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The Fifth National Policy Institute
see p. 3

FOCUS

The monthly newsletter of the Joint Center for Political Studies

Incomes for Black Families Continue to Rise

But President Reagan Is Wrong: They Were Higher in the 1970s

The New Black Middle Class (Part II)

Due to Economic Vulnerability and Racial Bias, the American Dream Is Tarnished for Many

JCPS Roster of Black Elected Officials, 1987

POLITICAL TRENDLETTER

Perspective

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Project 1993: A Five-Year Plan for Political Empowerment

Over the next five years—between 1988 and 1993—a number of critical political developments will take place that will shape the nation's domestic and foreign policy agendas well into the 21st century. Taken together, these developments will be like a powerful locomotive about to leave the station. If blacks don't get aboard and help steer its course, they're likely to be left behind or dropped at the wrong station.

What are these powerful political developments about to take place during the next five years that will have such crucial implications for black Americans? Two of them, of course, are presidential elections—in 1988 and 1992. A third is the important state and local elections that will be held in the intervening years. Another major event for us to keep our eyes on is the decennial census which occurs in 1990. We must make sure there is a fair count. The census not only determines the kinds of governmental resources that come into our communities, it also leads to redistricting and reapportionment, both of which influence the extent of our political clout. And, of course, the more blacks are counted, the better their chances of deciding where legislative seats will be created and where they will be abolished.

Now is the time to plan, to strategize, to look ahead to political targets of opportunity. There are many strategies that blacks might follow, but the most fundamental ones, those that have stood the test of time, are: increasing black voter registration and turnout; electing more blacks to office; and electing white candidates who will vigorously support black objectives. These three strategies are the bedrock of political empowerment.

A strategic, five-year plan (should we call it Project 1993?) for black political empowerment between 1988 and 1993 will require a number of major commitments: raising money; identifying good candidates; conducting research and political analyses; developing policy issues; holding candidate forums; and encouraging blacks to participate in the 1990 census and to monitor reapportionment schemes in 1992. Raising money is central to the success of all of these efforts.

By now it should be a foregone conclusion that political empowerment is neither free nor cheap. Manpower and money will be required to increase voter education and registration through programs like the National Coalition on Black Voter Participation and through civil rights, fraternal, and other organizations. Extensive research needs to be conducted to guide decisions about which elections to target and how legislative boundaries should be drawn. And, in some cases, blacks will have to pay for lawsuits to challenge discriminatory redistricting plans.

In 1993, we will mark the 20th anniversary of the historic march on Washington and the 25th anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. What a great tribute it would be to mark these two historic occasions with a demonstrable increase in black political power.

Eddie N. Williams

PRESIDENT

FOCUS

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The Fifth National Policy Institute

Conference Kicks Off the Presidential Election Year, Underscores Black Political Clout

When the Fifth National Policy Institute convenes in Washington next January, black political leaders will have one eye fixed on the 1988 presidential election and the other eye focused on the 21st century. The Institute, scheduled for January 20-23, will give officials a unique opportunity to develop strategies and coalitions to pursue their policy interests during the next two decades.

Planning ahead will be critical. As we approach the end of this century, over 80 percent of all new entrants into the work force will be women, immigrants, and native-born nonwhites— groups that have not been favored up to now in the work force or in the educational system. Moreover, by the year 2080, nonwhites will comprise 26 percent of the entire national population. Given these demographic changes and the anticipated political pressures to assure the nation's economic stability and national security, we can anticipate the need to take a harder and more responsive look at issues like poverty, poor education, and declining government resources as we seek to enhance our international competitiveness.

To the extent that black Americans are part of this problem, they will be urged to help seek solutions to it. Thus, the Fifth National Policy Institute will not only give black political leaders a chance to flex their muscles, it will also give them an opportunity to fix their sights on future public policy objectives.

More than 1000 officials will gather in Washington next year to participate in the most comprehensive national, non-partisan, educational conference of its kind. Occurring in advance of the Iowa Caucuses and the New Hampshire and "Super Tuesday" primaries, the Institute's timing could not be more propitious. Black officials will get a head start in developing strategies to address many of the issues facing the black community and the nation.

Coretta Scott King described the challenge this way:

> In many ways black America faces crises of unparalleled dimensions. Unless we stand up and demand justice, equality, and opportunities, the clock will be rolled back even further on some of the important economic, political, and social gains we fought so hard to achieve. The Fifth National Policy Institute will place black public officials in the forefront of the movement to shape our future.

Black political leadership is growing. In the U.S. House of Representatives, 5 blacks chair full committees and 18 chair subcommittees. Five of the nation's 10 largest cities are headed by black mayors. The number of black elected officials has increased from 1,469 in 1970 to 6,681 in 1987 (see *JCPS Roster of Black Elected Officials, 1987, p. 5).* The influence of black voters is growing in federal, state, and local elections.

Sponsors of the Fifth National Policy Institute

- The Congressional Black Caucus
- The Joint Center for Political Studies
- The Judicial Council of the National Bar Association
- The National Association of Black County Officials
- The National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials
- The National Black Caucus of State Legislators
- The National Caucus of Black School Board Members
- The National Conference of Black Mayors

The U.S. Senate's anticipated rejection of Judge Robert Bork's nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court is partially explained in terms of growing black political clout, especially in the South. In 1986, black voters helped to return the Democratic party to control of the Senate by providing the margin of victory for a half dozen or so southern Democrats, all of whom opposed the Bork nomination.

The black vote will be as critical an element in the 1988 presidential selection process. The Institute will develop a policy blueprint for black political participation.

