# EDITORIALS

John J. Oliver, Jr.
Chairman of the Board

Frances M. Draper
President

## Desegregation case

Thirty-six years ago, May 17, 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court issued an opinion which changed the system of education in this country forever. As a direct result of the Court ruling, desegregation became the policy in far-reaching areas.

The opinion, delivered by Chief Justice Warren, held that segregation deprived children of equal protection under the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. The "separate but equal" doctrine of *Plessy vs. Ferguson* was said to have no place in the field of public education.

The years have diminished the impact and fallout of this momentous decision. It is accepted as a matter of course that equal opportunity (in principle at any rate) is the law of the land.

The *Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education* was the case in which a team of lawyers from the NAACP faced up to the challenge. Included were George E. C. Hayes, James M. Nabrit, Jr., Jack Greenberg, Spottswood Robinson, Thurgood Marshall, Oliver W. Hill, Robert Carter and Louis L. Redding.

A relatively unknown ruling by the court on Nov. 7, 1955, affirmed that racial segregation in public beaches and bathhouses maintained by public authorities was unconstitutional.

This is an example of the fallout decisions resulting from the 1954 school desegregation case. This historic case must never be forgotten, and any efforts to overturn the decision must be fought by any means necessary.

## Fighter Gus Savage

Cong. Gus Savage (D.Ill) is one of those rare individuals who too many people overlook when they are alive and then years later, after they are dead, the country seeks to honor. He reminds us of our national hero, Martin Luther King, Jr. who during his lifetime was called everything but a hero. Many of us remember when Rev. King spoke out against the Vietnam war and how many condemned him.

Now comes Congressman Savage who is outraged because every man woman and child in the United States is sending Israel $1,000 in foreign aid at the same time the U.S. government refuses to adequately house the homeless, educate our young or give health care to the elderly at home.

He fusses about the $400 million guarantee for Jewish people to settle in Palestine when we need loan guarantees for housing in DC. —and the fact that only one other congressmen joined him in a "No" vote does not stop him from speaking out.

He cautions that his outrage is not at Israel, which he says has a perfect right to lobby for funds from the USA. His anger is directed toward Americans who don't have sense enough to fight for their own well being—especially Black Americans.

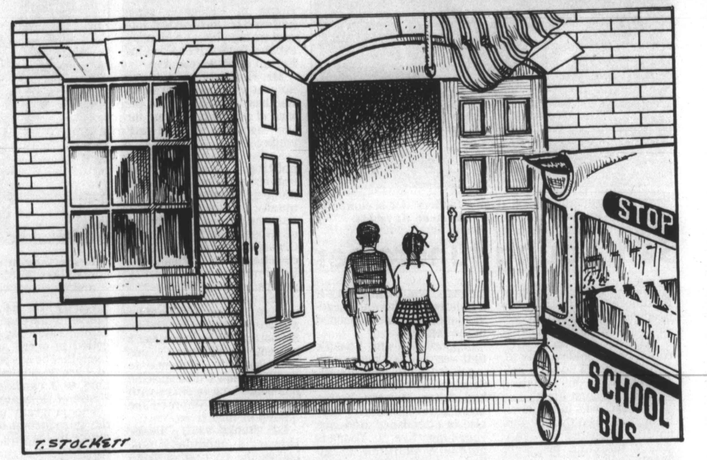
This Illinois congressman says he voted against impeachment of Judge Alcee Hastings because he felt it was "selective persecution." He was joined in this vote by only two other members of the Congressional Black Caucus. He called that vote "One of the most disgraceful incidents in the history of the Congressional Black Caucus."

"Selective persecution" is one of the reasons he gives for supporting Mayor Marion Barry in his present fight against drug charges heaped on by an overzealous district attorney.

Congressman Savage was one of the few congressmen to oppose the United States invasion of Panama. Reports now reveal that four times as many civilians were killed in that invasion as were military personnel.

