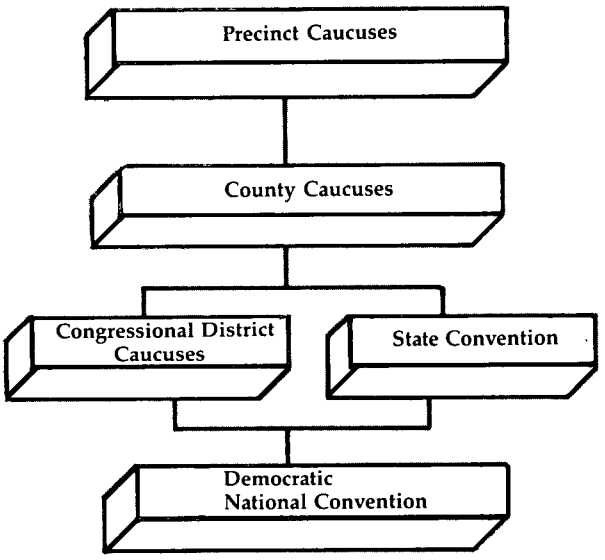
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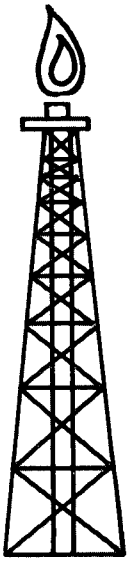


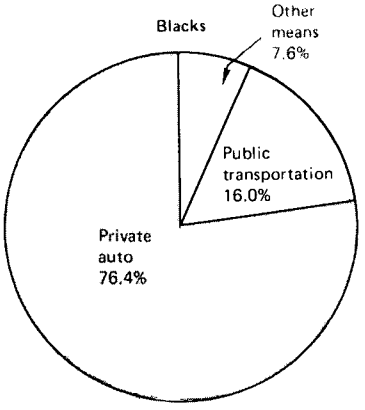
Election 1984 Alert: Delegate Selection

Political participation means more than voting. Presidential primaries and caucuses will begin in the Spring; it's not too early to get involved.

The Debate over Natural Gas Deregulation

Why are consumers paying more for gas when there's a glut on the market?





Commuting: Extra Burden for Blacks

Blacks can sit anywhere on the bus, but the bus is going in the wrong direction.

Joint Center for Political Studies ISSN 0740-0195

Perspective

During the past few years we've heard a lot about "structural unemployment," "structural deficits," and "structural weaknesses" in our economy. These are problems inherent in the way our economy functions. They have complex and far-reaching consequences, and they are not susceptible to piecemeal solutions.

Another "structural" problem—one that is even more resistant to change than those tied to the economy—is *structural discrimination.* Structural discrimination is neither mandated nor planned; it results from flaws within the very nature of American society. Today, blacks in America are shackled not so much by deliberate discrimination because of race—although that has not disappeared—as by the inevitable discriminatory effects of the social order as we know it.

It is structural discrimination when you can't get a good job because you couldn't get a good education, because you lived in a poor neighborhood, because your family didn't earn enough to do any better.

It is structural discrimination when a downturn in the national economy leaves you even further behind than you were before, when your children follow in your footsteps and find life increasingly tough at every turn because they are your heirs, when the extra stresses of being black in white America dismember your family, destroy your spirit, and push you into an environment of crime.

What is cause and what is effect? All these conditions are both causes and effects. Their convergence points to a structural condition that is consigning future generations of blacks to the economy's junkheap.

Structural discrimination was built into Reagonomics: drive up unemployment in order to bring down inflation and, at the same time, reduce the budgets of social programs in order to minimize the deficit-widening effects of tax cuts. Stimulate economic growth in the suburbs by abandoning the cities. Encourage growth in the sunbelt and let the industrial centers die. Whatever the intent behind them, these policies have a discriminatory impact. Even if economic recovery follows the administration's rosy forecasts, unemployment for blacks and Hispanics will remain at double-digit levels for some time to come.

