

MOVING UP

by Gary Puckrein

The past two decades have been good to a significant minority of the nation's blacks, the group referred to by the National Urban League as the "viable, albeit fragile, black middle class."

Thanks to the civil-rights legislation of the Lyndon Johnson era, the Great Society programs that opened up thousands of new government jobs to young blacks, the unprecedented economic boom of the 1960s, the uneven pressures of affirmative action, and, in general, a lessening of overt racial hostility, millions of black Americans today enjoy a level of education, political participation, and material well-being that is approaching that of the majority of whites. While the impact of four recessions since 1970 has slowed the pace of blacks' social and economic progress, sometimes dramatically, their gains are real.

Here is a progress report:

■ *Income.* At first glance, the Big Picture, so often publicized, is sobering—black median family income in 1982 (\$13,598) continued to lag far behind that of whites (\$24,603). But the median in this case is not the message, or at least not the whole of it. When statistics for the nation's total black population of 28 million are presented in the aggregate, the growing plight of the urban underclass tends to overpower some important distinctions.

In brief, black married couples are the "haves"; the "have-nots" are black single mothers and their offspring. Subtract the 2.9 million female-headed black households (now 42 percent of all black households) from the picture and the circumstances of blacks and whites in America appear far less divergent.

Thus, in 1982, the median annual income of all black *married-couple* families was \$20,586, compared to \$26,443 for white married-couple families. In households where both spouses were employed, the gap was even narrower—about \$5,000. And, in households where the husband and wife, both working, were between ages 24 and 35, the difference was less than \$3,000. With these young couples leading the way, the proportion of all black families earning \$25,000 or more (in 1982 dollars) grew from 10.4 to 24.5 percent between 1960 and 1982. In all, some seven million blacks today live in households whose yearly earnings *exceed* the white median family income.

■ *Education.* By some indices, progress here has been even more dramatic. Today, the median level of schooling completed by blacks *and* whites, male *and* female, is above the 12th grade, and blacks lag behind whites by less than one-half year of classroom instruction.

Again, aggregate numbers mask part of the story. The fact that one-quarter of black youths do not complete high school hides, statistically, the progress of those who have pursued their studies further and thereby raised the educational level of the whole group. Between 1970 and 1980, the number of blacks annually enrolled full-time at American colleges and universities nearly doubled (from 522,000 to over one million).

■ *Employment.* Thanks in great measure to educational advancement, as well as to the changing nature of the U.S. economy, the kinds of jobs typically held by blacks have changed dramatically. In 1940, the largest single bloc of black workers—30 percent of the total—was employed on farms, mostly in the South. That figure today is two percent.

The long-term shift away from the farm has been matched by a long-term shift toward the retail store and the office building. Few blacks held white-collar jobs when World War II began, but 40 percent did in 1980 (versus 52 percent of whites), with black women making greater gains than black men.

Many of these jobs, of course, are clerical and many are in the public sector. But blacks have also made gains in the professions. Since 1960, the number of black doctors has tripled and the number of black lawyers has increased sixfold (though blacks remain under-represented in both professions).

Meanwhile, the number of black-owned businesses continues to rise, growing from 163,000 companies in 1969 to more than 230,000 in 1977 (the last year for which data are available). In 1983, according to *Black Enterprise*, the top 100 black-owned businesses, led by Motown Industries of Los Angeles, had combined sales surpassing \$2 billion. While a plurality of these companies either were car dealerships or specialized in products aimed at blacks, half of the companies in the top 20 were involved in computers, communications, energy, or construction.

■ *Residence.* The big shift of the 1950s and '60s was the influx of blacks into the nation's cities. The untold story of the 1970s and '80s is the outflow of blacks to the suburbs. Between 1970 and 1980, the number of blacks living in suburban neighborhoods increased from 4.2 million to six million. To be sure, not all of these new residents are prosperous; some are slum-dwellers who have moved (or been forced) into fringe areas soon to be abandoned by whites—and thus resegregated. But fully

one-third of all black families earning \$25,000 or more now live in predominantly white suburban communities.

