Baltimore Afro-American

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Thanksgiving, 1984

As winter descends on this city with its attendant cold weather, those of us who are prosperous and warm should be thankful for our good fortune. There are many people who are still suffering grievously, despite the much heralded economic recovery that somehow always fails to trickle down to the poorest of the poor.

Although Christmas is over a month away, the AFRO is being deluged by calls and letters from the needy who view the small amount of help available from this paper as an incomparable blessing, especially during the holiday season.

Thanksgiving Day is traditionally a time of feasting and family gatherings. it is a time of joy, if one has something to eat and loved ones to share the meal with. As we gather to feast we should be genuinely thankful and consider sharing some of our prosperity with the less fortunate.

There are numerous programs that give holiday meals to the needy and various food programs that could use help of a personal or financial kind. One could even help a neighbor or a distant relative to have a happy Thanksgiving.

The results of the recent national election raise the possibility that the poor will receive even less government assistance than in previous years. It is up to other citizens to ease their suffering.

Thanksgiving should be a time of sharing and giving thanks and not just an excuse for gluttony.

Prison nightmare

The recently released report on conditions in the South Wing of the Maryland State Penitentiary paints a bleak picture of neglect and mismanagement as well.

The wing is used to house the most incorrigible prisoners in the penal system and the fact that these dangerous inmates were placed in an area with inadequate security is inexcusable.

The state report cited the filthy conditions, which constituted health hazards, inadequate phone service, walkie talkies carried by guards that did not work, tendencies on the part of correctional officers to disregard security procedures endangering themselves and their fellow officers and a lack of thoroughness and frequency in shakedowns for contraband.

These conditions and others were brought to the attention of the warden and other prison officials before the tragic death of Officer Toulson in the south wing. They were not acted upon.

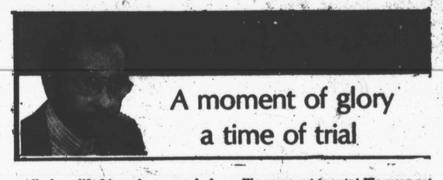
As a result of the report from the attorney-general's office, the governor had the warden and assistant warden removed. Double celling will be eliminated, immediate renovations will be made and plans will be drawn up to ease staffing problems such as the hiring of more guards. Money will be put in the capital budget to either renovate or replace the present facility.

The question remains, why did it take the tragic death of a corrections officer to motivate action at the highest levels of state government? Maryland's prison system has been in a crisis for at least a decade with its exploding population and inadequate facilities.

The unions that represent the correctional officers had warned about an impending crisis or tragic incident, yet very little was done to head of the occurrence.

At last some action has been taken. It would behoove the ranking state officials to look into the other institutions to head off similar problems at other prisons.

The safety of the officers and inmates who do not participate in disruptive behavior demands continuing vigilance on the part of all connected with the penal system.



A moment of glory a time of trial

All of my life I have been proud of us. Blacks have struggled, persevered, fought and striven for our recognition as a whole people. Never in my life have I been more proud of black Marylanders than I was on Tuesday, November 6, 1984.

Day after day, the polls told us that Reagan would win, and therefore, we should not waste our time by coming out to vote.

But we came out in overwhelming numbers. From the time the polls opened at 7 a.m., we stood in long lines, the old and the young, the blind and the disabled, the rich and the poor, we stood waiting to cast our votes.

In one polling place, in the late evening, my eyes filled up with tears when I saw us, black people, waiting to exercise the precious right to vote.

As I blinked back the tears, I thought to myself, "This is what Martin Luther King, Jr. struggled for; this is what my brother, Clarence Mitchell, Jr. dedicated his life to; this is what a host of black heroines and heroes of the past envisioned!"

We came out to vote! We were not intimidated by those whites sent only into our communities as so-called security officers of the Republican Party. They were on the polling places, but so were we, and we voted.

