EDITORIALS

John J. Oliver, Jr.
Chairman of the Board

Frances M. Draper
President

Big 'bully' USA

One of the best ways to get rid of someone you do not agree with is to walk all over him with a big stick and proclaim loud and clear that your word is law.

This is the lesson the United States of America has taught during the past two weeks by invading Panama and loudly proclaiming it will arrest and try its leader, Manuel Antonio Noriega, because he does not think or act as we do. The "protecting our citizens" reason for the invasion has brought more condemnation than praise from other countries around the world.

Hate mongers in the United States have watched their country take on the role of bully and decided that they will go and do likewise. The results have been increased tensions among races, deadly letter bombing of offices of civil rights fighters and even pickets at the NAACP National Headquarters in Baltimore who blatantly carried a sign reading "Bomb Benny".

On the one hand the country rushed with guns, tanks, airplanes and deadly missles to "protect" its citizens abroad at the same time creating a climate for hate right in its own backyard.

The fact that more than one half of the citizens of the United States approved of the war action taken by President George Bush does not make it right.

Being the biggest fish in the pond may tempt someone to throw his weight around and bend the law to fit his own agenda, but it should always be remembered that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

Spring is coming

Cold weather has its good and bad points but to easterners and southerners who are used to milder temperatures, cold weather means misery.But it doesn't have to be this way.

In areas where it gets cold in September and stays that way until late in May — and even sometimes through June — cold weather is taken for granted. And people in these areas do go about their every day life without too much struggle or complaining.

In those northern areas you learn to put on layers of clothes, wear sweaters around the house and keep your boots well lined with either cloth or paper. You also learn that man's best friends are hats, boots and gloves because if the extremities are kept warm the body seems to keep warm. You park your car near a wall or in a shelter, cover the engine with a blanket and make sure every nook and cranny is stuffed to keep out the cold.

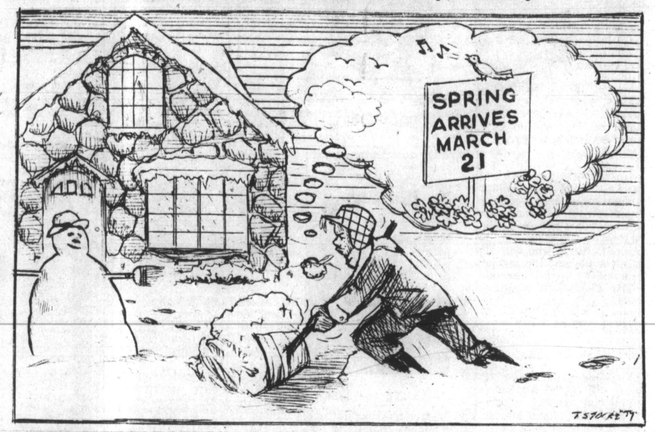
People in northern climates also treat their homes differently. They believe in storm windows, heavy curtains, and opening the front door as little as possible. They also follow the guidelines of their gas and electric company by closing off unused rooms. But you easterners and southerners know all of this. You just forgot it when those below zero temperatures hit.

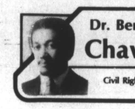
If you are honest with yourself, you also discovered that once it stayed cold day after day you soon got used to the weather and hurried to do your daily chores while the sun shone. That's the good thing about cold weather. It keeps one moving at a faster pace and you get more things done.

Yes, cold weather can be miserable for hundreds of reasons but since it's not going away, join your northern brothers and just take it as it comes. Remember,it won't stay cold forever and you'll appreciate spring more when it arrives.

That, after all, is really the good side. Spring IS coming.

Second coldest December in city's history





Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.
Civil Rights Journal

Justice movements

December 1989 marked the 51st anniversary of the founding of the "Southern Conference Movement" for racial and economic justice which was initiated in Birmingham, Alabama. The history of the freedom and justice movements in this nation is extremely important. We must not allow this history to get lost.

It was in 1938 that 1,500 people from across the South, African-American and Anglo-American, dared to come to the heart of Dixieland to form a multi-racial social action, regional organization known as the Southern Conference for Human Welfare (SCHW). At the time of this meeting, Birmingham was a literal racist police state which forbade under the law African-Americans and Anglo-Americans from even being in the same room together no matter what the purpose or auspices of the gathering. There were many labor organizers who also dared to attend the founding meeting of Southern Conference for Human Welfare. This organization mobilized around the quest for a true democracy in the South by challenging the vestiges of Jim Crow racism.

