


FOCUS

The monthly magazine of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies

(Click on titles to access articles)

Perspective

King and the Promised Land

Affirmative Action in Admissions—It Works

Top Schools Consider Race to Identify Students of High Potential, to Achieve Diversity on Their Campuses, and to Educate Society's Leaders

Two Education Governors for the South

Dramatic Gubernatorial Victories in the Old Confederacy Rekindle Hope That Progressive Change Is Still Possible in That Region

Advertisers Shun Minority Radio

Minority Broadcasters Are Routinely Denied Ads or Are Paid Less for Running the Same Ads as Stations With Majority Clienteles

Trendletter

Political Report: New CBC Chair James Clyburn Outlines Agenda

Economic Report: Black Unemployment Hits Record Low: Can It Stay This Good?

King and the Promised Land

I am taking the occasion of Black History Month to reflect on the life of Martin Luther King, Jr. Last month, the 70th anniversary of his birth was celebrated around the world. But in December 1955, as he ascended to the leadership of a bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama, he was a little known 26-year-old Baptist preacher who showed promise as a speaker. Neither King nor anyone else guessed at the time that this mass refusal to ride racially segregated buses was the beginning of the modern civil rights movement.

In the '50s, segregation reigned supreme in the states of the Old Confederacy, as well as in other parts of the country. Black people were relegated to second class citizenship and most Southern blacks were disenfranchised. Most well paying jobs were explicitly reserved for white men. Worst of all, anyone demanding a change in this system of racial exclusion was subject to attacks from white terrorist groups like the Ku Klux Klan, which often acted with the sanction of the local police.

As a drum major for peace, justice, and righteousness, King sought the abolition of this American apartheid. His swift rise to international prominence as a civil rights leader reached its zenith in 1963 at the March on Washington. Speaking at the foot of the Lincoln Memorial before a quarter of a million marchers, he dared us to dream of a day when "little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers." He also challenged the nation to "rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed—"we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

What makes King stand out in heroic relief is that he fought against racial oppression through peaceful protest. His battle plans were rooted in the Christian doctrine that you should love your enemies. Even as civil rights demonstrators were brutalized by club-wielding policemen, attack dogs, and high-pressure fire hoses, King continued to believe that love had a redemptive power that could transform the most recalcitrant segregationist. He was jailed in Albany, Georgia, in Birmingham, Alabama, and in more than a dozen other places. His home was bombed, and death threats were a common occurrence. But his courage never flagged.

Truly one of America's most powerful orators, King used the pulpit to appeal to the nation's conscience and buttress the hopes of the downtrodden. But King didn't restrict his protests to civil rights. He defied President Lyndon Johnson's escalation of the war in Vietnam even though Johnson had played a crucial role in securing passage of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights acts. King also voiced his outrage at the economic despair of the nation's poor—in the rural South as well as in the urban centers of the North.

Throughout his struggle, he knew he was living under a death sentence that could be carried out at any moment. In a prophetic sermon at an April 3, 1968, rally to support

Memphis sanitary workers protesting unfair working conditions, King proclaimed that the movement would succeed even if something happened to him:

"I would like to live a long life....But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the promised land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land." ■



PRESIDENT



Copyright © 1999 Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, Inc. The monthly magazine of the **Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies**, 1090 Vermont Ave., N.W., Suite 1100, Washington, D.C. 20005-4961, 202-789-3500. The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies is a national, nonprofit, tax-exempt institution that conducts research on public policy issues of special concern to black Americans and promotes informed and effective involvement of blacks in the governmental process. Founded in 1970, the Joint Center provides independent and nonpartisan analyses through research, publication, and outreach programs. Opinions expressed in signed *FOCUS* articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. *FOCUS* is published monthly by JCPES, Inc. Subscription price: U.S. \$15.00 per year.

EDITOR, FOCUS/David C. Ruffin
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR/Marc DeFrancis
PRODUCTION CONSULTANT/Laurel Prucha Moran
TRENDELETTOR RESEARCHER/Alfred Baltimore

PRESIDENT/Eddie N. Williams
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT/Robert J. Warren
VICE PRESIDENT, RESEARCH/Margaret Simms
VICE PRESIDENT, PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT/Kathleen Vander Horst
VICE PRESIDENT, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION/Brenda Watkins Noel
VICE PRESIDENT, COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING/Denise L. Dugas

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Andrew F. Brimmer/Brimmer & Company, Inc., Chair
Martina Bradford/Lucent Technologies, Inc., Vice Chair
Elliott S. Hall/Ford Motor Company, Vice Chair
George L. Brown/L. Robert Kimball & Associates, Treasurer
Wendell G. Freeland/Freeland & Kronz, Secretary
Eddie N. Williams/Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, President
Joyce London Alexander/Chief U.S. Magistrate Judge, United States District Court
Norma Ketay Asnes/Ketay Asnes Productions
James P. Comer/Yale Child Study Center
Charles U. Daly/John F. Kennedy Library Foundation
Robert M. Franklin/Interdenominational Theological Center
William M. Freeman/Bell Atlantic-New Jersey, Inc.
Freeman A. Hrabowski/University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Hector M. Hyacinthe/Packard Frank Business and Corporate Interiors, Inc.
Vernon E. Jordan, Jr./Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld
Weldon H. Latham/Shaw Pittman, Potts & Trowbridge
Patrice I. Mitchell/P.G. Corbin and Company, Inc.
Anna Perez/Chevron Companies
Edward J. Perkins/University of Oklahoma
Pauline A. Schneider/Hunton & Williams
H. LeBaron Taylor/Sony Music Entertainment, Inc.