Workshops have been scheduled on the following topics:

- Governmental Initiative and Individual Responsibilities
- Black Philanthropy: The Legacy Continues
- The Underclass: Reality or Myth?
- The Census/Reapportionment
- AIDS and the Black Community
- Hazardous Waste—The Silent Killer
- Increasing Opportunities for Minority Businesses
- The Low-Income Housing Crisis: Can Solutions Be Structured?
- Job Creation: Which Strategies Work in the Black Community?
- The Plight of the Black Elderly
- Criminal Justice and the Black Community
- Addressing the Needs of Black Rural America
- Teenage Pregnancy Prevention
- International Affairs: We Are the World
- Black Public Officials and the Education Reform Movement
- Substance Abuse: Public Policy Implications
- The 1988 Elections: Implications for Black America
- Public/Private Financing of Government Services

For more information about the Fifth National Policy Institute, write to National Policy Institute, Joint Center for Political Studies, 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004 or call (202) 626-3500.

Incomes for Black Families Continue to Rise

But President Reagan Is Wrong: They Were Higher in the 1970s

by Margaret C. Simms

In a characteristically up-beat, good-news-only speech to the National Alliance of Business on September 14, 1987, President Ronald Reagan commented on black economic gains in recent years. Black employment, President Reagan said, "has shot forward twice as fast as white employment, . . . the real [inflation-adjusted] income of black families has increased almost 40 percent faster than white family income, and the share of black families in the highest income brackets is up by over 70 percent." Although these claims are accurate, President Reagan makes his economic record look better by excluding data from the first two years of his administration, during which time this nation (and black citizens in particular) suffered the worst economic setbacks since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

The president also approvingly quoted a *Washington Times* columnist's claim that "On every front—jobs, income, household wealth—this, 1981 through 1986, has been the best five economic years in black history." This claim is highly debatable. For instance, data from the July 1987 report of the U.S. Census Bureau *(Money Income and Poverty Status of Families and Persons in the United States: 1986),* show that the median real income (in 1986 dollars) of black families was higher from 1972 through 1976 (above $17,800 each year) and in 1978 ($18,824) than it was in 1986 ($17,604).[1]

In addition, black families fared better, relative to whites, in the early 1970s than at anytime during the Reagan era. In 1970 and in 1975, for instance, black family income was 61.3 percent and 61.5 percent, respectively, of white family income; by contrast, the Reagan-era peak was 57.6 percent in 1985 (equivalent to the low point in the early 1970s).

President Reagan's exaggerated claims aside, the Census Bureau data show that blacks, on average, have benefited from the post-1982 economic recovery and, in fact, that some groups of blacks have done quite well. For instance, a higher percentage of black families (8.8 percent) had over $50,000 in income (in constant 1986 dollars) than at any other time in U.S. history.

Black married-couple families in which the wife worked outside the home continued to make strong gains. These families had the highest median income of all black families ($31,949) in 1986, and their income was 82 percent of the income of similar white families—the highest black-white income ratio for any family type. This relatively high ratio is due to the fact that the earnings gap between black and white women is smaller than the gap between black and white men. Therefore, when a black wife enters paid employment she provides a larger share of total family income than a white wife who is employed. Black wives are also employed at a higher rate than white wives—which explains why income for black married-couple families increased by over 6 percent in real terms between 1985 and 1986. The gains for black married-couple families exceeded those of all other family types during this period.

The data from the Census Bureau (included in the table on this page) show that the median income for all families (whites, blacks, and others) in the United States was $29,460 in 1986—an increase in real income of 4.2 percent since 1985. This was one of the largest annual increases in family income since 1972. Income for all black families increased 2.9 percent in real terms between 1985 and 1986, compared to an increase of 3.7 percent for white families. The black-white median family income ratio of 57.1 percent is not significantly different from the ratio in 1985.

Not all blacks have benefited as a result of the economic expansion, however. The latest data also show that nearly nine million blacks in the United States were in poverty in 1986, representing 28 percent of the

(Continued on page 8)

Median Family Income by Family Type and Employment Status of Householder, by Race, 1986

	All Families		
	White	Black	Black/White Ratio
All Families	$30,809	$17,604	57.1%
Married Couple	33,426	26,583	79.5
Wife Employed	38,972	31,949	82.0
Wife Not Employed	26,421	16,766	63.5
Male Householder	26,247	18,731	71.4
Female Householder	15,716	9,300	59.2

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Money Income and Poverty Status of Families and Persons in the United States: 1986,* P-60, No. 157 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1987).

Dr. Simms, an economist, is deputy director of research at the Joint Center.

[1]For a discussion of the employment and wealth status of blacks, see "Update on the Job Status of Blacks" (*Focus,* April 1987) and "Wealth Data Puts Black-White Gap in Sharp Focus" (*Focus,* August 1986).

