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FOCUS

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British Black and Blue

Discrimination Against Black British Youth in Education, Employment, and the Administration of Justice Impedes Their Upward Mobility

Adapting European Apprentice Programs

One Solution to Minority Joblessness May Be Found in the Adaptation of Youth Training Programs That Are Succeeding in Foreign Countries

Colin Powell: Defense After the Cold War

A Downsized Military Must Remain Strong and Flexible to Respond to Unanticipated Regional Conflicts, But Forces Should Be Used Prudently

POLITICAL TRENDLETTER®

Perspective

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Halting the Urban Arms Race

Our mission at the Joint Center is to help improve the quality of life for all Americans. The support we receive from foundations, corporations, government agencies, and individuals helps us to pursue our mission through research and analyses, and conferences and publications. However, our job is getting harder every day. It is impossible to improve the quality of life when so many lives that we want to improve are being snuffed out every day by guns and other violence.

One of the most staggering statistics I have read recently indicated that, between 1985 and 1990, the number of young black men killed by firearms almost doubled. According to the National Pediatric Trauma Registry, gunshot wounds among *children* in inner cities also nearly doubled. And, in 1990 alone, more black males between the ages of 15 and 35 died of gunshot wounds than were killed in the entire Vietnam war! And most of them were killed by other black males.

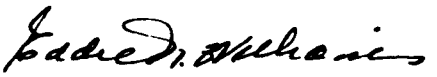
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services confirms that firearms cause more deaths than natural causes among youths in their late teens and early twenties. It is a scandal that the threat firearms pose to personal security in some black communities has reduced the quality of life below that of the poorest third-world countries. A 1990 study published by the New England Journal of Medicine found that young men in Harlem are less likely to live to age 40 than young men in Bangladesh. I realize that other folks also kill, but nowhere is the data more shocking than in the black community. The facts speak for themselves.

When 30 to 40 percent of elementary school children in Boston, Chicago, and Washington, D.C., report that they have personally witnessed a shooting or a stabbing, it is time to act. As a society, we all have a stake in ending what is literally an urban arms race and a devastating cycle of violence. We must stop the killing now. This is a challenge for all of us: black and white; government and corporate; public officials and private citizens.

The Joint Center also must respond to this challenge. We are already doing some work in this area, and with continued public and private support we will do even more. One project focuses on the impact of economic decline on the growth of illegal drug markets. Another project documents the destructive impact that substance abuse and punitive anti-drug efforts have on inner city families. In another area we are working with federal and local policymakers to find ways to reduce juvenile involvement in drug dealing and gun violence.

While there is a strong connection between drug distribution and gun distribution networks, the possession and use of firearms has spread far beyond drug dealers and users. A recent national survey of high school students showed that one of four black youths reported carrying a weapon. In many ways, our communities are under siege. The data on guns and drugs add up to a deadly formula: guns plus drugs equal genocide.

Through our collective efforts, we can persuade policymakers that urban arms control will require the same kind of national concern and commitment that, as a society, we demonstrated in achieving international arms control. Even as we work to expand jobs, improve education, extend health care, provide decent housing, and do other things to improve the quality of life, we must make sure that there is a life to live. ■



PRESIDENT

FOCUS

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British Black and Blue

Discrimination Against Black British Youth in Education, Employment, and the Administration of Justice Impedes Their Upward Mobility

by Jewelle Taylor Gibbs

Recent outbreaks of inter-ethnic conflict in the former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union have diverted attention from the interracial tensions between blacks and whites in other parts of Europe. Despite confrontations between black urban youth and the police in Britain in the early 1980s, and more recent right-wing assaults against Arabs and Africans in France, the American press has paid scant attention to the blatant incidents of racial discrimination and violence in these Western European nations.

In 1989, there were about 610,000 blacks in Britain, less than two percent of the total population. (Although Indians and Pakistanis and other non-white ethnic residents of Britain are sometimes referred to as "blacks," for the purposes of this article the term, "blacks" means peoples of African descent.) Nearly 79 percent of blacks in Britain are second and third generation descendants of Caribbean blacks who were recruited in the post-World War II years to replenish the unskilled and semi-skilled labor force. Beginning in the 1960s, small waves of African students and entrepreneurs followed. This trend continued throughout the 1980s. Currently, African immigrants make up 21 percent of the black population and an additional 280,000 identify themselves as racially mixed.

In contrast to other post-World War II immigrant groups, Afro-Caribbeans in Britain have less education, lower family incomes, higher rates of unemployment, and are concentrated in deteriorating inner-city neighborhoods. After four decades in Britain, 71 percent of black males are still in low-income blue collar jobs.

To understand the precarious status of black youth, ages 15 to 24, in Britain, one must understand that their dual marginality as members of a working class and racial minority group creates significant barriers to social and economic mobility in a society which is deeply divided along racial and social class lines.

