Volume 18, No. 1 January 1990

FOCUS

The monthly magazine of the Joint Center for Political Studies®

Foot Soldiers on the March to Freedom

The New Mayor of New York Promises a Government Open to All, Committed to Social Justice, and Tough on Crime

Hunger in America: A National Shame That Can Be Ended

A Modest Expansion of Existing Federal Programs Could Put Food on Almost Everyone's Plate

Unrestrained Spending for Prisons

As Drug Convictions Swell U.S. Prisons, the Cost of Supporting a Growing Penal System Is Getting Out of Control

POLITICAL TRENDLETTER®

Perspective

ISSN 0740-0195

PRICE $1.50

JCPS Celebrates Its 20th Anniversary This Year

Founded in 1970 with a grant from the Ford Foundation, the Joint Center has emerged as one of the nation's leading public policy research institutions. Popularly called a "black think tank," this unique multiracial institution contributes to the national interest by helping black Americans participate fully and effectively in the political and economic life of our society.

The Joint Center's success over the past two decades is inextricably linked to the success of blacks generally in the political and public life of the nation. By any yardstick, black political achievements have been significant, often dramatic. The number of black elected officials has grown from 1,469 in 1970 to 7,226 in 1989, and increasingly the black electorate figures prominently in major elections, including all presidential campaigns.

I think it is fair to say that between the mayoral elections of Carl Stokes in Cleveland and Richard Hatcher in Gary in 1968 and the elections of Virginia Governor L. Douglas Wilder and New York Mayor David N. Dinkins in 1989, black political empowerment came of age. It is now an undeniable reality.

The Center's success also can be measured in terms of what we originally set out to accomplish. Writing in the first *Focus* magazine in 1972, I tried to summarize our vision in these words:

> "We are required to be both a center for intellectual discovery and a wellspring of practical political knowledge...a center of excellence—an organization whose ability is unquestioned and whose credibility is beyond reproach...a forum in which scholars and practitioners of diverse interests and views can exchange ideas, interact on public policy issues, and search for alternatives."

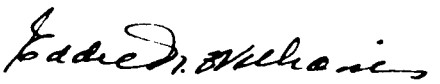
We have been and continue to be diligent in pursuit of this vision. With the continued support of our funding sources and our constituents, we will expand our efforts in the final decade of this century.

The Center will commemorate its founding throughout 1990 with a series of conferences, forums, and publications. The kick-off for these activities will be our 20th Anniversary Dinner, which will be held in Washington, D.C., on April 4. Chaired by Xerox chairman and CEO David Kearns, this event will honor Governor Wilder, the first black elected governor in the nation's history.

Coincidentally, Governor Wilder's political career began in 1970, the same year the Center was founded. We are delighted to be able to honor him for his historic political achievement at a time when we can look back with him on 20 years of successful public service and look forward to future service to society.

Another special event is planned for mid-year, a Founder's Day program honoring the many men and women who played major roles in the conception and delivery of the infant Joint Center in 1970. On this occasion we will release a history of the Center written by distinguished historian Darlene Clark Hine, a professor at Michigan State University.

On a personal note, I am pleased to have had the opportunity to be the Center's president for almost 18 of its 20 years, and I am deeply indebted to my staff, our Board of Governors, and a host of well-wishers who over the years have shared my vision for this institution and have helped to make it a reality. ■



PRESIDENT

FOCUS
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Foot Soldiers on the March to Freedom

The New Mayor of New York Promises a Government Open to All, Committed to Social Justice, and Tough on Crime

by David N. Dinkins

Editor's Note: Following is the historic inaugural address of New York City's newly elected mayor, delivered on January 1, 1990. A full transcript of Virginia Governor L. Douglas Wilder's inaugural address will be featured in next month's issue of Focus.

Today we mark more than a transfer of power. Today we travel another mile on freedom's road. It is a giant step for us. But it is only one of the many now being taken around the world.

So we gather here in the fresh chill of a new year to begin a new administration, to enter a new decade and to welcome a new birth of liberty, which has steadily been expanding in our own land and which has suddenly exploded in so many nations that once seemed so permanently gripped in an iron tyranny.

Who thought or predicted that in 1989, or even in this century, or even in our lifetime, we could hear freedom ring from Berlin to Bucharest, from Prague to Budapest, and all the way to the walls of the Kremlin itself?

Human rights is the most powerful idea in human history. And now we know—and yes, we don't just hope, we know—that someday soon the bells of freedom will also ring in Tiananmen Square and in Soweto.

We are all foot soldiers on the march to freedom, here and everywhere. We all belong to the America that Lincoln called "the last, best hope of earth."

In advancing that hope, our most powerful weapon is example. And this year, this city has given powerful proof of the proposition that all of us are created equal.

I stand here before you today as the elected leader of the greatest city of a great nation, to which my ancestors were brought, chained and whipped, in the hold of a slave ship.

We have not finished the journey toward liberty and justice. But surely we have come a long way.

This day is not a tribute to me; it is a tribute to you, the people of New York.

And the government we inaugurate here will belong to you, not to any elite or any narrow interest. Ours will be a civic forum, an open democracy that hears diverse views and voices before it decides, a democracy that holds out hope for the hopeless and assuages the fears of the fearful, a democracy that appeals to what is best in us and strives to bring us together.

