

Social Security Reform and the Black Aged

by Matthew Holden, Jr.

School Desegregation in States and Large Cities

from a report by Gary Orfield

Voting Rights Act Follow-up: Two Court Cases

by Armand Derfner

Plus: Conference Report Number 3 Immigration and Black America

Perspective

President Reagan's State of the Union message this year opens a window of opportunity through which Congress can usher in major adjustments to the nation's economic program.

The president acknowledged that fundamental problems trouble America's economy and said, for the first time, that the government must take the lead in restoring it. His language suggested increased flexibility and sensitivity toward those who are feeling the worst side effects of his economic medicine—women, blacks, farmers, and workers in general.

But while the State of the Union message contained conciliatory language, the president's proposed FY 1984 budget is testimony to his desire to "stay the course." Thus, it is clear that the president will not move far from his rigid ideological stance unless Congress pushes very hard for both short- and long-term programs to meet the real challenge of the changing economic order.

First, as I have said before, Congress must act immediately to generate jobs, protect farmers and small businesses from recession-induced foreclosures, and enhance the tattered safety net of economic, social, and health programs that are crucial to the nation's most distressed citizens. Piecemeal measures, such as the president's suggestion that the Agriculture Department "work individually with farmers with debt problems," are insufficient even for the short term. For the long term, while we are waiting for private sector initiatives to develop in such areas as child and health care, employment, or education, seeds of destruction are taking root that will eventually cost the country many times the amount of money it might save now.

Second, Congress must take the proverbial cold, hard look at the nation's defense needs. As long as the Defense Department gobbles up funds needed to finance domestic economic recovery, balancing the federal budget will simply be impossible. This is no issue of "psychology" or "political tradeoffs." It is a plain fact that despite the administration's rhetoric, it has not proposed overall budget cutbacks; it has merely shifted expenditures from social programs to military ones.

For the long term, the headlong rush into increased military expenditures may be more harmful than helpful to America's security. In examining the military budget, Congress should take into account our allies' defense capabilities as well as our own; arms control options as well as arms build-ups; and the possibility that some new, unproven weapons systems will destabilize the balance of power rather than enhance our security.

Third, Congress must begin to consider a comprehensive manpower strategy. The United States is the only major industrial economy that does not have such a plan. The employment act that the president plans to submit to Congress may turn out to be a first, short-term step. But long-term economic recovery requires that private investment incentives be coupled with public investment in human capital.

Among other things, the Congress should enter into a critical assessment of whether the nation's educational, job training, and manpower placement systems will provide the skilled labor needed by the economy over the next two decades. The president's proposal to upgrade science and math education is one useful measure. Many Democrats agree. But again, a piecemeal approach is wholly inadequate in a country where some 40 million adults are functionally illiterate.

Without a national manpower strategy, the American economy is likely to run into serious bottlenecks as we move into the post-industrial, high tech era. Furthermore, the gap between the upper classes and the underclass is likely to grow even wider, unless plans are carefully drawn to provide real educational and employment opportunities for all segments of the society. Only with such planning will the country avoid a relapse into economic decline and begin to build its strength again.

Eddie N. Williams
President

FOCUS

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Social Security Reform and the Black Aged

by Matthew Holden, Jr.

(The author is Doherty Professor of Government and Foreign Affairs at the University of Virginia. He served as moderator of a panel on Social Security Reform at a JCPS forum last autumn.)

On January 15, the National Commission on Social Security Reform reached a long-awaited compromise that allowed it to report proposed changes in the Social Security system. Since President Ronald Reagan and Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill participated in behind-the-scenes negotiations, some version of the report is considered likely to be adopted by Congress. Nevertheless, the bipartisan agreement is very fragile, and there are many stumbling blocks that could break it apart.

Where does the black community stand in the debate over Social Security reform? Several important issues were identified in a Joint Center forum on Social Security reform held last autumn. The issues relate to the solution of both the short-term financial problems of the Social Security system—those that must be resolved for the coming decade—and the long-term problems—those that will arise after 2010, as the baby-boom generation moves into retirement age. Although the commission was nowhere near an agreement at the time of the forum, the range of options was clear, as was the statistical picture of the black elderly. The comments of the forum participants thus provide a useful starting point for consideration of the reform proposals.

The Social Security "Crisis"

Suzanne B. Dilk, executive assistant to Robert J. Myers, executive director of the National Commission for Social Security Reform, outlined her view of the Social Security problem.

Over the past few years, the cash-benefit portion of the Social Security program has moved from one impending financial crisis to another. In early 1980, it was widely recognized that the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund—one of the three Social Security programs—would by late 1981 have insufficient assets to pay benefits in a timely manner. Stop-gap legislation was enacted, transferring monies from the Disability Insurance Trust Fund—another of the three programs—to the OASI Trust Fund for 1980-81. This pushed back the problem by about a year—to late 1982.

When the Reagan administration took office in early 1981, it proposed a package of benefit changes that would have solved the short-run problem—even under pessimistic assumptions about future economic conditions. The long-range problem also would have been solved—to such an extent that, under certain circumstances, payroll tax rates might ultimately have been reduced.

Several of the administration's proposals, however, met with widespread public disapproval—particularly the proposal for an almost immediate sharp reduction in the benefit rates for persons retiring at ages 62 and 64 and the elimination of the minimum-benefit provision for persons currently on the roll. As a result, Congress made only a few cost-reduction changes in 1981—e.g., the elimination of the minimum-benefit provision for *new* eligibles.