Three major social indicators are frequently cited to assess the socioeconomic status and general well-being of a nation's youth: educational attainment, employment status, and involvement in the juvenile/criminal justice system. As with black youth in the United States, Afro-Caribbean youth in Britain are more likely than whites to receive harsh disciplinary measures in schools; less likely to finish college; more likely to be unemployed or to be employed in low-skilled, low-wage jobs; more likely to be arrested for criminal offenses and drug violations; and more likely to be harassed and treated unfairly by the police and the criminal justice system.

Dr. Gibbs is the Zellerbach Family Fund Professor of Social Policy at the University of California at Berkeley and author of *Young, Black, and Male in America: An Endangered Species*, 1988. Her article, "Called Anything But a Child of God," appeared in the December 1991 issue of *FOCUS*. As a Visiting Scholar at the Joint Center in 1991–92, Dr. Gibbs travelled to Britain to collect data as part of an ongoing comparative study of the socioeconomic status of black youth in the United States with black youth in Britain.

Sin-Bin Education

The discrimination that exists in the British school system results in low academic achievement by black youth, less challenging courses, and fewer opportunities to enter universities than for their white counterparts. The impact of this discrimination continues to limit their future opportunities for professional and financial success.

The British state schools, available to all students, have been criticized by parents, ethnic-minority organizations, and the government's Commission for Racial Equality for their treatment of minority children. A 1986 government-funded report authored by professor John Eggleston of the University of Warwick, titled *Education For Some: The Educational and Vocational Experiences of 15- to 18-Year-Old Members of Minority Ethnic Groups*, culminated a three year investigation into the educational experiences, performance, and problems of black and Asian students in six different British communities from 1979-1982.

The report concluded that Afro-Caribbean students experienced various forms of direct and indirect discrimination in the schools. It found that many teachers had low expectations or prejudiced attitudes toward minority students; minority students were frequently placed in reading and math groups below their ability level; and the curriculum did not take into account the cultural and economic contributions of the Commonwealth countries from which minority students or their parents had come. However, the most damaging finding was that many black students were either overtly or subtly discouraged from taking classes which would prepare them for the qualifying examinations to enter institutions of higher education. This study also found that Afro-Caribbean students were more likely to be disciplined, suspended, or expelled than white or Asian students for similar infractions.

Another major government-sponsored study issued in 1985, *Education For All: The Report of the Committee of*

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Black and Blue

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Enquiry Into the Education of Children From Ethnic Minority Groups, also documented educational practices and policies which resulted in unequal education for minority students, particularly Afro-Caribbean youth. For example, the study found that between the late 1960s and the early 1980s, black students were dramatically overrepresented in special schools for the "educationally subnormal" as well as in the special "disruptive units," "withdrawal classes," and "guidance units" (popularly labeled "sin-bins") for "problem" students, established by the state schools in the 1970s.

Despite these patterns of discrimination in primary and secondary schools, a high proportion of black youth remain in continuing education, and generally complete at least two years of higher education, although many do not ultimately obtain university degrees. However, those who do earn degrees experience discrimination when they seek admission to medical schools, law schools, and other professional institutions.

Mode B: Dead-End Training

Unemployment rates are very high among black youth in Britain. From 1987 to 1989, 25 percent of black youth were unemployed, compared with 12 percent of white youth. The unemployment rate for black youth has remained approximately double that of white youth since 1984, with the highest rates of black youth unemployment emanating from large industrial cities.

Those black youth who are employed are concentrated in low-skilled, low-wage industries. They also tend to be in the sectors of the economy—such as the service industries and light manufacturing—that are most vulnerable to lay-offs during periods of economic decline. There are few blacks in finance and banking, sales, and junior executive or professional positions. Young black workers are rarely seen in jobs that require direct contact with the public, such as in large department stores and offices. Moreover, they have been historically excluded from building and construction trade unions which dominate many higher-waged skilled jobs.

In order to interpret these employment statistics accurately, it is important to understand that the figures include those young people who are participating in state subsidized Youth Training Schemes, or youth apprenticeship programs, which last 12 to 18 months but frequently do not lead to actual employment. A collaborative effort of the government and private industry, these schemes are intended to provide training opportunities for out-of-school youth who do not plan to attend universities. There are basically two types of training schemes: (1) "Mode A" schemes, which are sponsored by employers, usually offer the trainees a job after one year of training; and (2) "Mode B" schemes, which are usually operated in government-sponsored training centers, offer few, if any, placements or referrals to jobs after the training is completed. Trainees receive stipends during training. (See "Adapting European Apprentice Programs" on page 5 of this issue of *FOCUS*.)

It is not unusual for black youth to participate in three or four consecutive Mode B schemes where they learn a number of skills, yet remain unemployed after completing them. For example, a 1986 study by the Manpower Services Commission, the government agency which oversees the training-schemes, reported that in 1985, 56 percent of white trainees found jobs after completing their training, as compared to 33 percent of Afro-Caribbean and 31 percent of Asian youth. Several investigations of training scheme selection practices have concluded that black youth have been deliberately excluded from the more desirable "Mode A" training schemes and are usually assigned to "Mode B" schemes.