I see New York as a gorgeous mosaic of race and religious faith, of national origin and sexual orientation, of individuals whose families arrived yesterday and generations ago, coming through Ellis Island or Kennedy Airport or on buses bound for the Port Authority.

In that spirit, I offer this fundamental pledge: I intend to be the mayor of all the people of New York.

This administration will never lead by dividing, by setting some of us against the rest of us, or by favoring one group over others.

This administration will redefine the relationship between City Hall and our local neighborhoods and communities. From City Island to Staten Island, from East Harlem to East New York, we will empower people and we will respect the need for neighborhood stabilization. We will encourage local business development.

And we will emphasize community-based efforts to provide prenatal care, lead screening, child care, after-school programs and centers of culture and companionship for seniors. Again and again, we will tend to the grassroots, to nurture the initiatives that will become the new ideas of New York's future.

This administration will seek an inclusive prosperity, not one that leaves too many lost amidst the wealth and grandeur that surrounds us. We will join with business and labor to build the economy of the 21st century. And we will ask them to join with us to prepare our people to work in it, to earn their own way and to move ahead.

This administration will renew the quest for social justice, whether the issue is education or affordable housing, the environment, health care or consumer rights, the shame of homelessness or the pain of AIDS. We will speak out against national policies that offer cold indifference instead of compassion.

And we will set our priorities to strengthen the weak, to help those who have been hurt and to keep the middle class living in New York City.

I recognize that we cannot do everything we should, that our finances may get worse before they get better, that for now our dreams are bigger than our budget. We must assure a long-term fiscal stability. We face difficult times ahead. And we will make the difficult choices. The sacrifices will be shared, and shared fairly.

As a city, we cannot live beyond our means. And, however, we will never be mean spirited and we must never lose sight of our dreams.

We must never forget the moral imperatives that count far more than money.

We must demand the equality of women, and defend a woman's right to choose.

We must stand for, and speak for, justice around the world, including Israel's right to exist in safety and security and a free South Africa, rid of the evil of apartheid.

We must oppose discrimination in any form against anyone, African-American or Asian, Latino, persons with disabilities and veterans, lesbians, and gays.

In dealing with AIDS, we must seek to cure the disease, and not to curse the afflicted. Most of all, we must reaffirm the rule of law and fight back against the pushers and muggers and take back our streets and subways and our parks. And we must do this by night, as well as by day.

Let me say what I said so often during the campaign. I intend to be the toughest mayor on crime this city has ever seen.

Ours will be a civic forum, an open democracy that hears diverse views and voices before it decides, a democracy that holds out hope for the hopeless and assuages the fears of the fearful, a democracy that appeals to what is best in us and strives to bring us together.

And I challenge our citizens to enlist in that cause, to work with the police and to depose the drug dealers from their places of power, to arrest them and convict them and send them to prison. The enemy is not just overseas in Panama or Colombia. In too many neighborhoods, the enemy is across the street, peddling poison to our kids.

The answer is not to legalize drugs, but to enforce the laws against them.

The answer is not to explain or excuse crime, but to insist that there is no such thing as just stealing from a store or just snatching a purse. We must demand discipline and respect for the law and for each other from all who share this city.

Lawlessness is as unacceptable inside the government of New York as it is on the sidewalks of New York. Official corruption is nothing less than another form of common theft. And it will not be tolerated in this administration.

I believe that freedom from crime is a basic civil right of all our people, as fundamental as the franchise and fair housing.

So here today, in my first act as mayor, I invite each of you to enter office with me, by joining a community anti-crime group, by helping a public school provide drug education or, if you're a parent, by insisting upon a new ethic of individual accountability and responsibility for your children and your family.

I believe that individuals can make a difference. But I also believe that there are great differences only government can make. Our city budget is complex. Our programs are numbered in the hundreds, our public employees in the hundreds of thousands. Yet our purpose is simple and enduring, to improve the standard of life for each and every citizen.

And we must start with the most vulnerable and the most precious of all our people, our children.

To that end, I hereby dedicate the Dinkins administration to the children of New York. And the measure of whether I fulfill my mandate will be how we treat those who start out in life during my tenure at City Hall.

As we join together here in this pageant of progress and democracy, there is, this morning, somewhere in this city, a child born addicted to crack, a child suffering from AIDS, a child beaten down by the deprivation of poverty, a child abandoned, a child forgotten, a child whose dream has already been denied.

No matter how rich and powerful we become, we cannot be satisfied when so many children experience the sunset of opportunity at the very dawn of their existence.

For the children of this city are voices of hope, singing out the sweet songs of the future amidst the discord of daily life.

They sing in Spanish and English, Russian and Italian, Korean and Creole, all the dozens of languages we speak in our town.

The spirit of their youth says to each of us follow your hopes and not your fears.

And to them—and to each of you—I make this promise, the same one I made when I entered the United States Marine Corps: Semper fidelis. Always faithful.

Thank you.
God bless you.
Keep the faith. ■

Join Us at Our 20th Anniversary Dinner

The Joint Center for Political Studies will celebrate its 20th Anniversary at this year's annual dinner on Wednesday, April 4, 1990, to be held at the Washington Hilton Hotel here in the nation's capital. Virginia Governor L. Douglas Wilder will be honored at the event.

