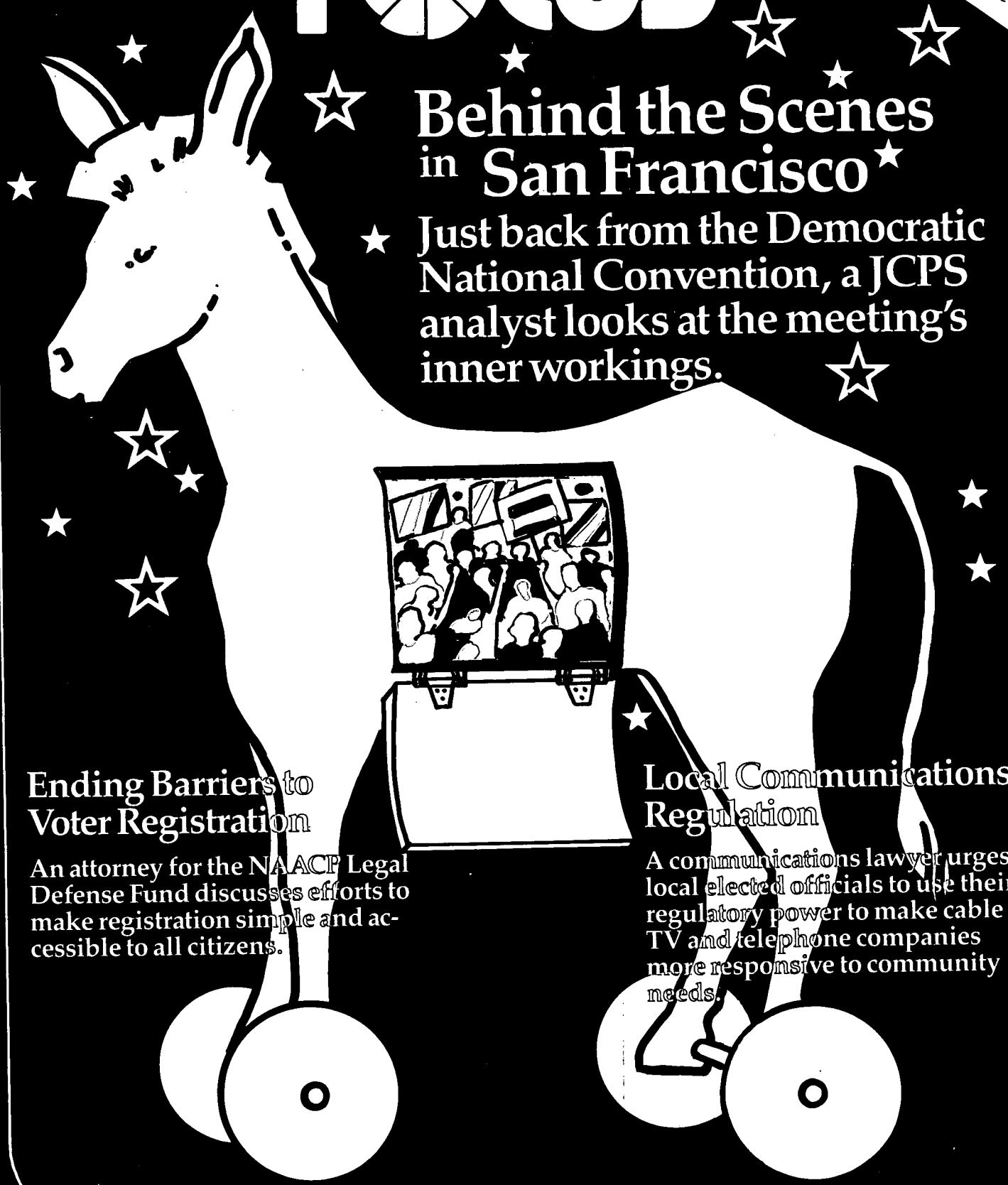
Volume 12, No. 8 August, 1984

JCPS Conference Report: Making It as a Black Military Officer

FOCUS



Behind the Scenes in San Francisco

Just back from the Democratic National Convention, a JCPS analyst looks at the meeting's inner workings.

Ending Barriers to Voter Registration

An attorney for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund discusses efforts to make registration simple and accessible to all citizens.

Local Communications Regulation

A communications lawyer urges local elected officials to use their regulatory power to make cable TV and telephone companies more responsive to community needs.

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Joint Center for Political Studies

Perspective

Jesse Jackson's unprecedented campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination is now history, but its impact is certain to be far-reaching. That impact will be greatly reduced, however, if we fail to put into realistic perspective just what the Jackson candidacy did in fact achieve and what it could not possibly have achieved.

In his candidacy, Jesse Jackson personified an emerging political movement that has been taking shape in the black community for the past two years. Although it is too early to determine exactly what the long-term impact of the Jackson candidacy will be, some significant accomplishments are readily apparent. Certainly the effort helped create a climate favorable to the nomination of a woman for the vice presidency. And it will prompt other changes in the way the Democratic party conducts business, including the elimination of rules that prevent blacks, Hispanics, and women from exerting greater influence. In broader terms, Jackson's candidacy should stimulate renewed efforts to eliminate subtle barriers to minority political participation such as run-off primaries and dual registration requirements.

This unique campaign also provided invaluable experience to an army of new political organizers and operatives who had previously been denied all but token opportunities. These new recruits will certainly mount formidable political campaigns in the future, whether for themselves or other candidates.

With its call for a Rainbow Coalition, the Jackson candidacy emphasized anew the importance of coalition-building. Although the rainbow did not fully materialize in the 1984 primaries, it remains a powerful and attractive idea whose time has come. Also at hand is recognition of the extensive political influence wielded by the black church. Mr. Jackson reaped enormous benefits by engaging the black church and other social institutions as instruments of political mobilization.

The Democratic National Convention itself provided further evidence of the impact of the Jackson candidacy and of the black electorate generally. More blacks than ever before participated in the convention, as delegates (17.7 percent), as speakers, and as committee participants. And although it was not apparent at the convention, there was substantial black involvement in the development of the party's platform, especially the *majority planks,* which were not debated in San Francisco. The strength of the party's stands on "justice," "empowerment," South Africa, and Third World policies should be attributed in good measure to black participation.

What was debated in San Francisco, of course, were Jesse Jackson's four minority platform planks, three of which were soundly defeated. There has been a lot of complaining about the defeat of these planks, which many believe represent the mainstream of Democratic thinking. But looking back, blacks have no cause to feel bad about losing this fight: they could not have won it in the first place.