Excessive Force, No Caution

Even though blacks are less than two percent of the British population, young black males are overrepresented in arrests for crimes such as muggings, burglaries, and car thefts in British urban areas. They constitute 17 percent of adults arrested in the London metropolitan area; the majority of this 17 percent are young blacks under age 30.

With the increased availability of "hard drugs," such as crack cocaine and heroin, violent crimes have also been on the rise. The city of Manchester is currently the center of the drug trade in Britain, with less serious problems in London, Birmingham, and Liverpool. In a 1991 study of Lewisham, a borough of London, 95 percent of drug offenders arrested for selling crack were black, yet 85 percent of crack users known to drug enforcement agencies in the area were white.

In view of these disparities, about 90 percent of those interviewed for this study identified criminalization of young black males as one of the four or five major problems for black British youth. Criminalization refers to the differential treatment of black youth by the police. There is documented evidence that black youth are stopped more often than white youth by police officers who question them without sufficient cause, search them and their homes without warrants, stop black drivers of late model cars, and often provoke blacks into an aggressive response so that they can have a legitimate excuse to use excessive force and take them into custody for "resisting arrest." In 1983, a report from the Policy Studies Institute, an independent British think tank, showed that 63 percent of West Indian males in the 15 to 24 age group were stopped by the London Metropolitan police, compared to 44 percent of whites and 19 percent of Asians in the same age group. Similar disparities have been reported in other cities.

When stopped for suspicion of minor offenses, black youth were significantly more likely to be arrested than white youth, who are often simply "cautioned" (given a warning) and sent home. Consequently, black youth were more likely than whites to obtain a juvenile record for minor infractions of the law. In Liverpool, several young black people reported that *all* of their friends had juvenile

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POLITICAL TRENDLETTER

Inside This Issue:

- Joint Center conference explores whether European apprenticeship models can be adapted in the United States.
- TrendLetter presents a partial roll call of senior black appointees in the Clinton administration.
- Mississippian Bennie Thompson is in a runoff for Mike Espy's Congressional seat.
- The First Lady quizzes the President on *FOCUS* reading assignments.

Can Apprenticeships Empower Minority Youth?

At a March 16 conference on apprenticeships sponsored by the Joint Center and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation of Germany, over 100 educators, business leaders, and scholars came together to investigate how European school-to-work transition programs can be adapted in the United States. Dr. **HERMANN SCHMIDT**, president of Bundesinstitut fur Berufsbildung (the Federal Institute for Vocational Training) in Berlin, asserted that the emphasis of the German apprenticeship program has been to shift the focus of training from managers to front-line workers. The apprenticeships, which average three years, are not only designed to impart skill and knowledge but also to mold new attitudes among workers and enable them to plan and act autonomously. In addition, apprenticeships train German workers to operate in a workplace that embraces a team approach: instead of the traditional industrial style of "top-down" hierarchical management, decision-making involves administrators, technicians, and skilled workers. The program has been integrated into the public education system and offers a dual approach to education—young people can either choose tracks that lead to a university education or opt for company training, though it was emphasized that one choice did not preclude the other. According to Schmidt, about 10 to 15 percent of those who participate in apprenticeships go on to higher education.

An active partnership among business, labor, and the government is essential to the success of Germany's apprenticeships. The partners take responsibility for the design of curricula and training and for the evaluation of the program. For their part, employers provide the training and bear the cost of instruction. Training costs usually vary from $3,000 to $7,000 per student—the Siemens Corporation spends about $80,000 for its three-year program. A total of $45 billion was spent for job training in Germany last year ($25 billion of that sum went to retraining). All large German firms participate in the program, as do most medium- and small-sized companies. Today, 70 percent of Germany's young people participate, as opposed to 48 percent 25 years ago.

Much of the program's success can be attributed to the high-level political support that has helped make the program a national priority. In 1976, then-German chancellor **HELMUT SCHMIDT** called upon all companies to provide training places for *all* workers. This commitment to "train them all" remains a challenge to include those among the "forgotten" 20 to 30 percent at the bottom of the socioeconomic strata. To help meet this goal, the government co-finances in-company training if companies' resources are too limited to support programs or efforts to integrate minorities.

The German program has its limits, however, including difficulty in: keeping curricula current with technological changes; getting colleges and companies to cooperate with each other; providing enough teachers; and placing students in small- and medium-sized businesses that can provide the full spectrum of training opportunities.

Much of the discussion among conference participants revolved around adapting elements of Europe's apprenticeship models in the United States. Dr. **BADI FOSTER**, a former vice president of the Aetna Life and Casualty Company, noted that European countries which are poorer in natural resources than the United States are

pressed to invest in their people. Unfortunately, said Foster, the attitude of U.S. business executives toward workers has too often been, "We don't need you." He pointed out other barriers to implementing European apprenticeship models here, such as resistance from those who *would be* partners—educators, business managers, and labor leaders.

