

NAACP Stands Firm With Energy Position

Scores Media 'Distortion Of Our Views'

The National Executive Board of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) met in Atlanta April 17, for its first quarterly meeting since the publication of its Jan. 9, 1978 energy policy. The meeting reaffirmed that policy as issued, despite a strong internal opposition led by Washington D.C. lawyer and union wrecker Joseph Rauh, head of the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA).

The NAACP energy policy calls for the development of nuclear power to expand the U.S. economy and provide skilled jobs for black and white Americans.

Due in part to enormous pressure from Rauh's so-called "labor faction," and despite a recommendation by the civil rights organization's own Energy Committee to refrain entirely from defensively reiterating their already clearly stated policy, the 100-member executive board, after a day-long discussion, released a statement explaining that they had announced their January energy policy because of the need to reduce unemployment among blacks, particularly black youth, and because of the impact of inflation on the NAACP's constituency.

The statement continues, "We reaffirm our statement of Jan. 9, 1978. We deplore the failure by some members of the media, and others, to focus any attention on the essential thrusts in that statement. Apparently there was a deliberate distortion of our views and priorities..."

Despite the NAACP's condemnation of the distorted press coverage given the original statement, which was directed in large part to the *New York Times* which led the pack in misreporting the energy policy, the *Times* continued its policy of deliberate and racist distortions in reporting on the April 17 meeting. Headlining their April 18 news story "NAACP Seeks to Clarify Deregulation Stance," the *Times* lied "The organization's energy statement of Jan. 9 has widely been interpreted as supportive of deregulation....The statement was seen by many as one that favored the oil industry, and it drew bitter criticism from organized labor..." implying that the NAACP had backed down. Again the *Times* omitted reference to the clauses in the energy statement which promote development of nuclear power. On Jan. 27 the *Times* had editorialized on the original statement by asking, "Does Civil Rights Include Energy?"

In its Jan. 27 editorial the *New York Times* concluded: "We happen to believe that the NAACP paper on energy was inadequately prepared, poorly reasoned and finally,

wrong for all Americans....In debating the wider questions, civil rights groups will have to rely on 'outside experts' for their research and analysis, perhaps risking, as the NAACP did, manipulation and exploitation by other interests."

The Rauh faction was able to force the NAACP's defensive reiteration, but suffered a major setback in their attempt to have the organization renege in its support of nuclear power.

Expressing a "sour grapes" attitude after the meeting, Rauh told a reporter, "I don't like people who criticize and blame the press for their own mistakes...whether that person is Bert Lance, whom I don't admire, or the NAACP board, whom I do." Revealing the depth of distrust of Rauh within the NAACP, a member of the NAACP's Energy Committee, when asked about "disrupters" at this week's meeting, responded: "You mean Rauh, don't you?"

Rauh had been joined in his efforts to subvert the dominant pro-energy-growth policymakers in the NAACP by Lane Kirkland-controlled "labor" NAACP board members Bill Pollard, head of the civil rights division of the NAACP, and the United Auto Workers' Doug Fraser and Bill Oliver.

Observers close to the Atlanta meeting stress that the situation within the NAACP and in particular around the organization's prodevelopment, pronuclear policy is up for grabs. According to these sources, the future policy direction of the NAACP Executive Board—led by Monsanto executive and Executive Board Chairman Margaret Bush Wilson and NAACP Executive Director Benjamin Hooks—depends very much on the degree of public support the Board receives from industry and organized labor for its courageous stand for nuclear power production.

The full text of the NAACP Executive Board statement issued is reprinted below:

On Jan. 9, 1978, the National Board of Directors of the NAACP announced its energy statement for the following reasons:

* A full employment economy is essential for the reduction of unemployment of blacks across America.

* The failure of the Federal Energy Department to employ blacks in substantive policy positions.

* The persistently high rate of unemployment and underemployment among black youth.

* The massive and continuing decay of the inner cities, where most blacks live.

* The destructive impact of inflation on people who look to our organization for leadership.