In September 1981, President Reagan proposed that a task force be formed to recommend "realistic, long-term reforms to put Social Security back on a sound financial footing and to forge a working, bipartisan consensus so that the necessary reforms can be passed into law." The National Commission on Social Security Reform was created in December.

In late 1981, the problem of an immediate cash shortage in the OASI Trust Fund emerged once more. There was the prospect that the OASI Trust Fund would have insufficient funds to pay benefits in a timely manner in late 1982. Congress therefore adopted legislation to permit the OASI Trust Fund to borrow from the Disability Insurance Trust Fund and the Hospital Insurance Trust Fund—the third of the Social Security programs. Congress provided, however, that such borrowing could not be in excess of that needed to guarantee payment of benefits during the first six months of 1983. No borrowing would be permitted thereafter. Thus, without further action, by the beginning of July 1983, the OASI Trust Fund will not have sufficient assets to provide for benefit checks. About $13 billion will then be due to about 32 million beneficiaries.

The actual dimensions of both the short- and long-term financial problems of the Social Security

Changes Proposed by the National Commission on Social Security Reform

Postpone scheduled cost of living adjustment (COLA) from July 1983 to January 1984, and move subsequent annual COLA payments to January instead of July (will affect 36 million beneficiaries). $40 billion savings*

Tax half of benefits when non-Social Security income is above $20,000 (will affect 3 million beneficiaries). $30 billion savings*

Move the tax hike scheduled for 1985 up to 1984 and a portion of the tax hike scheduled for 1990 up to 1988; but allow employees to take income tax credit for increase in 1984 (will affect 116 million taxpayers). $40 bilion savings*

Cover all new federal employees and all employees of nonprofit organizations beginning Jan. 1, 1984. $20 billion savings*

Forbid state and local government employers now in the Social Security system to withdraw. $3 billion savings*

Eliminate windfall benefit for individuals who worked for short periods in jobs covered by Social Security and also receive pensions from jobs that were not covered by Social Security. $0.2 billion savings*

Require self-employed individuals to pay taxes equal to the amount now paid by both the employer and employee (one-half deductible from taxable income). $18 billion savings*

Starting in 1988, base annual COLAs on the lesser of wage or price indexes, whenever the reserves in the OASDI fall below 20 percent of expected needs for the year.

Increase, between 1990 and 2010, the benefit bonus given those who delay retirement beyond age 65 from 3 to 8 percent.

Reimburse the OASDI trust fund for fee wage credits granted by military and for uncashed Social Security checks. $18 billion savings*

Expand benefits and eligibility for widows and widowers and for divorced spouses. $1 billion new cost

Total Savings: $168.2 billion

*Estimated savings for 1983-1989.

system depend very much on the economic conditions that prevail. Unemployment levels affect how much money flows into the system, as do wage levels. Inflation affects how much flows out in benefits—even with the proposed revisions in cost-of-living adjustments. Clearly, the Social Security system cannot be considered in isolation from the economy at large.

A Portrait of the Elderly Black Population

Dr. Robert Hill, a senior research associate at the Bureau of Social Science Research, set forth some basic facts about black reliance on Social Security (see Table). While the percentage of black aged living in poverty has decreased over the past decade, the actual number—unlike the number of poor white aged—has increased. Moreover, 93 percent of all black aged poor depend on Social Security for more than half of their income. Only 6 percent of poor black aged families have any other form of pension, and this pension accounts for less than 2 percent of total income.

In light of the status of the black aged, Dr. Hill made several recommendations. First, he opposed all efforts to address the financial problems of the system by raising the age for receipt of full benefits to 68 years or more. Black men now have a life expectancy of 65 years. A greater proportion of black men than white men are obliged to retire at 62 years because of ill health or disabilities. Raising the retirement age would discriminate against blacks by disproportionately reducing the number of blacks who would ever receive retirement benefits and by reducing the number of years the average black retiree receives benefits.

It should be noted that the National Commission ultimately did not propose any change in retirement age. But its proposals left unresolved the question of how to meet a projected shortfall in the next century, and the eight Republican panel members issued a separate recommendation that the retirement age be raised after the turn of the century. Unless black economic and demographic status change dramatically before then, such a plan would still have discriminatory impact.

Dr. Hill's second recommendation was that the minimum benefit for new eligibles—eliminated by Congress in 1981—be restored. Many people who have worked all their lives are deprived without a minimum benefit provision. People who have worked in jobs not covered by the Social Security Act requirements—such as domestic service and agriculture—should not be forced to rely on the public assistance system.

Dr. Hill's third recommendation was that the present levels of Social Security benefits for low-wage workers be raised, since current benefits are actually below poverty level.

Joseph Eaglin, executive director of the Washington office of the Congress of National Black Churches and former vice-president for policy analysis of the National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, added that the context of Social Security payments is an important consideration. The black aged tend to remain in households with younger members, including children, and any reduction in their income could seriously harm the already low incomes of many households. Thus, especially in the black community, any reduction in Social Security income will have effects reaching beyond the elderly themselves.

Likewise, the Social Security benefit is itself only one component of the income of an elderly person. For the poor elderly, other income comes from housing support, social service benefits, and Medicaid. But these programs are extremely vulnerable to political considerations, and Social Security must be seen as the real safety net for this group.

