

Platform of the Black and Puerto Rican Convention

This platform represents the collective efforts of the platform committee, the workshops and their participants. The recommendations in this platform are designed specifically to meet the needs of Black and Puerto Rican citizens of Newark and in general to meet the needs of all citizens of Newark.

The candidates selected by this convention must endorse these recommendations and implement them when elected.

Platform Committee

The following are the resolutions of the Boards and Commissions workshop submitted to the platform for the Black and Puerto Rican Convention:

1. The Boards and Commissions should reflect a desire for progress and change in the community.
2. Blacks, Puerto Ricans, and interested groups should be appointed to the various Boards and Commissions.
3. Only, the residents of Newark should be appointed to the Boards and Commissions.
4. The members of the Boards and Commissions should be committed to serving the interest and welfare of all the people.
5. Non-residents interested in the welfare of Newark and its people should be allowed to serve on Boards and Commissions in an advisory capacity.

Submitted by Leroy Johnson  
Chairman of the Boards and Commissions  
workshop

## CITY FINANCE

### D. Some of the Revenues coming Into Newark

1. Urban Aid Bill-increased police & fireman salaries but did not improve living conditions.
2. Lottery has not been committed therefore not included in Budget of 1970.
3. Sales Tax-has only slowed down the increase of tax rates.

### II. Recommended Financial Improvements:

A. Property tax should be updated, the ratables (Land & building) increase will decrease tax rate.

B. The law requiring that the city employees live in the city of Newark be enforced.

C. Federal Aid with local control & participation.

D. The following proposals should be obtained through the proper legislation:

1- A service charge should be levied on tax exempt organizations.

2. An increase in Bank Stock rates.

3. The State should adopt a revenue that would include at least 20 percent of the sales tax be retained by Newark.

4..A permit for municipalities to impose their own broad-base taxes.

5. Legislation enabling Newark to levy a head tax at the Newark Airport and on aviation fuel tax.

6. Legislation permitting Newark to levy regular property and/or obtain taxes on the Port Authority and all interprises located on Port Authority land.

7. Legislation insuring that the share of the State funds going to Newark should be in proportion to the amount it pays to the State.

8. An increase in debt service be established.

9. Legistation permitting cities to levy a differential property tax on land and improvements.

E. The following recommendation should be submitted to the State and/or Federal Government:

1. The "Foundation Pro ram" for the present \$100 per-pupil should be raised to provide Newark with a possible \$12 million more in State aid.

2. An additional broad-based tax for an example an income tax to provide funds for metting the basic necessities of the citizens of Newark.

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3. The cost of education and welfare should be completely taken over by the State and Federal governments.
4. An alternative for the State and Federal Governments, if they do not assume the total financing of education, should be that of the State's Grant-In-Aid formula for education be revised to consider the special needs of Newark and other municipalities.
5. Medical education and welfare should be immediately subsidize by the State
6. The Federal Government should adopt a revenue-sharing proposal along the lines suggested by the President, with extra consideration given to the overburdened cities, the ratio of sharing should be increased more rapidly than the President proposed.

## CITY LAND AND HOUSING

### I. INTRODUCTION PROBLEMS PRESENTED

- A. There're not enough houses in Newark-A definite need exists for more housing.
- B. Highways and urban renewal have removed too many people from areas.
- C. Land is utilized for functionless projects. Urban renewal holds land for programs unrelated to community needs, such as the downtown expansion project.
- D. Community groups and technicians are now doing research to effectively combat these offenses.

### II. PROPOSALS

#### A. Planning Institutions

In order to enable proper development of housing and related resources it is necessary to have highly trained, sensitive and creative Black and Puerto Ricans on all boards where decisions are made on housing. Chief among these are Newark Housing Authority, and the Central Planning Board. A complete over-haul of staffing must follow this board reorganization. Public Housing authority must be divided into two separate agencies- Public Housing and Urban Renewal. The two functions are unique enough to require special attention from different boards of directors.

#### B. PRIORITY AND INTERESTS

Public officials must stop land acquisition for non-priority items. This means an absolute moratorium on projects such as useless school expansion, and highways and commercial projects. Recognizing the shortage of land in Newark but also the shortage of housing, we demand that construction begin immediately on all open land available in the city of Newark. Where necessary, building codes and zoning regulations should be changed so that construction is made feasible on vacant lots in the city. Certain unnecessary industrial areas should be converted into comfortable residential areas. The meadowlands should be developed into complete communities featuring a housing and industrial mix. in a well planned manner.

