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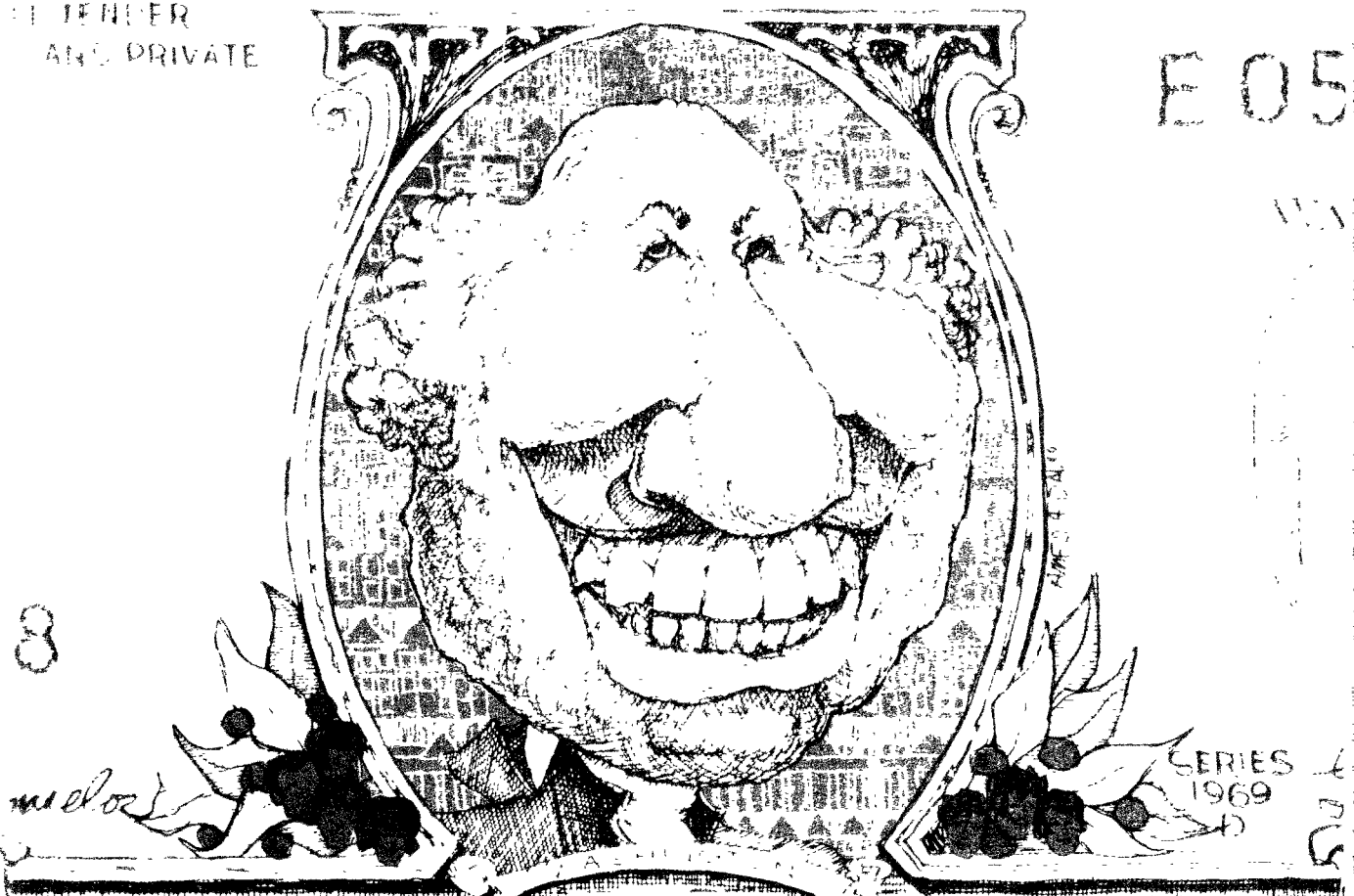
The case for housing allowances

FEDERAL RESERVE NOTE

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Perspective

SENATOR EDWARD BROOKE, addressing the annual Congressional Black Caucus dinner last month, made a powerful statement on both the philosophy and tactics required "to get what we want, what we need and what we deserve from the political system." Brooke called for effective and sophisticated black participation in the political process at all levels and in all ways. He also challenged blacks and whites to ally around issues of common concern in order to achieve their common interests.

