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FOCUS

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

Politics, Morality and Civil Rights

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Expand Economic Opportunity: Yes We Can

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Survey Shows Race a Factor in Elections

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POLITICAL TRENDLETTER®

Perspective

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Foreign Affairs: a Joint Center Growth Area

Today virtually every aspect of our well-being is affected by events which occur overseas—international trade and problems of U.S. competitiveness, growing problems of ethnic conflict around the world, our relationship with Japan...all challenge us as a society. Foreign events frequently impinge directly on domestic matters, often blurring the lines between those two spheres as they affect the interests, the values, and the economic prospects of black Americans. Thus, blacks and other minorities are compelled to become more active participants in the shaping and implementing of U.S. foreign policies.

Over the years, the Joint Center's involvement in international affairs has grown. And thanks to a five-year grant of a million dollars from the MacArthur Foundation and the agreement of former U.N. Ambassador Donald McHenry to chair our international affairs advisory committee, the Center will expand its research and scholarship in this area in the years ahead.

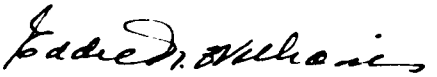
We are currently at work in several areas. In cooperation with the National Endowment for Democracy, we are studying and assisting the processes of democratic reform on the African continent. We are supporting efforts in South Africa to replace apartheid with a democratic political system as well as movements in other African countries to expand participation in governance.

The dust has hardly settled on Operation Desert Storm, but already efforts are underway to reassess the implications of the high concentration of blacks in the U.S. armed forces. The Joint Center is also investigating ways to minimize the adverse effects on blacks of troop reductions. This work is an outgrowth of our years of research on black representation in the military.

On yet another front, the Joint Center is being called upon to address some of the broad issues of ethnic conflict around the world, drawing on the American experience in managing racial and ethnic diversity. Herein lies an irony and a reality that may have significant implications for both domestic and international affairs. The irony, of course, is that in the United States, despite its historic and dramatic achievement in this area, there continue to be all too many instances in which race relations and civil rights are still unfinished agendas. The United States, however, is perceived by many countries to be a reasonably successful multi-racial and multi-ethnic society.

International affairs is the Joint Center's new growth area. Our goal is to increase the involvement and the influence of black Americans in this field. This is important for at least two reasons. One is that successful foreign policies require broad public input and acceptance. The other is that blacks have something to offer and something to gain from being more fully integrated into the foreign policy establishment.

Both of these reasons are critical today as our nation shapes new relationships within an international system in flux and transition. The challenge for all of us was stated eloquently by Ralph Bunche 40 years ago in his Nobel Peace Prize lecture: "There will be no security in our world, no release from agonizing tension, no genuine progress, no enduring peace until, in Shelley's fine words, 'reason's voice, loud as the voice of nature, shall have waked the nations." ■



PRESIDENT

FOCUS

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Politics, Morality, and Civil Rights

As Congress Considers a Bill That Would Restore Anti-Discrimination Protections to American Workers, President Bush Remains Opposed

by Lynda Lee Edwards

In 1964, when congressional leaders fashioned the Civil Rights Act, it incorporated the ideals of racial justice, equity, and fairness. As Senator Hubert Humphrey, the Democrat from Minnesota, rose to cast his vote for the bill he said, "there is no room for second-class citizenship in this country." Republicans also shared that sentiment. Republican New York senator Jacob Javits was largely responsible for the legislation's bipartisan support. And President Lyndon Johnson used his considerable influence from the White House to move the bill forward.

But other voices, those of fear and reaction, were also raised. Senator Barry Goldwater, the 1964 GOP presidential nominee, warned that the Act would precipitate a "police state." That obviously didn't happen. A group called the Coordinating Committee for Fundamental American Freedom ran an ad in the nation's newspapers proclaiming that the Act was setting the American people up "for a blow that would destroy their right to determine how they live." That didn't happen either.

This year, Congress is considering another anti-discrimination bill—the Civil Rights Act of 1991. Unlike the Act of 1964, which extended to millions of Americans rights they had never before enjoyed, the measure being debated now would primarily restore longstanding protections from employment bias. Yet once more the voices of fairness and equity are opposed by those of fear and reaction.

While several Republican members of the House and Senate have come forward as sponsors, the bill lacks the strong bipartisan support that propelled civil rights legislation in the 1960s. In 1964, Senator Javits had said, "It is clear that the mainstream of my party is in support of civil rights legislation and particularly in support of this bill." Were the senator alive today, he would not be able to repeat that statement, especially since the leader of his party, President George Bush, opposes the bill.

Who Decides on Civil Rights

This most recent civil rights bill was first introduced in 1990 to overturn six 1989 Supreme Court rulings that severely weakened the protections against employment discrimination provided by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 1981 of Title 42 of the U.S. Code. The effects of the rulings were to place greater burdens on plaintiffs—minorities and women—to prove discrimination; to remove legal sanctions against intentional on-the-job racial harassment; and to reduce access to the courts by making judicial challenges more costly and time consuming. The Civil Rights Acts of 1990 and 1991 were both designed to restore the enforcement provisions of Title VII and Section 1981, and to make it possible for courts to award monetary damages to all victims of intentional discrimination.

The struggle between advocates and opponents of the bill has been vigorous and at times bitter. Opponents complain that extending monetary damages to women, the handicapped, and members of religious groups goes beyond reestablishing the law as it was before the Court's 1989 rulings. A broad coalition of civil rights proponents, on the other hand, asserts that employment discrimination is still a major problem and that this bill restores and strengthens the mechanisms needed to combat it.