Jackson's minority platform planks didn't stand a chance for two reasons. First, they went against the grain of the strategy that Walter Mondale and other party leaders, including some blacks, wanted to develop through the convention. Their goal was to unify the party, with the support of white southerners and conservatives very much intact, and to reduce Mr. Mondale's vulnerability to President Reagan's charge that he is a big spending liberal who is a captive of special interest groups. The Mondale strategy may or may not work, but there is nothing to suggest that it is anti-black.

The second reason the Jackson planks failed is that Jackson simply did not have enough votes to force a different outcome, especially in the face of collaboration between Mondale and Hart delegates. As a matter of fact, when it was Jackson forces who collaborated with Hart supporters, as they did on some foreign policy platform planks and in the Rules Committee, they were quite successful—once again demonstrating the crucial importance of coalition politics.

By focusing our attention on fights we could not win, we may belittle all that we did win. And down the road, we might fall victims to our own misperceptions, if blacks withdraw from politics because they feel their efforts really make no difference. Rather, we should say, as the Reverend Jackson did, "It's not just an election to win . . . . Victory on one level is watching our community come together. Part of our mission was to broaden the base of our leadership and bring about a new level of unity . . . . Victory is telling our children, Yes you can!"

Eddie N. Williams
President

FOCUS

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Behind the Scenes in San Francisco

by Thomas E. Cavanagh

(The author is a research associate at the Joint Center.)

It was quite a show in San Francisco: bright lights, balloons, flags, even indoor fireworks. The press came expecting a coronation, and by and large, that is what they reported. But there was more to this year's Democratic convention than was apparent from the four-night miniseries on network television.

If the proceedings seemed to lack suspense, that was by design. Because the key decisions were made out of view of the cameras, the focus of the prime-time audience remained on the speeches throughout the week. As it happened, the speeches were unusually good, highlighted by Mario Cuomo's eloquent keynote and Jesse Jackson's spellbinding address. But turning the convention into a well-orchestrated television show required considerable preparation, maneuvering, and quenching of fires in the political woods.

Setting the Scene

To project an image of party unity to the television audience, the delegates on the floor must be willing to play their assigned roles as the supporting cast in a script written by the prospective presidential nominee. Yet the convention always has the potential to turn into an actual decision-making body on live, coast-to-coast, prime-time television. Preventing such an uncontrollable turn of events requires all the ingenuity and muscle at a politician's disposal. Both were amply displayed in San Francisco.

In Ronald Reagan's eyes, Walter Mondale may be "so far left" that he has "left America." But at the Democratic convention, Mondale stood at the center of both the party structure and its ideological spectrum. This was the reality to which all of the actors in San Francisco had to accommodate themselves.

Jesse Jackson and Gary Hart led the insurgent forces who were on the outside looking in. Ideologically speaking, the progressive, minority-dominated Jackson movement may have had little in common with the neoliberal, Yuppie*-dominated Hart movement. But in terms of "ins" and "outs," both had more in common with one another than either had with the Mondale forces. Their unity of interest overcame their ideological differences at many key points in the political maneuvering.

The Floor Fight

For the first time in many years, there were no credentials disputes that were referred to the floor of the convention. The Rules Committee report also passed without a floor fight. Under a compromise accepted by all three presidential candidates, the committee voted to establish a "Fairness Commission" to revise the delegate selection rules for 1988 (see back page). Although the Rules Committee guidelines are not binding on the Fairness Commission, they embody the consensus that resulted from protracted negotiations and thus will probably be given great weight in the drafting of the 1988 rules. In agreeing to the guidelines, Mondale sought to produce party harmony in 1984 by accepting many of the changes sought by Jackson and Hart, at the risk of diminishing the influence of his own base of support among labor unions and party and elected officials in 1988.

With credentials and rules disputes out of the way, the only real controversy that was referred to the full convention was over the platform. Jackson supported four platform minority reports (i.e., proposed amendments), advocating the use of quotas in certain types of affirmative action programs, elimination of the runoff primary, "no first use" of nuclear weapons, and a real cut in defense spending. A Hart-backed minority report restricting the use of American military forces was also scheduled for a vote.

The platform fight was scheduled for Tuesday afternoon of convention week, before live network television coverage would begin. The convention managers scheduled Jackson's speech for early Tuesday evening, prime-time on the East Coast, *after* the platform voting was complete, to ensure that he would not have a chance to sway the delegates with a speech *before* the platform votes were taken. This schedule had the added effect of pressuring Jackson's delegates not to mount a lengthy floor fight during the platform debate; for if the platform voting ran overtime, it could knock Jackson's speech out of prime time. Such calculations carry much weight in the television era.

Mondale ensured his control over the floor through an intricate series of deals arranged in the days and hours before the platform fight. The key factor was Hart's insistence on passage of his minority report on military intervention. In return for Mondale accepting the Hart plank, Hart agreed to instruct his delegates to vote against the Jackson planks on defense spending and the runoff primary, which Mondale considered the most politically troublesome. Mondale's advisers felt that proposing a cut in defense spending would leave the nominee vulnerable to Reagan charges of being soft on defense, while condemning the runoff might have led to an open revolt by southern white party leaders.

All three contested minority reports lost by similar margins: 2216 to 1406 on "no first use," 2592 to 1128 on defense spending, and 2501 to 1253 on the runoff. The voting patterns by delegation were similarly consistent. The strongholds of opposition were in such Mondale-dominated delegations as Delaware, Hawaii, Michigan, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, and Texas.

Many of the Hart delegates did not appear to take their candidate's instructions very seriously, and voted a more progressive line than Hart advocated. In addition to the Jackson- dominated District of Columbia and Louisiana delegations, the highest vote proportions in favor of the minority reports came from such Hart-dominated delegations as California, Colorado, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Oregon, and Utah. This alignment repeated the pattern seen in the Platform and Rules Committee voting prior to the convention, when Hart and Jackson delegates frequently lined up together against the Mondale forces.

The shared sense of battling against Mondale also led to other forms of cooperation between Hart and Jackson delegates. Many of the Hart delegates waved Jackson banners during Jackson's speech on Tuesday, and many of Jackson's delegates returned the favor during Hart's speech the following day. Some Hart delegates even handed their credentials to Jackson alternates to enable them to be on the floor during Jackson's speech.

After the first three minority report votes, Hart's platform plank was approved overwhelmingly. Then a last- minute compromise on the affirmative action plank was brought before the convention and passed by a voice vote. The

*Young urban professionals

compromise deleted all reference to quotas (which the majority platform had explicitly opposed) and called for "verifiable measures" of compliance with affirmative action guidelines. Whether "verifiable measures" meant quotas appeared to be in the eye of the beholder; the Jackson forces said *yes*, the Mondale forces, *no*, so one can conclude that they agreed to disagree.