JCPS
POLITICAL TRENDLETTER

Inside this Issue

- **Southern black voters, who helped to elect a Democratic majority to the U.S. Senate in 1986, are widely credited with playing a pivotal role in the anticipated defeat of Judge Robert Bork's nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court. These same voters now face another historic challenge: the election of their favorite, Jesse Jackson, in the Super-Tuesday presidential caucuses and primaries in March 1988.**

- **A hot topic among black elected officials is whether they are unfairly being targeted for investigations into alleged corruption; but a Congressional Black Caucus hearing reveals a diversity of opinion among blacks on this question.**

- **Where are they now? *TL* looks at four veteran black leaders who have left the political stage but are still active in civic and political affairs.**

- **Across the nation: in Hartford, Conn., state Senator Carrie Saxon Perry won the Democratic mayoral primary, giving her a chance to become the city's second black and first woman CEO; in the District of Columbia, supporters of statehood face setbacks from the Democratic National Committee and the Congress; in two Illinois cities, blacks have been elected to the city council for the first time in decades, as a result of voting rights act lawsuits; and, in Baltimore, state's attorney Kurt Schmoke won a surprisingly close race to become the city's first elected black mayor.**

Southern Black Voters (I): Senate Blocks Bork

Southern blacks, who helped to elect a Democratic majority to the U.S. Senate last November, got their reward this month when the Senate Judiciary Committee voted nine to five to oppose the nomination of Judge ROBERT BORK to the U.S. Supreme Court. At this writing, Democratic strategists claim to have 54 votes against Bork, a sufficient number to ensure defeat on the Senate floor. Bork's defeat would be a major victory for the forces of civil and human rights, which had been tagged "impotent" earlier in the Reagan administration. **How significant is the fight over Bork's nomination? It is "as important as a presidential election," said RALPH NEAS, executive director of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, a lobbying group.** As Rep. JOHN CONYERS (D-Mich.) and others pointed out, the next nominee to the Supreme Court would hold the fifth and decisive vote on a Court that is at present almost evenly split on many key civil rights questions. Clearly, the stakes are enormous and the defeat of Bork would give civil rights groups a victory unmatched since the battle over reauthorizing the Voting Rights Act in 1982.

President Reagan had believed that Bork would be confirmed by an alliance of Republicans and conservative southern Democrats, but the southern Democrats broke ranks and opposed Bork. Why did these southern senators disappoint Reagan? First, and perhaps foremost, according to many political pundits, a growing and unified black electorate in the South was a major factor. According to polls, approximately 7 out of every 10 southern blacks opposed Bork, and many southern senators concluded that Judge Bork, if elevated to the Supreme Court, would disrupt race relations in the region. **Southern Democratic senators who opposed Bork include HOWARD HEFLIN and RICHARD SHELBY of Alabama, DALE BUMPERS and DAVID PRYOR of Arkansas, LAWTON CHILES and BOB GRAHAM of Florida, WYCHE FOWLER of Georgia, WENDELL FORD of Kentucky, BENNET JOHNSTON and JOHN BREAUX of Louisiana, TERRY SANFORD of NORTH**

CAROLINA, JIM SASSER and ALBERT GORE of Tennessee, and LLOYD BENTSEN of Texas.... However, at least one Democratic senator elected last year from a state with a large (29 percent) black electorate, ERNEST "FRITZ" HOLLINGS (S.C.), decided to support Bork. Hollings, whose term ends in 1992, may well have provoked black voters whose support he has enjoyed in the past.

Names which are being floated as President Reagan's next nominee include Judge PATRICK HIGGINBOTHAM of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit (Dallas); former Senate majority leader and current White House chief of staff HOWARD BAKER; Sen. ORRIN HATCH (R-Utah); and Judge CLIFFORD WALLACE, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (San Diego). **All except Hatch are considered to be more "moderate" than Bork. Hatch may be barred from the Court (by Article I, section 6, paragraph 2) because of his vote as a senator to support raising the salaries of Supreme Court justices.** Some observers think the nomination of Hatch could be tied up over constitutional issues so long that it could well deprive President Reagan of the opportunity to appoint a ninth justice altogether. Of all of Reagan's potential nominees, Howard Baker is probably the one most favorable to black Americans, but he is also the one most despised by the ultra-right. Thus, some observers believe that Baker does not have a chance of being nominated by Reagan. At this writing, the odds-on favorite, if the Bork nomination is withdrawn or is defeated, is Judge Higginbotham.

Southern Black Voters (II): Jackson's Super-Tuesday Ace

The *Atlanta Journal and Constitution's* second southern primary poll of voters in 12 states (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia) **gives JESSE JACKSON a strong lead over his rivals for the Democratic nomination for the presidency.** The poll, conducted September 18-28, showed Jackson with the support of 27 percent of the Democratic respondents; Sen. ALBERT GORE, Jr. (Tenn.), with 13 percent; Massachusetts Gov. MICHAEL S. DUKAKIS, 9 percent; Rep. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT (Mo.) and Sen. PAUL SIMON (Ill.), 5 percent each; and former Arizona Gov. BRUCE BABBITT, 3 percent. Six percent of Democrats polled did not prefer any of these candidates, and 29 percent were undecided....**Jackson is ahead in 9 of the 12 southern states: Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia.** He does best in Alabama, Mississippi, and Virginia, three states where he is supported by a third to two-fifths of Democrats polled. Gore leads Jackson in Kentucky and Tennessee (Gore's home state), and Jackson is tied with Dukakis in Florida.

With the support of 65 percent of blacks and only 10 percent of whites, Jackson is clearly dependent on black voters. If the Democratic candidate field remains crowded, Jackson may very well win the primaries on March 8 in nine of the southern states on the basis of little more than the black vote. This would give him good momentum as he goes into the next set of primaries in the Midwest, where black voters are also a significant voting bloc. For Jackson, southern black voters are his best hope for staying the course—his ace in the hole, so to speak.