Beyond the technical issues of the debate is a high-stakes ideological battle. The outcome may determine who will prevail in shaping civil rights policy—the majority of the Congress, which supports strong civil rights enforcement, or the Bush administration and the Supreme Court, which is now dominated by Reagan-appointed conservatives. If Congress reverses the 1989 rulings through legislation (as it did in 1988 with the Court's *Grove City* decision which weakened Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act), the Court may be deterred from future attempts to alter established civil rights precedents. If the Court's rulings are allowed to stand, many civil rights advocates fear the clock will be turned back on the movement toward race and gender equality.

Discrimination or Business Necessity?

The Civil Rights Act of 1991, H.R. 1, which was introduced in the House of Representatives on January 3, is essentially the same bill that Congress passed and President Bush vetoed in 1990.

The Act would overturn the Court's *Wards Cove Packing Co.* v. *Atonio* decision, which is at the core of the debate about "quotas." The case involved a challenge by Alaskan native and Filipino workers at a salmon cannery who demonstrated statistically that they were greatly overrepresented in unskilled, lower-paying jobs while white employees held almost all of the higher-paying white collar positions. *Wards Cove* reversed the Court's own 1971

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Civil Rights

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unanimous landmark decision in *Griggs* v. *Duke Power Co.*, by weakening the prohibition against employment practices that may appear to be fair on their face but are discriminatory in their application and operate to deny minorities and women jobs and promotions.

The *Griggs* ruling had required that employers prove a "business necessity" for the offending practice or practices by demonstrating that they "bear a significant relationship to successful performance of the job." The Civil Rights Act would reinstate the requirement that employers show the business necessity for such practices.

Some business groups oppose the return to the *Griggs* standard because in their estimation it narrows the defense employers are allowed to make in discrimination cases. They also argue for more flexible hiring criteria like "prior successful experience" and "whether a person has an outgoing personality." They even support the idea that "customer preferences"—such as the kinds of people customers want to wait on them in retail establishments—should be defined as legitimate business needs. Civil rights advocates counter that these criteria are too subjective. Moreover, selecting employees based on customer preference has been outlawed by several courts over the last two decades.

The Act's opponents also fear that it will force businesses to adopt "quotas" requiring employers to hire by the numbers to avoid disparate impact lawsuits. Its sponsors dismiss the quota issue as a red herring. The bill's language explicitly states that nothing in it "shall be construed to require or encourage quotas."

Expanding Penalties

Another hotly debated provision of the Act would restore the sanction of monetary damages against intentional discrimination. In *Patterson* v. *McClean Credit Union* (1989), the Supreme Court actually allowed on-the-job racial harassment when it ruled that a 19th century civil rights statute does not apply to overt racism in the workplace. In this decision, the Court foreclosed the only monetary remedy available to workers who are victims of racial harassment. The case involved Brenda Patterson, a black bank teller and file clerk, who sued her employer, the McClean Credit Union in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, for racial harassment.

Patterson sued under Section 1981 of Title 42 of the U.S. Code which was part of civil rights legislation enacted by Congress in 1866. Section 1981 grants to all persons "the same right to make and enforce contracts...as is enjoyed by white citizens." While the Court did not overturn Section 1981, it severely limited its scope. The majority opinion concluded that since Section 1981 only applies to the "making" of a contract, it cannot be used to redress racial harassment that occurs after a contract has been signed.

Before the Court ruled in *Patterson*, all forms of racial discrimination and on-the-job harassment were routinely judged to be illegal under Section 1981. Now anything that happens after the hiring process has been placed beyond the reach of the law's remedies, allowing blatant discrimination to go unanswered.

The most controversial component of the 1991 Civil Rights Act, also related to the *Patterson* case, would amend Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to allow juries to award punitive monetary damages to *all* victims of intentional discrimination, including women, members of religious groups, and the handicapped. Currently only racial minorities may receive damages.

This extension of damages is the part of the bill the business community opposes most strongly. The most strident protests against jury-awarded damages come from small businesses. Leslie Aubin, lobbyist for the National Federation of Independent Business, says that even if awards are capped at $150,000 (as in last year's bill), the average Federation company, which has nine employees, could be wiped out by such a suit. "AT&T with its rooms of lawyers and employment tests and records can deal with this part of the bill a lot easier than a small restaurant with seven or eight employees," she says. In fact, while the law would apply to many small firms, it would exempt all businesses with less than 15 employees.

The bill's supporters stress that this provision only covers intentional discrimination. They also reject claims by business advocates that vast sums will be awarded to plaintiffs and that civil rights lawyers will reap "bonanzas" in fees. A 10-year study conducted by the Washington D.C. based law firm of Shea and Gardner for the National Women's Law Center shows that in 85 percent of Section 1981 cases, no damages were awarded at all. In the cases where an award was made, the plaintiffs received an average of $40,000. And in only three cases, nationwide, were damage awards larger than $200,000. Furthermore, the current legislation makes provision for monetary damages or jury trials only in cases where discrimination is intentional, not for disparate impact cases.