To say that Congressman Savage has taken unpopular positions on key issues is putting it mildly. But a careful look at the record seems to indicate that here is a man who is trying to not only just serve in the legislature but to educate and agitate. He wants our people to know the true meaning of Democracy and he knows that the only way to call attention to this is to speak out.

We know that the Gus Savages' of the world are bound to be ridiculed by the press and so-called leaders. We also know that men and women like Gus Savage usually end up in the American hero category. That's what makes the country great. We encourage Congressman Savage to continue on the road that he has set for himself and can only hope that others will join him in his fight for a true Democratic America.




## Racist trends in drug policy

By Jeffrey A. Schaler

Most people seem to agree that in order to stem the flow of illegal drugs we need to address the demand side of the drug problem. Two questions need to be asked and answered here: (1) Why do people engage in drug dealing? and (2) Why do people use drugs?

People deal drugs because it is economically beneficial to do so. Crime pays.

If young Black men and women had good jobs or the opportunity for a productive future, they might feel a sense of confidence in themselves to succeed, a greater sense of self-efficacy, and would no doubt choose to ignore the attractive lifestyle of the drug dealer. But they don't, so they won't.

Instead of addressing these core issues our national drug policy directors focus on enforcement, imprisonment and accountability. We know this won't work. It won't stop the real reason that people become drug dealers.

By ignoring this reality and refusing to make it a drug policy priority, our drug policymakers are perpetuating it.

If racism is the cause of lost opportunity and feelings of low self-worth, then a drug policy that refuses to make the combatting of racism a top priority is a racism perpetuating policy.

Why do people use drugs? I've asked the question over and over again, to affluent suburban high school students and penitentiary inmates. The consistent answer regardless of race or socio-economic status is this: Low self-esteem.

As one high school student said to me: "Drugs are just self-esteem rolled up in cigarette paper." People use drugs because they feel lousy about themselves.

As one inmate told me recently during a tour of the Maryland State Penitentiary: "People use drugs because they have low self-esteem. They go through treatment and get better. They get out of treatment, and their self-esteem gets lowered again.

The trend in addiction treatment programs is to brainwash people into believing that the reason they use drugs is because they suffer from an incurable biological disease. The idea was first set forth by a man who's image now adorns the official emblem of the American Psychiatric Association.

In 1786 Benjamin Rush, father of American psychiatry and signer of the Declaration of Independence, first termed alcoholism a disease. According to psychiatrist Thomas S. Szasz, Rush was a "master of the medical metaphor, recasting moral and social problems in medical terms." In spite of this then purported love for Negroes ("I love even the name of Africa") Rush was a racist.

In 1792 he claimed to have discovered the disease of "Negritude." Negroes were Black, he claimed, because they had a congenital form of leprosy. He called the disease of vitiligo, a loss of pigmentation in the skin, the spontaneous cure of the "disease" he believed all Black people suffered from.

As Szasz points out, "Since this was a congenital form of the disease, the Negro remained safe as a servant, but was declared unsafe, and hence taboo, as a sexual partner. In short, Rush maintained that God created man as White, and if he is Black it's because he has leprosy."

Today, proponents of the disease concept of addiction assert that biological and genetic factors are the reasons for drug addiction. Alcoholics and addicts are "out of control." They are encouraged to join Alcoholics Anonymous and similar 12 step programs that insist the individual turn his "life over to a higher power." Often drug users are ordered into treatment for this disease by the courts.

Numerous scientific studies have completely debunked the loss of control theory of alcoholism, the basis for most biological theories for addiction. Meanwhile, methadone maintenance programs are spreading by leaps and bounds. Methadone is a highly addictive drug that heroin addicts stay dependent upon.

State governments, based on advice from the addictions treatment industry, has encouraged its use for years because it is cost effective, reduces crime and allows addicts to function as productive members of society. Methadone is called "medicine" for "treatment" of the "disease" called addiction.

Finally, it is worthwhile to note that at least 75%, if not more, of the federal research grants for addiction studies are given to those concerned with biological, not psychosocial, factors associated with drug use, in spite of the fact that many researchers around the country regularly submit applications to study these psychosocial factors.