An "Unholy Alliance" Against Black Leaders? Some Say No

An issue that was widely discussed at this year's annual Congressional Black Caucus legislative weekend was whether black leaders, especially black elected officials, are under attack by the Reagan Justice Department, the Republican party, state and local prosecutors, and the press. Indeed, Rep. WALTER FAUNTROY (D-D.C.) opened a hearing on the subject with the question: **Is there an "unholy alliance" developing between Republican officials and the press to destroy black leaders? For the most part, the black candidates and elected officials on the panel** (former Brooklyn Rep. SHIRLEY CHISHOLM, former state Senator CLARENCE MITCHELL III, Rep. HAROLD FORD [D-Tenn.], and the congressional candidate for Louisiana's 8th district seat, FAYE WILLIAMS) **answered "yes, black leaders are under attack." Members of the press (see below) and a Justice Department spokesperson answered "no."**...In addition, two panelists addressed some broader historical and current issues. HERBERT REID, a Howard University law professor and counsel to Mayor MARION BARRY (D-D.C.), discussed the efforts by white officials in the 1890s to demonstrate that blacks were incapable of self-governing. Their goal, Reid said, was not only to remove black office-holders but also to disenfranchise blacks. **Professor MARY SAWYER of Iowa State University presented the findings of a study she conducted in 1977 and updated earlier this year. Sawyer called the investigations of black leaders a form of "red-baiting," where charges of corruption are replacing charges of communism.** Sawyer and Fauntroy called

for a plan of action to monitor cases of alleged harassment and to establish a legal defense fund for black leaders.

The media panelists, all black (DOROTHY GILLIAM and JUAN WILLIAMS of the *Washington Post,* WILBUR TATUM, publisher of the *New York Amsterdam News,* and BRUCE JOHNSON of Washington's WUSA-TV), **largely disagreed that there is an "unholy alliance" between the press and governmental officials.** They argued that racism does not explain all charges of corruption and that black officials should conduct themselves so properly that they could say, "try us anywhere [the courts or the press]." Williams and Johnson pointed out that, in this era, when "character" has become an issue for the public, blacks were not alone as targets of investigations; former presidential candidates GARY HART and JOSEPH BIDEN, former Secretary of Labor RAYMOND DONOVAN, Rep. MARIO BIAGGI (N.Y.), and a host of other white leaders and elected officials have also been targets.

In the end, the issue of harassment of black elected officials remained far from settled, as everyone expected. Most of the audience seemed to firmly believe that black public officials are unfairly being attacked, but what was also clearly revealed is a diversity of opinion on the issue within black America. For the panel members, that diversity came down to one's role, status, and occupation: elected officials charged racism; the journalists said their job was to cover a story with balance. But, as *Washington Post* columnist Dorothy Gilliam pointed out, what appears to be balance to some may not be perceived as balance to others.

Where Are They Now? Chisholm, Stokes, Jackson, Burke

They came, they did their duty, and they left the political scene. Or did they? *TL* begins an occasional series that will focus on the generation of leaders who graced the political stage in the early years of black political empowerment: "Where are they now?"....**The spotlight this month is on two women, two men; one teacher, three lawyers, all pioneers whose rise to political prominence from humble beginnings is an inspiration and a legacy for those who will follow them. Though only one of them now holds elected office, all four are active in political and civic affairs...** SHIRLEY CHISHOLM, a former teacher and New York State assembly member, had many "firsts" in her political career. She was the first black woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives when she won a seat in 1969 and was also the first mainstream black and the first woman to run for president. Early in 1982, Chisholm shocked many Americans by announcing her retirement from Congress to return "to a more private life." Many say she was tired of the growing conservative mood in the country. **But, even out of office, Chisholm continued to be one of the strongest voices in protest against the Reagan administration's cutbacks in domestic programs. In August 1984, Chisholm was one of the founders and is presently the chair of the National Political Congress of Black Women (NPCBW).** With her tireless devotion to progress for all those poor and suffering at the bottom of the economic ladder, Shirley Chisholm remains for many, black America's "First Lady." In addition to her ongoing political activities, Chisholm has returned to her former career as a teacher at several schools, including Mount Holyoke and Rutgers University.

In November 1962, CARL STOKES became the first black Democrat in the history of Ohio to be elected to the Ohio General Assembly. Stokes was elected from a county that was only 14 percent black. **But it was in November 1967, when he (along with RICHARD G. HATCHER in Gary, Indiana) became the first black elected mayor of a major American city (Cleveland), that Stokes reached full national prominence.** After completing two terms as mayor, Stokes embarked upon a career in broadcast journalism, becoming an anchorman at WNBC-TV in New York in 1972. In 1980, Stokes became general counsel to the United Auto Workers. **On November 8, 1983, he entered electoral politics again and was elected to the Cleveland Municipal Court, where he still serves.** The son of a laundry worker and a mother who was a domestic, Stokes dropped out of high school but went on to earn his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Minnesota and his Juris Doctorate from Cleveland Marshall Law School.

MAYNARD JACKSON, formerly an attorney with the U.S. National Labor Relations Board and president of the Atlanta City Council, became Atlanta's first black mayor in 1974. Many believe his election set a trend for the election of black mayors to other southern cities. Barred by law from seeking a third term as mayor, Jackson left elective office in 1982 but, as a member of the executive committees of the Democratic National Committee and the Georgia Democratic Party, Jackson's feet are still firmly planted in the political arena. Jackson also leads a busy non-political life as an attorney—practicing public finance law in the Atlanta office of Chapman and Cutler, where he is a partner—and as an entrepreneur who was one of the founders of Air Atlanta, the nation's first black-owned airline.