Stonewalling

The Bush administration opposes the Act and there is strong evidence that it always opposed altering the Supreme Court rulings. The initial response by Attorney General Richard Thornburgh to the Court's 1989 rulings was that no legislative response was warranted. Yet much of the struggle over the Act has taken place within the Bush administration. Last year, high-ranking black administration officials such as Health and Human Services Secretary Louis Sullivan, director of the Office of Personnel Management Constance Newman, and Civil Rights Commission chairman Arthur Fletcher, all Republicans, urged the President to sign the bill, but White House insiders pushed for a veto.

Not only did White House counsel C. Boyden Gray and chief of staff John Sununu persuade the President to veto the 1990 bill, they sabotaged all efforts at compromise. (Last year, both houses of Congress passed the Act with

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May 1991

POLITICAL TRENDLETTER®

Inside This Issue:

- Supreme Court will decide if the Voting Rights Act applies to judicial elections.
- Pro-choice advocates push for congressional legislation to protect procreative and reproductive rights.
- Two former rivals are gearing up to challenge Baltimore mayor Kurt Schmoke in his bid for reelection.
- Seniority on key committees is a source of clout for the Congressional Black Caucus.
- Across the Nation: former Gary mayor Richard Hatcher fails to unseat incumbent mayor Thomas Barnes; Chicago alderman Tim Evans loses reelection bid; and Kansas City, Missouri, elects Emmanuel Cleaver as its first black mayor.

Voting Rights Act and Elected Judgeships

Two pending Supreme Court rulings may result in the election of more black judges. On April 22, the Court heard arguments to determine whether to apply the Voting Rights Act in two cases where election systems are alleged to have excluded black candidates from judgeships. One case, *Houston Lawyers' Association* v. *Attorney General of Texas*, involves a challenge to an at-large scheme for electing trial judges in Texas counties. Out of 386 district judges in Texas, only nine are black. The other case, *Chisom* v. *Roemer*, involves an election scheme in Louisiana. On the Louisiana State Supreme Court, five of the seven members are elected from "single-member" districts but two are elected from a combined "multi-member" district. The effect is to submerge New Orleans' majority black population within the whole district's larger white majority.

The Bush administration joined civil rights lawyers in arguing that Section 2 of the 1965 Voting Rights Act prohibits states from allowing election practices that lead to discriminatory results. In the Texas case, **JULIUS CHAMBERS**, executive director of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, argued that "African-Americans and Mexican-Americans were excluded from effectively participating in elections in Texas." He added that a state's interest in determining its election practices "should not be allowed to trump the individual's right to be fairly represented in the vote." Attorneys for the two states argued before the Court that Congress did not intend to apply the Voting Rights Act to judicial elections, and that such an application would erode the public's confidence in an independent judiciary. Using the Louisiana case, Solicitor General **KENNETH STARR** contradicted those assertions, arguing that when states choose to elect them, "judges are representatives of the people, and that's what the Voting Rights Act covers." The Supreme Court decisions could affect judicial election systems in 41 states.

The Abortion Debate: Still Unfolding

Eighteen years after the historic *Roe* v. *Wade* Supreme Court decision legalizing a woman's right to an abortion, the issue remains unsettled. Since *Roe*, there have been numerous challenges in the courts as well as attempts in the state legislatures and Congress to either expand access to abortion, or to weaken or nullify the 1973 decision. Pro-choice groups were stunned by the 1989 Supreme Court decision, *Webster* v. *Reproductive Health Services*, which upheld the State of Missouri's right to ban abortion in public facilities, and let stand the Missouri statute preamble declaring that life begins at conception. Pro-choice advocates view the *Webster* ruling as chipping away at *Roe*. They are concerned that state legislatures have continued to erode procreative and reproductive freedom where *Webster* left off and are looking to Congress to codify the *Roe* decision. **PATRICIA TYSON** of the Reli-

gious Coalition for Abortion Rights (RCAR) in Washington, D.C., says more than 600 anti-abortion bills have been introduced in state legislatures. "We cannot have a patchwork of different laws," she says, "therefore it is essential that the federal government assume that every woman, regardless of where she lives, is able to exercise free choice."

Pro-choice advocates have given priority to the passage of the Freedom of Choice Act (H.R. 25 and S. 25) and the Reproductive Health Equity Act (H.R. 766) in the 102nd Congress. The Freedom of Choice Act, introduced by California Democrats **ALAN CRANSTON** in the Senate and **DON EDWARDS** in the House, would prohibit states from "restricting the right of a woman to choose to terminate a pregnancy before fetal viability, or at any time, if such termination is necessary to protect the life or health of the woman."

According to its chief sponsor, Rep. **BILL GREEN** (R-NY), H.R. 766 seeks to "guarantee all women access to all constitutionally protected medical services relating to their medical health, regardless of their economic status." It would allow federally funded programs that provide pregnancy-related services to provide abortions. The bill would extend funded abortion services to Peace Corp volunteers, military personnel and their dependents, women in prison, federal employees, and Medicaid recipients. Green has introduced the bill in Congress every year since 1985 but according to Green's office, it has never been reported out of committee because "the climate (in Congress) has not become sufficiently pro-choice."

Reauthorization of Title X of the Public Health Service Act, without a ban on abortion counseling, is also important to pro-choice advocates because for 20 years this program has funded family planning clinics, of which there are about 4,000 in the country. A significant portion of their services are rendered to poor and minority women. After 1981, the clinics were allowed to discuss abortion as an option with clients during counseling, but in 1988 the Reagan administration banned such counseling. Pro-choice advocates are against this "gag rule." **JULIA SCOTT** of the Black Women's Health Project Office of Policy and Education in Washington, D.C., says the loss of access to information and abortion services will weigh most heavily on the poor, many of whom are women of color. The gag rule was challenged in the Supreme Court last October in *Rust* v. *Sullivan*; a ruling is expected this summer. If the Court upholds the regulations, pro-choice advocates will try to persuade Congress to overturn them by statute.