To be sure, structural discrimination is a legacy of the nation's history of racism. Lyndon Johnson was right when he said you cannot take a man out of chains and say, now you're free to run the race like everybody else. It is a tribute to the capabilities and stamina of black Americans that they have caught up as much as they have in the face of continuing adversity.

But to blame racism is to belabor the obvious. The challenge is to find a way out of today's vicious circle—not yesterday's web of slavery and segregation.

And the only way out is a broad attack on structural discrimination. Our past efforts have been much too limited in both moral commitment and dollars. More important, they have been limited in their perception of the overall problem.

To say we must broaden our offensive rather than retreat from our commitment to racial equity is unfashionable. The failure of past programs has led many to conclude that no program can work. But past programs failed because they were Band-Aids instead of blood transfusions. They amounted to tinkering with spare parts instead of altering the structure itself.

Because *structural* means, in its current applications, complicated, intractable, interconnected, the word is sometimes used as an excuse for abandoning efforts to find solutions to real problems. I believe the word should serve instead as a challenge not to be satisfied with half solutions doomed to failure.

Eddie N. Williams
President

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Commuting: Extra Burden for Blacks

by William P. O'Hare

(Dr. O'Hare is senior research associate at the Joint Center. He is principal researcher on a project recently initiated at the center, under a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation, to study trends in commuting between home and work.)

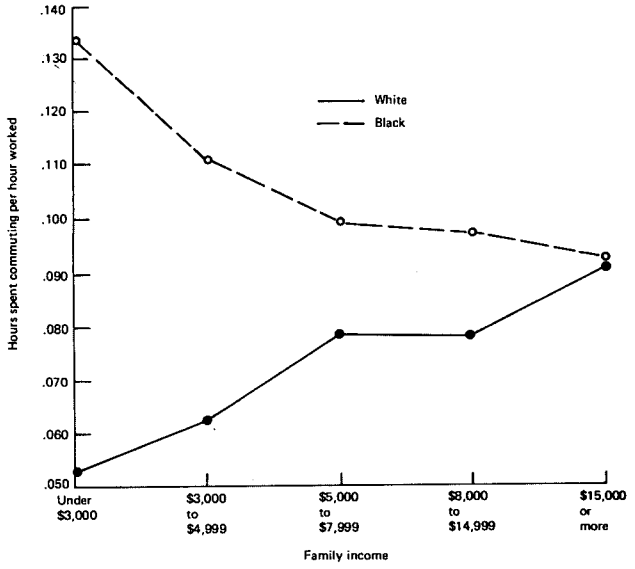
Blacks spend much more time commuting to work than whites—an average of about 45 minutes more a week. According to 1972 data—the most recent available—blacks spend an average of 26.6 minutes going from home to work, while whites spend an average of only 22.1 minutes. The additional commuting time for blacks amounts to about 39 hours a year—almost another work week.

Blacks also spend more time commuting relative to the time they spend working. On the average, blacks spend a little over 6 minutes commuting for every hour they work; whites spend a little less than 5 minutes commuting for every hour at work.

This commuting burden—time spent in travel per hour worked—is especially high for low-income blacks (family incomes below $3,000 in 1972). For every hour low-income blacks spend on the job, they spend an average of about 8 minutes commuting. Poor whites spend only about 3 minutes for each work hour. Thus the commuting burden for poor blacks is more than twice as high as it is for poor whites.

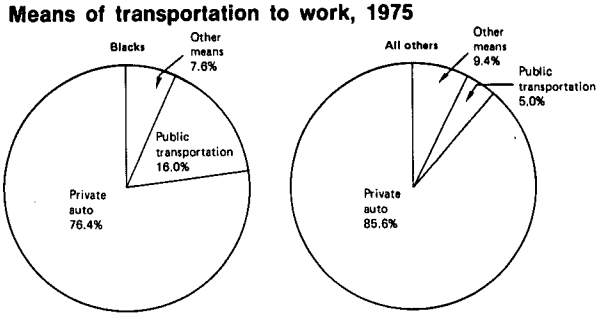
Another difference between black and white commuters is that for blacks, the commuting burden decreases with increasing income, while for whites, the burden increases (see Figure). The commuting burden for blacks decreases with increasing family income from 8 minutes to 5.5 minutes for blacks with family incomes above $15,000 a year. For whites, by contrast, the commuting burden increases from 3 minutes to 5.5 minutes for those with incomes above $15,000 a year.