Members Emeriti: William B. Boyd, Kenneth B. Clark, James D. Wolfensohn

Affirmative Action in Admissions—It Works

Top Schools Consider Race to Identify Students of High Potential, to Achieve Diversity on Their Campuses, and to Educate Society's Leaders

by William G. Bowen and Derek Bok

William Bowen is president of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in New York and is a former president of Princeton University. Derek Bok teaches at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government and is former president of Harvard. The two recently coauthored The Shape of the River (Princeton University Press, 1998), in which they argue that race-sensitive admissions policies are successful and benefit society as a whole. The book is based on their study of the academic, employment, and personal histories of more than 35,000 students of all races who attended academically selective universities between the 1970s and the 1990s. This article is a summary of the book's findings.

In his classic 1969 study of Wall Street lawyers, Erwin Smigel reported: "I only heard of three Negroes who had been hired by large law firms. Two of these were women who did not meet the client." Smigel's statement should not surprise us. In the 1960s, barely 2 percent of America's doctors and lawyers were black, and only 280 blacks held elected office of any kind. At that time, few leading professional schools and nationally prominent colleges and universities enrolled more than a handful of blacks. Late in the decade, however, selective institutions set about to change these statistics, not by establishing quotas but by considering race, along with many other factors, in deciding whom to admit.

This policy was adopted because of a widely shared conviction that it was simply wrong for overwhelming numbers of blacks to continue to hold routine jobs while more influential positions were almost always held by whites. In a nation becoming more racially and ethnically diverse, these educators also considered it vital to create a learning environment that would prepare students of all races to live and work together effectively.

In recent years, the use of race in college admissions has been vigorously contested in several states and in the courts. In 1996, a federal appeals court in New Orleans, deciding the 1996 *Hopwood v The State of Texas* case, declared such a race-sensitive policy unconstitutional when its primary aim is not to remedy some specific wrong from the past. Californians have voted to ban all consideration of race in admitting students to public universities. Surprisingly, however, amid much passionate debate, there has been little hard evidence of how these policies work and what their consequences have been.

To remedy this deficiency, we examined the college and later-life experiences of more than 35,000 students—almost

3,000 of whom were black—who had entered 28 selective colleges and universities in fall 1976 and fall 1989. Among these schools were Princeton, Yale, Stanford, Columbia, Duke, Vanderbilt, and Washington universities and Bryn Mawr, Swathmore, Williams, Oberlin, and Smith colleges. A massive database, built jointly by the schools and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, for the first time links information such as SAT scores and college majors to experiences after college, including graduate and professional degrees, earnings, and civic involvement. Most of our study focused on African Americans and whites, because the Latino population at these schools was too small to permit the same sort of analysis. What did we discover?

Compared with their extremely high-achieving white classmates, black students in general received somewhat lower college grades and graduated at moderately lower rates. The reasons for these disparities are not fully understood, and selective institutions need to be more creative in helping improve black performance, as a few universities already have succeeded in doing. Still, 75 percent of blacks graduated within six years, a figure well above the 40 percent of blacks and 59 percent of whites who graduated nationwide from the 305 universities tracked by the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Moreover, blacks did not earn degrees from these selective schools by majoring in easy subjects. They chose substantially the same concentrations as whites and were just as likely to have difficult majors, such as those in the sciences.

Although more than half of the black students attending these schools would have been rejected under a race-neutral admissions regime—that is, if only high school grades and test scores had been counted—they have done exceedingly well after college. Fifty-six percent of the black graduates who entered these selective schools in 1976 earned advanced degrees. A remarkable 40 percent received either Ph.D.s or professional degrees in the most sought-after fields of law, business, and medicine, a figure slightly higher than that for their white classmates and five times higher than that for blacks with bachelor's degrees nationwide. (As a measure of change, it is worth noting that by 1995, 7.5 percent of all law students in the United States were black, up from barely 1 percent in 1960. Slightly more than 8 percent of medical school students were black, compared with 2.2 percent in the mid-1960s. Black elected officials now number more than 8,600.)

Continued on page 4

Admissions

Continued from page 3

Higher Earnings, More Leaders

By the time of our survey, black male graduates who had entered selective schools in 1976 were earning an average of \$85,000 a year, 82 percent more than other black male college graduates nationwide. Their black female classmates earned 73 percent more than all black women with bachelor's degrees. Not only has the marketplace valued the work of these graduates highly, but the premium associated with attending one of these selective institutions was substantial. Overall, we found that among blacks with similar test scores, the more selective the college they attended, the more likely they were to graduate, earn advanced degrees, and receive high salaries. This was generally true for whites as well.

Despite their high salaries, the blacks in our study were not just concerned with their own advancement. In virtually every type of civic activity, from social-service organizations to parent-teacher associations, black men were more likely than their white classmates to hold leadership positions. Much the same pattern holds for women. These findings should reassure black intellectuals who have worried that blacks—especially black men—would ignore their social responsibilities once they achieved financial success.

Were black students demoralized by having to compete with whites who had higher high school grades and test scores? Is it true, as Dinesh D'Souza asserts in his book *Illiberal Education*, that "American universities are quite willing to sacrifice the future happiness of many young blacks and Hispanics to achieve diversity, proportional representation, and what they consider to be multicultural progress"? The facts are very clear on this point. Far from being demoralized, blacks from the most competitive schools are the most satisfied with their college experience. More than 90 percent of both blacks and whites in our survey said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their college experience, and blacks were even more inclined than whites to credit their undergraduate experience with helping them learn crucial skills. We found no evidence that significant numbers of blacks felt stigmatized by race-sensitive policies. Only 7 percent of black graduates said they would not attend the same selective college if they had to choose again.