Minorities at the Convention

One could not help but be struck by the black presence at this year's convention. There were 697 black delegates, a full 17.7 percent of the total—records on both counts. Jackson's campaign was a major factor, of course. Not only did he bring in over 300 black delegates in support of his candidacy; he also caused the other candidates to build up their own black delegate slates as visible evidence of black support. Another major factor was the party's affirmative action rules, which have become more and more stringent over the years, and which this year aimed at achieving minority representation in proportion to "presence in the Democratic electorate"—for blacks, about 20 percent.

Hispanics and women of all races were also prominent players in the convention drama. Hispanics threatened to boycott the first ballot of presidential voting to underscore their top priority: a firm commitment from party leaders to kill the Simpson-Mazzoli immigration bill. The boycott move fizzled when the Hispanic delegates supporting Mondale made clear their intention to hold firm for their candidate. (However, the defeat of the Simpson-Mazzoli bill became a *fait accompli* when Congress reconvened after the convention. New head counts showed that Democratic support for the bill in the House of Representatives had become too soft to ensure passage of the final version.)

The women's movement was overjoyed at Walter Mondale's selection of a woman as his running mate. But here, as in many other instances at the convention, blacks also had conflicting emotions. There was pleasure that a candidate for national office had been selected from outside the traditional pool of white males, and pride in Jesse Jackson's significant role in opening up the process. But the vice-presidential choice awakened old resentments that white women have often walked through doors opened painfully by blacks. There was also displeasure over the fact that Mondale had not interviewed a black woman for the vice presidency.

Relations between blacks and white females were also somewhat strained by the women's role in the platform fight. The National Organization for Women (NOW) could have served as a lever to pry some women's votes away from Mondale's control on the minority planks. NOW had endorsed all five minority reports before the convention. With Geraldine Ferraro on the ticket, however, NOW was much less inclined to pressure Mondale, whom it had endorsed earlier, on the floor. The day before the platform fight, NOW abandoned its efforts to lobby delegates on the floor and decided to work behind the scenes for a compromise on the affirmative action plank.

The black Mondale delegates, over 200 strong, and the 70 black delegates committed to Gary Hart were constantly cross-pressured by their own candidates and the Jackson forces. "Cast a vote that you can be proud to tell your grandchildren about," they were exhorted by Jackson and his supporters. Nevertheless, Mondale's black delegates generally followed their candidate's instructions. This led to some serious tensions among black delegates, which reached a crescendo when Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young unexpectedly took the podium to argue against abolishing the runoff primary. The mood turned ugly as many of Jackson's delegates tried to drown out Young's remarks with booing.

The following morning, Coretta Scott King was heckled when she tried to defend Young before the Black Caucus. This was too much even for many of Jackson's backers. With tears in his eyes, Jackson himself tried to calm the crowd and urged that all black leaders be accorded respect even in the heat of controversy.

Many black Mondale delegates, in fact, shared a sense of frustration with the Jackson delegates: everyone but blacks seemed to be coming away from the convention with a clear victory. Women got Ferraro; Mondale's attempt to install Bert Lance as party chair was clearly a gesture to the white South; Hart won his platform plank on military intervention.

The frustration was partly a result of timing: blacks did receive some important commitments, but before the convention opened. The rules for 1988 should improve the chances of any future black presidential candidates and others supported by minority groups. The platform takes strong stands on civil rights, South Africa, and restoring cuts in social spending. Moreover, blacks had achieved a record level of involvement in all aspects of the party's operation. The progress is most striking when the 17.7 percent black delegate representation is contrasted with the 2.8 percent of just 20 years ago. Nevertheless, the absence of any clear-cut victories during the week of the convention itself left many black Democrats feeling that their party was once again taking them for granted.

"Our Time Has Come"

These and other tensions formed the backdrop to Jesse Jackson's 55-minute speech to the convention Tuesday night. Jackson had skillfully built suspense in the days and weeks before the convention over what his stance would be toward Mondale and the party as a whole. Thus, with the defeat of Jackson's three platform planks, the convention crowd was unsure what to expect from him.

His voice husky with emotion, Jackson began on a conciliatory note, offering his support to the Mondale-Ferraro ticket. He then launched into a remarkable call for healing the divisions between blacks and Jews that had been aggravated by the controversies surrounding his campaign:

"If in my low moments, in word, deed, or attitude, through some error of temper, taste, or tone, I have caused anyone discomfort, created pain, or revived someone's fears, that was not my truest self. . . ."

The sight of a presidential candidate offering such an unprecedented public act of contrition left many in the convention hall overcome with emotion. Jackson's intensity reached new heights toward the end of his address, as he declared:

"Our time has come. Our faith, hope, and dreams will prevail.

"Our time has come. Weeping has endured for the night. And now, joy cometh in the morning.

"Our time has come. No graves can hold our body down.

"Our time has come. No lie can live forever.

"Our time has come."

Maneuvering continued apace after the convention, as Jackson sought to find a role for some of his key suppor-

(Continued on page 8)

Joint Center for Political Studies

JCPS Conference Report

Number 5, August 1984

Making It as a Black Officer

(On May 3, 1984, the Joint Center for Political Studies held a roundtable on "Keys to Success in the Officer Corps." Funding was provided by the Ford Foundation. Colonel Wade S. Gatling, formerly a senior fellow at the Joint Center and now assigned to the Pentagon, organized the conference and wrote this report.)

"I was commissioned in 1945 as a 19-year-old," said **Lieutenant General Julius Becton, Jr.**, "and in those days the Army was looking for a lieutenant who could lead a platoon of infantry against an armed enemy. They couldn't have cared less whether you were a math major or had a certain SAT score. Today, we expect that young lieutenant to be literate, comfortable with complex systems, at ease in formal settings, and able to deal with a whole array of social problems."

Addressing a roundtable convened by the Joint Center for Political Studies, General Becton, who retired recently as Deputy Commanding General of the Army's Training and Doctrine Command, was reflecting on his 38 years as an officer and the change during those years in what the military expects of its officers. The forum, "Keys to Success in the Officer Corps," explored the kinds of information and insights that young black officers—and college students preparing to enter the officer corps— need to succeed in the military.

The participants included retired and active senior officers (some of whom are currently involved in military training programs and personnel systems), Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadets from historically black colleges (HBC), scholars, and other policy analysts.

Some specific concerns prompted the convening of this roundtable, which was chaired by **Louis E. Martin,** assistant vice president of Howard University and a member of the Joint Center's Board of Governors. First, despite encouraging growth in the number of black officers during the past decade (from less than 3 percent of the total to nearly 6 percent), the attrition rate for blacks in the lowest officer grade has exceeded that of their white counterparts (see January 1984 *Focus*). What's more, the promotion rate of black officers, young black officers especially, has at times been significantly lower than that of white officers.

