movement. Stokely Carmichael, H. Rap Brown, and the Panthers, even at their height and even with all the attention lavished on them by the media never had a mass movement. The overwhelming majority of blacks have rejected the separatist line as a non-solution.

We have weathered the storm that almost by necessity had to follow the tremendous though inadequate changes of the sixties. We now have the opportunity to move forward once again towards greater equality. In 1876, the political question was the removal of northern troops from the South--a step that was unquestionably a retreat and which blacks were powerless to prevent. In 1976, the question is whether the nation will make a commitment to full employment.

The Humphrey-Hawkins full employment and balanced growth bill is symbolically and politically the most important measure on the public agenda since the passage of the 1965 Civil Rights Act. It is significant because the two groups that have pushed it to the forefront are the labor movement and the civil rights movement. It is politically practical because it is addressed to the needs and aspirations of black and white workers. If passed, signed into law, and effectively implemented it would make possible the completion of the economic dimension of the civil rights movement.

If, in this bicentennial year, we make a commitment to full employment, a conference one hundred years from now will not have to ask "Have we reached the end of the Third Reconstruction?"

Does Civil Rights Include Energy?

It is ten years since Martin Luther King Jr. stunned his allies in the civil rights movement—and their benefactor in the White House—by leaping into another pasture of protest to join the opposition to the Vietnam War. His foray into foreign policy raised a basic question about the scope of black political activity: Should civil rights groups concern themselves only with racial equality and social welfare, or should they pursue the sources of inequality and poverty in the total fabric of economic and even foreign policies? The question reappeared last week when the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People stepped forward to offer what it saw as a black position on energy.

After decades of intense civil rights activity, during which it routinely supported the general policies of liberal Democrats, the N.A.A.C.P. decided on a sharp break with President Carter. It endorsed the oil industry's desire for the deregulation of the price of natural gas. It supported the accelerated development of nuclear breeder reactors as preferable to coal conversion. It pressed for higher rates of growth even at some cost in environmental damage. Government constraints on energy demand and consumption, it argued, can only inhibit growth and therefore retard the financial and social progress of blacks.

Predictably enough, the N.A.A.C.P. suddenly found itself with some unfamiliar allies. A delighted oil industry reprinted the new statement on energy in newspaper advertisements. The Wall Street Journal proclaimed that blacks finally understood the wondrous workings of a free market. Republicans came scurrying to learn if this was an opening to a long-lost constituency.

A second consequence was a split in the ranks of the civil rights movement. The National Urban League, which had taken the lead in protesting what it regards as President Carter's inadequate response to black needs, broke with the N.A.A.C.P. and held with the White House on energy. Black members of Congress were quick to counter the N.A.A.C.P. position by arguing that deregulation of energy prices would only exacerbate black poverty and unemployment. Other liberals sniffed for sinister connections between members of the N.A.A.C.P. board and agents of the oil industry.

Troubled by the criticism from customary allies, the board and staff of the N.A.A.C.P. are now quarreling about the circumstances of their energy statement and the wisdom of venturing into such unfamiliar political terrain. It would be a pity if they confuse the two questions.

We happen to believe that the N.A.A.C.P. paper on

energy was inadequately prepared, poorly reasoned and, finally, wrong for all Americans. But we applaud the growing recognition by civil rights groups that the great issues dividing the country can, logically, also divide sophisticated black organizations. And we agree with the underlying judgment that blacks, along with the rest of society, will benefit from the spread of black influence to both political parties, in conservative as well as liberal circles, in the business community, the labor movement and other established power centers. The best politics for us all is a truly integrated politics.

In a prophetic remark only months before his assassination, Martin Luther King observed that, with the elimination of legal segregation, the civil rights movement would have to aim for genuine equality for the disadvantaged. Slums would have to be rebuilt, ghetto schools upgraded and meaningful jobs created. That phase of the effort, he knew, would cost billions of dollars. And to achieve such a redistribution of resources, he said, black and poor people would have to "grasp the levers" of political and economic power to "influence the course of events" generally.

Ten years later those levers remain elusive. Blacks invested virtually all of their political capital in Jimmy Carter's Presidential campaign and now wait impatiently for the results. Implicit in the statements of the Urban League and N.A.A.C.P. is the explicit idea recently expressed by the Rev. Jesse Jackson. He told Republican leaders that a disappointed black community should no longer be considered the automatic ally of any single party or party faction.

In one sense, a black interest in energy policy was only the natural consequence of a growing interest in tax and monetary policy and other broad issues. But the N.A.A.C.P.'s experience also points to new difficulties. The black position on Jim Crow laws was always self-evident; the consequences for blacks of one or another economic or foreign policy are by no means clear. In debating the wider questions, civil rights groups will have to rely upon "outside experts" for their research and analysis, perhaps risking, as the N.A.A.C.P. did, manipulation and exploitation by other interests. It will take a special sophistication to protect the integrity and credibility that black groups have attained over the years.

Still, the disadvantaged need effective representation on all the issues that shape their lives. However flawed this beginning, aggressive black voices on all sides of national policy debates should be welcomed by all Americans.



COALITION!

Bayard Rustin

An event recently took place which has deeply disturbing implications for all of us concerned with social progress and economic justice. In Florida—a poor state, a state with one of the highest percentages of persons subsisting on fixed incomes, a state with serious unemployment—the voters permitted busing to obscure every other issue in a Presidential primary election. We face serious troubles when busing, not jobs, determines the outcome of a primary in one of our largest states. The reality is that the most serious problem facing America today is the economic situation in which whether you are rich, middle class, poor or *lumpen-proletariat*, our national economic policies are gravely affecting us all for the worst.

The Florida results are deeply symbolic, for they demonstrate in a quite measurable way how an essentially unimportant issue can be manipulated and distorted so as to create division among those with a personal stake

in progress. Many of those same people who find busing a convenient tool with which to sow political discord recognize and are attempting to exploit elements of the new emphasis on ethnicity for precisely the same purposes.

We are now in the throes of what I refer to as a worldwide "New Tribalism." We see people on every continent substituting ethnicity for realistic and effective solutions. We see it in Canada, where the French-Canadians want to go their separate way. We see it in Belgium, where the Walloons want to wear their hair Walloon style and eat Walloon food. I don't even want to talk about the Irish problem.

Why are we experiencing this ethnic phenomenon, and what of it is good and what bad? In a sense, ethnicity is beautiful and creative. It is an expression of pride in one's past, of self-respect, and of the dignity that is essential to a healthy human condition.

