EDITORIALS

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THE VOICE OF BLACK AMERICA SINCE 1892

Fathers' Day 1988

As we approach another Father's Day, those old bromides about "dear old dad" don't always ring true for those in the black community.

All too often, our memories of our fathers are vague. If one would judge by media reports of the thousands of female-headed households, one would wonder if most of our young are the results of immaculate conception.

In other words, there often is no father or male role model working to build the black family.

Often, boys with no other way of proving their worth will choose to have a child to manifest their presence on Earth.

But that unthinking act of showing the world what one is made of can all too often result in yet another fatherless waif thrust upon our community.

Fortunately there are positive experiences we can look to. Recall the television pictures of Danny Manning's father, cooly displaying his faith in his son as the Kansas star led his team to the NCAA championships. Remember Doug Williams, and how the death of his young wife left him the sold parent of a tiny girl, whom he has raised with grace.

And there are the countless examples on smaller scales and in less well-known avenues, where men rise each day and face the world on behalf of their families.

These are the stories we need to hear more, in order to convince our youth that having children is not in itself an act of fatherhood. Rather, it is the first step in a life-long process which could make or break another human being.

In a race which has been on the adversarial end of society since its inception on these shores, we can ill afford to propagate sons who don't know their fathers, and daughters yearning for male guidance.

Let us all pledge ourselves to being better fathers to our own broods and serving as role models for that great bereft body of boys and girls who have never known a Dad.

Ruth Jenkins

SOB SISTER

Union Station perils

Charity should begin at home. So should superpower care, concern, consideration and commitment. And correction.

All of these must begin with communication. So we hereby communicate a home concern to President Reagan. With congratulations on the relative success of the summit meeting with Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev.

He helped lay "A constructive basis to addressing not only the problems of the present, but of tomorrow and the next century." And championed human rights.

He did this in Moscow. We wish he would exert such interest and energy in Washington. To its problems in general. And to the subject of our gripe, in particular.

In this regard, we wish that the Reagans could have come back to D.C. by railroad train. And have to suffer the indignities of Union Station, like us ordinary passengers. And the thousands of unsuspecting vacationers lured to the nation's capital by patriotism, p.r. and historical hype.

Amtrak's travel route along the eastern seaboard includes many terminals where the rider makes only one step from coach to an abutting platform. But not in Washington.

There he faces grievous hindrances and hassles. Especially if he's loaded down with luggage. To alight there, he has to descend a hazarous set of narrow train steps. But that's not the half of it.

Also at many junctions along this route, the passenger is discharged at least within a mile of a station entrance. But not in Washington.

There he is hustled out onto a platform in far afield. Doorway to his destination is hardly discernable in the distance. That requires quite a trek. But even that is not the half of it.

More often than not, his train has arrived on a track not served by escalator to street level. If he lucked up on a platform which has moving stairs, two-to-one the contraption is not running.

Probably afraid that teenagers' untied tennis-shoe laces might get caught in the cracks. Store escalators used to be wary of high-heel wearers, but now sneakers cause different concerns.

Well now the passenger is confronted by a two - flight steep stairway. So El Cheapo Traveler may decide to prioritize health over wealth. And surrender his weekend bag to a latecomer Red Cap who is lolling nearby trying not to gloat.

True, the baggage claim check says "Free Red Cap Service." Now isn't that cute! Especially in Washington where only hot air is free—and not even that, come cold weather.

So the passenger huffs and puffs up the two flights of stairs. To a landing sadly lacking breathing apparatus and paramedics. Still not within hollering distance, the waiting room is hidden by detour partitions.

When he finally trudges into that area, he snarls at family and friends who came to greet him. 'Cause now he's just reached the half of it. They still have to conquer the under-construction hallway maze leading to the street.

Folks trying to flee town have to overcome this ordeal in reverse. They miss many a train that way.

We resent being forced to undertake this unheralded and unceremonious walkathon. When we want to do an athletic stint, we'll adopt a charitable cause, conduct a press conference, and don shorts and sneakers.

Sitting on his marble high chair, the Lincoln Memorial statute just might be musing about Union Station.

They say he wrote his Gettysburg address aboard a train. No way such inspirational thoughts could surmount the stress of today's terminal.

Maybe that's why latter-day presidents adopted less taxing modes of travel. Self preservation. And not even hardy Secret Service henchmen take kindly to hardships.

A dozen or so years ago, Washington's rail shed was at least tolerable. But even though it wasn't 'broke,' the powers-that-be decided to 'fix it' for the nation's Bicentennial Celebration. It has been intolerable.

