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This paper summarizes the history of black politics in cities of the urban north: New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit and Cleveland. When blacks became mayors of these cities they faced unique tasks which required policy initiatives on redistributive issues including homelessness. The discussion below will describe how Chicago's Harold Washington addressed these tasks in comparison to his white predecessor and successor.

Race and Politics in the Urban North

Large urban cities in the north have had a varied history with regard to race and politics. In the 19th century, these cities led the nation in abolition of slavery and in the pluralist incorporation of blacks into political coalitions. However, as the proportion of blacks in the population increased, competition for industrial jobs and housing grew intense. The resultant racial unrest was expressed in the riots of the early 1900s in Chicago and Detroit, by industrial strikes, and by housing segregation (Drake & Cayton, 1945; Rich, 1991:64). Blacks and whites no longer freely associated together in public places, and most northern blacks were victims of a "color line" in employment (Drake & Cayton, 1945: 101; Farley & Allen, 1989). That is, blacks' career choices and advancement were constrained by an arbitrary line drawn to limit their pay scale relative to that of whites, and to restrict their pursuit of employment to nonƒprofessional occupations.

Given racial barriers in employment, housing, and public association, northern black political leaders in the 1940ƒ60s championed black issues but without much result (Katznelson, 1976: xiv). Blacks participated in the political system initially because it was the only available avenue to amelioration of caste tendencies (Drake & Cayton, 1945: 343).

They did receive patronage services and jobs, but not in proportion to their loyalty to the Democrat or Republican parties (Katznelson, 1976; Travis, 1987; Gurin, Hatchett & Jackson, 1989: 4; Massey & Denton, 1993: 155ƒ56). Constituents viewed such impotence with disillusion and disregard for the black political leader of the era (Wilson, 1980).

      Nationally, in 1966ƒ68 alone there were 290 riots, 169 persons killed, 7,000 wounded, and more than 40,000 arrested in racial incidents (McAdam, 1982: 182). During the 1960s and early 1970s, urban northern cities of Philadelphia, Detroit, Chicago, New York, and Cleveland were foci not only of black protest, both violent and peaceful, but also of movement thought. This era, for example, spawned Minister Elijah Muhammad and the Nation of Islam, based in Chicago, who voiced a message of separatism, selfƒreliance and selfƒdefense. Concurrently, Martin Luther King, Jr., a Nobel Peace prize winner, employed nonƒviolent protest as a strategy for change; Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton articulated black power as the new ideology to gain control of the black community.

      A central tenet of black power ideology holds that one goal of black politicians should be socioƒeconomic gains for all levels of blacks (Carmichael & Hamilton, 1967: 46ƒ48). "Race," according to Charles V. and Dona C. Hamilton (1986: 287), "has been fused with class in the political struggle to obtain equitable policies to alleviate poverty." Such fusion occurred according to Smith (1981) because the events of the 1960s and 1970s transformed blacks from an interest groupƒƒmultiƒfaceted and with a variety of goalsƒƒinto a solidarity group with the single common objective of eradicating racism in American institutions. Collectively, this group perceived whites as oppressors; whites' retaliation against both peaceful and violent confrontation crystallized this concept (Morris, 1984: xi). This helped blacks develop norms of organization, a solidarity of purpose, and a consciousness of the ability to act within the stages of racial negotiation. Salisbury (1989: 16) added that when blacks took action in a movement it was with the express purpose of changing the "structure of the socioeconomicƒsocioƒpolitical order."

      These events and normative actions, combined with such demographic changes as black migration, higher birth rates and white outƒmigration, provided an impetus for change. In addition, the black vote expanded substantially due to legislation and active enforcement of voting rights. These radical societal changes enabled black mayoral candidates to successfully mount campaigns which utilized racial bloc voting despite class interests, high voter turnƒout plus coalitions with segments of other racial/ethnic groups (Tate, 1993; Dawson, 1995). In 1967 Cleveland's Carl Stokes employed this campaign strategy to become the first black political executive of an urban city in the north (Stone, 1970; Stokes, 1973). By 1987 blacks comprised more than one third of the mayors in the nation's 20 largest cities (BrownƒChappell, 1991).

      Ultimately, the trend to elect black mayors in the urban north declined somewhat as black voting solidarity, and voter turnƒout, decreased while the electoral coalitions disintegrated (Thomas & Savitch, 1991; Peterson, 1994). By the 1990s whites had succeeded blacks in the mayor's office in Philadelphia, Chicago, and New York. Carl Stokes' immediate successor was white, but was replaced by a black mayor, while Detroit voters have consistently elected a black mayor since 1973.

      Black Mayors and Expectations for Redistributive Policy

The black mayors of the urban north during 1967ƒ90 faced two unique tasks.