David T. Kearns, chairman and chief executive officer of Xerox Corporation, is the national dinner chairman, and Robert B. Washington, Jr., managing partner of the law firm of Laxalt, Washington, Perito & Dubuc, is chairing the General Dinner Committee.

Sponsors' tables of 10 seats each are priced at $5,000; patrons' tables of 10 are $2,500; and individual tickets are $250. For further information or to make reservations, please call Alfreda Edwards at 202—626-3555.

January 1990

JCPS

POLITICAL TRENDLETTER®

Inside This Issue

- **Bush's choice to head the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division might not be welcomed in the black community.**
- **Congressman Conyers calls for reparations for the American descendants of African slaves.**
- **Update: President Bush's appointment of black officials.**
- **Across the Nation: Court orders Georgia to redraw its judicial districts; Craig Washington wins Houston congressional seat; recount confirms L. Douglas Wilder as governor of Virginia.**

Bush Names White Environmental Lawyer as Civil Rights Chief

Having failed to obtain Senate confirmation last July for black former Wayne County executive WILLIAM LUCAS to become assistant U.S. attorney general for civil rights, the White House has once again disappointed civil rights activists by naming John R. Dunne for the post. Dunne, a white Republican, served as a New York state senator for 24 years and was deputy majority leader of the state senate before retiring in 1989. He now has a private environmental law practice in Uniondale, New York. Civil rights leaders complain that Dunne, like Lucas, is ill suited for the job because he has practically no civil rights experience.

Bush administration officials seem unable or unwilling to find a nominee who is acceptable to the civil rights community to head the division, which is the lead federal agency charged with preventing and correcting discrimination. Dunne is one of two candidates President **GEORGE BUSH** considered for the sensitive post after the Lucas nomination failed. The other was white conservative San Francisco attorney **LAWRENCE SISKIND,** formerly special counsel for Immigration Related Unfair Employment Practices at the Justice Department. The Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department has been leaderless since December 1989 when **WILLIAM BRADFORD REYNOLDS,** who served throughout the Reagan administration, resigned. The consensus among civil rights advocates is that Reynolds spent most of his tenure trying to obstruct anti-discrimination enforcement.

In addition to his inexperience, heads of civil rights organizations and black political leaders were alarmed that Lucas had not viewed recent Supreme Court decisions—which have weakened anti-discrimination protections—as serious departures from current civil rights law. **They urged President Bush to nominate another black for the position after they opposed Lucas. Recently, JULIUS L. CHAMBERS, director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund Inc., urged the President in a letter "to seek a black lawyer for this position, not because we think that this job should be reserved for blacks, but because we believe that at this time a black American, or an attorney with a clear record of active support for civil rights, is more likely to understand the realities of discrimination and to bring to the office the special commitment required to do this job well."**

Dunne's nomination may well stir up the same furor among the civil rights community as Lucas's nomination. In addition to Dunne's inexperience, his general sensitivity to civil rights has been questioned. Since 1957 he has belonged to a Long Island golf club that excludes women, and for 24 years he belonged to another golf club in Albany that did not admit women until 1988. Nevertheless, according to a Republican National Committee spokesman, Dunne's name will be formally submitted for the post after the mandatory FBI investigation is complete.

Beyond the issue of who heads the civil rights division is a concern in the civil rights community over how committed the federal government is to the vigorous enforcement of anti-discrimination laws. Writing in the October 1989 issue of NBA magazine, published monthly by the National Bar Association (an organization of black attorneys), **BARRY WEISBERG,** an official of the Cook County (Illinois) Public Defender's Office, states, "It is time the Senate Judiciary Committee addressed the fundamental issues which go beyond the qualifications of any

nominee to lead the [Justice Department's Civil Rights] Division....The issue for the Division in the 1990s is not only leadership, but the need to establish more suitable remedies for discrimination while creating an enforcement apparatus that is capable of narrowing the gap between equality as *opportunity* and equality as *fact.*"

Conyers Introduces Reparations Bill

Congressman JOHN CONYERS (D-Mich.), citing the "fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality and inhumanity" of slavery in the United States, has introduced a reparations bill (H.R. 3745) designed to investigate whether Americans of African ancestry should be compensated for the impact of slavery. The bill would establish a seven-member "Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African Americans," which would make recommendations to Congress within a year on whether reparations are warranted, what form and amount such compensation should take, and who should be eligible. The commission would recommend remedies to problems caused by slavery and by *de jure* and *de facto* segregation against slaves and their descendants. The members of the commission would be appointed by the President (three members), the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives (three members), and the president pro tempore of the U.S. Senate (one member).

Rep. Conyers asserts that there is a persuasive moral argument that nearly 250 years of free slave labor, dating from the settlement of Jamestown, require repayment. After the establishment of the Republic, four million Africans and their descendants were enslaved (from 1789 to 1863) and this slavery was sanctioned by the U.S. Constitution and spelled out in federal statutes. Among other items, the commission would consider whether the government should issue a formal apology for "gross human rights violations."