But the rise of ethnicity also reflects a political fact of life about which I feel we should be less enthusiastic. We now find that there are politicians who will promote and encourage ethnic identification to relieve themselves of the responsibilities of advancing true social and economic reform. They will parcel out a few favors in the hopes of appealing to ethnic feelings while ignoring health care, housing, taxes, the whole list of vitally needed changes.

The ethnic problem within the United States at some point has to emerge simply because we were lied to, accepted the lie, and there is no greater danger to a man than when he fools himself. We expect the opposition to fool us; but when we fool ourselves we are in deep trouble. We consistently have fallen for the old melting pot concepts. But there *never* was a melting pot; there is not *now* a melting pot; there never will be a melting pot; and if there were, it would be such a tasteless soup that we would have to go back and start all over!

Whether we are blacks or of any other ethnic origin, we must not fool ourselves once we have said that we demand dignity. We are constantly talking about personal dignity when what we need is social dignity. Anyone can achieve personal dignity simply by believing he is dignified. But social dignity is another thing entirely. Eating soul food, wearing hair in an Afro, or taking black studies courses has nothing to do with social dignity. For how can we have dignity if we must rear our children where there are rats and roaches in deplorable tenements, where the streets are filled with junkies, where there is poor medical care, and no jobs?

I can point to no better illustration of how the power structure exploits racial and ethnic feeling than the current fad of decentralization or community control. But does it make sense to believe that you can solve the health-care crisis, the housing crisis, the unemployment crisis by decentralizing? We need massive planning and massive funding, not decentralization.

Decentralization and community control also represent another disturbing trend in our society which one might call the worship of the new. The ancient Romans conceived of Janus, their God of gates and beginnings, as two-headed: one looking forward and one to the past. We must never forget that nothing creative can be accomplished unless one is looking both forward and backward. We have come through a period when everything new was accepted as gospel. We had the "New Politics," and then the "New Left." The black community saw a new and instant leader proclaimed by the press every six months.

I think it is time we realized that blacks, Italian-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos—all who know discrimination and who have been denied their rightful share of power—can only uplift themselves through the political system. Those who tell us that the political system does not work are only revealing their ignorance. The political system works beautifully, but not for us. It works for those who control it.

Our objective should not be to condemn politics but to seek to control the political system ourselves. But none of us can do it alone—not the Italians, nor the blacks, nor the Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, or poor whites. Only through a coalition of those forces which have a self-interest in social progress can we achieve that progress. To create and strengthen that coalition, we must be constantly on guard against those issues and tactics which will create divisions among us.

So we find blacks and Puerto Ricans in the Bronx fighting over who will control an anti-poverty program. Or blacks and working-class white ethnics in a bitter dispute over open housing. No one has to tell me that there are blue-collar workers in Queens who are prejudiced. I know that. And I know that there are suburban



Jews who discriminate, just as I know there are blacks in Harlem who are irrational in their attitudes toward whites. If I must be permitted to have my fools, I'll permit others to have their fools, too! The question is: When are the majority of us going to stop capitulating to each new fad, each new irrationalism, and assert affirmative, positive leadership?

Politics is important, not only because it is ultimately the only avenue to power, but because it is the most democratic form of expression in our society. True, there are other forms of group expression. There is confrontationism, and we have experienced our share of that. And there is elitism, such as 200 persons who feel they have the right to shut down the Pentagon. But the elitists and confrontationists take the easy, and ultimately futile, road to social change. There is only one way to change society—by going out and educating the poor about the issues and about the value of political action. There is no other way.

Confrontations and violence have never brought anything of lasting value. Perhaps the greatest myth of the past decade is that blacks are getting more than other people because of the riots. I am still trying to discover what we are supposed to have won. I haven't found it yet. There is more unemployment, more deteriorated housing, and worse medical care in Watts right now than before the riots.

You can engage in confrontation after confrontation and maybe the power structure will give you a concession here, a crumb there. Maybe you'll be given a meaningless anti-poverty program, which will likely be shut down as soon as things get quiet. But once you escalate the confrontations, and demand more than a few token concessions—that's when you will be repressed.

We have yet to witness one positive, lasting accomplishment from violent confrontation, though we have seen many of confrontationism's destructive legacies. The whole notion that an escalation of violence, a hardening of rhetoric, and posturings of militancy can win progressive social change automatically destroys any possibility of creating an effective coalition.

*We have yet to
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I know there will be times we will not agree. There will be occasions when I will be fighting, on an intellectual level, with Jews and Italians, not because they are Jews or Italians, but because our ideas are different. But in order to maintain a relationship whereby we can disagree without hating or resorting to the stereotype, we must have trust. We must strive for common goals, we must speak with candor and honesty, and we must tolerate and respect the cultures of others.

We stand united in our commitment to democratic principles, and we are alarmed that American democracy is threatened as a consequence of our nation's failure to build a just social order.



For more than a decade now we have witnessed "the second American revolution"--the struggle of black Americans for racial equality. We are aware that progress has been made in this area, but we cannot ignore the reality that millions of Negroes are still subjected to second-class citizenship. The civil rights movement destroyed the legal foundations of racism in the South, but segregation still confronts us as the single greatest obstacle to building a unified society. The situation has actually grown worse, for while the problem was formally a matter of segregation by race, we are also experiencing today the effects of segregation by class. The middle class of both races has fled the inner city, leaving behind ghettos that have become festering enclaves of poverty, crime, violence, demoralization. This problem is at the center of a larger ^{urban} crisis in which the very survival of our cities is at stake.

Our nation ^{has} responded to this crisis more with dismay and confusion than with constructive social action. The general awareness that the problem exists has been neither a guide nor an incentive to action. We are all aware that unemployment is one of the greatest problems of poor blacks, yet it has been the conscious policy of our government to increase unemployment in the hope of slowing the rate of inflation. Poor blacks have not been the only ones to suffer from this policy, but they have suffered most severely. We are also aware of the acute housing shortage in our cities, yet housing construction has almost ceased

for everybody except the most affluent, and the richest nation in the world must look on helplessly as desperate squatters move into abandoned dwellings. The list of problems extends endlessly-- education, health care, crime, pollution-- in each case our government ^{has} responded falteringly and with inadequate resources. Americans seem unable to face up to an unpleasant reality; neglect will only make matters deteriorate further. The less that is done about our problems today, the less we will be able to do about them tomorrow.

What is required is a massive social commitment of will and resources to eliminate poverty and urban decay. For this reason we are unalterably opposed to any strategy which undermines the capacity of our nation to mobilize this commitment, or which is offered as a weak alternative to the basic reforms that are necessary.

