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FOCUS

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TRENDLETTER **PERSPECTIVE**

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Continuing World Leadership

It is noteworthy that foreign policy was barely an issue in this year's presidential election. While economic growth and tax cuts dominated the stump speeches, the presidential candidates offered little as to their strategic visions or a framework for the future of U.S. foreign policy. Sadly, the public seemed not to care. This is remarkable in view of profound changes that have transformed the international system in recent years. These changes include the demise of the Soviet Union, the virtual end of communism and the conclusion of the Cold War.

Recent opinion polls give us some insight into the electorate's reticence on foreign policy. The polls reveal substantial public ambivalence about an active leadership role by the U.S. in international affairs, especially in such matters as peacekeeping, foreign aid, and the defense of other countries by our military.

Analysts across the political spectrum have commented on this uncertainty and on the lack of a clear national purpose in foreign affairs. They point to the need for a new national consensus on the U.S. role in the world. Meanwhile, several recent domestic policy proposals and decisions threaten to undermine continued U.S. leadership in international affairs. For example, the growing preoccupation with deficit reduction, tax cuts, and shrinking the federal government, all add up to an assault on the nation's ability to remain an active and constructive presence in international affairs, especially in the Third World.

Recent reductions in foreign aid have brought it to embarrassingly low levels compared to other developed countries, and we remain unconscionably delinquent in our dues to the United Nations and other international organizations. In fact, in some quarters, the U.N. has become the focal point of a new xenophobic outburst in American society.

This is unfortunate since the U.N. maintains important humanitarian programs like the World Health Organization and UNICEF. It also provides one of the few institutional forums where international disputes may be resolved, or at least diffused, peacefully.

Despite the current calm on the international front, foreign affairs will no doubt return to the nation's front burner in 1997. The breakup of the Soviet Union and the fracturing of Yugoslavia have already caused a chain of hot wars, border conflicts, and ethnic feuds running from the Adriatic Sea to the Caucasus. Other hot spots like the Middle East and North Korea will demand attention as well. Another area that is begging for our attention is Africa, where most countries are racked by growing economic and political problems. Starving children with swollen stomachs rarely stare out at us from our television screens as they did in the 1980s, but malnutrition and disease continue to plague millions in non-industrial counties. Indeed, it is very likely that the still underdeveloped world is mankind's final frontier.

The international arena looms large in our future for yet another reason. A global economy and global markets are a reality today and will become even more important in the years ahead. Our economic aspirations cannot be realized without full engagement with the global marketplace.

In the aftermath of the Cold War, during a period of economic realignment, we should not be witnessing the diplomatic disarmament of the United States. We should be retooling to meet head-on the new global economic, strategic, and political challenges of this uncertain time. ■



PRESIDENT

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Shredding the Safety Net

The Welfare Reform Bill Slashes Food Stamps and Dramatically Reduces the Assistance Available to Poor Families with Children

by Katherine McFate

The welfare "reform" bill that President Bill Clinton signed into law on August 22, 1996, will return social policy in the United States to a time before the New Deal, when the state and local officials and economic resources of a particular locality determined the public assistance available to the poor. As of October 1, 1996, no individual or family in America—no matter how poor or needy—will be guaranteed federal welfare assistance. Instead, the current cash assistance program for poor families, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), will be converted into a block grant program (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or TANF) with all eligibility and design issues handed over to state legislatures. The bill does not stop at simply redistributing control: it also reduces the amount of assistance available to low-income Americans over the next six years by more than $54 billion. Most of these cuts do not come from the AFDC program per se. Rather, the bill achieves its savings by slashing the food stamp program ($28 billion), eliminating aid to legal immigrants ($22 billion), restricting help for disabled children ($7 billion), cutting child nutrition programs ($2.9 billion), and reducing federal aid to local social service agencies ($.42 billion).

Time limits, more poverty. This legislation has been heralded as a reform that will move welfare recipients into work, a goal that both the American public and the poor support. The new law does little, however, to help the poor find jobs or to support them when they do find work. It simply establishes an arbitrary time limit on assistance and prohibits states from using federal funds to provide support to poor people who have received assistance for a longer period.

Specifically, the legislation states that over the course of an entire lifetime, an individual can receive no more than five years of public federal assistance. But states have the option of establishing even shorter time limits on public assistance under this law, and 14 states have already received waivers to implement two-year time limits. The Department of Health and Human Services estimates that if all states adopted a two-year time limit, by the year 2006, 5.5 million children would be denied assistance, even if the states exempted 20 percent of their caseloads from the time limit, as the law allows them to do. Private charities, already stretched to the breaking point in providing food assistance to the poor at the end of each month, will be unable to fill the void left by the new policy. What will happen to these families when they reach the time limit no one can say. This is a massive social experiment that has not been tried before.

Bearing the brunt of this experiment will be black families and children, who are three times more likely to be poor than white families. About 37 percent of all black children (and 14 percent of all American children) currently reside in a household that receives welfare. Further, even though less than 40 percent of all families who receive welfare are black, more than 60 percent of the families who remain on welfare for more than five years are black. Within five or six years, as many as half of the black households currently receiving welfare (containing two million black children) could be forever barred from receiving further public assistance. In fact, a recent Urban Institute report indicates that, with a five-year time limit, this law will push an additional two-and-a-half million people (including more than a million children) *into* poverty and will also deepen the poverty of children who are already poor.