Dr. Eaglin noted that employment injustices have often confined blacks to the very jobs that are not covered by the Social Security Act. As many as 35 percent of blacks who reach retirement age between 1980 and 1992 will have minimum Social Security coverage or none at all. He strongly urged that the particular needs of the black elderly be examined specifically and that they be addressed through focused programs.

Overall Implications

The commission's recommendations have a couple of significant overall implications.

First, the proposed income tax credit that will offset the Social Security tax increase in 1984 represents acceptance, for the first time, of the principle of general revenue support for Social Security. This is an important if not obvious breakthrough.

Second, the proposed taxation of Social Security benefits, for the 8 percent of recipients who have more than $20,000 income without Social Security, raises the question whether the principle of a means test for this entitlement program has been accepted without adequate consideration, and whether, hereafter, discussion will be limited to what the cut-off for means testing should be. This change could open up other entitlement benefits, such as unemployment insurance, workmen's compensation, and veterans' disability compensation, to such taxation.

Although any changes in Social Security will have a large effect on blacks, the specific implications for black interests do not appear to have been well articulated. Neither the principal black organizations nor black elective political leadership appear to have found it possible to enter deeply into the Social Security reform process. So far, the main advocates have been the senior citizens' lobby and the trade unions, whose concerns only partially overlap with those of the black community.

Black Aged and Social Security

	Black aged families	Black aged unrelated individuals
% in poverty (1979)	36	59
% w/income from pensions	30	15
% dependent on SS for over 50% of income	70	67
% dependent on SS for over 75% of income	25	42

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JCPS Conference Report

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Immigration and Black America

Rarely has immigration commanded as much attention from policymakers and the public as it has during the past decade. The subject has been on the agenda of every session of Congress since 1972, and Congressional committees in both the House and the Senate have undertaken several extensive studies of various aspects of the subject. Presidents Ford, Carter, and Reagan all commissioned extensive studies of the issue or submitted comprehensive immigration reform proposals to Congress. A Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Affairs created in 1978 conducted a massive two-year study and recommended several changes in current policy. And the 97th Congress came very close to enacting the Immigration Reform Act of 1982 (Simpson-Mazzoli) before the bill was shelved in the waning hours of the lame duck session of the House.

This national preoccupation results from the dramatic increase in immigration in recent years, especially in large-scale refugee admissions and illegal immigration. By 1980, total annual immigration reached a level exceeded only by that of the first decades of this century, when there were no numerical restrictions on immigration. Throughout the 1970s. routine legal immigration increased steadily; in 1975, the first of more than a half million Indochinese refugees began to arrive; and illegal immigration grew rapidly, producing a total annual influx now estimated to exceed one million.

This rapid increase in the midst of a deteriorating economy has generated vigorous public debate about the effects of immigration on the country, whether and to what extent immigration should be curtailed, and particularly how the federal government might improve its diminishing capacity to prevent illegal immigration. Central to this debate is the longstanding fear that immigrants are displacing domestic workers and depressing wages and working conditions in the low-wage sectors of the labor market. Several prominent public officials and some scholars have stressed these presumed adverse effects as reasons for decisive government action to curtail illegal immigration and reform immigration laws. Others have alleged that immigrants are increasingly participating in public service programs, thereby increasing overall costs and depriving the domestic needy.

These claims are largely undocumented, and many analysts believe they are seriously exaggerated or entirely wrong. Yet they reflect widespread uneasiness about the implications of large-scale immigration, even while the country continues to be proud of its heritage as an immigrant society and remains committed, at least in principle, to liberal immigration policies for humanitarian reasons.

Black America, too, is caught in the dilemma of conflicting attitudes. Blacks have become increasingly concerned about both the glaring inequities in the country's immigration policies and the implications of current large-scale immigration for the black community. They see the drastic differences between the treatment of Haitians and



Left to right: Milton D. Morris, Michael Teitelbaum, Eddie N. Williams

On October 24-26, 1982, the Joint Center for Political Studies and the Johnson Foundation held a conference on "Immigration and Black America" at the foundation's Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, Wisconsin. The Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation also provided funding. Dr. Milton D. Morris, director of research at the Joint Center, prepared this report on the conference, with the assistance of Roy Chatterjee, former staff analyst.

Attitudes Toward Immigration

	Agree		Disagree		
	Black	White	Black	White	Not Sure
The U.S. should make an all-out effort to stop illegal immigration	88%	92%	7%	5%	4%
The U.S. should reduce the number of legal immigrants admitted annually	82%	80%	12%	16%	5%

Cubans seeking refugee status as an indication of a racially discriminatory immigration policy. Moreover, blacks have exhibited growing concern about the treatment of deportable aliens and especially about legislative proposals that appear likely to expose many Hispanic Americans to discriminatory treatment in the labor market.

Nevertheless, as a 1980 Roper survey found, blacks, like whites, are in overwhelming agreement that too much immigration is occurring and that prompt action should be taken to curtail illegal immigration. Blacks in some localities are increasingly concerned that large numbers of refugees are competing with them for scarce low-cost housing, jobs, job training benefits, and other public services.