Delegate Troy Brailey likened the situation to past days when whites stood over the "Niggers" to harass us; to try to intimidate us; to try to turn us back.

We were not intimidated, we were not turned back. Only by the providence of God did I avoid being arrested on election day as I confronted group after group of white security officers in black polling places.

My fear was that if one of them had dared to touch me, I would have resorted to violence and would have faced possible arrest. Thank God, that did not happen.

Yes, Reagan won, but in a larger sense, we black people won. Once again, we served as the conscience of America because our votes said that the only government worth supporting is a caring, compassionate government for all the people.

We repudiated the most powerful political figure in the world by using our vote to tell him that his policies are immoral, indecent and cruel . . . we will not vote for a man, no matter how powerful, who shows contempt for blacks; disdain for senior citizens; and disregard for the children of those who are poor and, or, disadvantaged.

There are those who say we will pay a price for the repudiation of Reagan. We have already paid the price for almost four years. Whatever comes during this second administration we will survive; we will make it no matter what is thrown against us.

In all of my years of public speaking, I have never, ever quoted Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Many, many other public speakers, to their credit, have quoted him. Until the writing of this column, I have not.

But now, I am constrained to do so. His prophetic words serve us well at this time. "We've got some difficult days ahead. . . we as a people will get to the promised land . . . I am not worrying about anything, I am not fearing any man . . . with this faith, we will be able to achieve this new day."

It will be a day of caring. We shall have moved from the dark ages; through the days of reason; through the days of enlightenment; through the days of despair; onward and upward to the days of compassion, an infinite compassion for all in this nation.

My God! I am so proud of us!

LETTERS

Inmates at Maryland pen speak

Dear EDITOR:

For many years, the imprisoned victims, have been trying to communicate our difficulties and factions of prison life. However, our efforts are continually being circumvented by the prison administration.

Unfortunately, on Oct. 4, 1984, Officer Herman Toulson, lost his life and once again the public received only one side of the real truth. Therefore, we feel that you should hear the other side of the coin.

But before we proceed, let it be clearly understood, that we are incarcerated human beings and not animals and that we feel and understand, that when another human life is taken by whatever means, (an act of God or by another human hand) it's a tragic event. However, we must explore the reasons as to what brought about this man's fate.

On the one hand, the newspapers wrote an account of Officer Toulson's past life, as a heroic person. A Vietnam Vet, wounded twice, (two purple hearts and a bronze medal). The article went on to speak about his personal life, his spouse as he was contemplating a resuiting of their family structure.

Being incarcerated we are more concerned about the family structure than most black men in the free society, and we think that it's only right that two individuals create a family structure for their children and themselves.

However, at this point we can begin to understand a little about Officer Toulson, and from what was said above, connotes that this individual had problems. Problems and difficulties that he brought into this institution each and everytime he entered, (as with 85 percent of the officers working here at the Maryland Penitentiary.)

Now, Mr. Editor, we understand that your job is to sell newspapers, and to inform the public on events worthy and unworthy of them knowing, (that's a huge responsibility.) But sir, in this case like so many others when writing about an occurrence that happened in a prison, it's never descriptive when given to the public.

As a matter of fact, the information is so dissimilated that I have to stop and try to remember it, and I am here where it was supposed to have occurred.

Nevertheless, let's look at Officer Toulson from an institutional point of view. Being straight and forward, it's customary that when you live you are a no good S.O.B., and on the other hand, when you die you were a good righteous, etc., etc., person.

So it was only natural that his fellow officers delivered such an eulogy. One supervisor stated in the paper that Officer Herman Toulson was liked by many inmates. I doubt very seriously that you could find five out of the fifteen hundred inmates that did.

I personally have not spoken to any. This individual, (Officer Toulson) proved on many occasions to be facetious, and would make disparaging statements about an inmate's mother in hopes that he would strike out at him. We (the imprisoned victims) are humans first and men second.