Echoing the new theme of black political participation—"no permanent friends, no permanent enemies, just permanent interests"—Brooke set forth his version of "the map" and "the plan" needed today. His speech reflected what he sees as "a new consciousness, a new reality, a recognition of the fact that we are standing on the threshold of a new and crucial phase for Black Americans—indeed for all Americans."

The following quotes will be of special interest to minority group leaders and indeed to all American leaders who profess to support the cause of minority Americans.

* * *

"WE HAVEN'T EVEN come near to fulfilling the heady prophecies of August 1963 and we never shall if we limit ourselves to sentimental journeys back to that euphoric day. We cannot and should not try to revive the Civil Rights Movement as we knew it then."

"The return of power to state and local governments disrupts long-time power relationships and demands new and expanded leadership, organization and efforts at state and local levels. The past reliance on concentrating our efforts at the federal level must give way to the selective application of power at the most effective level of government. Revenue sharing and regionalism have complicated our political equation."

"Political power and public office have been the keys which opened the doors of opportunity for various groups in America since the founding of our country."

"Americans respect and respond to political power. Political power influences public policy at all levels. This

is the nature of politics. And others have mastered the ground rules, and so must we."

"DESPITE OUR POLITICAL gains, I am still troubled by the fact that there are only four Blacks in the nation who hold elected statewide office. A statewide political base is a formidable source of political power. You can read all you want about how I got to the Senate, but if I had not been elected Attorney General of Massachusetts, I wouldn't have had a chance of being elected to the United States Senate."

"We abdicate political power when we decline to exercise our right to be heard and our right to vote."

"In the past we have viewed the notion of coalitions too narrowly. We have regarded coalitions as permanent. We feared we would lose our identities if we coalesced with others, particularly Whites. But, coalitions need not be permanent nor erosive."

"We must form free-floating coalitions across racial lines. And these coalitions must be based on specific and pragmatic issues of common interest."

"There is no question what these issues are. They are economic! Our economic interests are clearly aligned with those of the majority of Americans. Inflation, unemployment, inequitable taxation, inadequate health care and housing are not black issues, but issues affecting millions of Americans, who suffer the agonies of our economy without ever sharing its abundance."

"Alliances will not only give us strength in numbers but restore proper perspective on many issues, which have improperly been labeled black issues."

"WE HERE TONIGHT are symbols of the increased opportunities for young Blacks in American politics. But as political leaders—we will have failed if we cannot get America to see that these young Blacks, almost half of all Blacks, who are waiting on the threshold of adulthood are an undeniable reality for America—a reality which cannot and must not be kept balanced on the margin of American economic life."

Eddie N. Williams, President

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NBC/LEO: grassroots power

U.S. REP. WILLIAM CLAY (D-Mo.) made a profound observation when he asserted several years ago that "black people in America have no permanent friends and no permanent enemies; only permanent interests." The spirit of that challenge has inspired black local elected officials in community after community to organize themselves around issues that are common to all of them, issues whose answers are crucial to the social and economic vigor of their minority constituents.

A major response to the challenge has come from the nation's nearly 1200 black elected officials on the municipal and county level. In 1970 the black elected officials who attended the annual meeting of the National League of Cities hammered together something they called the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (NBC/LEO). They designed it as a vehicle that black elected officials could use to accelerate broader acceptance of the goals and priorities important to minority constituents.

NBC/LEO functions both as a caucus within the National League of Cities/U.S. Conference of Mayors (NLC/USCM) and as an independent coalition concerned with the permanent interests of black Americans. As such, it is recognized by NLC and by the political establishment at large as a potentially powerful grass roots advocate, united on public policy issues that affect the well-being of minority citizens.