Probably the most contentious issue in the reauthorization of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is the issue of funding experiments involving fetal tissue transplants. Under the Reagan administration, in 1988 the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a funding moratorium on such research, and the regulations have since been upheld by the Bush administration. Opponents of fetal tissue research argue that it can become an incentive for women to have abortions. Proponents maintain that such research may provide breakthrough treatments for illnesses such as Parkinson's disease, juvenile diabetes, epilepsy, and Alzheimer's disease. Fetal tissue research is supported by many in the scientific community, including the director of the NIH, **BERNADINE HEALY**, who opposed the recommended moratorium from the beginning. Rep. **HENRY WAXMAN** (D-Cal.), chair of the house Health and Environment Subcommittee has introduced an amendment to the reauthorization bill that would remove the ban on this form of research.

Schmoke to be Challenged for Reelection

The September 12 mayoral primary in Baltimore may become a heated battle for native son and black first-term mayor **KURT SCHMOKE**, 42, who was elected in 1987 with 79 percent of the vote. The mayor has already been challenged by two experienced Democrats, and in the November 5 general election he may face Republican opposition as well. Democratic opposition candidates who have already announced include white Democrat **WILLIAM SWISHER**, a former state attorney whom Schmoke unseated from that post in a 1982 election; and black Democrat and former mayor **CLARENCE "DU" BURNS**, a protege of Schmoke's nemesis, the state's popular governor **WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER**. As president of the city council, Burns assumed the post of mayor when Schaefer stepped down to run for governor in 1986. Schmoke edged out Burns by a surprisingly close margin of about 5,000 votes in the 1987 Democratic primary, though he easily won the general election against Republican **SAMUEL A. CULOTTA**.

Crime and education are expected to top the election issues. Last year Baltimore recorded 360 murders, the highest number in 10 years. According to the city's police department, the murder rate is still escalating. Schmoke,

an Oxford scholar with law degrees from Yale College and Harvard Law School, campaigned heavily in 1987 on making education a priority, and he has since mounted a highly visible public relations campaign declaring Baltimore, "The City that Reads!" However, he has not been able to form a productive alliance with the school superintendent or the business community. Schmoke and Superintendent **RICHARD HUNTER**, his hand-picked choice over protests by the school board, have clashed over the policy and management of the school system. Schmoke has refused to renew Hunter's contract, which expires on July 31. The mayor has also run into problems raising money from the business community for the College Bound Foundation, which was established in 1988 to provide counseling and college funding for the city's public school graduates. Out of the foundation's financial goal of $25 million, to be raised by the city's business community, only $13 million has been raised so far. Despite these problems, Schmoke is expected to prevail in his bid for reelection.

Committee Power and the CBC

Black members of Congress continue to gain power and influence as they accrue seniority in the House of Representatives. During this Congress, for the first time, the 26 members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) are present on all 22 of the House's standing committees. Dispersal among a variety of committees covering a broad number of issues is a strategy which the CBC adopted in the early 1970s to maximize the influence of its members, who remain relatively few in number. Four CBC members chair standing committees and one chairs a select committee. The chairmen are **JOHN CONYERS** (D-Mich.), Government Operations; **WILLIAM CLAY** (D-Mo.), Post Office and Civil Service; **RONALD DELLUMS** (D-Cal.), District of Columbia; and **LOUIS STOKES** (D-Ohio), Standards of Official Conduct, commonly referred to as the ethics committee. This is Stokes' second time as chair of the ethics committee. **CHARLES RANGEL** (D-NY) chairs the Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control. Members just steps away from the chairmanship of powerful committees include Rangel, who ranks fourth on Ways and Means; Illinois Democrat **CARDISS COLLINS**, ranked second on Government Operations; Conyers, third on Judiciary; Dellums, fourth on Armed Services; and Clay, third on Education and Labor.

According to political scientist **DAVID BOSITIS,** senior research associate at the Joint Center, "as CBC members increase in rank and seniority, their clout on the Hill and in the Democratic Party expands." The caucus represents nearly 10 percent of the Democratic majority in the House and the caucus votes with the party position on most issues. Bositis adds, "Caucus members are in key positions which enable them to help engineer the legislative agenda of the 102nd Congress, including the Civil Rights Act and the Parental and Medical Leave Bill. Rangel remains in an important position to develop legislative policy to address the national drug problem and Clay's chairmanship gives him primary legislative jurisdiction over the U.S. postal and civil services, both of which employ a significant number of blacks."

Of the caucus members with high committee ranking, Rangel, 60, may be closest to assuming a chair. Ways and Means Committee chair **DAN ROSTENKOWSKI** of Chicago is facing a decision that many senior members with substantial campaign war chests are pondering—whether to retire before 1992, with the legal option of keeping the campaign funds for his personal use, or to stay in office and forfeit the funds. In 1989 Congress passed the Ethics Reform Act, which eliminates the "grandfather clause" which allowed congressmen who have been in office since 1980 to convert campaign funds to personal use. This becomes effective with the 103rd Congress beginning in January 1993. If members stay in office, they can only use the money for campaign purposes. Rostenkowski reportedly has a war chest of about one million dollars. Representatives **SAM GIBBONS** of Florida, and **J.J. PICKLE** of Texas, second and third in line to chair the Ways and Means Committee, are both in their seventies and may consider retirement soon.

