Baltimore Afro-American

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Library closings

Baltimore, for many years, has boasted of the best and most versatile library system in the country. The Enoch Pratt Library has been an invaluable resource to this city and state.

The backbone of the state public library system is the Enoch Pratt Library and the announcement that the system will be forced to close five branches due to monetary constraints is disturbing.

Enoch Pratt has done its best to keep up with the demands of patrons over the years, expanding the visual offerings such as video-tapes and films to remain current.

Pratt has continued to offer enlightening panel discussions, and special events. Despite shrinking revenue the library has done its utmost to continue the kind of service that has made Pratt renowned. Despite these efforts, the library has finally been forced to schedule the closing of five branches.

As disturbing as the notice of the closings is, even more disturbing is the closing of two branches that service the Park Heights area. This will create an undue hardship for young students from that neighborhood who need to use the library for home assignments.

Another thing that has been disturbing is the relative passivity exhibited by political leaders and community residents. It would seem that a city with a high dropout rate and a school system short on textbooks would do everything in its power to keep libraries open.

A strong library system is important to a strong public school system and a city that can afford to subsidize privately owned, apartment buildings, nightclubs and hotels can afford to maintain a quality library system.

A city that dreams of a multimillion dollar stadium and a new professional football team, should have the fortitude to ensure that children of the city have the educational and cultural tools provided by Enoch Pratt Library to make some of their dreams come true.

Holiday season

With the passing of the Thanksgiving holiday, the most festive time of the year is here. Many people look forward to this time of year when religious holidays and secular ones bring merriment and reunions of families and friends.

Both Christmas and Hannukah arrive during this season, along with New Year's and the newest holiday to be celebrated during this season, Kwanzaa, which runs from Dec. 26-Jan. 1.

Kwanzaa is a nonreligious nonheroic holiday created in 1966 as a unifying holiday during the end of the year and the beginning of another. Kwanzaa was created by Dr. Maulana Karenga in 1966 in Los Angeles, California.

He adapted traditional practices from African harvest festivals and came up with ceremonies and concepts that cover all 7 days. Each of the seven days of Kwanzaa stand for a particular principle: Dec. 26 Umoja-unity; Dec. 27 Kujichaguliaself-determination; Dec. 28 Ujimacollective work and responsibility; Dec. 29 Ujmamaa-cooperative economics; Dec. 30 Nia-purpose; Dec. 31 Kuumba; and Jan. 1 Imani-faith.

This holiday which is celebrating its 20th year, attempts to create a holiday that unifies black people regardless of their religion. This is a noble ideal and one that should be supported.

During this season it is especially important to practice the 4th principle, Ujamaa-collective economics by buying from black businesses.

Letters

Neighborhood voting record

I read with interest and real appreciation your report of neighborhoods with high voting percentages in Friday, November 7th's paper. I am sorry to see that you excluded Grove Park which is the highest voting black neighborhood in the city and has been over a 10 year period. In the primary Grove Park voted 55 percent of the registered voters.

In the general Grove Park voted 78 percent of the registered voters. The main precinct is 28-2. Some of Grove Park votes at 28-3 which ups the statistics for Howard Park. Grove Park's vote is always over 50 percent regardless of the kind of election. (primary or general)

We don't wave banners about our voting record because we feel it is what should be done. However if you are giving praise to neighborhoods that pump out the vote, then please make readers aware of our remarkable record. We would not want Grove Park voters to feel their efforts were not important and our record begin to drop.

We do work hard within our community to keep voter registration and participation high.

HELENA S. HICKS

Black Needs Assessment Project

The Health and Welfare Council of Central Maryland Inc., Morgan State University's Institute for Urban Research and the Baltimore Urban League are to be commended for their collaborative, systematic and scholarly efforts in conceptualizing and developing the Black Needs Assessment Project.

The central focus of the project and report, "Actions for an Empowered Community, represents a timely, pertinent and trenchant delineation of the needs to provide empowerment and stability in Baltimore's majority Black community.