One could go on and on with statistics, but the data merely confirm the evidence of the senses. No analyst denies that many American blacks, almost half, live below, at, or near the poverty level as officially defined. But it is also true that millions of others no longer do. The ranks of what E. Franklin Frazier in 1957 disparagingly termed the "Black Bourgeoisie" have grown. And in the process, the character of that bourgeoisie has been profoundly altered, in many respects for the better.

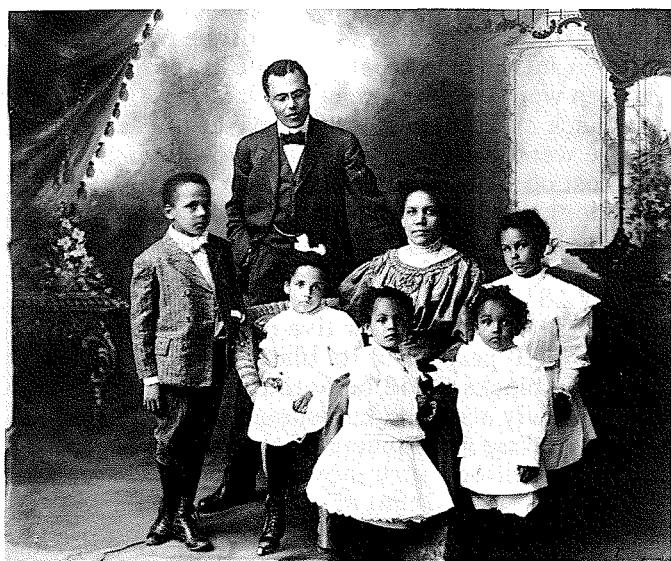
Blue-Chip Blacks

Alongside *Ebony* (circulation: 1.5 million) and other publications founded by earlier generations, there have emerged sophisticated new magazines such as *Essence* (circ.: 800,000), *Black Enterprise* (circ.: 250,000), and *Dollars and Sense* (circ.: 110,000) aimed at a very different sort of black audience. Across the country, the black middle-class groups and associations founded prior to World War II (e.g., the NAACP, the National Negro Business League, Alpha Kappa Alpha) have been joined or superseded by a proliferation of new groups that more accurately reflect the concerns and strategies of the 1980s: the National Association of Black Manufacturers, the Council of Concerned Black Executives, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators, and scores of others.

So many young blacks are now enrolled in mainstream colleges and universities—from Yale to the University of Alabama—that the 114 traditionally black colleges, mostly founded after the Civil War, now face a brain drain and an uncertain future. In 1980, according to a poll by *Black Enterprise*, 82 percent of the magazine's subscribers agreed that black colleges are "serving a purpose that cannot be met by other colleges." Only half of these people hoped that *their* children would attend one of these schools.

The gains of the past several decades, sometimes startling in retrospect and still often dimly perceived by most Americans,

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Emmett J. Scott and family in Tuskegee, Alabama, 1906. Scott, secretary to Booker T. Washington, typified the Negro elite of his era. His business interests included banking, insurance, and real estate, all for a Negro clientele.

should not be taken for granted. Nor should they obscure the fact that there were well-to-do blacks in the United States long before the 1950s and '60s. Indeed, there has always been a Negro elite of some kind. As America changed, so did this group's size and social role, along with the sources of its affluence, but most black leaders, and the ideas they espoused over the decades, originated within this class. Those ideas on how to better the lot of all blacks in America have changed with each generation.

We are in the midst of such a complicated change today, and young black leaders in politics, business, the media, and the professions—the “blue-chip blacks,” to use journalist Roger Wilkins's phrase—are grappling with its implications.

