National Roundup

WASHINGTON — The best explanation for the recent Black College Day rally to support 107 traditional colleges in the nation was made by Dr. Andrew Billingsley, president of Morgan State College in Baltimore and Rock Newman, Central State University student leader who helped organize the "March on Washington" by some 10,000 students from all of the schools.

Dr. Billingsley later emphasized that black college supporters are not seeking to halt integration of students in any private or public institution of higher learning, but they do not want colleges founded to specifically provide education for blacks to be desegregated out of existence.

Many students do not wish to confront the hostility, indifference and racism which exist in white institutions and they should have the right to attend the college of their choice with government support, Billingsley stated. White students are also welcomed to attend under black leadership, he added.

Billingsley emphasized that many predominantly white ethnic (Jewish) and religious (Catholic) schools receive much more government support than most black institutions.

The effort to "save black colleges" is being led by the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO), an organization of black college presidents, the National Organization of Black University and College Students (NOBUCS) and the United Negro College Fund.

However television personality Tony Brown said he organized the rally to focus public and government attention on the controversy to help block current congressional cuts in education funds for the institutions primarily serving black students.

By Larry Still and Art Carter

The campaign has brought some results, with President Carter issuing the following statement declaring:

"I issued a memorandum to all departments, I think the first of 1979, asking that they increase the participation by black colleges and universities in the federal programs that we have. I think we've increased about $30 million since I've been in office. I've been satisfied with that progress . . .

"By the authority vested in me as president by the Constitution of the United States of America, and in order to overcome the effects of discriminatory treatment and to strengthen and expand the capacity of historically black colleges and universities? to provide quality education, it is here ordered . . ." the President continued in requiring the government to take eight steps in support of black institutions.

Despite the executive actions, the Technical Assistance Consortium To Aid Colleges (TACTICS), one of the major agencies aiding the schools, has been eliminated from the U.S. Office of Education budget as a result of behind the scenes maneuvering for control of the multi-million dollars programmed for aid. TACTICS office in Washington has been quietly closed and the staff eliminated despite protest FROM NAFEO and UNCF.

Meanwhild, in a stirring, opening convocation speech at Howard University, President James Cheek challenged government efforts to reduce support for the school and urged Howard's successful alumni to come to the aid of the threatened institution.

"I have visited your homes, I have dined at your tables and I have ridden in your fine automobiles and I have yet to meet a Howard graduate who can legitimately claim to be poor . . ." Dr. Cheek declared in urging the Howard alumni to provide more support for the university.

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Critics of the Congressional Black Caucus must have devoted most of their time at the 10th annual legislative weekend to the parties and reception while overlooking the two days of workshops on Capitol Hill, public meetings throughout the city and strategy sessions on electing state and local politicians in the various hotels.

Anyone who wishes may spend weekends "partying and drinking" during the important sessions at most conventions, including the Democratic and Republican confabs, but thousands of caucus participants devoted two full days to meetings on health and welfare, minority enterprise, economic development, youth problems, voter participation, etc., without attending one cocktail party or social events which most of the "free loading" press emphasized.

It should also be reported that CBC has a well organized followup schedule of workshops and programs of the National Black Leadership Roundtable in an effort to implement its legislative goals. The CBC executive group, headed by executive director Barbara Williams, Rep. Cardiss Collins (D-Chicago), chairman, and D.C. Congressional Delgeate Walter Fauntroy, head of the black voter network, will meet in December to outline next year's activity.

Regional meetings are scheduled in March and June of 1981 in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia and Washington.

There are suggestions for "regionalizing" the legislative weekend and dinner-program, but most delegates appear to believe the experience of bringing America's black political leaders together at least once a year is worth the expense . . . and the criticism.

Incidently, the Congressional Black Caucus weekend has become so well attended that Cabinet officials Patricia Harris, secretary of the Department of Health and Human Affairs, and Moon Landrieu, secretary of Housing and Urban Development, had difficulty getting tables for their guests. Even Mrs. Coretta (Martin Luther King) reported she had difficulty finding space, among the hundreds of others seeking tickets.

And CBC has proven so effective, that an Italian American Caucus, a Hispanic Caucus, and a Polish American Caucus has been organized in Congress, along the tradition of the Rural Caucus and other state caucuses of legislators who meet regularly in Washington and "take care of your business" over dinner . . . and cocktails. We think the CBC ought to be congratulated for showing their colleagues the way. Keep up the good work!

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Members of the black National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) are helping CBC efforts by publishing the records of some 90 congressmen whose districts have 15-30 percent Black voters. The voters were asked to demand support of caucus employment, housing and welfare proposals. Congressional Delegate Fauntroy emphasizes that the campaign is necessary to counteract the moral majority support of conservative congressional candidates.

But a close look at the economic programs of President Carter and Ronald Reagan shows that both proposals emphasize the "trickle down" theory for the poor and black people by urging major tax reductions for businessmen and investors in order to provide more jobs at the lower end of the economic scale.

The major difference between Reagan's Strategy for Economic Growth and Carter's proposals is that Reagan declares he will seek to limit government spending programs and "stabilize" the economy to provide for faster private development, while Carter would ask business to employ more people with the aid of government incentive programs.