Neighborhoods in good condition must be preserved. Rehabilitation money must be made available as a remedy against advancing deterioration. Investigation must be made into the current status of the Federal Code enforcement Program.

## CITY LAND AND HOUSING

Rehabilitation money must, as a remedy against ~~advancing deterioration~~ be made available. ~~Public officials~~ must insist on a more equitable distribution of the property tax burden. His taxes on residential parcels are essentially taxes on Black and Puerto Rican property ownership while millionaires in the downtown industrial complex go tax free. We suggest instead a property tax based on current value of all property of all ~~businesses~~ all businesses operating in Newark, and a commuter tax on those who work in Newark and live elsewhere.

All housing that is built must be useful to the community to be served i.e., all low and moderate income families. All persons allowed to use land for building purposes must agree to construct in accordance with community needs and demands. Newark needs large units for large families. New housing must offer opportunities for ownership in the form of co-operatives or condominiums. Recreational facilities must meet the needs of both young and old.

## C. PUBLIC HOUSING

There is a necessity for a complete review of housing authority policies and personnel with respect to the administration of the many public housing agencies of the city of Newark. The following are the kinds of problems which must be corrected:

- a. Discriminatory practices in placement of tenants.
  1. Steven Crane Village and Bradley Courts must be made available to Blacks and Puerto Ricans.
- b. IMPROPER MAINTENANCE
  1. Money must be obtained from the Federal Government and used effectively to bring up the physical and social standards ~~of the~~ Public Housing Projects
- c. Recreation facilities must be made available to young and old.

## D. HOUSING IN NEWARK AND GOVERNMENTAL SOURCES OF FUNDS

We recognize that there can be no effective program for the construction of housing without the aid of the federal and state governments. We therefore, must have local officials who can deal effectively with these sources of funds. Black and Puerto Rican officials must make citizens aware of Federal programs that can help families obtain funds for home ownership, rehabilitation of property, rent supplement, and such laws as Turnkey Three which allows co-operative ownership of Public Housing over a period of time.

## E. THE COMMUNITY AND HOUSING

Public officials must recognize the needs and advantages of community involvement in the housing process. Citizen participation must be encouraged in home ownership and master - planning. Citizen control must be encouraged in land acquisition and development. Citizen support will be necessary in the procurement of funds from all governmental sources.

## EDUCATION RESOLUTIONS

LEADERS: Eugene Campbell, Vice President of AATA of New Jersey  
William Horton, School Administrator

CONSULTANTS: C. Herbert Oliver, Chairman, Oceanhill-Brownsville  
School District, Brooklyn  
Lester Campbell, AATA of New York

### 1. CURRICULUM

African Free School should be used as a model to bring about necessary change in the public school system.

To insure Black & Puerto Rican survival, curriculum has to give identity, purpose and direction; that is, it must tell who we are, what we must do, and how we must do it.

The existing curriculum must be changed so that it benefits the maximum amount of Black & Puerto Rican people.

Black Studies - History - Teaching of Black & Puerto Rican History from the earliest time to the present, beginning at the primary level in grade school, written by Black & Puerto Rican writers and approved by the community.

The immediate implementation of programs to improve basic skills of reading and arithmetic. The implementation of new programs such as George Cureton's reading method.

Person in charge of curriculum must make radical and revolutionary changes.

The addition of Swahili & Spanish languages to the curriculum in all public schools.

### 2. Community Control

City to be divided into ~~two~~ <sup>elected</sup> districts with duly/governing Boards for each district. ~~Two~~ representatives from the local Boards shall be appointed by the Mayor to the Central Board. ~~Two~~ members of the Central Board can be appointed at large.

Each district will be responsible for the final selection and promotion of its personnel.

### 2A Child Guidance -

Schools should be community centered providing all  
medical services  
recreation  
social agencies  
entertainment

Complete child guidance team in every school made up of parents from the community.

## EDUCATION RESOLUTIONS

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City wide Student Council elected by the students.  
Opportunity for students to provide services to the community.

No decisions involving suspensions, etc., of a child can be made without the involvement of the parents.

### 2B Personnel, Promotion, Practice, Etc.

Training program for teachers designed to develop them along the community needs.

Pay increases of teachers & administrators should be based on pupil achievement.