NEARLY 1200 black mayors, vice mayors, councilmen, aldermen and county commissioners qualify for regular membership in NBC/LEO. Associate membership status is available to the hundreds of municipal and county officials who hold high appointive offices. Annual membership fees for officials in both categories are ten dollars. Current members of NBC/LEO, led by their chairman, Mayor William Hart of East Orange, N.J., have launched a major membership drive to swell the rolls of NBC/LEO to add impetus to important organizational goals.

Other current officers and steering committee members are:

Richmond, Va., Vice Mayor Henry C. Marsh III, first vice chairman, Atlanta Vice Mayor Maynard Jackson, second vice chairman, Pontiac, Mich., Mayor Pro Tem Charles Tucker, secretary-treasurer, New Haven, Conn., Alderman William Jones; Jersey City, N.J., Councilman William Thornton; Newport News (Va.) Councilwoman Jessie Rattley

Also, Winston-Salem, N.C., Councilman Charles Ross, Detroit Councilman Ernest Browne; Ft. Worth, Tex., Councilman Leonard Briscoe; Kansas City, Mo., Councilman Charles Hazley; Boulder, Col., Councilman Penfield Tate; Long Beach, Cal., Councilman James Wilson; Vancouver, Wash., Councilman Willard Nettles; East St. Louis, Ill., Mayor James E. Williams.

Also, Highland Park, Mich., Mayor Robert Blackwell, Compton, Cal., Councilman Ross Miller; Oak Ridge, Tenn., Councilman George Phipps, Youngstown, Ohio, Councilman Herman Starks; Stockton, Cal., Councilman Ralph White; Salina, Kan., Commissioner Robert Caldwell; Richmond, Cal., Councilman Nathaniel Bates; Raleigh, N.C., Mayor Pro Tem

Clarence Lightner; and mayors James McGee of Dayton, Kenneth Gibson of Newark, Thomas Bradley of Los Angeles and Richard Hatcher of Gary.

NBC/LEO pursues the broad objective of improving the black condition in America through a skilled and knowledgeable use of the governmental system. It takes seriously the role that has been thrust upon the political process and its practitioners, both of which are viewed generally as the new cutting edge of the civil rights movement in the seventies.

The organization pursues its broad objective by working within the League of Cities/Conference of Mayors to: (1) achieve a forceful input in and impact on all NLC/USCM program activities; (2) achieve visibility and power within the politically potent organizations; (3) make sure all NLC/USCM policies and practices are filtered through a black perspective so that implementation of such policies and programs operate to the advantage of minority communities.

NBC/LEO also works independently to rally its membership around the objectives of a national black political agenda.

Because it is no longer possible for one or two individuals to travel to Washington, palms outstretched, and virtually raid the treasury, black elected officials must make more friends and influence more people. New Federalism and decentralized programs have effectively changed the rules of the political ball game.

An expanding membership roster adds more muscle to NBC/LEO's thrusts within the powerful NLC/USCM as it seeks to use the political leverage of those establishment organizations in behalf of black America's priority agenda. And, certainly, NBC/LEO's strength as an independent force is significantly enhanced by a membership list that demonstrates unity and solidarity.

Society has demonstrated that it is able to deal with the nettlesome individual, no matter how just his cause. NBC/LEO is seeking to build a charismatic organization, one whose power flows to each of its members when the need arises, and one whose power is such that the downfall of one individual does not substantially halt or hinder the minority community's advance toward the implementation of its agenda.

NBC/LEO is effective. It has influence. Gary, Ind., Mayor Richard G. Hatcher is co-chairman today of the U.S. Conference of Mayors' most powerful and prestigious unit, the Legislative Action Committee. Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, now first vice president, is slated next year to become president of the National League of Cities. Six other NBC/LEO members are on NLC's board. It is not immodest to say that the power that helped propel these men into positions of influence flowed from the unity and strength of the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials.

Clarence L. Townes, Jr.