If we want world leaders
To due-respect this nation,
Don't let them come to visit
By way of Union Station

Les Payne

Richard Green — a no nonsense educator

It was the third inning of the Mets game when I pitched the New York City schools chancellor the question about Joe Clark, America's sweetheart school principal with the Adirondack baseball bat.

Just as quickly, Richard Green, as is his way, fired the question back at me while we sat at Shea. We tossed it around until the chancellor said finally that he didn't think an educator should patrol his hallways with a bullhorn, to say nothing of a baseball bat.

Clark, the notorious "get tough" principal who runs a boot-camp high school in Paterson, N.J., has won the praise of President Ronald Reagan and his education secretary. The former Army Reserve sergeant, who when wrestling with polysyllables sounds like one of his expelled students, is currently the best-known black educator in America.

The most challenged educator, however, is Chancellor Green, who signed on three months ago to redirect the city school system. As in many urban schools, violence stalks the hallways. Classroom whispering, gum-chewing and spitball-throwing long gave way to crack-smoking, rape, robbery and gunplay.

It's a bull market for classroom crimes in cities such as Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Detroit, Los Angeles and elsewhere. With 3,528 attacks over the last 12 months, New York City schools' reported cases are shamefully up 10 percent.

A deliberate speaker, Green is a no-nonsense educator. To his credit, he is a professional at ease with himself, a man who cares deeply about students and who, given time and resources, could well turn the system around.

However, there is little evidence that the nation's largest school system places its priority where Green places his: with the children.

The almost totally politicized school system festers in the most racist large city in America, presided over by the most racially insensitive mayor.

Instead of the strong, caring and effective Green, they probably would prefer a warden such as "Crazy Joe" Clark, as he is called by his students.

And since image is everything in this republic, Crazy Joe, overstaying his 15 minutes in the limelight, has made the cover of Time, spewed his vitriol on CBS' "60 Minutes" and now Warner Bros. is shooting a $10-million film about his life, such as it is, with Morgan Freeman and Robert Guillaume.

America's embrace of Crazy Joe stems not from his ability to get students to crack books but to his threats to crack heads. Using questionable powers, the principal has suspended hundreds of students — "leeches and parasites," he calls them — for being tardy, absent or otherwise disruptive.

Such an approach, especially given the oppresive history of African-Americans, fails to meet the challenge of inner-city education. The system, in league with parents and the broader society, must broaden its objectives to include turned-off blacks, especially males, whose environment has not convinced them that education is worth the effort.

It is, of course. But society must expose these underclass youngsters — and they are not "leeches and parasites" — to the same system of rewards and punishments that inspire in others a zeal for educational excellence.

Parren J. Mitchell

FORMER U.S. REP.

Tough decision for black people

When I was a student at Morgan State University, the restaurants in a nearby shopping center would not let black people sit down to eat, for us food was on a carry-out basis only.

The then President of Morgan, Martin D. Jenkins, exhorted the students not to buy in those places. In effect, he was saying that it was better to suffer temporary hunger than to suffer a permanent loss of individual dignity. That was a tough choice.

I was reminded of this situation when I read that Attorney General Edwin Meese had selected a black man to fill a vacant position in the U.S. Department of Justice. This raised a very serious question for me. Under what circumstances should blacks accept employment with those agencies or organizations whose philosophy and performance are against the best interests of black people?

I think there is agreement that the ultraconservative, extremist, right political organizations are not in the best interests of black citizens. Should blacks accept employment and/or appointments with such organizations?

If those blacks really, truly believe in, and fully accept the tenets of far right, extremist, conservative groups, then going to work for them is logical, I suppose.

However, if the person accepts work with them, despite the fact that he or she bitterly opposes their philosophies, that is another issue. Is it better to accept a temporary hunger than to suffer a permanent loss of individual dignity?

Some blacks have accepted employment (or an unpaid position) with groups or organizations generally regarded as hostile to blacks. They justify their acceptance by saying that they plan to work from within to bring about positive changes in such groups.

They claim they are working on the Trojan Horse Theory, i.e., change or destroy from within. This may well be a wise choice, if there is one scintilla of evidence that change can be accomplished within those organizations.

Is it reasonable to assume that a group named "American Friends for the White South African Government," is in any way amenable to change? The very name of "The Mississippi Society for the Preservation of Senator Bilbo's Principles" clearly suggests that organization ain't going to change from within or from without.

The question becomes, do those blacks who claim they are operating under the Trojan Horse Theory really believe that, or is that used as a cover-up for selling out on Black people?

