Baltimore Afro-American

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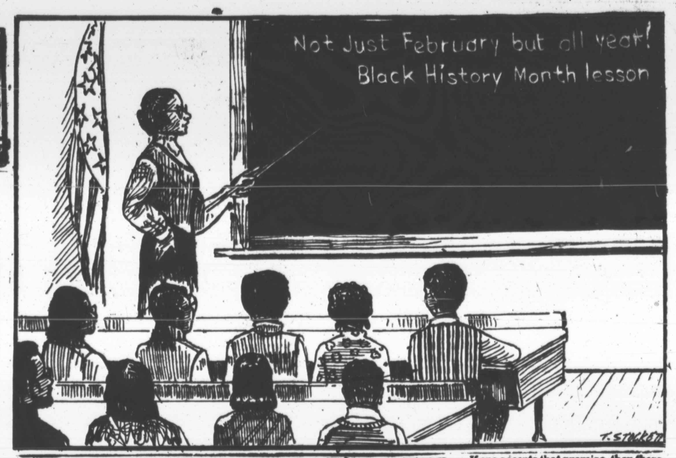


Black History Month

Black History month is a time for reflection on the many struggles that black people have gone through since they have been in this country and it is especially fitting this year that the struggles of Carter G. Woodson and other black historians be acknowledged.

Recently there was some danger that Carter Woodson's house would be lost to the Association for the Study of Black Life and History but the crisis was successfully met.

It is very important that we teach our young about the heroic figures and great social upheavals that have dotted the landscape of black history. They should know who the pioneeers have been, but it is not enough for them to recite a list of names and dates.

They must be made to understand that all the heroes are not dead and that they too can do great works for their people. The figures that we teach our children and ourselves about should be viewed as flesh and blood creatures who experienced some of the same feelings that we experience.

Black history whenever possible should always be related to family history to make it more personal for young people. Often families have valuable historical resources in photo albums and heirlooms in the home.

Black History Month is a time for families to get together to discuss their heritage and where they are going in the future. It is a hallowed time of year.

Parren J. Mitchell

International trade

If one accepts that premise, then there is little question that reducing the budget deficit is essential to solving that situation. While short term remedies are important now, we must now allow ourselves to ignore the longer-term issue of competitiveness of U.S. industry.

This country has traditionally been able to pay higher wages than other countries and yet still competes internationally because of superior technology. Because of its technological sophistication, the U.S. was able to command premium prices in world markets, and sustained a unique position in the world economy.

Now, however, low-wage nations that earlier were unable to challenge our products have been catching up in productivity and product technology primarily by using U.S. machinery and production methods.

Their lower labor costs enable them to undersell American production in many industries, thus the shift in U.S. industry and jobs occur.

Other contributing factors are subsidization of their exports by their governments, and cost-savings from being able to avoid manufacturing regulations that apply to U.S. production.

While many reasons can be given to explain why we are in a trade crisis, the brutal fact remains that millions of Americans have lost jobs; an estimated 250 U.S. factories in the textile industry alone have closed down in the last five years, and local economies have been devastated by foreign competition.

The hope that new and more rewarding industries will appear to provide higher-income jobs for the displaced American worker is fading fast.

The time to act is now, and whether they be protectionist measures or alternative worker assistance programs, there needs to be an effective microeconomic adjustment strategy and a complementing fiscal policy to place our economy on a path of sustainable growth.

Guns

The apparently endless series of handgun murders that plague Baltimore is creating a climate of fear and anger that result in more drastic measures being taken to curtail the slaughter.

Handguns are very tempting weapons because they are easily concealed and readily wielded by persons of minimal strength and skill. They have taken too great a toll of our young people in this city and something must be done.

A handgun murder took place in one of our schools last week and it is intolerable that guns should become almost commonplace in city schools according to some students.

The question of gun control is being debated in the City Council at the present time and many citizens are ready to support ever more serious penalties for handgun violations.

Some people are calling for metal detectors being installed in schools to prevent students from bringing guns into school building. It is a tragic comment on the state of society when students can more readily take a gun into school than take a textbook out.