### 2C Building & Construction

Detailed plan should be submitted covering projection and completion of needed schools designed by, for, and of Black & Puerto Rican people.

### 2D Far Range Planning Institute

Curriculum should be relevant to industrial needs.

More scholarships and meaningful programs coming from business firms that operate in Newark for Black & Puerto Rican people.

### 3. Achievement

Should design our own method of achievement measurement based on our objectives.

More State funds for Newark and its schools.



## LAW ENFORCEMENT

Report of the law enforcement workshop is as follows:

A. We hereby recommend that the following matters be included in the platform:

1. Municipal courts be maintained.
  - a. It is our intention to elect a black mayor in Newark. We feel that through his powers, the court will be more responsive to community needs. To remove that power from the mayor and place it in the hands of the governor would be a mistake.
2. An effort be made to get more Blacks and Puerto Ricans on the police force and that the requirements for policemen be tailored to accomplish this purpose for example making the height requirements more flexible, having the entrance examination given in Spanish as well as English and that the standard used for character investigation be published.
3. Establishment of an effective police review board to investigate and hear community complaints concerning police activity.
4. Abolition of the police director's position and the establishment of a civilian's board of police commissioners to assume the former functions of the police director.
  - a. It is hoped that by having commissioners selected from the community that the police department's policies will reflect the wishes of the community
5. Strict enforcement of the requirement that policemen live in the city of Newark
6. Liberal opportunities to be provided for policemen to advance in their education with financial assistance given to those who are enrolled in college to supplement tuition costs
7. We are in favor of an increase in police salaries with a requirement that police participate in in-service courses on the areas of urban sociology, psychology, criminology, and physical fitness.
8. Assignment of personnel on the basis of merit and without favor or partisanship. The promotions in the police department should be based on examinations which include areas of urban sociology and not on the basis of favor or partisanship.
9. Establishment of a youth aid bureau in every precinct
10. Community groups be stimulated to work in close cooperation with local youth aid bureaus and with the administration and the residents in the Essex County Youth House

## FUNDAMENTAL OF POLITICS"

### I. GRASS ROOT POLITICAL PREPARATION

#### A. Preparation

1. To ~~prepare all~~ facets of the community by education in such areas as active registration and disenfranchised citizens for voting.\*
2. This education should take place in voter education centers and through personal contact by canvassing.
  - a. The method of canvassing should be Block-Captain system where people who have been ~~trained~~ will work with a certain area of people making sure that all people eligible are registered and politically aware. For this purpose a committee consisting initially of people from this convention body will be formed. This committee will be trained to work in the various education programs. All organizations will be asked to submit the names of people to work on this committee through delegates. Observers as well are invited to participate.
  - b. All organizations in the City should have a voter-registration clause which compels all members eligible to be registered.
  - c. Guarantee the safety of all people traveling to and from during registration and at election time.
  - d. Utilize the news media to aid in Voter Education and Voter Registration.
  - e. Utilization of the established political machines where possible.
  - f. Meet with non-white tavern owners for the purpose of helping us politicize those people who frequent these establishments. This also includes churches, fraternal organizations, etc.

\*For intelligent voting politicize unaware people on political issues which will shape the destiny of this City.

## HEALTH

### HEALTH DELIVERY SYSTEM:

1. Decentralization of and local involvement.
2. Implementation of programs to involve neighborhoods.

### EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, EDUCATION AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES:

1. Investigate and evaluate all fragmented, non relevant, discoordinated program operations of all health institutions, agencies, education institutions to determine if the involvement and delivery meet the needs of the community. Implement the ways to recommend new approaches to meet the needs of the community.
2. Training of Community liazon people.
3. Education of community to facilities of health centers.

### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH:

1. Problem analysis of agencies charged with responsibilities, i.e., Department of Public Health, business and industry that contributes to polution of the Greater Newark area.
2. Develop innovative approaches and plans for having health, business and industrial agencies to coordinate programs of development to satisfy needs of the community.

### HEALTH FUNDING AND LEGISLATIVE SOURCES OF FUNDS:

1. Look into ways and means of obtaining additional funding, and expansion on Model Cities type programs.
2. Education and lobbying programs set up to obtain more funds from foundations as well as federal resources.
3. Development of lobbyists composed of community people to obtain funds from private sources of funds, in addition to municipal, federal and state funds.