The issue of reparations for black Americans is not new. In fact, it dates back to the promise of "forty acres and a mule" made to emancipated slaves during the post-Civil War Reconstruction era. **Since then, numerous scholars and political activists have made the case for reparations. In 1972, the 10,000 delegates of the Black National Convention held in Gary, Indiana, called for reparations as part of the "Black Agenda" they adopted. Reparations advocates have cited Public Law 100-383, enacted by Congress in 1988, as a precedent supporting the concept of paying federal reparations to blacks. In accordance with that law, Congress is appropriating total reparations of $1.2 billion to Japanese-Americans who were held in World War II concentration camps in the U.S. Each former internee is to receive $20,000.**

Washington, D.C., is not the only place where the reparations idea has taken hold. Just last year, black State Senator **WILLIAM OWENS** introduced a reparations bill (S. 1621) in the Massachusetts Senate that would compensate for African slavery, the slave trade, and the effects of discrimination against descendants of Africans born or living in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. That bill has been refiled for the 1990 session.

Black Appointments by President Bush—Year One

Since January marks the completion of George Bush's first full year in office as president, *Focus* lists some of his more significant black appointments. Further updates of black appointees to the Bush administration will appear in future installments of *TrendLetter.* (See March and April 1989 issues of *Focus.*)

COLIN POWELL, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Department of Defense. General Powell is the first black and, at 52, the youngest person to be named the nation's highest-ranking military officer. Powell is eminently qualified for the post. After serving two tours of duty in Vietnam as a combat infantry officer, during which he was awarded a Purple Heart, Powell rose quickly through the ranks. In the last three years he has commanded the V Corps in Germany and the U.S. Forces Command in the United States. Perhaps the best preparation for his new post were his stints as military assistant to Defense Secretary **CASPAR WEINBERGER** from 1983 to 1986 and as national security advisor to former President Reagan. In these last two positions Powell contributed to developing the "big picture" of the Reagan administration's military and strategic policy. Knowledgeable and articulate, Powell displayed an integrity that restored public confidence in the National Security Council in the wake of the Iran-Contra scandal, an affair dominated by council staff member Marine Lieutenant Colonel **OLIVER NORTH** and by Admiral **JOHN POINDEXTER,** the national security advisor Powell replaced. Powell was a primary architect of the December invasion of Panama by U.S. troops to oust dictator **MANUEL NORIEGA,** now being held for trial in the United States.

GWENDOLYN S. KING, commissioner of Social Security, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. King administers all federal social security programs, including Old Age Insurance, Survivor's Insurance, Disability Insurance, and Supplemental Security Income for the needy, aged, blind, and disabled. In total, these programs provide monthly incomes for 42 million beneficiaries. As commissioner, King oversees a staff of 65,000 and

an annual budget of nearly $250 billion, one of the largest budgets in the world. King was director of the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs under President Reagan from 1986 to 1988. She was also director of the State of Pennsylvania's liaison office in Washington, D.C., and senior legislative aide to Sen. **JOHN HEINZ** (R-Penn.) and has held staff posts at the Departments of Housing and Urban Development and Health, Education and Welfare during the Ford and Carter administrations.

WILLIAM C. BROOKS, assistant secretary, Employment Standards Administration, Department of Labor. The Employment Standards Administration is the largest agency in the Department of Labor and contains the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, the Office of Worker Compensation Programs, and the Wage and Hour Division. Brooks administers laws and regulations involving employment conditions for most U.S. workers as well as Executive Order 11246, designed to protect minorities from employment discrimination. An executive for 16 years with General Motors, his most recent position there was as corporate executive director of Personnel Administration. Before joining General Motors, Brooks held a variety of federal civil service positions.

MICHAEL J. CALHOUN, chief of staff of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). As one of HHS Secretary **LOUIS SULLIVAN'S** principal advisors, Calhoun has department-wide management responsibilities in the nation's largest federal department, which administers 250 programs and has a budget for fiscal year 1990 of more than $424 billion. Calhoun came to HHS from the Washington law firm of Laxalt, Washington, Perito & Dubuc, where he was a partner. Prior to that, he was vice chair of the International Trade Commission and a senior legislative aide on the House Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee. Calhoun's academic credentials are impeccable—he holds a B.A. from Princeton and a law degree from Harvard and has studied at the London School of Economics.

JOSHUA I. SMITH, chairman, Commission on Minority Business Development. The 14-member bipartisan commission was recently mandated by Congress—in the Business Opportunity Development Reform Act passed in 1988—to review the effectiveness of the federal 8(a) minority business set-aside program, which is managed by the Small Business Administration. The commission is conducting a two-year study to advise the President on ways to promote and develop more minority-owned businesses. Smith, a beneficiary of the 8(a) program himself, is founder and chief executive officer of Maxima Corporation, a computer consulting company he formed in 1978 with $15,000 and which today employs 1,300 people with 1989 revenues of $57 million. Smith was honorary chairman of the 1988 Maryland Bush/Quayle Campaign and is an advisor to **LEE ATWATER,** chairman of the Republican National Committee. The executive director of the Commission on Minority Business Development is **LEONARD SPEARMAN,** who has served as deputy director of the White House Office of Presidential Personnel and as a special assistant with the Small Business Administration.

REGGIE B. WALTON, associate director of the National Drug Policy Office. As head of the Bureau of State and Local Affairs, the number-three position under drug "czar" **WILLIAM BENNETT,** Walton coordinates state and local anti-drug efforts. He has served as deputy presiding judge of the Criminal Division of the Superior Court for Washington, D.C. From 1981 to 1986 Walton was an associate Superior Court judge, where he earned a reputation as a tough sentencer with special compassion for the victims of violent crime.