Another concern is that a large number of black officers are "first generation" college graduates and the first in their families to enter white-collar professions. Those who join complex bureaucracies such as the military without being fully aware of what is expected of them or of the standards of professional behavior may fail without ever fully understanding why.

General Becton's remarks about the requirements of commissioned service both embraced the overall theme of the roundtable and foreshadowed the issues to be examined at the meeting the education of officer candidates, the difference between a job and a profession, social awareness and responsibility, competence, standards, and behavior. The first of these, the academic preparation of the prospective officer, sparked the initial debate.

Preparation: Academic and Otherwise

"Maybe the military's different, but if I got a resume from somebody who graduated from college with a C average, I would simply ditch it," said **Edwin Dorn,** deputy director of research at the Joint Center. Dorn was responding to **Colonel Robert Dinkins,** professor of military science at Howard University, who said cadets could qualify for attendance at summer camp, a six week training session on an actual military base, and advancement to their final year of ROTC training with only a C average. Dinkins explained that the services are interested in the whole person, not just the academic person.

Holly Carter, director of the Meserve Center for Asian Studies at Northeastern University and a member of the Advisory Committee to the Joint Center's clearinghouse on blacks in the military, joined Dorn in expressing reservations. "That is so different from the way I go about preparing black students at Northeastern. I tell them that it's fine to be a whole person, but when you get out in the job market, it's competence, excellence, and quality of performance that get you in the door." With any other approach, Carter said, you're doing your students a disservice. But Dinkins insisted that while academic achievement is essential, other important factors such as commitment, attitude, self-discipline, and, especially, potential for leadership are not necessarily revealed by college grades. Favorable assessments in these areas *and* fulfillment of university academic requirements are necessary to begin a military career, he said.

Colonel John Bordeaux, professor of aerospace studies at Howard University, agreed: "I have cadets with a C average who are solid performers, and I have cadets with a 3.5 average (B+) who are less



Left to right: General Elmer Brooks, Colonel Robert Dinkins, Colonel Rosetta Armour-Lightner, Captain James Gilchrist, Devonda Byers, Colonel Wade Gatling, Dr. Holly Carter, General J. T. Boddie, Jr.



Left to right: Milton Morris, General Julius Becton, Jr., Louis Martin

than solid performers." Grade point average may reflect academic achievement, he noted, but not necessarily a willingness to "put the shoulder to the rock and push."

General Becton suggested that other factors, such as the standards of the institution and demands of the curriculum, must be considered when evaluating academic performance. And retired Air Force **Brigadier General J.T. Boddie, Jr.** reminded the group that "for students who must work their way through school—as many blacks must—that C average may represent greater academic potential than is apparent."

Colonel Frederic Leigh from the Army Chief of Staff's Office put the issue of the "C cadet" into perspective: he pointed out that only a small percentage of those who are commissioned are C students. He also said that the professional military education requirements serve to weed out unqualified participants.

This discussion closed on a cautionary note. **Lieutenant General Arthur Gregg,** who retired as the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, said that while the notion of the whole person is certainly appropriate in commissioning programs, insistence on the pursuit of academic excellence must not be abandoned. Gregg warned that a young officer who has a cavalier approach to academics in college cannot afford to adopt such an approach to commissioned service.

Milton Morris, JCPS director of research, shared General Gregg's concern. He noted that, in view of the military's continuing demand for highly skilled and well-educated officers, universities and ROTC programs must remain committed to producing academically strong graduates and officers. Given the educational experiences some blacks bring to college, Morris said, the challenge facing these institutions will continue to increase.



William Scott, Edwin Dorn

Cadets and Black Colleges

"Does coming from a black ROTC program represent a handicap that one has to overcome?" asked Dr. Morris. **Commander Curtis Reaves,** a special assistant for minority affairs in the Navy, noted that "when you consider the low national ranking of many HBC's by publications such as Barron's, graduates of black schools may have a lot to overcome."

Colonel Dinkins held that being commissioned at an HBC is not a hindrance, because those evaluating a young officer are not likely to be aware of the comparatively poor performance of HBC students at summer camp. Others disagreed, saying that such information does circulate among higher level officers. Said General Becton: "Don't deceive yourself into thinking they don't know who is from Prairie View and who is from Texas A&M."

General Gregg then worried aloud that the tendency to focus exclusively on the weaknesses of the HBC graduate may contribute to the perception of black academic inferiority. Gregg also asserted that despite its location, racial composition, or other characteristics, a school can develop a reputation for producing excellent officers if there is an institutional and a service commitment to do so.

General Becton said three things must occur to build such a reputation: (1) universities must accept full responsibility for the quality of their graduates (i.e., if graduates are deficient in basic skills, the institutions must look inward for some of the causes); (2) the services must assign only top quality faculty and staff to ROTC detachments; and (3) these detachments must emphasize the preparation of quality *officers,* not just good cadets.

To cadets fearful that an HBC's poor reputation may have a negative impact on their careers, **Togo D. West, Jr.,** former general counsel to the secretary of defense, offered some advice: regardless of the source of commission, there are many factors that influence personal and professional assessments of an officer, including the performance of predecessors and biases about region, age, and, of course, race. "Whether these biases help or hinder, they are there, and it is still your obligation to make your own record.

The First Assignment

"For me the first assignment was a shock," revealed General Boddie. He had been flying since he was 16 and already had his private license, so he was ready for the flying portion of pilot training. But the academics, the initial exposure to engineering courses, and the level and intensity of instruction proved his biggest obstacle, he said.

Boddie said that many young officers today experience a similar shock when they first encounter the academics and competition of specialty training. Those unprepared for demanding coursework and full classroom days, plus evening and weekend study, may have considerable difficulty. But the outcome needn't be failure, said Boddie: "You need hard work and self-discipline; I cloistered myself for one year, gave myself Saturday night to do what young lieutenants do, and graduated number one in my class."

Brigadier General Elmer Brooks, an Air Force officer assigned to the Pentagon, said, "One of the first hurdles a new officer must jump is that psychological hurdle of becoming a professional officer." Unlike other occupations, Brooks explained, the military is not a 9 to 5 job. "It's full time, on duty and off."

Others agreed that this commitment must begin immediately. When you first meet your commander, they advised, be ready. Find out what


Cadet Barbara Williams


Cadet Frederick White


Midshipman Deborah Comfort


Cadet Gary Snapp

he or she expects, not only from the commander directly, but from peers and others with whom the commander regularly interacts. Listen to them and spend time with them, professionally and socially. "And realize," General Brooks added, "that some commanders use that first meeting as a test—to see what your mettle is, to see if they can back you down, make you turn in a different direction." How do you handle such an approach? By being prepared, making sure you're right, and holding your ground, he said. "You'll find they respect you in the end for sticking to your guns."

