Feel sorry for Scottsboro Boys not Judge Horton

By Ida Peters

How it really was

NBC-TV's colorcast of "Judge Horton and the Scottsboro Boys" is so misleading and glossing over what actually happened that it is a backhanded slap at black people. It's such a back-handed slap that most people who were not reared on the AFRO and haven't read other black media in the last 44 years don't really understand.

The story, told by Judge Horton's widow ends up with a bleeding heart plea to feel sorry for Judge Horton who was forced to retire from the bench because of his ruling the case which went against the power-structure of Alabama.

Why should we feel sorry for Judge Horton? He knew that the boys were innocent. What about the Scottsboro boys?

NBC-TV showed them like cattle, sitting in their cells waiting, singing spirituals..." I want to get ready".

We reviewed the legal history of the trial (see AFRO April 27-May 1, 1976) in "Scottsboro Boys shall not die".

What about the Scottsboro Boys? Nine Chattanooga, Tenn. boys (3 21) were hauled off a freight train March 24, 1931 in northern Alabama town of Paint Rock, arrested and charged with raping two white women, Victoria Price and Ruby Bates.

At the frist trial 10,000 white mountaineers and villagers came to town the first day of the trial. Cases all the way to the Supreme Court lasted until 1936. In the second trial, Judge James E. Horton, presided, ordered a new trial which resulted in the case going to the Supreme Court

I have no quarrel with NBC's account of Judge Horton's conduct of the trial. The fact is that he nolonger deserved to serve the public and at this time 44 years later, I think it's time we shed some tears for the Scottsboro boys.

Now if we have to shed some tears for Judge Horton, put a little more emphasis on what the boys went through. It might make the prisons more aware of the rights of all citizens and it might make more of us aware of what's happening in prisons. The Scottsboro case is not unique. These things are happening today in almost every state where people are poor and cannot afford adequate counsel.

From March 24, 1931, through a succession of trials the nine boys were held in all kinds of prisons.

An AFRO report in 1936 tells about Eugene Williams who was only 13 when he was arrested. It took the International Labor Defense to persuade his death sentence and get him a juvenile court hearing. The fact that he was the youngest carried little weight with his jailers. They are reported to have tormented him, abused him and stolen the parcels friends sent from outside.

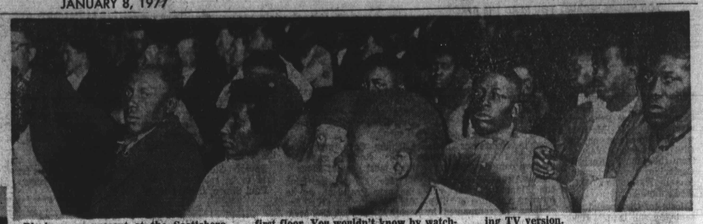
An AFRO reporter said that in 1936 when he visited the nine boys as the five year case came to a close that the lights in their eyes were no longer bright. The vim, vigor and vitality that characterized all nine at the time of arrest had vanished. Their shoulders were stooped and they were shells of their former selves.

Heywood Patterson, Joe Crowell Charlie Weems and Roy Wright were in the same cell. Olin Montgomery was by himself, wearing glasses and almost blind. On another floor was Eugene Williams, Willie Robinson and Andy Wright setting cleaned up for a visit from the reporter.

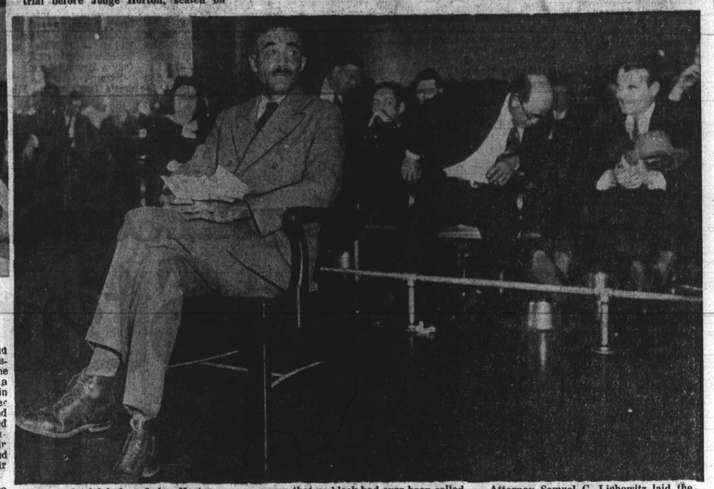
Ozie Powell was in the hospital ward where he had been for allegedly 11 months for trying to cut one of his guards.