TERENCE A. TODMAN, ambassador to Argentina. One of the nation's ablest diplomats, Todman has seen service in numerous countries in Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America. A career minister in the Senior Foreign Service, he was most recently ambassador to Denmark from October 1983 to January 1989. Before that, he was ambassador to Spain for five years. Todman has also served as ambassador to Chad (1969 to 1972), Guinea (1972 to 1975), and Costa Rica (1975 to 1977). He began his State Department career in 1952 as the India-Ceylon-Nepal desk officer in the Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs. Todman received the Presidential Distinguished Service Award in 1985 and the President's Meritorious Service Award in 1988. He has also been decorated by the governments of Spain, Denmark, and the Virgin Islands.

LEONARD H. O. SPEARMAN, Ambassador to the Republic of Rwanda (Central Africa). Spearman, a life-long college educator and the father of Leonard Spearman (see above), was president and professor of educational psychology at Texas Southern University. He has also taught at Florida A & M University, the University of Michigan, and Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Spearman directed the Division of Student Financial Assistance at the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare from 1972 to 1975 and was associate deputy commissioner for higher and continuing education at the U.S. Office of Education from 1978 to 1980.

J. KENNETH BLACKWELL, deputy undersecretary at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for intergovernmental relations. Blackwell will coordinate HUD policies and programs with the nation's governors, mayors, county executives, and public interest groups. He will also be the department's primary liaison with the White House on intergovernmental matters. Prior to this appointment, Blackwell served six terms on the Cincinnati City Council, and also held the positions of vice mayor and mayor. In addition to serving in elective office Blackwell spent 18 years at Xavier University in Cincinnati as an education professor and as university vice president.

Across the Nation

GEORGIA: In *Tyrone Brooks v. State Board of Elections*, a panel of three federal judges in Georgia has recently ruled that 54 of the state's 137 superior court judgeships, which are filled through at-large district elections, must be reviewed by the U.S. Justice Department for compliance with the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The 54 judgeships, which were created by state statutes between 1964 and 1989, had not been precleared by the Justice Department in accordance with Section 5 of the Act. Presently, the boundaries of all of the state's multicounty judicial districts ensure that blacks are a minority among each district's voters, even though some counties may have black majorities as large as 75 percent. The at-large election system further dilutes the voting strength of blacks. The net effect is that black candidates have been precluded from gaining seats on the state bench.

In challenging these practices, civil rights attorneys in Georgia and other Southern states have invoked the 1982 amendments to the Voting Rights Act. The amendments require plaintiffs only to prove that an election practice has a discriminatory *result*, rather than requiring proof of discriminatory *intent* which is more difficult to establish. Until recently, the 1982 amendments had been used to overturn biased procedures primarily for electing state and federal legislators and city council members. In the last three or four years, however, they have become a powerful weapon against election laws that have denied blacks judgeships as well. The *Brooks* case, filed by the American Civil Liberties Union in Atlanta, is one of a series of such suits across the South.

In implementing the *Brooks* decision, the plaintiffs have proposed that the present districts be divided into smaller jurisdictions, a refinement that would give blacks voting power more commensurate with their numbers and offer black judicial candidates greater opportunities to win. But Georgia Attorney General **MICHAEL BOWERS** has asked the court to reconsider the *Brooks* decision. Bowers argues that, unlike legislators, judges do not *represent* people, but only interpret the law, and that the plaintiff's plan would politicize the judiciary. The plaintiff's counter-argument is that, as they are elected positions, the judgeships are already politicized. Furthermore, since districts have been redrawn for political convenience in the past, it is reasonable to alter them to ensure racial fairness.

TEXAS: State Senator CRAIG WASHINGTON beat City Councilman ANTHONY HALL to win Houston's 18th Congressional District seat in a special run-off election on December 9. The contest was held to fill the unexpired term of the late Congressman GEORGE M. "MICKEY" LELAND. Both Washington and Hall are black Democrats. Washington, an attorney, served 10 years in the Texas House of Representatives before being elected to the state senate in 1982. He is well known in the state legislature for his persuasive oratory and his strong stands on issues of conscience—including his efforts to secure higher welfare payments for poor children and his vow not to occupy his congressional seat until the Texas legislature votes on a worker's compensation bill.

Since the run-off turned out to be between the two candidates who most agreed on major issues, such as improving health care for the poor, increasing funds to fight drug abuse, and cutting back military aid to Central America, the race ultimately came down to style. **The low-key Hall was bested by a flamboyant Washington who reached voters by promising to "pick up the torch" left by Leland. The late congressman was killed in a plane crash last summer while on a humanitarian mission in Ethiopia. Washington promised to take up Leland's crusade against hunger at home and abroad.** The 18th Congressional District, which covers most of Houston, has been represented by a black congressperson since 1972.

Meanwhile, in the same run-off election, the winner of the city council seat Hall vacated to run for Congress was black attorney SHEILA JACKSON LEE. Perceived as an underdog, Lee came from behind to defeat Hispanic former city comptroller LEONEL CASTILLO with 54 percent of the vote. Lee was helped by the high black voter interest which the Washington-Hall race generated. A low turnout among white voters hurt Castillo.