I can understand and sympathize with the person who takes the kinds of employment we have been discussing out of sheer desperation. Unable to find any other work, with a family depending on them, they swallow their pride and take the job.

During the days of open, vicious racism, blacks held jobs where they were subjected daily to insults and humiliations, but they bore these because their families were dependent on them—tough choices, but they had to be made.

Yes, the person who accepts out of desperation deserves our sympathy, but they deserve our condemnation if they become outspoken apostles, defenders of those policies and practices which are counter to the best interests of black Americans.

COMMENTARY & OPINIONS

MEMBER NNPA UPI

Ethel Payne

BEHIND THE SCENES

...Bits and pieces

Robert Parker, the former maitre'd of the Senate dining room, who wrote a book about his experiences, thinks that after his Michigan triumph, Jesse Jackson should have withdrawn from the race and obtained commitments from Michael Dukakis in shaping the party platform.

Also, promises of a role in key appointments and laid plans to run for the U.S. Senate from his home state of South Carolina. All this, he said would pave the way for a third shot for the presidency in the future, with a better chance at winning.

In 1986, Republicans controlled the Senate, but in the November elections, Democrats regained the majority. It was the black vote that provided the margin of victory in Alabama, California, Georgia, Louisiana and North Carolina.

The data shows that in each of those states, Republicans held a wide lead over their challengers, that is until blacks went to the polls.

In Alabama, incumbent Sen. Jeremiah Denton had a 61% lead with his rival, Richard Shelby trailing by 31%. Blacks pushed him over the edge by giving him 91 percent of their total turnout.

Alan Cranston, the incumbent in California, was running 12 points behind Republican Ed Zschau. Blacks rescued him with a whopping 96 percent of 248,210 turnout.

In Georgia, Wyche Fowler, was virtually written off with only 39% against 61% for Mack Mattingly. Blacks gave him 85 percent of their total 149,111. John Breaux in Louisiana had just 39% against the GOP's Henson Moore with 61%. Breaux was the winner with 91% of the total black vote of 209,626.

Former Governor Terry Sanford of North Carolina was painted as a liberal by Sen. Jesse Helms and was trailing Republican James Broyhill by 44% to 56%.

Blacks turned out and gave him 94 percent of a total of 136,953 votes.

The irony is that not a single one of the above has given Jesse Jackson their support who made it all possible; hence the anger that will stalk the Democrats this fall.

Habit for Humanity is another global concept that focuses on decent housing for people not only abroad, but here in the United States. Working with labor unions, the construction industries and private citizens, poor and affluent, the program is aimed at rehabilitating slum dwellings into more livable accommodations.

In February of this year, four former First Ladies jointly sponsored a symposium on Women and the Constitution. They were Mrs. Rosalynn Carter, Mrs. Ladybird Johnson, Mrs. Pat Nixon and Mrs. Betty Ford. Among the participants were Supreme Court Justice, Sandra Day O'Connor, Mrs. Coretta Scott King and former Texas congresswoman Barbara Jordan.

The Carters are still involved as Democrats in politics. They will be active at the national convention. Mrs. Carter is serving as Chair of the fund-raising effort, "From Your House to the White House," Thousands of Democrats across the country are being asked to host celebration parties in their homes on July 21, the last night of the convention. They will be watching the nomination by television and serving refreshments.

Each guest will be asked to contribute $10.00 that will go into a fund for financing the campaign for a Democratic victory in November. The goal is to invite 10 or more persons to each home and the money collected will be forwarded to campaign headquarters in Washington for distribution to local campaign offices.

Interested persons may write to the Democratic National Committee at 430 South Capitol Street, SE, Washington, D.C. 20003 for details.

NOTABLE ITEMS

For 42 years, Robert and James Paschal have operated the restaurant and hotel on Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive in southwest Atlanta. It is an institution in its own right, and it is famed for its down home cooking, notably fried chicken and peach cobbler. Mornings when you walk into the coffee shop, you are liable to run into famous faces who like to drop by for food and conversation. There is a regular bunch of kibitzers who occupy a certain corner to swap tall tales and gossip.

Robert Paschal is frail and has had some serious illnesses. He is never long away from the kitchen, however, because he likes to cook and to supervise the meal service. He may come out from time to time to greet visitors and "regulars." His brother, Jim, who runs the business end, has been trying to persuade Robert to come out of the kitchen into the front office, but he is content to stay where he is with the pots and pans. Ask him when he takes a vacation and he'll answer." I take two days a year to go to Porchville, and just sit." And where is Porchville? He grins mischievously and answers, "on my back porch, of course!"