The chief value of the report is that black academicians, civil rights leaders, clergy, community activists, entrepreneurs and the lay public speak for themselves as to what is needed to energize 450,000 black Baltimoreans and to provide access to the socio-economic mainstream of Baltimore.

The Black Needs Assessment Project is a splendid framework to begin, belatedly, addressing nagging and visceral socio-economic and educational pathologies of longstanding in Baltimore.

It is up to each of us to take the 200 recommendations in the report and make them doable and concrete realities. It is now time for action and not rhetoric.

SAMUEL L. BANKS

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.

Anthony Armstrong

And one makes three

Chicago, in the Richard Daley era, gained the reputation of "the city that works." Richard Daley understood that local politics rose and fell on the simple, the mundane.

Though Chicago had become a city of great urban art, world renown skyscrapers (the city is home to the world's tallest building — The Sears Towers), the Loop, and more recently its Gold Coast: Chicago worked so well because Mayor Daley understood that the stuff of local political success weren't all glamorous.

The real strength of the Daley years was the ability to fill the potholes, clean the alleys, and empty the trash. For Chicagoans government was best when it was predictable, regular, dependable.

Governments, especially local ones, are something like icebergs. What you see is only the tip. What's below the surface is the real essence. Under the public face of Chicago, where the political mechanics do their work, are the gears that made Chicago and Richard Daley so effective.

The major part of that effectiveness grew from Daley's ironclad hold on the Democratic Party political machinery in Chicago. When Daley died a new cadre of would-be Boss-Daleys joined the inevitable scrabble to replace him.

A lot of the maneuvering to succeed Daley, and, more importantly to control the impressive Democratic Party machinery, was played out in the Chicago press. However, the real fights were under the surface out of the sight and glare of the public.

An inept functionary named Michael Bilandic tried first. He was swept under, after a brief time as Chicago's mayor by his inability to get the snow off the streets. Next came Chicago's first woman mayor, one Jane Byrne, who had been a Daley aide.

Her combative style, less than effective administrative skills, feuds with Richard Daley, Jr., the great man's son, and her insensitivity to Chicago's large black population soon spelled her doom.

These were mistakes of personality and individual political management skill. Yet, the real problem in the Chicago-after-Daley was more serious.

The Democratic Party, up 'til then the invincible Democratic Party, had begun to crack bellow the surface; and though out of the view of the public, these cracks were soon to tear that city's Democratic Party organization into little pieces.

Richard Daley, Jr., by then the Cook County States Attorney, (Chicago is in Cook County, IL) was itching to be mayor himself; this smashed into Mrs. Byrne's aspirations, which had always clashed with Mr. Bilandic's.

All of these people found themselves hostage to another man who, after the snow had stopped flying, began to write the blackest chapter in Chicago's recent political history.

His name is Edward R. Vrdolyak, and by this time it was he who had become the closest thing to a political boss, now that the master had past from the scene. Enter Harold Washington, surface all the cracks; get in the Chicago mayoral fray and, run right down the middle. Win!

Enter Robert (Bob) Embry, surface all our political stupidity; get in the Baltimore mayoral fray, and run right down the middle. Win! Baltimore is east. Chicago is mid-west. Baltimore is medium size. In comparison, Chicago is big. Baltimore is Charm City; Chicago is the Windy City.

Real differences, yet both cities have something very important in common: a group pushes its way out into the middle and lets someone, who otherwise couldn't, become the city's mayor. I don't blame Embry one bit for looking closely at a run for Mayor of Baltimore City.

His involvement in the race would not be racial either; instead it would be just good politics. No one is going to just leave the mayoralty of this city laying on the table. If blacks don't want it, and our brewing fratricidal war (between Mayor designate "Du" Burns and States Attorney, Kurt Schmoke) seems to indicate that we don't, then Embry has every reason to run down the middle and take it back.

Embry brings some formidable tools to the fray too. His background is strong, particularly in housing and urban development, and education. He is well educated, having attended Williams College (a small elite, expensive New England school) and Harvard University Law School. He certainly can't be called racially insensitive, and just happens to be a damn nice person.