Commuting burden, by income, for blacks and whites, 1972.



SOURCE: *Review of Public Data Use*

Means of transportation to work, 1975



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Although blacks spend more time traveling to work, they generally do not travel as far as whites. The mean distance between home and work for blacks in 1975 was 8.1 miles, compared to 9.2 for whites and others. For both blacks and whites, those with higher incomes travel farther than those with lower incomes, probably because those with higher incomes often live in the suburban fringe or exurbia. It is probably because blacks are overrepresented in the low-income categories that their mean travel distance to work is lower.

Why, then, do blacks have a heavier commuting burden than whites? One reason may be that blacks, particularly those with low incomes, are more likely to work part-time. If the commuting times are the same for a one-hour workday as for an eight-hour workday, the ratios of time spent commuting to time spent working are dramatically different.

Is Public Transportation Serving Blacks?

But the primary reason blacks have higher commuting times (both absolute and relative to work time) is probably that so many blacks depend on public transportation to commute to work. Blacks use public transportation at three times the rate of whites. In 1979, among household heads, 16.9 percent of blacks and 4.8 percent of whites used public transportation to get to work. But public transportation is generally slower than other means. Studies show that the average speed of automobiles during the trip to work is about twice that of public transportation.

Furthermore, most metropolitan-area commuters travel from the suburbs to the city, and mass transportation systems are usually designed with their needs in mind. But black workers are more likely to travel in the opposite direction, from city to suburb. Generally, workers traveling in this direction are poorly served by mass transit, and in fact, only 6 percent of them use public transportation. But *42.2 percent* of those who do are black.

Given these commuting patterns, transportation policies must be seen as an important component in any effort to assist central-city populations. The interrelationships between transportation policies and employment patterns and their effects on various segments of the population should be carefully studied, so that future transportation policies will not work to the detriment of already disadvantaged groups.

Election 1984 Alert: Delegate Selection

by Jeanne Fox

(The author, a social scientist, is currently serving as a consultant to the Joint Center.)

The selection of convention delegates is a crucial step in the nomination of a presidential candidate. The stakes are high, and everyone interested in the outcome—presidential aspirants, local and state party leaders, interest groups—will try to manipulate the delegate selection process to their own advantage. Those who understand the process best will be a step ahead in the race.

Blacks have a strong interest in who the nominees will be in both political parties and thus in who the convention delegates will be. We therefore offer some preliminary observations about the delegate selection process. The Joint Center will publish its delegate selection guide as soon as all state plans are known. But now is the time to become familiar with the rather complicated process.

The laws and regulations governing delegate selection emanate both from state legislatures and from political parties. State legislatures, for example, have the authority to decide how delegates will be chosen—by caucus, primary, or a combination of processes. Political parties decide how many delegates will be allocated to each state and some criteria for their selection. Thus delegate selection processes vary enormously between the parties and from state to state.

The Selection Processes

As of now, 25 state Democratic parties have decided to use primaries to select convention delegates in 1984, and 32 state Republican parties have decided to use primaries. The remaining state parties will use caucuses or combinations of caucuses and primaries. In total, the Republicans will select 2,234 convention delegates, and the Democrats, 3,931.

In some primaries, voters choose among slates of delegates pledged to the various presidential candidates. In others, voters merely express their preferences among the presidential candidates. In the latter case, the delegates are actually selected in caucuses or conventions, and they need not be pledged to candidates in the same proportions as the primary vote.

If any voter may participate in the primary election of either party, the election is called an *open* primary. In a *closed* primary, only voters who have registered in advance as members of a party may vote in that party's primary. Delegate seats may be awarded to pledged candidates in proportion to the number of votes each candidate receives in the primary election, or the candidate or slate receiving the most votes may be awarded *all* of the delegates.