The result of Officer Toulson's death, dramatized fueled by the administration here at the penitentiary, and thus, the outside world, by the media, is not the whole and true story. Yet the prisoners here are paying for it exceedingly.

Up until this date, 10-24-84, we have been locked down and showered only three times, and fed in our cells nine and a half straight days. Our families and friends came to our rescue.

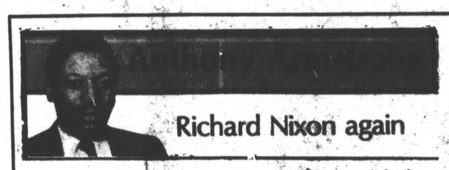
They marched from 7 until 12 midnight, until they knew that we were live safe and out of harm's way. But even that was a fallacy, because we are constantly being harassed by the officers.

Our families carrying candles, only stopping to speak to a prisoner thru an open window, asking what else do you want us to do.

The voice from inside, demand to see the warden, Frank Hall, go speak to the news reporters, NO, BETTER YET, find Governor Hughes and ask him why my sons, brothers, fathers, uncles, and nephews are being punished for another man's crime. Let him know about the brutality of the guards on inmates in here, and the inhuman treatment that we are receiving.

Sir, what happened to Officer Toulson, was unfortunate, but you can believe that he created his own destiny. We are not animals and you cannot continue to treat us as such.

THE INCARCERATED MEN.
Names withheld by request



Richard Nixon again

People are strange things. One day they love you, the next day they turn around and rile you to the highest point of disdain. American politics is full of such "one day you love me, next day you hate me" stories.

None though is as interesting as that of Richard Milhouse Nixon.

Foe and friend alike, almost everyone will agree former president Nixon is again one of the nation's most sought after political minds particularly on matters of foreign policy.

How is it that such a thing could occur so relatively soon after Watergate, resignation and, public scorn?

We can find some answers to the mystique of Richard Nixon in the checkered relationship all America has had with a man we've loved to hate for more than a quarter century.

Ever since the McCarthy era, in the 50's, when Richard Nixon was widely accused of using the communist scare for his personal political gain until the 70's and Watergate; America has alternately loved Richard and loathed Richard.

Even before the McCarthy shame, Richard Nixon was being accused of using dirty tricks to defeat his political opponents in California.

Even in his attempts to be selected as the Vice President in the Eisenhower administrations, Richard Nixon was viewed by many as a man who would do anything to get what he wanted.

And though it is still one of those things that we have to wait for the history books, some national political observers have already begun to look with doubt on the tactics Mr. Nixon used to remain on the Eisenhower ticket for a second term.

Most people over forty can remember the famous "checkers speech" where Mr. Nixon used his dog, "Checkers", to invoke the sympathy of the nation and to keep alive his political fortunes.

Then there was Bebe Rebozo a close, some say too close, friend of Mr. Nixon's who was everything from confidant to who-knows-what. Robert Aplanalp, Maurice Stands, Spiro Agnew and a slew of other names all point to fundamental character flaws in Richard Nixon but; none of these men survived nearly as well the downfalls they experienced in the service of their common denominator — Richard Nixon.

Another nationally famous figure, Senator Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts, looks as if he will never live down the stigma of what happened at Chappaquidic Island. Richard Nixon, however, seems as if he will go on forever. Why?

The answers to why "king" Richard is more alive today than ever have to be sought in the future of the American body-politic itself and, what Americans appreciate in their leaders.

It must be said that people in America don't get bad reputations for what they do wrong, they get bad reputations for being caught at what they do wrong.

Americans have always thought there was something to be admired in a person who could "beat the system" and get away with it.

Richard Nixon, even among people who have very strong negative feelings about him, is still viewed as the man who almost wrecked America and lived to tell about it.

However, as bad as he was to most people, Richard Nixon never committed the one unforgiveable sin in American public life: being caught with a woman other than his wife.

Americans will forgive a lot of things, homosexuality, drunkardness, favoritism, even lying. We as a nation, however, have never found ways to forgive a man who is known to be cheating on the Mrs.