His work in and for Baltimore has been major, almost of world-class quality when it comes to his tenure as Commissioner of the old Housing and Community Development agency. His service in the Carter administration gives him great contacts in Washington, D.C.; and there are many who give him the real dollar credit for much of Baltimore's rejuvenation.

As school board president he has, at the least, not fallen on his face. Lastly Bob Embry can command the money of a lot of people in Baltimore who have some very deep pockets. Being William Donald Schaefer's good friend doesn't hurt either.

Add to Embry's considerable talents as an administrator, a gatherer of federal dollars, a sensitive personality of proven concern, his seeming political skills. He has handled himself very well in the possible quicksand of walking between two black candidates, in a city with a large black population.

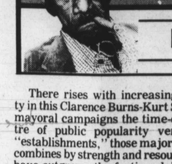
If he can continue his tightrope act through the Spring, Embry could well become the "I'm sick of these black fools so I'm not going to vote for either 'Du' or Kurt candidate. Should this occur, and it is not a far-fetched personality, Embry will become Mayor of Baltimore in 1987.

Were it not for our internal fighting, Embry might still become a firm candidate for mayor, but his chances would be no where near as good as the current set of circumstances allow. Even in a three-horse race Bob Embry is going to get his share of the votes, nothing will stop that. However, I can't help but feel that he must be feeling two emotions.

One would be his real elation at possibly being the mayor of the city he has so much to do with improving; the other would have to be a nagging feeling about whether he could have been mayor were it not given to him on a silver platter that we blacks didn't recognize the value of.

Platter or not, Bob Embry is there and a force to be dealt with. You can be sure that should he run, and every indication is he will, his campaign will be well managed.

You can be sure, also, that should he run in a three-horse race, involving himself and two blacks, he will win. The mathematics of Baltimore politics, and the penchent of people to vote for their own, will make three into one: Bob Embry.



Max Johnson

Political Viewpoint

There rises with increasing intensity in this Clarence Burns-Kurt Schmoke mayoral campaigns the time-old spectre of public popularity versus the "establishments," those major political combines by strength and resources that have outgrown the factions label.

So far, well-organized public appearances coupled with fund-raising drives would appear to be pushing Schmoke ahead at rather rapid pace this early in the race.

Independent sources have it, however, that Burns holds a wide advantage with tentatively promised establishments support, which could surface mid-winter with strong influential fanfare. The degree being dependent upon how tall Burns stands as interim mayor.

In-coming Gov. Donald Schaefer reportedly expects Burns to carry on his pending city proposals. Baltimore is Schaefer's baby, his nourished city that brought him national acclaim. To what extent Burns acquiesces remains to be seen.

As for Schmoke, Schaefer has long exhibited a noticeable coolness toward the state's attorney. And the personable Schmoke has let it be known somewhat more finesse-wise the feelings are mutual.

So, the two announced mayoral candidates have entered the next September municipal primary election with early opposite voter-support appeals.

Historically here, establishment candidates have been winners of key posts. An exception in recent years was the initial winning bid of Parren Mitchell to his (7th-D.) Congressional seat in 1970.

He won with more popular votes than organizational over the late Sam Friedel, long-time veteran in the post, who had far more money and backing of a strong political organization.

But Mitchell raised issues in his campaign, a lot of them. Burns may garner establishments' support, but he should be expected to address pressing city problems.

Schmoke is likely to lose much of his popularity, if he doesn't start talking soon about why the city needs him as its chief executive.

This scenario sharpens, however, as a new campaign possibility surfaced the past week — one that quite conceivably could endanger the election of both of them.

Reportedly, Robert Embry, recently resigned School Board president, is strongly considering entering the mayoral race, giving Baltimore voters a white candidate along with the two black ones.

Decision at point appears to be whether Embry — and, of course, his establishment supporters — considers an entry in the primary, or sees it more feasible to avoid that race and run as an independent in the November general election.

Should he choose the primary, it would likely raise among black voters the disheartening spectre of two earlier campaigns when blacks tried unsuccessfully to unseat Mayor Schaefer.

A few years back, George Russell, former judge, filed against Schaefer, and was somewhat nonplussed when Clarence Mitchell, a young state senator, entered the primary also. They split the black vote and Schaefer won easily.