Foster asserted that many American educators have little understanding of the workplace and are often resistant to "cooperative education." They tend to see a dichotomy between classroom learning and competency-based education. For their part, few American business executives believe in training their workers, and labor leaders are caught in an adversarial relationship with corporate managers. Moreover, unlike the United States, where only about 13 percent of the workers are organized, in Germany 40 percent of the workers belong to unions. Labor leaders there can participate in the apprenticeship program as full partners because they are perceived to speak for *all* workers. **TONY SARMIENTO**, assistant director of the Department of Education at the AFL-CIO, expressed pessimism at enlisting corporate participation, charging that "many businesses pay their workers little and provide no benefits for unfulfilling part-time jobs."

American University economist **ROBERT LERMAN** added that there is a vicious cycle that keeps youths in their teens and early twenties out of the labor force. Many young people in the United States who are not college-bound don't see an early pay-off in entry-level jobs so they don't apply themselves in school. Perceiving this attitude, employers are reluctant to include young people in their workforces. Furthermore, few high school counselors are involved in career counseling, and businesses don't customarily rely on schools for job recommendations.

Lerman also said U.S. institutions that offer apprenticeships have drawbacks: The military is downsizing and will provide fewer opportunities in the future; community colleges have high drop-out rates; and Job Training Partnership Act programs have yielded meager results.

Labor Secretary **ROBERT REICH**, the luncheon speaker at the conference, said we must address the two-tiered labor market of the global economy, where skilled workers are in demand and the unskilled are not. He added that 90 percent of the new jobs are only part-time and average 27 hours a week. The federal departments of Labor and Education are now working together to develop national standards for skills and "portable" credentials that would be short of a college degree for young people yet certify the mastery of a set of skills.

Other participants asserted that no matter how successful an American apprenticeship program might be, affirmative mechanisms must be established to ensure minority participation. For example, programs must be placed in urban communities. And it was recommended that employers who include minorities in apprenticeship programs receive tax incentives.

MILTON J. LITTLE, Jr., vice president for operations at the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation in New York, said, "We should not just train young people to be more productive workers. Apprenticeships must empower students to achieve their maximum intellectual potential, provide them with multiple options for learning, and prepare them for the challenges of being 21st century citizens."

An Administration That Looks Like America

With a commitment to select people for his administration who "look like America," President **BILL CLINTON**'s cabinet includes four African Americans, two Latinos, and four women. African Americans are also prominent among subcabinet and mid-level positions as well as White House staff appointments. The following is a partial list of profiles of Clinton's cabinet-level black appointees:

RONALD BROWN, 52, Secretary of Commerce. The former chairman of the Democratic National Committee (DNC), Brown, the consummate negotiator, unified his party after three successive presidential election defeats. During his three years as party chairman, he built up the DNC's capital reserves to prepare for the run for the Oval Office, raising more money than any previous DNC chairman. He was largely responsible for holding the Democrats together after a fractious 1992 presidential primary campaign.

Brown worked for the National Urban League during the 1960s and 1970s, rising to head the Washington Bureau as deputy executive director. In 1979, he went to work for Senator **EDWARD M. KENNEDY** (D-Mass)

and became the senator's general counsel and staff director in 1980. During the 1988 presidential campaign, Brown worked for then-Democratic presidential contender **JESSE JACKSON** as his Democratic convention manager, and also served as a senior political advisor in the 1988 Dukakis-Bentsen campaign.

Brown graduated from Middlebury College and St. Johns University School of Law and was a partner in the Washington, D.C. law firm Patton Boggs & Blow prior to his appointment as Secretary of Commerce.

HAZEL ROLLINS O'LEARY, 55, Secretary of Energy. A long-time energy policy official, O'Leary left her position as executive vice president of Northern States Power Company in Minneapolis to head the Department of Energy (DOE) where she promoted conservation and sought ways to use alternative energy sources. Northern States serves 1.7 million customers in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and the Dakotas. She has a strong background in energy policy-making, having worked at DOE during President **JIMMY CARTER**'s administration and in the Federal Energy Administration under President **GERALD FORD** where she was involved in the regulation of oil, gas, and electrical utilities and the implementation of environmental and conservation policies. That experience will help her as she explores ways to reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil. But she has little prior experience in the nuclear weapons field (two-thirds of the department's budget goes to supporting nuclear facilities). O'Leary must oversee the reduction of weapons production as well as the complex and costly problem of nuclear cleanup and waste disposal. O'Leary graduated from Fisk College and Rutgers University School of Law.

MIKE ESPY, 39, Secretary of Agriculture. The first black person elected to Congress from Mississippi since reconstruction, Espy has been able to help his rural Delta district as a member of the House Agriculture and Budget committees. As a representative of the state's 2nd District, Espy was chiefly responsible for the passage of legislation establishing the Lower Mississippi Delta Commission, charged with developing strategies to eliminate poverty in the multistate Delta region. He got to know the President when, as governor of Arkansas, Clinton chaired the Commission. Espy was an early supporter of Clinton's presidential candidacy.

Educated at Howard University and Santa Clara University Law School, Espy served in Mississippi state government posts as an assistant secretary of state and assistant attorney general in the early 1980s. Since his arrival in Congress, he has worked closely with white farmers in his state, and has immersed himself in federal agriculture policies and programs. His selection as Agriculture Secretary has been applauded by traditional farming interests. In his new post, he will also have jurisdiction over the food stamp and National School Lunch programs.