Nixon has shown endless loyalty and faithfulness to his wife. Another thing we have an unforgiving problem with is a man who does not seem to want to take care of his children. For all he is, Nixon has never been blamed for not providing the best for Julie and Tricia, his two, now grown, daughters.

These are our personal quirks. On the national scene, however, Nixon's rebirth as a figure of real importance is the result of the belief that no one in the country today knows more about foreign policy than he.

For all the feelings of leadership attached to President Reagan, everyone agrees he is no foreign policy wiz. The analyst feel Reagan's weakest characteristic is his almost total lack of knowledge or appreciation of international matters.

Within the Reagan White House, the needed experienced foreign policy mind has been sorely lacking and, only Secretary of State Schultz has improved that situation to any degree.

So why Richard Milhouse Nixon again? If you're interested you can find the answer by asking the Gromykos of the world.

African village at the zoo

There are a few things said by our people that expose them, and I am referring to the Anthony Armstrong's reference to the African Village in Druid Hill Park, which Dr. Emmett Burns remarked.

I have traveled over two-thirds of the world. I have traveled to Dakar, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, and attended the University of Ghana in Accra.

The only object I found missing at the African Village is the outdoor clay oven in which Africans smoke and bake fish. Thank Mr. Armstrong for his article.

ROBERT L. SHIVER

Sound the jubilee celebration of freedom

The efforts of black Americans for full freedom, equality of opportunity and social justice, historically, have been extremely cumbersome, difficult and tortuous.

In this conjunction, although the iniquitous, dehumanizing and cruel system of slavery has ended, the residual effects as reflected in discrimination, institutional exclusion and denial remain clear and present burdens for 26 million black Americans.

Nonetheless, in spite of all of the problems and institutional denials, black Americans have continued to inch forward and maintain their dignity and spirit.

The 122nd observance of National Jubilee Day is a grand and inspirational testimony to a people's resolve to be free and to go forward in the face of withering and mountainous opposition. The questions and responses that follow provide a clearer understanding and historical meaning for Jubilee day:

— I. What is Jubilee Day?

Jubilee Day marks the observance of the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation by Abraham Lincoln after the battle of Antietam here in Maryland in September, 1863. Lincoln made known to the confederate states then in rebellion that if they did not return to the Union, the Emancipation Proclamation would go into effect on January 1, 1863.

Emancipation Proclamation did not free any slaves, the slaves remained under the South's domination and control, it did add a powerful moral significance to the Civil War.

Then, too, over 186,000 black Americans were able to enlist in the military and fight for their freedom. Black Americans served with distinction in the U.S. Army and Navy.

— II. Why Observe Jubilee Day?

Jubilee Day represents a most important part of the history of black Americans in the Western Hemisphere. The Emancipation Proclamation which undergrids and sustains it promotes the indivisibility of freedom, social justice and human dignity.

It, too, should be noted that the Emancipation Proclamation was a significant and historic forerunner of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments which provided freedom, citizenship and the right to vote for former slaves.

The observance of Jubilee Day, too, depicts another phase of our ongoing struggle for freedom, social justice and equality of opportunity. Jubilee Day, in short, is a celebration of the promise and power of freedom.

Jubilee Day also has valuable meaning and pertinence for the present and future development of our children and youths. The observance permits black children and youths, as well as adults, to acquire a deeper understanding and appreciation of our glorious historical past.

In this sense, Jubilee Day is an anchor and catalyst for black pride, high self-esteem and awareness. A people that does not its history is condemned to failure. Jubilee Day is a unique and vital part of our history.

— III. What is the Significance of Jubilee Day Today?

The support of Jubilee Day by the NAACP shows cultural and racial continuity and pride. Each year that Jubilee Day is observed by the NAACP and the broader community, it represents a heartening and potent identification with our past and our indomitable passion for freedom and social justice.