Recently, the same thing happened in another campaign. This time, William Murphy, Jr., former judge and distinguished attorney, filed for mayor against Schaefer, and Mitchell showed up again as a candidate. Same results. The primary black vote was split, Schaefer won again.

Some early observers see a possible repeat of these situations, should Embry enter the primary. Not that Mitchell would appear again, but that Burns and Schmoke would draw just enough votes between them to allow Embry to win.

Embry is seen as a potent candidate even among those blacks connected with the public schools system. Circulating

Continued on page 5)

G. James Fleming

The Victor—the spoils

The Victor . . . the Spoils

"To the victor belongs the spoils" — the spoils to give and to take away, to distribute in any way the victor chooses.

Whether called "plums" or "Spoils," this practice is followed by all politicians, those engaged in governmental politics as well as those engaged in church and business politics; and, yes, those engaged in educational politics.

"To the victor belongs the spoils" is a creed adhered to by both those politicians considered upright and decent as well as those classed as "the other kind."

This sharing or withholding of the spoils, or of any political recognition or position knows no barriers of race, creed, or color and is indulged in by all who "play the game," most notably by those who achieve power in politics.

It has been surprising, therefore, that the members of the Maryland Black Legislative Caucus acted so surprised, and got so mad, because Governor-elect William Donald Schaefer and his regime plan to replace Delegate Larry Young as chairman of the House Environmental Matters committee — a chairmanship in which he has earned the highest marks for his committee's accomplishments.

But — and this is an important "but" — Delegate Young, for good and sufficient reasons, chose to actively support Schaefer's opponents in the recent Democratic primary. He backed the Stephen Sachs/Parren Mitchell ticket.

Delegate Young took sides, and his side happened to be the losing side — and he is now destined to pay the price. On the other hand, if the Sachs/Mitchell ticket had won, he would probably have been rewarded handsomely one way or the other. At least, he would have kept his chairmanship.

Nothing written here is meant as endorsement or glorification of "the spoils system." Call it reprehensible, if you will, but it is part of practical politics, part of the rules of the game. Sometimes, it leads to relatively poor people in high places, as evidenced by some Reagan appointments to the federal courts. Just the same, it is of the warp and woof of politics.

* * *

In democratic countries there is no divine right process of accession to office, or inheritance of office, or elevation in office, unless such is ordered by constitutional or statutory authority.

Senator Theodore Kennedy has had to face this reality; so did the sons of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and many others, lesser known. Several governors who tried for higher office have found themselves unwanted, sometimes by their party, sometimes by the electorate.

Of course, there is nothing wrong — and much very right — about the Black Legislative Caucus using and exploiting the Larry Young situation for bargaining purposes. This case should not be allowed to cause a loss to black legislators, as a group, or to the upward mobility of Blacks in politics.

Handled with political savvy, the Caucus does not have to lose clout, in the long run.

* * *

Looking elsewhere, there will be other distribution of spoils down the Virgin Islands where, for the first time since 1970, the Democrats have elected a governor and where, earlier, the Democrats won control of the one-chamber legislature, the Senate.

Alexander Farrelly, governor-elect and Derek Hodge, lieutenant governor-elect, both lawyers, both black, will name, in due time, all the top commissioners, the trustees of the University of the Virgin Islands, and the advisory board of the hospitals, to mention only a few of their political opportunities. They will have under their oversight public works, airports and the huge insurance business in the islands.

You can bet that, although the jurisdiction they serve is predominantly black, they will be rewarding only political friends and supporters and passing over or replacing those who did not support them in their race for the top executive positions. Such is the nature of politics.

LETTERS

History and 'Uncle Toms'

We wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes,—
This debt we pay to human guile
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,
And mouth with myriad subtleties . . .

"We Wear the Mask"
PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

Some young journalists, with their minds unencumbered by recent recollections of "from whence blacks have come" and with little desire to attack the onerous task of digging into the minds of living, indigenous "historians," are in an enviable position: able to stand on the sidelines, watch humanity's parade, and exercise their being created in the image of God, in mind as well as body.