**Director of Governmental Affairs
Joint Center for Political Studies**

The case for housing allowances

Editor's note: On Sept. 19, President Nixon announced several moves designed to make private mortgage loans more readily available to prospective home buyers, but also said any program of federal housing allowances for low-income families would be deferred for up to two years pending further studies of the concept. The federal government thus remains without any program specifically designed to subsidize low-income housing, because of last January's suspension of two programs for subsidies of rentals and home buying (Sections 235 and 236). (See the March Focus for details on this housing freeze).

In the following article, Samuel C. Jackson, former assistant secretary of Housing and Urban Development, takes a look at the rationale for housing allowances and some of the current experiments using the concept.

The article represents Mr. Jackson's own opinion, and should not be taken to necessarily represent the views of the Joint Center for Political Studies.

By Samuel C. Jackson

THE MORATORIUM on the construction of new and rehabilitated low income housing is now into its tenth month. It was imposed to permit a search for better ways to administer subsidy programs. As we seek new ways to deliver on the national commitment of a decent home in a suitable living environment for all American citizens, income support programs assume increasing relevance.

One of the most important of these is the housing allowance program. As defined for the purpose of this article, a housing allowance is a series of regular periodic payments made to an individual or family currently unable to afford decent housing in a suitable living environment. Family need in relation to the cost of standard housing units in moderate housing cost neighborhoods determines the amount of the allowance. The individual or family involved must use the allowance to make rental or home ownership payments.

Housing allowances have been used as an instrument of national economic and housing policy in many European nations, which offer a variety of models.

IN SWEDEN, every family which has filed a tax return indicating the presence of a child in the house receives an application for a housing allowance. Because this is the only requirement for eligibility, the administrative costs are low.

Housing allowances were recently introduced in England initially as a component of a policy of disengagement by the national government in the housing market.

In England, unlike Sweden, allowances are only available to individuals who are renting units. British government officials reasoned that homeowners would receive a double allowance if they were allowed to participate, as they were already allowed to deduct real estate taxes and mortgage interest payments for income tax purposes.

The cost of a housing allowance system, in both England and Sweden, is borne by several layers of government. In Sweden, the national government provides matching funds to municipalities on a one-to-one basis in certain clearly delineated situations. On the other hand, in the United Kingdom, the national government shares up to 90 per cent of costs accruing to local housing authorities as a result of required rebates.

THE CONCEPT of a housing allowance has not been limited to European shores. Forms of housing allowances were discussed in Congress as early as 1949, although no action was taken until 1969 and 1970, when the Department of Housing and Urban Development supported research designed to determine how much a national program would cost and what effect it would have on the rental market.

In late 1970, Model Cities agencies in Kansas City, Missouri, and Wilmington, Delaware, began programs designed to test the feasibility of housing allowances as a means of providing decent housing for low and moderate income families.

Because the design and operations of the Kansas City and Wilmington programs were nearly identical, I shall limit my discussion to the Kansas City program which was administered by the Kansas City Model City's Housing Development Corporation.

While 180 families were participating in this project as of September, 1972, during its peak 222 were enrolled. The project was funded to provide \$250,000 a year for allowances over a five-year period and \$36,000 a year for administrative costs over the same period. Recipients of allowances were allowed to participate in the program for a period of three years.

Allowances were offered to families or elderly individuals living in the Kansas City Model Neighborhood who would have qualified for participation in the federal rent supplement program (one of the low-income housing subsidies suspended last January). First priority was given to households living in public housing and substandard housing. The large majority of households served by this program were low-income black families. Recipients of assistance were allowed to participate in the program for a three-year period and received approximately \$100 a month.

EVALUATION OF the Kansas City experiment is continuing, but here are some of the preliminary findings:

1. A housing allowance program enables a large number of families to move from substandard to standard housing within a short period of time.
2. Households with extremely low socioeconomic characteristics may be served by a housing allowance program.
3. The housing allowance program may increase the quality of housing which is available for eligible households.
4. Participants in such a program exercise sound judgment in selecting rental housing.
5. A housing allowance program may serve to encourage resegregation of minority groups.