As long as our drug policies focus on the enforcement of unenforceable drug laws and biological factors as the cause of drug use, then the real reasons that people use drugs, namely, the psychological, sociological and economic reasons for feelings of helplessness, hopelessness and despair, can be avoided.

If racism is operational in the creation of these feelings, then racism can be ignored — and thereby perpetuated.

Drug use is a choice, not a disease. People choose to use drugs because they find meaning in doing so. Until our national drug policies focus on the meaning that people find through drugs, they may very well be creating more of the problems they are attempting to solve.

# DO THE WRITE THING

## An angry grandmother

On Tuesday, May 8, 1990, my granddaughter was assaulted physically and sexually by three boys in the gymnasium of the Greenspring Middle School. I thank God that rape did not occur, but what they did to her was despicable and sick.

The staff of the Greenspring Middle School, in their fear of the news media and publicity, (to quote a staff person) handled this situation very unprofessional and without empathy or caring for the family or my grandchild. Their goal was to get us out of there as fast as they could.

I wish to compliment Officer T. J. Lucas and the Northern District Police Department for their attention to detail and in the handling of the case, although they couldn't arrest the boys. The boys were arrested by the school's security before the Police Department arrived and as a result of that, they were released to the custody of their parents.

Had the Police Department arrested them they would have been detained overnight and been in court the next day. One of the boys should not have even been on the street, much less in school, because of his juvenile record and drug possession charge.

All three boys have created problems in the school before, according to the security officer, but the school did not want to make waves with, especially one of, the parents because of the parent's attitude.

This school did not follow procedure in the handling of this case. An Assistant States Attorney had met with security officers sometime ago and gave them specific instructions about how to handle situations like these or situations regarding sexual offenses of juveniles.

They did not follow the procedure, they did not call the Assistant States Attorney's Office as they were supposed to do.

And so these beasts are out walking the streets, selling drugs, using drugs and awaiting their next victim.

I'm angry, my granddaughter has been violated and the school, Greenspring Middle, doesn't want a bad reputation.

JEANNE F. TAYLOR

## Funeral directors

After reading the May 12th, 1990 article, entitled "Council Bill to Focus on Funeral Parlor Practices," I want to provide some facts not given to you prior to issuing this story.

1. The city should reactivate the "Where To Call For Help Cards" Program. This program and publication was produced by the Mayor's Office. Its function was to inform ALL citizens of phone numbers of individuals and agencies to assist them with their specific needs. NOTE: Create a section on what to do when in need of funeral services.

2. There are various brochures available, i.e., making funeral arrangements, pre-need, etc . . . . We are willing to assist the city in developing such brochures. They can place them in the various City's Information Centers, as well as each Councilmanic district office to reach the consumer.

HARI CLOSE



The Afro-American
MEMBER
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# COMMENTARY & OPINIONS

Ron Daniels
Vantage Point

## Crisis in Black America

A few weeks ago Michael McGhee, a Black Councilman in Milwaukee, Wisconsin sent shock waves through the city when he vowed to use violence unless there was a more serious commitment to improve the plight of the inner-city residents in his ward.

Predictably Councilman McGhee, who is a former member of the Black Panther Party, was roundly condemned by the White establishment and some of the more moderate leaders in the African American community.

There were expressions of dismay that an elected official and keeper of the public trust could make such "Provocative" and "irresponsible" statements.

Needless to say, no responsible African American leader advocates the use of violence as the principal means of resolving problems or redressing grievances. Indeed even Councilman McGhee's ultimatum was articulated as a kind of strategy of last resort, and it had a five year deadline attached to it.

The councilman declared that unless the city responded to the demands of his constituents within five years, they would have no alternative but to turn to violence to achieve justice.

The ultimatum was a clear warning that the city of Milwaukee is sitting on a time bomb which is on the verge of exploding.

