Bill Jackson–A Man In the Inside

By FRANCES N. BECKLES

BALTIMORE — The Nixon administration has introduced a number of controversial programs.

However, most people would agree that H.R.1 is the most controversial.

More popularly known as the Nixon's Welfare Reform Bill, H.R.I. is proposed to deal with the myriad of social welfare problems facing this country.

WELFARE CRISIS

It has been presented to the American people as a variable means for dealing with the current welfare crisis.

Divided into four major sections, H.R. I specifically includes:

National Assistance Program (NAP) — services to the aged, blind and disabled.

Social Security —increased benefits and services to recipients.

Medi-care and Medi-caide — services and benefits to persons in need of medical services.

Family Assistance Program (FAP) — dependent children and their families provided with work incentives and training programs.

KEY ROLE

William "Bill" Jackson, social worker, educator and civil rights activists, will play a key role in helping to insure that poor Blacks and other minorities eligible for benefits under sections one through three receive them.

Bill accepted the position of "special assistant" to the director of Equal Employment Opportunity and Labor Management Relation Officer, included in the broad area of concern of the aging, blind and disabled early in 1972.

His responsibility not only included insuring that persons eligible to receive old age assistance, aid to the blind and disabled, early in security and medical services receive them, but that those people who provide these services are also representative of the minority community.

ELIGIBLE PERSON

Every eligible person receiving social security benefits will receive, Y.H.R.I is passed, $130 monthly and will be a boom to the Black community.

The first year close to three million people are expected to register. He surmises that most of the new people included in the program will be from the minority group.

This program will come mostly from the deep south, Mississippi, Alamba and Georgia.

Get Assistance

It has been difficult for these people to get assistance in the past.

Bill feels by the government taking over the full financial burden and responsibility for these three categories of assistance, poor and especially minority people will finally have some possible way to live a decent life.

"I'm not saying that $130 will be enough to meet all needs but it certainly is a beginning," he declared.

POLITICAL SYSTEM

The reality of the current welfare situation is depended on the economical political system.

Bill is of the opinion that like other social issues facing this nation, social welfare reform will be decided from a political prespective.

"Politics are something we must come to grasp with and learn how to deal with," he said.

GAMBLE ALL

"On this matter, H.R. 1 I don't think it's wise for us to gamble all or nothing," Jackson continued. "To reject the whole thing, we lose everything and run the risk of getting something even less desirable.

"I understand Nixon wanted to use the Ribicoff Bill (a more liberal welfare reform measure), but politically that would have been disasterous if he used a Democrat's bill.

"In all due respects to those who have honest motivations for the bill," Jackson said, "I think it is politically unwise to gamble all or nothing."

STRONG FEELINGS

H.R.I aroused strong feelings among not only people in the Black community but in social welfare and union camps as well.

Seen as a possible treat to the social work profession, since it made no provisions for services to needy people, only provided financial support, some social workers felt it short changed poor people who need more than just financial support, which still remain inadequate.

Furthermore the Family Assistance Program (FAP) might reduce the task of social workers to clerical workers.

UNIONS FEAR

The unions feared an influx of cheap labor which H.R.I. might provided, if the recipients under the (FAP) were not guaranteed minimum wages.

Aged and disabled people clearly need more benefits, and for the most part few people would deny them of these.

But there were very strong feelings that opposed the increase in financial aid to families with dependent children.

MAIN SUPPORT

There was still a contingent of people to believe welfare is the main support for Black women and their "bastard off-spring" and this practice of financing these degenerates should be stopped.

They needed to be put to work, to insure that FAP work incentive plan would be implemented.

This plan was combined with the old aged, aid to the blind and Social Security, which resulted in one bill.

GROUPS OPPOSING

Most groups opposing the FAP portion (4) of the bill elected to reject the whole bill. One such person is Charlene "Wyndy" Morgan, community planner and chairman of the Community Strike Force on Social Services of Baltimore.

"Although there are certain portions of H.R. 1 that are good, we must reject the whole bill," said Wyndy.

The Strike Force, a broad base community group was organized by Congressman Parren J. Mitchell of Baltimore, in response to a growing dissatisfaction Black Baltimore felt with the traditional social service institutions.

BEST PART

In Miss Morgan's opinion, H.R. I sections dealing with services to the aged and disable, as well as increasing the benefits to recipients of Social Security recipients are by far the best part of H.R. I.

However, she like others across the nation, vehemently opposes FAP and OFF sections, as it is thought to be racism and oppressive to Black people.

Basically, these have been the issues which Bill had to come to grasps.

AGED BLACKS

"My decision to become a part of the Social Security Administration dealing with implementing this bill, should it pass, was based on what I saw happening to aged Black people in Clarksville, Miss."

The problems facing the aged in this country is serious, but he believes the problems facing the aged in this country is serious, but could be worse.

While on an assignment for OEO in Clarksville, Jackson met many homeless, aged Blacks. Formerly they lived on land owned by whites, who allowed them to live practically rent free for working the land.

NEW GENERATION

Often, when a new generation of owners took control of the land, they evicted aged people because they could not work the land, leaving them to roam the countryside and streets of the near-by towns.

"Many of the older people will be covered by the old age

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the OIC AND GULF

In 1967, Rev. Sullivan met with E. F. Jacobs, Gulf Marketing Regional Vice President, at opening of Gulf-OIC Training Station in Philadelphia.

In 1972, Gulf President B. R. Dorsey presented Rev. Sullivan with check for $50,000 for OIC training projects. Left is Matthew Moore, OIC's Pittsburgh consultant.

At the 1972 OIC Convocation in Washington, D. C., Gulf sponsored a breakfast for members of Congress. It was chaired by Sen. Edward Brooke, right, and attended by Gulf Vice President William Henry, left, and Community Relations Manager, Roy Kohler.

An OIC-Gulf training class

Partially as a result of action taken by Reverend Leon Sullivan, Gulf, in 1961, decided to build a more constructive relationship with the black community.

Reverend Leon Sullivan began OIC — Opportunities Industrialization Centers, Inc. — in 1964 in Philadelphia to provide an organization to upgrade and train the unskilled and the underprivileged. Gulf joined his program in 1967 by experimenting with OIC-related training programs in a number of cities.

In 1971, Gulf's top executives were selected by Reverend Sullivan to raise funds for OIC in Pennsylvania, and since Gulf is fully committed to OIC as a minority training vehicle, it pledged $50,000 as its 1972 contribution. Further, B. R. Dorsey, president of the corporation, and William Henry, an executive vice president, personally helped OIC to raise funds in the Pittsburgh area, one of the nation's largest concentrations of corporate headquarters. Gulf also has helped publicize OIC aims by producing a TV commercial which has been shown on Gulf's NBC-TV network News Specials.

Gulf's community relations program with minority groups is well established, but the company feels that it has only scratched the surface of studying employment and minority enterprise investment carefully with high priority concern for implementing even greater future involvement.

Gulf

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