We are, therefore, opposed to anyone who engages in or advocates violence as a means for achieving social change. However militant the rhetoric or "revolutionary" the deed, violence serves only one function: to strengthen the forces of reaction in America. Rather than uniting progressive forces around a program for social change, violence inevitably leads to the creation of a coalition of opposites. Provocation from the left brings on reaction from the rights, and reaction from the right seems to justify the wild rhetoric of the left. This is not a coalition for change but a dance of death which can lead only to the destruction of democracy in America.

We are opposed to any separatist strategy for the same reason that we oppose violence: In the end the only ones to benefit from such a strategy will be the worst enemies of blacks and the most uncompromising opponents of social change. We affirm as a fundamental political principle the fact that Negroes by themselves cannot carry out the programs that are needed to deal with the present crisis. They have neither the numbers nor the resources. The black struggle will succeed only if it can attract support from major elements in the white community. Negroes must, there^{fore,} become part of a broad coalition of forces demanding social change. The only alternative is isolation and inevitable defeat, and such will be the consequence of the separatist strategy regardless of the intentions of those who advocate it.

And finally, we are opposed to any minor social programs insofar as they are offered as alternatives to the massive commitment that we are urging. Efforts to foster small ghetto business or tax incentives that encourage industry to help employ the poor must be reluctantly accepted for what they are—sincere but inadequate attempts to cope with severe problems. They must not be allowed to obscure the ~~extent~~^{depth} of the crisis or the extent of public commitment and political organization that will be required to deal with it.

We must not delude ourselves into thinking that tinkering with the social process will solve the present crisis, or that somehow it will solve itself through the bootstrap efforts of the poor or the natural workings of the economy. What is required is a social and economic program which is planned and carried out by the only agency with the resources and the power to effect basic reforms. That agency is the Federal government.

We need a national housing program so that each American can be guaranteed a decent home.

We need a national program to tear down our slums and rebuild our cities. [^] ~~The~~ ^{**We need a national health program so that**} elderly and the infirm can be guaranteed adequate medical treatment.

We need a national education program so that each young person in America will receive a quality education.

We need a national program to clean our air and waters.

We need a national crime program which will upgrade police forces and modernize our system of penal reform.

~~And~~ [^] We need a program of full employment, with the government as employer of last resort, so that every-able bodied man or woman in America can be given a decent job.

And we need a guaranteed annual income for everyone who is too old, too young, [^] or too sick to work

We are aware that America is not now prepared to undertake these reforms. Yet we are also aware that eventually we will have no choice but to do so. We are already a nation at war with itself, torn by dissension and shattered by violence. We are a nation consumed by rage and fear. Either we will continue to fight with each other or unite to build a just society. We feel that a majority of Americans wants [^] just society, and that our democratic system is capable of meeting the present challenge. We believe that American democracy can be reformed. And it is on the basis of this belief that we appeal to Americans to honor the ideals of this nation and to fulfill once and for all our national commitment to social justice.

INTEGRATION STATEMENT

There is a false and tragic notion abroad in American today-- that integration is dead. It isn't though there are some people who wish it were. They include the traditional enemies of integration, those who have always wanted an American rigidly segregated by race, religion and ethnic background. Today they have new allies, those members of the very minority groups that have the most to gain from an open society, but who insist nonetheless the destinies of their peoples can best be worked out in isolation. Theirs is the counsel of despair.

We believe there is hope. In the past two decades there has been significant progress toward integration--in education, jobs, politics, housing and the use of public facilities. Insufficient though this progress has been, it is still progress. And it is blind folly to disparage or ignore it. Integration remains, therefore, a realistic and feasible objective. It is also, needless to say, of vital importance to the social and moral health of this nation. We are moved to reaffirm our full, unalterable allegiance to the goal of an integrated, democratic, plural society. Integration, as the word is used here, should not be confused with the idea of America as a "melting pot" which has little relevance to our society today. We believe that black Americans and all minority Americans should take pride in their distinct cultures and heritages. We also believe in a "black power" that expresses itself in economic and political advance.

But we denounce a pride that infects its possessors with suspicion and hatred of the members of all other groups. We

reject a society of "we" and "they". We also reject an entrepreneurship that believes the economic problems of the ghetto and barrio can be solved in small shops and plants and family enterprises. We reject the romanticizing of the ghetto as a fit place for human habitation.

The racist nature of our institutions makes it inevitable that we shall have segregated schools and segregated communities in this country for sometime to come. But for God's sake let us not pretend, as the separatists do, that that's a boon. Let us recognize those walls for what they are--shameful evidence of centuries of injustice; barriers to fulfillment' cages in whose confinement inhabitants become embittered and wild. And let us also recognize that the only thing to do with the ghetto is to do away with it. Given the present situation, we are forced to accept as a mean expedient the concept of improving what is particularly in education, employment and housing. But let us not see these improvements as ends in themselves. They only have validity if they lead people out of the ghettos and help them to move freely and fearlessly into all levels of our society.

We must act at various levels at the same time. The effort to rescue black children from self-hatred, by inculcating a sense of pride in their origins and history, must go on at the same time they are absorbing the basic skills they need to live and thrive in America. Power bases must be built in order to prepare minorities to play meaningful roles in the government of our cities, states and nation. Our housing and job programs must have as one of their principal objectives the creation of integrated communities and integrated work forces.

The very enormity of the task moves us beyond the tiny, private enterprises that so many separatists advocate. Only one entity in our nation has sufficient power to undertake the task we see before us and that is the Federal government. All our energies must be bent to make the Federal government responsive in all its programs to the desperate needs of the poor and the oppressed-- for in the denial of those needs lies the destruction of our present democratic system.

The government we envision can only be achieved through the cooperative effort of all people who want to live and work together. We reject violence with the same unbending conviction that we reject separatism.

Our goal is a restructuring of society by all of us, so that it reflects the immense richness of our variety. We want a society that welcomes our contributions; a society in which we catch glimpses of ourselves in our newspapers, textbooks, movie and TV screens, in all our agencies and councils of government. We want a society that does not press us into molds but lets us break molds and live, so long as we hurt nobody, lives of individual and collective fulfillment.

That is what we mean by an integrated society. And toward the advertisement of such a society we now rededicate ourselves.

ARTICLE FOR NOTRE DAME LAW SCHOOL JOURNAL ON CIVIL RIGHTS

By Bayard Rustin

The shape of the black agenda in the coming period will be determined by the evolving nature of our needs. From a time when black people wanted social liberties all white people enjoyed as a matter of course, we have moved to a point where there is an increasing convergence between our needs and the needs of a great many, perhaps even a majority, of Americans. Simply put, we need jobs for the unemployed, and better ^{jobs} for the marginally-employed; a guarantee of adequate housing and ^a affordable medical care; improved education and expanding access to higher education; a strategy that attacks crime and violence free of the demagogy of the Right, and a massive program to rehabilitate the cities.

