

NAACP Energy Policy Wins Acclaim, Opens Way For New Political Alliances

The groundbreaking energy policy statement issued by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) on Jan. 8 has been applauded in the nation's press in the past week as a timely testament to a growing sentiment within the general population that the Carter energy, or nonenergy, policy is abominably inadequate to meet industrial and domestic consumption needs now and in the future. Reactions to the NAACP statement have in fact given clear indication that traditional regional and political barriers, which have prevented closer cooperation between minority groups, labor, and industry in the past, are breaking down under the pressure of the national energy debate.

From the aerospace center of the Pacific Northwest to Athens, Georgia, conservatives and industrialists alike have hailed the NAACP energy statement for its outspoken insistence that all Americans have the right to demand a growth-oriented energy policy from the Administration. The *Seattle Times* last week editorialized that the NAACP spoke for "all Americans" in rejecting the zero-growth, make-shift energy and labor proposals of Energy Secretary Schlesinger and the rest of the Carter team.

Political Barriers Crumbling

At the time of publication of the NAACP energy policy, the national NAACP leadership predicted that long-time "friends" in the white liberal establishment would not take kindly to the organization's policy decision. Clark Watson, the Denver-based chairman of the American Association of Blacks on Energy and advisor to the NAACP's energy committee, drew out this point in his Jan. 13 speech to the conference of Americans for Energy Independence.

In his speech, Watson warned the Carter Administration and predominantly white liberals that "second-class economic status of blacks" can no longer be tolerated or perpetuated by proposed legislation. Watson singled out the kow-towing Black Congressional Caucus for its consistent refusal to push for long-term industrial expansion programs, the only programs which can satisfactorily rectify economic inequality in the U.S.

The Athens, Georgia *Daily News* was quick to pick up on these implications of the NAACP policy statement in its Jan. 13 issue. Reporter Larry Young commented that the organization's decision reflects growing disenchantment among minority layers who were assiduously

wooed by the Carter presidential campaign team, but who have since been abandoned as far as policy is concerned. Turner underscored the similarity in view between the NAACP statement and longstanding oil industry criticisms of the Schlesinger energy program, concluding that the days of the black-white liberal alliance are probably numbered.

Turner's predictions have been confirmed, in part, by a Mobil Oil Corporation ad, which appeared last week in the *New York Times*. In that ad, Mobil hailed the long-term approach reflected in the NAACP position, and sharply criticized the failure of the liberal *Washington Post* to cover the story.

NAACP Keeps Momentum Going

The NAACP, meanwhile, has not let up in its efforts to mobilize more support around their energy perspective. In his Athens *Daily News* column, correspondent Turner reported that the NAACP has blanketed Congress with copies of the energy resolution, targeting in particular the Senate and House conference committee, which has so far failed to reach a compromise energy package.

NAACP National Chairman Margaret Bush Wilson traveled to Washington, D.C. last week to testify against the Administration's light truck fuel economy standards for 1980. Representatives from Chrysler Corporation and the Ford Motor Company joined with Mrs. Wilson in criticizing the standards recommended by the Naderite National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, headed by Joan Claybrook. The proposals, according to auto industry estimates, would force the closing of several inner-city truck manufacturing plants, with a loss of 46,000 jobs in auto and auto-related industry. At least 25 percent of those jobs would be lost by minority urban workers, Wilson accused.

Liberal Establishment On Defensive

As predicted, the white liberal establishment, which for long has fought to keep national black minority organizations within strict racial limits, has been thrown on the defensive by the aggressive actions of the NAACP and their growing number of national supporters.

Last week's *New York Village Voice*, the newspaper of wealthy kids who can afford to fantasize about wind

power and other alternative energy resources, released a two-page feature spread on the NAACP policy statement under the banner headline, "Big Oil's New Black Ally." Not coincidentally, the slant of the *Voice* directly parallels early coverage by such senior papers as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*.

National Press Hails NAACP Energy Policy

Seattle Times, lead editorial, "Energy Supply Tied to the Job Market," Jan. 18:

Because leaders of the recent National Association for the Advancement of Colored People energy conference broke sharply with President Carter's energy policy and called for greater strengths in the private economy, several knowledgeable observers are calling the NAACP statement a document of enormous political and social importance....