## WELFARE

1. Support for legislation to consolidate all public assistance agencies and programs under one state agency supervised and administered by state plan.
  - A. Welfare grants should be regulated in order to assure clients equal grants whether from city or county welfare board.
  - B. Cost of living grants should be issued in concurrence with national cost of living.
2. Welfare recipients should be given a greater role in welfare policy making.
  - A. A majority of welfare recipients on local assistance board.
  - B. Two people should be selected by the organized recipient groups to work in each in-take office, but should be paid by the department of welfare whose job will be to inform all potential welfare recipients information as to the rights and benefits available to them.
3. Recruitment of qualified personnel in-service training would do a great deal to improve the skills and attitudes of welfare employees.
  - A. City welfare employees salaries should be raised so that they are comparable with those of related agencies in order to attract a more qualified staff, that would also improve the grade of services rendered.
  - B. All caseworkers should be periodically evaluated by welfare recipients as to their efficiency in order to determine all across the board increases in salary.
  - C. In order to insure and upgrade a qualified personnel a bonus in the form of higher salaries would be given to those employees who seek to improve their function thru extra study courses in this field (uniform salaries).
4. Additional services should be available to all needed persons.
  - A. All welfare applications should be processed within a five day period from date of application.
  - B. All emergencies should be considered for on the spot relief pending later investigation as to clients illegability as regulated by departments, institutes and agencies.
  - C. Lunch and carfare grants should be issued to all school

## WELFARE

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4. C. Lunch and car fare grants should be issued to all school age children of active welfare participants.
- D. On the spot employee referrals should be made by the welfare department to all hard core unemployed persons at the in-take division at each welfare office.

## CONSTRUCTION

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To endorse a Black Labor Committee whose purpose is to establish a permanent labor committee in the City of Newark that can be consulted by and would work with, the selected candidates that emerge from this convention. An ad hoc committee of the Employment Workshop has been formulated to act as a catalyst for the labor committee. Candidates must act on recommendations of committee.

#### A. Areas of Representation:

1. Black union Officials
2. THE UNEMPLOYED
3. Union members
4. All other unorganized persons

2. To drop certain qualifications with regard to Black applicants

#### A. Testing

1. Educational qualifications

3. Submit a resolution to the Commission of Labor that persons with police records must not have this held against them when employment is being seeked.

4. Establishment of an evaluation and involvement mechanism that will check the performances of city work training programs and other poverty agencies and their officials now serving the Black community.

5. To review all contractual relationships between the Newark College of Medicine and Dentistry and the Black Community so that all irregularities can be corrected.

6. Up-to-date training of Newark's work force for good jobs in needed skills and growth industries

7. Attract new businesses and industries that will utilize Newark workers

8. Full equal opportunity of employment in government-sponsored or publicly related construction

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### I. Create A Newark Capital Development Corporation

Create a city-wide, non-profit, multiple-funded umbrella organization: the Newark Capital Development Corporation. This organization would promote and help fund private economic and community development projects that can be operated on a self-sustaining basis, provide needed subsidies particularly to projects with limited equity funds, and provide loan and equity funds.

Especially with our minority black businessmen.

### II. Devise Minority Business Development

The new mayor should create or appoint an economic advisory council which will reexamine the existing plans for the development of Newark with a view toward determining their adequacy from the perspective of the black community and creating a plan which benefits all sections of the community.

The total plan will be accompanied with a detailed breakdown indicating for each specific project the following:

- a. The number of jobs that will be produced per project.
- b. The amount of wages that will be earned per project.
- c. The amount of tax revenue that will be received by the city as a result of the project.
- d. What the project will do for the community in terms of improvement.
- e. When the project will begin and end.

### III. Housing

Establish a \$500,000 revolving fund to finance repairs to properties in violation of the housing code where owners are negligent. The cost would be assessed against the property. The program will conserve existing housing, satisfy code requirement, improve the environment and create contracts and jobs for a home improvement industry geared to the small contractor and the core city.

### IV. Goals:

Propose an income program that would be comfortable for those at grass-roots level. Achieve minimum decency incomes of \$4,500 for the multiple-person family of four and \$2,000 for unrelated individuals by 1978.

Develop a balanced development plan for the entire reserved land around resevoirs inducing trade, recreation and housing.

Develop vacant and underused industrial land, primarily along railroad corridors to help diversify the economic base, create more high-paying blue-collar jobs, and aid business development.