The NBC-TV colorcast "Judge Horton and the Scottsboro Boys" is a sad commentary on life in the United States. I don't feel sorry for Judge Horton. I feel sad about the Scottsboro Boys who committed no crime other than being black.

Hayward Patterson as he actualy looked sitting at table in courtroom. He is holding a rabbit's foot and horseshoe. Black hunters went out and shot rabbits for each of the nine boys.



Blacks were present at the Scottsboro trial before Judge Horton, seated on first floor. You wouldn't know by watching TV version.



At actual trial before Judge Horton — Dr. Frank Sykes, Decatur, Ala. dentist and former Black Sox baseball pitcher, was one of ten Decatur citizens placed on the stand by defense attorneys to prove that no black had ever been called for jury duty in Morgan County. In this fight to prove that a black had ever been placed on the jury roll and that this violates the U.S. Constitution, Defense Attorney Samuel C. Liebowitz laid the foundation for his appeal to the Supreme Court. Dr. Sykes is holding a list of 180 names of Decatur and Morgan County citizens qualified for jury duty.

State Militia in World War I uniforms guarded the courthouse at Decatur, Ala., April 8, 1933 in the Scottsboro trial. This frenzied crowd was so eager for blood they did not consider Eugene Williams was only 13 and under the law of Alabama should have been tried in juvenile court.

Arena, Mechanic Dunbar openings

By Ida Peters

Tonight Friday, Bethel AME Church and Trinity Presbyterian Church will host the opening of "None To Call Him Father" an orginal play by Melvin McGree at the Arena Playhouse, curtain at 8:30 p.m.

The play is a bicentennial biography of Nat Turner who led the pre-CivilWar slave insurrection in the slave state of Virginia.

The musical "Raisin" is also opening tonight at the Morris Mechanic Theatre. Sunday, at the 3 p.m. Ida Peters and AFRO Public Relations is hosting a VIP showing of the musical with champagne afterwards to meet the cast. Irene Gandy, the advance press agent is in town from New York and Hope Quakenbush is going all out to make the cast welcome to Baltimore.

Saturday, at 7 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. "The Nutcracker" will be presented free at the Dunbar High School with 120 dancers from Baltimore Public Schools sponsored by Urban Services.

At Center Stage, George Bernard Shaw's "Misalliance" running thru January 30. Critics call this play "delightful" after viewing opening night Tuesday.

"Caesar and Cleopatra" is at the Opera House in the Kennedy Center in D.C. plus "Travesties" is at the Eisenhower Theatre.

Quotes

Muhammad Ali: "Am I an actor? Don't people know I've been acting for 23 years?" And, "When you run out of gas in the ring, there's no place to fill up."

• • •

Richard Burton (on "Who's Who" soon to be seen in the film "Equus," tells Barbara Howar that there was a period of about five years in which he did a number of films he can't remember because he was "sloshed" all the time. But it's different now. He considers himself an alcoholic, and he says he can no longer "go for three days and three nights laughing and joking with the ghost of Dylan Thomas." Drinking now can make him physically ill, so he "watches it a bit."

Burton says that, contrary to his reputation as a womanizer, he was faithful for years to two wives. But he admits to preferring the company of women to men, and describes himself as "a natural flirt."

Sexual Metaphor Of The Week (courtesy the emcee of L.T.D.'s recent Total Experience gig : "It's not the size of the ship, it's the motion of the ocean."

Shady Rollo, community worker in real life

Rollo, on NBC-TV's "Sanford and Son," is Fred Sanford's primary candidate for prison. But actually Nathaniel Taylor, who plays the role, is a primary contender for outstanding community worker.

Taylor principally makes his living as an actor and as program director for PASLA, the Performing Arts Society of Los Angeles: After majoring in theatre arts at Los Angeles City College, he enrolled in PASLA's drama workshop and within seven years had attained his present position.

As head of the society, he coordinates the drama and dance workshops for 125 young adults in South Central Los Angeles. In addition, kids identifying with the character Rollo, ask for and accept his advice.