The same concerns could be expressed (by the NAACP—ed.) for all Americans, regardless of race, who face uncertain economic futures.

It is all well and good, of course, for those already gainfully employed to talk of restraining economic growth by limiting new energy production through price controls, environmental curbs, and the like. Poorer citizens also are concerned about conservation and about the possible hazards of say, nuclear power plants.

But they are on sound ground in urging, as the NAACP has done, stronger efforts to solve the potential problems of alternative energy sources, to achieve economic parity through expansion of the private sector's capacity to create jobs.

With the legislative battles to strike down discrimination long since won and with government-sponsored make-work employment a temporary remedy at best, it is encouraging to see the recognition—by important minority representatives—of the private sector as the most promising catalyst for long-term relief of joblessness and related problems.

The Daily News, Athens, Georgia, "Carter Loses Another One," by Larry Young, Jan. 13:

...Seems Jimmy has dawdled too long on his energy plan and thus lost the backing of nothing less than the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)....

Not only has the NAACP broken with Carter—whose 1976 election was supported heavily by blacks—but an energy report issued Tuesday appeared to put the NAACP at odds with long time political partners in the nation's white liberal establishment.

The report...urged deregulation of price controls on new oil and natural gas and argued against forced conversion to coal to 'job-producing industries in urban areas...'.

In addition, the report asserted that environmental and safety concerns about nuclear power are outweighed by future needs for electricity and the "economic and social objectives that are more important to black Americans...".

Basically, the NAACP report—as have spokesmen for

the oil and gas industry—called for federal action to stimulate greater energy production and hit at what it calls the "pessimistic attitude" of the Carter administration which forecasts dwindling supplies of oil and natural gas.

"This emphasis cannot satisfy the fundamental requirements of a society of expanding economic opportunities," the report stated.

The NAACP report was framed by its national energy committee, a panel headed by James Stewart Watson Sr. of Oklahoma City.

Watson said copies of the NAACP report have been mailed to all members of Congress, and "special attention" will be paid to members of the Senate-House conference committee....

In effect, the NAACP report is expected to weaken the positions of both the President and liberal Democrats fighting natural-gas deregulation and production incentives contained in the Senate version of the energy legislation.

Mobil Hits Washington Post Non-Coverage of NAACP

Under the headline "Bits and Pieces," Mobil Oil ran an advertisement in the New York Times on Jan. 19 which we excerpt below.

...As businessmen, we know that keeping the public trust is a long-term process, and that one year's gain can quickly be dissipated. We think openness helps, which is why we speak out on a regular basis in this space and elsewhere. Nor are we about to take any comfort in the fact that the press' slip is showing. But we can't help wondering whether some of the media's difficulty isn't self-created.

The *Washington Post*, for example, delayed for two days any story on the landmark position taken recently by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in support of an energy policy that would spur the economy by encouraging U.S. production and thus create new jobs. The *New York Times*, by contrast, announced the NAACP decision in a prominent spot on the financial page, and the *Wall Street Journal* devoted almost its entire editorial page to the story. The *Washington Star* also gave it an editorial.

The *Post* apparently failed to see much news in the fact that a major civil rights group was taking basic issue with the whole philosophy of the Administration's energy proposals.

Calling for a "more vigorous approach to supply expansion," the NAACP said "we cannot accept the notion that our people are best served by a policy based on the inevitability of energy shortage and the need for the government to allocate an ever-diminishing supply among competing interests." Nicely put, we think...

Watson acknowledged that the report of the NAACP views and recommendations involving energy represented a significant split with both the President and traditional allies in Congress.

"We simply recognize that economic development for blacks is tied very closely to the expansion of the economy," Watson said. "That's the reason we've taken the position that industry must be encouraged."

The NAACP report urged that "all alternative energy sources should be developed and utilized," including the new-generation nuclear-breeder reactor, the program opposed by Carter on environmental and safety grounds and because of the threat of proliferation of nuclear

weapons....