Whatever the solutions that the City Council and school officials try to institute, the problem will not diminish to a great degree until there is nationally enforced, uniform handgun control. Municipalities are helpless to stem the tide of handgun crimes as long as there are some areas of the country with little or no control on the purchase and distribution of handguns.

In the past twenty years, the United States has experienced an accelerating loss of major industries and jobs partly or entirely to other nations that have lower costs, which usually reflect lower wage rates and standards of living.

The explanation for this occurrence was initially thought to be poor management and productivity decline in American industries.

However, it is increasingly difficult to apply that rationale in view of the simultaneous loss of so many jobs and so many industries in addition to the similar losses occurring in European industries.

These U.S. industries include steel, automobiles, textiles, clothing, shoes, electrical equipment, mining and many others.

The rising trade deficit, which simply stated results when the United States imports more than it exports, is threatening to go above $150 billion this year.

And, when coupled with slow economic growth, has provided the impetus for the introduction of more than 300 bills in Congress to restrict access to the U. S. market by foreign goods.

Opponents of this approach refer to these measure, which seek to place limits on imports of textiles and other products, as "protectionist."

They argue that protectionism by the U.S. could trigger retaliation by other countries, leaving all trading nations worse off, as occurred in the 1930's after the enactment of the now infamous Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act.

They would argue that curtailing imports from developing countries and others which are heavily in debt, such as Brazil and South Korea, could impair the ability of American banks to collect on the debt owed to them from these countries and further threaten the viability of a fragile financial system.

Some would even suggest that an economy regulated by the self-correcting laws of the marketplace naturally require an adjustment to be made, albeit wage rates and standards of living.

In recent years, we have seen the loss of industries and jobs to foreign competition put pressure on U.S. workers in trade-sensitive sectors of the economy to not only forego wage increases, but to even accept pay cuts.

While some of these arguments are not totally without merit, I would suggest that those who lost a way of life they have known for generations, will not take the matter so lightly.

Others have suggested that the immediate crisis in U.S. trade is primarily a result of the overvalued dollar, which makes U.S. products more expensive to purchase for other countries, and makes products from other countries more attractive to consumers in the U.S.

Letters

School Board nominations

This is an appeal to the readers of the Baltimore Afro-American Newspapers to take advantage of an opportunity given all interested citizens of Baltimore.

During a press conference on October 21, 1985 it was announced that the mayor had established a School Board Nominating Committee to accept nominations on the Board of School Commissioners, one of the most important governing bodies of our city.

This committee includes representatives from city-wide organizations who had been invited by the mayor to assist him in developing a pool of prospective members from which he could choose when filling a vacancy on the School Board.

The committee has developed the following criteria for applying for consideration as a member of the School Board.:

1. Baltimore City residents (Applicants must have lived in the state for five years and in the city for one year. Employees of the Baltimore City Public Schools are not eligible.)

2. Those who have demonstrated an interest in and a knowledge of the Baltimore Public Schools.

3. Those who are willing to give the required time for active participation on the School Board.

Any interested citizen may receive additional information by calling 396-1244 or writing for an application to:

School Baord Nominating Committee,
Room 349
City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Cleo A. Diggs

Wants more church news

Thank you for the bountiful ideas and good news which you have supplied about our people's accomplishments, especially average people who have used their creativity to make a contribution to mankind.

I have been very satisfied with my mail subscription which I have had for a number of years. Everyone, who has any racial pride, should receive the AFRO to be well-informed about actions being taken and actions that each needs to make as a citizen in this community.

I want to thank you also for the inclusion of more church news. Many of us are mainly interested in what is going on in the churches. We consider these announcements as pertinent information. May I suggest that you include a column of study on a Book of the Bible, chapter by chapter. Start with the book of Matthews, then Acts.—Just a suggestion!

People, in large numbers are mispronouncing this word when "Lift Every Voice and Sing" is sung: chastening (rod) pronounced (chase ning) with the long a sound, as in haste, waste, chaste.

Since we regard this as our Negro National Anthem, we want to sing all of the words correctly.

Bernice Bradford Lewis

Color changes at Labor Dept.

Insiders are concerned that a new pattern of practice at the U.S. Department of Labor is changing the employee makeup from black and white to all white, particularly at the upper levels.