On January 8, 1973, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development launched an even more extensive evaluation of existing housing programs and their alternatives. Basic questions are being asked about the housing allowance program, including:

- (1) How will families use their allowances?
- (2) How will the housing market respond to allowances—will rental prices rise?
- (3) How should an allowance system be administered?

Answers are being sought to these questions in three types of experiments at nine sites throughout the country. Under this program, between 15,000 and 20,000 families will receive allowances.

The first of these is the "demand experiment," which will analyze the use of housing allowances by up to 1,000 families in each of at least two metropolitan areas with populations greater than 500,000. The second study is the "supply experiment" which will analyze any effects on the housing supply that result from offering housing allowances to between 4,000 and 8,000 families in two metropolitan areas with populations of around 250,000.

The third and final experiment is the "administrative agency experiment," designed to determine how to most effectively administer the program. Among the agencies participating in the third experiment are two local housing authorities, two metropolitan area county government agencies, two state community development agencies and two welfare agencies.

GIVEN BOTH the European experience and current experiments in this country, the case for making a housing allowance program an important component of our national housing strategy is quite persuasive. Such a program could reduce both poverty and the number of low-quality dwellings. In addition, it would lower the administrative costs involved in providing our disadvantaged citizens with decent housing. The experience in Sweden cited above is the clearest example of the beneficial effects of such a program.

One major advantage of a housing allowance program is that it can increase a family's ability to select housing in an area which it regards as desirable. Because payments are made to a family and not to housing operators, they will follow a family from one section of a metropolitan area to another, so long as its income is sufficiently low as to require the assistance. This increased mobility can well foster the free movement of black and Spanish-speaking families in the housing market.

On the other hand, such families may choose to live in areas with which they are familiar, choosing to remain near friends and build a viable political base. In both Kansas City and Wilmington, low income participants tended to follow the movement patterns of their racial ethnic groups and showed a proclivity for staying in the Model Neighborhood. Wilmington households which stayed in the Model Neighborhood, however, obtained larger housing at a lower cost while

retaining the ability to enjoy Model Neighborhood services, the security of a familiar environment and the support of family and friends.

A second advantage of the housing allowance program is its ability to respond to a broader segment of the families eligible for subsidy because they are less costly per unit. The Office of Management and Budget argues that only a small number of families eligible to participate in the subsidized programs have an opportunity to purchase or rent housing under the Section 235 - 236 programs each year (these were the programs suspended last January). The housing allowance thus becomes a form of family income maintenance.

Finally, administrative costs should be lower than they are in a production subsidy program because fewer people will be needed to administer the subsidy. Appraisers, mortgage credit specialists, architects, loan officers and management specialists will be unnecessary in a housing allowance program. The role of the federal government would, like social security, be largely limited to determining eligibility and writing checks.

SEVERAL ARGUMENTS have been raised in opposition to a housing allowance program. The most significant of these, from the point of view of black elected officials, is that such a system necessarily relies upon a supply of older existing housing being available for low income families while more costly new construction would be largely limited to families who can afford it without a direct subsidy. Thus, it is argued, low income families might well be limited to older housing requiring high maintenance costs.

Several factors which are ongoing in most communities should serve to avoid this result. Among them are:

1. The upgrading of local building codes,
2. Increased use of programs for housing rehabilitation,
3. Implementation of fair housing laws at all levels of government, and
4. Increasing family incomes for black families which should assure an expanding housing supply.

Thus, a viable housing allowance program would have an administrative requirement that before a family can use an allowance to rent or purchase housing, the owner would be required to produce a certificate that the housing meets local building code requirements for the basic housing systems, e.g. foundation, roof, plumbing, heating and electrical.

LOCAL BLACK elected officials must examine new components in our national housing strategy with a critical eye. Acceptance or rejection of such a housing allowance must be based upon a critical analysis of their effects upon the overall supply of housing available to the minority community and to an adequate family income to afford the units.

