

The Antonelli-Yeldell Convictions

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MAYOR WASHINGTON has described the bribery and conspiracy convictions of his top aide, Joseph P. Yeldell, and millionaire developer Dominic F. Antonelli Jr. as a tragedy for the District of Columbia, as well as for the two men and their families. The mayor is half right—certainly there is personal tragedy in this case for the two men most directly involved. But this is not a tragedy for the community. It is an ordinary case of corruption—and neither the integrity of the local government nor of businessmen should suffer as a consequence of it. The crimes committed, in fact, were unfortunately commonplace when you consider the many states and federal agencies where investigations of top public officeholders, friendships and cash have produced evidence of government corruption.

What the jury found was an arrangement whereby Mr. Yeldell traded a fat D.C. government lease for a secret \$33,000 personal loan from Mr. Antonelli. You could say it was a tragedy that Mr. Yeldell's participation in this arrangement netted him so little com-

pared with Mr. Antonelli's gains. But aside from illegalities of this connection, the relationship in event was precisely the sort that prudent government officials should take pains to avoid.

By receiving financial favors from someone whom his city government agency was in a position to do favors of a most profitable nature, Mr. Yeldell showed, as he had on other occasions, a remarkable insensitivity to the public responsibility entrusted him. Through the years, it was Mr. Yeldell's increasing preoccupation with the trappings of political power, coupled with administrative incompetence that interfered with his agency's ability to serve people of this city who need help the most.

It was inexcusable that Mr. Yeldell was allowed to mismanage for as long as he did, with no effort by superior, Mayor Washington, to do something about it. At least now it is a thing of the past—and anything but a tragedy for the local government the people it still seeks to serve.



By MacNeily for The Richmond News

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From a commentary by Wallace Terry on WDM-TV: The trials of Rep. Charles Diggs and Joseph P. Yeldell prove two assertions about justice in a predominantly black city: Black people are as law and order oriented as anyone, perhaps more so, and black people expect their black leaders to uphold the public trust as well as anyone, perhaps more so. When I came to this city 20 years ago, the House District Committee was run by Southern bigots and the city was administered at the top by whites. When Mr. Diggs took over the committee and Mr. Yeldell became the manager of the mammoth Department of Human Resources, they wielded as much power in



For the Record

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Charged with diverting some \$50,000 in government payroll funds to his own use, Mr. Diggs faced a jury of 11 blacks and one white. Charged with accepting a bribe, Mr. Yeldell faced a jury of 12 blacks.

Some people wondered if those juries could be impartial. They recalled the Watergate defenders who believed that they could not get a fair trial in the District because most jurors are Democrats and black. Mr. Diggs and Mr. Yeldell are both. And besides, Andrew Young and Coretta King testified for Mr. Diggs, while the Yeldell supporters said there man was the victim of a media vendetta and a white-power plot.

But both juries convicted, sending a loud, clear message: You can't expect special treatment in a D.C. courtroom because you happen to be black. And whatever your accomplishments have been in behalf of blacks, you must not betray the trust of your office. No one, black or white, is or should become that high or that mighty.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Tax 'Rewards,' Not Penalties

The current tax-relief legislation has sparked a political debate, once again, between those who stand to benefit from it and those who don't. If the Congress is interested in cooling the inflationary trend that cripples everyone, why not draft a tax-relief bill that relieves everyone?

The Federal Reserve Board is attempting to slow inflation by reducing the growth of the money supply—specifically, all cash in circulation and money in checking accounts (M-1). The Fed is particularly bothered by consumer credit and, when it raises interest rates, consumers are discouraged from borrowing because the cost is made prohibitive. The danger is that the Fed will be too successful, and the economy will plunge into a recession, as it did in 1974.

But this is a society dependent upon installment credit. Increasing

the cost of borrowing hasn't effectively curbed credit-buying. It has only increased the cost of living for everyone. No one exists in today's economy without borrowing of some kind, and borrowing increases the money supply, which fuels inflation.

The solution is obvious, if Congress would take the Fed's cue. Why not a system of rewards instead of penalties?

For example, a tax credit on the downpayments made for installment purchases. If the downpayment amounts to at least 10 percent of the total price of a car, appliance or boat, the consumer gets a tax credit for 10 percent of the amount of his downpayment. If the consumer puts down 25 percent of the total amount of purchase, he writes off 25 percent of the amount of that downpayment on April 15. Real-estate mortgages

should be included, discouraging the MGIC 95 percent mortgages, and encouraging larger proportionate downpayments.

The dollars spent up front will, in large part, come from M-1, and the growth of the money supply will be slowed, as the proportion of the total amount borrowed will decrease. In other words, the growth in the number of installment loans will not decrease, thus jobs are spared; but the growth rate of nonproductive dollars on loan will be quelled.