JESSE BROWN, 48, Secretary of Veterans Affairs. A strong crusader for veterans' rights, Brown joined the (now) 1.3 million-member Disabled American Veterans (DAV) organization in 1967 after a stint in the Marine Corps. He has a personal commitment to the mission of the DAV; a wound he received in 1965 while on patrol in Vietnam has left his right arm partially paralyzed. In 1988, he became the executive director of the DAV National Service and Legislative Headquarters, in charge of advocacy and lobbying. He supervised a staff of more than 400 employees in 70 offices around the country.

As head of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Brown will oversee a budget of $35 billion with 240,000 employees. The department administers the largest government-supported health delivery system in the country with its 171 hospitals and more than 350 outpatient and outreach community facilities. A major challenge will be to find a way to help the thousands of homeless veterans who sleep in the doorways and alleys of our cities and to upgrade the level of health care offered by VA hospitals where the quality of service has, in many cases, been scandalously substandard.

CLIFTON WHARTON, JR., 66, Deputy Secretary for the Department of State. There are many "firsts" in Wharton's resume: *first* African American to receive a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Chicago; *first* African American to chair a major U.S. foundation—the Rockefeller Foundation; *first* African American president of a predominately white university—Michigan State; and, in his most recent position, the *first* African American to head a Fortune 100 company, Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association and the College Retirement Equities Fund, the largest private pension fund in the world with assets of $112 billion. Wharton has also held several federal government appointments, including *first* chairman of the board for International Food and Agricultural Development, U.S. Agency for International Development. Wharton is the son of **CLIFTON WHARTON, SR.**, who was the nation's first black ambassador and a 40-year U.S. foreign service officer.

(Editor's note: In future issues, *FOCUS* will identify other African Americans in sub-cabinet and major staff roles.)

Bennie Thompson in Runoff for Espy's Seat

Black Democratic Hinds County Supervisor **BENNIE THOMPSON**, 45, survived a crowded March 30 open primary election to win a runoff spot for Mississippi's 2nd congressional district seat vacated by **MIKE ESPY** who resigned to become Secretary of Agriculture. Thompson will face white Republican **HAYES DENT** in an April 13 contest. Dent, 31, is from an old farming family in Yazoo City about 40 miles north of Jackson. He worked in the U.S. Department of Agriculture during the Bush administration and has been an advisor on agricultural affairs to Republican Governor **KIRK FORDICE.** Dent led the field of eight primary candidates with 34 percent of the vote while Thompson garnered 28 percent.

Prior to his election to the Hinds County board of supervisors in 1980, Thompson served as mayor of the city of Bolton (1973-79) near Jackson. He has extensive experience as a civil rights activist and was an original plaintiff in the *U.S.* v *Fordice* lawsuit first filed in 1975 to desegregate Mississippi's public colleges and universities and to ensure equitable financial support for traditionally black state-supported institutions of higher education. He also won a suit to redistrict the Hinds County board of supervisors so that black representation on that body would better reflect the proportion of black voters in the county. In contrast to former Congressman Espy, who had appeared in advertisements for the National Rifle Association, Thompson supports the Brady Bill, which would require a waiting period before firearms may be purchased. He also advocates a ban on assault weapons.

To make it to the runoff, Thompson had to get past Clarksdale Mayor **HENRY ESPY**, an older brother of the former congressman, who, with his strong name recognition, led in several early polls. Henry Espy is reported to have received major financial support from white farmers who hoped he, if elected, would serve as a conduit to his brother, the Secretary of Agriculture. But Henry Espy came in third with 20 percent of the vote. Another notable black political figure in the race was **UNITA BLACKWELL**, mayor of Mayersville, Mississippi, since 1976 and one of the founders, along with **FANNIE LOU HAMER**, of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. Blackwell was among the 33 recipients of the distinguished MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship in 1992. Despite an endorsement by EMILY's List, a political fundraising organization for pro-choice Democratic women, Blackwell finished fourth with 7 percent of the vote.

The April 13 runoff will determine whether this seat, with its 58 percent black voting-age population, will continue to be represented by a black Democrat or whether the seat will revert to Republican control. In 1986, Mike Espy became the first black person to represent Mississippi in Congress for over a century when he beat then-incumbent **FRANKLIN WEBB**, a white Republican. The largely rural district situated in the Mississippi Delta is reported to be the second poorest in the nation. Twenty-one of its 24 counties have very limited health care services, and one county has no school system.

The GOP has weighed in heavily on the side of Dent. Newly installed Republican National Committee Chairman **HALEY BARBOUR**, a close political ally of Dent's, hails from Yazoo City. He's anxious to have the GOP reclaim the seat, and the party has pumped a lot of money into the race. Having Dent run as the only Republican candidate was a GOP strategy to unite the nearly all-white GOP vote against a Democratic opponent with divided support. Despite this maneuver, Thompson is confident that he will be able to unite the black vote and prevail.