YVONNE BRAITHWAITE BURKE, an attorney and former California State assemblywoman, became the only black woman from California ever to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives when she won a seat in November 1972. In 1978, Representative Burke resigned to run for attorney general in California. After she lost that race, she was appointed to the powerful Los Angeles Supervisor's post but she failed to win election in 1978. Burke then began practicing law and remains prominent in California politics and civic associations. **She serves on numerous boards including the Board of Regents of the University of California, where she is currently vice-chairman.**

AROUND THE NATION

CONNECTICUT: State Rep. CARRIE SAXON PERRY, seeking to become Hartford's second black and first woman mayor, received 59 percent of the vote and defeated a white opponent to capture the Democratic primary nomination. Perry was endorsed by incumbent THIRMAN MILNER, the city's first black mayor, who is retiring. **Perry, an alumna of the Hartford public school system and Howard University, has been a community activist, an assistant majority leader of the state House, and secretary of the Legislative Black and Hispanic Caucus.**

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: District Democratic party officials are threatening to boycott the 1988 Democratic National Convention because a new rule has changed the "governor" status previously accorded the Mayor at national party conventions. As members of the D.C. Democratic state committee see it, this new rule undercuts the District's mayor at the very time that D.C. is seeking statehood. So far, the Democratic National Committee (DNC) does not seem to be listening to the complaint. **If the DNC does not rescind its decision, the mayor would have to compete with other District elected officials to become a delegate.** All in all, many political observers in D.C. think the skirmish might not mean much for voting on the floor at the Convention, but may do serious damage to the party by demonstrating its symbolic acquiescence to the foes of statehood in keeping D.C. the last territory in the continental United States that practices taxation without representation.

Meanwhile, **the D.C. Statehood fight itself seems to be falling upon hard times.** Although the premier fighters for statehood, Rep. WALTER FAUNTROY, the D.C. mayor, city council and, most especially, the Statehood Party are still optimistic, most agree that the going is rough. So far, Rep. Fauntroy reports having 177 House members pledged to support the bill—41 more are needed to reach a majority in the 435-member U.S. House of Representatives. Moreover, it is no longer certain that the House leadership will bring the bill to the floor this year.

ILLINOIS: As a result of a switch from at-large elections to a system in which members of the City Council are elected by individual wards, **Danville voters elected the first two black City Council members in 60 years.** LESTER BROWN, an accountant, and EUGENE THOMPSON, a 61 year-old retired foundry worker and one of the plantiffs in the voting rights suit that led to the new election system, were the two blacks who ended Danville's all white rule. Danville was 16 percent black in 1980.

In Springfield, **two blacks advanced toward a runoff and the certainty of being the first of their race on the town council since 1901.** In Ward 2, where all four candidates were black, state university official LEROY JORDAN won 44 percent of the vote and Democratic activist FRANK MCNEIL had 46 percent. They will face each other in the Nov. 3rd general election....These elections were also part of the settlement of a class-action lawsuit by black residents who challenged the city's commission form of government under the federal voting rights act. Council members are now elected by districts.

MARYLAND: State's Attorney KURT SCHMOKE defeated incumbent (appointed) Mayor CLARENCE "DU" BURNS by a surprisingly close margin of about 5000 votes to become Baltimore's first elected black mayor. The closeness of the final tally shocked local pundits because of Schmoke's thirty point lead in early polls. Schmoke owes his victory to black voters. According to the Baltimore Evening Sun, he received more than 62 percent of the vote in precincts that are more than 90 percent black, while Burns received 68 percent of the vote in precincts that were at least 90 percent white. **But, for the first time, black turnout roughly equalled white turnout—approximately 44 percent of blacks are said to have voted compared to 43 percent of white voters.**

In Prince George's county, state's attorney ALEX WILLIAMS has established himself as a major voice in the community. **Williams, the only black elected to a countywide post in the approximately 50 percent black county, has begun a number of initiatives which lead many observers to believe that he has higher political ambitions.** For example, he has released a long-awaited police brutality study, hosted a large reception for Gov. William Schaefer, appears monthly on a local radio show, and is starting a monthly newsletter. But Williams's progress up the political ladder may not be immediate. The biggest obstacle is that higher positions are held by whites (e.g. the district's congressional representative and the county supervisor) who helped Williams in his campaign, and so far Williams has not demonstrated a proclivity to go against these supporters. So far, Williams says his plans are to run for re-election in three years rather than seek another office.

MICHIGAN: Former Rep. CHARLES DIGGS, the first chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, lost his bid to return to electoral office in the Wayne County (Detroit) Commissioner's race. **Facing a crowded field of ten candidates, Diggs came in second in the Democratic primary to ALBERTA TINSLEY-WILLIAMS, who is also black.** Tinsley-Williams, who teaches classes in stress management to the unemployed, will now face another black woman, Republican MARJORIE B. RODGERS. Rodgers, who switched her registration to the Republican party in 1980, is currently a student at the Ross Institution of Business. Tinsley-Williams is expected to win in this heavily Democratic district.

MISSISSIPPI: Blacks (all Democrats) made big gains in the state's August primary elections, in some cases winning offices they have not held since Reconstruction. For example, ROSIE S. SIMMONS, a former deputy circuit clerk, became the first local black circuit clerk for Bolivar County in this century....In Sunflower County (Indianola), CLANTON BEAMON, executive director of Delta Housing Development Corp., was elected as the first black supervisor....In Lowndes and Oktibbeka Counties, ALFRED WALKER Jr., defeated a white candidate to become the first black to represent the 41st House District....In Hinds County (Jackson) ALICE HARDEN is set to become the first black female state senator in Mississippi's history. Harden will represent the 28th senatorial district left vacant by the resignation of black Senator HENRY KIRKSEY, who is running for lieutenant governor in November. VELVELYN FOSTER, one of the candidates defeated by Harden, has challenged her election, claiming that Harden does not reside within the 28th district. A final decision on this matter is expected in mid-October....None of these candidates have opposition in November, so for all practical purposes, they are the winners.

