

# Post-industrial age dashed blacks' hopes

by Mary Lalevée

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## **Free at Last—What Really Happened When Civil Rights Came to Southern Politics**

by Margaret Edds

Adler & Adler, 1987

277 pages, hardbound, \$18.95

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One sad point comes across very clearly in Margaret Edds's detailed review of the political situation of black Americans in the years following the victories of the civil rights movement: The hopes of many blacks that economic progress would follow political advances have been dashed. Black Americans moved into the cities in the 1950s and 1960s,

found employment in industry, and it looked as if young blacks could look forward to a future of education and employment in industry, which would have ended the tragic situation where blacks form the majority of people living below the poverty line.

The coming of the "post-industrial society" in the mid-1960s meant that most blacks remained in poverty: In Macon County, Alabama, black family income is 60% that of white families, in Lowndes County black income is only 41% of white income. In Birmingham, Alabama, the steel industry once employed 30,000 workers. Now, only 2,500 work there. In her accounts of local political battles, Edds mentions without comment that the only new enterprises that have been set up in many areas are greyhound tracks!

However, apart from useful documentation on this aspect of American political life, Edds writes in an irritating journalistic style, which seems to have its own rules: Every person mentioned must be physically described ("a whispery-voiced minister's son," and "sporting a distinctive, shoulder-length hairstyle," are just two examples in one paragraph), and adjectives must be added to every noun. The cliché level is also far higher than tolerable. ("Similar change would soon sprout in more sophisticated settings across the South, sending pundits scurrying to record the advent of a new stage in the evolution of black politics.") Editorial work could have improved this book.

## **Books Received**

**Team Yankee: A Novel of World War III**, by Harold Coyle. Presidio Press, Novato, Calif., 1987. \$17.95, hardbound, 313 pages.

**Strategy: The Logic of War and Peace**, by Edward N. Luttwak. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., and London, England, 1987. \$20 hardbound, 283 pages.

**The Wartime Papers of Robert E. Lee**, edited by Clifford Dowdey and Louis H. Manarin. Da Capo Press, Inc., N.Y., 1961 (republishation). \$16.95 paperbound, 993 pages.

**To Destroy You Is No Loss: The Odyssey of a Cambodian Family**, by Joan D. Criddle and Teeda Butt Mam. The Atlantic Monthly Press, N.Y., 1987. \$17.95 hardbound, 289 pages.

**Cadillac Desert: The American West and Its Disappearing Water**, by Marc Reisner. Penguin Books, N.Y., 1987. \$8.95 paperbound, 582 pages.

**Engines of Creation: The Coming Era of Nanotechnology**, by K. Eric Drexler, with a foreword by Marvin Minsky. Anchor Press/Doubleday and Co., Inc., Garden City, N.Y., 1987. \$8.95 paperbound, 312 pages.

**Union Pacific: Birth of a Railroad, 1862-1893**, by Maury Klein. Doubleday and Co., Inc., Garden City., N.Y., 1987. \$27.50 hardbound, 704 pages.

**Vesco: From Wall Street to Castro's Cuba, The Rise, Fall and Exile of the King of White Collar Crime**, by Arthur Herzog. Doubleday and Co., Inc., Garden City, N.Y., 1987. \$17.95 hardbound, 364 pages.

**Policy Versus the Law: The Reinterpretation of the ABM Treaty**, by Raymond L. Garthoff. The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., 1987. 117 pages.

**ABC, The National Air and Space Museum**, by Florence Cassen Mayers. Harry N. Abrams, Inc., N.Y., 1987. \$9.95 hardbound, 32 pages.