As imposing as this agenda might appear, it is not utopian. Obviously, its attainment requires a change in national political leadership, for until there is an administration committed to the ^{completion} of the civil rights movement's economic goals our efforts will be limited to a holding action against budget cutbacks, vetoes, the weakening of enforcement, and divisive issues--such as busing--which are introduced to solidify the Administration's political position. A second prerequisite to more substantive change is that we acknowledge that the black man has achieved considerable progress, and ^{ze} ~~recognition of~~ the forces and programs that brought us that progress.

Certainly the decade which spanned the period since the 1963 March on Washington has been an era of unparalleled progress for black Americans. Moreover, this progress has extended beyond the acquisition of social liberties--as guaranteed in the 1964

Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act, and open housing legislation--to encompass substantial economic gains. There has been a massive shift in the character of the black working class, a significant reduction in poverty, and educational advances beyond what we might have realistically envisioned at the time of the March.

But there has also been failure and frustration. The very precepts on which we based the struggle for racial equality have been called into question by conservatives and liberals alike. Early this year, while he was still riding the crest of his landslide victory, and before his administration was engulfed in scandal, President Nixon launched a determined effort to discredit the policies of previous Democratic administrations. Social spending programs, he told the nation, had failed; the blame rested with a federal government too removed from the needs of its citizens to effectively administer housing, education and health programs. Some liberals, although expressing strong disagreement with Nixon's alternative of laissez faire, echoed his philosophy of decentralization. Wrote Anthony Lewis in the New York Times: "America needs principled conservatism... opposed to centralized power on philosophical grounds." Other liberals, reacting to the revelations of scandal and deception within the administration, lay the blame on an all-too-powerful office of the President: centralized authority, they assert, is at the root of the totality of the national's ills, foreign, domestic and spiritual.

There are momentous implications in Nixon's New Federalism and in the liberal response to it. Myths are being created and spread about what government can and cannot accomplish, and the acceptance of these myths could have incalculable consequences for black people if they should become the basis for future social policy.

The most damaging myth is that racial progress in the 1960's was limited to the winning of equal access to public accommodations and other ~~basically~~ social rights. According to this thesis the economic ~~XXXXXXXX~~ policies and social initiatives of the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations were little more than well-meaning failures. Some go as far as to assert that blacks are worse off today than during the era of Jim Crow because expected gains have fallen so far short of the revolutionary rise of expectations.

This is simply not borne out by the facts. Infact blacks did make substantial gains between 1961 and 1969--during the eight years of Democratic Party rule. Unemployment was cut from one million persons, representing 12.4 of the black workforce, to 600,000, or 6.4 per cent. The number of Negroes living below the federal poverty level declined from 12 million to 7.6 million. The number of blacks holding jobs in white-collar, operative, or craftsman field^s increased by 69 per cent while there was a 13 per cent decline in the number of Negroes working as domestics, unskilled laborers and farmworkers. Instead of the most poorly-paying, unstable and unorganized occupations, blacks now found frequent employment in jobs that are highly unionized, offer decent working conditions and benefits, and increased chances for advancement. From an economic underclass, the predominant portion of the black workforce became a part of what we generally consider the working class.

How does this record of progress relate to social policy? An examination of the record since 1969 gives a clear picture of how government programs and policy affect the economic conditions of blacks.

Unemployment has risen to around 10 per cent, and is more serious for teenagers, returning veterans, and those who live in inner-city ghettos. Some 200,000 persons have been added to the poverty rolls, the first increase in poverty in over 12 years. The black-white income gap, which has decreased from 51 per cent to 61 per cent in the previous decade, began to widen once again.

These statistics certainly raise the question of whether the ^effect Mr. Nixon's policies has been ^{"benign"} "benign" or otherwise. Since he has assumed office, 300,000 blacks have found themselves on the unemployment lines, the poverty rolls have risen by 200,00 and the narrowing of the racial income gap--a steady process of the 1960's -- has been blunted. The conclusion to be drawn is not that the Great Society programs failed, but that, incomplete and flawed as they were, they were beginning to accomplish the formidable task of bringing blacks into a full role in the economy.

The key to this progress~~ion~~ was the Johnson Administration's emphasis on jobs, Total freedom, A. Philip Randolph early recognized, meant freedom from unemployment and underemployment. When he addressed the crowd assembled at the Lincoln Memorial ten years ago, Randolph stressed that the March was a demonstration for jobs as well as social liberties. "We know we have no future in a society in which six million black and white people are unemployed and millions more live in poverty," Randolph said. "It falls to us to demand new forms of social planning, to create full employment and to put automation at the service of human needs, not at the service of profits--because we are the worst victims of discrimination."

One of the Great Society's weaknesses was its failure to commit its^{elf} to attaining a full employment economy. For to attack the roots of poverty ~~and~~ and discrimination would have been far more effective, and the results more enduring, that community action agencies, tax incentives to businesses, and all the other indirect strategies which were doomed to failure by their very narrowness.

Thus our program must be a national program. It may not bear the imprint of civil rights, but its fulfillment will have incalculable affects on the lives of the poor.

By merging our agenda with that of the much broader working class program, we are not proposing to ignore the unique needs of blacks. Strong enforce-ments of civil rights legislation will be an important issue for the ^eforseeable

future. But we must also acknowledge that our basic problems are economic and recognize that the program to overcome economic inequality is a program that ~~transends~~^e race.

But while this may not be a "black" program, it will benefit blacks much more than other groups simply because so great a proportion of the black population consists of poor and working class people. Because blacks hold a disproportionate number of low income jobs, they have a special stake in the adoption of legislation increasing the minimum wage. Broadening the minimum wage coverage ^{to} include domestic workers would benefit black women far out of proportion to any other group in ^esociety. Repeal of Section 14b of the Taft-Hartley Act, permitting states to pass right-to-work laws, would be a direct challenge to the pervasive economic caste system of the South. In the southern textile industry alone there are 700,000 unorganized workers--many of whom are black--earning wages at or near the poverty level.

The period ahead will not be ^ean easy time for blacks. Assuming Nixon serves out his second term, the chances for substantial economic change are slight, although his weakened political state should doom the more outrageous efforts to emasculate and dismantle social programs he inherited from earlier administrations. In the meantime, blacks have an important and perhaps pivotal role to play in the rebuilding of a broad-based, majority coalition that sees its basic function as representing the needs of working people. The coming period will not be marked by the dramatic changes that marked the 1960's; we will rather be laying a foundation for the revival of ^ethe movement that made those changes possible, so that we may complete the agenda of the March on Washington.