Work requirements, but no guarantee of jobs. The new law stipulates that after two years, anyone who receives assistance must be working. But states appear to have a great deal of flexibility in defining what activities constitute work, and there are no apparent penalties for failing to meet this requirement. However, there are financial penalties for failing to meet overall work participation rates. The law mandates that 25 percent of a state's welfare caseload must be working within a year, despite the fact that, currently, less than 3 percent of all welfare recipients are working. The law makes these stipulations without allocating any funds for job creation efforts—either public or private. *States are not required to offer jobs to welfare recipients after the federal time limit on assistance expires.* Past experience with grant diversion programs (which allow private employers to use welfare grants to subsidize wages) indicates that private employers have little interest in hiring welfare recipients.

If the overall number of individuals receiving assistance drops, these reductions in the caseload can be counted toward a state's work requirement. Thus, states may be tempted to tighten eligibility requirements and employ administrative practices to push recipients off assistance rolls to meet the work participation rates required under the legislation.

As to education and training programs, at this point it is unclear whether they can be counted as activities that meet the work requirement. In New York City, welfare recipients in post-secondary education programs have been forced to

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Ms. McFate is associate director of social policy at the Joint Center.

Welfare

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give up school in order to meet mandatory workfare requirements. In addition, although new child-care funds are provided by the federal law, Congressional Budget Office estimates show that these funds will not cover the increased costs of child care for the two-thirds of all welfare recipients who have children under 6 years old and so must have child care if they are expected to work.

Incentives for states to cut their own funding for poor families. Under the old welfare system, the federal government paid between 50 and 78 percent of welfare grants (with larger shares going to poorer states) and the state government paid the rest. Under the new block grant system, the federal government pays a frozen flat sum to the state (with slight adjustments for population increases), but the state has to pay only 75 percent of what it currently pays for poor families. So, for example, when New Hampshire paid a family of three $550 a month under AFDC, the federal government paid half and the state paid half. Under the new block grant, the state can reduce its contribution by 25 percent, so the benefit level goes down to $496 a month.

Moreover, states don't have to use the money they receive from the federal block grant to provide poor families with cash assistance. They can divert up to 30 percent of the block grant into a new Child Care and Development block grant or put 10 percent into the state's Title XX Social Services block grant, which the bill cuts by $2.4 billion over six years. Since the child-care funding contained in the legislation is inadequate to meet the increased demand that will be created by the new work requirements, some states are likely to opt for this diversion, further reducing the money available for basic support for poor families.

In other words, although the federal funds available under the new block grant program are equivalent to the funding that states currently receive under the AFDC program, the actual money available for basic income support and work programs for poor families is likely to decrease significantly. This is so because states are allowed to reduce their own contribution to the program and they are allowed to divert federal dollars to purposes other than income support. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimates that between 1997 and 2002, states could withdraw or divert up to $40 billion from income support and work programs. It is notable that, at present, cash assistance and food stamps for the typical welfare family provide bare subsistence at a level that is less than 70 percent of the poverty line. Inflation has been allowed to eat away at the nominal value of welfare benefits in most states over the past two decades. The new law makes this situation worse by creating a fiscal incentive for states to cut the funds available for basic subsistence.

Slashing the Food Stamps safety net. Perhaps the most pernicious aspect of this law is that it achieves most of its savings by slashing food programs. About one in ten American families receives help from the Food Stamp program, and a majority of these families have members who are working. (Twenty-two percent of African Americans and 15 percent of Hispanics receive food stamps.) Almost $28 billion will be cut out of the Food Stamp program over the next six years.

A substantial proportion of the cuts come from across-the-board reductions in benefits that will affect all recipients, including the elderly, disabled, and working poor, as well as families with children. When fully implemented, the law will cut benefits by almost 20 percent—a reduction equivalent to a cut of from $.80 per person per meal to $.66 per person per meal. Most legal immigrants will be denied food stamps.

But perhaps the harshest element of the legislation is the provision that restricts access to federal food assistance for single, unemployed, childless individuals between 18 and 50 years of age. These adults will be allowed to receive food stamps for only three months of any three-year period as long as they remain unemployed. After three months, they must be working at least half time or be in a workfare or training slot to keep receiving food stamps. But, again, the law provides no new funding to create work or training slots. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that in an average month, one million jobless individuals who would take a job or training slot, if one were available, will be denied food stamp assistance because no position is available to them.

This provision is likely to hit minority communities very hard. African American unemployment rates are typically twice as high as white unemployment rates. Blacks are less likely to qualify for unemployment assistance when they are jobless, and they tend to be concentrated in urban neighborhoods where joblessness is epidemic. Until now, food stamps have provided a very basic nutritional safety net to the most disadvantaged people in our society; this law destroys that net.