After graduating from Yale Law School, Lee moved to Houston in 1978 to join the law firm of Fullbright & Jaworski. She has served as an assistant commissioner with the Texas Department of Agriculture and an associate municipal court judge for the City of Houston. Lee is only the second black woman to sit on the Houston City Council. The first was **BEVERLEY CLARK,** who one month earlier beat incumbent **JIM WESTMORELAND** in the general election. His fortunes sank after he made a racial slur against Mickey Leland during the campaign (see the November-December 1989 *TrendLetter*).

VIRGINIA: On January 13, L. DOUGLAS WILDER took office as the governor of Virginia, the first black elected governor in the nation's history. As expected, the December 20 recount of the votes cast in his gubernatorial race against Republican J. MARSHALL COLEMAN did not change the outcome except to show that Wilder won by 6,741 votes instead of the 6,852 in the original tally. Coleman's request for a recount was backed by the Republican National Committee (RNC), concerned by the pivotal role the governor will play in the 1991 remapping of state and federal legislative district lines. According to Election Data Services, a Washington-based political consulting firm, Virginia is projected to add one new congressional seat as a result of population gains.

"Gubernatorial and legislative victories are essential to the Republican Party in its strongest base and battleground—the South," says PETER GOLDMAN, a high-ranking Wilder campaign adviser and deputy transition director. "Winning Virginia would have provided some momentum for the 1990 elections, which will determine the partisan composition of most state legislatures, as well as the governors of 36 states, and thus influence the outcomes of the redistricting battles of 1991." Since a governor's veto of any redistricting plan in Virginia can only be overridden by a two-thirds vote in the state legislature, and given that the Democrats control both houses, the GOP pinned its hopes on Coleman. Although there does not appear to be a large enough concentration of blacks to carve out a majority-black congressional district, the newly created district could be drawn in a way that would make it easier for a black candidate to win a House seat. No black person has represented Virginia in Congress since Reconstruction, when **JOHN M. LANGSTON** served in the House from 1890-91.

As governor, Wilder must face the challenge of improving the state's transportation system, especially in the rapidly developing regions of northern Virginia and the Tidewater. **Having run on a campaign promise to not raise taxes, he must now begin working with a two-year budget that is estimated to fall $750 million short of the expected state income.**

Lobby Now to Get JCPS Film Aired

The award-winning JCPS/WETA documentary *Turning It Around: Urban Teens in Crisis* will be distributed via satellite to all public television stations on Wed., Jan. 31, 1990, at 1:30 p.m. eastern time. The documentary tells the story of four troubled young people who turn their lives around and the programs that work to help them. Please urge your local public television station to air this program in your community.

Hunger in America:
A National Shame That Can Be Ended

A Modest Expansion of Existing Federal Programs Could Put Food on Almost Everyone's Plate

by Robert J. Fersh

Beneath the daily newspaper headlines and past the claims of prosperity, one can hear these voices across the country:

> "The children always had something to eat. Sometimes I didn't."
>
> "For two and a half days in November I had nothing to give them."
>
> "I had three apples one day. The next day I let the kids eat the lettuce."
>
> "We eliminate fresh fruit and vegetables and cut down on milk."
>
> "We have people lining up at 7 a.m. to get food bags at 1 p.m. and we are out of food by 2:30. And this is an area that is supposed to be in good shape economically."

Too many Americans believe that hunger exists only in Third World countries like Ethiopia or the Sudan. But hunger also strikes millions here at home. In this country, we do not see the distended bellies and emaciated frames of starving children that are a common sight in less developed nations. Here, hunger's victims are sick or malnourished children failing in school because they cannot concentrate; they are undernourished mothers giving birth to weak and sickly babies; they are senior citizens, living on fixed incomes, whose inadequate diets leave them vulnerable to premature death from pneumonia.

A preponderance of evidence confirms the pervasiveness of hunger in the United States today. The U.S. Conference of Mayors and dozens of other organizations report that the demand for food at private soup kitchens and church food pantries has reached levels unmatched since the Great Depression.

These reports are consistent with what official government statistics on poverty tell us. According to the latest Census Bureau data, 31.9 million Americans, or 13.1 percent of the population, live in poverty. Nearly six million more people live in poverty today than at any time in the 1970s, including recessionary periods. The poverty rate for blacks, at 31.6 percent, is three times that for whites. And perhaps most alarming of all, the highest poverty rates are among children. One in five American children is poor, including nearly *half* of all black children under age six and over 43 percent of all Hispanic children in that age group.

Indeed, the poor are getting poorer. Nearly 40 percent of those in poverty today have incomes below half of what is considered a poverty income—the highest proportion in 15 years. When one considers that the government defines the poverty line based upon the ability of a household to afford a minimally adequate diet, it is clear that anyone living below the poverty line faces a real risk of going hungry.

These conditions have been confirmed by the preliminary results of a major research survey conducted by our organization, the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC). Our survey, the Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project, or CCHIP, is the centerpiece of FRAC's campaign to end childhood hunger. CCHIP was developed by the Connecticut Association for Human Services with the help of child health researchers, nutritionists, and survey methodology experts during the mid-1980s, largely in response to the Reagan administration's repeated attacks on the methodology of hunger reports coming out at that time. The survey is now being conducted in nine states across the country.

The first statewide CCHIP survey, conducted in three Washington State sites (Pend Oreille County, Seattle, and Yakima) during the winter of 1987-88 by the Governor's Task Force on Hunger, painted a grim picture. In Washington State, the survey of 789 low-income urban and rural families revealed that up to 40 percent of lower-income families with children were experiencing severe monthly food shortages. Children from hungry families were more than twice as likely as other children to suffer from fatigue, headaches, inability to concentrate, and unexpected weight loss, and were more likely to have higher rates of school absenteeism.