In caucus states, delegates are selected through a series of meetings among party members, held at successively higher-level political jurisdictions, usually starting at the precinct level and working up through county, congressional district, and state levels. At each level, delegates to the next level are chosen from among participants. Delegates supporting various candidates are usually selected in proportion to support for the candidates among all participants. (The diagram shows the caucus process in Mississippi, which exemplifies many of the steps and procedures used in other states.) Party caucus dates and times must be announced and published in advance; a delegation chosen via a series of unpublicized meetings can be challenged.

As mentioned earlier, some states hold both "beauty contest" primaries and caucuses. And, for the Democratic convention, in addition to the delegates selected in either primaries or district caucuses, "add-on" delegates are selected in every state from among party and elected officials, and at-large delegates are chosen to fill out the delegation. These "add-on" delegates are usually chosen either at a state convention or at a caucus of delegates already elected.

Minority Representation

During the past 20 years, the Democratic and Republican parties have sought in different ways to broaden participation in their conventions by women and minority groups.

The Democratic National Committee requires that each state adopt an affirmative action plan to include blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans, Asians, Pacific Americans, and women. Also required are outreach activities and specific plans to help defray caucus and convention expenses for low- and moderate-income delegates. Women must comprise 50 percent of state delegations, and minority groups are encouraged to participate in relation to their numbers in the Democratic electorate. For example, if 20 percent of the votes cast for Democratic candidates in a state come from blacks, then the state party is supposed to aim for roughly 20 percent black representation in its delegation.

The Republican National Committee's affirmative action effort will be embodied in its call to the convention, which is to serve as a guideline to state Republican parties. The call to the 1984 convention is likely to be similar to the call to the 1980 convention, which said:

> Participation in a Republican primary, caucus, any meeting or convention held for the purpose of selecting delegates and alternates to a county, district, state or national convention shall in no way be abridged for reasons of sex, race, religion, color, age or national origin. The Republican National Committee and the . . . governing committee of each state shall take positive action to achieve the broadest possible participation by everyone in party affairs, including such participation by women, young people, minority and heritage groups and senior citizens in the delegate selection process. . . . Each state shall endeavor to have equal representation of men and women in its delegation to the Republican National Convention.

Steps Toward Participation

Clearly, the caucus system favors those with ties within the political party. In the 1984 selection process, however, the affirmative action requirements and candidates' concern over the black vote mean that black delegates are likely to be sought out. If you want to participate in the process, you should start making contacts now.

1) Contact party officials in your state to get a copy of delegate selection rules and procedures. Get to know the rules and be sure you have completed qualifying procedures on time. Small mistakes will work against you since there is heavy competition for convention seats.

2) If your state does not hold a primary, attend the precinct caucus with a group of your supporters. Numbers can be important in determining who gets chosen.