Assistance denied to convicted drug felons. Finally, this new law denies federal cash assistance and food stamps to any individual who is convicted of a felony drug charge after October 1, 1996. This includes convictions for possession and use, not just distribution. While pregnant women and individuals who are currently in treatment programs are allowed to receive assistance, there is a severe shortage of treatment slots in most cities. If the large racial disparities in drug convictions and sentencing continue, this clause will also have an exceptionally heavy impact on minority communities. It is likely to be particularly damaging to black male ex-convicts seeking employment in the legitimate mainstream economy. These men typically have a difficult time finding jobs; and food stamps give their relatives some help with living expenses while they search for work. If they find part-time or low-wage work, food stamps can supplement their low earnings to make legal work a little more attractive. This bill will deny them this aid.

"We can change what is wrong..." On the day that President Clinton signed this bill into law, he admitted that the measure was "far from perfect," but said, "we can change what is wrong," and proclaimed that "welfare is no

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OCTOBER 1996

TRENDLETTER

POLITICAL REPORT

by David C. Ruffin

La Marcha

On October 12, while many Americans were observing Columbus Day, thousands of Latinos assembled in the nation's capital for the first Latino march on Washington to demand full rights and an end to discrimination. Demonstrators swelled the three-mile line of march down 16th Street, one of Washington's major thoroughfares, to a rally on the Mall.

They were farm workers and university professors, teachers and electricians, students and janitors, and they had travelled from San Francisco, Detroit, New York, Chicago, Miami, Seattle, Denver, Boston, and San Antonio. Many came to bear witness to the contributions Latinos have made to America. For example, one banner carried by a man and a woman displayed the names of 38 Latino Congressional Medal of Honor awardees from 1864 to 1970.

FRANCES APARICO, 40, a professor of Latin American cultures at the University of Michigan, said, "I came to demonstrate against legislation like the welfare bill that targets Latino women and children. We're going to send a message to government officials at election time." She and her husband, Julio, a writer and labor organizer, drove for 10 hours from Michigan. **BRUCE ANDERSON**, a 32-year-old graduate student at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, whose parents are from Ecuador, said, "For decades, Latinos have been ignored and disenfranchised. We're taking a stand in this march to show we're not going to let it happen to us anymore." He arrived with a contingent of 100 Latino students from Harvard.

Not everyone travelled far to attend the march. **LETITIA GOMEZ**, a resident of the District of Columbia, said, "We are discriminated against because of what we look like. I was born here, but recently, a white man said to me, 'You should go back across the border where you belong.' Why should I have to put up with that?" she asked. **ARTURO RODRIGUEZ**, 50, from Germantown, Maryland, said, "It's a disgrace for anyone to talk about the Constitution and then say immigrants don't belong here. We built this country." A naturalized citizen, Rodriguez is an employee of the District of Columbia who was born in Peru and came to the United States 20 years ago. He held aloft a small Peruvian flag for himself, and a Chilean flag to represent his wife who couldn't attend.

"We demand respect and a recognition that we belong here," said **LORENA RIOS**, a 24-year-old journalism student from San Francisco State University. "People in this country aren't aware of how Immigration and Naturalization Service agents break into homes and arbitrarily arrest Latino people."

Others came to protest that lettuce is picked by exploited immigrant workers who are paid less than the minimum wage. Some expressed their opposition to legislation that would deny education to immigrant children.

The sentiments of many demonstrators were expressed by the signs they carried: "We Didn't Cross the Border, the Border Crossed Us"; "No Human Being Is Illegal"; "Continue the Legacy of Freedom for All"; "Immigrants Are Taxpayers Too."

The marchers were as diverse as their signs. Many of them were born in other lands: Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Peru, Chile, and Cuba. But **ADRIANA MARTINEZ**, a Stanford University graduate and staffer for Congresswoman **LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD** (D–Cal.) said, "This is a special day. There's a great sense of community." Indeed, such a massive, unified Latino march on the capital is historic.

LINDA CHAVEZ-THOMPSON, executive vice president of the AFL-CIO, asserted that "13.1 million organized American workers stand with you." She said that the labor movement, like the Latino community, is in a struggle to have its rights recognized.

The march leaders outlined seven demands—called "Proposition 1"—

that were broadly acclaimed by the demonstrators: 1.) Civil and constitutional rights for all; 2.) Equal opportunity and affirmative action; 3.) Free education for all children from kindergarten through high school; 4.) Access to public health services; 5.) More citizen police review boards; 6.) Labor law review and a $7.00 minimum wage; 7.) Extend amnesty for undocumented residents and an eased naturalization process.

At a rally on the Ellipse with the White House as a backdrop, national Latino leaders spoke to the concerns of the demonstrators. "The Congress isn't dealing with serious issues. They're pushing emotional buttons with their immigration, welfare reform, and English-only bills," Congresswoman **NYDIA VELAZQUEZ** (D–N.Y.) said. "Latinos are the fastest growing minority group in the nation and we are becoming citizens, and we're voting."