Although it probably won't take place in the near future, but 49-year-old black Philadelphia Rep. **WILLIAM GRAY** is in line to assume the House speakership. Gray is now third in line behind Majority Leader **RICHARD GEPHARDT** of Missouri and Speaker **THOMAS FOLEY** of Washington. Gephardt was a presidential candidate in 1988 and next year may revive his White House aspirations. Foley, at 62, is serving his 13th term in Congress; he became speaker in 1989 when Democrat **JIM WRIGHT** of Texas was forced to retire due to ethical improprieties. There is no term limitation on the speakership. If the Democrats remain in the majority and Foley steers clear of scandal, Foley could be around for some time. (**THOMAS P. "TIP" O'NEILL, JR.**, of Massachusetts served the longest continuous term as speaker, 10 years. But Texan **SAM RAYBURN** is credited with the longest cumulative tenure; he reigned a total of 17 years though his leadership was interrupted twice, from 1947 to 1949 and from 1953 to 1955, when the Republicans held a majority.)

ACROSS THE NATION

INDIANA: Seeking reelection, Gary mayor **THOMAS V. BARNES** soundly defeated a cast of nine opponents, including the city's former mayor, **RICHARD HATCHER**, in the May 7 Democratic primary. In this overwhelmingly Democratic city, Barnes is not expected to have any opposition in the November 5 general election. Barnes received 16,607 votes and was followed by Hatcher with 9,520 votes and white attorney **SCOTT KING**, with 9,056 votes.

Former black congresswoman **KATIE HALL** also won reelection—to her second term as city clerk. She is thought to be positioning herself to regain the Congressional seat she lost in 1984 to Democrat **PETER VISCLOSKY**. In the years between her House defeat and election as city clerk, Hall served as vice chair of the Gary Housing Board of Commissioners and as an Indiana state senator. During her single term in Congress, she was the driving force behind passage of the Martin Luther King Jr. federal holiday legislation.

ILLINOIS: Chicagoans elected Mayor **RICHARD M. DALEY, JR.**, to a full four-year term on April 2. Daley received 73 percent of the vote to defeat three opponents, including **R. EUGENE PINCHAM**, the Harold Washington Party's black candidate. Pincham came in second with 22 percent of the vote. The *Chicago Sun Times* estimates that a third of the black vote was cast for Daley in an election where turnout was low among all voters. "This was a low interest, low turnout, low tension election," says **CLARENCE PAGE**, political analyst for the *Chicago Tribune*.

Since the city's first black mayor **HAROLD WASHINGTON** died in 1987 during his second term, some of the city's black leadership have been trying to get another of their own elected to fill the spot. Daley's April victory marks the third time the mayoral seat has eluded a black candidate since **EUGENE SAWYER** was chosen as interim mayor by the board of aldermen after Washington's death. Pincham's general-election loss last month was preceded by the defeat of Cook County Commissioner **DANNY DAVIS** in the February primary and of Alderman **TIM EVANS** in the April 1989 special mayoral election that Daley won.

Evans, who has tried to claim the mantle of Harold Washington and has represented the city's 4th ward for 18 years, was upset in his bid for reelection by black activist **TONI PRECKWINKLE** in a squeaker. In the April 2 general election, Preckwinkle beat Evans by 109 votes. For Preckwinkle, who has challenged Evans twice before, the third try was the charm. Evans' request for a recount is pending in the Cook County Circuit Court.

LOUISIANA: Democratic state representative **DIANA BAJOIE** of New Orleans breezed past four other contestants in February, winning 53 percent of the vote to become the first black woman elected to the Louisiana Senate. A 15-year veteran of the state house of representatives, Bajoie takes the seat left vacant by black Democrat **WILLIAM JEFFERSON**, who was elected to represent New Orleans in Congress. The senate term expires in January, so Bajoie will have to run again in October for a full four-year term.

Bajoie is known as a grassroots politician who is a fervent advocate for families, children, and women. Observers often recount an impassioned speech she made on the floor of the legislature two years ago, which revived a bill dealing with spousal rape that had all but died. Bajoie's floor statement, in which she castigated her male colleagues for their insensitivity toward the issue, was instrumental in securing the measure's adoption.

Bajoie's replacement as state house representative to the 91st district is political newcomer **RENEE PRATT**, a black special education teacher. In the April 20 runoff, Pratt defeated a Bajoie ally, **LINDA COMPTON**, also a teacher, by 87 votes.

MISSOURI: Twelve years after white Democrats in Kansas City deserted their party to defeat its black mayoral candidate **BRUCE R. WATKINS**, voters in the city, which is 30 percent black, have elected **EMMANUEL CLEAVER II** their first black mayor. Formerly mayor pro tem and three-term city council member, Cleaver defeated white businessman and council colleague **BOB LEWELLEN** by 53 percent to 47 percent in the March 26 election, with broad support from voters of both races. A United Methodist minister, the 46-year-old Cleaver received strong support from the business community, including endorsements from **DONALD J. HALL** and **IRVINE O. HOCKADAY, JR.**, the chairman and president of Hallmark Cards Inc., one of the city's major employers.