THE PRESIDENT *FOCUS*ES ON THE QUESTION OF THE MONTH

It happened at the reception before the Joint Center's Annual Dinner on March 30. Said an enthusiastic President Clinton to the assembled and highly receptive gathering: "I'm very familiar with the Joint Center. Hillary has known Eddie Williams for years. Hillary gave me one of his newsletters [*FOCUS*] with one of the articles circled and she said, 'Read this.' I said, 'Wow, this is great,' and she said, 'Then read it every time. I'm on the mailing list.'"

Clinton, now a regular reader, added that the First Lady holds him accountable with periodic question-and-answer sessions to make sure he has read *FOCUS*!

Adapting European Apprentice Programs

One Solution to Minority Joblessness May Be Found in the Adaptation of Youth Training Programs That Are Succeeding in Foreign Countries

In November 1992, a team led by Joint Center Director of Research Programs Dr. Margaret Simms conducted a study tour of selected apprenticeship programs in Germany, Denmark, and Sweden. The focus of the tour was to determine whether the adaptation of these programs in the United States will improve the employability of black youth. Germany was chosen because its apprenticeship program is the best known and most effective in Europe and includes a strong career counseling component. Denmark was included because its program offers students the flexibility to alter their career paths. Finally, Sweden operates a "second chance" program which offers drop-outs a mechanism to re-enter the educational system. In addition to Simms, the tour participants included Dr. Barbara McCloud, who is a senior research associate at the Joint Center and 10 black educators, policymakers, and business leaders from across the United States. This article is a summary of the major observations and recommendations of the participants. The Joint Center held a conference on apprenticeships last month (see TrendLetter), and a full report of the group's findings will be available later this spring.

Prominent in the debate on reforming the American educational system have been discussions regarding the issue of school-to-work transition, which is more difficult for students in the United States than in European countries, especially those that have apprenticeship systems.

A well-developed American apprenticeship system has great potential for improving the employability of black youth, but only if key features accompany its implementation: (1) business, government, and labor must work as partners in the establishment of apprenticeships; (2) vocational education, as redefined under an apprenticeship system, must be highly valued and rewarded by society; (3) the system must be accompanied by essential improvements in academic education at the pre-vocational levels; (4) the system must be shored up with safeguards against discriminatory tracking, testing, and hiring practices; and (5) incentives must be in place to ensure participation by minority-owned businesses.

Partnership at Every Level

The tour of European apprenticeship programs served to identify several essential ingredients of successful programs. At the same time, shortcomings in how systems served ethnic minorities and women were discovered.

A social contract for collaboration. In each country that was visited, the foundation for the apprenticeship system, indeed for the entire approach to workforce training, was a partnership among the three major economic sectors—business, labor, and government. Two binding ingredients for that partnership were a shared belief in the importance of an educated and highly trained workforce and a shared responsibility for preparing that workforce. This partnership appeared at every stage of workforce training—in career counseling, apprenticeship selection, training programs, and the certification process, as well as programs for life-long learning.

Business: the critical player. Business involvement is the critical ingredient that makes European apprenticeship systems work. Businesses provide the job slots apprentices occupy, pay apprentices their wages, and, in most cases, make substantial outlays for training, in terms of instructors and equipment. The main reason most European businesses make this commitment is that they believe *investing* in young workers is essential for the productivity of the future workforce and for their nation's overall economic competitiveness. Of course, not every business is involved because of these ideals; societal pressures and government regulation also serve to induce participation.

Vocational education as a valued option. The reason two-thirds of German youth enter apprenticeship programs is twofold: The programs are viewed positively by society, and young apprentices are rewarded for their efforts by the marketplace. In the United States, by contrast, vocational education programs are viewed as dumping grounds for students who are not considered "college material." Widespread acceptance here of vocational training as a valued option will depend on whether this society can broaden its view of this form of education and see it as having equal value with a college preparatory curriculum.

Defining competencies. Another important feature of the European system is the official certification process that completes each apprenticeship. Conferring a certificate on a student indicates that the apprentice has mastered certain well-defined and widely accepted competencies. In Europe, these competencies are recognized, defined, and tested by boards that include representatives from business, labor, and government. Thus, a potential employer knows that every journeyman in a given occupation has mastered a set of known competencies and therefore is qualified for an entry-level job in the chosen field.

In the United States, some elements of this system already exist—a national board certifies current apprenticeship programs, mostly within the crafts and related trades, and there are state licensing boards for specific occupations. What is needed is a more comprehensive system which ensures that a person successfully completing any

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Apprenticeship

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established training program will be viewed as competent wherever he or she might apply for employment.

The experiences black students have often had with competency testing and standardized tests in general raise issues of extreme importance as far as the apprenticeship certification process is concerned. While the need for appropriate testing to evaluate competency is recognized, it is essential that the boards formulating those examinations be sufficiently diverse to ensure that the examinations are both fair and relevant.

Improved basic education. Even if there were a strong apprenticeship system in the United States, there would still be a need for an improved system of basic education. This became quite clear from observing the German dual system, where students from the stronger education tracks and those with better grades fare much better in the competition to secure an apprenticeship. Success requires a good educational foundation and a commitment to ensuring that all students progress well through school, able to demonstrate the academic skills necessary for full participation in the workplace.