The Supreme Court Preview

When the Supreme Court convened this month, it agreed to take up a welter of cases that may extend or restrict a broad range of rights and liberties. The assault on majority-minority congressional districts that began with the *Shaw* v *Reno* case in 1993 will continue. But this term, the challenge against majority-minority legislative bodies will also be focused at the state and local level. For example, one case on the High Court's docket is *Reno* v *Bossier Parish School Board* in which the plaintiffs are attempting to apply the *Shaw* principles to local redistricting plans.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is actively engaged in numerous civil rights and civil liberties cases. For example, in *Arizonans for Official English* v *Arizona*, the ACLU has argued that an English-only provision in the Arizona Constitution violates the basic principles of representative government embodied in the First Amendment.

The ACLU has also weighed in on cases like *Young* v *Harper*, a due process case on behalf of a prisoner whose participation in a supervised release program was abruptly terminated by prison officials without any hearing or allegations of misconduct. In a Fourth Amendment case, *Maryland v. Wilson*, the Court will decide whether a police officer's automatic right to require a driver to exit his vehicle during a stop extends to passengers.

The Supreme Court is also likely this year to determine the principles of free speech that will be applied to the Internet, which is rapidly becoming the most democratic and most powerful medium of communications ever created. The ACLU and 20 organizations that provide information on the Internet are challenging the federal Communications Decency Act (CDA) which makes it a crime, punishable by up to two years in jail, for anyone to engage in speech that is "indecent" or "patently offensive" on computer networks if the speech can be seen by a minor.

The Act applies to all aspects of cyberspace: E-mail, newsgroups such as those in Usenet (sites where individuals can post comments on specific topics), chat rooms (real time conversations by computer) and the World Wide Web.

The ACLU filed its legal challenge to the CDA on February 8, 1996—the day it was signed into law by President **BILL CLINTON**. The case was also filed on behalf of groups like Human Rights Watch, Planned Parenthood, and the Critical Path AIDS Project Web page (information about safer sex practices and AIDS treatment). Later, a second suit was filed by more than 20 corporate and trade organizations, including the American Library Association and computer industry giants Microsoft, America On-Line, Prodigy, Apple, and CompuServe.

The plaintiffs charged that, because the nature of cyberspace made it either technologically or economically impossible to screen potential readers by age, all speakers in cyberspace would have to reduce their speech to the level found acceptable for the most vulnerable minor. For this reason, the plaintiffs said the CDA violated the First Amendment and the rights of their member organizations by criminalizing speech that, at a minimum, was constitutionally protected for adults.

The plaintiffs described the enormous quantity of valuable speech, both for minors and adults, that would be effectively criminalized under the CDA. They also asserted that if such censorship were constitutional, it would be technically infeasible to comply with the CDA.

On June 11, a panel of three federal judges imposed a preliminary injunction against the Communications Decency Act, unanimously declaring the measure unconstitutional. Judge **STEWART DALZELL**, writing for himself said the Internet is, "the most participatory form of mass speech yet developed," one that "deserves the highest protection from government intrusion."

The government appealed the decision, and now it's up to the Supreme Court to decide if the Internet is to be given the same broad free speech protections given to printed material. ■

ECONOMIC REPORT

by Edward Montgomery and Malinda Lindquist

Dueling Economic Strategies: Dole vs Clinton

President Clinton and Republican presidential candidate **BOB DOLE** have each made economic policy the cornerstone of their election campaigns, but they have based their proposals on very different assessments of the nation's economy. Clinton points to the current low levels of inflation, the decreasing deficit, and job growth as evidence that the economy has done well under his stewardship. Dole decries the increased tax burden and declares that productivity and the overall economy have grown only modestly to make his case that change is necessary. Each candidate has attacked the other's past record, and each has proposed changes in federal tax and spending policies. Since economics is central to each campaign, it is important that the electorate understand the possible consequences of the candidates' respective proposals.

Who Benefits?

Each candidate has proposed a series of tax reforms designed to increase growth, stimulate investment, and "help the American family." The key components of Dole's proposal are a 15 percent across-the-board cut in income tax rates, a $500 per child tax credit, and a reduction in capital gains taxes. Clinton also proposes a $500 per child tax credit, and tax credits for college tuition and IRAs to allow families to save for home purchases, schooling, or medical expenses. Dole would offer the full $500 child tax credit to families with incomes of up to $110,000, while Clinton's plan would restrict the credit to families earning under $60,000. (Under both proposals the child tax credit would be reduced on a sliding scale, but under the Dole plan families making up to $130,000 would still receive some benefit while under Clinton's all benefits would end for those making more than $75,000.) The Dole tax cuts, totaling $548 billion over six years, are far more extensive than the smaller ($108 billion over the same period), more targeted cuts proposed by Clinton.

Under both proposals, low and middle income households with more than two children would receive the largest *percent* reduction in their current taxes. According to the Joint Tax Committee of the U.S. Congress, a married couple with three children earning $30,000 per year would find their federal taxes falling by 126 percent ($1,301) under the Clinton plan, while under the Dole plan that family would find its taxes falling by 100 percent ($1,034). (In other words, the family would pay no taxes under the Dole plan. But under the Clinton plan, the family would receive a rebate.) The biggest *dollar* reductions in taxes occur for families making between $45,000 and $60,000 under the Clinton plan and around $110,000 under the Dole plan.