Cleaver will have a full plate of pressing, contentious city issues to deal with. Like most other metropolitan areas, Kansas City is in an economic downturn. It is threatened with losing two major employers, Trans World Airlines and Allied Signal (a manufacturer of non-nuclear parts for nuclear weapons). The two companies together employ more than 12,000 people. Added to this looming economic disaster are: a federal court order to desegregate the school system; the political hot potato of selecting a site to build the next landfill within the next two years (when the current one is scheduled to close); and the inadequacy of its separate city and suburban bus systems.

Expand Economic Opportunity: Yes We Can

At the Joint Center's Annual Dinner, District of Columbia Mayor Sharon Pratt Dixon Spoke of Full Economic Empowerment for African-Americans

Sharon Pratt Dixon's election victory last November made her the first black woman mayor of a city with a population greater than 500,000. Following is the text of the keynote speech Mayor Dixon delivered at the Joint Center's annual dinner on April 9, 1991.

I remember when the doors first opened at the Joint Center for Political Studies, there were just a handful of African-Americans who had been elected to public office, and we have come a great distance since then. It is a privilege to celebrate our achievements in the political history of this country, particularly those of us who happen to be African-American women.

While ours has been a stellar history, it has not always been in the forefront of American thinking. Our experience has been unlike that of any other ethnic group that has come to America, for here we are 215 years after the Declaration of Independence, 128 years after the Emancipation Proclamation, 37 years after *Brown* v *Board of Education*, 27 years after the Civil Rights Act, here we are still trying to gain access to the basic powers of citizenship in this country.

Unlike Great Britain, the United States is not deeply divided by ideology. America is a country of pragmatists, and as such we have only been committed to two ideologies: democracy and capitalism, and not necessarily in that order. Therefore, one has to have access to both of those powers. First, political power in terms of the right to vote, and then economic power in terms of the chance to participate in this basic capitalist system.

It has been our experience that America has steadily and consistently denied us access to at least one of those levers of power—denied us access to the basic perquisites of citizenship. Indeed, in the beginning, citizenship for us was not only denied, we were not allowed to exercise the most basic expressions of independence—the right to read and the right to own property—which for a long time were defined as criminal conduct on our part. It was not until 102 years after the Emancipation Proclamation that we finally gained access to any lever of power, and that was in 1965 with the enactment of the Voting Rights Act.

We have been in this country since the 1600s. We have waited long. We have served this country in our industries and we have served her in the military, fighting for the freedom of this nation. We have done it since the American Revolution. Indeed, in the Revolutionary War it was one among us who was the first to have been slain: Crispus Attucks. And yet it was not until 1965 that we finally gained access to one of those basic levers of power.

What strides we've made since then. Now Doug Wilder serves as the governor of the Old Dominion. Bill Gray will surely be a Speaker of the House of Representatives some day, for he's now the third highest ranking Democrat in the House of Representatives. There are several among us who served in pivotal positions on major Congressional committees. (I'm sure Charlie Rangel's going to become chairman of the Ways and Means Committee.) Ron Brown serves as the chairman of one of the only two major political parties in all of the United States of America. And in almost every major city in this country there's one among us who serves as its mayor, including the Big Apple, where David Dinkins controls $30 billion a year.

Bridges to Economic Opportunity

Ours is an extraordinary story of resilience and enterprise. But now the challenge, with nine years remaining before we cross the threshold of the 21st century, is to leverage all of that collective political power to gain access to the other lever of power, economic power. We must become manufacturers, producers, and distributors of goods and services in this expanding global marketplace. We have got to do it because of the competition that exists in the world today and because we live, as I said, in a capitalist country where everyone must bring something to the table. We cannot allow ourselves to be defined as those who take. We must be defined as those who make.

We must be seen as those who are expanding the economic pie. Because of our unique plight and our unique circumstances, for so long we've had to direct our energies to just achieving basic citizenship and political rights. But that does not in any way negate the fact—with only nine years left of this century, nine years away from another century—that we've got to move with dispatch. It cannot be that we perceived Doug Wilder's election [to governor of Virginia] as an end. We've got to understand that that's just the beginning. One Harvey Gantt running for the Senate is a moral victory, but we cannot be satisfied until a whole lot of Harvey Gantts have access to the floor of the United States Senate.

One Shirley Chisholm and one Jesse Jackson running for the presidency demonstrate our willingness, ability, and capacity to achieve and seek out the highest level of political office, but much more still has to be done. We must bring the same resolve and enterprise that we brought to the political quest. We must now extend our political reach to our economic quest.

What is clear is that we're entering a new global economic environment, and we cannot allow ourselves to be pushed to the economic margins. Our history should tell

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Dixon

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us we can't afford to do that. We participated in the agricultural revolution but, sadly, to this day we're still waiting for the 40 acres and the mule. We participated in the industrial revolution, but we never reaped the full benefits of our labor. It has been our plight as African-American workers to be consistently locked out, put down, or cut off from the bounty of American capitalism.

Now, as we stand on a new economic threshold, we are required to look searchingly at our condition today, and if we do not grasp this economic power, we will once again find ourselves at the economic margin. Our young people are growing frustrated and impatient with the absence of real opportunity and that is part of the reason so many of them in communities across this country have turned to their own kind of capitalism—the illicit capitalism of the drug trade. Therefore, we must create new economic opportunities for our own salvation.