Interpreting the Carter energy plan as overly concerned with environmental protection and criticizing what it considered a failure to stress adequate production of supplies, the NAACP report asserted:

"The basic approach of the plan as it relates to energy supply reflects the absence of a black perspective in its development."

Due to other news considered more "worthy" by the mogul media, this little bit of news has been downplayed to a considerable extent. That's why I am glad to fill you in....

The Village Voice

Below is the attack in this week's Village Voice against the NAACP and its commitment to high-technology energy production:

*By Alexander Cockburn
& James Ridgeway*

Last week, the oil industry announced its latest acquisition, the takeover of the largest black civil rights organization in the country: the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The details of the acquisition were not immediately known. Members of the purchasing syndicate, headed by Mobil Oil, included Standard Oil of California, Arco, Southern California Gas, Con Edison, and the Arthur D. Little Company. The price was not announced.

The takeover was signaled in the form of an extraordinary report of the NAACP's national energy conference. Hailed by Mobil's public relations genius, Herbert Schmertz, as "terrific," the report was regarded by many stunned participants in the conference as a double-cross and one indicative of the bankruptcy of the present NAACP leadership.

The report, largely composed by industry lobbyists, urges strong support for nuclear power, including the breeder reactor; argues for higher energy prices in general and deregulation of natural gas as necessary stimulants for the creation of jobs. It sides with industry in severely rebuking the Carter administration's energy plan, and insists that the oil and gas industry should receive more money if the crisis is to be solved.

As stories about the report begin to appear last week, the *Wall Street Journal*, in a lead editorial, heralded it as a "document of major political and social significance" and added, "...for the first time in memory the NAACP has sided emphatically with the free-marketers instead of the interventionists on a major question of public policy..."

Inside the NAACP itself reaction from staffers took a different tone. "The whole thing stinks," said one member of the staff, insisting on anonymity. "We were railroaded." "Ben Hooks (the executive director of the NAACP) does not know where he is. He has his finger up his ass," said another. "I doubt if he even knew about this. He's just wallowing in that Baptist preacher bullshit." "The board," said a black activist on the

matter of the report, "is a conglomeration of assholes."

Such expressions of outrage notwithstanding, reactions to the report in official Washington took the form of grudging acknowledgement of and even admiration for, the oil industry for having won possibly important ground in the battle over energy. The President, in the wake of his world tour, was visibly surprised at the NAACP's stand. Members of the Black Caucus in Congress hastened to prepare a hostile response. Black businessmen and industry lobbyists waited to see how Senator Russell Long would use this assistance from so surprising a quarter.

The Industry Plot

It is now possible to detail the strange saga of how the energy industry captured the NAACP....

Relying on Stuart's report and on vigorous arguments made to her in the course of the preceding six months by Bates of Mobil, Clark Watson of the American Association of Blacks on Energy, a representative from Westinghouse (which manufactures nuclear power plants), and others, Wilson issued the final pro-industry report—without consulting with the NAACP staff and, indeed to their intense surprise...

Gentlemen's Agreement?

St. Louis Globe-Democrat, "NAACP Strikes a Blow for Common Sense," by Patrick Buchanan, Jan. 17:

(In his column endorsing the NAACP energy statement, syndicated columnist Buchanan issued the following rejoinder to William Tucker's recent *Harper's* magazine "Environmentalists who pattern themselves after the English gentry":)

What do black urban bricklayers have in common with English gentry?...when the energy crunch comes, blacks will be freezing on unemployment lines while environmentalists, Naderites and Common Causers roast their tootsies in front of the fire listening to revolutionary songs by Pete Seeger.

Conyers's Rebuttal

It was sentiments such as these that provoked outrage among many black politicians. "The issue is going to be raised," Representative John Conyers of Detroit told us, "as to who the NAACP represents. How on earth could deregulation be in the interests of black people? Only 28 percent of the black heads of households make over \$15,000 a year, as opposed to 53 percent of white family heads. Obviously, we are the relatively largest unemployed, and would be the most adversely impacted by increased energy costs."