What the self - righteous condemnations of Councilman McGhee ignore is the violence that breeds violence. Milwaukee's inner - city ghetto is not the only Black community with a fuse that is running out.

All across America African American poor and working people are suffering from an intense period of the kind of violence born of overt racism, institutional racism and policies of indifference and neglect.

After a period of high expectations in the 60's and 70, Reaganism and Reagonomics ripped apart the so called safety net which was at best a fragile floor underneath the Black community.

When Reagan destroyed this floor millions of Black people plunged further into poverty.

Today one of two Black children lives in poverty; one of three Black senior citizens lives in poverty; one of three Black women between 18 - 55 lives in poverty; and Black men are in fact an "endangered species."

The greatest cause of death of Black men ages 18-24 is homicide/fraticide. The Black male college population declined by 46,000 over the last decade.

Meanwhile the Black male prison population increased by 76,000 between 1986 and 1989. There are now more Black men in prison than in college.

One of the key factors contributing to this escalating crisis is chronic unemployment and underemployment. The de - industrialization of America has stripped away a traditional base of employment for African American workers.

The economy is rapidly changing, but underfunded, inadequate inner - city public school systems are failing to educate African Americans to meet the requirements of the changing economy.

Hence vast numbers of African Americans come to the job market with marginal or obsolete skills; a marginality and oblescence resulting from decades, and centuries of racism and economic exploitation.

In a startling example of the destablizing impact of unemployment on Black males in particular, William Julius Wilson cited the following statistics in a recent PBS television interview with Charlene Hunter Gault:

In 1950, in the Oakland section of Chicago, there were 70 Black males employed for every 100 Black women. By 1989 the number of Black males employed had dropped drastically to 19 for every 100 Black women.

This statistic is loaded with devastating implications in terms of the Black family, the drug economy, crime, violence and increasing Black male incarceration.

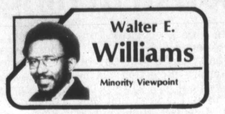
All of this litany of ills afflicting the Black community constitutes violence against a people. When the government fails to provide jobs for Black people, and hampers our efforts to create jobs for our people, that's violence. The failure to provide affordable housing and health care for Black people is violence.

And when America refuses to provide quality public education for Black people this is tantamount to murdering millions of innocent minds.

This is the violence which will inevitably breed violence; the abuse which fosters frustration and hostility amongst the victims of government sponsored violence.

Add to this condition the growing number of racist attacks on Black people and the widening use of police terror under the guise of fighting a war on drugs and you have the chemistry for an explosive situation.

What Michael McGhee and a growing number of African Americans are saying is time out! It will either be "freedom for everybody or freedom for nobody."



Walter E. Williams
Minority Viewpoint

## Politicizing behavior

Let me confess. I prefer that my fellow man act in certain ways. He shouldn't be fat; he shouldn't enter into my presence with a cold or other contagious disease;

He shouldn't wear colognes or perfumes that I'm allergic to; and, if he lives next door to me, he should plant beautiful tulips to grace his lawn in the spring.

Am I willing to have Congress pass a law to enforce this pleasing behavior? The answer is no.

The reason is because I know that many of my fellow men would prefer that I not: walk out to my mail box in my bath robe; run my mower at eight o'clock Saturday morning; be so outspoken, and smoke in their presence.

Using laws to dictate others' behavior for my benefit, and their doing the same for me, makes us both worse off. It's better if we're courteous and adopt a "live and let live" attitude.

In recent years, Americans have begun to use politics to impose preferred behavior. Many of us dislike the smell of cigarette smoke and believe that it is harmful.

The important question is: Are we settling the problem in the way consistant with our constitution and rule of law?

What about laws against smoking on privately owned property such as in airplanes and restaurants? They violate basic principles of liberty. Why not permit owners of airplanes and restaurants to decide which clientele they wish to serve.

If owners thought they could please more customers by banning or restricting smoking, they should be free to do so.

Whatever the outcome, I'd have no problem because the decision was made through the "democracy" of the marketplace.