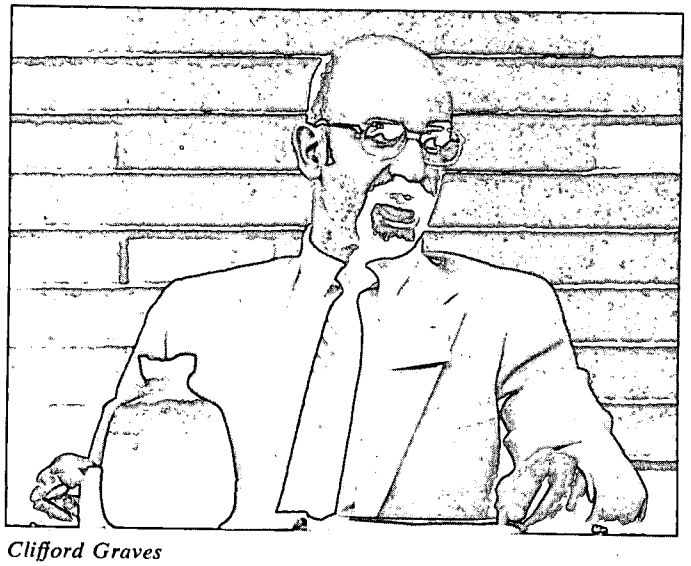
These concerns erupted into a major controversy in New Orleans in 1979, prompting Mayor Ernest (Dutch) Morial to commission a study of the local effects of refugee resettlement. The mayor urged the federal government to increase its assistance to the city to help it cope with the influx of refugees. Similar concerns among blacks in Miami may be a prominent part of the social and political tensions in that city.

In view of such concerns, the Joint Center, in conjunction with the Johnson Foundation, held a two-day conference on "Immigration and Black America" in October 1982. The conference explored the effects of immigration on black America, the kinds of immigration policies blacks might support, and the ways in which blacks and other minorities might collaborate in formulating an effective and prudent immigration policy. Conference participants included leading scholars, federal and local officials, and representatives of black and Hispanic organizations with major interests in immigration.

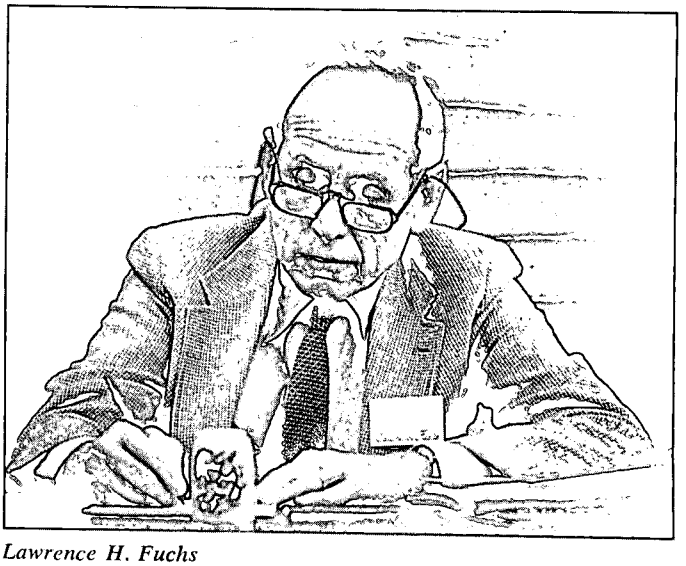
The conference began with a thoughtful appraisal of the international and domestic forces that shape the country's immigration experience by Dr. Michael Teitelbaum, senior associate of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. On the one hand, a historically strong market for large numbers of low-wage workers attracts immigrants to this country, while on the other hand, equally powerful forces abroad push people to leave. Dr. Teitelbaum pointed out that "the value of migration to the United States is going up" for the peoples of developing countries, as unemployment and underemployment in those countries worsen and wage differentials between those countries and the United States increase. Under these circumstances, and in view of the weak enforcement of immigration laws, people who invest in migrating to this country are making an entirely rational investment.

A further problem, said Teitelbaum, is that many countries now promote emigration as one means of solving their grave economic problems. This policy—followed by Mexico, several Caribbean basin countries, India, Turkey, and other friendly countries—both reduces the pressure for jobs at home and brings in funds from those working abroad. Because the United States has a strong interest in the growth and stability of these countries, it cannot simply cut off the migration flow. Drastic curtailment of access to the United States would be traumatic for these countries and would almost certainly impair U.S. relations with them.

The fundamental dilemma of American immigration policy, argued Teitelbaum, is that it cannot control either



Clifford Graves



Lawrence H. Fuchs

the forces pushing emigrants out of their home countries or those pulling immigrants here.

On the domestic side, the capacity of government to control immigration is very limited. The inability of the Immigration and Naturalization Service to enforce current laws effectively is well known. How would the agency cope with such responsibilities as legalizing millions of currently illegal immigrants? And achieving equity in the enforcement of immigration laws, particularly with respect to refugees, is an equally formidable problem, given the political considerations that necessarily play a role in the decisions on whom to admit.

Dr. Teitelbaum noted that because decisions on immigration policy are so difficult, delaying tactics by those with an interest in the status quo have been very effective. After more than a decade of effort, Congress still has not been able to enact an immigration law.