* * *

Mrs. Coretta Scott King and California Assemblywoman Maxine Waters were among eight American women invited by the wife of the Greek Prime Minister, Margarita Papandreous to participate in a pre-summit conference last week to "have a voice in the all-important nuclear disarmament conference" to take place this month at Geneva between Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev and President Ronald Reagan. After a briefing by the State Department, the delegates left by the Greek - owned Olympic Airlines for Athens.

From there, they boarded a bus to take them to the port on the Aegean Sea. The two-day conference was being held on a ship so that the serious discussions would have no interruptions. Madame Papandreou is Minnesota born where she met her husband, Andreas. They have three children. Some journalists noting the Greek setting asked if politics would be part of the agenda with maybe a boost for another Greek, Michael Dukakis.

F. Gregory Newton

Educator

National crime: indictment

Crime in these United States, especially black crime, has come to be a significant reflection of the character flaw in the culture generally. When looking at the background of America's black crime, two probable causes appear. They are "racism" and "family failure."

One facet of racism as the precursor to crime among black folk is the high incidence of unemployment among blacks in a white-controlled job bank. Another facet lies in the slow deterioration of standards in public school education since the integration of such schools began in 1954.

Thus, poor education and therefore poor preparation for employment is not the fault of black students, but that of the system that administrates those black students. Thus, ill-prepared and ill-treated as students, many of them become the criminals who mis-treat the culture.

The problem did not begin and end with the system, however; for the family also must share in a measure of the blame. Children today are born to parents who are led to believe that they are not to control and dictate the behavior of their young.

Thus, they are bombarded with "children's rights," and cultural claims that young people have the right to do just about anything they want.

Girls, as an example, are told by the culture that they can tinker with sex, and if they become pregnant, can receive abortions without their parents even knowing about it.

The fact is, however, that parental control and responsibility for rearing the child should remain with the parent and be taken away from the system. It should then follow that should a young person commit a crime, the parent as well as that perpetrator should share in the punishment, either through fines or incarceration or both.

Finally, the justice system itself is a partner—culprit in the making of criminals and crime. In its attempt to demonstrate it is a democracy, the culture has given more care to the perpetrators of crime than to the victims of crime.

Thus, instead of maintaining a system of balance, it has tipped the scales of justice in favor of the criminal, in far too many cases. Two examples come immediately to mind.

One is the regular release of known criminals from convictions on "technicalities," or perhaps, the release from prison of convicted criminals due to a lack of prison space.

The other is the attempt to rehabilitate the criminal to the exclusion of punishing him for his crimes. Convicted murderers have been reported to live in relative luxury in prison dormitories while awaiting funds for college education or technical training, etc.

This of course has the effect of informing such criminals that their crimes aren't really all that evil, and are in fact forgivable.

Thus, crime in the culture is popular because crime in the culture can be profitable, or at least is unpunishable, and is oftentimes the result of cultural crimes committed against the criminal before he committed his crimes against the culture.

Walter E. Williams

MINORITY VIEWPOINT

Look before you leap

British economist Lord Peter Bauer has written a booklet for Washington's Cato Institute entitled, "The Disregard of Reality." In just 18 pages he makes more sense about economic development than volumes of reports by development experts.

Experts proclaim that poor countries face a vicious circle of poverty where poverty and stagnation are self-perpetuating. Accordingly, foreign aid is the only way to break it.

This is a self-serving melody sung by the U.S. State Department, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, U.N. officials, research grant recipients, and ungrateful foreign tyrants receiving American taxpayer largesse; but Lord Bauer says, "If the notion of the vicious circle were valid, mankind would still be in the Stone Age at best."

Throughout history people, families, societies, and countries have moved from abject poverty to affluence without external donations or foreign aid. In 1776 we were a poor country. And virtually everyone who came here was poor: the Jews, Irish, Germans, English, Swedes, Poles, Orientals, you name them.

When these poverty-stricken immigrants hit our shores, there wasn't even a domestic aid program much less a foreign aid program. According to today's experts, we could not have developed, yet we did, and one thing is sure, it wasn't due to foreign aid.

Lord Bauer suggests that Western guilt lies at the heart of some of our policies toward poor countries. He says, "Materially, the West never had it so good, nor ever felt so badly about it...

Guilt has contributed to the confusion between the merits of charity in helping the less fortunate and the notion that income differences as such are reprehensible results of oppression and exploitation."

Guilt causes the West to pour out lavish sums of money on brutal, genocidal regimes all over Africa yet single out South African rulers for special hate.