To suddenly become major players in a high-tech service economy as America herself enters a major economic revolution is not going to be easy. So what it means is that we've got to leverage all of our accumulated political power to wedge our way into the process. It has been our presence in the Federal Communications Commission that has paved the way to expanded ownership of TV and radio stations by African-Americans today.

It is our presence right here in the District of Columbia on the Public Service Commission that explains why there are African-American officials in every one of the utilities in the District. It is the fact that we are mayors of major cities across this country that explains why we are partners and directors in the public finance divisions of every major investment banking company in this country.

I've often said that when we go to the presidential convention, maybe what we ought to do is to spend a little less time trying to figure out who among us will sit on the dais or who among us will speak at the podium or even who ought to be on the ticket as a vice presidential candidate. Why not spend that time and energy trying to figure out who among us can run the Federal Communications Commission, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, or the Nuclear Regulatory Commission?

We have got to exercise that regulatory power to achieve economic parity. But when we achieve this economic power we've got to do so in a manner that redounds to the collective benefit of our community, for while more and more of us in the African-American community have become a part of America's middle class, that many more of us have gotten caught up in a vicious, irreversible cycle of poverty, and this dynamic is creating a menacing pall over our own potential and power as a people. The sad byproduct of this expanding poverty has been drugs and crime. And the biggest victims have been our own children because of the absence of real economic opportunity.

We must create the bridges to economic opportunity for the sake of our children and for the sake of our own salvation. But economic power must be shared. Wherever power exists, we must be certain that it is exercised to the full benefit of our community. That means that our entire community must be reflected at the table of power. And to have a full reflection of our community at the table of power means that we need women at that table. For, while women have always been on the front line in the battle for change, we have rarely been there to exercise the power ultimately obtained.

Need for Women at the Table

The whole modern civil rights movement began one day when Rosa Parks decided that she would not go to the back of the bus. Her personal resolve and singular courage ushered in two decades of reform. Yet there is no equivalent of a Rosa Parks running the NAACP or the Urban League. Dorothy Height has always had to do it alone.

It was Fannie Lou Hamer who in 1964 led the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, and the first African-American to seek the office of President was Shirley Chisholm in 1972. Yet when the Democratic Party was attempting to assuage the growing discontent among women in 1984 by putting a woman on the ticket, not one African-American woman was on the list of potential nominees.

It was just this year, 1991, that the Congressional Black Caucus recaptured its high of four women members which it first achieved in the mid-1970s. And it was not until this year that an African-American woman has become mayor of a major city, though many women may have shepherded the way—a Unita Blackwell, a Lottie Shackleford, and here in this city a Patricia Roberts Harris. We must be at the table to shape policy, not to engage in a mindless exercise of power but to reflect the concerns that may help in the uplifting of our entire community.

So when the trails are blazed, whether it be the U.S. House of Representatives, whether it be the State House, whether it be the White House, we need to be there at the cutting edge, for we as a people stand at an extraordinary crossroads. We see in our horizon magnificent potential, as we see before us enormous obstacles. We can achieve that potential if we close ranks, renew the spirit and resolve that carried us to this point. And I am certain if we do it we can recapture our children and reclaim our future.

But to succeed means that we've got to reinvigorate that magnificent relationship that got us this far—partners and comrades in arms, men and women, shoulder to shoulder, a relationship that brought us to this point. And when I say this, I mean full partners crossing the threshold of the 21st century, not just in terms of the quest for power but absolutely in terms of the exercise of power. To this we must say, "Yes, we can and yes, we will." ■

Survey Shows Race a Factor in Elections

Social Issues Top Concerns Among Focus *Readers; Nearly Half Envision a Black Presidential or Vice Presidential Candidate by Year 2000*

Education, race relations, and poverty are the biggest problems facing this nation, followed closely by the economy, drugs, and health care according to a 1991 survey of *Focus* readers.

Over 400 readers returned the survey which appeared in the January issue of the magazine. Among those who responded, 78 percent gave their party affiliation as Democratic, 8 percent as Republican, and 10 percent as independent. Two out of three are male, 88 percent are black, over half report their household income as above $50,000, and 80 percent have at least a college degree. Over a third of those who returned the survey are elected officials. About one-fifth identified their place of employment as a community organization, and about one-fourth described their occupations as either professional or technical.

Education Ranks Highest. Asked to list the three most important issues facing the nation, respondents named education 46 percent of the time. While a large number of survey participants named education as an overall problem area, many readers pinpointed issues such as illiteracy or job training as their chief concern. On a related question, nearly 92 percent said that school curricula do not adequately reflect the contributions black Americans have made to society.

Race and Politics. Thirty-nine percent named race relations as one of the top three problems facing the nation. Race relations are of greater concern among Democrats than Republicans surveyed, with Democrats more than twice as likely to name this as the number one problem facing the nation (20 percent versus 9 percent, respectively).

Respondents were also asked to evaluate race relations in their community and the role of racism in municipal, county, and state elections. Less than a third described their communities' racial situation in positive terms ("excellent" cited by 2.5 percent and "good" by 28.6 percent), while the vast majority chose the two categories at the bottom of the scale, "only fair" (51.2 percent) and "poor" (17.2 percent).

Fifty-nine percent of the *Focus* readers who returned the survey said racism had been a factor in recent elections in their municipality, county, or state, while 29 percent said racism was not a factor and 11 percent were not sure. Elected officials were less likely than other respondents to perceive racism as a factor in elections; 54 percent of the officeholders answered "yes" on this question compared to 62 percent of non-officeholders.