Since the Dole plan includes a tax rate reduction for *all* taxpayers and Clinton's does not, the majority of black households both with and without children would pay less taxes under the Dole plan. Based on Joint Tax Committee estimates of tax savings and Census information on income by family type, an estimated 65 percent of black families would pay less taxes, or at least the same amount, under the Dole tax cut proposal than under the Clinton plan. The black families who would fare better under the Clinton plan than the Dole plan are those low or moderate income working families with children who qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit.

Spending Cuts to Pay for Tax Cuts

Despite the fact that the Dole cuts would likely mean a greater reduction in taxes for more families than the Clinton plan, a recent poll by McKeon and Associates found that only 54 percent of the American public and 31 percent of African Americans support the Dole tax proposal. This poll suggests two reasons for the public skepticism. First, 74 percent of blacks believe that even if the Dole plan were enacted, it would not significantly lower the amount of taxes their household currently pays. The reductions in taxes under the Dole plan for households making around the median household income for blacks ($25,000) range from 0 to $711 depending on the number of children they have.

Secondly, 58 percent of blacks believe that these tax cuts will lead to spending cuts in federal programs they support. Blacks may be especially concerned about the magnitude of potential cuts to Head Start, Food Stamps, Pell grants, civil rights enforcement, and other educational and social programs. Since both candidates' proposals include a series of spending cuts designed to pay for their tax reductions and to achieve the goal of a balanced budget by 2002, this concern may be well placed.

The figure below presents data from the Washington, D.C.–based Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, which analyzed the areas where the two candidates have indicated

Economic Report *continued*

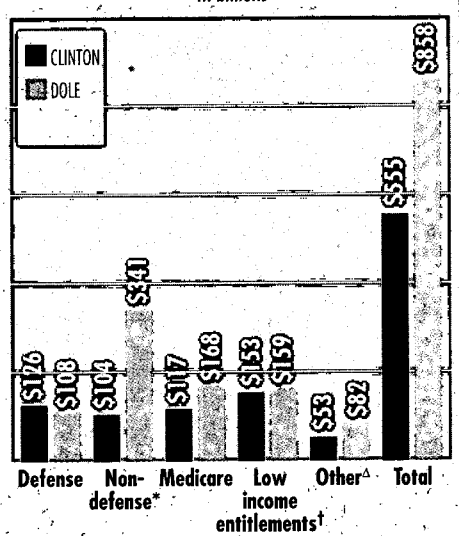
they would reduce spending. The Clinton plan requires less extensive reductions in spending to achieve the balanced budget goal ($555 billion under Clinton compared with $858 billion under Dole), in part because his tax cuts are more modest than Dole's.

While both candidates exempt Social Security from spending cuts, Dole would make cuts in non-defense programs three times deeper than Clinton would (these could affect the Departments of Energy, Education, Housing and Urban Development, Agriculture, Health and Human Services, and Commerce). On the other hand, Clinton would reduce defense spending more than Dole. Due to the enactment of the welfare reform bill, the discrepancy between their cuts in entitlement programs to low-income individuals are minimal. One important difference for low-income households with children is that the Dole plan would reduce the Earned Income Tax Credit by $19 billion.

FIGURE 1

Proposed Spending Reductions

In billions



* Examples are education, law enforcement, environment, scientific research, health care for veterans.
† Examples are food stamps, supplemental security income benefits.
△ Includes other entitlements and asset sales.
Note: Bars may not add up due to rounding.
Source: Center for Budget and Policy Priority, 1996.

Both candidates plan to reduce the federal workforce. This may disproportionately affect blacks since, according to the Office of Personnel Management, the percentage of blacks in the federal workforce (20.9 percent) is double their civilian labor force representation (10.6 percent). The Dole plan is likely to have a more harmful impact on black federal workers because it calls for much larger federal spending reductions. If Dole eliminates the U.S. Department of Education, as he has threatened, this would disproportionately affect blacks, who comprise 36.1 percent of the employees in that department. Dole would also reduce federal workers' retirement compensation by $8 billion.

Perhaps the most controversial part of the Dole plan is the assumption that his tax cuts will be paid for in part through higher economic growth. Indeed, Dole has stated that the goal of his program is to increase the rate of growth of the economy to 3.5 percent a year, a level not consistently seen since the 1960s. Dole's plan is based on "supply-side economics," an idea originally championed by **JACK KEMP** and then adopted by President **RONALD REAGAN** in the 1980s. The theory of supply-side economics goes like this: tax cuts, combined with less government spending and hence lower government borrowing, are supposed to stimulate companies to invest, households to save, and employees to work more, all leading to enhanced growth in the economy. Moreover, with higher economic growth, there would be more people making more money, resulting in higher tax revenues.

Dole claims that $147 billion of the $548 billion in his tax cut plan will be paid for by what is referred to as "revenue recapture" brought about by increasing the rate of growth of the economy from the 2.3 percent rate it averaged under Clinton to 2.8 percent annually. This represents an increase in the growth rate of some 20 percent. While the vast majority of economists think some revenue recapture will occur, some critics have labeled the Dole proposal "deja-voodoo" economics. They feel that the Dole plan is based on the same kind of overly optimist growth assumptions made by Ronald Reagan and his advisors in the 1980s when annual deficits ballooned to over $200 billion.