The end result is that Congress has reduced the federal government's take, for constructive purposes—that is, reducing the growth rate of the money supply through rewarding consumers rather than penalizing them.

JEFF GARVER
Germantown, Md.

from serious malnutrition. Food production, even with major technological breakthroughs, cannot catch up with population's exponential growth.

It seems better to concentrate our government efforts first on stabilizing the world's population to a level where all people can be fed even in the low harvest years.

It is a cruel hoax of this "human rights" administration to promote experimentation with food supplies, which will swell the world's population during the bumper crop years only to wipe out millions by starvation when an unforeseeable plant disease or unreasonable weather condition causes a crop failure.

RICK C. NORMAND

Washington

I read with some concern in Marquis Childs's Oct. 19 column that President Carter has formed yet another commission to study world hunger. What's going on here? Is this the same man who once stated that there were 72 agencies responsible for health but that two would be a gracious plenty?

If President Carter is so hot to increase rather than decrease the bureaucracy, why is he avoiding the real issue? Mr. Childs hit the nail on the head when he wrote that the population explosion in less developed countries is the root cause of hunger. Find a solution to the population problem, and hunger will take care of itself.

RONALD DEES

Alexandria

'Curious Similarity'

Has anyone noticed the curious similarity between the contradictory situations two of the world's radical guerrilla movements find themselves in at the moment? Both the PLO and the Rhodesian Patriotic Front have at last attained the conditions for which they have been struggling: The PLO (with Jordan and Syria) has been invited to participate on terms that they have so long been fighting for—the Camp David accords—but refuses; the Patriotic Front has been asked to join in the free elections provided for by the "internal settlement"—but refuses.

The democratic intentions those two terrorist organizations are supposedly trying to attain are ostensible ones only, and their true object is simply the subjugation of the land by military force.

PATRICK HENRY

Washington

setting, and the involvement of congressmen by the hundreds and money in the millions has dwindled to a couple of congressmen and a couple of thousands in campaign dollars, I wonder how we can ever retrieve the reputation of our friends, the Korean people? Open a pillow to the winds and you can never re-gather the feathers.

We have fallen victim to the press penchant for a sick label. After the success of "Watergate," what an easy but meaningless move it was to "Koreagate," a word containing nothing analogous except its familiar sound.

The word "Watergate" fills the American heart with fear, anger and

"Koreagate" brings up specters, now-
ever unthinking, of an equal horror to our minds.

For the alleged actions of one Korean, we have, unconsciously perhaps, tainted the image of an entire nation, a Korea of 35 million people who have been our friends and allies for many years.

The word "Koreagate" has infected our nation with bad feelings, feelings as scattered as feathers. May the feathers be swept away that we may again see the Koreans as they are—friends and allies.

RAYMOND F. HOWARD
New York

A Broken Trust

I was appalled, as were several of my patients, by your Oct. 11 story "No Clues to Suicide Given by Paisley; Psychiatrist Says Ex-CIA Official May Have Had Emotional Crisis" [Metro]. The psychiatrist involved seems to think the Hippocratic commitment to keep patient-doctor "holy secrets" confidential died with the patient. Like the National Commission on Confidentiality of Health Records, on whose board of directors I serve, I believe that when society has a legitimate claim to personal health information—as it may have in some criminal-justice or medical-research cases—some information can be shared. But society had no apparent "need to know" in this case, and the physician's lips should have remained sealed.

This is particularly true in the case of psychiatrists, who must keep their patients' secrets to prevent erosion of trust. What is said in therapy should remain locked in the therapist's office until released by the patient—and not by the patient's demise, which releases nothing except possibly his or her soul. Interestingly enough, the patient group involved in this story appears to have had the best intuitive grasp of the ethics involved.

HENRY A. SEGAL, M.D.
American Academy of Psychoanalysis

Washington

I read in stunned disbelief the Oct. 11 news story.

I consider this action by the psychiatrist Dr. Jack Baruch, an irresponsible breach of confidentiality and I am concerned about the impact of this on people in psychotherapy. I feel a strong sense of urgency to express my belief and hope that Dr. Baruch's action is a rare exception.

The assurance of confidentiality for people who are in psychiatric treat-

ment is essential. In recent years, there has been a great deal of effort by psychiatrists in the Washington Psychiatric Society and the American Psychiatric Association and its other branches to protect confidentiality from unwarranted intrusions by various inquiring third parties, such as the government and insurance companies.

I am greatly concerned for what I believe is a blatant disregard for confidentiality by Dr. Baruch that unfortunately may well be generalized to all psychiatrists and other professionals in the behavioral science field who do psychotherapy. How adversely will this affect the therapy of people already in treatment? How many people will resist needed therapy because of their concern about how seriously the psychiatrist will accept the professional responsibility of confidentiality?

PAUL D. SULLIVAN, M.D.
Past president,
Washington Psychiatric Society

Rockville

The Washington Post

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