Former students of all races reported that they considered learning to live and work effectively with members of other races to be important. Large majorities also believed that their college experience contributed a lot in this respect. Consequently, almost 80 percent of white graduates favored either retaining the current emphasis on enrolling a diverse class or emphasizing it more. Their minority classmates supported these policies even more strongly.

Some critics allege that race-sensitive admissions policies aggravate racial tensions by creating resentment among white and Asian students rejected by colleges they hoped

to attend. Although we could not test this possibility definitively, we did examine the feelings of white students in our sample who had been rejected by their first-choice schools. Significantly, they said they supported an emphasis on diversity just as strongly as students who got into their first-choice schools.

What About Merit?

Our findings also clarify the much misunderstood concept of merit in college admission. Many people suppose that all students with especially high grades and test scores "deserve" to be admitted and that it is unfair to reject them in favor of minority applicants with lower grades and test scores. But selective colleges do not automatically offer admission as a reward for past performance to anyone. Nor should they.

For any institution, choosing fairly "on the merits" means selecting applicants by criteria that are reasonably related to the purposes of the organization. For colleges and universities, this means choosing academically qualified applicants who not only show promise of earning high grades but who also can enlarge the understanding of other students and contribute after graduation to their professions and communities. Though clearly relevant, grades and test scores are by no means all that matter.

Taken together, grades and scores predict only 15 to 20 percent of the variance among all students in academic performance and a smaller percentage among black students. Moreover, such quantitative measures are even less useful in answering other questions relevant to the admissions process, such as predicting which applicants will contribute most in later life to their professions and their communities. (Martin Luther King, Jr., now regarded as one of the greatest orators of this century, scored in the bottom half of all test-takers on the verbal Graduate Record Examinations).

Because other factors are important—including hard-to-quantify attributes such as determination, motivation, creativity, and character—many talented students, white and black, are rejected even though they finished in the top 5 percent of their high school class. The applicants selected are students who also were above a high academic threshold but who seemed to have a greater chance of enhancing the education of their classmates and making a substantial contribution to their professions and society. Seen from the perspective of how well they served the missions of these educational institutions, the students admitted were surely "meritorious."

Could the values of diversity be achieved equally well without considering race explicitly? The Texas legislature has tried to do so by guaranteeing admission to the state's public universities for all students who finish in the top 10 percent of their high school class. Others have suggested using income rather than race to achieve diversity. Our analysis indicates that neither alternative is likely to be as effective as race-sensitive admissions in enrolling an academically well-prepared and diverse student body.

Continued on page 8

Two Education Governors for the South

Dramatic Gubernatorial Victories in the Old Confederacy Rekindle Hope That Progressive Change Is Still Possible in That Region

In last November's elections, black voters helped bring about a changing of the guard in the state houses of two Deep South states: Alabama and South Carolina. In Alabama, Democrat Don Siegelman defeated incumbent Republican governor Fob James, and in South Carolina, Democrat James Hodges ousted Republican David Beasley. In each case, African Americans provided the critical votes that put the victors over the top.

Expectations are high among those hoping for "New South" leadership from these new governors. In their inaugural speeches last month, each of them called for racial inclusion and improved education. Children from southern states have historically ranked near the bottom in national measures of academic achievement. The following excerpts from these two governors' inaugural addresses offer glimpses into their visions of how their states will proceed into the 21st century.

Inaugural Address of James H. Hodges, Governor of South Carolina, January 13, 1999

In this the last inaugural address by a South Carolina governor in the 20th century, [I wish] to tell you of my hopes and dreams for South Carolina, and especially for South Carolina's children, as we prepare to enter the new millennium. And I want to talk about what, working together, we can do to shape dreams into realities — what we can do to ensure that our state is prepared for the opportunities and ready to meet the challenges of the next 100 years....

Today, unlike centuries past, we're poised to put South Carolina on the march to greatness for the next 100 years — if we have the courage to heed the lessons of history. One is an economics lesson. The Hodges administration will be a pro-business administration. We will be pro-business because we know the lives of our children depend on our state's continued economic prosperity. Economically, we have a solid base of tourism, manufacturing, service industries, and agriculture, along with the beginnings of high-tech industry....

Not only will we continue to recruit industry, we will accelerate efforts to capture better-paying high-tech jobs for our state — the kind of jobs that will fuel the economic engine of the 21st century.

But economic success alone is not enough. As a businessman, I believe that we can protect our natural environment at the same time we foster our business climate. The beauty of our state — its pristine beaches, protected wetlands, and precious forests — must be preserved for our children.

A second lesson history teaches is that the source of much of our strength to meet the challenges of the 21st century is in the strength of our people. But it must be all of our people. I'm a baseball fan. Last year, the National

Baseball Hall of Fame welcomed Larry Doby as a member. The induction of a native son of Camden into that great Hall was a well-deserved tribute. But the recognition of only the second black baseball player in major league history to break the color barrier underscores what great baseball was lost by fans and players alike by the exclusion of African Americans from our national pastime for all those years. Thankfully, we're beyond those days.

I pledge that the Hodges administration will be an administration that celebrates inclusion. We are reaching out to members of all races, genders, and ethnic groups for governmental appointments. We realize we aren't going to win any 21st century championships with half the team sitting on the bench.

There is a third, and most important, lesson that history teaches. Nothing, nothing is as important to the future of our state as quality public education. The only way to realize our dreams for South Carolina in the next century is to improve our public schools. I believe the overriding reason I am standing here before you today is that South Carolinians delivered a mandate last November that education must be our number one priority....

Everything else—all our hopes and dreams of economic prosperity, protecting our precious natural resources, appreciation of diversity in the decades to come—everything else depends on a first-rate program of public education. That's why I am asking all South Carolinians today to join me in launching a children's crusade. A 21st-century crusade of textbooks and computers and parents and teachers allied against the enemies—ignorance and indifference....