And when your commander or other superior invites you and your spouse for drinks, it is important that *both of you be there,* advised the group unanimously. The same holds true, they said, for unit social functions and official gatherings at the clubs. "Furthermore, do not persist in isolating yourselves," Boddie added. Such behavior suggests an unwillingness, or inability, to deal with fellow professionals outside the duty setting, and can only detract from one's professional image and growth.

Broadening the discussion, senior officers recommended the correct approach to an assignment. "If you have problems communicating, especially orally, work hard to overcome them," one participant stressed. "Be responsible, take the initiative, be committed to the mission," said Bordeaux. Put your responsibility to your personnel above your personal considerations, and work to make your unit the best, Gregg urged. "Do *your* job, not your commander's." If you are a platoon leader, he said, it's your job to run the platoon; leave the running of the company to the commander.

Seek out tough jobs, the ones that provide the greatest visibility. Set career goals, short and long term. Be realistic and flexible when expressing assignment preferences. If you have a choice between staff officer and commander, choose commander. But always strive to excel in whatever job you get.

Attend as many schools as you can including graduate school—and complete graduate school early (before being selected for major or lieutenant commander; attending graduate school later can interfere with the fulfillment of other requirements). Complete professional military education requirements first, because these directly affect an officer's qualification for promotion.

The most important document in your file, though, is the effectiveness report; quality of performance is the principal gauge against which each officer is measured. However, the group noted, other, subtler, standards are also used in evaluating an officer. These standards, along with more personal matters, were the next subjects considered by the roundtable participants.

Men, Women, and the Military

Everyone agreed that being married to an enlisted person complicated an officer's career, but they did not all agree that such a marriage was a significant career hindrance. Some felt that despite the acknowledged complexities—difficulties with housing, assignments, and career development—the situation is manageable and, therefore, need not frustrate career progress. On the other hand, many felt that officer-enlistee marriages should be avoided. Despite efforts to manage the relationship, they cautioned, obstacles would inevitably arise—both personal and professional—which would be almost impossible to surmount. Cadets felt that this injunction would be especially disturbing to cadets already married to enlisted persons "To me, it's as if you're asking someone to give up a dream," said one. There was general agreement, however, that those involved in or entering such an arrangement should be fully aware of its challenges and its potential for limiting a career.

There was no disagreement on the issue of fraternization, the association of officers with enlisted personnel "under circumstances which prejudice good order and discipline." **Colonel Rosetta Armour-Lightner,** professor of aerospace studies at Grambling State University, observed that while there are no regulations proscribing officer-enlisted marriages, there are directives governing fraternization. She and others expressed particular concern about junior officers who, because of an egalitarian perspective, might be inclined to frequent the noncommissioned officers' club or date enlistees. Such behavior, they noted, compromises the hierarchical relationship that must exist between officers and enlistees, and, therefore, is incompatible with the standards of conduct an officer is bound to uphold.

What do you do if you're a female officer, and one of the men makes a pass at you?" asked a cadet during a break in the proceedings. "First of all, don't ignore it," answered a senior officer. What you do specifically, the cadet was told, depends on the situation—who says it, what he says, and where. For example, if an enlisted man in your unit makes a comment that is clearly inappropriate, snap him to attention and write him up. If an enlisted man from another unit makes a pass, stop him, find out his name and unit, and contact his commander.

Dealing with people of equal or higher rank can be a bit more delicate. A lieutenant cannot "dress down" a captain, "but you must make it known that his remarks are not proper." Make it clear that you're not interested, and if the man persists, consider whether he is guilty of sexual harassment, which can be handled through official complaint channels.

Later, in general session, the discussion turned to strategies for contending with discrimination of any kind: Whenever you suspect discrimination, first try to step outside of yourself and ask, "If I were not involved, how would I see this?" Then, consult with peers and others. Find out how the system works, formally and informally. Finally, if you still suspect a violation, "take the problem to your immediate superior," said **Captain James L. Gilchrist,** professor of naval science at Florida A&M University, who counseled cadets to resolve the problem at the lowest level within the system. If your immediate supervisor is the one you suspect is discriminating, he explained, "go through him to the next person."

Integrity

"Suppose you're returning from an overseas trip with your commander and he asks you to do something that you know contradicts customs laws. What do you do?" This was one of many scenarios the roundtable participants considered as they turned to the issues of honesty, ethics, and integrity. The situations examined ranged from blatant requests to circumvent the law to suspicions of unethical behavior by superiors. Another participant raised the question of subtle manipulation of information in support of selected points of view. "This is perhaps the most difficult kind of ethical question officers have to wrestle with—it is not quite so simple as some of the others."



Togo West



Left to right: Dr. Holly Carter, General J. T. Boddie, Jr., General Arthur Gregg, Cadet Gary Snapp