JCPS Roster of Black Elected Officials, 1987

Black Elected Officials: A National Roster, 1987, is now available from the Joint Center. The only publication of its kind, *The Roster* has documented the growth in the number of blacks elected to office for more than 15 years. Data compiled by the Center this year reveal that between January 1986 and January 1987, the number of black elected officials in the country rose from 6,424 to 6,681, an increase of 4.1 percent. This rate of growth was lower than it had been in previous years, and blacks still hold fewer than 1.5 percent of all elected offices.

Despite this diminishing rate of growth, blacks made many noteworthy accomplishments. Seventy-one took office in jurisdictions where no black person had ever before held office. And for the first time since Reconstruction, Mississippi Delta voters elected a black U.S. congressmember. Blacks now hold 23 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, the highest number ever.

Black Elected Officials contains the name, title, jurisdiction, address, and date on which the term of office expires for every black elected official in the country. Also included are basic population data and information on governmental organization for each state.

For a copy of *Black Elected Officials* ($29.50 each), write Publications Clerk, Joint Center for Political Studies, 1301 Penn. Ave., N.W., Suite 400, Wash., D.C. 20004; or call 202-626-3500.

			Federal		State				Substate Regional		County			Municipal					Judicial and Law Enforcement						Education			
State	Total	Net Change since January 31, 1986	Senators	Representatives	Governors	Administrators	Senators	Representatives	Members, Regional Bodies	Other Regional Officials	Members, County Governing Bodies	Members, Other County Bodies	Other County Officials	Mayors	Members, Municipal Governing Bodies	Members, Municipal Boards	Members, Neighborhood Advisory Commissions	Other Municipal Officials	Judges, State Courts of Last Resort	Judges, Other Courts	Magistrates, Justices of the Peace, Constables	Other Judicial Officials	Police Chiefs, Sheriffs, and Marshals	Other Law Enforcement Officials	Members, State Education Agencies	Members, University and College Boards	Members, Local School Boards	Other Education Officials
Alabama	448	45					5	19			58		13	32	220			1	1	9	18	5	7		2		56	2
Alaska	3	−1						1							1												1	
Arizona	15	3					1	2			3				4												5	
Arkansas	319	4					1	4						26	139			16		1	39					1	92	
California	293	6		4			2	6	5		8	1	1	7	41	7		4	1	79		1	1			20	105	
Colorado	15	1					1	3							3					4		1					3	
Connecticut	68	1				1	3	7						1	32	3		2			3						16	
Delaware	21	2					1	2						1	12												5	
District of Columbia	251	0		1										1	9		232										8	
Florida	179	1					2	10			11	3		18	94	3		2	1	17			1				15	2
Georgia	445	28		1			6	22			91		3	17	209	1		2		14	2	1	1				73	2
Hawaii	1	0																									1	
Idaho	0	0																										
Illinois	434	8		3		1	7	14			35	1		19	149	45		18		25		1				2	114	
Indiana	69	−1					2	6			12			1	30		4	2		3							9	
Iowa	9	0					1				2				1							1					4	
Kansas	29	1					1	3			2				7	1		2		3							10	
Kentucky	74	28					1	1			1			2	50					3	2		1	1			12	
Louisiana	505	17					5	14			118	2		21	158			2		8	41	1	14				121	
Maine	3	0																1									2	
Maryland	119	11		1			6	21			6			9	52		1		1	13		4					5	
Massachusetts	36	1					1	6			1				15	4											9	
Michigan	316	2		2		1	3	13			25		2	14	82			17	1	50	4				1	14	87	
Minnesota	12	3						1						1	3					4			1				2	
Mississippi	548	27		1			2	18			51	43	5	21	205			4	1	2	74	5	5				103	8
Missouri	164	3		2			3	12			3			15	93			5		10		2	2			2	15	
Montana	0	0																										
Nebraska	5	1					1								1												3	
Nevada	10	1					1	2			1				2					2						1	1	
New Hampshire	1	1						1																				
New Jersey	198	−2					2	6			7		1	10	92			1				1					78	
New Mexico	6	1				1					1				1					2							1	
New York	250	2		4			4	16			11			2	32	6				48	1						126	
North Carolina	353	42					3	13	1		32	1	1	18	194	1			1	16		2	4				66	
North Dakota	0	0																										
Ohio	214	5		1			2	11			1	1		11	98	3		9		30					1		46	
Oklahoma	117	1					2	3			2			15	49			20		2			1				23	
Oregon	10	0					2	1			1				2	1				2							1	
Pennsylvania	140	6		1			3	15						4	42			3	1	35	12	1					23	
Rhode Island	11	3					1	5							3												2	
South Carolina	340	11					4	16			62	1	2	14	119	2				1			4			1	114	
South Dakota	3	0												1	2													
Tennessee	143	1		1			3	10			47			2	38					11	7		1				23	
Texas	282	1		1			2	13			13			10	119	1				12	19				1	6	85	
Utah	1	0																		1								
Vermont	1	0						1																				
Virginia	123	−2				1	2	7			32		3	8	56			4				7	3					
Virgin Islands	35	−5			1	1	10			17															6			
Washington	19	2					2	1			1			2	3					4							6	
West Virginia	20	0						1							13			3		2	1							
Wisconsin	20	−2					1	3			2				7					3			1				3	
Wyoming	3	0						1							1												1	
Total	6,681	257	0	23	1	6	99	311	6	17	640	53	31	303	2,483	78	237	118	8	416	223	33	47	1	11	47	1,475	14