Consequently, administrators of the L.A. Unified School District utilize him frequently for lectures to teachers and school personnel on what the children of today expect from adults. He is, thereby, helping the schools bridge the gap between students and faculty.

"I don't make money from much of the work I do," said Taylor, "but the rewards are still there."

Taylor has had roles in several television series including "Police Story," and is currently making a film, "Passing Through," in which he plays the lead, a tenor saxophonist.

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The Iota Chapter of the Lambda Kappa Mu Sorority presented a check for $1,212.00 for sponsoring the Arena Players production of BAD SEED on December 15. In the photo Mrs. Ovelia Queen, president of the Iota Chapter, looks on while Mrs. Thelma Addison, Chairperson of the Event, presents Mrs. Clifton Sherrard, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Arena Players, with the check.

"The Dirtiest Harry Of Them All." —Jim Bacon, United Features Syndicate

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In mayor's parade at City Hall rededication

On Sunday, Jan. 2, students and instructors participated in the mayor's parade for the rededication of City Hall.

Beautifully attired in the dress of the late 1800's, eight students portrayed "Famous Black Marylanders". Riding in an authentic horse-drawn buckboard, drama students Audrey Winn, Leon Pevor, Nathaniel Hampton, Beverly Norton and Floyd Gillam recreated the personages of Lena V. Ashton, first black nurse to graduate from Provident Hospital. Also, Frederick Douglass, 1817-1895, U.S. Marshal for District of Columbia, Recorder of Deeds and U.S. Minister to the Republic of Haiti. Then, Ira Frederick Aldridge, Actor, 1804-1867 who was knighted by King of Sweden for roles in "Othello"; Harriet Tubman, Underground Railroad Conductor, 1823-1913; and John H. Murphy Sr., 1843-1923, founder of AFRO AMERICAN Newspapers, dressed in copy of uniform he wore when he served as sergeant, Company G, 38th Regiment Infantry U.S. Colored Troops, Maryland Volunteers in the Civil War.

Daniel Lyons, drama student, and James McDaniel music student wore traditional 1800's dress and displayed the Cultural Arts Banner.

Of special significance was the re-creation of the Orchard Street Church, a Baltimore landmark, which legend says played an important part in the escape of slaves during the Civil War. The Orchard Street Church is currently being refurbished as a National monument.

Cultural Arts instructors; Ahmad Onyango, Frank Brown, Eugene Warren, Bernard Byrd, Elwood Miller and Guy Jones were aided by students Warren Thomas and James McDaniel in constructing the scale model of the Church. Drama instructor, Robert Russell assembled and prepared the students, members of Mod Players, in traditional dress.

The McKenzie Report

By Vashti McKenzie

Debut albums by Kalyan and Man's Theory will be released by MCA Records in January as the first two entries from Bob Schwaid's and Reggie Lavong's much publicized Rollers Productions.

Kalyan, whose sound incorporates pulsating rhythms overlaid with mellow vocals, surging horn lines and swirling keyboards, makes its bow on the MCA label with their first album, titled simply, "Kalyan," and produced by the noted Tony Silvester.

Kalyan has become the top group in Trinidad with a new music they've evolved from the island's strong musical rhythms. Part of it is based on "soca," which combines elements of salsa, calypso and reggae. Add to that an awareness of American soul and jazz, a search for African roots and a growing spiritual awareness and you have some idea of the crosscurrents that went into the formation of this unique band and the music they create. Highlights include "Disco Reggae," "Hello Africa," "La La Jam Back," and "What We Gonna Do Next."

The debut MCA album from Man's Theory, titled "Just Before Dawn," features the musical talents of five very creative individuals who write and perform their own material.

Organized five years ago in B-More, Man's Theory is comprised of Charles Gentry, lead guitar and vocals; Stephen Carter, alto and soprano sax', percussion and vocals; Eustaquio Palabon, drums, percussion and vocals; Mike Taylor, bass and vocals; and Marcus Van Claggett, lead vocals and flute.

Every song on "Just Before Dawn," which was produced by Michael Felder and William Daniels, signals the arrival of a major new group well worth hearing, from the powerful rhythms of "Hard Times," "Creek" and the explosive "You Talks A Good Talk" to the mellow beauty of "What Can I Do" and "I've Always Needed Someone Like You."