What we must not do is allow the richest of all nations to renege on its promise of a decent home for every citizen.

Black mayor in Atlanta's future?

Vice Mayor Maynard Jackson appeared in a strong position to be Atlanta's first black mayor after an Oct. 2 primary electorate gave him 47 per cent of the total vote. Jackson was to face incumbent Mayor Sam Massell in an Oct. 16 runoff. Massell took only 19.7 per cent of the primary vote, with 19,760 votes, to Jackson's 47,041.

The possibility arose of a mostly-black city government, as blacks also won outright victories for five of the nine seats on the school board, and could win a majority of the 18 city council seats in the runoff.

Blacks were assured of at least nine council seats, as six blacks won outright victories in the primary, and another three seats were to be decided by black versus black runoff contests.

For an additional three council seats, black candidates faced whites in runoffs. If only one of these blacks wins, the council would have a black majority of ten.

In another important race, black civil rights activist Hosea Williams was to face white candidate Wyche Fowler in a runoff for city council president, a newly created position which will replace the vice mayor's job under a charter revision. The current board of aldermen will be replaced by a restructured city council on Jan. 1.

Williams is president of the Atlanta chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Fowler is now an alderman. Under the new city charter, the council president will have power to assign members and chairmen of council committees.

In the primary, Williams was a close second, with 29,009 votes to Fowler's 30,006.

Another black mayoral candidate, Georgia State Sen. Leroy Johnson, finished fifth with 3,900 votes, 3.8 per cent of the total ballots cast. Two white candidates finished ahead of him—former Congressman Charles Weltner, with 19,558 votes, and conservative candidate Harold Dye, with 9,165.

Jackson apparently owed his lead in the primary mostly to black voters. While taking 47 per cent of the total vote, he had only six per cent of the white vote, according to news accounts.

Although Atlanta's blacks constitute a slim majority of its total population (51.3 per cent), blacks account for only 49.5 per cent of registered voters.

Of 105 candidates for all offices in the primary, 56 were black, according to the Voter Education Project in Atlanta.

IN ANOTHER Southern city, black City Councilman Clarence E. Lightner will face a white opponent in the Nov. 6 runoff for mayor of Raleigh, N.C. Lightner, a three-term councilman and a funeral home owner, came in a close second in the Oct. 9 primary behind businessman G. Wesley Williams, with 6,979 votes to Williams' 7,653. Another white candidate who came in third threw his support to Lightner. About 21 per cent of Raleigh's voting age population is black.

And in Detroit, a *Detroit News* poll showed black State Sen. Coleman Young leading former police commissioner John F. Nichols by six percentage points in the race for Nov. 6 election as mayor. It said 15 per cent of whites supported Young.

Education bill compromise seen

The Nixon administration has apparently decided to compromise with Congress and accept an extension of the present Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) rather than insist on its proposed Better Schools Act (BSA). Proposals to partially consolidate some of the separate programs under the ESEA may be the basis of a compromise.

The Better Schools Act would have been a version of special revenue sharing, with present categorical grant programs scuttled in favor of no-strings-attached grants.

Among the programs that would have been lumped into the special revenue sharing proposal was compensatory education funds for schools with large numbers of low-income children. The program comes under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Both President Nixon and the No. 2 man at the Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare, Frank C. Carlucci, made speeches promising administration flexibility, although they continued to seek some form of grants consolidation. Nixon said the principle of consolidating grant programs is "more important than the question of how the bill is titled or who gets the credit."

Dangling a carrot, outgoing HEW Assistant Secretary for Education Sidney P. Marland said the administration will ask Congress for an additional \$540 million for the current fiscal year's elementary and secondary programs if Congress passes an "acceptable" bill consolidating present grant programs. Part of this increase would simply make up for cuts in proposed budgets of several programs, such as library aid. But about \$400 million was expected to go to compensatory education, bringing its total to \$1.9 billion.

MEANWHILE, the House Education and Labor committee has begun consideration of a bill to extend and revise the ESEA.