The Effects of Immigration on Blacks

An important factor in how the United States tailors its immigration policies is how immigrants affect this country. Several analysts dealt with this issue in relation to blacks. Professor Charles Hirschman of Cornell University considered the effects of immigration on opportunity structures within the society; Dr. Jules Lichtenstein, of the Office of Management and Budget, examined the impact of immigrants on blacks in the labor market; and Dr. Milton Morris examined black-immigrant interactions in contemporary urban America. All the analysts acknowledged the difficulty involved in isolating and measuring the costs and benefits that accrue from immigration and agreed that any conclusions on the subject are tentative.

In Professor Hirschman's view, there is evidence that opportunity structures in the society have operated differently for blacks and for major immigrant groups. Blacks have been deprived of the opportunities for upward mobility that most immigrants have experienced. Dr. Lichtenstein reached a similar conclusion on the basis of generational comparisons of ethnic group progress in certain occupations and industries: "recent immigrants can compete more effectively in the labor market than low-income groups and have prevented native groups, such as blacks, from realizing potential employment and earnings gains."

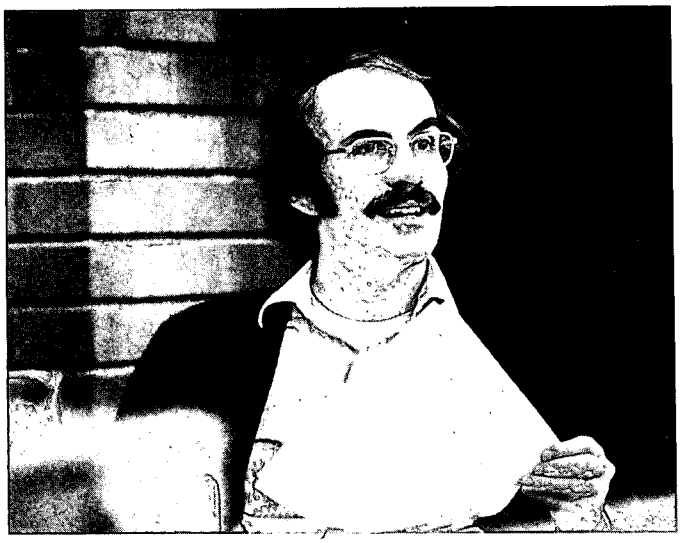
Dr. Morris pointed out that immigrants invariably cluster in a small number of cities, and so their effects are not evenly spread across the society. Because blacks are concentrated in the same cities, those effects tend to fall disproportionately on them. Moreover, because newly arrived immigrants tend to be poor and to seek low-wage jobs, they inevitably compete for jobs and housing with many inner-city blacks. Recent research on cities such as Philadelphia and Boston supports the view that immigration has resulted, in the past, in increased competition and more restricted opportunities for blacks.

Professor Larry Fuchs, executive director of the Select Commission on Immigration, noted the curious historical juxtaposition of liberalizing immigration policies and intensifying discrimination against blacks. He argued that although black progress might have been impaired and some economic opportunities lost as a result of the large European immigration prior to World War II, blacks, like the rest of the population, have been beneficiaries of immigration.

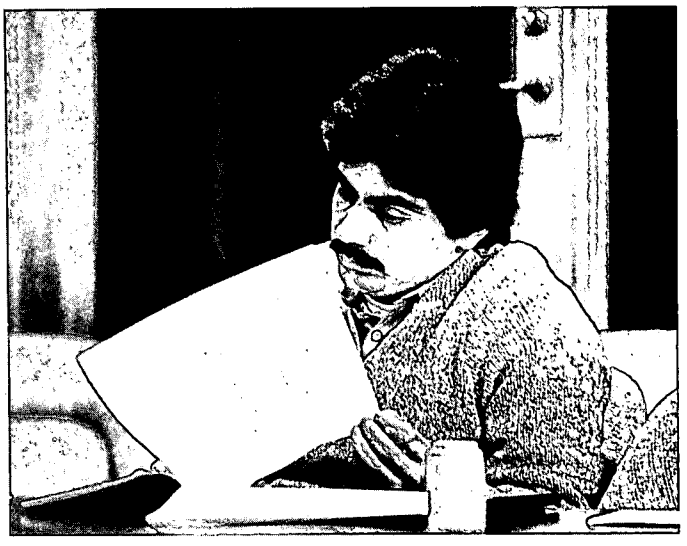
Dr. Fuchs distinguished between the effects of legal and illegal immigrants: "Lawful immigrants do not constitute a threat to the poorest black Americans, because under present laws most immigrants do not come up from the bottom, in competition against unskilled young blacks entering the labor market for the first time." On the other hand, the effects of illegal immigration might be different, and Dr. Fuchs reported that one reason the Select Commission recommended steps to reduce illegal immigration was the strong suspicion that such immigration had particularly strong negative effects on blacks.

Local Perspectives

Miami City Commissioner Miller Dawkins reflected on the dilemma the issue poses for most blacks. Miami has



Charles Hirschman



Arnold Torres



Left to right: Brenda Pillors, Cecil Braithwaite, Jake Dyels, Ransford Palmer

absorbed several hundred thousand Cuban refugees over the past two decades and continues to receive an influx of Haitian "boat people." Commissioner Dawkins expressed concern about the financial burdens refugees impose on the city and the extent to which the city's large black population has been hurt both by these costs and increasing competition for jobs. But he also expressed outrage at the harsh and discriminatory treatment accorded Haitians by public officials.

