—Bishop Brookins

(Continued from Page A1)

gage payments on the property fell in arrears. To avoid foreclosure, the property was transferred to the Bishop in exchange for his agreement to pay the arrears and assume the mortgage.

Bishop Brookins paid the arrearage, assumed the mortgage and completed the renovations on the property. Every aspect of the transaction was done openly and recorded with the County.

Bishop Brookins repaid the $336,000 federal renovation loan in full. The city government, on its own, forgave $50,000 in interest due.

Several years later, a politically motivated investigation concluded that federal poverty funds were misused. The city lawyers declined to pursue the matter, however, and the issue was dropped.

Enter the L.A. Times and the Washington Post with a decade-old suggestion that the transactions may have been improper. The newspapers ignored the fact that the training and education program was one of the most successful projects in the city at the time.

More importantly, they ignored the fact that the Bishop paid the loan back on time. Instead, the newspapers focused on the fact that the Southern California Conference was not incorporated. They imply that since the Conference was not incorporated, it did not exist.

Hogwash. A large percentage of the businesses in the U.S. are not incorporated. Does that mean they don't exist?

A random and informal poll of people in the community revealed, the overwhelming majority felt that the White-media was unfairly accusing Bishop Brookins of wrongdoing as part of the national move to destroy the Black leadership.

Bishop Brookins' response to this unwarranted attack was predictable: "It comes with the territory....I'm not going to get upset. They falsely accused Jesus, who am I to complain?...But I am not going to be quiet in the face of injustice."

W. Eric Cloud, a local attorney, is a member of the Washington AFRO-AMERICAN Newspaper Advisory Board.

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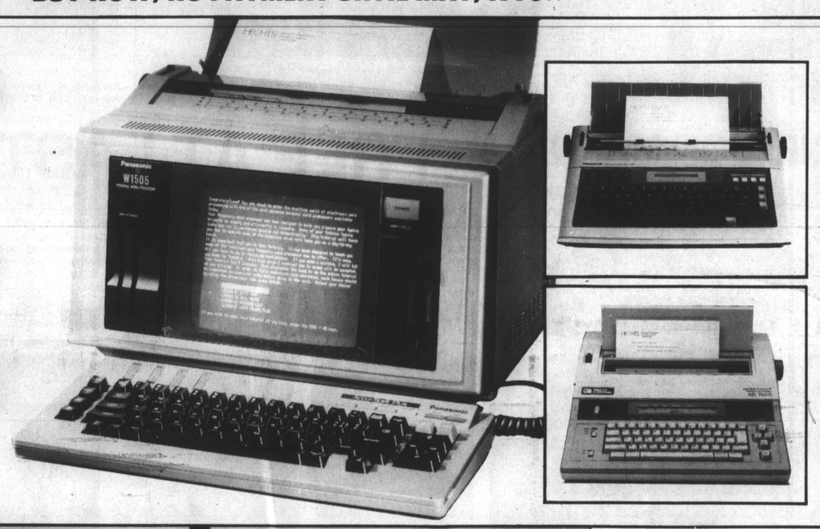

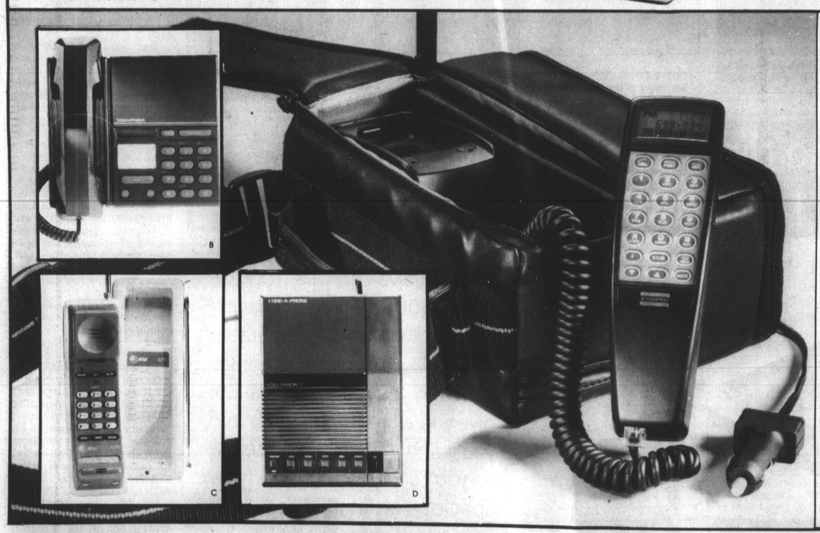

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The Afro-American Section B

METRO PROFILE

■ Lifestyle B2
■ Area Entertainment B4

Saturday, February 17, 1990

'FOR WHITES ONLY'

Remembering those days of segregation

Children acknowledge signs of segregation in public park in Richmond, VA.