Out of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare movement, grew the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF) in 1948 which worked for over 25 years in the deep South to bring movement activists together to support "people's movements" in the South for racial, labor and human rights. One of the important historical understandings of the freedom movement in this country has been the "continuity" of the evolution of multi-racial coalitions known by many different names, but maintaining the basic principle of "grassroots organizing as the fundamental means of challenging and transforming American society for social, racial and economic justice."

When the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was established in Raleigh, North Carolina in the 1960's, the Southern Conference Educational Fund was one of the main Southwide multi-racial coalitions that openly supported SNCC financially and politically. Names of leaders like Joe Gelders, Jim Dombrowski, Aubrey Williams, Carl and Anne Braden, and Fred Shuttlesworth were important forces that forged an essential part of the foundation of the evolution of the Southern freedom movement.

While the list of all of the names of the persons who have given themselves to the struggle in the South is much too long to mention here, it is important that we pause to salute the thousands of named and unnamed persons who have participated in the various struggles in the Southland of this nation. If there is to be a new South and if there is to be a new nation where economic and racial justice are realities for all citizens, then the one thing we have already learned is that the struggle must continue. And the struggle can only continue effectively to the extent to which multi-racial and multi-generational grassroots movements are organized, maintained and mobilized.

BLACK POLITICS IN VIRGINIA:

Drawn battle lines

By Calvin M. Miller

Already the battle lines are drawn between the legal team of the certified Governor-Elect Wilder and the disgraceful loser Coleman.

Rightfully so, the Wilder camp is saying, "Let's get it over," — transition, inaugural and then getting on with running the state should be the only priorities for the new Governor.

The antics of the Coleman forces only cloud, distort and confuse this historical change in managing the Commonwealth.

While the entire world marvels at this great historical event (election of a Black Governor in the Commonwealth of Virginia), the Virginia Black community is exalted, joyous and filled with great expectations.

It is here, "with great expectations," that Wilder will solve all race-related problems, as well as others, is an over expectation and it will be unfair and it will interfere with the new Governor's management of the state.

Already, dark clouds are forming. Governor Baliles reveals a shortage of funds. A budgetary freeze on capital funds was called for last week. There have been numerous "small" articles cropping up in Virginia papers about the economic "slow down" in the Commonwealth.

The pending case before the Supreme Court may end up in finding the Commonwealth liable for over $300 million.

Prison problems, education problems, environmental problems, transportation problems, affirmative action and problems of public discrimination abound— these problems are intrinsic, of long standing presence and they were not effectively dealt with going back to Thomas Jefferson and all Governors who preceded Wilder.

The Secretary of Administration and the head of the ABC Board are probably the highest Black members of the Baliles Administration.

Only in recent history, oddly enough, beginning with the Administration of Governor Holton, did Black appointees begin to appear.

Of course, Governor Wilder will improve in this area. But, there will be no absolute reciprocity and there will not be a Black Cabinet. It is a false expectation of the Black community.

Blacks Will not be appointed in numbers nor in positions that the Black community may desire. It is reasonable only to expect that the Black community, in general, will be seen in a more positive manner as Wilder: (1) Establishes his cabinet, and (2) as Wilder makes his approximately 4,000 appointments on various boards, commissions and agencies.

It is rational and proper to expect Governor Wilder to set a new gubernatorial tone. More Blacks should feel more welcome in the Sate Capitol.

Without attempting to prophesy — or even read the stars — it appears that the long-awaited 1990s will not be marked by great gains for the African-American. At least, it will be a mixed bag.

There will be more Black mayors in more cities throughout the country, but the gains will be largely in the smaller jurisdictions.

In the premier cities there will be tremendous primary contests which may end in White mayors winning back the top plums in New York, Philadelphia, Detroit, Los Angeles, Baltimore, and, perhaps, Birmingham and New Orleans.

In Philadelphia the mayor's terms are limited to two, but in all of them the internecine struggle among African-Americans will so split the Black vote that there is a good chance that no African-American will get a primary majority in a major party — a party that can win in the general election.