The first elite blacks appeared in the American South during the mid-17th century. Primarily West Indian-born or -bred, fluent in English and often baptized as Christians, they were brought to British North America as slaves or indentured servants. Most remained in servitude. But the severe labor shortage that afflicted Virginia and some other Southern colonies during these early years allowed some blacks to set the terms of their labor, establish families, obtain their freedom, buy farms, own

slaves themselves, even hold minor public office.

However, the 18th-century spread of the plantation system, and of the racial theories that justified it, ensured that these black yeomen would not become the self-sufficient precursors of a modern black middle class. On the eve of the American Revolution, there were an estimated 740,000 Negroes in the British colonies, most of them in bondage, and it was by then virtually impossible for a slave in the South to work his way to freedom.

The Revolution changed all that, briefly. Amid the chaos and confusion of the war years, thousands of slaves slipped their shackles. By 1810, some 100,000 free Negroes inhabited the Southern states, accounting for five percent of the South's free population and 10 percent of its black population. The largest clusters of free blacks could be found in Virginia, North Carolina, and the newly acquired Louisiana Territory, where the relatively freewheeling atmosphere of New Orleans attracted not only American Negroes but many from the Caribbean as well. The 1860 census revealed that 85 percent of the free black males in New Orleans were artisans, professionals, or proprietors.

Free blacks elsewhere in the South were not always so fortunate. Most endured dismal poverty and working conditions scarcely distinguishable from those of slaves. But some freedmen did manage to take advantage of the peculiar nature of the Southern economy, which depended on black craftsmen, and which required, among other things, a class of free black merchants, healers, lawyers, preachers, and teachers to meet the needs both of other free blacks and of slaves.

Intimacy in the North

Not all, nor even most, free Negroes stood aloof from white society and the white economy. In New Orleans, where most of the black population was of mixed blood, prosperous free Negroes identified with whites and distanced themselves from the mass of "uncultured" blacks. On a lesser scale, the same phenomenon could be found elsewhere. But, then as now, other blacks took a bolder stand. They nurtured a strong sense of race consciousness and eventually assumed a leadership position within the free black community. Men such as abolitionist Daniel Coker in Maryland or the members of South Carolina's Brown Fellowship Society were representative of this group.

In the North, of course, the circumstances were different from the outset. Not only were there always vastly fewer slaves than in the South, but a disproportionate number of them lived in cities and worked in close proximity with whites (as, for ex-

ample, domestic servants, stable keepers, or gardeners). Their relations with their masters were somewhat better as a result. A Southern visitor to Connecticut before the Revolution complained that slaveowners there were "too Indulgent (especially the farmers) to their slaves, suffering too great a familiarity from them, permitting them to sit at Table and eat with them (as they say to save time) and into the dish goes the black hoof as freely as the white hand."

Blacks used the intimacy gained at their masters' tables to press for additional privileges—the right to visit friends, live with their families, hire themselves out on their own time. Many learned to read and write. These black bondsmen were the ancestors of the free black middle class that appeared in the North during the 19th century, and to this group many middle-class blacks today can trace their roots.

Black Wealth in Philadelphia

The upheaval of the War of Independence not only exposed blacks to republican principles but also helped usher in an improved regime throughout the Northern states. "Prior to the great revolution," John Jay of New York observed in 1788, "the great majority . . . of our people had been so long accustomed to the practice and convenience of having slaves that very few among them even doubted the propriety and rectitude of it." The war (in which many blacks fought), and the principles of liberty and equality for which it was waged, changed many minds, though not by any means most. Yet, as Jay noted, the doctrine of the abolitionists "prevailed by almost insensible degrees, and was like the little lump of leaven which was put into three measures of meal." Massachusetts abolished slavery in 1783 and other Northern states soon followed.

To be sure, it was not long before harsh new restrictions on voting, holding property, education, employment, and travel were set into place. Race riots were frequent, and blacks in most Northern cities endured both poverty and scorn. But some free Negroes, often trading on skills learned in bondage, succeeded in achieving a degree of economic independence and even acquired modest fortunes. James Forten, as a child an errand boy around the docks of Philadelphia, became a sailmaker and left an estate valued at \$100,000 upon his death in 1842. Forten was one of many black leaders who in 1830 attended a Negro convention in Delaware to consider "ways and means for the bettering of our condition."