Risks of Slow Growth—Who Pays?

If Dole were elected and the economy failed to grow at the rate he now projects, either the federal deficit would swell or further cuts in spending will have to occur. In a worst case scenario, Dole might have to reduce spending an additional $147 billion to compensate for low economic growth, inflating spending reductions to over $1 trillion. If the Dole pledge to exempt Social Security, Medicare, and Defense from further spending cuts held, this would mean additional cuts in the remaining 34 percent of the budget. Discretionary spending cuts in programs like welfare, education, the infrastructure, environmental protection, and crime prevention are particularly likely to affect minority and low-income households.

It is important to compare the Clinton and Dole economic plans on both the tax and spending sides. While a greater number of black households would receive a larger tax cut under the Dole proposal, this gain must be balanced against the prospect of tremendous cuts in programs that employ and benefit these same households. ■

The Faces of AIDS

The Third Joint Center/CDC Forum on AIDS Shows the Human Face of the Disease and Searches for a Community-Based Action Agenda

by Wilhelmina A. Leigh

In Tennessee, like the rest of the nation, African Americans contract the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and AIDS at a rate far higher than that of the general population. Although blacks constitute only 16 percent of the Tennessee population, they make up 35 percent of all AIDS cases and 61 percent of the cases of HIV infection reported in the state since the discovery of the disease in the early 1980s. Teens represent more than 4 percent of the reported cases of HIV infection, but more than three-quarters of HIV-infected teens are African Americans.

Leading the state in reported cases of HIV infection and AIDS is the Memphis/Shelby County area. According to Yvonne Smith Madlock, director of the Memphis and Shelby County Health Department, as of December 1995, 1,900 persons in these jurisdictions had been diagnosed with AIDS, and an additional 2,100 persons had been diagnosed as HIV positive.

On March 9, 1996, Memphis was the site of the third HIV/AIDS prevention education forum hosted by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The two previous forums were held in Oakland, California, and Detroit, Michigan. (See *FOCUS* issues September 1995 and April 1996.) Entitled "HIV/AIDS Among African American Youth: Developing An Action Agenda for Leaders and Policymakers," this forum was organized to develop a comprehensive approach to reducing the incidence of HIV/AIDS in the City of Memphis and Shelby County.

State Representative Kathryn I. Bowers, who represents a district in Memphis, chaired the forum coordinating committee. The Memphis and Shelby County Health Department assisted with planning the half-day forum, held in conjunction with a conference on HIV/AIDS education and leadership for pastors sponsored by the African American Church Consortium. More than 75 state and local elected officials, policy makers, religious leaders, service providers, and persons with AIDS gathered at the Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church for the event.

The Faces of AIDS

Titled "The Faces of AIDS," the most poignant segment of the forum involved a panel made up of AIDS victims and those who support them. These faces included two teenage mothers and a formerly incarcerated gay man—"Jane," "Mary," and "John Doe,"—and Novella Smith Arnold, head of We Care, Inc., a criminal justice ministry with more 500 volunteers. Arnold, a licensed chaplain and a candidate for ordination in the Episcopal Church, counsels young people and prisoners with AIDS. The two young women, both teen mothers with AIDS, have been abandoned by their families. Eighteen-year-old Jane Doe's mother put her and her two-year-old son out of the house after Jane was diagnosed as HIV positive. Sixteen-year-old Mary Doe, in the dementia stage of AIDS, was forced to leave home by her mother, a recovering intravenous drug user, who expressed fear of catching the disease from her daughter.

Jane had heard of AIDS, but thought it was a gay disease that she could not get through a heterosexual encounter. Mary had received no education about HIV/AIDS either at school or at home. It never occurred to her that she could contract the disease. Chaplain Arnold says both teenagers had been taken advantage of by older men (one 28, the other 35), and they were unaware of the risks involved with the sexual encounters with the men. Jane's message to other teens is: "the safest sex is no sex."

Arnold, whose daughter also is suffering from AIDS in its latter and most devastating stages, condemns the way AIDS victims are treated by their families and communities. She said: "AIDS is the most deadly killer in our inner cities, but we know so little about it. And I'm appalled that a family would kick their own children out of their homes. Even dogs and cats take care of their sick." Neither Jane nor Mary have permanent homes and must seek temporary shelter with various relatives. Arnold has made a plea to residents of Memphis and Shelby County, who have extra bedrooms, to open their homes to young people who find themselves homeless as a result of their diagnoses with the HIV infection or AIDS. The final face of AIDS was "John Doe," a thirty-year-old gay man. As a cross-dressing homosexual, John was a target of sexual assault while in prison. During his incarceration, he was infected with HIV as a result of being raped. Chaplain Arnold noted that because homosexual men in the local jail—many of whom are HIV positive—are no longer segregated from other men, sexual activity, both forcible and voluntary, has created an HIV/AIDS epidemic there. Sex-for-drugs exchanges also contribute to the spread of HIV infection within the correctional system. Often without knowing they are infected, men, when released from jail, transmit HIV to their wives, girlfriends, and partners.