Whatever one may think of South African rulers, the fact is their killing of blacks is only a tiny, tiny fraction of that done by the rulers in places like Ethiopia, Uganda, Angola, Mozambique, and the Central African Empire.

Were South Africa's rulers, Peter Bauer adds, "....any color other than white, their conduct would arouse little or no comment in the West."

Part of the solution to poverty and stagnation in much of the world calls for at least law and order, private property rights, savings and investment, and an increase in human skills. These factors aren't guarantees of economic growth but they seem to be an important part of it.

Countries managing to escape abject poverty tend to have systems that foster private property, savings and investment, and development of human skills. Moreover, countries with higher income generally enjoy greater human rights protections which lead to greater incentives to save, invest, and learn skills.

We suspect that's no coincidence.

Ethiopia and several other African countries now hover on the brink of disaster. Western welfare has been like giving an aspirin to a cancer patient when radical surgery is needed. Africans must rid themselves of the leeches, tyrants, and kleptomaniacs who masquerade as African leaders. Foreign aid only strengthens the hand of oppressive governments.

The supreme irony of much of Africa is the inescapable conclusion that the average man was better off under colonialism than black rule. This irony would be doubled if, 30 or 40 years from now, a black South African can say he was better off under apartheid than black rule.

Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

Free Namibia

The anti-apartheid movement continues to gain momentum throughout the world. Here in the United States, however, there is a need to increase public awareness and support for the freedom and independence of Namibia from the genocidal clutches of the racist government of South Africa.

While I was in southern Africa recently I talked to many Namibians about the illegal armed occupation and exploitation of their nation by South Africa.

I also learned of eyewitness accounts of some of the most brutal acts of terrorism committed against the people of Namibia by the more than 100,000 soldiers of the South African Defense Force patroling inside Namibia.

Namibia is a nation the size of California, Oregon and Washington combined. Its population is 1.6 million: 95 percent African and 5 percent white.

Namibia is located on the southwest coast of Africa, bordered by Angola to the north, Botswana to the east and South Africa to the south.

Namibia is Africa's last colony and suffers from the continued imperialism of western nations, led by the United States, in unholy league with apartheid South Africa.

Since 1969 the United Nations has condemned South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia. In Namibia, just as in South Africa, blacks live under a legalized system of racial segregation and oppression.

They are denied all rights and have no voice or participation in the governing of their own nation. All rights and power are reserved for the white minority which is only 5 percent of the population.

Namibia is an extremely wealthy nation with many natural resources, including valuable minerals. Yet the wealth of this nation has been stolen by South Africa and supporting western powers.

All the Namibians I met overwhelmingly expressed their support for the Southwest African People's Organization (SWAPO) and recognized it as the liberation movement of Namibia.

SWAPO's crucial role in Namibia's independence struggle has been universally recognized in the international community. P. W. Botha, the ruthless president of South Africa, announced in April that South Africa would take "fitting and effective action" against SWAPO.

In response, Kapuka Nauyala, SWAPO's representative in Zimbabwe, stated, "This is aimed at silencing SWAPO and other democratic organizations in order to stifle the mounting opposition to Pretoria's continued illegal occupation of the territory." It is our responsibility to help prevent the silencing of SWAPO.

What can we, in the United States, do to help our sisters and brothers in Namibia and in South Africa? It is urgent that we publicly support the Dellums - Cranston Comprehensive Sanctions Bill (HR 1560/S 556).

This bill would require U.S. companies to leave South Africa, would ban all trade between the United States and South Africa and stop the flow of military and intelligence information between South Africa and the United States.

Additionally, June 16th is National Anti-apartheid Action and Lobby Day, when hundreds of thousands of people will gather around the country to protest apartheid and express support for comprehensive sanctions against South Africa.

While I was in Zimbabwe I read a copy of the Namibian newspaper. A front-page article detailed a vicious atrocity that has become all too common in Namibia.

It was the story of Rebecca, a young, 16-year-old Namibian girl who was riding her bicycle home from the market outside of Oshakati, in Namibia. Earlier that day there had been an explosion in town which killed 23 Namibians.

A truck-load of South African soldiers stopped Rebecca and interrogated her. Then one of the soldiers shot Rebecca at point-blank range in the stomach. Rebecca did nothing to provoke the attack.

After shooting her, the group of white soldiers stripped her naked and then drank beer and shot up into the air, while she was laying in the road, crying out for help. Four hours later a fellow Namibian passed by and attempted to respond to Rebecca's cry.