The charge is that Secretary William Brock has surrounded himself with young conservatives who are determined to alter the liberal landscape which his policy on support of affirmative action had established.

These new, inexperienced ideologues are ordering reduction-in-force procedures that will eliminate all five professional Blacks in the department, and cut 13 more out of 25 planned staff reductions. The action is being taken without regard to established rules of trimming payrolls, all in the name of complying with Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act on paring the budget deficit.

The move comes in the wake of a warning by the National Urban League that the policies of the Reagan Administration are hitting hardest on Blacks. At a press conference to present the league's annual "State of Black America" report, President John Jacobs warned that the bottom line is "Hands off affirmative action."

Economist Dr. Robert Hill, a visiting professor at the University of Pennsylvania, said that Gramm Rudman will have a negative effect on the hiring, promotion and training of minorities.

Brock has been hailed by civil rights groups for his forthright stand on affirmative action in opposition to the attempt by Attorney General Edwin Meese to roll back the legislation of the past that has helped blacks to move out of the poverty trap.

Lately, however, the Secretary seems to be bowing to the right, some say under pressure from the White House. Brock has been pre-occupied with the long illness and death of his wife, and has turned over much of the direction of the agency to underlings who are all white male conservatives.

Recently, while department employees were holding their commemoration of the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the Undersecretary deliberately convened a staff meeting of presidential appointees, even while Brock, himself, was participating in the program. Blacks in the department say this was a calculated snub of the slain civil rights leader.

When the Women's Bureau observed its 65th anniversary last November, the video of the historical role which women have played in the workforce was a highlight of the one-day conference.

It gave special attention to black and Hispanic women. While the film was applauded as a much-needed factual presentation of progress in race relations and women's rights in America, it displeased some of the top officials in the department.

To date, it has not been released, as planned, to public television and other sources. Meanwhile, pressure has been put on the bureau director, Mrs. Lenore Cole Alexander, to resign her post, with the position to be taken over by a white woman who has the blessing of the ultra-conservative Heritage Foundation.

Mrs. Alexander, is the wife of T.M. Alexander, well-known in business circles, here and in Atlanta. Both are life-long Republicans and were supporters of Ronald Reagan. Alexander has long been prominent in black Republican councils. Mrs. Alexander is one of the highest black appointees in the Reagan Administration.

The only other black woman with similar rank is Stephanie Lee Miller, assistance secretary of Health and Human Services for Public Affairs.

JIM MITCHELL

Anthony Armstrong

Two guns

This is the story of two guns. Both were made in America; one is a .357 Magnum, the other a cheap Saturday night special. Both are looking for respectability; neither has a mandate to do anything not ordered by its "triggerman." One gun calls itself, simply, 357; the 'other is known as Thrill.

Thrill is a peaceful gun, in fact it has never been fired. 357, on the other hand, already has three notches on it, the results of three different firings. Each firing was in the twisted defense of its owner, a 19-year-old "stick-up artist."

Each one has saddened 357 because the reason for his use has never been made clear to him.

He thought his mission was protection. As things have developed, all he has been asked to do is to fire on innocent and helpless people.

Thrill, 357's smaller buddy, lives in a drawer beside its owner's bed; he isn't even loaded. Unlike 357, who lives in his owner's pocket, Thrill is only removed from the drawer for cleaning.

Thrill's stated purpose is the protection of the family and the property of its owner, against those who would seek to rape its' house and to harm the' occupants.

Thrill is a happy gun, doing what a happy gun is supposed to do. Yet, if you asked Thrill it will say to you, "I don't know what I'm supposed to do, I take all my orders from my owner."

357 is a "dumb" gun too, all it knows how to do is what it is directed to do. In the last six months 357 has been directed to fire, just "put-it in somebody," has been shown-off dozens of times, and been lent out three times, to a guy whose reputation is that of a ladies' man. 357 isn't happy about the events, it isn't sad either, it's just a gun.

Talking with each other one day, 357 said to Thrill, "Hey man, let's go out and shoot someone," Thrill, in a fit of rage, answered back, "Not on your life fool, I'm not doing anything of the kind."

To that, 357 responded, "Oh, yes you are, you just wait." 357 went on to say that his owner and Thrills' owner were friends, having grown-up in the same neighborhood. "Once your new owner starts to miss not having a Georgetown jacket, you'll get used."

