

# Has Carter Forgotten Black Needs?

8/14/77

By Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

**B**LACK disappointment with the Carter administration, a low murmur several months ago, has swelled to a crescendo. A key element in the coalition that elected President Carter is becoming estranged from his administration and resentful of its failure to launch a massive attack on the problems confronting black people and the cities in which they live.

What happened to cause this disappointment? Were black expectations so unrealistically enlarged that no administration could meet them? Or have the administration's policies been so inadequate?

In the main, black expectations were realistic. It was generally understood that political and budgetary restraints would prevent total, short-term transformation of our society. But it was also expected that national priorities would be reordered and that major domestic initiatives would be made, inaugurating real and much needed changes.

A refrain of administration spokesmen has been, "We've only been in office six months. Give us time." But the first six months of an administration set the tone for the remainder of the presidential term. There is suspicion that the basic principles that may come to inform all of its domestic policies will be too cautious — a priority on keeping costs down, even where that may mean defeating the goals of a program, premature compromises to make programs palatable to conservative interests and an assumption that the problems of poverty and joblessness have their origins in supposed deficiencies within the poor rather than within an economy that doesn't create enough jobs.

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King David Ordine & said  
"We're building an economic  
base & putting people  
where it hurts"

FBI-157-9146-9