Because the Hodges administration is committed to improving education without tax increases, we must adopt a statewide lottery with all the revenues targeted for specific educational needs. We must begin by aggressively moving to cut class size in the early grades and implementing a strong pre-kindergarten program....

[With] the blessings of Almighty God, the dawn of the 21st century will herald a period of unrivaled prosperity, boundless opportunity and, most importantly, the golden triumph of education over ignorance that will lead a future South Carolina governor, standing in this very spot 100 years from today, to look back with pride and truthfully proclaim that the 21st century was indeed "The South Carolina Century."

Inaugural Address of Don Eugene Siegelman, Governor of Alabama, January 18, 1999

Alabama: The waiting is over. Too much time wasted. Too many promises broken. Too many dreams shattered.

We will dare great things. We will try new things. If they don't work, we will try something else.

Continued on page 6

Governors

Continued from page 5

I will work every day to make Alabama the Education State. Our children will have state-of-the-art computers. Our children will have preschool. And our children will have college scholarships....

Today I stand upon that incredible stage of history we call Alabama. And we stand before the only living witness of that history, this grand Greek lady that is our capitol.

It was here on her stage that the Confederate States of America was born. On these steps President Jefferson Davis looked down this same street and saw Civil War and sacrifice. In that time he turned to General Robert E. Lee and said: Lead us. And we honor General Lee today for his courage, his sense of duty, and his sacrifice.

Ninety years later she witnessed another act of individual courage: A single, solitary African American woman refused to give up her rightful place on a city bus. On that day Montgomery labor leader E.D. Nixon called the pastor of that Church and said: Lead us.

That pastor — Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. — stood on these same steps, looked down the same street as Jefferson Davis, and saw not civil war, but civil rights and sacrifice. He changed this nation. And today we honor Dr. King for his courage, his sense of duty and his sacrifice....

Today a new generation of Alabamians takes this stage. And in God's noonday light, we honor our heritage, unite our citizens, rededicate ourselves to Alabama values and stride confidently into a new century....

Alabama values run through my blood and have helped shape my life. Every one of you knows exactly what I mean by Alabama values...a heritage, a culture, a quality of life tempered by self-reliance, rebellion, and chivalry....

My mother was a beautician, from the time she was 16 until she turned 72, and my dad was a salesman. My mom and dad worked hard to make a better life for my brother Les and me. My parents worked as hard as anyone but could not go to college. Not because they lacked the skills or the knowledge, but for one reason and one reason only: They didn't have the money.

Together we will shatter the financial barriers to college and open the doors of higher education to every Alabama family. Any student who works hard, stays in school, stays out of trouble, and graduates from high school will have earned the right to go to college tuition free.

This will be our HOPE college scholarship program. And this is my HOPE for celebrating Alabama children.

Somewhere in Alabama today a child is born. Eighteen years from now it will cost that family \$96,000 to educate that single child at a public college.

No child should fail because of the lack of money. I want every child, white or black, rich or poor, to have the same hope and expectation that they can attend college, get a good job and provide for their family's future....

We will fulfill the dreamer's dream. Every Alabama child will be judged by the content of his character and the content of his mind....

[My wife] Lori and I want our kids to have the very best opportunities in life, and we know the road to those opportunities starts at the school house door. Not just for our kids, but for every child. Education is the key to each child's success and education will be the key to Alabama's success.

Today I am putting every teacher, every principal, and every student on notice: They can accomplish more; we will expect more; and none of us will settle for less....

We will teach our children the basics: reading, writing and math. And then, we must give them the tools they need to succeed in the 21st century: the ability to think, to reason, to communicate, to solve problems, and to work with computers. We will give Alabama four-year-olds the head start they deserve with voluntary prekindergarten. We will put the world's knowledge at the fingertips of every Alabama child with state-of-the-art computers in every public school. And every high school graduate will be able to go to college tuition free.

And we will pay for it with an Alabama Education Lottery. For those of you who think a lottery is wrong, I want you to know I respect your deeply held beliefs. I understand that I cannot sway your convictions, nor would I try. But let me tell you what I think is wrong. I think it is wrong for a working mother to hold down two or three jobs, to work her heart out, to scrimp and save trying to make ends meet, with no hope she will ever be able to send her son or her daughter to college.

I think it is wrong for a child to work hard, to stay in school, to stay out of trouble, to make their grades, to come home and do homework, mind their parents and do their chores — and when they finish high school they have the doors of college slammed shut in their face, only because they or their parents didn't have the money to send them to college. That's what I think is wrong....

We will demand safe schools for our children, schools conducive to critical learning.

Portable, sub-standard classrooms stand as a monument to this state's historical indifference to our children's education. Every day when I drop my children off at school I'm reminded that thousands of Alabama's children are crammed into unsafe, portable classrooms. Both of my children have spent the better part of their school days in portable classrooms. I promised that my first act as governor would be to sign an executive order demanding the removal of portable classrooms....

An education lottery is so critical to the future of Alabama, only the people of Alabama should have the right to decide. I will ask the legislature to let you decide in a statewide vote whether you want pre-kindergarten for your kids, computers in your schools and college scholarships for your children and grandchildren....

The next four years will be a defining moment for our children, our families and for this state's future. Together, with your help and God's blessings, we can take what is best about this great and wonderful state and make it even better. ■



For more information on this subject, visit our website at www.jointctr.org and look for this icon.