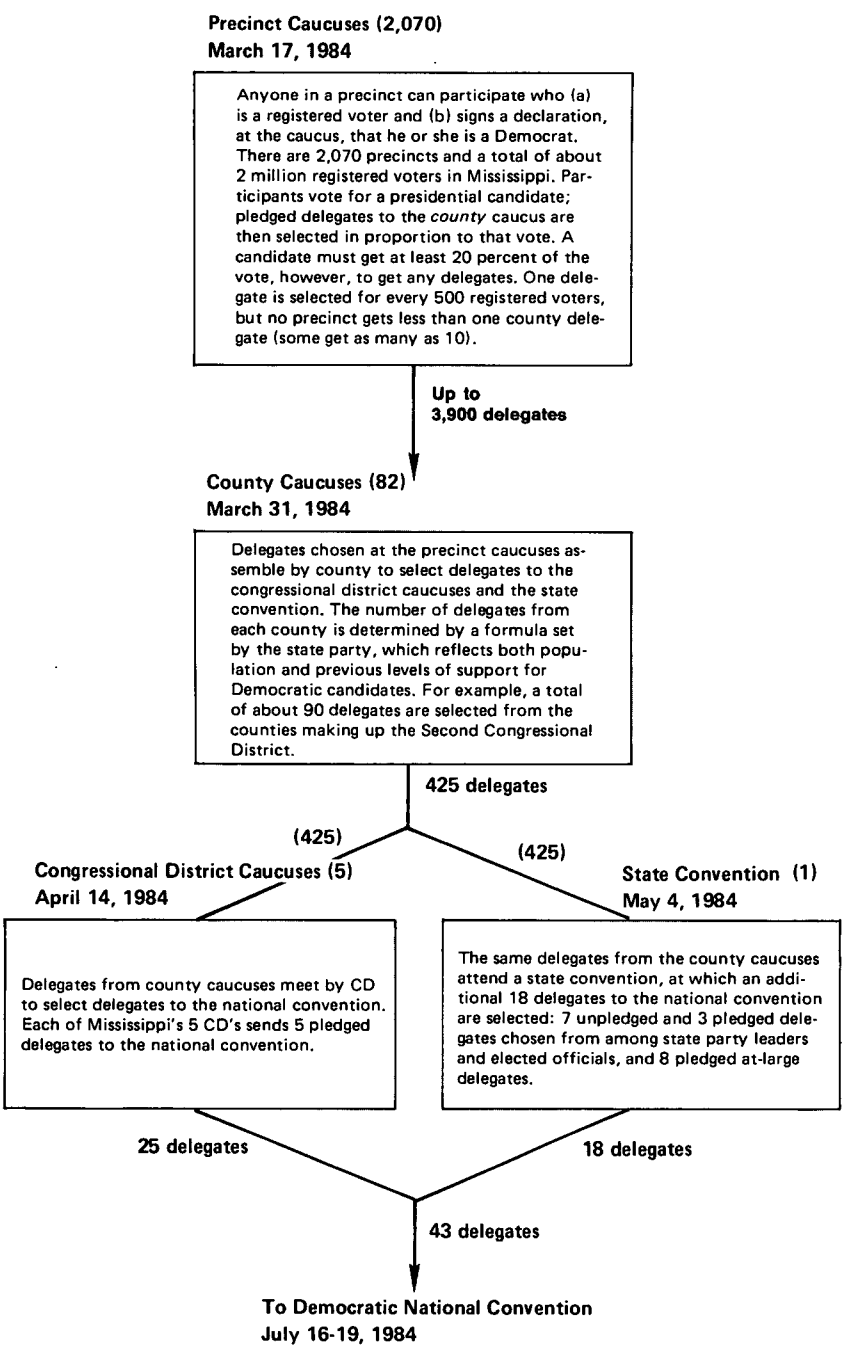
3) Choose your candidate early so that you can become known to the staff at the candidate's campaign office in your state, county, or city. Delegates pledged to particular candidates are usually subject to approval by the candidate.

4) If you cannot get information about your candidate's campaign organization, call your political party headquarters. It will have information about all the candidates.

Black elected officials should be particularly aware of the opportunities presented by the new Democratic rules. In particular, certain steps in the selection process in effect set aside at least 20 percent of the delegate seats for party officials and elected officials. To the extent that the state's minority representation goals are not achieved in the initial round of selection—that is, through primaries or local caucuses—the state parties are supposed to make up the shortfall in the selection of pledged at-large delegates and pledged and unpledged party and elected officials. Furthermore, both parties seek to have equal numbers of men and women delegates, so black women will have an opportunity to increase their representation at the conventions.

Even if one is not running for delegate, it is worth getting involved in the selection process, by working in support of those who are running; by attending precinct caucuses, where support for the various presidential candidates will be measured; and by voting in primaries. Only by using all such avenues of participation can blacks ensure that their interests are fully represented at every stage of the presidential selection process.

Mississippi Democratic Party Delegate Selection Process



The Debate Over Natural Gas Decontrol

by Philip White

(Dr. White, formerly assistant director of research at the Joint Center, was recently appointed special assistant to the vice chancellor of the City University of New York.)