Clifford Graves, San Diego County executive, comes from a locality with a large population of deportable aliens from Mexico and a relatively small black population. His county's experience, said Graves, does not confirm the view that these immigrants adversely affect the local population. On the contrary, he reported, studies sponsored by the county suggest that deportable aliens contribute more than they cost the county.

Horrace Morris, executive director of the New York Urban League, said that in New York City, most of the presumed deportable aliens were West Indian and other third world peoples. The struggles and aspirations of these groups are similar to those of black New Yorkers, and blacks would not readily fight against them, even if they are worried about immigration in the abstract. Mr. Morris cautioned against overemphasizing competition between blacks and immigrants: "Historically, blacks have not really been in competition with other immigrant groups. They have been relegated, because of racism, to particular positions and have never had the opportunity to compete." The real issue is what can be done to free blacks to compete.

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Dr. Roy Bryce-Laporte, director of the Institute on Immigration and Ethnic Studies at the Smithsonian Institution, agreed. He suggested that with the substantial increase of dark-skinned immigrants, the two groups will increasingly be addressing similar concerns.

In the meantime, how should blacks approach the broad issue of immigration reform? And how should they respond to specific proposals such as employer sanctions? Arnold Torres, executive director of the National Education Service Center of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), observed that such sanctions would expose other minorities, such as Mexican Americans, to added discrimination in the labor market.

Translating the recognition of the effects of immigration on blacks into a policy position appears to be an excruciatingly difficult task, one that blacks are only just beginning to confront. One problem, said Dr. Fuchs, is the different attitudes toward the issue on the part of black leaders and the rest of the black population. Black leaders overwhelmingly express sympathy with and support for refugees and refugee admissions. They perceive refugees as an embattled minority whose struggle for economic and political freedom is inextricably linked to the black struggle. In many localities with large immigrant populations, however, "grass roots" blacks are angered by what they perceive to be the special benefits and treatment accorded refugees and by the hardships they believe are imposed on them by deportable aliens.

The consensus of the group was that blacks should seek to collaborate with other minorities in formulating a position on immigration policy. Georgia State Senator Julian Bond articulated this consensus by observing that "a central theme of this gathering has been the necessity of continuing political coalitions and interchanges between blacks and browns in the United States . . . to redirect U.S. foreign, domestic, and immigration policies to meet their common interests."



Horrace Morris

School Desegregation in States and Cities

A study issued in January by the Joint Center for Political Studies shows a dramatic increase in the racial and ethnic isolation of black and Hispanic students in the nation's central-city public school districts. By 1980, enrollment in the 10 largest school districts was more than two-thirds minority, and the proportion of minorities was growing rapidly. The only districts that have made substantial progress in school desegregation over the past 15 years were those with extensive city-suburban busing, most of which were in the South.

The study, "School Desegregation Patterns in the States, Large Cities, and Metropolitan Areas, 1968-1980," is the second of two reports prepared by the Joint Center at the request of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights. The first report, issued in September 1982, examined national and regional trends in school desegregation. Both reports were written for the Joint Center by Gary Orfield, professor of political science at the University of Chicago and JCPS adjunct fellow. They are based on primary data supplied by the U.S. Department of Education to subcommittee Chairman Don Edwards.

"School Desegregation Patterns" examines the changing racial and ethnic composition of the public schools in all states with substantial minority populations, in the 50 largest central-city school districts, and in 44 metropolitan areas for which federal data are adequate to permit analysis.

Examining desegregation patterns at these various levels reveals the complexities hidden in the nationwide statistics. Florida, for example, is among the states with the highest populations of both blacks and Hispanics. For blacks, Florida was one of the top three states in progress toward *integration* between 1968 and 1980; for Hispanics, it was one of the three states with the sharpest increases in *segregation*. In Tampa, the typical black student attended a school that was 72.4 percent white; in Miami, that student's school was only 17.9 percent white. It should be noted, as well, that in Florida and two other southern states (Tennessee and Mississippi), segregation has been increasing over the past eight years after substantial desegregation between 1968 and 1974.

States

The report lists the most segregated states for black and Hispanic students separately, and shows the degrees of progress or regression in each state with a substantial minority population. The states with the most segregated school systems for black students are Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, and New York. The states that showed the largest decreases in segregation of black students between 1968 and 1980 are Delaware, Kentucky, and Florida. Segregation of black students *increased* significantly during this period in New Jersey and New York.

Segregation of Hispanic students increased dramatically in every state with a substantial Hispanic population, except Colorado. New York, which contains 10 percent of all Hispanic students in the country, is by far the most segregated for these students. Texas, with 27 percent of all Hispanic students, is the second most segregated, and California, with 32 percent, is next, with rapidly increasing segregation of Hispanics. In Colorado, the percentage of Hispanic students in majority white schools increased by 4 points—from 63 to 67 percent—between 1968 and 1980.

Cities

Between 1968 and 1980, there was a striking increase in the proportion of minority students in the largest city school districts of the nation. This trend was evident in every region of the country and regardless of whether or not desegregation plans were in effect. Six of the 10 largest districts were more than half minority in 1968; by 1980, all had more than two-thirds minority students, and most had more than three-fourths minority students. Two-thirds of the 50 largest central-city school districts had nonwhite majorities.