The committee was considering a number of amendments, some designed to consolidate several existing programs into two broader categories. Title I was not included in these consolidation proposals.

Several amendments to Title I itself were proposed, however. Expected to produce the hardest bargaining were proposals designed to benefit expanding urban areas, and conflicting proposals to retain money in rural areas.

Congressional caucus fete: they all came

When the Congressional Black Caucus throws a party, everybody who's anybody in the black community comes. Or so it seemed Sept. 29 at the third annual

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fund-raising dinner thrown to pay the bills for the 16-member caucus' staff operations.

More than 3,000 persons paid \$100 each to come to the Washington Hilton hotel and dine on filet mignon, listen to the Dells, Melba Moore and Isaac Hayes perform, cheer news of the 713th home run by Hank Aaron, see the annual Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Award presented to NAACP Washington lobbyist Clarence Mitchell Jr., honor Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, and applaud a speech by U.S. Sen. Edward W. Brooke (R-Mass.).

Earlier, more than 200 black elected officials attended a seminar organized by the Joint Center for Political Studies and the caucus staff, at which the black members of Congress explained the workings of Congress and its committee system and encouraged the local and state officials to involve themselves in national issues which affect their constituents.

Brooke, who with tongue in cheek described himself as "the Senate Black Caucus," observed that several of the black members of the House have been "button-holing their white congressional colleagues to tell them about black voting potential in their districts," using statistics prepared by the Joint Center showing which districts have heavy concentrations of black voters.

He urged blacks to "form free-floating coalitions across racial lines," and identified such economic issues as inflation, unemployment, inequitable taxation, and inadequate health care and housing as issues which affect all races

JCPS offers seminars for disadvantaged towns

Under a contract from the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, the Joint Center for Political Studies has organized a series of five regional workshops for local officials from economically disadvantaged communities. They are designed to help the officials understand the processes of planning, management and community development so they can make full use of programs administered by HUD. The workshops should also help towns improve their own capacity for management and community development.

The first of these three-day sessions was held in Richmond, Va., Oct. 11-13. Others will be in Atlanta, Nov. 15-17; Houston, Jan. 10-12; Los Angeles, Feb. 14-16, and Detroit, March 14-16.

Participants will hear from management and urban affairs consultants Harry Adley, of Adley Associates, Atlanta; Timothy Jenkins of MATCH, Washington, D.C., and Ruby Burrows McZier, of Washington. They will also meet regional officials of HUD.

The contract for the series was channeled through the National League of Cities. James Wilson, program manager for the NLC, will act as evaluator during the workshops.

Prominent advisors added

Four persons prominent in national political affairs have agreed to fill vacancies on the advisory council of the Joint Center for Political Studies.

The new advisors are Mrs. Jewel Lafontant, deputy solicitor general of the United States; Dr. Henry Lucas Jr., a prominent San Francisco dentist who is also a member of the executive committee of the Republican National Committee; Henry Marsh, vice mayor of Richmond, Va.; and Basil A. Paterson, vice chairman of the Democratic National Committee and president of the Institute for Mediation and Conflict Resolution in New York City.

The four additions join 19 other Joint Center advisors who have distinguished themselves in the public life of this country. The other advisory council members are:

Congressmen Augustus Hawkins (D-Calif.) and Louis Stokes (D-Ohio); Illinois State Sen. Richard Newhouse; Maryland State Delegate Aris T. Allen; Michigan Secretary of State Richard Austin; Salina, Kan. City Commissioner Robert Caldwell; East Orange, N.J., Mayor William Hart; Sheldon, S.C., school board member Frieda R. Mitchell; Greene County, Ala., Sheriff Thomas Gilmore; Detroit Recorder's Court Judge George W. Crockett, Jr.; Washington bureau NAACP Director Clarence Mitchell, Jr.; political scientist Samuel Dubois Cook of Duke University; Professor Shelby Smith of Atlanta University; Professor William P. Robinson, Sr., of Norfolk, (Va.) State College; California State Sen. Mervyn Dymally; Gary, Ind., Mayor Richard Hatcher, and Manhattan Borough President Percy Sutton.