HIV/AIDS testing at the jail is voluntary, said Arnold, and inmates usually must make repeated requests and

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Dr. Leigh is a senior research associate at the Joint Center.

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frequently must call upon outside advocates in order to be tested. Thus, there is no established means of screening and no effort to separate prisoners to stem the epidemic. Both Chaplain Arnold and John Doe made a plea to the legislators attending the forum to make condoms available at the jail and to advocate mandatory education and testing for HIV/AIDS to reduce the incidence of the disease within Memphis and Shelby County. Because of her participation in the forum, however, the Shelby County Sheriff's Department has banned Chaplain Arnold from the county jail, the site where she had been counselling since the facility opened in 1981.

Dr. Craig Dorko has treated many HIV/AIDS patients in the Adult Special Care Clinic at the "Med" (University of Tennessee Regional Medical Center at Memphis) over the past six years. He spoke about the factors that contribute to the high rates of HIV infection and AIDS in Memphis and Shelby County. The high incidence of drug-resistant gonorrhea and other sexually transmitted diseases, he noted, are evidence both of unprotected sex and of a heterosexual population among which HIV/AIDS is likely to spread quickly.

Teaching Parents to Teach Sexuality

The "Faces" panel evoked a strong response from forum participants. A teen in the audience asked how one can effectively tell teens not to have sex, when so many teens use sex to bolster their self-esteem or to procure money and material possessions they might not otherwise have. Dr. Dorko admitted that it is difficult but necessary to make this point with teens, especially in light of the fact that condoms are not 100 percent effective. Since many young people believe that condoms guarantee safe sex, he recommends having peers educate other teens about issues and risks related to sexual activity.

In the discussion related to HIV prevention education, another Memphis teenager who attends a public high school noted that the curriculum on health and sex education that is supposed to be in place for the kindergarten through 12th grade has not been implemented at any of the schools she has attended. Commissioner TaJuan Stout Mitchell of the Memphis Board of Education noted that a recent national survey of youths asked what could be done to improve health education in the schools. Many of the respondents suggested that if parents don't want schools to teach family life and sexuality, the schools should offer classes for parents, because the youths fear that there is no other way for them to be informed about the disease.

Another youth proposed that teachers become adequately informed and feel comfortable addressing the issues, so students will also feel comfortable and gain the greatest benefit from the instruction. Others advocated creating peer-counseling groups and making literature about all health-related issues and targeted to youth available in the schools. A final survey recommendation was to let children organize awareness clubs to promote "No Sex—No Risk" and "Protected Sex—Less Risk."

Mitchell remarked that the only current vaccine available to combat AIDS is education, and this educational vaccine needs to be strong to counteract the current trends in behaviors that contribute to the spread of HIV infection. For instance, on any given day in the United States, 7,742 youths become sexually active; 1,293 give birth; and 673 get syphilis or gonorrhea.

Mitchell suggested that the Memphis City School system offer its students a comprehensive health program that includes education, promotion of health issues, and health services. To be effective, she said such a program should be supported with sufficient resources and personnel, be made easily accessible to students, and not be provided only in response to crises.

HIV/AIDS education not only helps to reduce the misinformation, fear, and denial that limit the effectiveness of prevention activities, but it can also foster sensitivity and compassion, which could lessen the stigma against people diagnosed with the disease. In combination with HIV/AIDS prevention education, a comprehensive school health policy would enable the Memphis system to respond to psychological trauma among children whose parents or siblings die of AIDS.

Reverend T. O'Neal Crivens, of the Testament of Hope Community Baptist Church, suggested that many people are unwilling to get tested for HIV infection because of the close association of an HIV-positive diagnosis with death and society's unwillingness to deal with issues of death and dying. Counseling and education on the broader topic of dying could have benefits in the area of HIV prevention.

Recommendations

Toward the end of the forum, participants met in three working groups—community, education, and churches—to develop a list of recommendations to be undertaken to reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS in Memphis and Shelby County. State Rep. Kathryn I. Bowers and the other elected officials in attendance have taken these recommendations back to the state legislature to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Tennessee:

- Strengthen school health programs and put in place a mechanism to measure their effectiveness;
- Support legislation to investigate and prosecute rape of teenage and young adult women by older men, and establish a system for holding these men accountable, financially and legally, for the consequences of their behavior;
- Develop an intergenerational educational curriculum on AIDS awareness for churches, with modules for preschoolers through golden-agers;
- Mandate HIV/AIDS testing for prison inmates and give HIV-positive prisoners the option to be separated from others in the facility; and
- Prepare persons with AIDS to deal with end-of-life issues, from practical arrangements to spiritual/psychological preparedness for death. ■

All That We Can Be

Book Summary: The Army's Approach to Promoting Black Leadership and Racial Integration Can Be Adopted by Civilian Institutions

by Marcia Morgan

When General Colin Powell was named Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1989, it was obvious that he was selected because he was the best man for the job. Not the best black man, the best man. The promotion of a black man as the senior officer of the armed forces was no accident. It resulted from over two decades of developing a cadre of skilled and proficient black soldiers within a totally integrated institution striving to be the best that it could be. In times past, blacks in the military had experienced prejudicial treatment that differed only marginally from that found in society as a whole.