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Vincent Tubbs, Warner Bros. director of community relations, has received a second "male decision maker" award from the National Association of Media Women. He first received the NAMW trophy in 1974.

Albert Popwell, who has been in NYC for five days promoting "The Enforcer" didn't mind one bit, since he is New York-born. "I'm Harlem USA," he says proudly. Popwell, in fact, was once one of Marion Bruce's Starbuds in Harlem. It's where he started dancing. Later he was with Katherine Dunham and Pearl Primus. Strictly into acting now, like all, he wants to direct. But first he would like to play the roles of two black saints: St. Martin de Porres, and St. Benedict the Moor.

Melba Moore at Paul's Mall in Boston, Mass., Jan. 12-16 and into Marco Polo Hotel in Miami Beach, Fla., Jan. 21-30.

Latest Broadway hit is "Your Arm's Too Short To Box With God," which was conceived by Vinnette Carroll from the Book of Matthew. Music and lyrics are by Alex Bradford and Micki Grant. The show originally played at the Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy and at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C.

Arts and Music

David Rabe's "Streamers", a soul-searingly honest and sensitive probe of young Americans in the torrid, starts Friday, January 7 at Arena Stage in D.C. Running through Feb. 20 in the Kreeger Theater. Winner of the new New York Drama Critics' Circle Award for "Best American Play", "Streamers" uses a room in an Army barracks as a microcosm for some of the most explosive tensions in U.S. society-racial, sexual, social-set against the uneasy 1965 backdrop of suddenly escalating American involvement in Vietnam.

The Edwin Booth Theater will feature two classic one act plays on Jan. 15-16 at 8:00 p.m. in the Harford Community College Center Theater in Bel Air. These two one acts, "The Room" by Harold Pinter, and "The Brute" by Anton Chekhov, will run for approximately one hour.

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Corner Theater and Station, 28 E. Mt. Vernon Place will offer workshops this January in basic and advanced acting, dance, and other techniques. Each workshop will meet once each week for six weeks.

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The Dance workshop will be taught by Elizabeth Walton who studied dance with Martha Graham, Robert Joffery, Merce Cunningham and then went on to dance with Paul Taylor and in her own company before assuming her present position as head of the dance department at UMBC. The workshop will explore various techniques of dance and movement.

Phillipe Wynn leaves Spinners

Buddy Allen, manager of the Spinners top recording group announced this week in New York that John Edwards has been signed to replace Phillipe Wynne, tenor lead singer who joined The Spinners in May, 1971.

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Wynn has left the group to pursue a solo career, write, direct and do other things.

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John Edwards was the singer who replaced Phillippe in May and June of 1975 when Philippe was sidelined with tonsillitis At the time, the group voted to continue their heavy schedule and Edwards drew raves from critics as a replacement ... especially at Shady Grove in D.C.

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Allen says they are lucky that Edwards was available to step in. The parting was described as very amicable.

The Spinners have just received their seventh Gold Record for "The Rubber band Man" and are booked solidly through 1977.

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The group is currently finishing an engagement in San Carlos where the gross was $240,000 in five days.

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They then go in rehearsal with John Edwards and will fill college engagements in Michigan and at Purdue University. They then play the Front Row Theatre in Cleveland, then into rehearsal for the "Captain and Tennille Show" in February.

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Events in your community

January 7-9, 13-16, 21-23, 28-30, 1977 — Arena Players — "None to Call Him Father," New Arena Playhouse. Call 523-6245 — 10:00 a.m.-12:00 Noon and 5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.

January 11-16, 1977 — Shipstad and Johnson Ice Follies, Civic Center Auditorium

January 15, 1977 — "History and Horizons of Bowie," sponsored by Bowie State College and the Bicentennial Committee. Free State Mall, Annapolis Rd., Bowie, Md., 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

January 21, 1977 — Sarah Vaughn, Civic Center Auditorium, 8 p.m.

January 27, 1977 — Basketball — Morgan State Univ. vs Univ. of Baltimore, RFK Stadium, 1:30 p.m.

January 28, 1977 — Shriner's Ball, Martin's West — 10:00 p.m.-2:00 a.m. — Call 523-2800 Persons or organizations who wish to have coming events printed here are asked to write to Mrs. G. Steele, AFRO-AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS, P.O. Box 1857, Baltimore, Md. 21203.

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