White enrollment percentages have declined sharply both in systems with purely voluntary desegregation plans, such as Houston and San Diego, and those with mandatory busing plans, such as Detroit and Memphis. Atlanta, Detroit, Memphis, and Gary all had overwhelmingly black majorities in 1980. Detroit and Memphis were under busing orders; Gary was not. Atlanta and its suburbs experienced an 85.7 percent decline in the number of white students between 1968 and 1980, despite a political bargain that strictly limited busing in the hope of achieving population stability.

One of the most important trends of the 1968-1980 period was the increase in Hispanic enrollment percentages in the nation's largest school districts. In Los Angeles, Hispanic enrollment increased from 20 percent in 1968 to 49 percent in 1982. In Houston, Hispanic enrollment grew from 13 to 28 percent. Majority Hispanic districts, such as El Paso, San Antonio, and Corpus Christi, experienced rapid increases in the Hispanic share of their total enrollments, and some older industrial cities experienced sharp increases from previously low percentages of Hispanics. Boston's Hispanic school population, for example, increased from 3 percent in 1968 to 14 percent in 1980.

Levels of segregation and desegregation varied widely among cities. In general, the greatest desegregation of black students occurred in cities within districts that also include surrounding suburban areas and that had metropolitan-wide busing plans. White enrollment, and thus the possibility of continuing integration, was far more stable in these metropolitan-wide districts than in the central-city only districts (such as Houston, New Orleans, and Baltimore), where there has been very little desegregation.

Metropolitan Areas

Although metropolitan areas are the basic unit of analysis for most social trends, the U.S. Department of Education has not systematically collected data on racial composition and segregation of public schools by SMSAs (standard metropolitan statistical areas). This oversight hinders nationwide analyses of school desegregation at this level. The

(Continued on page 7)

VRA Follow-Up: Two Court Cases

by Armand Derfner

(The author, former head of the Joint Center's Voter Law Policy Project, currently teaches at the American University Law School.)

Since the Voting Rights Act was extended in June 1982, court decisions have been handed down in several voting cases. Two of these give important indications of how effective the VRA will be in preventing electoral discrimination over the coming years: one involves district lines for the Chicago City Council; the other concerned the system for electing the city council in Port Arthur, Texas.

Chicago: Good Precedent, Controversial Plan

Just before Christmas, a federal judge in Chicago ruled that the city council districts had been drawn in a way that diluted the voting strength of black and Hispanic voters. But the judge replaced the illegal plan with one that did not eliminate the gerrymandering against minorities.

The Chicago case, called *Ketchum* v. *City Council of Chicago,* is especially significant because it was the first case decided outside the South under the "results" test required by the 1982 amendment to Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. As you may recall, this section had been amended to make clear that a "discriminatory results" standard was to be applied, rather than the "purpose" standard the Supreme Court had established in the 1980 case of *Mobile* v. *Bolden.* The Chicago case is also significant because it is the first case in which the Justice Department has participated since the extension was passed.

In this case, black and Hispanic plaintiffs, joined by the Justice Department, argued that the redistricting plan for the Chicago City Council should be struck down, for two main reasons: (1) the plan was drawn in a way that kept white incumbents in safe districts even though the minority population has grown steadily, and (2) the plan actually decreased the number of minority districts below what the population would suggest and below the number under the old plan.

The court held that there was nothing improper about drawing plans to protect incumbents. But it found that under Section 2 as now written, the plan resulted in discrimination because there was a "retrogression" in minority voting strength from the previous plan. The city's plan called for 17 majority black districts and 2 majority Hispanic districts out of a total of 50. The population of Chicago is now 40 percent black and 14 percent Hispanic. The court ordered that the plan be redrawn to provide 19 majority black and 4 majority Hispanic districts.

But the court allowed the plan to be redrawn by the same defendants who had gerrymandered the original plan. Moreover, the court ignored evidence suggesting that a substantial black majority population (around 65 percent) is needed in a ward to give black voters a realistic opportunity to determine the outcome of the election. It ordered only that the districts be redrawn to produce voting-age majorities of black or Hispanic residents. And, not surprisingly, the new lines drawn by the city officials did the bare minimum required. Under these lines, it is unlikely that black and Hispanic voters would be the majority in the 23 districts called for in the court order.

Civil rights leaders and neutral observers alike recognized that the outcome was a paper victory for minorities. By contrast, one of the incumbent white aldermen said, "Actually, I feel we won a big victory. It could have been a disaster for us, but we came away in good shape."

Further action on this case will not be taken until after the February primaries. But despite the limited relief ordered by the court, its interpretation of the Section 2 results test sets a precedent that may lead to successful suits against voting discrimination in other areas outside the South.

Port Arthur: Private Citizens Take the Lead

On December 13, the Supreme Court ruled that Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act forbids Port Arthur from using a discriminatory "majority runoff" requirement. The decision confirms the importance of the Voting Rights Act in blocking the use of subtle discriminatory devices such as majority requirements, some at-large election systems, and numbered posts.

The decision also underscores the importance of participation by private citizens in voting rights cases. It was private citizens who acted at a crucial time to prevent the city from implementing a change to the discriminatory system.

In 1977, Port Arthur consolidated with several nearby white areas, not long after an election in which several black candidates had come close to winning. The Justice Department objected to the annexation, which decreased the black population of Port Arthur from 45 to 40 percent. But the department said it would approve the change if the city also changed its existing method of electing city councilmembers at large. This policy—allowing annexation of white areas if at-large elections are eliminated—has often been followed in Section 5 preclearance proceedings, with cities such as Richmond, Charleston, and San Antonio.