Over the past five years, recession, high prices, and conservation curtailed demand for natural gas and resulted in a gas surplus, yet prices for residential customers continued to climb. Natural gas prices had been rising an average of 17 percent annually for three years; then in 1982, in the depths of recession, natural gas prices rose an average of 22.3 percent over 1981 prices and in 1982-83, in some parts of the country, as much as 50 percent. While price increases appear to be tapering off, the public is still reeling from the experience of recent years.

Consequently, Congress has been besieged by constituents seeking relief from high gas prices. More than 100 natural gas bills were introduced in the last session of Congress and more than 40 have been introduced thus far in the 98th Congress. Most of the bills fall roughly into two categories: those favoring decontrol of natural gas prices and those opposed to decontrol. Some of the latter support tighter controls on gas prices than those that currently exist as a result of the Natural Gas Policy Act, enacted in 1978. Understanding that act, which both groups single out as a major reason for the high prices, will help in understanding the natural gas debate now taking place in Congress.

The Natural Gas Policy Act

The NGPA was proposed as one part of the energy program announced by President Jimmy Carter in April 1977 to exert firm control over domestic energy use and to lessen dependence on foreign suppliers of energy. President Carter and the U.S. House of Representatives both wanted to extend the price controls already in force in the interstate market to the intrastate market; the Senate voted for deregulation of all prices. The NGPA was a compromise passed after 18 months of intense and often acrimonious debate.

The NGPA divides gas into about 27 categories for price regulation. The principal price differential is between "old" gas, discovered before the bill was enacted, and "new" gas. Old gas remains under federal price controls until it is exhausted. The price of new gas is based on a formula, calculated to cover inflation plus a constant, which was supposed to increase the price of gas by about 10 percent per year. New gas prices were to be allowed to double by 1985, when all controls would be removed.

In addition to this central price differential, the act specified that "high cost" gas, from wells deeper than 15,000 feet or from certain geologic formations, would be deregulated within one year after the bill was enacted. The NGPA also established separate pricing provisions for natural gas covered under certain kinds of contracts, produced from wells yielding a certain volume per day, or representing various combinations of onshore, offshore, and reservoir categories.

Several developments combined to drive up the price of gas far beyond the anticipated 10 percent per year. Within a year after enactment of the NGPA, oil prices doubled. Since gas price ceilings in the act were partly pegged to oil prices, this increase permitted gas prices to rise sharply. At the same time, gas shortages during the winter of 1976-77 led pipelines, in their quest to ensure supplies, to contract with suppliers to buy gas at the highest prices permitted. The pipelines also agreed to "take-or-pay" provisions, under which they would pay for almost all the gas they had contracted for even if they could not sell it. Since the pipelines are allowed to pass on all costs to consumers, these contracts have kept prices high and rising, even though there is now a surplus of gas available.

The Debate

Both opponents and advocates of decontrol generally accept that new gas will be decontrolled, although they disagree over how rapidly controls should be taken off. Thus, most of the debate on natural gas prices is centered on the price of old gas—gas discovered before the NGPA was passed—which constitutes about 60 percent of current supplies.

Proponents of decontrol believe the price of gas is high because the categories of gas and the resulting price variations created by the NGPA have encouraged some producers to explore for more expensive types of gas, such as new and deep gas, and to produce less old gas. Decontrolling old gas would result in higher prices for old gas, say decontrol advocates, but producers would be forced to lower their prices for new gas to compete with increased supplies of old gas. They argue that now is the ideal time to decontrol prices, because the abundant supplies of gas mean that the market should push prices down rather than up.

Opponents of decontrol argue that the price of fuel is not truly determined by free market forces. The OPEC cartel has set oil prices artifically high. Pipelines have no incentive to bargain for the best prices for their customers. Gas utilities cannot bargain for lower prices, because only a few pipelines normally serve a given geographic area. Most consumers cannot shop for lower gas prices, because utilities are legal monopolies. For all these reasons, say opponents, regulations must be used to lower the price to the level where it would be forced by competition. They buttress their argument by citing a recent Department of Energy study, which shows that controls provide more gas at lower prices.