Philadelphia boasted the wealthiest free black population

**SUCCESS STORY:
BLACKS IN UNIFORM**

Despite much pain and strain, ever since President Harry S Truman issued Executive Order 9981 desegregating the armed services in 1948, black Americans have advanced faster in the military environment of teamwork, earned rank, and command authority than anywhere else in U.S. society.

"The message was given," observed Jimmy Carter's Army Secretary, Clifford L. Alexander, Jr., who is black. "The message was carried out."

Today, a decade after the end of the draft, 390,000 blacks account for 20 percent of all four services' enlisted men and women, up from 10 percent in 1971, and from 9.7 percent in 1964, before U.S. deployments in Vietnam. Indeed, in 1981, roughly 42 percent of all "militarily qualified" black males, from age 19 to 24, had actually enlisted in the armed forces (versus 14 percent of comparable whites), according to Brookings analyst Martin Binkin's 1982 study of *Blacks in the Military*.

The Army is the favored service, with blacks making up 32 percent of its enlisted personnel, 25 percent of its senior sergeants, and nine percent of its officers in 1983. Last year, 22 percent of all Army volunteers were black, down from a record 37 percent in 1978. As a group, young black male enlistees still suffer from disproportionately high rates of semi-literacy, violent crime, disciplinary offenses, and brief, unauthorized absences (AWOL), but black first-term volunteers do not drop out any faster than do whites. In fact, they do slightly better. And they re-enlist at 150 percent of the white rate.

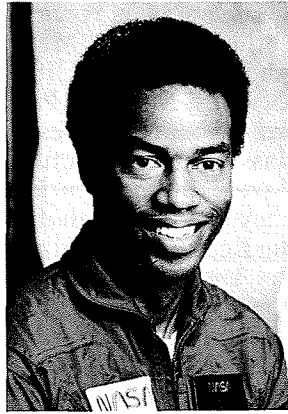
Surveys show that young blacks choose the service for the same reasons young whites do—"to better myself in life," "to get training for a civilian job," "to serve my country," etc. Few civilian jobs for 18- and 19-year-olds can match the supervision, training, or pay (\$573 a month, plus room and board) offered to new enlistees by the Pentagon.

The Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines have come a long way since the race-and-drugs turmoil of the Vietnam era. Racial clashes occurred among Marines at Camp Lejeune, N.C. (1969) and among airmen at Travis Air Force Base in California (1971). In one month,



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October 1972, militants staged "black power" near-mutinies aboard two Navy carriers, the *Kitty Hawk* and the *Constellation*. Shaken, the Pentagon ordered investigations into blacks' grievances over military justice and promotion policy, quietly discharged the unfit, and assigned "equal opportunity" advisers to every base. Off-duty social self-segregation did not vanish, but discipline was restored; blacks encountered less "institutional" discrimination. Civil-rights leaders still see "cultural bias" in job placement tests that concentrate young blacks in nontechnical units (e.g., supply and food service, infantry, and artillery).



Lt. Col. Guion Bluford

Helpful to integration has been the rapid growth and slowly recognized competence of the black officer corps, now 16,400 strong, with the Army in the lead and the Navy far behind. (Today, 5.8 percent of all military officers are black—in line with the proportion of all U.S. college graduates in the relevant age group who are black.) In 1975, the Air Force produced the nation's first black four-star general, the late Daniel (Chappie) James, a much-decorated veteran of air combat in Korea and Vietnam who rose to head the North American Air Defense Command. In 1983, another Air Force Vietnam veteran, Lt. Col. Guion Bluford, became the first black astronaut in space.