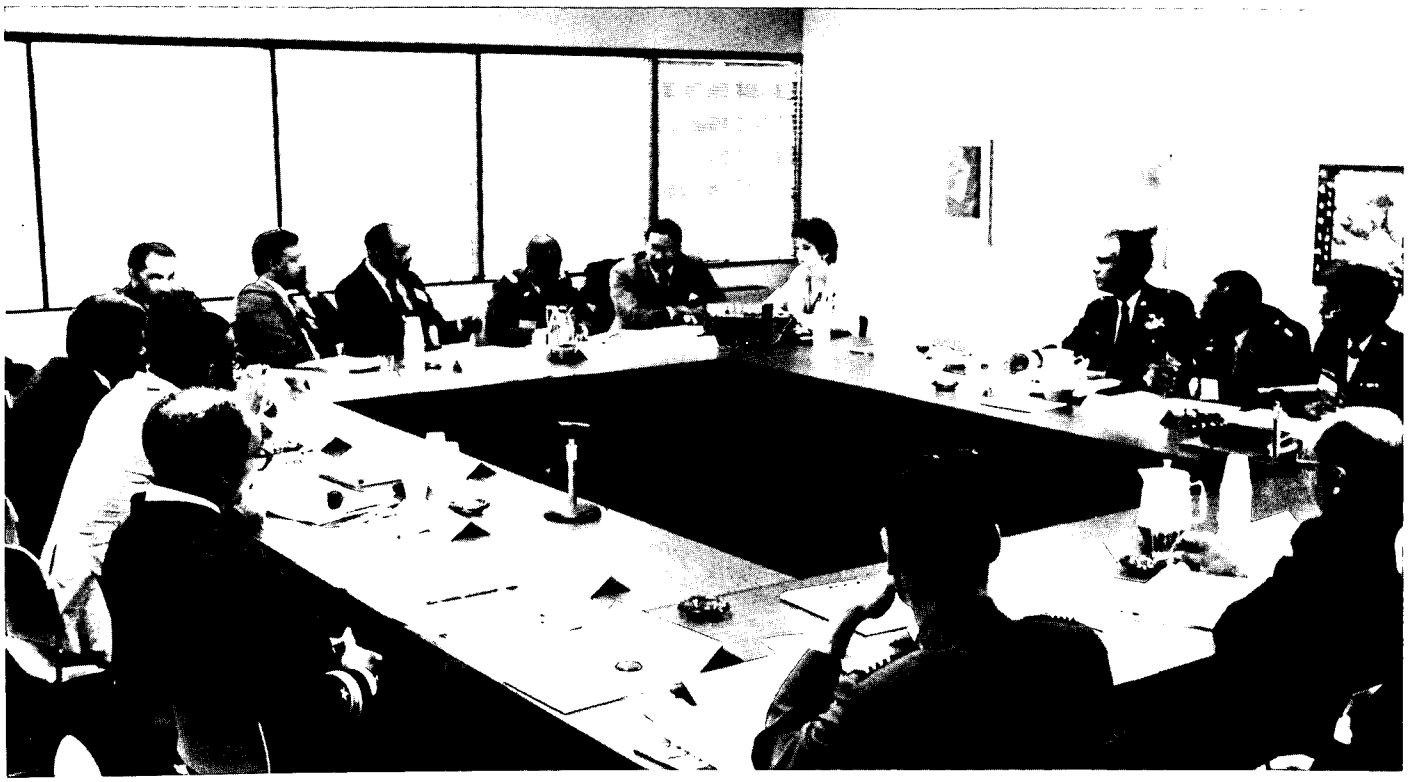
But in general, the group expressed a belief that "There are no degrees of integrity. Once you've compromised it, you can't get it back." In a questionable situation, cadets were advised, obtain as much information and advice as circumstances will permit. Occasionally a junior officer may misread or misunderstand a situation, because of inexperience or insufficient information.

After you have made your decision, however, senior officers said, "Don't relent!" Respectfully provide your reasons, they advised, and refuse to comply. Admittedly, such responses require courage and strength, "but remember," said General Boddie, "it won't get any easier as you go up the ladder and assume greater responsibility."

"Don't despair. You're not out there alone," Mr. West assured the cadets. He and others urged the prospective lieutenants to seek the counsel of peers and other officers, including their commander. Senior black officers, they noted, constitute a special source of knowledge and experience. And they urged young female officers in particular, who at times may feel social as well as professional isolation, not to try to endure alone.

In addition to locally available sources of advice and reassurance, the conferees identified three national private organizations that attend to the professional welfare of black officers: for Army officers, the ROCKS; Air Force, the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.; and Navy, the National Naval Officers Association.

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Ending Barriers to Voter Registration

by Lani Guinier

(Ms. Guinier is assistant counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.)

An important key to increasing voter turnout by minorities is voter registration. Only 50.5 percent of the black voting-age population cast a ballot in the 1980 presidential election, yet among blacks *registered* to vote, 84.2 percent voted. Only 43.0 percent of voting-age blacks voted in the congressional races of 1982, but among those registered, 72.7 percent voted. But current attempts to sign up the unregistered are complicated by the many and varied state-erected barriers to simple and convenient voter registration.

Most voter registration requirements in the United States were enacted in the late 1800s to prevent blacks in the South and new immigrants in the North from voting. Although such requirements have been rationalized by the need to prevent voter fraud, most election fraud occurs in voting, not registration, and is typically committed by election officials, not private citizens. Whatever their theoretical justification, in practice these requirements serve primarily to reduce voter participation among all citizens and especially among minority and poor people.

Other western nations facilitate registration. Some of them even use house-to-house canvassing similar to our census taking. But here in the United States, restrictions have long operated to discourage broad participation in the electoral process. Statistics from states with large black populations make clear the continuing negative impact of registration restrictions: the average black-white registration discrepancy in the South is about 10 percentage points, and the number of unregistered blacks in the North ranges from several hundred thousand in Pennsylvania, Michigan, and New Jersey to just under one million in New York.

Black registration has increased significantly in 1984. Many black voters have become convinced for the first time that their votes might make a difference. Further gains depend, in part, on the success of efforts to remove the burden of registering from the individual and place it on state and federal governments, where it belongs. To this end, a coalition of civil rights organizations has begun a litigation campaign to make voter registration accessible to all citizens.

The Georgia Suit

The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., in cooperation with the Voter Education Project; the Georgia Chapter of Operation Push; the Southern Regional ACLU; and the Georgia State Conference of the NAACP, filed suit on June 13, 1984, against the governor, secretary of state, and State Election Board of Georgia. Filed in the federal district court for the Northern District of Georgia, our complaint charges that Georgia's restrictive voter registration procedures violate the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the First, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth amendments to the Constitution. The plaintiffs are black citizens who are unregistered voters and black citizens who are registered but have been denied their applications to serve as deputy registrars.

The practices we are fighting include the state's failure to ensure that counties appoint black deputy registrars; the counties' refusal to allow registration in sites central to the black community, such as churches; the state's insistence upon fixed registration sites and inflexible, time-consuming application procedures for establishing these sites; prohibition of door-to-door registration; and maintenance of only one registration site in rural counties—a site that is closed on evenings and weekends.

In some counties, a citizen must take time off from work and drive 50 miles to the courthouse to register. And in some places, registrars insist that citizens register twice—once for city elections and once for county and federal elections.

Georgia's refusal to appoint more deputy registrars obstructs the applicants' First Amendment right to associate freely and establishes a system of prior licensing of First Amendment activity. The restrictive registration practices vary from county to county, resulting in unequal treatment of citizens in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment, which forbids the abridgment of a person's citizenship rights and mandates that everyone be given equal protection of the laws. Moreover, the state's burdensome and arbitrary scheme of voter registration has a disproportionately ill effect on black citizens and thus violates the Fifteenth Amendment, which outlaws the denial or abridgment of a person's right to vote on account of race or color.

In almost half of Georgia's counties, black registration rates are significantly lower than white registration rates. In several counties, white registration is more than 20 percentage points higher than black registration. We believe that this disparity is part of the legacy of Georgia's historical discrimination against blacks. Our complaint charges that the Voting Rights Act and the First and Fourteenth amendments require the state to assume responsibility for closing the gap between black and white voter registration. Furthermore, we contend that the state's voter registration law is not narrowly tailored to promote a state interest such as preventing fraud, which is the legal argument most often used to justify such restrictive schemes.