THE MYTHS OF THE BLACK REVOLT

By: Bayard Rustin

Inevitably during a period of social turmoil there develop conflicting political strategies for change. These strategies will be based on varied emotional responses to daily events as well as on fundamentally different philosophies. Such intellectual conflict is occurring today in the black community, and I think this is all to the good. The debate may be characterized by great emotion and rhetoric, but ultimately it will serve the educational function of refining theories, delineating positions, and stimulating further dialogue.

A full-fledged ideological and political debate has not taken place in the black community since the monumental exchanges between W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington which ~~took place~~ ^{occurred} over a half century ago. The intensity of today's dialogue is an indication of the aroused political awareness of black people and an overall heightening of aspirations and militancy. As a result of these developments, there is enormous potential to build a movement for progressive social reform. But this potential can also lead to consequences of a reactionary nature for it is in itself a politically neutral phenomenon. An informed black militancy, based on a clear analysis of the economic and social situation of Negroes both in the South and in the Northern ghettos, an identification of the major institutions which can provide blacks with the maximum power and leverage in their struggle for equality, and a political strategy that can influence these institutions to serve the needs of the poor--such a militancy will move our society in a progressive and equalitarian direction. ~~But a militancy will move our society in a progressive and equalitarian direction.~~ But a militancy that is based on frustration, withdrawal, and a desire to simplify or avoid reality rather to transform it will unintentionally aid the right, isolate blacks, and destroy the possibility of solving the problems which afflict our nation.

It is with the hope of furthering dialogue so as to encourage the emergence of an effective, programmatic militancy that I offer here a critique of certain

myths that have recently become popular among some blacks. Let me be clear that by "myths" I am not referring to those allegorical stories by which a people or nation interprets its history and beliefs, but to a series of concepts that derive from wish-fulfillment or a misperception of political reality, and which can thus mislead black people in our struggle to achieve equality. Such myths deserve serious critical appraisal.

1. The Myth of Black Unity

The myth of black unity is put forth by those who perceive race as the dominant factor in determining the political consciousness of a group. I do not deny that race is one such factor, particularly in the case of Negroes. To a degree, black people have a common heritage of slavery, although one out of every nine Negroes before the Civil War was a freedman, and there were 4,000 Negro slaveholders. There was also the very considerable difference between these slaves who were forced to work in the fields and those others—relatively more advantaged — who were house servants. In terms of contemporary experience, a certain unity is imposed upon blacks by those whites who stereotype Negroes and discriminate equally against them. But the failure to differentiate among blacks is the result of white prejudice and ignorance and should hardly serve as a model of belief for those blacks who wish to abolish racism in America.

Of the factors which obstruct black unity, there is age—a generational conflict exists today in the black community to the same degree that it exists in the white community; and geography—blacks have no territorial focus for unity, and beyond that, there is little shared experience between rural and urban Negroes, as well as between Southern and Northern Negroes.

But more profoundly, there are differences of class and philosophy. Negroes, like the Irish, Italians, Jews or any other American ethnic group, are divided socially and economically on the basis of class, and engage in the same practices of residential "grasshopping" and job mobility. One may criticize these

practices, but they must be recognized as sociological realities. Moreover, the white employer is divided from the white employee by virtue of the fact that the profits of the one come out of the wages of the other - and vice versa. To deny that this can also be true of blacks is not merely to perpetuate an illusion, but also to lend support to those beliefs- that Negroes are inherently different from whites, that they are not subject to the same laws governing human behavior - which have always been used to segregate blacks and deny them equal access to the social and economic advantages of this country.

Philosophical differences are as pronounced as class divisions. If one were to ask representatives of various black organizations to draw up a program for the education of Negro children, the plans would be far from identical. The Muslims would propose a program based on the teachings of Elijah Muhammad, the NAACP plan would be integrationist, and CORE would demand separate black school districts. There are also serious philosophical differences among the most extreme groups. Those who wish to build a political movement by appealing solely to the racial consciousness of blacks will be deeply disillusioned.

2. The Myth of Black Capitalism

The fact that black capitalism has been proposed by Richard Nixon^{is} by itself enough to make one question its efficacy as an economic program. But it is also being proposed by many other people and by some leaders of CORE and consequently warrants close analysis.

I favor some aspects of the proposal for black capitalism more for psychological than for economic reasons because it is important to destroy the brutal stereotype that black people are incapable of engaging in entrepreneurial activity. But the economic impact of black capitalism has been--and can only be--marginal at best, and if we are not careful, this approach may actually compound the injustices from which Negroes suffer.

There is, first, the very simple fact that the vast majority of black people are not capitalists and will not become capitalists in the foreseeable future. They are salaried workers, and those most in need are the

working poor, and the unemployed. Any program to economically uplift the majority black people must be designed specifically for these individuals.

Now black capitalism does not appear to me to be so designed. Its main beneficiaries will be a small number of entrepreneurs, and because of the conditions under which they must earn a living, they will have a stake in racial separatism - a condition that has never been conducive to black progress. In general, black entrepreneurs must oppose economic integration for the simple reason that they are threatened by white economic competition. Andrew Brimmer, the only Negro member of the Federal Reserve System, has pointed out that "With the progress of desegregation the considerable protection which segregation provided for Negro businessmen has been eroded substantially. Thus, in virtually every large city (especially in the East and Midwest), hotels and better class restaurants which previously catered exclusively to Negroes have encountered hard times." Much of the talk we are hearing about black capitalism today, therefore, results from the desire to restore a black monopoly over a segregated black market. Yet this has been difficulty in the face of competition from large chain organizations, particularly since, as Brimmer notes, some black enterprises, due to high operating costs in the ghetto, have been forced to raise their prices ten to fifteen percent above those of their larger competitors. I cannot see how under such an arrangement a black worker or welfare recipient can benefit from "buying black."

But I can see how they will benefit by Federal programs to reconstruct our cities, to provide ^{full} employment, a decent income, and adequate health care for everybody, and to improve the quality education in our schools. To the degree that talk of black capitalism diverts our attention and political energies away from this fundamental solution to the social and economic problems of black Americans, to that degree its ultimate effect will be deleterious. And to the degree that it re-inforces racial separatism, it will exacerbate those problems

of poverty and discrimination which derive from separatism.