Jubilee Day conveys the steadying and overarching message that troubles are not new to us as a people and our collective spirit remains strong and vibrant.

— IV. How Can One Become Involved in the Jubilee Day Observance?

The Baltimore Branch of the NAACP, as is true of branches across the nation, sponsors an annual Jubilee Day Program. The President and Executive Director of the Baltimore Branch, NAACP are Mrs. Epolia V. McMillian and Ms. Barbara Cooper.

The chairperson for the statewide Jubilee Day observance is Dr. Calvin Burnett, President of Coppin State. A planning committee is working with Dr. Burnett for the Jubilee Day observance which will be held on Sunday, January 6, 1985 at the Sharp Street United Methodist Memorial Church at 4:00 p.m. Please mark your calendar.

Nathaniel Smith, the Maryland State President of NAACP, is assisting with the statewide coordination of Jubilee Day. We urge your support of Mr. Smith in his efforts. Statewide support is crucial to the success of Jubilee Day.

— V. How Can You Help the Observance of Jubilee Day?

The following steps are essential:

1. call the NAACP office to volunteer your services. The NAACP can be reached at 396-3700.

2. spread the word in your community about the Jubilee Day observance.

3. make plans to attend the statewide Jubilee Day observance at Sharp Street United Methodist Church on Sunday, January 6, 1985 at 4:00 p.m. Your active support can make Jubilee Day an outstanding event.

4. call your county NAACP to volunteer your services.

Post-election questions

Scores of significant and important questions have been raised in the wake of the reelection of President Ronald Reagan for "four more years," with little indication of what the probable answers may be, at least for the immediate future. There is little doubt that right now thousands of voters around the country who put their hopes and faith in the return of the Democratic Party to the White House now have the feeling that there is nothing to look forward to.

They must remember, however, that the political reign of the president is only "four more years," and that compared to the long and rocky road that Black voters have trod down through the years is one small step. The big thing now is not to despair. Black folks cannot despair. We have conquered a shameful period of slavery, endured the Reconstruction Period, overcome the challenges of two World Wars and survived the country's historic Depression.

Moreover, we have suffered and progressed through the painful civil rights battles of the 1950's and 1960's. So now it is time to recall the words of the preacher who cautioned us that "They may take our land, our money or our freedom, but they can't take our spirit." Without our spirit, we would be nothing so now is the time to rally with each other, come forth with a stronger spirit and meet the political challenge of the next four years.

Meanwhile the tantalizing questions will persist. Four more years of Reagan and how does one who is black and jobless cope? How does one cope when he or she has already for four years felt the brunt of Reaganomics? What does one have to look forward to when he knows that he still won't be able to get a decent job?

How does a mother feel when she knows that she won't be able to get aid to feed her children she's bringing up alone because the aid has been cut? How secure is the young couple feeling right now who has been afraid of a nuclear holocaust for their unborn children?

Just Thinking

Al Downey

Last week, shortly after the presidential votes were announced, this writer found it easy to find some humor.

This week, after reflection, that feel of despair has captured me as well as many others of the hue. What happened in last week's balloting was tragic and not comic.

The final decision was to use the material originally conjected.

About a week ago, I was conferring with John Wilkes, who was heading the black campaign for Reagan-Bush. Wilkes abruptly ended the conversation because a poll report predicted that the GOP winners would receive 15 percent of the black vote.

Wilkes was in seventh heaven and headed for the Pier Seven Happy Hour to celebrate.

Early Wednesday, when the results rolled in with the analysts the announcers were reporting that Reagan received 4 percent of the black vote.

So the story goes, Wilkes headed down Virginia Avenue below his Columbia Apartment, the Kennedy Center, and dashed across the street and headed for the Potomac.

"Don't jump!" Wilkes heard a voice. He heeded the voice.

Another Wilkes' story came on Wednesday when the lines were burning up with congratulations, several callers assured him that they voted for his candidate. And added, couldn't he find a nice job in D.C. for their support at the poll and in the community.