Advertisers Shun Minority Radio

Minority Broadcasters Are Routinely Denied Ads or Are Paid Less for Running the Same Ads as Stations With Majority Clienteles

According to the findings of a study released in January by the Federal Communications Commission, minority broadcasters and stations that serve minority listeners face discrimination by advertisers. This discrimination may cut station revenues by as much as 60 percent. The study was conducted by Kofi Ofori, director of research at the Washington, D.C.-based Civil Rights Forum on Communications Policy. The report, "When Being No. 1 Is Not Enough: The Impact of Advertising Practices On Minority-Owned and Minority-Formatted Broadcast Stations," states that minority broadcasters and minority-formatted stations on average receive less money per listener for advertising than similar non-minority stations receive, and they are often excluded from consideration for advertising placements because of their service to minority audiences. In addition, radio stations that serve minority listeners fare much better with advertisers when the stations owners are not minorities. The study concludes that discriminatory practices by advertisers and advertising agencies threaten the very existence of many stations.

The report focuses on two discriminatory practices. The first, known in the business as "no Urban/Spanish dictates," is the practice of refusing to place ads with broadcasters whose format is targeted to racial or ethnic audiences. The second, "minority discounts," refers to the practice of paying minority broadcasters less to run the same ads than is paid to general market stations of the same size.

Racial Stereotyping

Looking at 1996 data for 3,745 radio stations across the country, the study concluded that stations that program for minority audiences earn about 29 percent less revenue per listener than those that air general-market programming, and it found as well that minority-owned radio stations take in less revenue per listener than comparable majority-owned stations. The cause of this disparity was not hard to find. When asked in one survey to describe their experiences selling advertising time, 91 percent of the minority-owned stations reported that they had encountered "dictates" not to buy advertising on their stations. Many stations had attempted to quell advertisers' concerns with market research that showed that placing ads on their stations was a profitable practice. But these efforts were often ignored and seldom led to changes in policy. Even when minority broadcasters were able to attract advertising, the advertisers often insisted on discounted rates. More than 61 percent of the stations surveyed reported that they were paid less than mainstream stations of the same size who ran the same ads. The difference in payments was very substantial: for specific advertising these stations

received 59 percent less on average. They estimated that discounts and dictates together reduced their revenues by more than 60 percent.

Although this study did not have the data to determine exactly why these patterns persist among advertisers, who in fact would benefit financially if they treated all broadcasters equally, anecdotal evidence suggests that a major factor is ethnic and racial stereotyping. That is, advertisers are underestimating the disposable income minority listeners can spend on their products and they may fear that associating their products with minority stations or listeners would hurt their products' "image." Last year, one ad sales firm distributed a memo to advertisers recommending that they steer clear of "urban" stations and instead buy time on stations that offer "prospects, not suspects."

The effects of these practices on minority broadcasting and the public at large are profound. The lack of fairness in competition for revenue means that minority stations are not likely to be as profitable as their majority-owned counterparts and, therefore, cannot provide programming that is as varied or of as high a quality. This in turn damages their overall chances of success and means these stations cannot be as numerous as they otherwise would be. The minority community and the general public both lose. The minority community and its listeners lose a needed service—broadcasters who respond to their needs and report on events in their communities and news of interest to them. Discriminatory policies, in the end, work against the expression of the minority community's interests, ideas, and opinions. The general public loses the diversity of viewpoint and format provided by these stations, leading to a more homogeneous, less informative menu available on the radio dial.

Recommendations

To counteract these practices, the report makes several recommendations.

- Further research is needed to quantify the impact of discriminatory practices against minority-owned and minority-formatted stations.
- The Federal Communications Commission and the Federal Trade Commission should formulate policies on acceptable advertising practices.
- The White House should consider issuing an executive order banning federal agencies from contracting with advertising agencies that practice "no Urban/Spanish dictates" and "minority discounts."

Continued on page 8

Admissions

Continued from page 4

The Texas approach would admit some students from weaker high schools while turning down better prepared applicants who happen not to finish in the top tenth of their class in academically stronger schools. Income-based strategies are unlikely to be good substitutes for race-sensitive admissions policies because there are simply too few blacks and Latinos from poor families who have strong enough academic records to qualify for admission to highly selective institutions.

What would happen if universities were flatly prohibited from considering race in admissions? Our findings suggest that over half of the black students in selective colleges today would have been rejected. We can estimate what would be lost as a result:

- Of the more than 700 black students who would have been rejected in 1976 under a race neutral standard, more than 225 went on to earn doctorates or degrees in law, medicine, or business. Approximately 70 are now doctors, roughly 60 are lawyers, and almost 125 are business executives. The average earnings among all 700 exceeds \$71,000, and well over 300 are leaders of civic organizations.

- The impact of race-neutral admissions would be especially drastic in admission to professional schools. The proportion of black students in the “top ten” law, business, and medical schools would probably decline to less than 1 percent. These are the main professional schools from which most leading hospitals, law firms, and corporations recruit. The result of race-neutral admissions, therefore, would be to damage severely the prospects for developing a larger minority presence in the corporate and professional leadership of America.

The ultimate issue in considering race sensitive admissions policies is how the country can best prepare itself for a society in which one-third of the population will be black and Latino by the time today’s college students are at the height of their careers. With that in mind, would it be wise to reduce substantially the number of well-prepared blacks and Latinos graduating from many of our leading colleges and professional schools? Considering students’ own views about what they have gained from living and learning with classmates from different backgrounds and races and the demonstrated success of black graduates in the workplace and the community, we do not think so. ■

Radio

Continued from page 7

- The advertising and broadcast industries should develop codes of conduct that prohibit these unfair practices. Specifically, they should pledge to base advertising placement and payment on objective market research by accredited market research services rather than on ethnic and racial stereotypes.

Federal Communications Commission Chairman William Kennard, the first African American to head the regulatory agency, announced that the FCC will hold a summit on February 22 in New York City to bring

together representatives from the advertising and broadcasting industries, other media representatives, the Federal Communications Commission, and Congress to discuss the development of a code of conduct regarding advertising placement and payments.