One day a man broke into Thrill's owner's house and stole him. He couldn't fire because no human had pulled his trigger, so he just went along with his captor. Once in the street Thrill began to have a funny feeling, thinking that something was just about to happen.

Thrill heard his new owner talking about how much he wanted some drugs and, that now that I have this gun "I can get anything I want." Thrill did not understand.

Heretofore, Thrill had only heard talk about defensive things and never about being used to taking anything from anyone. He wondered if he'd even be able to fire under anything other than those defensive circumstances.

357 was out there too. He was far more worldly than his smaller counterpart and, had already been made accustomed to violence. 357 had shot a boy "just because I don't like him," was the word from his owner.

In one celebrated crime, 357's trigger got pulled and the bullet ripped through a lady's heart. All he could do about it was to hurl the Bullet upon demand; that it struck the lady was none of his business.

The owner, sweating with fear, shoved the gun into his coat and fled. The lady lay there in pain, bleeding, soon dead.

When 357 told this tale to Thrill; the little gun wanted to cry, knowing that killing helpless people was not the reason for their existence. He tried, in his inanimate way, to talk with .357, but to no avail.

Thrill thought it so strange that 357 didn't even shed a tear. When Thrill asked 357 why, why? The answer came back just as mute, just as dumb. This was not the world Thrill wanted to be in, not the role he had imagined for a gun.

357 just laughed, or it seemed like a laugh! The little gun, a lowly Saturday night special, wanted to cry but couldn't. Little that Thrill knew that he would have the chance to cry mightly.

Then it happened. Thrill found himself, one day, in the pocket of a fool; a lazy good for nothing fool. He was being taken, it seemed, back to his old house. He thought, "Could it be, I'm being returned?"

Yes, he was being returned but for a reason he soon would discover. He would be asked to kill his old owner; he wouldn't do it. He would simply not fire; this is the tale of two guns.

Samuel L. Banks

Black enpowerment and self respect

Each day it becomes increasingly clear that a concerted, systematic and concentrated effort is being made to make 30million black Americans a people of perpetual lamentations, misery and impotence.

As overarching and painful reality is that the majority white society that has, historically, created the socio-economic pathologies and "Frankensteins" is, "to a substantial degree," responsible for the racial and class dichotomies that plague our society.

It is unmitigated nonsense to blame blacks and Hispanics for their subordinate and tenuous status in the American body politic when they have been ancient and historic victims of institutional racism, exclusion, shoddy education and denial.

The tragic reality, once again, is that the victims of institutional denial and exclusion are being blamed for their wretched and marginal status by those who have denied them equality of opportunity, equal access and upward mobility.

What, in fact, the majority white society is affirming through its collective behavior is that 36 million black Americans, through no fault of their own, have been denied equality of opportunity for over 300 years, must now compete on an equal footing with whites who have enjoyed preferred status.

It is, to be sure, remarkable that the group spirit of most black Americans has not been broken in view of the anvils and weights imposed upon black Americans in the societal race for social, economic and political justice.

The national pullback or retreat on human and civil rights makes it abundantly clear that the acquisition and utilization of political and economic power, viewed as empowerment, must be focused on local and state levels.

In this conjunction, in terms of a local perspective, it is sheer nonsense to hear literate and knowledgeable black Baltimoreans bewail the absence of black majority rule when black Baltimoreans constitute a majority of the population.

There are over 450,000 black Baltimoreans, a clear majority of Baltimore's population of approximately 740,000, yet the black refrain persist: If We Only Had the Power. The minority white population cannot be blamed in this instance because the political power can be seized through the ballot by the majority black population.

Evidence of this democratic process of political empowerment is shown in the election of black mayors in Los Angeles, New Orleans, Chicago, Gary, Atlanta, Philadelphia, Detroit, Norfolk, Richmond and Portsmouth, Virginia, Newark, New Jersey and numerous cities and towns across our nation.

Majoritarian politics or the practice of majority rule was spelled out as far back a the Mayflower Commpact in 1520. It is not heretical for undemocratic for black citizens, where they constitute a majority, to vote their numbers for their own.