Adapting European Models

Proponents of youth apprenticeships in America often point to the labor market problems of minority youth as a rationale for adopting the European systems. But the European models being considered for adoption have a mixed record as far as the treatment of their own ethnic minorities is concerned.

Tracking: a dual system within a dual system. Implicit within most of the European models is the duality of educational choice. One stream of students is moving toward a university education and the other stream is directed toward apprenticeships. Although there is significant crossover, the system nevertheless can cause students to become the victims of rigid tracking. This occurs primarily at two points in the education/training process: in the decision about which school track a student is placed in and in the access to apprenticeship slots.

In the European model, the student bears the major responsibility for identifying and applying for an apprenticeship slot, but employers are free to require additional tests and interviews before making their selection. The combination of poor early schooling and these additional requirements can place minority students at a disadvantage. In Germany, the students who lose out on the competition must turn to less desirable school-based training or enter the unskilled workforce. The students most adversely affected there have been ethnic minorities, especially Turkish youth.

Strong career counseling and equitable job placement. Another essential ingredient for making the job selection process work well is knowledge of career alternatives and occupational requirements. The German and Danish systems are well designed to inform students about the implications of choosing one occupation over another. This is rarely done well for a large percentage of American children, especially minority students. An equitable job placement process is also important. Safeguards must be established that reduce or eliminate discrimination against students based on their race, ethnicity, or gender. At a minimum, the same employment discrimination laws that apply to regular jobs must apply to apprenticeships.

Retooling the education system. The apprenticeship approach to teaching and learning will require some adjustments on the part of teachers, workplace trainers, and students. The approach emphasizes the development of skills in teaching self-discipline, independent learning, and problem-centered teaching styles. These skills have not been a part of mainstream teaching methods in the United States, especially for those working with minority students. School systems of our central cities, where the vast majority of black children are being educated, must be included in these reforms. Business should not be allowed to take the easy way out and focus all its efforts on suburban school districts.

Clinton's Move

As part of his "Putting People First" program, President Clinton has embraced youth apprenticeships and has proposed funding for them as part of the economic plan. The initial step in implementing an apprenticeship program is likely to be an expansion of federal- and state-supported pilot and demonstration programs in operation across the country. First, these demonstrations must be well-structured and placed in a variety of environments that include minority students, especially in central cities with varying levels of economic prosperity. How these programs perform will indicate whether apprenticeships can open new avenues of economic mobility for minority youth.

Second, these pilots must undergo comprehensive evaluations before they are institutionalized. And third, it is essential that the development process include members of a variety of racial, ethnic, and cultural groups at all levels of decision-making. This will diminish the likelihood that disadvantaged groups will be denied opportunities through educational tracking, apprenticeship assignments, or the certification process.

The African American community must become more engaged in the discussions of apprenticeship programs, both at the national level and in every local community. It should be generally understood that the apprenticeship approach does not consign students to a "second class" education, and that America's failure to prepare students for tracks other than college is limiting young people's opportunities. The European apprenticeship model does not confine students to "blue collar" options or craft occupations; students can prepare for virtually any occupation through an apprenticeship, and many of these vocations have strong career ladders, such as banking and engineering. Rather than limiting students, it can open up new doors that were previously closed to them. ■

Colin Powell: Defense After the Cold War

A Downsized Military Must Remain Strong and Flexible to Respond to Unanticipated Regional Conflicts, But Forces Should Be Used Prudently

On February 18, General Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, met with the Joint Center staff and board members to share perspectives on the future role of the U.S. military. This article is based on those perspectives and his responses to Joint Center questions .

Over the course of his three and one half years as chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the changes that have taken place in Eastern Europe have been, in the words of General Colin Powell, "breathtaking for an army officer trained for nearly 40 years to fight the Soviets." Communism as a social, economic, and political system in the Soviet Union has collapsed, the Berlin Wall has fallen, and the Iron Curtain has come down.

These monumental changes have prompted a fundamental shift in U.S. strategic planning, based on the new realities that the Cold War is over and World War III is not going to happen. Profound adjustments in the size and shape of U.S. forces have been underway, and the nation's security focus has shifted to regional unrest and ethnic conflicts. Downsizing, begun under the Bush administration, has reduced troop strength and weapons inventories, and closed bases. Uniformed personnel have been cut from 2.1 million to 1.8 million. President Clinton is calling for even deeper cuts of another 700,000 personnel between now and 1996—200,000 in active duty forces, 250,000 reserves, and 250,000 in civilian Defense Department positions. General Powell noted that the cuts will have an especially significant impact on minorities since the armed forces have provided blacks and Latinos with unique employment and educational opportunities.

Nevertheless, he emphasized that U.S. armed forces are still a good investment as they continue to carry out critical strategic responsibilities around the world. General Powell plans to retire when his term as chairman expires this September after an exemplary 34-year career in the army. He said he has no post-retirement plans.