New York is so recent in the mayoral club, that it is too early to project the future of David Dinkins, the first Black mayor in the Big Apple (The same for L. Douglas Wilder, governor of Virginia).

It is difficult to even guess what will eventually happen in Washington, D.C., where Marion D. Barry is the incumbent mayor, and Jesse Jackson and Maurice Turner, erstwhile police commissioner, are expected to be primary aspirants.

Detroit and Los Angeles may see Black's succeeding Blacks; Baltimore and Philadelphia are toss-ups. Atlanta, Birmingham and New Orleans will probably hold their own as the Southern cities with strong Black mayors.

G. James Fleming
Public Affairs Commentator

'90s mixed bag in Black gains

The hand of change is certainly moving in the field of higher education. There are very few giants in these days, as in the day's past. The exceptions are Howard University and Hampton (now University) and, increasingly, Spelman College.

Howard holds its place because of its location, its being partly a branch of the federal government, and its broad-scale program in every university category. Its president-elect, Dr. Franklin T. Jennifer, is the first Howard graduate to be elected president.

Hampton holds its place because of its historic prestige and because of its good fortune in having as its current president, Dr. William E. Harvey, who has held on to his commission in the military reserve. This connection has opened many doors to Harvey and to Hampton.

Spelman's recently elected chief executive is the bright, articulate Jonetta B. Cole, who seems bound to be heard from, notably, this decade.

None of these presidents fill the national boots, however, of yesteryear's Booker T. Washington or Robert Russa Moton, both of Tuskegee, or a later John W. Davis of West Virginia State College, or Mary McLeod Bethune of Bethune-Cookman of Florida, and the New Deal.

Neither are there any great giants among the clergy. No great bishops, with thundering voices; no intellectual or philosophical scholars, akin to Mordecai W. Johnson of Howard, or Howard Thurman of Boston and San Francisco, or Benjamin E. Mays of Morehouse College.

* * * *

In the lay leadership of such organizations as the National Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the programs are still vital, but there is lacking the clout of before and during World War II. Again no giants; no A. Phillip Randolph of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and the March on Washington idea; no Walter White, no William Pickens, no Roy Wilkins, no James Weldon Johnson. And, where, oh, where, is the new Martin Luther King, Jr.

Perhaps the changes that have made the more urbanized America what it is today, have affected the nature, quality and distribution of talent and leadership. Perhaps the giant and near-giants are no longer in the public service vocations but are in the nation's counting houses and other corporations.

There is a bright light in two areas: Professional sports and music, classical and popular. There African-Americans are holding forth or are finding new, lucrative and important openings.

Ten more years to go! Only time will tell what the 1990s will really bring.

The Afro-American
MEMBER The Audit Bureau
MDDC NNPA UPI

COMMENTARY & OPINIONS

Walter E. Williams
Minority Viewpoint

Minority view

Let's get the definition of counterfeit. Webster's Dictionary defines counterfeit as: one thing made like or resembling another; specifically, an imitation without lawful authority, made with the intent to defraud by passing false for true.

Up until 1963, silver dollars, half-dollars, quarters, and dimes contained 90-percent silver and 10-percent copper (for hardness). They had serrated edges, called mill marks, to prevent fraud by people clipping off the edges before passing them on to another person. Mill marks weren't put on nickels and pennies since no one would bother clipping them. Dollar bills were inscribed, "This certifies that there is on deposit in the Treasury of the United States of America one dollar in silver payable to the bearer on demand."

That's all been changed. Today's dollars, half-dollars, quarters, and dimes are made of 91.67-percent copper and the rest nickel. They are copper inside with a thin nickel bonding and mill marks just like the silver coins.

You might ask, "Since our coins are mostly copper, why bother with the nickel bonding?" It's easy. When Congress set out to take (steal) our silver, they knew that if they minted copper dollars, half-dollars, quarters, and dimes for circulation, Americans would laugh them off as big pennies. But more importantly, Americans would have kept their silver coins, and traded with the phony copper coins. That way the U.S. Treasury wouldn't now be sitting on mountains of silver; American citizens would.