Yet despite their overwhelming concerns about race relations in communities and electoral politics, a surprising number of survey participants seem optimistic about the chances that a black person will soon be nominated for one of the two highest offices in the land. Nearly half (47.5 percent) believe that one of the two major political parties will nominate a black candidate for president or vice president before the end of this century, while 49.5 percent do not believe that will occur.

Republican readers were 15 percent more likely than their Democratic counterparts to predict a black presidential or vice presidential nominee by the year 2000. On the question of whether that nominee will be a Democrat or a Republican, Democrats were closely divided, choosing their own party by a margin of just under three percentage points. Republicans, on the other hand, were much more likely—by a margin of 23 percentage points—to think that it will be their party that will run a black candidate for president or vice president.

Poverty and Economics. The third major issue most frequently named by readers in the survey was poverty (38%). Readers voiced their concerns about deepening poverty as well as about the widening income gap between black and white and between rich and poor. Concern over poverty did not directly reflect readers' personal experience. Asked whether they were better or worse off economically than they had been three years ago, over 70 percent said about the same or somewhat better. Just under 14 percent said they were much better off, while 12 percent said they were now somewhat worse off and three percent described themselves as much worse off.

General economic concerns, including the federal budget deficit, the banking crisis, and the nation's overall economic health, were cited by 32 percent of the participants, placing economic issues fourth among the leading problems mentioned. Drugs were a top concern for 29 percent of those surveyed, while 21 percent named health care and its cost as one of their top three concerns.

Readers were also asked a series of questions on policy issues that are topics of current public debate. By a ratio of approximately five to three, *Focus* readers opposed the death penalty. They overwhelmingly favored some restrictions on gun ownership (87 percent to 13 percent), while 28 percent favored a total ban on handgun ownership and 41.6 percent favored such a ban on rifles of military design.

Finally, survey respondents strongly agreed with a statement that characterized affirmative action as a "useful tool for achieving equal opportunity"; 84 percent agreed with that assessment, while just 10 percent disagreed. ■

The survey results were compiled and analyzed through the combined efforts of Nancy Stella, Bea Strattner, and Merlinda Novicio.

Civil Rights

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overwhelming bipartisan support, but each body fell just short of veto-proof two-thirds majorities). Gray stonewalled the efforts to negotiate a compromise that had begun between Sununu, Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), one of the bill's prime sponsors, and black Republican William T. Coleman, who represented the interests of the civil rights groups. Coleman, a Washington attorney, chairs the board of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund and was Transportation secretary in the Ford administration. Gray is perhaps the most ardent opponent of the Act in the Bush administration and is considered to be the point man within the White House for the ideological right.

A group that has expended a substantial amount of money and effort to oppose the Act interestingly calls itself the Fair Employment Coalition. The coalition of about 260 companies and business associations retained the public relations firm of Robinson, Lake, Lerer, & Montgomery to conduct a campaign to make sure that Americans would associate the bill with the stigma of quotas. In the end, labeling the 1990 Civil Rights Act a quota bill and asserting that it would increase unreasonable lawsuits, Bush vetoed it last October 22. The Senate failed to override the veto on October 24 by one vote.

This year's bill, the Civil Rights Act of 1991 (H.R.1), is on a fast track in Congress, the first piece of legislation introduced in the House this session. But officials at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue seem even more entrenched in their opposition than last year.

This April, White House officials torpedoed the renewed negotiations that William Coleman and former National Urban League director and Washington attorney Vernon Jordan were holding with officers of the Business Roundtable. The group represents 200 of the nation's largest corporations, including AT&T, American Express, and Johnson & Johnson. The discussions broke down under White House pressure just as the participants were approaching a compromise involving a limit on damages and language softening the definition of business necessity. The legislation is expected to be redrafted to contain these considerations even without the direct endorsement of business groups.

Long-time civil rights attorney William Taylor, who has been close to the talks, says, "Gray and Sununu had the Roundtable stop negotiating because they were getting too close to an agreement. If the nation's most powerful corporations had cut a deal on the bill's language, it would have made it more difficult for the White House to maintain its unyielding rejection of the Act." Smaller companies also have remained unyielding in their opposition.

In addition to the bipartisan House and Senate majorities and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, a coalition of 185 organizations, the bill's supporters include high-ranking black Bush administration officials, the American Bar Association, the Civil Rights Commission (by a vote of 7 to 1), as well as such traditionally "anti-quota" Jewish organizations as the American Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Committee, and the Anti-Defamation League. Some observers contend, however, that all of these forces may not be enough to override a presidential veto unless the House and Senate leadership weigh in more heavily. What is even more ominous is that the closer the vote gets to the '92 elections, the less likely it is to be debated as an issue of fairness in the workplace. Several political analysts predict that the Republican Party will use the Civil Rights Act as a focus for racially loaded election messages, similar to the Willie Horton ads of Bush's 1988 campaign and North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms' "quota" ads in his successful bid for reelection last year. Some Southern Democratic senators who have supported civil rights in the past—partly because they have depended on black voters for reelection—fear that voting for the Civil Rights Act could invite a white voter backlash.

Today, just as in 1964, what is required of members of Congress to support civil rights legislation is moral courage. What is also required is leadership. Many Americans, discouraged by events over the last few years, are wondering if there exists enough of either quality in the nation's capitol to make the Civil Rights Act into law. ■

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