During the 1970s, more black youths entered the service academies. Some quickly emerged as class leaders, but inferior public school educations still hurt others. At Annapolis, for example, roughly 38 percent of the 80 black men and women who entered as plebes with the class of '83 failed to graduate (versus 23 percent of whites). High attrition rates have plagued graduates of traditionally black colleges in Army basic officer courses. And improved civilian opportunities have diverted many bright black university graduates who otherwise might have been prime officer candidates.

Even so, black officers have made major advances. They have made them on merit. Since 1970, black commanders have led the Army's VII Corps in West Germany and seven of its 16 combat divisions, including the elite 82nd Airborne. Such assignments have helped two Army blacks achieve four-star rank. All in all, the Army now has 26 general officers who are black—gaining high-level management and leadership responsibilities that *Fortune 500* corporations or federal agencies have yet to offer.

in the North. The city's black gentry—led before the Civil War by such men as Forten and Bishop Richard Allen (founder of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church)—organized schools, churches, literary circles, newspapers, and benevolent societies. Not only Philadelphia but other cities along the eastern seaboard witnessed the emergence of a group of middle-class black intellectuals and social activists who railed against slavery in the South and racial discrimination in the North. They saw one of their wishes granted when the Grand Army of the Republic prevailed in the War between the States.

The effect of the Civil War, Emancipation, and Reconstruction on middle-class blacks was, of course, profound. In the South particularly, where four million former slaves now became free men, the old patterns of race relations enjoyed by affluent free Negroes began to crumble. While the great majority of former slaves remained in the countryside—and remained poor—a “great mass of unbleached Americans” (as one Raleigh newspaper called them) sought work in the cities as petty tradesmen, artisans, and laborers. As a result, the number of black-owned businesses in the United States, almost all of them in the South, increased impressively, from about 2,000 in 1863 to 40,000 in 1913. When Southern whites boycotted black businesses, Negro leaders urged blacks to retaliate by “buying black.”

Welcome to Tuskegee

An urban middle class comprised of former slaves gradually displaced the older bourgeoisie, with various degrees of acrimony. In New Orleans, to cite the most extreme case, the old elite was virtually destroyed as a distinctive class. In Richmond, the ante-bellum mulatto upper crust of proprietors and entrepreneurs decided to close ranks with the upwardly mobile (and darker) newcomers; Jim Crowism and segregation combined in that city to nurture the development of a small but significant class of black businessmen and professionals that provided products and services to the black community (such as banking, undertaking, or cutting hair) when whites would not.

In Atlanta, the postwar economy likewise transplanted the economic base of the black middle class from the white to the Negro community. Prominent among the new businesses were the “cooperative” insurance and real estate concerns, many of them organized by new arrivals to the city who had no ties to Atlanta's venerable Negro elite, whose social supremacy they eventually assumed.

The middle-class Negroes in the South, despite political dis-

enfranchisement and social apartheid, were increasingly able to give their children the advantages of higher education at Tuskegee or Tougaloo or Fisk or one of the other new black institutions founded with the help of Northern philanthropists and missionaries. Prior to 1876, only 314 blacks in the United States had college degrees. By 1900, some 2,000 blacks held diplomas, and more than 28,000 black instructors were teaching 1.5 million black children in school. Up through the 1960s, the leaders of the black community in the South (and to some extent even the North), its intellectuals, ministers, and political activists, would be drawn overwhelmingly from the Negro middle class created after the Civil War. Booker T. Washington and Martin Luther King, Jr., are two prominent examples.

Good-bye to Dixie

Emancipation had little immediate impact in the North. What happened in Chicago is a good example of what happened to most Northern cities between the Civil War and World War II. Along the banks of the Chicago River, in the center of town, a small free black community had been growing since about 1840. When the guns fired on Fort Sumter, 1,000 blacks were living in Chicago. Social life centered on several small Baptist and Methodist churches, which also functioned as stations on the Underground Railroad. Abolitionists pointed with pride to this prosperous (but politically and socially subordinate) community of free blacks, at times hinting that certain portions of the white community, as one antislavery newspaper put it, might do well to emulate these "well-informed, and peaceable citizens [who] seldom see any of their brethren grace the police calendar." There was no great influx of Southern blacks to Chicago (or other Northern industrial cities) after the Civil War, nor for half a century. The federal census of 1910 showed nine out of 10 blacks living in the Southern states, with three out of four inhabiting rural areas.