In their newly released book, *All That We Can Be: Black Leadership and Racial Integration the Army Way*, Charles C. Moskos and John Sibley Butler paint a glowing picture of the success the Army has achieved in its integration of blacks into leadership roles at all levels, identifying it as "the only place in American life where whites are routinely bossed around by blacks." Recognized as two of the foremost authorities on race relations in the armed forces, Moskos and Butler propose that several aspects of the Army's approach to integration would also result in increased black leadership in private-sector companies and civilian institutions. Highlighted by the authors are the Army's methods of recruitment and promotion, without lowering standards, along with its rigidly enforced policy of antidiscrimination.

They describe the long history of black military service, noting that black Americans served in all of the nation's wars and conflicts, even when their basic rights were denied by slavery and segregation. For black men and women in uniform, military service has also been a source of family stability and "has paid for the education of generations of black children."

One of the key elements of the Army's success at integrating its ranks and providing broader opportunities is its rigid intolerance of discrimination, enforced from the top down. Isolated incidents of racial prejudice still occur, but commanders deal with them swiftly and effectively. As Moskos and Butler point out, "Commanders are held accountable for race relations on their watch." Officers' annual evaluations include an assessment of their compliance with the Army's equal opportunity policies. Those found in noncompliance can expect no future promotions.

Another important lesson in race relations for the civilian sector, that Moskos and Butler believe is key to the Army's success, is its approach to leveling the "playing field." By offering remedial educational opportunities, the Army does not lower its standards; rather it elevates its recruits and soldiers to meet the Army's demanding standards. The four remedial education programs that are described, the Pre-Military Development Program (PMDP), Functional Academic Skills Training (FAST), Enhanced Skills Training at historically black colleges and universities, and the U.S. Military Academy Preparatory School, all focus on enhancing math and verbal skills in a highly disciplined environment. These programs have resulted in increased acceptance rates for black recruits and have fostered higher rates of retention and promotions among blacks. But their high cost of operation has already caused one program to be dropped, and the others are under review.

The Army also maintains its standards through its promotion procedures. Guidance to promotion boards establishes goals to select minorities in the same proportion they exist in the population. The guidance is also clear that these goals should not be artificially met. By providing training throughout a soldier's career, the Army seeks to insure there are substantial numbers of capable people of all races to promote.

Moskos and Butler document the successful development and promotion of black officers and enlisted soldiers by their increased representation at all levels. "The number of black senior NCOs grew from 14 percent in 1970 to 26 percent in 1980 and to 31 percent in 1990, where it has stayed. Among commissioned officers, the proportion of blacks grew from 3 percent in 1970 to 7 percent in 1980 and to 11 percent in 1990. By the mid-1980s, blacks accounted for roughly 7 percent of all Army generals, and they still do."

Although the title of the book and most of its content describe a very positive image of integration and leadership development within the Army, the main theme of *All That We Can Be* is how the strategy and the lessons of the Army can be applied in the civilian world. "The Army offers an important model for how we ought to consider the Afro-American component in our culture," the authors assert.

While Moskos and Butler, who is black, firmly establish the positive role of the military in the development of black Americans, they express the concern that the continuing drawdown of the military will diminish opportunities for disadvantaged youth to improve their circumstances through military service.

Within this context, the authors pose the question: "How do we, without conscription, obtain some of the democratizing advantages of the draft?" They suggest that "The equalizing effect prevalent in the American military

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U. S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Morgan is the 1996–97 Joint Center Senior Military Fellow.

Welfare

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longer a political football to be kicked around." Welfare is no longer a political football because conservatives in both parties scored the victories that were important to them: the federal guarantee of assistance to poor families has been obliterated. Federal oversight of state activities is effectively gone, and the funding mechanism in the legislation will encourage states to cut already meager benefit levels and reduce investments in training and education. Most legal immigrants will be denied aid. Basic food assistance for the poor—even the working poor and the elderly—has been slashed.

Why would the next Congress (even one with a Democratic majority) want to replay a game they believe they have already won? They are unlikely to take up the ball again until the repercussions of this legislation begin to be felt around the country—in the immigrant communities of the Southwest, in the depressed rural areas of the Midwest, in the urban ghettoes of the East. The problems of poor families are far from being solved, but now that federal legislators have handed off the mess to the states, it will probably take a few years and a lot of suffering before they step up to the scrimmage line again. Perhaps next time, we'll have at least one team that champions the poor. □

Army

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organization can be replicated on a large scale only in [a program of] national service, where intense cooperation is also required." By replacing current student loan programs with educational benefits similar to the existing G.I. Bill in return for national service, they believe this type of program would attract middle-class, college-bound participants as well as disadvantaged youth. These programs would pay the minimum wage and be service-oriented to make it clear to participants that their common goal is the welfare of society in general, not personal gain.

A broad program of national service that incorporates some of the discipline and skill training of the military could then become the vehicle for further development of leadership opportunities and for social integration. Such efforts would produce a trained and competitive pool of black youth prepared to enter the academic and business worlds on an equal footing with their white counterparts. □

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Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies
1090 Vermont Ave., NW, Suite 1100
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