They are able to listen to varied voices, filtered through their prejudices, and conclude the absolute rightness or wrongness of the actions they observe or hear whistling in the wind.

So often . . . too often . . these appolloan creators, critical oftentimes to the point of excruciating pain, are able to ameliorate or totally eliminate any personal affinity by coughing their accusations in the guise of "They say . . "

Some columnists have already chosen sides for the 1987 mayoral race in Baltimore City. Their attempts to portray Clarence Du Burns as an "Uncle Tom" a buffoon, and a "yes man" for William Donald Schaefer does not take into consideration the social and political milieu into which Burns was born and in which he was raised.

Formally uneducated black people wearing the mask of porter, dishwasher, waiter/waitress, shoeshine boy . . . all "Negro jobs," paying wages that only placed them deeper in debt.

They played the survival game: do what you have to support yourself and your family . . . without going to jail. They played the game; they wore the mask: smile . . . "Yes, Ma'am . . . Yes, Sir . . . Thank you, Ma'am . . . Thank you, Sir." Such people were crusading lambs, traveling a path where black sheep seldom win . . . except by their wit; so they wear the mask . . . and they survive.

So many young people . . . too many young people . . . live in a world which they see as being remotely different from the one in which the Du Burnses of the world lived and were nurtured.

During the 1960's when efforts to achieve equal rights for blacks were at their peak, Whitney Young, Jr., the late executive director of the National Urban League, was referred to as "Whitey Young" because his strategy to achieve the goal was less belligerent, less bellicose, and less destructive than that promoted and practiced by Stokely Carmichael, Huey Newton, Rap Brown, et. al.

He believed it was important to have blacks talking with chief executive officers in corporate board rooms; he believed he could help achieve the goal by conferring with President John F. Kennedy or Robert Kennedy, the U.S. Attorney General.

Here was a man who worked indefatigably, locked arm-in-arm with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the historic March on Washington in 1963, and he had pickets marching outside the League's National Conference Headquarters, carrying signs referring to "Whitney Young," in effect, "Uncle Tom."

Maybe, those who would seek to denigrate Clarence Du Burns by their "Uncle Tom" reference should take off their masks and punch holes where the peepholes should be, enabling them to see that while they may not agree with his tactics, while they may not like those with whom he has allied himself, he has been a stepping-stone for young blacks who have dared pursue their political aspirations.

For the first time in Baltimore City's history, a black man will be entitled to be called "Mr. Mayor." Along with him, black people should revel in his success . . . forever how long it lasts. He is a black Horatio Alger; he is a model for young black people to emulate and surpass. He is deserving of being called "Mr. Mayor" not "Uncle Tom."

There is little, if any, doubt that Burns will run for the mayoral office of Baltimore City in 1987. He would love to be the first elected mayor who happens to be black. If he loses, he will take solace in the fact that history will still record him as "The First Black Mayor of Baltimore City." (What an epitaph!) Without rancor, and with a smile on his face, he'll decide his next role to play. *Why should the world be overwise,*
In counting all our tears and sighs?
Nay, let them only see us, while
We wear the mask . . .

ISAIAH C. FLETCHER, SR.

—Viewpoint

(Continued from page 4)

among some early supporters are beliefs that as mayor he would give the system more attention.

Then, there is the Embry possibility as an independent. He could thus bypass the primary and face the winner of the Burns-Schmoke race.

Reasoning in this case, sources are saying, is that Burns and Schmoke, both with strong ardent supporters, would find the winner so polarizing the loser's followers he wouldn't get their votes in the general.

This reasoning holds that Embry, as a white candidate with far stronger establishments support, could win handily getting votes from many of the disgruntled losers in the Burns-Schmoke race.

The whole thing, should it develop, carries a loud and clear message to Burns and Schmoke and their supporters! Don't wage a campaign that will make both sides mad at each other, or even one side made at the other.

-AFRO SURVEY-

What is your opinion of Sunday shopping?

Reginald Combs

Salli Gardener

Lynee Gunn

Beverly Hunter

This week the question to the man and woman in the street is, "What is your opinion of Sunday shopping?"