The one area in which opponents and supporters of decontrol agree is that existing contracts, including such provisions as the take-or-pay clause and automatic price escalators, should be cancelled or renegotiated. This would be the major step toward a more competitive market. Some are also urging elimination of the automatic pass-through of costs from pipelines to consumers.

A major complicating factor in the debate is that the price of gas varies greatly across the country. In parts of the country where gas is much cheaper than oil, decontrol could cause gas prices to "fly up" until they approach the price that industries

would pay for oil. Considerations such as these have caused a number of other issues to be injected into the decontrol debate, such as the substitution of oil for gas, the profits of major oil companies, and the degree to which decontrol would affect exploration for new gas sources.

Congressional Action

During the early part of the natural gas debate, two alternative bills emerged as the primary contenders: the Natural Gas Regulatory Amendments (HR 1760, S615), submitted by the Reagan administration on February 28, 1983, and the Natural Gas Consumer Relief Act (HR 2154, S996), offered by Congressman Richard Gephardt and 73 cosponsors in mid-March. The administration bill would have permitted phased-in decontrol of old gas over a three-year period. The Gephardt bill would have retained controls on the price of old gas indefinitely, as permitted under the NGPA, and rolled back the ceiling prices of new gas to the January 1982 levels. Both bills provided for gradual decontrol of new gas, although they differed on timing. Neither bill survived in congressional committee.

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has reported a new bill (S1715, S Rept. 98-205) to the full Senate without recommendation. That bill would lift all remaining federal price controls within 44 months. It calls for immediate deregulation of "new new" gas, sold under contracts after the new bill is enacted, and of all gas sold under contracts that expire or would be renegotiated after the bill's enactment.

During the 44-month period, the Senate bill would allow the price of old gas to rise according to a "free market price indicator," which is based on the average price of new contracts for new gas. It amends take-or-pay contract clauses so that, during the first year, pipelines would be obligated to take only 50 percent of the high cost gas for which they had contracted, 60 percent during the second year, and 70 percent during the third year. It also includes protection for consumers, including a requirement that any savings realized through take-or-pay reductions, downward price adjustments, or other measures be passed to consumers. Furthermore, increased pipeline costs could be passed to consumers only if it could be demonstrated to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that they were "prudent." Opponents argue that FERC's discretion is no substitute for legal controls, especially because they believe FERC has acted to the benefit of the industry and the detriment of consumers until now.

Among supporters of the Senate bill are the National Association of Manufacturers, the Independent Petroleum Association of America, and the Natural Gas Supply Association. Opponents include unions and citizen groups, including the Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition, which strongly backed the Gephardt bill, gas utilities, independent producers, and the National Governors Association.

Just before the August recess, a sharply divided House Subcommittee on Fossil and Synthetic Fuels sent a bill to the full Energy and Commerce Committee that would permit the decontrol of a greater volume of gas than did the original Gephardt proposal. But the House bill, unlike the Senate bill, retains permanent controls on old gas, although it calls for deregulation of additional volumes of gas produced by "enhanced" recovery techniques from old wells and fields. Critics believe this provision would eventually permit considerable volumes of old gas to be decontrolled. The House bill would, as under current law, decontrol the price of new gas on January 1, 1985.

The House bill also allows pipelines to reduce the amount of gas they must take under take-or-pay contracts to 50 percent. And it includes consumer protection measures similar to those in the Senate bill, along with some additional ones.

Eleven of the 42 members of the full Energy and Commerce Committee had signed on as supporters of the Gephardt bill, which is viewed as much more pro-consumer than the bill currently being considered. Committee chairman John Dingell was among the nine members voting against the new measure in subcommittee.

The Reagan administration has said it will accept either the House or the Senate bill.