Source: *Black Elected Officials: A National Roster, 1987*

The New Black Middle Class (Part II)

Due to Economic Vulnerability and Racial Bias, the American Dream Is Tarnished for Many

by Bart Landry

Editor's note: In the first part of this article, which appeared in the September 1987 issue of Focus, *Dr. Landry, a JCPS visiting scholar and author of* The New Black Middle Class *(University of California Press, 1987), described how the black middle class grew from 3 percent of all black workers in 1910 to 37 percent in 1980 (and was projected to grow to 56 percent in the year 2000). He also showed that "the black middle class lags far behind the white middle class in proportionate size and in access to the most desirable jobs within the middle class." In part II, he explores in greater detail the differences in income, occupation, and standard of living between the black and white middle classes.*

In the mid-1970s, middle-class blacks were still riding the crest of the civil rights victories of the 1960s. Ten years of affirmative action had facilitated the influx of a large number of blacks into the middle class, most of them moving up from the working class. For these blacks, life had indeed changed. Not even the gas lines and the economic problems brought on by the 1973-75 recession had yet dampened their enthusiasm. One-fourth of the black respondents in my 1976 survey felt they were already experiencing the best possible life, and two-thirds expected to share that experience within five years.

Enter 1981, five years later. Instead of their dreams being realized, the black middle class found the United States was in an even deeper recession than that experienced in the early 1970s. In the following year, 1982, the black middle class not only stopped growing; it shrank by 5,000. The white middle class, in contrast, expanded by half a million. While the black middle class resumed its expansion in 1983, a major fact had been underscored: the new black middle class is an economically vulnerable group.

Income Gap Grew in the 1970s

In seeking to explain the vulnerability of middle-class blacks, one of the most important questions is whether blacks and whites receive the same rewards when they enter the middle class. In his book, *The Declining Significance of Race,* William J. Wilson argues that as a result of the civil rights legislation of 1964, college educated blacks now enter the job market with the same opportunities as comparably educated whites. Even "during the serious recession of the 1970s," he adds, "trained and educated blacks continued to improve their positions vis-a-vis whites in terms of income and occupational advancement."

However, the income data published by the U.S. Census Bureau do not substantiate these claims and, instead, reveal just the opposite. Between 1974 and 1981, for instance, average income increased by 53.5 percent for black middle class males but rose by 68.2 percent for white middle class males. For black and white females, the comparable gains were 73.9 and 77.0 percent, respectively. The result was an *increase* rather than a decrease in the income gap of both groups. The recessions of the mid 1970s and the early 1980s were especially disastrous for middle-class black males, whose average income declined by 0.3 percent in 1980 and increased by less than 2 percent in 1981. In contrast, white males' incomes in those same years grew by 7.2 percent and 8.8 percent, respectively.

Even the data on incomes of black and white professionals—among whom we can expect to find the recent college educated blacks Wilson argues are competing on an equal basis with whites—do not support Wilson's thesis. Between 1974 and 1981, the average income of black professionals increased by only 38.7 percent, compared to 66.7 percent among whites. The result was an even greater widening of the gap (from $3,976 in 1974 to $10,418 in 1981) between black and white professionals than between all middle-class blacks and whites. The income gap between black and white professional women also widened—though not as much as the gap between professional men—even though black women have more job experience than white women.

Bias or Human Capital Deficiencies?

It has often been charged that the lower incomes of minorities and women are due to deficiencies in human capital. Minorities and women, so the argument goes, have less education, job experience, and seniority than white males and are more likely to be in lower paying occupations. Given the pervasiveness of this argument, it deserves close scrutiny. Is the income gap between blacks and whites due primarily to human capital deficiencies or to racial discrimination?

To answer this question, I employed a statistical technique developed by sociologist Otis Dudley Duncan of the University of Arizona. Using survey data I had collected from 21 metropolitan areas, I determined that middle-class blacks earned an average of $4,600 less than middle-class whites. Next—to obtain a statistically

matched sample—I assigned a sample of black males the same characteristics as white males in terms of level of education, seniority, job experience, supervisory responsibilities, residence in the North or the South, and employment in the private or public sector. Using multiple regression, I then recalculated the income of the sample of black males. The result? The income gap was narrowed by only slightly more than $1,000, leaving a gap of about $3,500 caused by racial discrimination.

This conclusion suggests that the widening income gap in the 1970s and the 1980s indicates a resurgence—not a lessening, as Wilson claims—of market discrimination. Rather than declining in significance, racial bias appears to be increasing for the black middle class.

All of this should not be surprising. A study by Robert Althauser and Sydney Spivack, *The Unequal Elites* (published in 1975), had similar findings. After matching 800 black and white male graduates who were from the same colleges and had similar backgrounds, Althauser and Spivack found that whites consistently obtained better jobs and received higher incomes than blacks. More recently, a 1984 census study examining the economic payoffs for educational investment found that black college graduates earned significantly lower incomes than white college graduates.

What Price the Good Life?

To what extent do the lower incomes and occupational gains of blacks affect their living standards? Are middle-class blacks able to live the good life? According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), an urban family of four needed an income of $23,700 to maintain a middle-class living standard in 1976. By 1981, the price tag for living the American Dream had increased to $38,000. I estimate that in 1987 it is about $55,000.