The city of Port Arthur, however, refused to make the change. It brought suit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, as permitted under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act. Port Arthur offered to compromise by shifting to an election system with six single-member districts and three at-large seats. But the plan aggravated the discriminatory influence of the at-large elections by requiring runoffs when no candidate received a majority vote. This requirement would make it difficult for a black candidate to win even when white votes were split among several candidates.

The Justice Department, one of the parties in the court case, agreed to the plan, although it expressed reservations about the majority requirement. But the private voters who had intervened did not agree, and the district court ruled that the plan was still discriminatory because of the majority requirement. In a major decision, the Supreme Court upheld the lower court's ruling.

Elections in the single-member districts have already been held in Port Arthur, and three blacks have been elected to the city council, compared to the previous high of one.

Telescope

New Committee Assignments for CBC Members

Several choice committee assignments have been given to black members of Congress. Alan Wheat, newly elected congressman from Missouri, has landed a seat on the House Rules Committee—an unusual distinction for a freshman. George Crockett (D-MI) has been placed on the Judiciary Committee; William Gray (D-PA), on the Budget Committee; and Major Owens (D-NY), another freshman, on the Education and Labor Committee and the Government Operations Committee. Edolphus Towns (D-NY) has also been placed on the Government Operations Committee; Katie Hall (D-IN), on both the Post Office and Civil Service and the Public Works and Transportation committees; and Julian Dixon (D-CA), on the Standards of Official Conduct Committee. Mervyn Dymally (D-CA) has been placed on the District of Columbia Committee, chaired by Ronald Dellums (D-CA). Five of the eight Democrats on this committee are now black.

Bill to Stop Nuclear Exports to South Africa Reintroduced in 98th Congress

Congressman Charles Rangel (D-NY) has reintroduced in the 98th Congress H.R. 1020, a bill to stop all nuclear exports to South Africa and to prohibit training of South Africans at U.S. government nuclear facilities.

The Washington Office on Africa, a lobbying group set up by a coalition of American churches in 1972 that monitors and analyzes developments in U.S. policy toward southern Africa, is launching a campaign to support the bill and to make the public more aware of U.S. dealings with southern Africa in the area of nuclear exports. They have published a pamphlet, *Stop the Apartheid Bomb,* documenting Western assistance in building South Africa's nuclear program over the last three decades. Contact the Washington Office on Africa, 110 Maryland Avenue, NE, Washington, DC 20002 (202 546-7961).

20th Anniversary of 1963 March on Washington

Civil rights leaders are organizing a revival of the 1963 March on Washington led by Martin Luther King, Jr. Some 250,000 people participated in the 1963 march, which paved the way for enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Organizers hope that the 1983 march, scheduled for August 27, will stimulate national support for new initiatives on jobs, peace, and freedom.

The cochairpersons of the campaign are Coretta Scott King, president of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Non-Violent Social Change; Congressman Walter Fauntroy (D-DC); Benjamin Hooks, executive director of the NAACP; and Joseph Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. These and other leaders have called for a new "Coalition of Conscience," composed of civil rights, labor, religious, and student groups, and other nonviolent movements for social change.

The coalition is drafting specific legislation to address the issues of jobs, peace, and freedom. It hopes to complete its proposals by April 4, the 15th anniversary of Dr. King's death. The August march will serve as the culmination of an intense lobbying effort for the proposed legislation.

Military Officers to Participate in the Joint Center's Senior Fellows Program

The Defense Department and the Joint Center have signed an agreement under which one senior officer will be selected each year to participate in the Joint Center's Senior Fellows Program. Senior fellows spend a year at the Joint Center conducting research on public policy issues and participating in the Joint Center's other activities.

In a memorandum to the secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, the assistant secretary of defense for manpower explained that the program "will provide the nominee with an opportunity to expand his or her knowledge and understanding of public policy issues, with a focus on topics of particular concern to black Americans and other disadvantaged groups." The assistant secretary went on to say that the program "will constitute a unique line of communication between the Department of Defense and important segments of the American public."

Prospective fellows should be officers who are eligible to attend senior service schools; generally, this means officers with the rank of lieutenant colonel. The service secretaries are to submit nominations to the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Manpower by March 15, 1983.

School Desegregation

(Continued from page 5)

limited SMSA data provided by the Education Department cover mainly southern and border states and the West, but permit some interesting comparisons of metropolitan areas in these regions.

All of the areas with high levels of desegregation for blacks have extensive city-suburban busing orders. Two of the districts that made the greatest progress toward integration during the 70s—Wilmington and Louisville—have had court orders forcing merger and desegregation of previously independent city and suburban school systems. In metropolitan Richmond and Atlanta, where the federal courts rejected city-suburban desegregation, the typical black student is in a school that is about three-fourths black. By contrast, in Tampa, which has a metropolitan area-wide desegregation plan, the typical black student attends a school that is 70.4 percent white.

Recommendations

Four recommendations grow out of the report's findings:

- Racial data on all metropolitan-area school districts should be regularly collected and released.
- The increasing segregation of Hispanic students should be seriously investigated and addressed.
- City-suburban desegregation plans should be encouraged and supported.
- Housing desegregation policy, which is integrally related to school desegregation, should be strengthened.

Copies of the report can be obtained for $3.00 from the Joint Center, 1301 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20004.

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