3. The Myth of Reparations

Reparations is attractive as a concept, but as a program it is impractical and politically reactionary. The power of the concept derives from its call for justice, and certainly no individual of good will can deny the magnitude of the injustices that have been committed against black people in America. But it is equally a call for retribution, and as such it has become more a moral than a political demand. James Forman is, in effect, not demanding equality for black people so much as he is condemning white people. He seeks not to correct social injustice but to purge white guilt.

It is in part for this reason that he has chosen to direct his attack at the church, the institutional embodiment of our society's moral and religious pretensions. But I would question the efficacy and the social utility of an attack that impels the attacked to applaud and morally debase themselves. And I would doubt that two such hate-and self-hate-generating feelings as Forman's moral aggression and white churchmen's guilt can produce anything that is socially creative. Certainly such feelings will not improve the lot of the unemployed black man and the miseducated black child.

But of course it will be said that Forman is demanding money--"15 dollars per nigger," to quote his own words. This pittance, if ever given, would hardly right the balance of wrongs committed against black people, nor would it appreciably improve their present situation. Most black people, I am sure, do not even desire such charity. They want work with dignity. Justice will be embodied in their attainment of an equal social position, not in the flagellation and self-flagellation of white people.

Moreover, the political effect of the demand for reparations can only be reactionary. It will, first, tend to isolate blacks from any political allies. Demands of a purely racial nature cannot appeal to the white poor who have

common interests with blacks. And I do not trust those affluent whites who, out of guilt, are sympathetic to re^{fi}prations. Guilt is an uncomfortable emotion, and the guilty party will ultimately rationalize his sins and affirm them as virtues. By such a process, today's ally can become tomorrow's enemy. Political alliances are not built on the shifting sands of moral suasion.

Second, it is an error for black people to focus their struggle on so organizationally diffuse and non-political an institution as the church. This can only deflect their attack away from the major political and economic institutions of the society and thus seriously weaken the effectiveness of the black movement for equality. The church may have been chosen as a target because of its vulnerability, but it is precisely because of this debility that black people must concentrate their energies elsewhere.

4. The Myth of Black Studies

In the long history of the black struggle, many slogans have emerged which have defined the demands of Negroes at a particular point in time. During Reconstruction, for example, the slogan was "Forty Acres and a Mule." It was both precise and practical. Today's slogans are neither, and Black Studies is a good illustration of this point.

What Black Studies should mean is a thorough and objective scholastic inquiry into the history of the black man in America. This history has been scandalously distorted in the past, and, as a field of study, it has been relegated to a second-class status, isolated from the main themes of American history and omitted from the historical education of American youth.

But I am afraid that Black Studies, as it is presently conceived by its proponents on campus, will not correct these errors so much as as compound them, for its primary purpose will be to further ends that are fundamentally non-scholastic. It is hoped, first, that Black Studies will serve the ideological function of creating a mythologized history and a system of assertive ideas that will facilitate the political mobilization of the black community. Such

an ideological undertaking would necessitate the substitution of a glorified version of black history for the present debased version, but neither version seems unduly concerned with the discovery of historical truth.

It is also hoped that Black Studies will serve the political function of developing and educating a cadre of activists who conceive of their present training as a preparation for organizational work in the black community. One may feel--as I do--that there should be more young Negroes engaging in activities designed to uplift their brethren, but to the extent that Black Studies is used as a vehicle for political indoctrination, it ceases to be a legitimate scholastic program.

What I find most distressing about the ideological and political conception of the role of Black Studies is the contempt that is shown toward black history and culture as potential academic disciplines. Faculty members will be chosen on the basis of race, ideological purity, and political commitment--not academic competence. Needless to say, this is not the best way to go about developing an intellectually respectable program. Under such conditions, competent black professors will not even want to teach in Black Studies programs--not simply because their academic freedom will be curtailed by their obligation to adhere to the revolutionary "line" of the moment, but because their association with such second-rate programs will threaten their professional status. If such a situation is permitted to develop, Black Studies will become little more than a haven for opportunists and ideologues.

There is, finally, the psychological function of Black Studies. It is hoped that by studying Negro history and culture, the self-image of young blacks will improve. Implicit here is the dual assumption that first, young Negroes have a negative self-image because second, they are ignorant of their history. ← If there is truth to either assumption, then I entirely agree--they should devote many intensive hours to the study of our people's rich heritage of struggle and achievement.

But Black Studies is also serving the psychologically protective function of enabling black students who have been brutalized in the past by segregated education, to withdraw from the demanding competition of the university. In this I see little virtue. Providing these students with separate courses of study in soul music and soul poetry--things they can just play with and pass--will enhance neither their competence nor their confidence. Nor will it deal with the fundamental problem of improving the quality of their education in order that they can obtain skills that will be useful in the world they must eventually enter as adults.

To solve this problem would require larger and better trained teaching staffs, remedial efforts, and, and an expansion of facilities, all of which can be obtained only through a massive increase in present expenditures. And if these changes are not made, the cheap separatist solution will ultimately boomerang, for Black Studies can provide psychic comfort for Negro Students only temporarily. When they realize that college administrators are interested more in political accommodation than quality education--when they realize that New Leftist students and faculty members are using black students for their own revolution-by-proxy--and when they realize that they are not being given an education but only a paper degree that will hardly improve their intellectual competence or their economic power, then they will rebel with far greater violence and bitterness than anything we have yet seen.

I want to conclude by emphasizing that I am opposed to any program in Black Studies that separates the contribution of black men from the study of American history and society. Racist textbooks and historians have played this game too long for black people to add to the damage that has already been done. The magnificent contribution of black people to America must be recognized and recorded, not only by black people, but also by whites who can benefit at least as much from such knowledge.

5. The Myth of Violence

There are those who propose violence as the solution to the problems of

poverty and injustice. The rationale here is that by threat of force, black people can extort from the white community the resources they need to improve the conditions of their lives. I disagree with this proposition not only because I believe that unjust means cannot lead to just ends, but also because the tactic of violence is suicidal. Whites may for a time make minor concessions to blacks who use violence--and thereby help to discredit non-violence as an effective means for achieving social change--but the point must inevitably be reached when the state will take repressive measures which will inflict untold harm upon the black community. Those who romanticize black violence--particularly the pseudo-revolutionaries of the New Left who can retreat into their universities and suburbs when the repression comes--deserves special condemnation.

Moreover, the solution to social injustice cannot be brought about by violence which is calculated to increase white fear and political reaction. Black violence will strengthen George Wallace sooner than it will increase the economic and political power of Negroes. If blacks are enraged because they do not have jobs, and whites are fearful that somebody may take their jobs away, the solution is not social warfare but full employment. If blacks are enraged because they ^{do} not have decent homes, and whites are fearful they will lose their homes that are still not fully paid for, then the solution is not violence destructive to the entire social fabric, but the construction of adequate housing for all. It is because what is needed is the expansion of resources in order to reduce competition over what presently exists and ^{to} provide a secure existence for everybody that A. Philip Randolph proposed a Freedom Budget for All Americans.