Kennard said that the advertising practices were not only unfair but also unwise. “Madison Avenue needs to understand today’s Main Street,” he said in a statement released by the FCC. “There is not only a diversity of people in America, but a diversity of types of people within each group—rich and poor, educated and unskilled, blue- and white-collar.” ■

FOCUS is printed on recycled paper with soy-based ink.



Joint Center for Political
and Economic Studies
1090 Vermont Ave., NW
Suite 1100
Washington, D.C. 20005-4961
202-789-3500

IMPORTANT!

NOTICE TO READERS: Please send address or title changes to Information Resources, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. YOU MUST ATTACH THE MAILING LABEL FROM THE BACK COVER when writing about service or change of address. Thank you.

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT No. 6958
Washington, D.C.

ADDRESS
CORRECTION
REQUESTED

Postmaster:
Form 3547 requested

TRENDLETTER

POLITICAL REPORT

by David C. Ruffin

New CBC Chair James Clyburn Outlines Agenda

On January 6, South Carolina Congressman James Clyburn assumed the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) at its ceremonial swearing-in held at the Library of Congress. Clyburn, who begins his fourth term in the House of Representatives, succeeds Maxine Waters (D-Cal.). The ceremony, which coincided with the convening of the 106th Congress, was attended by Vice President Al Gore, House Democratic leader Dick Gephardt (D-Mo.), and poet Maya Angelou. Addressing the social justice concerns that the Caucus will concentrate on over the next two years, Clyburn said, "We reach out today to people of good will in the belief that ours is not a special interest narrowed by considerations of race. We believe instead—as did Dr. King—that 'injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.'"

Three Social Justice Concerns

Clyburn identified three issues that will receive special attention. The first concerns racial diversity among federal judges. Few federal courts,

Clyburn noted, reflect the racial composition of the populations within their jurisdictions. An example is the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, which comprises the states of Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. There are no African Americans sitting on the panel of Fourth Circuit judges, even though the court presides over a higher concentration of African Americans than any other federal circuit.

James E. Clyburn (D)

Of Charleston, South Carolina —First elected to Congress in 1992; elected to fourth term in 1998

Born: July 21, 1940, Sumter, S.C.

Education: South Carolina State College, B.S. 1962

Occupation: State official

Political Career: S.C. Human Affairs commissioner, 1974–92; sought Democratic nomination for S.C. secretary of state, 1978, 1986

Congressional Committee: Appropriations

Congressional Subcommittees:

Transportation

Energy and Water Development

A second issue for the Caucus is the 2000 Census. Clyburn asserted that "there is nothing more damaging to the rights of minorities than being undercounted." During the 1990 Census, conducted during the Bush administration, eight million Americans were not counted and a disproportionately high percentage of the

uncounted were African Americans and Latinos.

Census data are the means by which the federal government allocates dollars, for example to pave roads and provide health care support, and they are relied on by state legislatures to draw election districts. The 1990 undercount, in Clyburn's view, led to a denial of services, inadequate funding, and underrepresentation. "The Congressional Black Caucus does not believe

the undercount was the result of accidents, coincidence, or necessary mistakes," he stated. Despite the Supreme Court's January decision to ban the use of scientific sampling methods endorsed by the National Academy of Sciences, the Caucus will continue to work for a full Census count.

The third issue, environmental justice, is critical to the health and economic well-being of many low-income urban and rural Americans. "Minority citizens are regularly placed at risk by public leaders who bring unwelcome projects, like landfills and hazardous waste disposal centers, into low-income neighborhoods," Clyburn said. "Somehow, the same standards which apply in the affluent suburbs don't seem to apply in the inner city or small rural communities."

Environmental clean-up, meanwhile, can pose a second kind of hardship—economic. Many minority Americans are employed by older

industries and factories that are financially hard pressed to meet anti-pollution standards imposed by local, state, and federal enforcement agencies. When companies close because they cannot meet environmental standards, minorities and their families are often deprived of their best source of regular income. Clyburn recognizes this dilemma.

"Big city mayors deserve support as they fight to create and protect jobs which their cities need so desperately," he said. "At the same time, minority and low-income neighborhoods should not become the dumping ground for hazardous pollutants that threaten the health and safety of residents." Clyburn called for balance and fairness, taking human health, the environment, equity, and economic development into account. He added, "The CBC will push for decisions on environmental fairness based on scientific assessments, and not political decisions based on racial insensitivity or disdain for low-income Americans."

In presenting this agenda, Clyburn stressed the importance of coalition politics. "This is not a black or minority agenda," he stated. "This is an agenda for all Americans dedicated to the principle of fairness and equity for all citizens. We offer these concerns not with the notion that the 38 members of the Congressional Black Caucus are capable of achieving solutions all by themselves. Success, in our view, depends upon our ability to enlist the support and attention of those who share our common interests.

"We want to join hands with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, the National Bar Association, and others when we tackle judicial matters. We want to work with the NAACP, the Urban League, the National Conference of Black Mayors, the National Black Caucus of Local Elected

Officials, and others who have a particular stake in an accurate census for 2000. We are anxious to work with the many environmental groups, the Sierra Club, the League of Conservation Voters, fraternities, sororities, Masonic orders, and the scores of others who have concerns for the health and economic well being of all Americans."

Representing the 6th District

When he was first elected in 1992, Clyburn became the first African American to represent his state in Congress since Reconstruction in the 19th century. Before his election, he was a teacher and an employment counselor, and he directed two youth and community development programs in Charleston. In 1974, Governor John C. West appointed him South Carolina Human Affairs Commissioner, a position he held for 18 years.