These results are consistent with the results of the original 1987 CCHIP pilot survey in New Haven, Connecticut,

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and with the results from Minnesota released in January 1990. FRAC conservatively estimates that if these findings turn out to hold true nationwide, two to five million American children currently face severe hunger, and eight to 10 million American children are at risk of hunger.

Our Nation Has More Than Enough Food

One reason the hunger problem is so tragic is that much of it could be resolved quite rapidly with resources already available. We possess more than enough food to provide all Americans with an ample diet. The United States is fortunate to have an infrastructure of federal food-assistance programs capable of meeting the needs of most of those at risk. These include the Food Stamp Program; the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC); the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs; the Summer Food Service Program; the Child Care Food Program; and the elderly feeding programs.

In recent years, admirable and even heroic work has been done by privately operated food banks and soup kitchens to meet the burgeoning hunger problem. But, even though these programs are necessary to address short-term emergency needs, those who operate them have stated repeatedly that emergency food is inherently too unreliable, inconsistent, and limited to ensure even a minimally adequate diet over the long term for the millions of Americans who face chronic hunger. To put it another way, a thousand points of light do not hold a candle to well-managed and adequately funded public programs. Federal nutrition programs are the key to a long-term solution because they offer people *food security*—the ability to buy food through normal channels.

The main argument for not improving these programs and stamping out domestic hunger is a financial one—that priorities must be set for government spending in the face of the budget deficit. Yet total spending on food assistance only makes up about two percent of the federal budget. The needs of the hungry are modest compared to expensive military weapon systems and other budgetary demands. This year, Congress will have the opportunity to attack hunger by improving two critically important nutrition programs, food stamps and WIC (the program for Women, Infants, and Children).

The Food Stamp Program

The Food Stamp Program, established in 1964, will face reauthorization by Congress this year for the first time since 1985. This program, the nation's single best line of defense against hunger, serves about 19 million people a month at an annual cost of about $15 billion. About half of all participants are children. Senate Republican leader Robert Dole, a long-time champion of the program, has called it "the most significant federal social legislation since Social Security. It has more impact and does more good than any other program."

During the Food Stamp Program's 1981 reauthorization and again in 1982, the Reagan administration and the Senate Agriculture Committee's then-chairman Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) convinced Congress to slash its budget. The Congressional Budget Office has since estimated that the program was cut by $7 billion (or 13 percent) between fiscal years 1982 and 1985.

Although these losses have been partly recouped since the mid 1980s, the Food Stamp Program today has two major defects: benefits remain woefully inadequate and participation is low. Despite a recent modest increase, the maximum benefit for families with no outside source of income or food remains about 90 cents per person per meal. Average benefits are far lower. Moreover, recent studies by the General Accounting Office (GAO), the Congressional Budget Office, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) conclude that only 40 to 60 percent of eligible households are participating. Since 1980, average participation has actually declined by one million persons, while during the same period, poverty has grown by almost three million persons.

Various studies show that this decrease in participation cannot be explained solely by the 1981 cutbacks. Several GAO reports indicate that when the Reagan administration raised a series of barriers to participation—ostensibly to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse—millions of eligible people were wrongly denied their benefits and discouraged from applying. Application forms for food stamp benefits run as long as 40 pages in some states and frequently require advanced reading skills. The cumulative effect is that access to food stamps, which was never easy, is even more difficult now.

With the Food Stamp Program up for reauthorization this year, the time is ripe for Congress to expand this essential program's benefits and ease access. In addition, several of the program's features need to be eliminated, including those that contribute to homelessness by limiting the deductions families can claim for high shelter costs and by reducing benefits for relatives forced to live together to afford housing; those that discourage lower-income youth from attending college by eliminating benefits unless they work at least 20 hours a week, even if they are searching for work; and those that discourage absent fathers from providing child support by counting all such support as income to the mother, thereby reducing her family's food stamp allotment.

Several key congressional leaders have indicated that they hope to introduce a bill early this year to address many of these issues, as a memorial to the late Rep. Mickey Leland. While Congressman Leland's death is a great loss for the anti-hunger movement, there is hope that Congress will enact such legislation as a fitting tribute to him.

The WIC Program

As it does every year, Congress also will renew funding for the WIC program in the FY 1991 appropriations process. WIC provides nutritious supplements to pregnant and post-partum women and to infants and children up to age five. A multitude of studies, including a major report

(Continued on page 8)

Unrestrained Spending for Prisons

As Drug Convictions Swell U.S. Prisons, the Cost of Supporting a Growing Penal System Is Getting Out of Control

by David C. Ruffin

While local and state governments and the Congress scrape for scarce funds for education, health care, and housing, the nation is spending billions of dollars to build new prisons and renovate outmoded ones. Billions more are being spent to keep inmates behind bars. And experts project that the cost of running a penal system which is growing too big, too fast, will continue to escalate. Almost 700,000 men and women are currently incarcerated in state and federal prisons (over 45 percent of them are black). Added to this number are more than 300,000 inmates in local jails. Some fear that these figures could double in the next 10 years.