Police Headquarters

By Hazel Trice Edney
AFRO Staff Writer

Young Allen Knight boarded the street car along side his mother who was a domestic worker as were many "colored" women in those days.

Dashing for the front seat, the boy was jerked into reality by his mother's anxious coaxing, "Come on . . . Come on . . . come on," as they scurried to the back of the car.

Mr. Knight, doesn't remember whether he asked his mother why they couldn't sit in the front seat.

But, Mr. Clifton B. Jeter, now 78, remembers the embarrassment and shame of having to explain racial segregation to his inquisitive 4-year-old, Clifton, Jr. as they also boarded a street car.

"I don't know how much explaining you could do for a child . . . except to simply say, we were kind of second class people . . . and we weren't treated like first class people . . . It was not just that we were separated, but we were treated so badly," he said.

Memories of segregation — the humiliation of being called a boy when you're a man, the degradation of not applying for a certain job because they don't hire "Negroes," the anxieties of having to use separate toilets, water fountains, transportation seat, and restaurants; and the shame of explaining to your children the tragic realities of "Jim Crow" — Those are the recollections still embedded in the souls of many Blacks today.

Though this is a new day, a day when many are bent on looking to the future, they believe we must never forget those struggles.

" 'Why do we always harp on that when those are things of the past?' "

Mrs. Bessie Taliaferro, assistant principal heard a student stand up and ask that question during a Black history assembly.

"Oh, they definitely take their freedoms for granted now," Mrs. Taliaferro said, recalling how she, as a girl would walk through the streets of the then all White, Randolph Macon College, "and I used to wonder what would it be like if I could just go there and get my college degree. But I never tried because we were always instilled with, 'You cando this or you could do that.' "

"We could be the things that were very safe for us, where we knew that we could get a job. But, now, today, you all can just do anything," she said.

But, the right to "just do anything," came only after the shedding of much blood, and many tears and lots of sacrifice.

"Negro" women, like "Negro" men, had it hard. But, the men saw it harder, many say, because the White man is especially fearful of what he could do if he were to gain economic power.

"The object was to take the manhood from the Black man," said Mr. Stafford Flowers, who grew up in Richmond, Virginia. "If they kept his manhood from him, then that would keep him down.

"You see, segregation hurt your pocket. If you don't allow a man to make a decent living, it's almost like putting the whip on him again, but it's just a different kind of whip."

Flowers' father, J. T. Flowers, who owned a brick - laying company, would not allow his family to unnecessarily subject themselves to the humiliation of separate public accommodations.

"My father would never let us ride the public transportation. That was his small way of protesting because you couldn't fight the power," Flowers said.

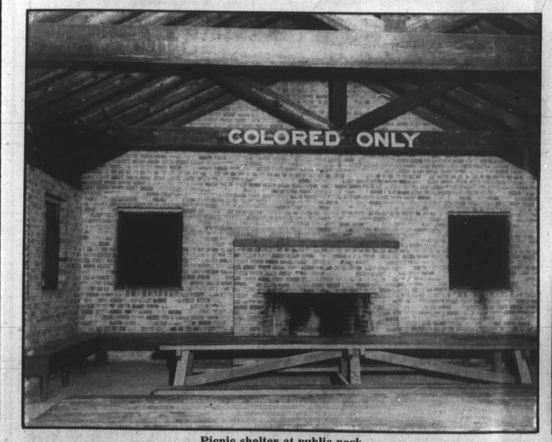
"We had to walk where ever we went . . . I walked two miles everyday to Armstrong High School . . . By doing so, we developed comradery . . . They were also the gold ol'days," said Flowers, now 65.

World War II (1941-1945) helped "save the Black man in the South" because of shipyard jobs and war-related work. "But, before World War II, it was terrible. It was hell," Flowers said.

These severe conditions of Blacks in the South were rooted in the historical "White backlash" as outlined in a speech, "Transforming a Neighborhood into a Brotherhood" given in August 1967, by Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"In 1863, the Negro was freed from the bondage of physical slavery through the Emancipation Proclamation, but he wasn't given any land to make that freedom meaningful . . . It was something like having a man unjustly imprisoned for 30 or 40 years and suddenly you discover that he's innocent . . . Then you simply go up to the man and say now you're free. But, you don't give him any money to get to town. You don't give him any money to buy any clothes to put on his back. You don't give him any money to get on his feet so that he can rise up once more as a man. This is what happened to the Black man in America . . . And so emancipation for the Negro was freedom to hunger. It was freedom to the winds and rains of heaven. It was freedom without a roof over their heads. Freedom without bread to eat. Freedom without land to cultivate. It was freedom and famine at the same time, and it is a miracle that the Negro has survived!

Virginia State Capitol.



Picnic shelter at public park.