* The threat to the health and well-being of the most most needy segment of America.

We now reaffirm our statement of Jan. 9, 1978.

We deplore the failure by some members of the media, and others, to focus any attention on these essential thrusts in that statement.

Apparently, there was a deliberate distortion of our views and priorities. Indeed, efforts were made to discredit our leadership regarding its motives and intentions. (emphasis added—ed.)

For more than 69 years, the NAACP has been in the forefront of economic, political, and social progress for black Americans. We have uncompromisingly advocated justice and fairness for all Americans.

Historically, the NAACP has been sensitive to and an advocate for, our constituents in their role as consumers and in this connection has always favored the concept of regulation of certain essential commodities. The Jan. 9 statement did not address itself to the issue of "regulation" or "deregulation" in this context—nor did

we intend it to do so! (emphasis added—ed.)

The determination of energy policy is ultimately a governmental matter. However, America is well aware that a policy impasse persists at the highest levels of our government. Whatever policy is finally adopted, the NAACP will remain alert in defense of the best interests of the poor, and will carefully monitor the effect of such actions on the daily lives of our constituency.

New Jersey Mayor Endorses NAACP on Energy

In an open letter to NAACP leaders Margaret Bush Wilson and Benjamin Hooks, Trenton Mayor and president of the New Jersey Conference of Mayors Authur J. Holland expressed his full support for the NAACP jobs and energy program. Holland called for the expansion of industry and commerce "in order to provide the best possible future for our nation, its cities, and our citizens." Since such expansion is only possible with a growing supply of energy, wrote Holland, "I believe the nation's interest is best served by an aggressive commitment to expanding the available supplies of energy including the development of nuclear fission and nuclear fusion technologies."

The Holland letter was read on Monday into the record of the New Jersey Senate State Government Committee during hearings on a bill calling for restoration of funds to the breeder reactor. Following testimony by the USLP and state utilities, the breeder bill passed the committee unanimously, and will now go the full Senate.

NAACP An Issue In N.Y. Press Battle

The largest black weekly in the U.S., the Amsterdam News, has locked horns with the Village Voice, the granddaddy of Fabian journalism, in a political battle which could have ramifications for the liberal wing of the Democratic party nationally. The battle erupted with an attack in the April 10 issue of the Village Voice on the Amsterdam News, establishing that paper's link to what the Voice alleged were "pork barrels" in the New York City budget.

In reply, the April 15 issue of the Amsterdam News devoted two entire pages to a caustic description of the Village Voice's political interests, and a defense against the charges of conflict of interest. Significantly, the Amsterdam News cites the Voice's attack on Margaret Bush Wilson, chairman of the board of the NAACP, for the organization's energy policy.

Here are portions of the editorials of the April 15 issue of the Amsterdam News.

"Voice of Our People"

The Village Voice is racist to begin with. . . .

Over the last year (The Village Voice) has set a tone to its content that is limited to the most negative aspects of Black life in New York City. . . the paper last year crucified one of the most eminent justices, Judge Ed-

ward Dudley, through the same type of yellow journalism. . . .

And in January the Voice took upon itself to attack Margaret Bush Wilson, the National Chairperson of the NAACP, for allegedly selling out the NAACP to the oil industry. . . .

The Amsterdam News is a small business operation and its board members are struggling small businessmen who should not be held to any arbitrary standards not being applied to other businessmen and other newspaper publishers. (Jack) Newfield (the author of the Voice article—ed.) asks the question: would we tolerate the publisher of the New York Post (Australian Rupert Murdoch) simultaneously owning a company that held a large contract with the city government? The question cannot be entertained until the publisher of the New York Post discloses what it is that he owns.

We know he owns the Village Voice and New York magazine. We know that he was an early supporter of Ed Koch. We do not know what the subsequent relationships are.

Newfield's problem is that the Amsterdam News understands the implications of the plan: nothing less than the consolidation of all federal funds for New York City in the hands of the omnipotent super poverty pimp, Ed Koch. . . .