Clyburn's 6th congressional district is 61 percent black, and it is the poorest in the state with 23 percent of its population living below the poverty line. Because of the rural and urban make-up of his district, Clyburn is a strong advocate for industrial as well as agricultural development. Sometimes this has placed him at odds with Clinton administration policy on the tobacco industry. Clyburn opposed proposals to curb tobacco consumption by increasing the excise tax on cigarettes as well as other regulations on tobacco products. About 42 percent of 6th district families are dependent on tobacco and its related industries for their incomes.

During his tenure on Capitol Hill, Clyburn has sponsored legislation to raise the minimum wage, and he has been an outspoken supporter of affirmative action. His commitment to civil rights goes back to his days as a student at South Carolina State University at Orangeburg in the early

1960s, where he sat-in at segregated lunch counters and led protest marches. He was jailed several times for his protest actions.

"Those were times when we lived in the shadow of Jim Crow laws, which told us where we could eat, and shop, and work, and live, and go to school," Clyburn says. "Jim Crow is now out of business." Nevertheless, he believes the fight to preserve civil rights must continue, stating that "Freedom cannot be left unattended, rights cannot be taken for granted, liberty cannot go unprotected."

Clyburn expressed alarm at the destructive turn public life in America has taken toward the politics of exclusion. "Partisanship has been applied with such zealous and mindless obsession that the broad and diverse needs of the people of America have been sacrificed for the constricted ideologies of the few," he said. "I am talking about a political system which is rampant with a winner-take-all mentality and which attempts to exclude all but those of like minds and values. Democracy is not meant to be the tyranny of the majority. It is meant to be a noble forum in which ideas must stand the test of debate. Our success as a nation will be based not upon the ruthless will of the majority, but upon the ability of diverse peoples to respect each other, to strive for common goals, and to build a society of tolerance and understanding."

Referring to the Constitution, Clyburn said, "The first seven words in the preamble, 'We the People of the United States,' define who we are. But we in the Congressional Black Caucus derive our inspiration from the next eight words: 'in order to form a more perfect union.'" ■



For more information on this subject, visit our website at www.jointctr.org and look for this icon.

ECONOMIC REPORT

by Margaret C. Simms

Black Unemployment Hits Record Low: Can It Stay This Good?

At the end of 1998, the unemployment rate for African Americans was as low as it has ever been. Their December unemployment rate was 7.9 percent, and for all of 1998 it was 8.9 percent. These are the lowest rates for African Americans since the government began calculating them in 1972. Over the decade of the 1990s, the unemployment rate declined more for black men than it did for black women. In 1990, black men had an unemployment rate of 11.8 percent, one percentage point higher than that for black women, but by 1998, their unemployment rates were identical (see Figure 1). The total number of jobs held by black men increased by 956,000 (or 16%) over the period. Job growth for black women was higher—1.6 million jobs (27% growth)—and the proportion of black women who were employed rose from 51.5 percent in 1990 to 57.2 percent in 1998. In contrast, the proportion of black men employed rose more modestly from 61.8 to 62.9 percent. (Note: The unemployment rate is based on the number of people without jobs who are actively looking for work and does not include those not in the labor force. So the employment-to-population ratio and the unemployment rate do not add up to 100 percent.)

The types of jobs held by African Americans also improved over the decade. For both men and women, the share of their jobs in the managerial and professional category increased.

Likewise, the proportion of black men in service and operator jobs, both relatively low paying, declined. Although some of the occupational shifts reflect an overall shift in the types of jobs available for all workers, black men appeared to make real progress in their occupational distribution relative to the rest of the population. Whereas in 1990 they were only half as likely as white men to be in managerial and professional jobs, by 1998 they were closer to two-thirds as likely. They also seemed to be moving out of operator, fabricator, and laborer jobs at a slightly faster rate than white men. However, the differences between whites and blacks are still large (see Figure 2).

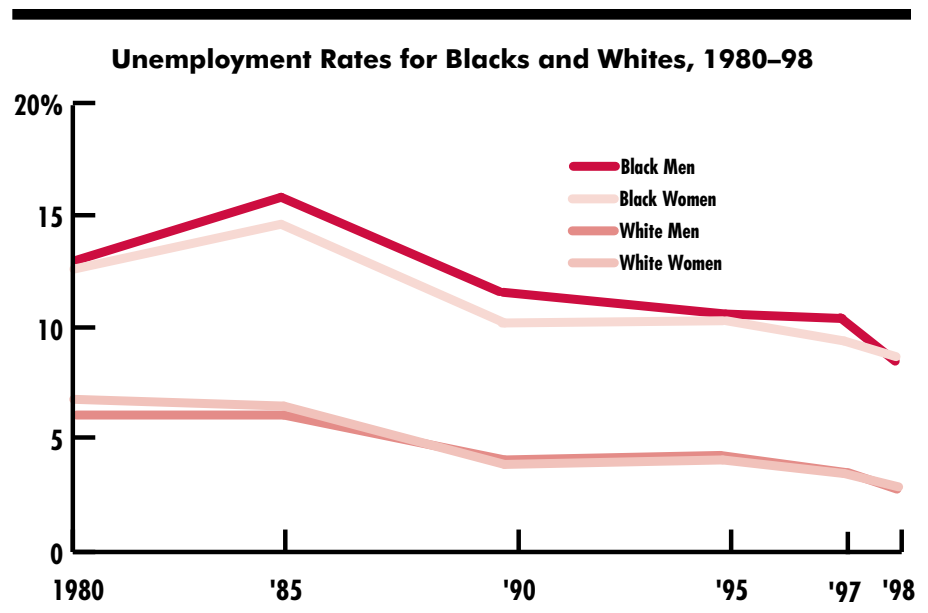
On the day the 1998 statistics were released, President Clinton told an audience in Detroit that the unemployment rates support his assertion that “this [the economy] is a rising tide that is lifting all boats.” The U.S. economy is certainly buoyant. The overall unemployment rate in December was 4.3 percent. The annual average of 4.5 percent for 1998 was the lowest recorded since 1969, a

year when the U.S. was still engaged in the Vietnam War, which took many young men out of the civilian labor force. To find a peacetime rate as low as that of 1998, one has to go back as far as 1957.