Coping with Uncertainty

No one can be certain what impact deregulation will have on the price of gas, partly because we do not know how the future course of the national and world economies will affect the natural gas market. Currently, the supply of gas greatly exceeds the demand; but if the economy recovers from the recession, demand for gas could increase. And if decontrol decreases prices for new gas, the incentive to explore for new gas sources will decrease. The result could be a shortage of gas supplies and increased prices.

Because of uncertainty about what prices will do if gas is decontrolled, some issues have been notably absent from the debate. Perhaps most important, protection for low-income consumers if gas prices rise has scarcely been mentioned.

In fact, three factors appear to militate against including energy assistance in the debate over gas decontrol. One is legislative strategy. The proposed natural gas legislation is already very complex, reflecting a myriad of competing interests. Thus some of the major actors in the debate appear to have agreed tacitly not to raise issues that do not absolutely have to be raised. A second factor is politics: opponents of decontrol see the inclusion of energy assistance in decontrol legislation as a "sweetener" to weaken the opposition, while advocates of decontrol believe that including energy assistance would undermine their argument that decontrol will not result in increased gas prices. Finally, the very structure of Congress comes into play: the committees that oversee energy policy are different from the committees that handle issues of concern to the poor.

However, many members of Congress remain concerned about the implications of decontrol for low-income consumers and have begun to consider energy assistance on a separate track. Ironically, the success of that approach may depend in part on how badly consumers are hurt by gas decontrol.

Telescope

JCPS Provides Technical Assistance For Community Development

The Joint Center has entered into an agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, under which the center will provide technical assistance to approximately 36 cities in Arkansas, Florida, and Maryland.

The agreement is designed to help cities participate in and implement community and economic development projects under HUD and state-run Community Development Block Grant Programs (CDBG). The Joint Center is targeting small cities with significant minority populations and "entitlement" cities—larger cities that automatically receive CDBG funds—where pockets of minorities are located. Three kinds of assistance will be offered: Small cities that have received grants but are experiencing problems implementing programs will receive management assistance. Small cities that have not competed successfully for grants will receive assistance in preparing needs assessments, designing projects, planning, and submitting applications. Entitlement cities will receive assistance in improving minority participation in CDBG programs and in planning projects of benefit to minority neighborhoods.

In Arkansas, application assistance has been provided to three cities; needs assessments and technical assistance strategies have been formulated for five additional cities. Cities are currently being selected for assistance in Florida and Maryland.

The Joint Center will produce a profile chart and narrative case study for each community, an overall assessment of the economic development needs and problems of such communities, and recommendations to HUD for increasing participation of communities with significant black populations in its programs.

Lemuel Jackson has been appointed director of the Joint Center's Community Development Program. Previously, he was vice president of the Civic Action Institute, a private, nonprofit, technical assistance organization in Washington, D.C.

Final Report on School Desegregation

"The key problems of segregation facing the nation are in the cities, and . . . the central reason for success where segregation has been reduced dramatically has been implementation of city-suburban desegregation plans, or citywide plans in the small number of big-city school districts that still retain white majorities and serve a large fraction of the metropolitan population."

This is one of the major conclusions of a new study published by the Joint Center for Political Studies entitled *Public School Desegregation in the United States, 1968-1980*, which examines desegregation patterns at the regional, state, metropolitan, and city levels and thus reveals complexities hidden in nationwide statistics. For example, the study shows that on the regional level, the most substantial decreases in segregation of black students came in the South and the border states; changes in the North were much slower. Segregation of Hispanic students is increasing in all parts of the country.

This report incorporates information the Joint Center released earlier in two preliminary reports, "Desegregation of Black and Hispanic Students from 1968 to 1980" and "School Desegregation Patterns in the States, Large Cities, and Metropolitan Areas, 1968-1980." Those reports were prepared for the House Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, which asked the Joint Center to analyze segregation data supplied to the subcommittee by the U.S. Department of Education. The author of *Public School Desegregation* is Gary Orfield, professor of political science, public policy, and education at the University of Chicago, and a JCPS adjunct fellow. Copies of the report are available for $4.95, prepaid, from the Joint Center.

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