Reginald Combs, 71, retired, "I don't do much shopping so I don't think it should be. I believe Sunday is a day of worship. When I was growing up the only thing you could do was go to church."

Salli Gardener, 59, customer service, "I don't feel stores should be open. I believe Sunday is a day of worship."

Lynee Gunn, 22, cashier, "I have no objections to it. I think it would be nice for the malls to be open on Sundays. You could just go out and browse or even shop if you want to. Religion shouldn't have anything to do with it. Religion shouldn't decide what day you spend your money."

Beverly Hunter, 33, youth supervisor, "I don't know. I have to put myself in both places. The people who are working and the people who are shopping. It's really hard to say—some people think Sunday is just another day."

Deborah Cooper, 32, aide, "I think you should be able to. Some people work and can't get out until Sunday. Plus, the Sunday workers get the chance to put a few dollars in their pocket. So it benefits everybody. I believe stores should be open after church hours so you don't offend anyone."

Linda Thomas, 35, student, "I think that would be alright. A lot of people don't have time to shop on weekdays. So this gives them the chance to do what they have to do. I also believe it makes more jobs and brings in more money."

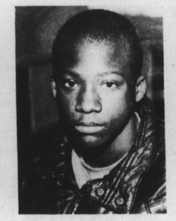
Nancy Childs, 33, school employee, "Sure. People work, some work on Saturdays, and the only day they have to shop is Sunday. So if you get off work late on Saturday you don't have much time to shop so that leaves Sunday."

Michael Gardner, 14, student, "I think there should be shopping on Sunday. I think it will make more convenient shopping for peopole who work all day Saturday. And it would be good for peopole who get off work Sunday morning who didn't have a chance to shop during the week."

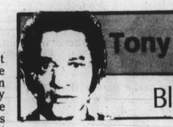
Deborah Cooper

Linda Thomas

Nancy Childs



Michael Gardner



Tony Brown's Comments

Blacks' commitment

Recent events have turned the spotlight on Worlds of Curls, a Black-owned hair care manufacturing company, located at 3111 N. Almeada Street, Compton, CA 90222. A Black executive of this company, along with a White executive from Revlon, insulted the Black community in a Newsweek (Oct. 13) article, detailing a white takeover of the $3 billion Black beauty market.

Blacks, Black pride and commitment to the Black community can drop dead, for all the Worlds of Curls' advertising manager cares. He simply wants Black peoples' money.

But like 20 other Black-owned companies that manufacture hair-care products, Worlds of Curls belongs to AHBAI, the American Health and Beauty Aids Institute. This Black trade association has developed a "Proud Lady" logo to identify the products of these Black companies.

If you know the products are Black produced, you will know that the firms are "deeply committed" to the economic stability of the Black community, the AHBAI argues. AHBAI's theory is that Blackness should stimulate the consumer to stop Revlon and Alberto-Culver from swallowing up the remaining 30 percent of the Black hair care market; the two already have 70 percent (up from 41 percent five years ago).

Worlds of Curls is Black owned, but does that necessarily translate into commitment? If the firm is committed to Blacks, why has it not fired (and made it public) an employee who contradicted what AHBAI stands for? Why has Worlds of Curls not made a formal apology to the Black community as Revlon did?

"Please note that the statements made by Mr. (Harold) Augustus were unauthorized by the company's Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Frank Davie, and do not reflect the policy or sentiments of Worlds of Curls Inc.," Lafayette Jones, AHBAI executive director, wrote.

"I would appreciate it if you would in future statements about this issue make it clear that Worlds of Curls viewpoint was terribly misrepresented in the article ("Targeting Black Dollars: White-Owned Companies Muscle Minority Firms Out Of The Hair-Care Market," Newsweek, Oct. 13). Worlds of Curls, like all the other Black Manufacturers of ethnic hair-care products, will not be driven out of this market," he wrote.

My response to Mr. Jones is as follows:

Your letter has added to my confusion about Worlds of Curls vis-a-vis the Black community.