But tyrants do not want the democracy of the market because they do not believe that free people will act the way the tyrant believes they should.

U.S. airlines have become handmaidens to America's anti-smoking tyrants. Airline companies know that smoking is a volatile issue.

Rather than making the decision themselves, they prefer to leave it up to "federal regulations" and avoid the risk of offending smokers and nonsmokers. Putting the matter in the hands of government is easy because our airlines have a monopoly in U.S. markets.

But how about this? U.S. airlines have quietly pressed Congress not to ban smoking on international flights. You might ask, "If smoking is hazardious to health on domestic flights, isn't it also hazardous to health on international flights?"

U.S. airlines don't give a hoot about health. They simply face competition on international flights. If they banned smoking on international flights, smokers might choose foreign airlines.

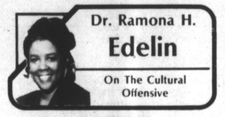
You might also ask, "If airlines think not smoking is so wonderful, why not ban it in their private lounges such as United's Red Carpet Club?"

If one group can use the political system that way, why not the other?

What's worse is that we're never satisfied. In the name of health the anti-smoking fanatics now seek to ban cigarette advertisement.

If free speech can be eliminated in the name of health or sensibilities, why not also ban advertisements for butter, salt, sugar, and other things that can injure health or possibly offend sensibilities.

By the way, smoking has not been completely banned. The smoking section is now the cockpit. The reasoning is if pilots aren't allowed to smoke, they might become irritable, act aggressively, and crash the plane. Maybe nicotine addicted passengers should threaten to act the same way.



Dr. Ramona H. Edelin
On The Cultural Offensive

## Our children's talent

When we are constantly and incessantly bombarded through the mass communications media, by terrifying, negative images of our children, we somehow lose sight of their enormous strengths.

When all we see, every day, on television and in print are gang wars, drug busts, crack babies, assaults against the elderly and other adults, and declining attendance and performance in school, even our own respect and regard for the magnificent genuine and talent of our children gradually erodes and dies.

What must we do in order to keep the focus of our group on the development and nurturing of our children's brilliance and talent, even in the throes of such virulent and potentially fatal, mind - control and opinion - shaping apparatus as the American media?

First we must be asbolutely clear and confident about who we are — what family we all belong to. African people have been highly accomplished scholars, dancers, musicians, athletes and sacred scientists for thousands and thousands of years.

We have developed intellectual and wise, prosperous, peaceful and highly creative societies thousands of years before Asian, Semitic or European people even emerged on the planet.

What we know of the ancient Ethiopian, Nubian and Kemetan (Egyptian) civilizations leads us to conclude that human evolution is not in fact linear, as Europeans would like to have us believe, but rather circular or spherical: that we will return to near - perfection when we go back to what our ancestors understood about life.

It is no accident that even after 250 years of murder and dehumanizing enslavement and another 225 years of American apartheid, we are still among the most talented and resilient people on the planet.

Our talent thrills and captivates the whole world! Whether it is Michael Jordan or Janet or Michael Jackson, George Washington Carver or Mae Jemison, Leontyne Price or The Boys, Romare Bearden or Iman, James Cleveland or Toni Morrison, John Hope Franklin or Cicely Tyson, Florence Griffith - Joyner or James Cleveland, Tevin Campbell or John Coltrane, Judith Jamison, the cast of Sarafina or M. C. Hammer — we are an ancient and modern wonder!

In any church choir, school play, open mike night or street corner simulation of Saturday Night at the Apollo, we can see more talent in one hour than we often see in a week of television that excludes us.

The African American cultural offensive urges us to not only resist the temptation to debase our children's talent, but also to seriously, systematically and joyously develop and nurture their talent, and our own.

Every school, church, community - based organization, recreation center, club, fraternal organization, lodge and block club can and should begin to regularly sponsor talent shows, oratorical and essay contests, athletic teams, chess clubs, debating and historical societies, Olympics of the Mind, and professional music, dance, drama and creative writing lessons for our children.