In 1976, the two-parent, middle-class families who made up my sample had average incomes of $21,300, or about $2,000 under the BLS standard. Those in the upper middle class, with an average income of $23,300, fared far better than those in the lower middle class, where a majority of blacks were concentrated. With an average income of $18,300, most lower middle-class black families found the good life still a distant goal. This was true also of lower middle-class whites whose average income was only slightly higher than that of blacks. Upper middle-class white families, however, enjoyed an average family income *exceeding* the BLS standard by $2,000.

Though average family incomes of two-parent black and white middle-class families were not very far apart in the mid 1970s, black families had to expend a greater effort to realize the same standard of living as white families. Sixty-two percent of all middle-class black wives worked full time in 1976, compared to only 24 percent of white wives. Without this contribution by wives, the average upper middle-class black family would have missed the income standard for the good life by about $9,000, but upper middle-class whites would have missed it by only $4,000. Once within the middle class, black families have historically depended far more upon the economic contribution of wives to approach or maintain the living standard associated with that class. This was increasingly the case in the 1970s and 1980s.

The slower income gains of black males and females in the 1970s and 1980s resulted in an erosion of their already tenuous living standard. With most middle-class black wives already employed full time, black families have not been able to shore up their sagging incomes by the large scale entrance of wives into the labor force as whites have done. The addition of income from white wives' employment, as well as the generally higher income gains of white males, helped middle-class white families keep pace with the rising cost of living into the 1980s. Black middle-class families, as a group, found their living standards slipping.

A Tarnished Dream

In the fading glow of the 1970s and 1980s, middle-class blacks have had reason to reassess the optimism engendered by their gains of the 1960s. There is no doubt that the gains of the sixties were real. The new black middle class today is larger and more diversified than its predecessor under segregation. It plays an important role in the larger economy, and it makes its intellectual contribution to the nation.

However, the limitations of its achievements are also real. Black middle-class males and females remain more concentrated in fewer occupations than whites and have entered upper middle-class occupations in disproportionately smaller numbers. Incomes have risen slower. Living standards are being eroded. Contrary to those who would like to believe that race has lost its significance in the market place, recent data indicate just the opposite. In the 1970s and 1980s, blacks seeking entry to the middle class found the hurdles they faced before the 1960s rising once more and the pace of their entry slowing. Blame for this turn of events can be laid at the doors of a sluggish economy and the resurgence of discrimination, aided and abetted in the 1980s by the Reagan administration's hostility to affirmative action. Resumption of the pace of middle-class growth experienced in the 1960s depends on improvements in economic growth and support for affirmative action.

In conclusion, blacks in large numbers realized the American Dream during the past 25 years; but as they looked around it became apparent that it was a tarnished dream. Sad irony for a people whose sweat and blood contributed so much to the building of the American Dream. ■

New JCPS Distinguished Scholar

Professor Peyton McCrary joined the Joint Center in August as the 1987-88 Distinguished Scholar. During his year at the Center, he expects to complete a book on the struggle of southern blacks for representation in local government. McCrary has served as an expert witness in at least 30 voting rights cases over the past two decades, testifying for either minority plaintiffs or the U.S. Department of Justice.

A native Virginian, McCrary earned his bachelor's and master's degrees at the University of Virginia. He received a Ph.D. in history from Princeton University in 1972. He has taught at the University of Minnesota, Vanderbilt University, and the University of South Alabama, where he is currently a professor of history. He is the author of several articles and papers on electoral politics and on the Civil War and Reconstruction. His prize winning book, *Abraham Lincoln and Reconstruction: The Louisiana Experiment,* was published by Princeton University Press in 1978. ■

Fellowships for Minorities

The Social Science Research Council, a non-profit research organization, is seeking minority applicants for its Advanced Research Fellowships in Foreign Policy Studies. The program encourages research that studies the complex interplay of political, economic, social, and international forces that are believed to influence foreign policy making. Applicants must hold a Ph.D. or a degree of accomplishment equivalent to the Ph.D.

Deadline for applications is December 1, 1987. For more information, contact the Program in Foreign Policy Studies, Social Science Research Council, 605 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10158; telephone 212-661-0280.

The National Urban Fellows, Inc., which has awarded 452 fellowships since its inception in 1969, is encouraging women, blacks, Hispanics, and other minorities to apply for its Fellowships in Public Administration and Rural Development. Following an intensive eight-week academic session at Bernard M. Baruch College of the City University of New York (for Urban Fellows) and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst (for Rural Fellows), fellows spend nine months as assistants to governors, mayors, city managers, and county administrators of urban and rural agencies and organizations. Master's degrees will be awarded to fellows successfully completing all requirements.

Deadline for applications is January 15, 1988. For more information, contact National Urban Fellows, Inc., 570 Seventh Avenue, Suite 905, New York, N.Y. 10018; telephone 212-221-7090. ■

Black Family Income

(Continued from page 4)

poverty population.[2] Slightly over 31 percent of the black population was in poverty, a rate that was nearly three times the rate for whites. Poverty rates are much higher for black families that are headed by women, and the extremely high proportion of black children in poverty reflects the fact that one-half of black children live in families headed by a woman without a husband present.

As these numbers make clear, while some blacks have made gains in income during the economic recovery of the past 5 years, those gains have not been equally distributed. In addition, black families have yet to regain the position, relative to whites, that they held 15 years ago. ■

[2]The poverty definition used by the Census Bureau is set by the Office of Management and Budget and consists of a series of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition, and which are adjusted annually to reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index. For example, the poverty threshold for a family of four in 1986 was $11,203.

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