Conyers is a member of the Black Caucus, which consists of the black members of the House. Early this week, Conyers's office was drafting a response to the NAACP program, which Conyers proposed and hopes will be adopted. The response will argue that the end result of deregulating natural-gas prices will be to allow the price to be set by OPEC: There is no free market; the question is whether the price is set for American consumers by OPEC or the U.S. government. The deregulation would mean inflation, some \$10 billion in additional costs per year; deregulation means more unemployment—360,000 workers laid off as side-effects of the heavy inflation....

Finally, the NAACP joins forces with, in Margaret Bush Wilson's words, "big government" and "big oil" in ignoring the most signal of all issues: health. The brisk trade-off between environmentalism and jobs suggested in the report passes over the real meaning of environmentalism—namely, the bid to prevent poor working people from being poisoned to death. As we have noted time and again, the incidence of cancer (to mention but one environmentally-caused disease) is much higher among blacks than whites; and indeed, among the prime suspects as cancer-causing are the petrochemical and nuclear industries....

Who are the people behind this extraordinary energy report? Among NAACP staffers there were dark suspicions....

One of the most obvious of the corporate ties is the Mobil connection. Mobil, with its notorious PR operation, seems to be in the forefront of the industry in parlaying the black connection into real political clout....

Among the contributors to the NAACP energy position was Andrew Brimmer, a former member of the Federal Reserve Board who has made his own contribution to the ongoing misery of the poor by attacking the minimum wage...

The grand old man of the black oil business in Washington is Hobart Taylor, Jr. Taylor, whose family comes from Texas, practiced for a time as an attorney in Detroit, and then worked in the White House for Lyndon Johnson. He is now an attorney in Washington and an important figure on the board of the NAACP...

Margaret Bush Wilson, the chairwoman of the NAACP, is a St. Louis attorney....

The ironies, in the week of the anniversary of Martin Luther King's birthday, are sharp and bitter. The largest black organization in the country has placed itself beneath the boot of the most merciless defenders of corporate privilege both in the United States and abroad....

Black Caucus is 'Front For No-Growth Elitists'

The Trib, New York, report on Clark Watson's remarks to the Jan. 13 conference of the Americans for Energy Independence, Jan. 16:

"The only way left to real equality is through economic equality. But the Administration, and particularly the Department of Energy is proposing policies that will perpetuate the second-class economic status of blacks...The Black (Congressional) Caucus has only served as a front for white no-growth elitists who thrive on the powerlessness (of blacks—ed.), but now they've been served notice to replace the rather mundane position they have taken in the past with well-thought-out policies that reflect the needs of black America...No longer will you see the Black Caucus—at least on energy—see-sawing between the usually incompatible interests of blacks and the interests of white liberals."

Black Caucus' Mitchell Calls NAACP Stand 'Ghastly Mistake'

News World, New York, Jan. 15:

WASHINGTON—Rep. Parren Mitchell, D-Md., chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, told The News World yesterday that an NAACP statement which condemned continued government regulation of gas and oil prices was a "ghastly mistake" and said he hoped the NAACP would "soberly reconsider" its position.

Meanwhile, NAACP Executive Director Benjamin Hooks met with Sen. J. Bennet Johnston, D-La., a leading Senate proponent of deregulation of natural gas prices, and afterwards vigorously defended before the press the organization's controversial statement, which attacked the Carter Administration's energy proposals....

Hooks said the very strong regulations proposed in the Carter energy plan would mean "you cannot have the new discoveries (of new fuel) that you have to have to expand the economy." This, he stressed, is absolutely essential to create jobs and lower the unemployment rate among blacks, which is twice that of the national average.

Mitchell attacked the NAACP's stand supporting deregulation because "if we deregulate, prices are going to rise and that will hit disproportionately on poor people."

Hooks responded by saying that poor people were more concerned about jobs than the cost of their energy, and suggested that remedial measures, such as "energy stamps" be adopted to help low-income persons cope with increased fuel costs created by deregulation.

"We want to create jobs, then we can deal with the impact," Hooks said.