Joint Center: *What do you see as the future role of the United States military?*

Powell: It's in the interest of the United States to keep some forces in Europe to continue to contribute to stability there. Similarly, troops in the Pacific are helping to maintain the equilibrium between China and Japan. At the same time, U.S. forces must be flexible enough to deal with unanticipated contingencies such as responding to the emergency in Somalia or offering relief to the Kurds in northern Iraq. The United States must also be prepared to engage in two shooting wars simultaneously—one on the scale of the Persian Gulf War and a possible conflict on the Korean peninsula, for example.

Joint Center: *How would you define U.S. strategic interests, and what are the criteria for armed intervention on foreign soil?*

Powell: We no longer have the convenient calculus of containing communism, and no new context has been formed. Some cases are obvious—like Iraq. In some cases, the media influences the decision loop. For example, Somalia is not vital to U.S. interests. But the criteria are highly situational. Bosnia is a cultural, religious, and ethnic stew that's been boiling for a thousand years, and fighting among the various factions is vicious. Before we consider investing several hundred thousand troops in that region, we ought to define the desired outcome of such a move. My job is to make sure that any such mission is thought through all the way—assessing the costs, risks, and what can go wrong—so that the president has all the options.

Joint Center: *How would you describe the morale in the services?*

Powell: Morale is excellent though strained by the downsizing programs which are cutting winners from the forces. But behavior like the sexual harassment of female naval officers by their male colleagues at Tailhook is outrageous and inexcusable. Someone in the chain of command should have said 'Stop!'

Joint Center: *What's the status of including gays in the military?*

Powell: The President has told me to lift the ban on gays in the armed forces, and now we are working out how to do it. Some aspects of the gay lifestyle may put the privacy rights of other members of the services at risk. But first and foremost this is a people's army, and it will conform to American social mores.

Joint Center: *Are there any special projects you're working on?*

Powell: Each year the Defense Department funds 1,500 Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs in high schools across the nation. These programs instill discipline, and the retired sergeants who run them serve as role models to the young cadets. Part of the defense budget request for the next fiscal year is for funds to support 3,500 such programs. One of the most significant challenges, however, is to establish programs where they are needed most. For example, there are 110 programs in Texas but only two in the state of New York and none in New York City. We're working to crack the Northeast. ■

Black and Blue

(Continued from page 4)

records, some having been arrested several times for "loitering," "unruly public behavior," or "resisting arrest." The British press reported several cases of black males suing the police for assaults in 1991 and 1992; damages were awarded in three cases in three separate cities where police were found guilty of brutality or excessive force.

Black youth are more often found guilty of offenses than white youth, according to a study conducted in the borough of Hackney in the Greater London metropolitan area. Blacks are sentenced to custody twice as often as white youth with similar criminal histories. White youth are more likely to be given conditional discharges, probation, and fines, and less likely to serve time in jail than blacks convicted of similar offenses.

This pattern of differential treatment of black youth in the criminal justice system inflicts irreparable damage upon them, since a juvenile record and/or incarceration will interfere with their education, limit their occupational mobility, and ultimately place them at risk for continued involvement in the criminal subculture. The stereotype of black youth as aggressive and violent, perpetuated by the British press, further marginalizes them and makes it easier to justify discriminating against them and excluding them from "respectable" British society.

Middle Class or Underclass?

In comparing black youth in Britain and black youth in the U.S., patterns of discrimination among these three social indicators—education, employment, criminalization—are remarkably similar despite obvious differences in the histories of blacks in these two countries.

The majority of black youth in Britain are currently restricted to the "secondary" employment sector, which provides unskilled jobs with poor working conditions, low pay, high turnover rates, and few benefits. These types of jobs do not offer economic security to young workers, nor do they enhance their skills or increase their motivation, and they do not provide young workers with an adequate income to save for the future or to support a family.

The future for the majority of black youth remains mired in the lower socioeconomic stratum of British society. Some will inevitably become members of a growing urban underclass of blacks who have been chronically unemployed and have adapted a lifestyle "on the dole" (a common term for the British welfare system).

At the other end of the economic spectrum, the discrimination against black university-educated youth—in terms of job opportunities, graduate training, and professional internships in medicine, law, architecture, and other advanced fields—has even more serious long-term consequences because it impedes the development of a stable black middle class. The increase in the number of blacks in higher-status professions has been artificially slowed, their potential earnings depressed, and a ceiling has been placed on their professional achievement and advancement. In turn, these limitations result in restricting the social mobility of middle-class black families whose access to better housing, schools, and high-quality health care, and a range of lifestyle options are further reduced.

These trends are particularly problematic in a society which is becoming increasingly multiracial and multicultural, yet does not have adequate legislation or public policies to address the racial discrimination and the increasing income disparities between blacks and whites, rich and poor. As Britain continues to experience economic decline and high rates of unemployment, pressure to develop public policies which are responsive to the aspirations of a culturally diverse population will increase. As in the United States, the British will sooner or later have to decide whether to embrace their young citizens of color and use their skills to compete more effectively in the global economy, or to continue to marginalize them and risk becoming irrelevant in the new world order. ■

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