We ultimately intend to argue that if a state requires its citizens to pre-register in order to vote, the state is under a statutory and constitutional obligation to take affirmative measures to ensure that registration is convenient and easily accessible for all of its citizens. Such affirmative measures could include automatic registration at age 18, comprehensive door-to-door registration drives, or registration by state or local employees at all state offices. Other possibilities are mass mailings of stamped voter registration cards—they could be enclosed in utility bills, for example—and registration at mass public events such as church gatherings and athletic competitions.

For now, however, we seek preliminary relief that is much less far reaching than the measures described above. Because of the approaching election and the grave need for *immediate* steps to make registration more accessible, we ask only that the plaintiffs and other individuals and groups be permitted to undertake voluntary efforts to fill the gap left by the defendants.

Specifically, we ask that the court order defendants to permit any registered voter to be appointed as a deputy registrar upon request. We also request the court to enjoin enforcement of state laws that limit registration to fixed locations. Under this order, volunteer deputy registrars would be able to pick up registration cards from their local registrars, assist people in completing the cards at any time or place, administer the oath to the registrant, and return the completed cards to the registrars for processing. Where it seems virtually impossible for the court to issue a ruling in time to permit these efforts before the closing date for registration, we ask that the court extend the registration period. *(Continued on page 7)*

Local Communications Regulation

by Edward Hayes, Jr.

(Mr. Hayes is an attorney with the Washington, D.C., firm of Baker and Hostetler.)

Although black elected officials have become adept at using the telecommunications media to disseminate information and mold opinion, many have not yet taken advantage of the benefits available to them through local regulation of some of these media. Most media regulation is, of course, the province of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). However, the FCC has chosen not to cover certain areas, reserving them for municipalities. These areas—primarily cable television and common carrier systems—should be studied by black elected officials with an eye to drafting regulations that provide services or income for their communities.

Cable Television Systems

Cable television represents one of the most promising opportunities for such regulation by municipalities. The FCC has given local governments sole responsibility for regulating such aspects of cable systems as selection of franchise holders and supervision of construction.

There is some question, though, about the restrictions local jurisdictions can place upon the signals carried by a cable system. This issue was specifically addressed by the U.S. Supreme Court on June 18, 1984, when, in *Capital Cities Cable, Inc., et al* v. *Oklahoma Alcoholic Beverage Control Board,* the court declared unanimously that the FCC has sole pre-emption authority over cable signals and that the state of Oklahoma could not require operators to delete liquor advertising from their signals.

Despite this decision, the precise balance of regulation between municipalities and the FCC remains in question. Legislation pending in the House of Representatives would provide municipalities with more control over the operation of cable systems within their jurisdictions. H.R. 4103, if passed, would establish "guidelines for the exercise of Federal, State, and local authority with respect to the regulation of cable telecommunications."

In the midst of this debate over the extent of their regulatory authority, local jurisdictions have become quite interested in the prospect of owning—rather than just regulating—cable systems. At present, there are 55 publicly owned or operated cable systems in the country, most of which fit into one of four structures, each with its own advantages.

The most common form of public cable management is through the creation of a *new municipal agency.* Usually patterned after existing municipal departments, the newly created agency is empowered by the city to design and implement a cable system that would best serve community interests. The largest such undertaking, in terms of the area covered, is the Public Cable Television Authority (PCTA) of North Orange County, California.

In some communities, the municipal cable system is developed and operated by an *existing city agency.* Under this arrangement, limited city resources are pooled to keep financing requirements to a minimum. The agency most often selected to supervise the cable operation is the municipal power utility. It is usually well-suited to the demands of cable television ownership because it already provides a public service for local consumption, addresses community concerns daily, and has a procedure in place for disseminating bills and payments at regular intervals.

Some cities have established *nonprofit public corporations* to manage their cable systems. Governed by an independent board of directors, such a corporation oversees the content of programming and regulates access by the community.

A fourth model for structuring public ownership of a cable system is a *joint venture between a public entity and a private operator.* One example of this plan is the system in Grosse Pointe, Michigan, 75 percent of which is owned by a public, nonprofit educational institution and 25 percent by Group W, a multiple system operator.

Black elected officials interested in cable ownership should consider each of these alternatives in light of their own city's needs and resources. Some may prefer or be required to accept less than full ownership while others, better off financially and certain about how they want their constituents to be served, may seek full and final authority over how the local cable system is run.

Common Carrier Systems

Another area of telecommunications that merits attention from municipalities is common carrier operation. A common carrier is a telecommunications company that holds itself out to the public for hire to provide communications transmission services. Local telephone companies and the cellular mobile radio telephone systems—which allow phone service in cars and other vehicles—for example, are common carriers.

Local jurisdictions normally negotiate the rates a telephone company may charge. Black elected officials should consider using this regulatory authority to encourage common carriers to provide additional services to the communities they serve. For instance, the local jurisdiction might require periodic affirmative action employment reports and percentage set-asides for minority suppliers of advertising, legal, accounting, and other services required by the common carrier. Given the divestiture of AT&T and the many adjustments that are still being made, now is an ideal time to institute such requirements.

The new cellular mobile telephone service offers similar opportunities. This system will improve the quality of automobile telephone service and make it possible for everyone who wants a car phone to have one. The regulation of cellular—like regular telephone service—will be divided so that the local jurisdiction will be responsible for local concerns such as intrastate rates. Because cellular is a new system and has yet to be reviewed by most jurisdictions, black elected officials have an unusual opportunity to include specific requirements in the initial regulations.

It should also be noted that with the AT&T divestiture and the federal deregulation of telephone operation, the existing rate setting process could be abandoned for a straightforward bidding approach. The state of Virginia, for example, recently announced its intention to solicit bids for telephone service rather than negotiate rates. Even under this arrangement, though, a municipality may require additional services of a common carrier system.

If, as is often stated, the telecommunications media are too powerful and important to ignore, then black elected officials at the local level must seek ways to make them more responsive to community needs. Active, self-interested participation in the regulatory process is one of the best ways to do this.

Telescope

Adolescent Pregnancy Child Watch

Faced with the high rate of pregnancy among teenagers, the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) has launched an Adolescent Pregnancy Child Watch (APCW). The problem: in 1980, almost 600,000 babies were born to adolescents, 10,000 to mothers 14 years of age or younger.

In collaboration with the Association of Junior Leagues, the National Council of Negro Women, the March of Dimes, and the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, APCW will educate communities about adolescent pregnancy and help them organize prevention programs. A manual will provide guidance to local volunteers in gathering information and developing agendas to decrease teenage pregnancies in their areas. It should be available for $9.50 by the end of the summer. CDF and other APCW organizations will begin training local project coordinators in September and will provide ongoing technical assistance.