## GENERAL YOUTH WORKSHOP

Since the role of education within any given society is to perpetuate the norms and values of that society and since in the past these norms and values have been used to oppress the Black and Puerto Rican groups of today, youth have begun to question those norms and values.

Progress or any move toward a ridding of the problem of these minority groups must begin with the youth of today. For it is in their hands that the total success or failure lies.

The youth Education Workshop met and pondered over some of these pressing problems confronting the community.

It is a general concensus of this body to set forth the following program for action:

### Youth Education

1. Decentralization of schools -- stressing community control.
2. Complete review of all guidance counselors -- hiring of Puerto Rican and Black counselors that will identify with the students' needs and will encourage them to go on to higher education.
3. Black and Puerto Rican courses and educational material that deals with all aspects of history, culture, language, and identity, to begin from the lower grades.
4. An all-day program for pre-kindergarten children.
5. Black and Puerto Rican holidays to be recognized by the public educational system.
6. Formation of Black and Puerto Rican groups within the schools which will be community-based and oriented toward working with the people.
7. Free lunches for economically disadvantaged children.
8. Hiring of Puerto Rican bilingual teachers which are oriented toward special needs of the Puerto Rican child.
9. Establishment of an ESL program -- English as a second language so that Puerto Rican students coming in from Puerto Rico will not be set back but will slowly work himself into the educational system.
10. Total review and revamping of curriculum and relating all curriculum material to the needs and reality of community life.
11. Review of all teachers --
  - a. Teachers should be subject to direct accountability of the community.



## GENERAL YOUTH WORKSHOP

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- b. Teachers must live or have background related to the community in which they are teaching.
- c. Mobilization and politicizing community residents to fight or work toward applying any or all pressure necessary to bring about essential changes in public school system.

12. Review of all vocational schools from a low-income skill training program to a more valid and worthwhile training.

### Youth Employment

Dirty streets, torn-up buildings, alley-ways, and safety hazards are all problems of urban areas. It is the viewpoint of this Workshop that because of these problems, more jobs can be created for youth in this city. Not only in this area, but jobs in all the areas of the city.

The above stated problems are evident to everyone. We see it daily in our travels through the community.

There should be no question that there are jobs available or that could be created. The Youth Workshop on Employment sets forth the following:

1. Creation of jobs:
  - a. On the job training in city hall and in business;
  - b. Cleaning of lots, parks, hospitals; painting of old houses; boarding-up of abandoned houses.
2. A raise in salary in all existing and future youth employment.
3. Mayor to have a program which deals with business:
  - a. To create jobs that include on the job training,
  - b. To stress the need to hire the youth of the city.
4. City jobs should be strictly for the urban youth.

### Youth Recreation

Cement playgrounds, garbage cans, basketball rims, and sidewalk crap games are only a few of the problems which face youth of today.

Because of the inadequate facilities in urban areas, which are highly populated by Black and Puerto Rican families, something must be done.

Recreation areas that will move the youth from the street and into a safe area have to be supplied. People are constantly stating that the youth are always in trouble. This is because of the lack of facilities to better spend their time. The time has come when minority groups must demand an improvement in this area. Therefore, the Youth Workshop on Recreation offers the following:

GENERAL YOUTH WORKSHOP

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1. Minority (Black and Puerto Rican) supervision and administration essential to Newark's recreational needs.
2. Reformation in youth activities, geared to community needs.
3. Imaginative programs projected for broad, seasonal participation, including winter and fall.
4. Cultural stress and creative programs must become an integral part of Black and Puerto Rican community:
  - a. Seminars and workshops.
5. Youth involvement in development of recreation programs.

## ADDITIONS TO THE PLATFORM

### CITY FINANCE

Each person who lives outside of Newark, but works in Newark must pay a payroll tax.

Section II Paragraph E number 2 dealing with an additional broad based tax was deleted from the Platform.

### LAND AND HOUSING

All ordinances which prevent additional low cost housing from being built in Newark should be repealed.

### HEALTH

The city officials should set up programs for the prevention and treatment of Drug Addiction.

### WELFARE

The degrading affects of the present welfare system should be removed. Instead of being based on the disintegration of families and need, it should be based on need alone.

The Convention supports the Welfare Rights movement locally, statewide and nationally.

### YOUTH

The new administration should recognize a city-wide youth council that would create and run all youth programs in the city with the assistance of adult advisors.