The recent election of Lieutenant Governor Douglas Wilder in Virginia did not occur because their had been a massive liberalization of politcal thought in Virginia, but a recognition by the holders of politcal power in Virginia of the potency and effectiveness of black political participation in Virginia.

The fundamental fairness and progressive leadership of Virginia's Governor Charles Robb helped, too, in creating an environment in which statewide candidates would be evaluated by the electorate on the basis of their ability and skills and not race, class and gender.

It is obvious and inexorable that the next mayor of Baltimore will, in all probability, be black. Black Baltimoreans must now forswear their fear, feelings of impotence and begin serious dialogue now as to what qualities and abilities do they want in the next mayor.

In my view, whether Mayor William Donald Schaefer runs for governor or decides to seek another term as mayor, the black majority population will seek one of its own. This development, I believe, will not occur becuase of any malevolence or animus toward Mayor Schaefer, but rather an enveloping and compelling desire to have one of their own.

Control of the political levers in a community will determine the degree of independence and extent of resources allocated for educational, health, housing and other human services. In short, control of the political process determines the quality of life available to the citizenry.

Black pride, self-respect and motivation will flow from seeing highly able, qualified and esteemed blacks in expanded positions of authority and power. Political power, high quality education, and a positive self-identity are crucial for black survival in the United States.

As we push forward for political, educational and economic empowerment, we must be strong and believe in the rightness of our elemental right to be fully free and equal in our nation. We come from a people, within the crucible of immense adversity and vicissitudes, have remainded people of boundless faith and spirit.

Dr. William E. B. DuBois captured this inextinguishable spirit over 83 years agaon in his prophetic and towering Souls of Black Folk:

"I have seen a land right mercy with the sun, where children sing, and rolling hills lie like passioned women wanton with harvest. And there in the King's Highway sat and sits a figure veiled and bowed, by which the traveller's footsteps hasten as they go. On the tainted air broods fear. Three countries' thought has been the raising and unveiling of that bowed human heart, and now behold a century new for the duty and the deed. The problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line."

Black empowerment will not just happen by idle day-dreaming or fantasizing. In this connection, I recommend that the Baltimore Branch, NAACP, under the astute and sagacious leadership of Mrs. Enolia P. McMillan, and the Baltimore Urban League, under the careful and methodical leadership of Dr. Benjamin Whitten, give serious thought to convening a statewide conference accentuating black empowerment.

Black academicians, scholars, political and civic leaders, religious and fraternal groups and sororities and the lay public would be invited to structure an action — program for black Marylanders who constitute over 23 percent of Maryland's total population.

We can accomplish a "Grand Design" for Black empowerment and collective self-respect if we will mobilize the will now. If we will truly believe it, then, we can achieve it now.

Political, economic and educational empowerment will bring Black Americans closer to "a land right merry with the sun." It is a marvelous way for Black Americans to act in the present and prepare for the future.

—AFRO SURVEY—

Should there be a Black History Month?

Victorine Adams

Rebecca Davis

Adrian Pittman

Robin Davis

Victorine Adams, community activist, "I think there is a need for a Black History Month. It's nice to have a definite time for it. But I believe black history, as far as social studies in school, should be studied all year round. Black history should never be eliminated from studies because it teaches the accomplishments of blacks."

Pamela McDowell, 32, student, "Yes, I think it is necessary because it gives blacks a little more recognition. It also helps to give our children a better understanding of who they re."

Jacob Chambli, 46, pastor, "I think it is necessary because young blacks need to know more about themselves. By having Black History Month, others will be able to understand us because they will be learning more about us."

Ronald Johnson, 34, clerk, "Yes, I think it is necessary because blacks need to keep up with their history. You have to know your own history. You have to understand your past so you can know yourself. Also it is very motivating to see the accomplishments of other blacks."

Rebecca Davis, 21, unemployed, "Yes, I do think Black History Month is necessary. Many people are unaware of the accomplishments of black people. I think it is well worth it to let them know."

Adrian Pittman, 24, student, "I think Black History Month is necessary. A person's history is his roots. Without knowledge of our history, we would be like a tree without roots. I think it would be significant to be taught every day. But, since it is not done that way, the month will have to do. It really should be constant."