To pull off the swindle, Congress had to counterfeit. They had to introduce fake coins that looked like the real thing. That's why they added a nickel bonding and laid on the mill marks to essentially copper coins to make them look like silver. This is precisely what an unscrupulous grocery would do to pass off rotten meat — add coloring and spices.

Congress didn't swindle us just for the hell of it. They had both motive and opportunity. Let's look at it: Suppose you and I kept our silver quarters containing .1808 ounces of silver. With today's silver price of $5.65 an ounce, we could melt that silver down and get slightly more than a dollar. Melting down one of the congressional counterfeit quarters, at the copper price of 7 cents an ounce, would bring us less than 2 cents. If we calculated the value of the millions upon millions of silver coins Congress swindled us out of, it would have to add up to the biggest swindle in the history of man.

Article 1, Section 8, of the Constitution says, "Congress shall have the power to coin money and regulate the value thereof." That means Congress has constitutional authority to put gold and silver, recognized by our Founders as money, in a coin form. This constitutional mandate also permits Congress, as it once did, to issue gold and silver certificates because the bearer always had the right to walk up to the U.S. Treasury and demand the gold and silver that was held on deposit. Nowhere in the Constitution is Congress given the power to "create" money, that is, issue worthless currency in the sense of not being backed by anything, and force us to use it. Federal Reserve Notes, which we now use, are bank obligations redeemable in nothing but another Federal Reserve Note. Depending on its inclinations, Congress can print (counterfeit) as many of these notes as it wishes under the guide of monetary policy. Thus, your legal-defense tip for today: If you're ever brought up on counterfeit charges, just tell the judge you're engaged in monetary policy.

Getting back to real money requires that both Congress and the states remove all taxes imposed on gold and silver transactions, and eliminate legal tender laws. That way you and I could contract with one another in gold and silver or obligations payable in gold and silver, and allow our countrymen, who have faith in Congress, to trade in Federal Reserve Notes.

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Ron Daniels
Vantage Point

Society orientation

On April 4, 1967, one year before he was assassinated Martin Luther King, Jr. laid out what might be considered a basic mandate for a progressive agenda. King declared that ... "I am convinced that if we are to get on the right side of world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin the shift from a 'thing oriented' society to a 'person oriented' society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism and militarism are incapable of being conquered."

There is hunger, poverty, homelessness, disease, illiteracy, joblessness and environmental contamination in America because this nation is a "thing oriented" society. Profit and property are valued more highly than people and the environment. The basic ingredient in our progressive agenda, therefore, must be an uncompromising commitment to a "radical revolution of values." Human beings, human development and human fulfillment must become the principal reason for being for the U.S. political and economic systems. We must transform America into a "person oriented" society based on the principles of political and ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY.

In that context there are a number of items that should be included in a progressive domestic agenda as we enter the decade of the 1990's:

— A FULL EMPLOYMENT ECONOMY — America should be committed to setting humane national priorities which will generate jobs. Every person who desires to work should be entitled to a good job with good wages. Cong. Augustus Hawkins authored legislation aiong these lines in the seventies, and Cong. Charlie Hayes has introduced a bill which seeks to rekindle a national commitment to full employment.

— THE RIGHT OF WORKERS TO ORGANIZE — should be a fundamental right in this nation. Right to Work Laws should be abolished. We must halt the present practice of permitting/encouraging unorganized labor to undercut organized labor.

— COMMUNITY-WORKER OWNERSHIP — legislation should be enacted which would enable workers and communities to take over plants which are closed by corporations in order to save jobs. These more democratic business formations should be allowed to compete in the domestic and world marketplace.

— UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE — every citizen in America should be guaranteed quality health care as a basic human right. Cong. Ronald V. Dellums has consistently introduced legislation calling for a comprehensive universal health care service.

— HOUSING BILL OF RIGHTS — every citizen should have the opportunity to own or rent a quality living facility (a home) in America. Congressman John Conyers has introduced the Jesse Gray Housing Bill which is based on this principle.

— UNIVERSAL QUALITY EDUCATION — no citizen in this nation should be denied a quality education at the primary or secondary level because of the impoverished condition of the community in which they might live. Nor should access to higher education be denied because of the inability to pay. Universal access to a quality education is fundamental to human development and fulfillment.

— EQUAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN — all human beings are entitled to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." Sexism and discrimination against women is a violation of human rights and hampers the full development of society. Passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, an absolute insistence on comparability of work, pay equality, child care, extended pregnancy leave without loss of job, and the right to choose to have or not have an abortion are among the basic rights which must be guaranteed to all women.

— AFFIRMATIVE ACTION — African Americans and other minorities have a right to remedies which seek to correct the crippling effects of long standing legal and customary practices of discrimination based on race. The right of African Americans and other racial minorities to affirmative action should be inviolable.

— REPARATIONS - African Americans were held in captivity as slaves for centuries. Once "emancipated," Africans in America were expected to function and succeed in a capitalist society without land or capital. Black people, unlike the Japanese who were recently awarded reparations for their unjust internment during World War II, have never been compensated for the crimes committed against our ancestors. Africans in America are entitled to reparations. An education and economic development resource bank could be established to uplift the condition of the masses of African Americans.

Other crucial items on the progressive agenda are UNIVERSAL VOTER REGISTRATION to insure access to electoral political power; a right to clean air, water and atmospheric and ecological balance to PRESERVE EARTH MOTHER for this and future generations; and a TOTAL FIGHT AGAINST RACISM, AND ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION and oppression based on race, color, sex, religion or sexual preference.

Louis Luna speaks:

War on drugs

The ink is barely dry on President Bush's "National Drug Control Strategy" and already partisan bickering has erupted over how much money we should spend on the war against drugs. The President has called for a total of $7.8 billion. His opponents say we must spend much more.

Before we get into a bidding war, however, let's look at what the President's plan does and — more importantly — what it doesn't do.

What it does: The strategy pulls together the pieces of what had been a disjointed federal war against drugs. Reading the full text of the National Drug Control Strategy, one is impressed by the scope of the recommendations and initiatives. The plan doesn't just outline federal policy but actually knits the elements of the drug war into a coherent design. It covers everything: prevention, treatment, street-level enforcement, courts, prosecutors, jails, money laundering, public housing, alternative sentencing, interdiction and foreign aid. It is nothing less than a fully mapped-out battle plan for victory.

The strategy recognizes that we Americans often pay lip service to the fight against drug abuse but then act as if someone else should be responsible for solving the problem. The plan therefore explains vividly why we must each declare our own war on drugs and makes a convincing case for immediate action.

Look at one finding. Despite the drug-related deaths of young sports and entertainment stars, nightly news stories of drug dealers killing each other and bystanders, and years of law enforcement efforts and rehabilitation programs, 28 million Americans nevertheless used illicit drugs in 1988. Think of it. That means that out of every eight people you see (friends, family and strangers alike), chances are one of them has used illegal drugs. At any age, of any race or creed, anyone can be a user: your neighbor ... your grocer ... your doctor ... child.

Here's another finding: we're rapidly losing an entire generation to drugs. National surveys say that 60 percent of high school seniors have already used drugs. A Gallup poll last month showed more than 50 percent of students report seeing widespread drug use at **school**. It's not just older children who take drugs, either. By the time they are 16, one in three kids has been approached to either use drugs or buy them. One in 20 eighth graders has already tried cocaine. And about one in six 13-year-olds has already used marijuana.

What it doesn't do: It's probably more accurate to talk of what the President's strategy **cannot** do. The plan can't provide a magic formula to solve the drug problem, because there is none. Past efforts focusing on just one facet of the fight (law enforcement, interdiction or rehabilitation) just didn't work. Drug abuse is a highly complex issue, one that must be addressed through a multi-layered attack. The plan calls for that.

But it also recognizes that, no matter how comprehensive and well-funded it is, no drug program can succeed without the support of the American people. Perhaps that is why its call to individual action is at the heart of the President's drug plan.

Samuel Banks
Educator

BLACK AMERICANS AND JUBILEE 1990

The national celebration of Jubilee Day has poignant, cherished and inspirational significance for thirty - five (35) million Black Americans. Jubilee Day signals anews our fierce and irrespressible desire to be free, antonomous and enterprising people in our native land.