Organizations that would like to become involved or would like more information about APCW should call (800) 424-9602 or (202) 628-8787, or write Children's Defense Fund, 122 C St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

JCPS Study Analyzes Jackson's Primary Campaign

When Jesse Jackson decided to launch his campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination nine months ago, public reaction was mixed. Many—including several black leaders—came out against such a move, calling it premature and questioning whether Jackson was the right man for the task. This led to the popular refrain by those who supported a Jackson campaign of "If not now, when? If not Jesse, who?" Many persons expressed the view that although Jackson had little chance of winning the nomination, other objectives could be accomplished, namely, increasing black political participation, voicing policy concerns of blacks and other disadvantaged groups, and bridging the gap between various ethnic groups. Later in the campaign, Jackson called for changes in party rules and state laws to increase the impact of minority political participation.

In *Jesse Jackson's Campaign: The Primaries and Caucuses,* Joint Center researchers Thomas Cavanagh and Lorn Foster say Jackson achieved success on three of these objectives—black voting was way up in the primaries; he had a significant impact on the Democratic policy agenda, most notably, focusing national attention on South Africa's apartheid policies; and he stimulated a debate on the effects of second primaries and other electoral and party mechanisms on blacks and progressive candidates.

However, Jackson was unable to forge a multi-ethnic "Rainbow Coalition." Cavanagh and Foster cite several factors that contributed to this failure to expand his base beyond the black community: the hymie incident and the Farrakhan comments, the emergence of Hart as a viable candidate, and Hispanic perception of Jackson's campaign as heavily black oriented. "The net effect," write Cavanagh and Foster, "was to put a very low ceiling on Jackson's share of the white vote."

In addition to examining Jackson's major objectives in running for president and how well he achieved them, *Jesse Jackson's Campaign* discusses the general impact this largely "symbolic" campaign is likely to have on the American political process in the future. And it takes a look at Jackson's media coverage and campaign organization and finance. It is the second JCPS Election '84 Report. Copies are available for $4.95 each.

Election '84 Reports 3 and 4, guides to the Democratic and Republican national conventions, respectively, are now also available from the Joint Center. Listing all black delegates and alternates to each convention, historical background, and statistical data, the guides are a valuable resource for anyone interested in black participation in partisan politics. These guides are also $4.95 each.

For any of these publications, write Publications Clerk, Joint Center for Political Studies, 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004.

Voting Rights for Prisoners

Approximately 300,000 men and women in U.S. jails are eligible to vote, yet most people—including prisoners themselves—are unaware they have this right. According to Representative John Conyers (D-MI), "ordinarily, it is only convicted felons that lose their voting rights under state law." Convicted misdemeanants, pretrial detainees who cannot make bail, and those who are appealing a felony conviction usually remain eligible to vote.

In June, Conyers and Representatives Ronald V. Dellums (D-CA) and Parren J. Mitchell (D-MD) introduced House Concurrent Resolution 335 to ensure that state constitutions and local charters reflect the right of these prisoners to register and vote; to ensure adequate accessibility of registration and voting booths to prisoners; and to ensure that probation and parole officers consider voting participation when evaluating offenders under their supervision.

Ending Barriers *(Continued from page 5)*

A similar suit filed in Mississippi on March 1, 1984, challenged the state's dual registration requirements as well as state laws prohibiting mobile registration throughout the counties. Mississippi has since ended some of its dual registration requirements, but the prohibitions against mobile registration and appointment of deputy registrars remain in effect.

By the end of the summer, we expect to file statewide lawsuits in Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Virginia. Registration challenges have already been filed in Michigan and New Hampshire. And attorneys in Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania recently won lawsuits challenging restrictions on voter registration drives conducted in public agency waiting rooms. On the legislative front, Representative John Conyers (D-MI) has introduced a bill to permit mail registration for federal elections, and Representatives Gus Hawkins (D-CA) and Al Swift (D-WA) are cosponsoring a bill that creates financial incentives for states to simplify registration procedures. Finally, governors in New York, Ohio, and Texas have issued executive orders authorizing registration efforts by state employees who have contact with the public.

The next step is to put the registration issue atop the national agenda. We must pressure county registrars, secretaries of state, and members of Congress to do something about the enormous number of unregistered voters. Presidential candidates and state and national parties must also be called upon to help make registration simple and accessible for all eligible citizens.

Behind the Scenes . . .

(Continued from page 4)

ters in the Mondale campaign. One prominent member of the Jackson camp, Congressman Walter Fauntroy of the District of Columbia, is being slated for a major role in the Democrats' voter registration drive. Other Jackson aides will probably be added to the Mondale-Ferraro team in the weeks to come.

Congressman Charles Rangel of Harlem, a Mondale supporter, has been named a co-chair of the Mondale campaign. Other senior black aides to Mondale include deputy campaign chairman George Dalley, political liaison Doris Crenshaw, and attorney James Dyke. Another black lawyer, Charles Atkins, was recently named an aide to the Ferraro campaign staff.

Although hostility to Reagan is widespread in the black community, enthusiasm for the Mondale-Ferraro ticket appears less than overwhelming at present. It remains to be seen whether the unification efforts underway will prove sufficient to generate the large black turnout.

Reforming the Democratic Party Rules for 1988

The report of the Rules Committee calls for the establishment of a "fairness commission" to study the rules governing the 1988 delegate selection process. The commission proposal was a response to criticism by both Jackson and Hart that the 1984 rules unfairly advantaged a mainstream front-runner like Mondale at the expense of "outsider" candidates.

The directive consists of two parts. The first set of recommendations was drafted by the Hart campaign, and includes the following provisions:

1. Reducing the threshold (or minimum percentage of the vote required for delegate representation) from 20 to 15 percent both within congressional districts and at the at-large level;
2. Reducing the number of unpledged party and elected official delegates by more than half, and prohibiting their selection until April of the primary season;
3. Mandating that all states in the first half of the primary schedule allocate their delegates on the basis of the proportion of the vote the candidates receive, and prohibiting both winner-take-all by congressional district and "bonus delegate" plans (which award an extra delegate to the winner of each congressional district);
4. Requiring that filing deadlines for delegate slates be no more than 30 days in advance of a primary or caucus; and
5. Prohibiting caucus rules that discourage participation, such as the two- stage primary and caucus system employed in Texas, or the non-secret ballot in Michigan.

The second set of recommendations was drafted by the Jackson campaign, and mandates that the reform commission study the following proposed changes:

1. Abolishing the caucus system altogether, in effect requiring the use of primaries in all states and territories;
2. Eliminating the category of unpledged party and elected official delegates;
3. Establishing a system of complete proportionality in translating vote totals into delegate totals, in effect abolishing bonus delegate and winner- take-all plans; and
4. Requiring "assured percentages" of delegates for women, minorities, and other disadvantaged groups.

Black political activists should pay close attention to the work of the reform commission over the next two years.

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