Much of the new construction is being driven by the rising rate of drug convictions brought on by the "War on Drugs." But growing prison populations are not the only problem. Increasingly, courts are mandating new construction in response to suits by prisoners who have successfully argued that situations where 500 inmates are crammed into dormitories designed for 200 constitute cruel and unusual punishment and a violation of their Eight Amendment rights. This space problem is widespread. The Federal Bureau of Prisons is now operating at 159 percent of capacity. Conditions are similarly severe among state prisons in California and 32 other states as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, where courts have ordered correctional departments to alleviate overcrowding, according to the American Civil Liberties Union's National Prison Project.

Drug Convictions and Tough Judges

The problem is growing worse more rapidly than even the experts imagined. The National Council on Crime and Delinquency, a think tank in San Francisco that studies criminal justice, projected in 1987 that the nation's prison population would grow by 20 percent over the five-year period of 1987-92. After just two years, however, the Council has had to revise its projection upward—it now estimates a 68.4 percent growth rate for the period 1989-94. "The prison population will more than double by the year 2000 if something isn't done," says Aaron McVey, senior research associate at the Council. McVey attributes the growth to both the increase in drug crimes and the prevailing "get tough" attitude of prosecutors and judges. In Florida, a front-line of the drug war, prison admissions stood at 18,000 in 1986 but had more than doubled by 1989 to 40,000, according to Council data. The recent passage of severe mandatory sentencing laws in many other states is having similar effects.

Mr. Ruffin is the editor of *Focus* magazine.

Hundred-Thousand-Dollar Prison Cells

The growth of the prison system is straining budgets at every level of government. The American Correctional Association (ACA), a group of 23,000 correctional professionals nationwide, reports that penal systems will spend nearly $4.1 billion for new prison construction in fiscal year 1990. Several states have multiple prison construction projects underway. Texas is building 33 new prisons, Florida 26, and California and New York are building 21 prisons apiece. A total of 260 new state correctional facilities are going up around the country, adding 114,715 new prison beds. (Not included in those figures are municipal construction programs.) According to Hallem Williams, an official at Henningson, Durham and Richson, Inc., a major architectural and engineering firm that designs penal facilities, each new cell costs the public between $40,000 and $100,000 to build.

While building new prisons is expensive, running them is costly too. State governments are spending more than $12 billion this fiscal year to manage their swollen facilities—twice the operating cost of five years ago. As the prison population grows, operating costs increase. The National Council on Crime and Delinquency estimates that over the next five years, 115,000 additional correctional officers will have to be hired.

Prevention at the Front End

In pursuit of short-term relief, some criminal justice systems are sentencing first offenders and those who have committed nonviolent crimes to probation without jail time. Some prisoners are given early releases. But these are temporary fixes that can have little impact on the overall problem.

A growing number of policymakers agree with Children's Defense Fund president Marian Wright Edelman, who advocates taking a more long-range approach. Edelman calls for dealing with the crime problem at the front end—by investing in successful child development programs. The same concern is echoed in this warning from Hallem Williams: "If we fail to take the steps necessary to prevent black boys from entering the criminal justice system, it means more prison-hardened criminals on the streets and fewer black men to be husbands and fathers. It also means fewer black men in the labor force, a lower tax base, and swelling welfare rolls." ■

Hunger in America

(Continued from page 6)

funded by the USDA, attest to WIC's effectiveness in averting low birthweight and infant mortality and in encouraging lower-income women to receive prenatal care from existing health services. This is an indispensable program for the United States, which ranks 19th in the world in infant mortality (behind practically all industrialized nations) and has a black infant mortality rate double that for whites.

In June of this year, FRAC issued a study under the title, "Feeding the Other Half: Women and Children Left Out of WIC." The study documents that only about half of all those eligible for WIC are being served, and that for children ages one to five the participation rate is below 40 percent. The primary reason for these dismal rates is insufficient federal funding. Real increases of only five to seven percent over the next five years (or roughly a $150 million increase each year) would likely make WIC benefits available to all who are eligible and wish to participate. Congress can take additional steps to strengthen other child nutrition programs and the several programs that provide food for the elderly.

Fighting domestic hunger cannot be a short-term, band-aid effort. Hunger has permanent effects, and working to end it, especially among children, is an investment in the future. Infants of well-nourished mothers are healthier and less likely to require expensive medical care. Well-fed children are better able to learn and more likely to become productive members of our society. Adults too are more productive if they are well-fed rather than hungry. For these pragmatic reasons, and even more for humanitarian reasons, it is essential that America make a bigger investment in the development and well being of its own people. ■

How Can Interested People Help?

Concerned citizens can do a great many things to end the shame of hunger in the United States. They can contribute to and volunteer at private food banks and soup kitchens. If you are convinced that hunger in America is unnecessary, take the time to make your voice heard.

State and local governments must be urged to expand the number of schools that offer the school breakfast program. The number of public and private sites that sponsor the Summer Food Service Program in months when school is out must be increased. Local food stamp offices must be monitored to make sure they are not creating unnecessary barriers to access into the program. And state or local government must augment federal feeding programs like WIC. Write or call your local, state, and federal elected officials and tell them that you want something done about hunger. Especially during this election year, citizens have the power to make a difference. There are numerous groups across the country working on these issues that can use your help. For more information, write: The Food Research and Action Center, 1319 F Street, NW #500, Washington, D.C. 20004; or call (202) 393-5060.

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