Former Defence Officer Calls Schlesinger 'Devious'

The Dallas Morning News carried this article on former deputy Defense Secretary William Clements' attack on Schlesinger on Jan. 10.

Former U.S. deputy Defense secretary and Texas Republican gubernatorial candidate William P. Clements unleashed a bitter attack Monday against Energy Secretary James Schlesinger.

Clements called Schlesinger a "devious character" and "an absolute disaster," in a luncheon speech before members of the Dallas Engineers Club.

"Mr. Schlesinger is an absolute disaster. To think that the president has placed our country in his hands is just absurd," said Clements, who is head of the Dallas-based SEDCO, which is said to be the world's largest oil and gas well drilling company.

In an attack on the current administration's energy program, Clements said in his four years in Washington, he was "exposed to Schlesinger" in social and business settings.

"He is the most devious character I have my life," Clements said.

He said it was unfortunate that President Carter "has to take credit and responsibility" for the energy bill

which Schlesinger and other advisers recommended to him.

He said though he never has been introduced or shaken hands with Carter, the president has indicated to him through his action that he is "hard-headed" about his energy bill and is "going to fight very, very hard" in support of it.

"But senators on the other side are equally hard-headed," he said, indicating the fight for the bill's passage will be a tough one....

Washington Governor Pins Mondale on Energy Program Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Jan. 17, 1978:

In its coverage of the meeting of Vice-President Mondale, Interior Secretary Andrus, and the governors of 13 Western states, the *Post-Intelligencer* reported that Washington Governor Dixy Lee Ray called for "increased production and, above all, the development of nuclear power." Her insistence that the national economy will not recover until the federal government comes up with an energy development plan prompted the announcement of a White House energy meeting between President Carter and the governors next month. The *Post Intelligencer* article concludes from the conference with Mondale and Andrus: "The discussions got so nitty-gritty that... Andrus... even had to give federal government's definition of the kind of road that would be kept out of roadless wilderness areas. One that was maintained with a pick and shovel, or better, he said."

'Watergaters' Surrounding Carter

A barrage of attacks against President Carter appeared in the nation's Eastern press last week as part of former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's efforts to bring about a U.S.-Soviet confrontation in the Horn of Africa, the Mideast, and Italy, and the imposition of corporatist policies at home.

Using the same dynamic as in the Lance affair, the British-linked forces around Kissinger are using a psychological profile of Carter and multiplying the "Watergate" effect by keeping him surrounded by a variety of scandal stories and accusations of "retreats" — the energy bill, FBI scandals, Korean bribery scandals, "human rights," nonproliferation, the failures of Carter's European-Asian trip, the economy, and so on.

The Marston Mess

The focal point for many of the attacks was the new "Marston Affair." According to the press charges, Carter broke his campaign pledge to hire U.S. Attorneys on the basis of merit by planning to fire the Philadelphia U.S. Attorney David Marston, a Republican, while Marston was in the process of "investigating" that city's traditional Democratic and Republican leaders, and that Carter attempted to cover up his knowledge of the situation. The real scandal has gone unmentioned in

these same newspapers: David Marston was collaborating with the Institute for Policy Studies' subversive networks which include the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department and First Pennsylvania Bank Chairman, John Bunting to bring down the administration of Philadelphia Mayor Frank Rizzo with a series of phony charges and slanders against the mayor and his supporters.

After the *Philadelphia Inquirer* broke the "Marston Massacre" story on Jan. 7, James Weighart, Kennedy Democrat and columnist for the *New York Daily News*, called Attorney General Griffin Bell's firing of Marston "a fix" and, referring to Watergate, recommended that Carter not forget the name "Marston."

The following are excerpts of press attacks around the Marston affair.

New York Times, William Safire, "Obstructing Justice," Jan. 16:

When a Congressman who knows he is under criminal investigation calls the President of the United States to get him to tell the Attorney General to fire the prosecutor who is investigating him, and the President makes the call and the prosecutor is fired — is that an obstruction of justice?

You bet it is, and the knowledge of his foolish complicity caused President Carter to try to deceive reporters in his press conference last week....