The genesis for Jubilee Day developed during the costly, painful and fratricidal Civil War which was waged to determined if the United States would continue as one nation or to continue, through compromise and colossal moral failure, the heinous and wretched system of slavery to co-exist. In the course of the war, although his "paramount aim" was to maintain the Union (i.e., United States), Abraham Lincoln made clear to the Confederate States of America, after the battle of Antietam in Maryland in 1862, that he would issue an Emancipation Proclamation with the purpose of freeing the slaves in the states of the Confederacy if they did not return to the Union before January 1, 1863. The Emancipation Proclamation received world - wide recognition significant, given its moral - religious dimensions, with obtaining the support of Great Britain, France, and other Western nations in supporting the goals and objectives of the Union throughout the remainder of the Civil War.

It should be noted in terms of historical accuracy that Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation which went into effect on January 1, 1863, the YEAR OF JUBILLE, did not see free any slaves in the slavocracy. The reason was that Union forces did not control the land where the four and one-half (4½) million slaves were located. However, the Emancipation Proclamation added a vital and powerful moral dimension which had immense psychological values slaves in the South and the 500,000 free Blacks in various parts of the United States.

The present celebration of National Jubilee Day represents a glorious and towering reaffirmation of 127 years of our people's determination, resolve and sacrifice to be full equal and participating partners in the American body politic.

Our efforts, past and present, have been just, tenacious and inexorable because, through it all, our hearts and minds have been "STAYED ON FREEDOM." We must now resolve, as we enter the vibrant and hopeful promise of 1990, resolved now in an age of high technology and cybernetics, to acquire the education, skills and added drive and initiative to secure our fair share of the $two (2) trillion - plus Gross National Product of our nation. The Gross National Product, for the record, simply refers to the sum total of goods and services produced in a calendar year (January 1 - December 31).

Throughout our nation after the ceremonial panegyrics, pyrotechnical displays, terpsichorean marathons (i.e., dancing), realing on succulent foods and beverages, alcoholic and non - alcoholic and the moving telling renditions of "Auld Lang Syne" ushering in 1990, a New Year and start of a new decade, attention will be riveted on the celebration of JUBILEE by thirty - five (35) million proud, resourceful and caring Black Americans. While it is true that JUBILEE celebration will take many forms across our nation, the LINCHPIN OR GLUE WHICH HOLDS THE JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS TOGETHER REMAINS THE SAME: UNFETTERED FREEDOM. Jubilee Day, in a transcendent and heartening sense affirms social justice, equality of opportunity and human possibilities.

In Baltimore, a joint Jubilee Day observance will involve the Baltimore Branch, NAACP, headed by the highly esteemed and widely respected president of both the Baltimore Branch, NAACP, but, too, the national president of the NAACP, and Mr. Samuel L. Daniels, the astute and perspicacious Grand Master of the Prince Hall Masons. This combined effort by the NAACP and the Prince Hall Masons represents a marvelous example of Black unity and cooperation. The planning committee for the Baltimore observance of Jubilee Day is headed by Dr. Calvin Burnett, the redoubtable and resilient president of Coppin State College, in concert with Mr. George Buntin, the very able executive director of the Baltimore Branch, NAACP, Reverend Dr. Marion Bascom, the revered pastor of Douglass Community Church and other distinguished citizens of the Baltimore metropolitan. The Jubilee Day celebration will take place on Sunday, January 7, 1990, at the Prince Hall Masonic Temple at 3:00 p.m. Dr. James E. Cheek, the nationally renowned former president of Howard University will be the principal speaker. Special attraction will include the lusty and splendid choirs of the All Saints Catholic Church and the Concord Baptist Church.

Baltimore's observance of Jubilee Day, I believe, can serve as a national model. There exists a felicitous amalgam in Baltimore which embraces children, youths and adults, academia and the larger community, sororities and fraternities, religious groups and the Prince Hall Masons and civic leaders, officials and the broader community.

In spite of the recent spate of bombings in Savannah and Atlanta, Georgia and Hagerstown, Maryland and a marked resurgence of purveyors of hate, intolerance, anti-Semitism and violence, Jubilee Day constitutes a luminous and steadying historical manifestation of hope, solidarity, pride and renewal. I hope, wherever you are in our nation, you will observe Jubilee Day.

In the exhilarating promise and hope Jubilee, I wish for you and your families a wondrous New Year and memorable Jubilee Day. You are expected to board the "Jubilee Train" on January 1, 1990.