While African Americans have benefitted tremendously from the expansion in employment, further gains may be affected by changes in the types of jobs that will be available.

It is important to remember that the structure of the economy and the types of jobs available are very different today from what they were in the 1950s or even the early 1970s. In those earlier decades, one in every four workers was employed in the manufacturing sector. By the 1990s, only one in seven workers labored in the manufacturing industry. The projection for the year 2006 is that only one in eight jobs will be in manufacturing. The fastest job growth will be in industries such as computer and data processing, health services, and management and public relations. The position of African Americans will be affected by their ability to get jobs in the industries

Figure 1.



Source: U.S. Department of Labor

and occupations with the most promising outlook for the future.

Where Will the Jobs Be?

By the year 2006, the black labor force is projected to grow to just over 17 million workers, 1.2 million more workers than in 1998. If the economy continues to perform at the current rate and blacks share in job growth the same way they have over the past three or four years, they would hold close to 15.6 million jobs in the U.S. economy by 2006. However, if the proportion of jobs held by blacks were to equal that of the general labor force in 1998, they will hold 16.5 million jobs, which would require that African Americans snag an additional one million jobs in the economy.

Whether blacks are able to hold the share of jobs they now have or move closer to parity—absent discrimination—will depend on the skills they bring to the marketplace. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that the fastest growth in job

openings between 1996 and 2006 (25.4%) will be for positions that require a bachelor's degree. Those jobs currently pay close to \$700 per week. Many of them are in occupations that did not exist during the earlier periods of low unemployment—including database administrators, computer support specialists, and systems analysts. In general, these are jobs where blacks are currently underrepresented, in part due to lack of training.

There will still be a large number of jobs in low skill occupations. Cashiers, salespersons, and truck drivers are three occupations projected to enjoy job growth; together they will add 1.5 million positions over the next decade. But jobs such as these, many requiring only short-term on-the-job training, pay less than half as much per week as those requiring a college degree.

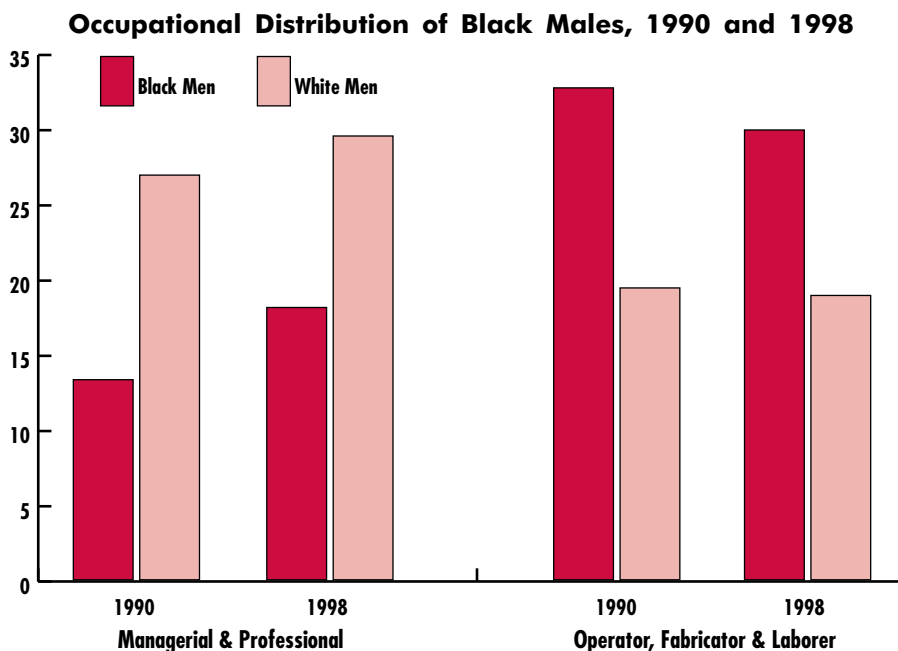
Skill Requirements

If African Americans are to make progress or even hold their own in the

labor market over the next 10 years, they will need more education, especially technology education. The interim report of the President's Information Technology Advisory Committee, issued in August 1998, adds another voice to those raising the alarm over the socioeconomic implications of new information technology in the workplace. The committee's report states: "To remain competitive in a global economy, we need to ensure that every American emerges from school with the general and specific skills needed to prosper in an information rich society. Current studies show that women and minorities are vastly underrepresented in both educational and workplace settings which require the development and/or use of information technology skills. Our nation will not prosper if we do not invest in developing all our human resources."

Among the committee's recommendations are studies to assess the social and economic impact of the diffusion of technology, the expansion of federal and collaborative initiatives to increase access, literacy, and research capabilities, and the development of new educational programs to retrain information technology workers whose skills have become outdated. While the advisory committee report does not mention particular kinds of educational institutions for federal funding or program access, special attention should be given to historically black colleges and universities and community-based training providers, in addition to elementary and secondary institutions where minority students are enrolled. These institutions have traditionally served a disproportionate share of African Americans entering the workforce and, with the advent of "race neutral" programs at many majority-white institutions, their contribution will be more important than ever. ■

Figure 2.



Source: U.S. Department of Labor