World War I proved to be the turning point. Hundreds of thousands of young white men, many of them sons of immigrants or immigrants themselves, enlisted to fight the Kaiser in France. Northern industrialists who had depended on immigrants to man the slaughterhouses and steel mills now experienced a shortage of labor. From Chicago (and Cleveland, Detroit, Toledo, and many other places) recruiting agents traveled south, railway tickets in their pockets and promises on their lips, urging rural blacks to come north to earn big money. It was a propitious time: The recruiters arrived to find the Cot-

Despite special help from both Washington and City Hall, 60 percent of new black businesses fail within five years. Black entrepreneurs blame the recession and lack of adequate financing by private banks. "Suburbanization" of blacks has also dispersed a once concentrated market.

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 Thomas O. Corby, President, AMC Mechanical Contractors, Inc.

When you start a small business in Metro Atlanta, you have a lot of advantages going for you. Like our owners and employees. Most of our workers are Black. And our customers are Black. And our products are Black. And our services are Black. And our success is Black. And our future is Black. And our...
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ton Kingdom ravaged by famine, flood, and the depredations of the boll weevil. The great mass of caste-bound Negroes in the South was ready to stir. Between 1910 and 1920, the black population in Chicago alone increased by 50,000. Over the next five decades, wave after wave of migration would shift almost half of America's black population from the rural South to Northern cities. Today, 47 percent of U.S. blacks live outside the old Confederacy, and 81 percent of all blacks reside in metropolitan areas.

Up north, the black Old Settlers were of course appalled by the violent reactions of their white neighbors to the new arrivals. But they were far from enthusiastic themselves about the influx of Southern Negroes. In Chicago, established black homeowners were embarrassed by what they deemed the shiftlessness, vulgarity, and violence of their new neighbors, whom they blamed for reversing the trend toward an easing of race relations in the North. Genteel blacks of the "old Knickerbocker stamp" in New York, and their counterparts in Philadelphia and Boston, felt the same way.

Nevertheless, large numbers of the migrants "made it" in the North, at least when compared to the lives they had led as sharecroppers and tenant farmers. By 1930, as the Depression got under way, one out of five working blacks nationwide (and therefore a far higher proportion in the urban North) was em-

ployed in "manufacturing or mechanical" occupations, up from six percent in 1890. The expansion of the Negro urban population in the North offered countless opportunities in business and—a novelty to Southern blacks—in politics.

But blacks, particularly middle-class blacks whose daily concern was no longer simple economic survival, also began to feel more acutely the discrepancy between the promise of freedom and the realities of their own experience. The Northern cities became crucibles of group consciousness. There, the timorous, docile Negro of the white imagination acquired a more defiant and impatient personality. This transformation was reflected not only in the works produced during the 1920s by the writers and artists of the Harlem Renaissance but also in growing agitation for equality under the law, agitation that achieved many of its goals during the 1950s and '60s.

The new black middle class of the 1980s lives, as a result, in a very different world and is composed of a different kind of individual than the middle class of any previous generation. Not only is the contemporary black middle class growing in size, but most of the newcomers are young black men and women who are from poor or working-class families. The nature of their relationship to the larger U.S. economy has in many cases been transformed, to a degree that would have surprised earlier entrepreneurs, such as Madame C. J. Walker (inventor of a hair-straightening process known as the Walker System), whose fortunes were derived entirely from the parallel black economy. As Harvard's Martin Kilson pointed out recently in *Dissent*, "upper strata blacks are employed increasingly not in ghetto [enterprises] but in national job markets—in national (white) banks, insurance companies, retail firms, industries, universities, and government agencies."