Robin Davis, 27, buyer, "I think black history is necessary for the simple fact that schools are not teaching it the way it should be taught. It is important for us to know our heritage, where we were before 1986, and how we have progressed. I think black history should be taught all the time. It should be part of the total school curriculum, not just a one-month focus."

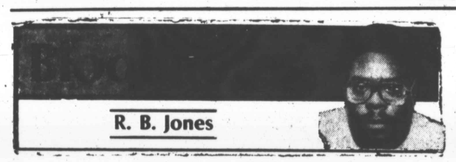
William Stewart, 39, truck driver, "I think that Black History Month is pretty necessary. The celebration of our history pulls us more together."

William Stewart

Pamela McDowell

Jacob Chambli

Ronald Johnson



R. B. Jones

Black manhood

In 1843 Henry Highland Garnett asked the piercing question "Has all the blood of our fathers run out of our veins?" David Walker asked that question 13 years earlier in his inflammatory antislavery tract "An Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World."

These two giants of the black abolitionist movement raised the issue of black manhood, not in terms of material acquisition, sexual prowess, or approval of the white power structure, but in terms of dedication to the liberation and development of their people.

During the slavery era black people were victims of the most brutal, overt oppression the world has ever seen. The only forms of relief were escape, rebellion, death manumission by a benevolent master or purchase by oneself or a relative.

Blacks were circumscribed in all areas of life whether they were slaves or free. Yet manhood was defined as fighting against slavery and protecting the black family. The annals of slavery are filled with black men and women rebelling, escaping, sabotaging and teaching their children that no matter how bad things seem, there is always the hope of freedom.

After slavery the new found freedom intoxicated the black community as members built educational institutions, businesses, social, political and religious associations and of course churches. They endeavored to make the most of their opportunities.

Our ancestors made great works that have often lasted up to the present,but some terrible changes have been taking place in our community and again someone must ask the question, has all the blood of our fathers run out of our veins?

During slavery black men risked death and dismemberment to protect our women from the abuse of white men. We fought overwhelming odds and vast distances to maintain contact with our families despite the separation of the auction block.

Now black women often look to us not for protection from external danger but as the source of their danger as they make their way through the city streets to work or church or simply to the corner store. The terror I see in their eyes on streets at night and the fearful clutching of purses when I pass them are very painful things.

An elderly neighbor told me a few years ago, "Back in the 1920s and 1930s, if you were on the street late at night and you saw a colored man walking ahead of you, you tried to walk along with him for protection. Now you better walk the other way."

Once the fear was caused by nightriders invading our communities but now it is us. When we are not terrorizing the women in our communities we are killing each other like animals cannabalizing their own species.

All black men are not that way. Not even a majority engage in those practices but the minority wreak so much havoc with near impunity that their acts are multiplied by our collective fear of these individuals.

We seem unwilling or unable to organize ourselves to restrain the weaklings who hide behind guns and shoot down young women who dare to defend their mothers with their bare hands.

Our politicians sputter platitudes and do nothing of any real significance. Their time is occupied with elections and posing as figures committed to black development when self-aggrandizement is all they are committed to.

Our religious leaders for the most part sermonize and bemoan the carnage in our streets. Still many of them are a bit nervous on the dangerous streets of Baltimore, despite the hosts of angels protecting them.

The leaders of business, education and fraternal organizations who have "made it" offer no alternative leadership. They try to avoid the issue of intragroup violence until it strikes them or someone they care about.

These blacks who have achieved the dubious "American dream" offer no values or examples of manhood other than a material acquisition and profit at any cost. These are the same values shared by young black males who put guns up to people's heads to acquire some quick money. If possession of cold hard cash and conspicuous symbols of wealth are what makes an individual a real man then it really doesn't matter how one gets those things.

Those are the values transmitted to our youths and that is the definition of manhood they have been given. Of course irresponsible procreation is an adjunct to this definition of manhood.

Still the question persists, "Has the blood of our fathers run out of our veins?"

We need to get back some of the values that our forefathers had dedication to; black liberation, perseverance, interest in building institutions, strong commitment to the family and a belief in the eventual triumph of the cause of black people.