Black political alienation on rise

Trust in the political system among black Americans plummeted between 1968 and 1972, according to a recent study which shows a much more gradual decline in trust among whites in the same period.

Confounding many political theories, the study also suggested that the level of trust in the system fell fastest among moderate- to upper-income blacks. Political estrangement is greater among upper-class blacks than among lower-class blacks, it showed.

The study was prepared by the Center for Political Studies at the University of Michigan, a unit of the Ann Arbor university's Survey Research Center. It is based on nationwide interviews of both blacks and whites every four years since 1958. A report on the study, titled "Social Conflict and Political Estrangement," was prepared by Arthur H. Miller, Thad A. Brown, and Alden S. Raine.

Surveyors asked people whether they thought they could "trust the government in Washington to do what is right" most of the time or only some of the time; whether the government is "run by a few big interests" or for the benefit of all; whether government wastes a lot of tax money; whether most people in the government know what they're doing, and whether "quite a few" or not very many people in government are "a little crooked."

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The more "cynical responses" a person gave, the more he or she fit into the "politically estranged" or "alienated" category. The researchers compared the degree of estrangement of various groups for each year the study was made. What they found provided some surprises.

BETWEEN 1958 AND 1964, the early years of the civil rights movement, the proportion of blacks who basically trusted the government rose, from about 50 to 60 per cent. In the same period, the level of white trust was dropping, from about 50 to about 40 per cent. But between 1964 and 1968, both blacks and whites grew somewhat less trusting of the government, with levels for both races declining at about the same rate.

The sharp drop of black trust in government came between 1968 and 1972. Where 40 per cent of blacks expressed trust in 1968, nearly 40 per cent expressed mistrust, or estrangement, in 1972. Trust among whites also declined, but much more slowly—from about 20 per cent to about 10 per cent on the trusting side.

This drop in black trust, the analysts said, could in part be interpreted as "a natural outcome of the clash between quickly rising expectations and the realism of slow-moving system changes."

Another part of the explanation, they said, lies in a "change in black attitudes toward whites." This was marked by such signs as "increased demands for black control of schools, public facilities and political institutions in black areas," as well as a swelling black pride and a tendency toward black nationalism in some quarters.

Interestingly, the sharpest drop in the level of trust among blacks after 1964 came among those who earned between \$8,000 and \$15,000, a group which comprised about five per cent of the black population. In 1964, they were the most trusting of all blacks (86 per cent); by 1968, they were only as trusting as the poorest blacks (about 46 per cent on the trusting side), and by

1972 they were the most distrustful of all blacks (47 per cent on the negative side).

IN 1968, the report said, the least trustful blacks were those in "gray collar" jobs—sales, clerical, and public service, such as policemen and firemen. But by 1972, they had been joined in the cynical circle by black professionals, who by that time had become more distrustful than blue collar blacks.

Clearly, the analysts said, it wasn't just a good job and income that led to trust in the system. They also ruled out the idea that upwardly mobile blacks are more trusting. (Whites who are moving up the social scale do tend to be more trusting, they found, but not exclusively so.)

Instead, they suggested that the idea of equity plays a role. Evidence indicates, they said, "that Americans expect economic progress and suggests that people most critical of the system are those who feel they get less than they deserve, no matter what their status. It seems, therefore, that along with affluence has come not only a demand for progress and for an equitable income and quality of life, but also a bitter disappointment and an increasing tendency to translate these feelings into system-blame rather than self-blame when these expectations are unfulfilled."

They conclude, "If an individual feels that the political system is providing the same level or a greater level of rewards and representation for someone less deserving than himself, he is less likely to be supportive."

Good reading

The September issue of *Nation's Cities*, the monthly magazine of the National League of Cities, features interviews with black municipal officials on their special problems.

A new book, *The Black Urban Condition*, by Columbia University black historian Hollis R. Lynch, contains contemporary documents describing the conditions of blacks in American cities from 1866 through 1971. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., \$12.50.)

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