Either way, the unemployed and uneducated would suffer from reduced "voluntary" spending programs while the wealthier get the benefit of reduced taxes to keep high salaried executives in their offices.

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Sam Tucker, the fast talking, black press flack who produced results for Carter in the 1976 campaign is now a press agent for the Reagan forces. A sign of the times.

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Moses Newson, former AFRO-AMERICAN executive editor, handled the executive office briefing for HEH Secretary Patricia Harris for the National Association of Black Journalists meeting here.

The NABJ is an organization of black journalists working for white controlled media. Members at the Washington Star, New York Times and other newspaper, radio and television outlets are now forming black caucuses to seek equal rights in the news room.

+ + Time moves on or is it TIME MOVES OVER.

MILES DAVIS:

When Will He Return?

The legendary trumpet player has not made a recording or a public appearance in over five years. What is he doing now, and what are his plans. DAWN Magazine has some of the answers in this revealing look at the jazz great.

By Libre Jasiri

When in 1969, Miles recorded "Bitches Brew" giving birth to fusion, new wave, The New Music and a stepchild, disco, Ralph J. Gleason wrote in the album liner notes, "What is so incredible about what Miles does is whoever comes after him, whenever, wherever, they have to take him into consideration." And it was always so.

From "The Complete Birth of the Cool" in 1949 to "Get Up With It," twenty - five years later, no musician has been more pervasively influential.

Certainly others have been at least as influential in the jazz world: Louis Armstrong, Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, John Coltrane; and in rhythm and blues (nee rock 'n' roll): James Brown and Sly Stone.

Miles' greatest influence on popular music came after the release of "Bitches Brew," in 1969. The long vamps, the excursion into electronics with his trumpet, in addition to the bass and keyboards, the elevation of the bass from the bottom with the rhythm section to center stage were the things of which fusion and disco would be made.

Although he is contemptuous of the labels that journalists put on the music and claimed to see "Bitches Brew" as a progression rather than a departure, Miles was known to do his work differently in the late sixties and early seventies.

While he had always listened to Rachmaninoff and Stockhausen, by 1975, he would place James Brown or Al Green on the turntable, lift the tone arm, and change the record or turn it over three or four days later. On a 1975 tour of the States the only tunes Miles played other than his own were Green's, from the LP, "Still In Love With You."

While older fans of the trumpet player claimed shock and disappointment at the new atonality of Miles' horn on, "Brew," the cacophony in "On the Corner," the dissonance in "Live - Evil," a whole other generation discovered him (or maybe he discovered them) and his ascendency to pop idoldom followed.

This generation, born in the late fifties, and weaned on Tin Pan Alley and the Motown sound, had not witnessed the light - heartedness of "Fran - Dance," the richness of "Round Midnight," the melodic romanticism of Miles and bandleader Gil Evans' masterwork, "Sketches of Spain."

As he became increasingly contemptuous and profane in his response to analyses and criticisms of his music, Miles was consistent in his habit of working with the best musicians available.

In the fifties, "the best" were seasoned, leaders in their own right: Theoloius Monk, Max Roach, Cannonball Adderley, and a budding innovator, John Coltrane.

By the sixties he had begun to surround himself with the best of young, unknown, and, in some cases, untried musicians: then teen - aged drummer Tony Williams, Herbie Hancock, Gary Bartz, bassist Ron Carter, keyboardist Larry Young, guitar player John McLaughlin.

At no time during this period did anything he did appear to be an experiment, either in his selection of band members or in the music they produced. Musically, he never retreated and never did he play the "classics" from the "Cool" period, from be - bop, from the post - bop era that identified him as an innovator.

But he did begin to mumble more and more frequently something about retiring, even as he put together the last band before going into seclusion in 1975.

That band included some young, unknown musicians who have since gone on to fame and fortune in the glittery, tenuous world of top - forty hits: percussionist James Mtume, bass player Michael Henderson, guitar player Reggie Lucas.

It also included drummer Al Foster, guitar player Pete Cosey, saxophonist Dave Liebmar, and, briefly, saxophonist Sonny Fortune.

In 1978, Miles claimed not to have been out of his house in three years. Certainly, he hadn't picked up his horn in that amount of time, not in the studio and not on the bandstand.

Because he had become more and more unpredictable, more and more prone to fits of rage, everyone believed this to be a temporary withdrawal: the band, Columbia Records, producer Teo Macero, his manager at the time, Neil Reshen, and fans.

Some members of the band continued to visit as they always had; all played other dates whenever possible and waited for Miles to call the next rehearsal for the first year or two.

He did call a rehearsal once or twice, starting rumors that he would accept a "new deal" offered by Columbia, would go back into the studio.

Rumors also abounded about the precariousness of his health and financial situation: that he was broke and had bone cancer. He never bothered to deny any of them.

He did admit to journalist Gregg Hall in a 1974 Downbeat magazine interview that he has "that black disease," sickle cell, a condition which caused him to have hip joint replacement surgery, and started rumors.

Although Columbia continued to release new LPs under Miles' signature through 1977, none of the music was new, with the exception of "Get Up With It," which he began to write in '74 as a token of his love for a dying Duke