Which brings to mind the story told by Cleveland's civil rights lawyer Chester K. Gillespie who ran for ward leader.

As everyone left they assured him that they had cast their support for Gillespie who told this reporter:

"They are all liars."

All liars.

"Yes, they are all liars. I received one vote and that was my own vote."

The biggest Houdini act from the newspapers after the vote was Jesse Jackson. Front-paged in the slick news magazines, zoned on most of the network talk shows, and his amazing vote registration efforts brought him to the fore before the Democrats' convention.

During the Mondale campaign the efforts of Jackson were slightly reported and since the election, the good reverend has apparently vanished from view.

You can't put any blame on the veteran, Louis Martin, long a savvy politico. Martin kept his presence at the desk in the administration building of Howard University where he is director of public relations.

Many of the Democratic speakers got laryngitis when it was learned that the funds were running out to pay for speakers' travel.

All of the members of the Black Caucus won easily in their races. Gary's Katie Hall lost in the primary.

AFRO SURVEY

How do you plan to celebrate Thanksgiving?

Andrew Howard

Cheryl Howard

Clarence Hall

Nelson Robinson

This week the question to the man and woman in the street was, "What are you thankful for this year?"

Andrew Howard, 26, unemployed, assistant, "Nothing. My job doesn't pay nothing, and the little money you make goes back into the system that doesn't give you nothing, unless, of course, you go to college for five years or more. I haven't been to college and I am not going. It is just not for me. I guess I am glad I'm still alive."

Cheryl Howard, 26, unemployed, "I'm thankful I am alive. I have a husband. Other men I have had didn't care about me that much. I am glad I have someone who does."

Clarence Hall, 30, retired, "Living. Yes, I'm thankful for just being alive. You see, I had a heart attack last year and almost died. I really may not have been here."

Nelson Robinson, 21, construction worker, "My job. Reagan is back in office, and jobs are becoming scarce, hardly any at all. I'm glad to have a job."

Connie McLean, 24, mail carrier, "I am thankful for having a job. You need income, and with Reagan in office, people are not getting jobs as quickly as they once were."

Vanessa Nance, 27, office manager, "I am thankful for a car and steady job. I have a family and live a decent life. The things I have like my car make it easier to take care of my family. I'm thankful for my car this year."

William Smith, 18, "I am thankful for being able to finally receive credit. I feel more responsible now. I couldn't afford to pay cash all the time, and I was not trusted for credit. No one would give me a chance. Well, someone has, and I am thankful for it. It feels good to know somebody trusts me."

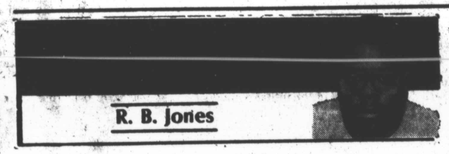
Deidre Alexander, 23, salesperson, "A healthy baby. I got a baby this year, and I am glad he's healthy. That's a special gift to me."

Connie McLean

Vanessa Nance

William Smith

Deidre Alexander



R. B. Jories

The cruelty of mediocrity

Edgar White, in his stirring play "Ode to Charlie Parker," has a line that I have remembered for 12 years, "Mediocrity is cruel." I interpreted that statement in two ways that apply to the present state of the Republican Party, especially as it relates to the black community.

Mediocre minds breed cruel deeds such as Reaganomics and suffering the words of black Republicans is cruel.

The Republican Party, nationally, has become an ugly right wing clique that excells in raising money, suppressing internal dissent and pandering to the pettiest and meanest aspects of the American psyche.

Moderate Republicans have nearly been excommunicated from the party. The Dallas party convention put on display for the world to see of a party with little ethnic or political diversity. It has become implicitly, if not explicitly, the white folks party.

This presents a dilemma for the blacks who choose to remain in the party or who choose to "cross over." They can try to advocate for their people within the presently hostile party or they can go along with the current ultra - conservative trend.