These values will become instilled in the males in our community when they are taught and exemplified throughout our communities. They must become tangible for young men to see and identify with.

If our ancestors with little money, education or opportunity could become men of greatness and heroic contribution, how could we with so much to begin with do any less?

"Has the blood of our fathers run out of our veins?"

Commentary

The vanishing family 'Crisis in black America'

By Kelly Hill

Bill Moyer's two-hour documentary about the vanishing black family in America, shattered the glass bubble of Americans. The socio-economic status of America is out of control.

The moral issue of babies having babies is morally wrong, said the Rev. Jessie Jackson; and Eleanor N. Holmes said, "this is like no other situation in America and it won't be easy trying to change the current situation."

There is speculation that maybe redesign of the welfare system may be the answer. And everyone seems to agree that this isn't a racial or genetic issue but a social one. However, the perpetrating factors in the beginning were racially motivated.

One must ask why are our young black people unmotivated and why are they content with their current situation? A useless generation of young, teenaged, single mothers raised by "young single mothers" and grandparents who are also victims of being a single parent....leaves our society waddling in a tub of mud.

After seeing the documentary, there is no racial issue here, but a gender of people who are uneducated, unmotivated and committing genocide. A multitude of youngsters who are completely out of sync with the rest of the world.

Bill Moyer's documentary did not show the average black single parent family, who by the way, isn't on welfare. This rendition of the black family structure sat on the back burner since the sixties. Some 20 years ago, Bill Moyer brought this issue to light.

It was the redressing of a problem that was foreseen some time ago. it was a problem that was shuffled along through the years until the back burner couldn't carry the weight. The dressing used back then has a new shape now.... babies having babies.

Filmed in Newark, New Jersey in the ghetto, the documentary allowed viewers to see, and gasp out loudly, to hear the message that is being sent across the nation about teenaged single mothers and fathers.

A ghetto neighborhood filled with teenaged mothers from three and four generations. In the 60's single parent families made up 10 percent of the population. By the year 2000, 70 percent of all black families will be headed by single women and 30 percent of all black males will be unemployed.

Johns Hopkins University currently has program for teenaged single mothers and fathers. They have been successful in preventing a small percentage of second pregnancies.

The documentary showed a different side of reality. A young father with six kids by three different women, classified himself as a "ladies man." A father whose sole purpose in life is to be "the king" in his own world.

A mother who hopes that her daughter will get married and her sons will become "freelancers." Young kids living in a world that is oblivious to the outside world.

Hampered by the opportunity to migrate outside of their inner circle, has trapped many of them. There is no motivation within the community, and they have grown accustomed to their environment.

The high rate of genocide, crime and unorthodoxed practices, drug pushing and usage, is acceptable.... it is a way of life.

Musical lyrics depicting low moral values, low self esteem, drug confrontation and the mass media which has influenced their thinking behavior, knows no boundary in these communities.

High unemployment and a need to survive has created an environment of faultering youngsters with no role models visible in the community.

It is the black community's responsibility to re-educate and re-introduce a high level of moral standards and values. A drum must beat from every community in America. Government, citizens, role models and families must band together to ameliorate the issues at hand. You can't run and you can't hide.

You can't move to the suburbs or move to another city. Concentrated boundaries can't be established because if is a disease that will spread into any community.... it knows no race.

These young mothers and fathers are the victims of our society, caught up in a web of frustration, intertwined in a pluralistic and perplexing world.

The causatory factors have lead to a chain of reactions, tearing down the walls of a humanistic society whose initial reaction is to put it on the back burner.

Is the black family an endangered species? If so, let's hear every voice across the nation in unity.

Glenn Lowry said it may not be easy to change the moral values of these young people. Mobilization of values will be met with an opposing thrust. Sex education in school is the controversy negating stalled changes.

If moral values are to be taught by the parent, then where do you begin with three generations of single parents?

As the Rev. Jesse Jackson pointed out, "Let us not scrap those programs that did work back in the 60's.....Head Start, the breakfast program and educational school grants, but build upon them."

AFRO welcomes letters

The AFRO welcomes letters from its readers. Letters should be brief and must bear the writer's name and address. All letters will be given consideration for publication.

FEB 1986