How can I clarify the company's position? I have no idea what it is. How was Worlds of Curls misrepresented? Has Mr. Davie publicly reponded to Mr. Augustus? Has he repudiated the statement or fired Mr. Augustus? Are you suggesting that the statement made by Mr. Bottner was authorized by Revlon? Is that the difference between the Revlon insult and the Worlds' insult? I think not.

What, Mr. Jones, is the issue? Buying from Black people just because they are Black or supporting businesses that support the Black community? Black people owe Worlds of Curls no more allegiance than they owe Revlon or Alberto-Culver.

Although your letter is incorrect when it asserts that I asked two audiences not to support Worlds of Curls, it is true that I questioned how they could use one standard with Revlon and another with Worlds of Curls. Officials from both companies are guilty of racist exploitation in their utterances.

Simply put, Mr. Jones, being Black is not enough for me. I got my Blackness free from God; I don't need to buy it. What I buy with my money is commitment to my community.

Mr. Davie is quoted in Black Enterprise as welcoming Revlon and Alberto-Culver to a share of the Black beauty market. The vice-president of Luster Products, another AHBAI member, also shares this view. That seems to contradict AHBAI's position.

Another contradiction: Advertising Age (Oct. 27) reports that Worlds of Curls "is seeking an agency for its $3 million-to- $5 million account." Two Black agencies were invited to pitch, but Worlds of Curls "says it 'wouldn't rule out' " White agencies, Advertising Age concluded.

If AHBAI is asking that the Black consumer spend $3 billion with Blacks who manufacture hair-care products because they are Black, why should Blacks not demand an apology from Worlds of Curls (whose advertising manager said: "I'm not like the Black fathers with the Black pride and all. The bottom line is to make money.") And how can Worlds of Curls not hire a Black advertising agency

The Black-hair care manufacturers (AHBAI) have a problem that goes deeper than the threat from Revlon or Alberto-Culver. These two firms can only succeed with the help of the consumer. It is the Black man and woman who are determining the future course of this $10 billion industry.

And it is the Black man and woman who must be served, and whose community must be respected and financially supported, if the threat to AHBAI is to be dissipated.

Buying Black is not a support system. It is a slogan to take money from the Black consumer and put it into a few Black hands. Black hands that hand all of the money to white hands are no more beneficial to the Black community than White hands that hand all of the money to White hands.

Worlds of Curls, like some of the other AHBAI members, seems obsessed with the White market, perhaps, running the risk of alienating their Black foundation. An excellent Charlotte Post article by Jalyne Strong quoted a local expert who said that the problem of Black manufacturers in the industry began some time ago, when the Black manufacturer abandoned the Black dealer for larger chain and supermarket stores.

Isaac Simpson, owner and founder of Simpson's Beauty Supply stores in Charlotte, told the city's leading Black newspaper: "Black manufacturers sold out, rather than having tried to cultivate the small Black dealer." Simpson suggested that Black manufacturers are now expecting a loyalty that they themselves did not give.

That impression is pervasive — and growing. AHBAI would spend its time much more efficiently addressing this concern than asking Blacks to buy because the seller is Black. That argument lacks the force of logic.

I am committed to Bronner Brothers because it saved a Black farm; to Soft Sheen because of "Black-on-Black Love"; to M&M because it supports Black colleges; to Johnson Products because it sent 1,600 Black students to college; to Pro-Line and many other AHBAI members because they support Black people. I do not support any company, Black or White, that does not make it abundantly clear that the Black consumer deserves respect and financial support.

If Revlon and Alberto-Culver will do the right thing and significantly put back into the Black community the way they significantly take out of the Black community, I will spend up to 50 percent of my health and beauty aids budget with them, and encourage others to do likewise.

And unless an AHBAI member supports the Black community, it will be driven out of this market. Those AHBAI firms that support the Black community will be preserved by the Black community. Revlon and Alberto-Culver do not have the power to do so, but Black people do.

An apology and clarification of its policy towards the Black community from Worlds of Curls might be the AHBAI's first step back. If Mr. Davie needs a national TV platform to do so, I'll provide him with one.

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