The ultimate tragedy of the party, regardless of its recent presidential victory, is that it is riddled with mediocrity. From its president on down it is saturated with ideological hacks who have stock phrases, dubious variation of patriotism, and no vision or plan for the future. They are fighting social change and hoping to return this country to the idyllic days of Eisenhower and Ozzie and Harriet.

Change is the one constant in the universe and those who seek to prevent it are fighting a losing battle.

The sad condition of many black Republicans was illustrated starkly the other night when I saw a local TV show that purports to be a debate. It usually features four panelists and a moderator. There is usually a split among the panelists, half of them being "liberal" and the other half being "conservative."

One of the "conservative" panelists last week was St. George Crosse, a member of the Reagan administration. He made numerous remarks that parroted the shrill and rather flimsy apologetics of the right-wing majority of the Republican Party.

He accused Walter Mondale of being left-wing which had to be one of the most absurd statements of this political season. His accusation was reminiscent of attacks made on Franklin Roosevelt in the 1930s. Walter Mondale is a liberal of sorts, but he is a far cry from a left winger. That kind of name calling is more appropriate for a McCarthy era politician, not a man living in a world that has a large percentage of its land mass and population that is either socialist or communist in some form. Shrill anti-communism is illogical and incompatible with large U.S. bank loans to communist countries and trade in foodstuffs and technology with them.

Crosse proceeded to blame the Democratic Party for fostering a welfare mentality in black people. His statement was as ludicrous as it was insulting to the intelligence of black people.

The good reverend made the first mistake in logic when he did not adequately define the words he used in his premise. Welfare has many meanings. It is used in the preamble to the U.S. Constitution in one way. It is used another way when describing assistance given to the poor by public and private agencies.

Welfare for poor people is considered a handout. It consumes something for nothing, a hand out. People who receive it suffer through a bureaucratic system designed to demean the recipients.

Welfare for the rich is referred to as a tax shelter, investment incentive, depreciation allowance, government subsidy, tax abatement, and other terms to imply that what is good for corporations is equivalent to what is good for society.

Another mistake Crosse made was that he implied in his statement that black people have so little ambition in life and are so awed by suggestions by white Democrats that they settle for nothing in life but a welfare check. Does he consider the majority of black people who reject his party intellectually deficient?

In most cases, social conditions outweigh any deficiency in ambition, that keeps people on welfare. These factors could lack of or a poor education and socialization in an environment of poverty and despair. The good reverend did not mention these factors, he merely repeated the tired party line which blames everything on liberal Democrats.

Crosse then proceeded to accuse liberals of being racist because they supported genocide of black people through abortion. Again he has made a glaring error in logic. His statement implies that black people have no will. They only do what whites tell them to do according to Crosse.

Throughout my educational process, I have not found one instance of voluntary genocide. Genocide is carried out by one group of people against another through coercive means. Abortion is a personal choice made by a woman. They are two different things and Crosse should know that.

Crosse also asserted on the TV show that black people were conservative on social issues. Again he did not define what he meant by conservative. When black people talk about conserving things they are talking about conserving values that have been the strength of the race such as unity, compassion for one's fellow human beings, a belief that one reaps what one sows and a belief in the promise of the future and the value of education.

The conservatism that Crosse is talking about is the Moral Majority brand that seeks to intrude into very personal issues in life and seeks to eliminate the progress of the last thirty years in civil rights peace advocacy, women's rights and workers' rights. Crosse spouts the rancid rhetoric of the new right, a different conservatism than that which is practiced in the black community.

Mediocrity is cruel and the black Reagania apologists, like their leader, exhibit the cruelty born of shoddy thinking, limited intellect and I believe cynically self-serving exploitation of white people's need to be able to point to some good Negroes.

If black conservatives want to develop a constituency in the black community they should develop an ideology and a program and not merely parrot what their white masters do the right way.

NOV