Finally, I should add that blacks have already suffered great losses from the ghetto riots of recent years, not only in lives, but also in property and jobs. The burnt-out homes and places of business have not been rebuilt but remain as glaring monuments to the futility and self-destructiveness of violence. And a study has shown that in Washington, D.C. alone, 4900 employees--the majority of them Negroes--lost their jobs as a result of the riots which swept

the city following Dr. King's death. Violence may indicate to America the despair which blacks feel, but its major effect is the aggravation of the degrading social and economic conditions which have nurtured and perpetuated that despair.

6. The Myth of Separatism

Separatism is valid neither from a psychological nor a political point of view. Dr. Kenneth Clark has recently argued that "There is absolutely no evidence to support the contention that the inherent damage to human beings of primitive exclusion on the basis of race is any less damaging when demanded or enforced by the previous victims than when imposed by the dominant group." Some separatists today are withdrawing in despair from America culture, others out of a nationalist affirmation of the desirability of a separate black society. But both are withdrawing from the challenge posed to the Negro by W.E.B. DuBois "to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self...to be both a Negro and an American...."

Even if sepratism were psychologically sensible--which it is not--it does not make political sense. The only reason the Civil Rights bills of 1964, 1965, and 1968 were passed was because Negroes had allies in the labor movement, the liberal community, and in religious organizations. It was only this coalition of forces that had the power to defeat the Republican-Dixiecrat coalition that has traditionally blocked any progress in the field of civil rights. Black separatism will strengthen the conservative coalition by weakening its opposition (that is why Republicans and Southern conservatives have always favored segregation), and it will be an obstacle to the realignment of the Democratic Party. Let us remember that it was the integrated delegations from Mississippi and Georgia which forced the segregationists from those states out of the last Democratic Party convention.

Black people are being elected to offices throughout the country for the very reason that they are not campaigning on a separatist line. Charles Evers'

slogan, "Don't vote for a black man. Or a white man. Just a good man.", is being adopted in concept by black politicians in every region. In the Southern states, the number of black elected officials has increased dramatically in recent years. There were only 72 in 1965 when the Voting Rights Act was passed, and today there are 461, and that number is steadily growing. Men like Evers, Howard Lee, Carl Stokes, and Richard Hatcher are proving that black separatism is an obstacle to black political power. This point was also proved by Tom Bradley who, though ~~defeated~~ ^{defeated} by a man who deliberately aroused racial fears and hatreds, nevertheless won 47% of the vote in a city only 18% black. It is only a matter of time before Los Angeles too shall have a black Mayor.

7. The Myth of the Black Revolution

I believe that the black struggle for equality is revolutionary, but not in the traditional sense of a violent seizure of state power. The black revolt is fundamentally cultural in that Negroes are affirming their dignity as black people and are demanding that their humanity be fully recognized and appreciated. But politically, blacks are not demanding revolution but rather participation in the democratic process and the enjoyment of the fruits of American society. In general, they want their rightful share of the pie.

Thus, the demand for equality is itself not revolutionary, but the response that must be made in order to satisfy this demand very much is. By this I mean that justice cannot be done to blacks in the absence of a total restructuring of the political, economic, and social institutions of this country. There cannot be full employment, the rebuilding of our cities, the reconstruction of our educational system, and the provision of adequate medical care for everybody, within the context of our present definition of social ^{and economic} priorities. When we talk about the achievement of these goals, let us be clear that we are proposing nothing less than the radical refashioning of our political economy.

The Negro struggle for equality will continue until the kind of revolution I have described is achieved. There will be periods, such as the present,

when progress will be slow, and as a result, there will be bitterness, frustration, and a casting about for instant solutions that avoid the challenges of fundamental social change. But even in what I have called "myths" I see a sign of hope, for they represent a sustained protest against injustice and ~~they~~ ^{thus} symbolize the refusal to accept the condition of inequality. But our task ^{now} must be to transform these myths into the reality of a political strategy and a social program so that we can get on with the job of transforming America.

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THE POLITICS OF BLACK PROTEST

By Bayard Rustin

The past decade has been a period of unprecedented social upheaval in America, and at the center of this turmoil has been the movement for racial justice. During this brief time we have been through an entire cycle of protest--from court litigation to non-violent civil disobedience to race riots and urban guerrilla warfare. As with every historical period, parallels could be drawn with the past. The March on Washington, the outbreak of large-scale violence in hundreds of Negro communities, and the rise of the Black Power movement--these events had their precedents in the March on Washington movement of 1941, the race riots of 1919 and 1943, and the black nationalist Garvey movement in the 1920s. But in the 1960s they occurred with a driving momentum that made the race problem the central issue in our national politics.

It is difficult to judge precisely what the effect of this experience with uninterrupted social protest has been on black Americans, but I would not doubt that it has made their political consciousness sensitive primarily to what we may call the upward arc of historical movement. The problem is that such a consciousness finds it hard to come to grips with the reality that history consists of alternating periods of movement and stagnation, of action and reaction, of tremendous hope and enthusiasm, which can be followed by cynicism and exhaustion. I am not suggesting that this process is inevitable, though to a certain extent it does seem to contain an internal dynamic that operates independently of human will. What I am suggesting is that we must understand this process if we are to be in a position to influence it.

What we must first understand is that the pendulum of history has already begun to swing downward. It is impossible now to gauge the extent of this reaction. My own feeling is that the drift to the Right in American politics can be reversed if we do the correct thing. But we cannot escape the conclusion that, for the present at least, the conservatives have made important and ominous gains. They control the White House and, through the power of presidential appointment, have gained a majority on the Supreme Court. WHAT IS HAPPENING today is not very different from what happened in the 1970s. At that time, the country had been through a period as turbulent as the one we have just experience. The Civil War and its aftermath left the North with a moral burden it simply could not bear. It was far more interested in pursuing its own commerical interests than in advancing the welfare of Negroes in the South and, of course, the North also suffered from the disease of racism. All hope for black equality collapsed when Northern Republicans worked out a compromise with Southern Democrats in the disputed election of 1876. The Southern Whigs agreed to let the Republicans retain control of the White House, in return for which federal troops were withdrawn from the South and large subsidies were provided for the construction of the Southern railroad system. The Compromise of 1876 initiated the darkest period in the history of American Negroes. The system of Jim Crow was established and lynchings and terrorism became commonplace as poor Southern whites, embittered by poverty, were encouraged to unleash their wrath upon Negroes.