Leaving the Men Behind

The problems that they face as American blacks have also changed. They have the law behind them now. The battle against legal discrimination was won by their elders. Many young, educated, and affluent blacks question the relevance of many of the institutional mainstays that supported an older generation. At the same time, the leaders of the black middle class are beginning to confront issues that have little to do with continued overt discrimination: for instance, the growing number of black female-headed households, teenage pregnancy, high black youth crime rates, illiteracy, drug abuse, and the relatively woeful state of blacks' health, especially that of black males.

Young, educated blacks are also concerned about several matters closer to their own daily experience—their high divorce rate (which is substantially higher than that of white counterparts); their continued low representation in the ranks of American entrepreneurs (black-owned companies, though increasing in number, still account for only two percent of all companies nationwide); their preference for jobs in the public sector (one out of five working blacks is on *some* government payroll).

Why have black women done so much better in the civilian job market than black men, especially when higher-status jobs are at stake? Between 1970 and 1980, the number of black women employed in the private sector as officials and managers, as professionals, as technicians, and as craft workers not only grew at a faster *rate* than that of black men but also exceeded in aggregate that of black men. Do broad affirmative action regulations on sex and race encourage a “two-for” syndrome? Do white employers feel less threatened by black women? Whatever the case, the phenomenon is striking, and its implications (for black men, for black families) are disturbing.

Gaining Confidence

Moreover, to a degree seldom appreciated by whites, the emotional strain on many successful young blacks can be intense. As Harvard’s Charles V. Willie has noted, psychologically, “the people who most severely experience the pain of dislocation due to the changing times are the racial minorities who are talented and educated and integrated, not those who are impoverished and isolated.” How does one properly adapt—and to what degree must one adapt—to the prevailing ethos of the white university, the white corporation, the white suburb?

And to what extent is one still responsible for the impoverished, underclass blacks who have remained behind? Journalist Orde Coombs, writing in *Black Enterprise* in 1978, probably spoke for many of his contemporaries when he wondered “what could we really *say* to them, now, except a murmured ‘How you doing, bro,’ as we hurried along to catch the train that would take us to another appointment, another conference, another step up our frenzied stair of upward mobility. Our eyes would pity them. Our palms would open to them and quickly shut again. And while we hated to talk about it, we knew that we had moved beyond them forever.” Yet, as Kenneth Clark, John Hope Franklin, and other black scholars have emphasized, a certain vertical solidarity remains essential—for political, economic, and social reasons, and for the sake of *all* classes of blacks.

None of the issues just cited can be addressed by federal regulation or resolved by the tactics employed during the civil-rights era. With what new strategies will the young black elite respond?

Many of them, of course, will simply take life as it comes, like a large proportion of their white fellow citizens, gleaning their satisfactions from material comfort, family progress, and social occasions, from the new car, the swimming pool, the second house.

Others are already building new kinds of networks—in business, in academe, in politics—based on somewhat different premises than those that stirred the generations of the 1940s and '50s. These networks range from organizations such as the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering, which has been highly successful in attracting blacks into the engineering profession, to the small group of black students at the University of Michigan who volunteer to help the institution recruit more minority students. They include new self-help organizations such as Adopt a Family and the Black Student Fund. What all of these fledgling efforts have in common, to greater and lesser degrees, is the propagation of middle-class virtues, by example if not precept.

The struggle to acquire personal dignity and access to the polls and to the marketplace long preoccupied the traditional black elite in America. When circumstances permitted, some of these men and women doggedly tried to build institutions and promote community values that would help to uplift all blacks. More often, especially prior to 1954, the struggle for equal rights—or simple survival—sapped their energies and disheartened their peers. Mindful of past experience, the Afro-American elite today is extremely sensitive to any acts that might threaten its recent gains. But a feeling is also abroad that the civil-rights movement, as an all-embracing effort to change the nation's legal codes, is moving toward a successful conclusion. In time, the new black middle class should slowly gain confidence and a sense of security and hence be better able to assist the mass of less fortunate black Americans than was any of its predecessors.