The first task these mayors had to address, consistent with black power ideology and campaign promises, was gains for blacks at all socioƒeconomic levels. For upper and middleƒclass black constituents they instituted affirmative action in hiring and contracting policies; such policy had a neutral effect on city budgets (Browning, Marshall & Tabb, 1984). However, to address lowerƒclass or poor constituent expectations for redistributive policy, mayors frequently used upper and middle class tax dollars to subsidize resultant programs and services (Peterson, 1981). These policy initiatives were problematic because they were unacceptable to the upper and middle class voters.

The depth of the redistributive problem is illustrated by inordinate black poverty levels in 1959 and 1989: with approximately ten percent of the national population, the ranks of the poor included 55.1 and 30.7 percent of blacks respectively (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1991: 363). Alternatively, 18.1 and 10.0 percent of whites, who composed the majority population in 1959 and 1989, were poor (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1991: 363).

The mayors second unique task: to contend with municipal structural limits within the context of lowerƒclass black constituency demands and expectations for redistributive policy (Bahl & Vogt, 1978; Wilson, 1980; Peterson, 1981; Elkin, 1987; Stone, 1989; Peterson, 1994). Structural limits are mandated by state constitutional prohibitions against city budget deficits. Moreover, to guarantee prosperity, cities have traditionally allied themselves with business (Banfield, 1961; Elkin, 1987). Yet when cities compete to expand, retain, and attract businesses they do so by assuring minimal resource risks which substantially reduces the opportunity for new redistributive policy initiatives. Minimal risks are assurances of low monetary, land and expertise costs to businesses; these assurances are required before they will develop a project which is expected to contribute to city prosperity. Hence, a business bias for city efficiency ƒƒ the lowest expenditures for the maximum returns ƒƒ does not augur well for redistributive policy initiatives.

There remains a dispute about whether black mayors can simultaneously address these two tasks. Piven and Cloward (1979) portrayed the 1960s as an instance of unusual opportunity for black lower class advancement, yet they also predicted that these gains would be jeopardized once the apparent crisis of social upheaval subsided. Williams (1987:127) argued that to date, poor blacks have not been prime beneficiaries of black incumbency, but that black middle class constituents and black business contractors have gained. However, Karnig and Welch (1980: 141ƒ151) found, particularly during a second term in office, a positive but weak statistical association with social welfare expenditure increases for black versus white mayors. Similarly, Tate (1993: 170) concluded that there have been some minimal increases in redistributive allocations targeted at poor blacks. Such expenditure patterns were largely funded by increases in intergovernmental revenues.

Homeless Policy Initiatives in Chicago: An Example of Redistribution

My recent research (BrownƒChappell, forthcoming [a]) discusses homelessness as an example of a redistributive policy initiative taken by a black mayor, Chicago's Harold Washington, as compared to his white predecessor and successor. Homelessness emerged anew and confronted all mayors of major cities in the urban north in the period 1979ƒ93. A homeless person was defined by Rossi (1989: 10) as an individual "not

having customary and regular access to a conventional dwelling . . . mainly those who do not rent or own a residence." When individuals began to habitually dwell in public places, this belied any claims that city officials made about business and individual prosperity. The existence of homeless people placed a city in a visibly less competitive position to retain, expand or attract businesses (Hoch & Slayton, 1989: 5). Also, Sosin, Colson and Grossman's (1988: 52, 92) Chicago survey pointed out that "the homeless are a sub*f*set of the very poor . . . the sample of the very poor in general and the homeless in particular are both heavily black." The homeless population is approximately 80 percent male (HUD, 1994: 23).

During the years 1979 through 1993 Chicago and other major cities experienced consistent growth in the demand for service to homeless individuals. In the period 1980*f*90 the national homeless population increased five times over; Jencks (1994: 13) estimated the annual population at 1.2 million adults during the late eighties alone. A review of the period found that state governments and the nation's largest cities were often slow to respond to the problem. Homelessness, or habitual dwelling in public places or free shelters, was initially perceived by federal policy officials as temporal in nature (Hoch & Slayton, 1989).

Consistent with the findings of other scholars (Bennett, 1993: 424; Tate, 1993; Karnig & Welch, 1980), my research comparing Chicago's first black mayor, Harold Washington, to his white predecessor suggested a greater emphasis on redistributive policy (Brown*f*Chappell, 1991). By the end of his first term, Washington not only increased the real fiscal allocations to homeless services almost ten*f*fold, but he also provided symbolic leadership on the issue through personal involvement such as private meetings with advocates. In comparison Richard M. Daley, Washington's white successor, continued and increased real fiscal allocations aimed at the homeless but absent the symbolism used by Washington; Daley refused to meet with advocates (Brown*f*Chappell, forthcoming [a]). Daley's policy initiatives may reflect an attempt not to alienate his white electoral majority and at the same time to deflect criticism of racial insensitivity.

Conclusion

In summary, a review of the history and nature of black politics in the urban north implies that black mayors may employ a more redistributive policy approach than white counterparts. This paper presented findings from Chicago, Illinois in the years 1979*f*93 which concluded that a black mayor did provide marginal increases in the redistribution of funds to the homeless when compared to his white predecessor. However, the white successor to the black mayor continued and increased the marginal allocations.

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