Things have not yet reached that stage today, but the parallels are frightening. The Southern strategy of the Nixon administration is based upon the same principle as the Compromise of 1876: namely,

Northern Republicans and Southern conservatives share common interests add together can rule this nation. I do not think it is possible to condemn too harshly what the President has done in the South in order to form this alliance. Indeed, I can think of no recent President who has more blatantly sacrificed the ideals of equality and racial justice for his own political ends. Nor is Nixon simply riding the wave of reaction. He is encouraging that reaction, for he knows that he became President because of divisions in the society, and that it is in his interest that these divisions grow wider. More specifically, he wants to see another antiblack Wallace vote in 1972, only this time he wants it cast for himself. This is the prime motivation behind the President's opposition to the extension of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, his nominations of Haynsworth and Carswell to the Supreme Court, and his clear message to Southern segregationists that the federal government will not oppose any efforts to roll back whatever advances had been made in school integration. Bay means of such acts he has helped foster a mood of confrontationism and racial hostility. He has profoundly and perhaps permanently alienated blacks, he has put the white moderates of the South on the defensive and he has given a go-ahead signal to the reactionaries.

What worries me most about the present situation is that there has been a decline in the effectiveness of some of the forces that have traditionally held reaction at bay. In the case of the South, we have already seen how the federal government, formerly an ally in our struggle has contributed to the resurgence of conservatism. Nationally, the progressive coalition of blacks, liberals, and the trade-union movement, which has been responsible for the major social advances since the New Deal, is now weakened by internal divisions.

This coalition held together surprisingly well in the November elections but many problems remain. In part this is due to conflict between blacks and lower-middle-class whites. This conflict has probably been exaggerated in the press, but a disturbing amount of it does exist, primarily because of economic competition between the two groups. Such competition can be reduced to a minimum if an expanding economy provides enough opportunities for everybody. But today, as a result of the Nixon administration's disastrous economic policies, we are in a recession. Consequently, the likelihood is that there will be an increase in racial tension which will further eat away at the unity of the progressive coalition.

Finally, the dramatic events of the last few years seem to have totally disoriented a sizable portion of the liberal community. Many liberals have lost a sense of purpose and direction. The traditional goals of integration and the expansion of the welfare state are no longer thought to be feasible or even desirable. But they have found no goals to replace the ones they have cast aside, with the result that they have become politically immobile. A number of theories have been created to give this mood a forward-looking image, but it is really little more than an accommodation to the new conservatism.

By no means do I want to give the impression that the situation is hopeless. There is a tendency today to anticipate the apocalypse. Such ideas are sheer indulgence, because even if there were any truth to them--and I do not believe there is--it would be our duty to act so as to prevent the worst from happening rather than to enable the fulfillment of our prophecies. Such moods can be

harmful, for, as George Orwell has pointed out, "an effect can become a cause, reinforcing the original cause and producing the same effect in an intensified form, and so on indefinitely. A man may take to drink because he feels himself to be a failure, and then fail all the more completely because he drinks." Our struggle is too important, there is still so much that remains unaccomplished, that it would be a grave error were we to indulge in this "end-of-the-world" chatter.

The situation is not hopeless. There are progressive forces at work in American society that did not exist in 1876. There is, first of all, the militant desire for racial justice, which is shared by countless numbers of young blacks. In the words of the civil-rights songs, I don't think that anybody is going to turn them 'round--not now, not after we have come so far. Then there is the black vote, which in both the North and the South has become a major new factor in American politics. It has helped put twelve blacks into Congress and countless others into State and local office, and it has become a key factor in the victory of virtually liberal Democrats. This vote has increased not only in numbers but also in sophistication, and in addition to the gains it has already won for blacks, it exercises a restraining influence on the scope and effectiveness of anti-Negro forces. The recent defeat in South Carolina of Alan Watson, who ran an utterly racist campaign with the full backing of the President, should make this point eminently clear.

Last, there is the trade-union movement which, though much maligned from both Right and Left, remains the strongest bulwark against reaction. Let us be very clear that the civil-rights forces alone could not have defeated Haynsworth and Carsell. They succeeded only

because they were allied with the trade-union movement, and it is this alliance, based upon mutual interest between blacks and labor, which offers the greatest hopes for future progress.

Thus, there are factors working both for and against the achievement of full racial equality. In a very real sense, we are at a crossroads. If Mr. Nixon succeeds in carrying out his Southern strategy, then the commitment to equality, on which America defaulted almost 100 years ago, will again be deferred to some future time. And if he fails, then we will be provided with an opportunity to resolve one and for all a central dilemma of American life--the relationship of blacks to American society and, in an even more profound sense, their relationship with themselves. Our task is to see to it that he fails.

If we are to have any hope of accomplishing this task, it is essential that we make an important distinction between issues of politics and problems in psychology. We should see this as a distinction between what we do in order to influence the political and economic relations in the society and what, in a more personal way, we do to achieve self-knowledge and identity. Now I do not think that these are hard and fast categories that totally exclude one another. A just society certainly encourages a healthy psychology, and individuals can find personal fulfillment through political involvement. But I think we must make this distinction, because in periods of great social upheaval--and we are living through such a period--there is a tendency to politicize all things, including scholarship, art, friendship, and love. The most extreme form of this total politicization is totalitarianism, a stage we have not yet reached.

But even a moderate form of it can be dangerous since it can lead to a politics so preoccupied with psychological issues that the goals of political action are obscured and even rendered unobtainable.

A. great cultural revolt is now taking place among many young black Americans. Young blacks are striking down the traditional symbols of racism. They are taking new pride in their cultural heritage and are demanding to be accepted as full and equal human beings. I think this is an exciting and creative social phenomenon, but it raises three political problems, which we must analyze carefully.

The first is that in some instances the cultural revolt includes a demand for racial separatism, which is entirely self-defeating from a political standpoint. Translated into political terms, the cultural revolt too often expresses itself as a desire for self-determination. Now this is a very complex issue, with which A. Philip Randolph tried to deal almost 30 years ago. At that time, he acknowledged that "the Negro and the other darker races must look to themselves for freedom. Salvation for a race, nation, or a class must come from within. Freedom is never granted; it is won. Justice is never given, it is exacted." But Mr. Randolph did not mean that blacks should isolate themselves from broader political movements in the society. He followed that statement with these words of caution: "But Negroes must not fight for their liberation alone. They must join sound, broad, liberal, social movements that seek to preserve American democracy and advance the cause of social and religious freedom."

This should indicate a political principle that we must never