The National Urban Coalition's Family Learning Centers, featuring family development in mathematics, science, technology and cultural studies, are sites where the nurturing of talent and family development activities in many areas, and the realization of whole and comprehensive programs, can unfold.

We are working with concerned adults in urban centers around the nation, to unite our leadership around the needs of our children and families — and to keep our children's wonderful talent uppermost in our minds and on our agendas.

Parren J. Mitchell
Former U.S. Rep.

## The saga of Harford Co., MD

On Sunday, May 6, 1990, I addressed the 29th Annual Banquet of the Harford County Branch of the NAACP. The Banquet was held at Aberdeen Proving Ground, a sprawling military base, about an hour's drive from Baltimore.

The banquet was held in the Officers Club, a well appointed facility with a breathtaking view of a large expanse of water. It was a historic occasion for me because Aberdeen Proving Ground was once one of the most racially segregated military institutions in the nation.

Years ago, it was reported that the Post Commander had declared that he wanted "no Negro troops or officers; no Negro workers; and no Negro families on my post."

A Black woman now is the manager of the dining room in the Officers Club.

Two charming women drove me to Aberdeen. As we proceeded North on Route 40, the sight of the Bata Shoe Company revived old memories and experiences. Bata is a large shoe manufacturing company which, at one time, was owned by a Czechoslovakian family and which refused to hire Black employees at any level of its operations.

In my official capacity with the State Human Relations Commission, I acted on a complaint of racial discrimination against the company. I met with the owners, who speaking in heavy European accents, were Nazi - like in their attitude towards Blacks.

They launched into a diatribe against Black people and in so many words, told me it was their company and they would employ those they pleased to hire.

I responded by telling them they would receive an official notification to appear at a hearing before the State Human Relations Commission.

A week later, they capitulated and about two months later, they instituted a bus service to transport workers from Baltimore to the plant.

Route 40 is one of the main arteries linking Baltimore and Philadelphia. It is peppered with motels, restaurants and other places of public accommodations, all of which in the 1960's simply refused to serve us.

The Congress of Racial Equality (C.O.R.E.) and other civil rights organizations launched a long, fierce campaign to desegregate those facilities.

One of the heroes of that campaign was a young White man, Joseph D. Tydings, later a United States Senator from Maryland, who personally went to all those businesses in an attempt to persuade them to desegregate their facilities.

Route 40 establishments are now open to all.

Aberdeen, in Harford County, is very close to a town called Rising Sun, Maryland, which is in Cecil County.

In the sixties when we were organizing to enact a statewide public accommodations law, the people in Rising Sun, both Black and White, were so intimidated by the Ku Klux Klan that no place, not a church, not a public building, not an office building would let us use a room for a mobilizing meeting.

We finally met in what appeared to be an abandoned one - room school house, with a large pot bellied stove in the middle of the room.

While we met, the KKK in their full, stupid regalia, paraded up and down on the other side of the road.

At the banquet, Joseph Bond was charged with recognizing special guests. In the 1960's, the Klan had burned crosses on his lawn in an attempt to force him to stop his unrelenting war against racism and discrimination.

Janice East Moorehead Grant was honored at the banquet. She had gone on Freedom Rides into the deep south, served as a plaintiff in suits against the Harford County School System for school desegregation, teacher and pupil promotion and assignment.

She was a teacher, and acting as the plaintiff, put her job in jeopardy but she had the courage to stand up and be counted.

A good number of youth and young adults attended the banquet. I am certain that few, if any, of them know about the long, hard struggle for racial equality in Harford County.

Every city must establish a facility to be used to house the archives about those long years of struggle. Photographs of the heroines and heroes should be there with explanations about their contributions to those years of struggle.

Our children should be required to use that facility at least two hours a week, to learn about our history — national and local.

To learn not just about Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X, but to learn about Joseph Bond, Janice Grant, Italy Overton, Lehman Spry, foot soldiers in the struggle for equality.