# EDITORIALS

John J. Oliver, Jr.
Chairman of the Board

Frances M. Draper
President

## The Liberian evacuation

Once again it appears the United States is poised to commit military forces into a foreign country (if necessary, they say) as unrest in Liberia threatens to uproot the established leadership in the country.

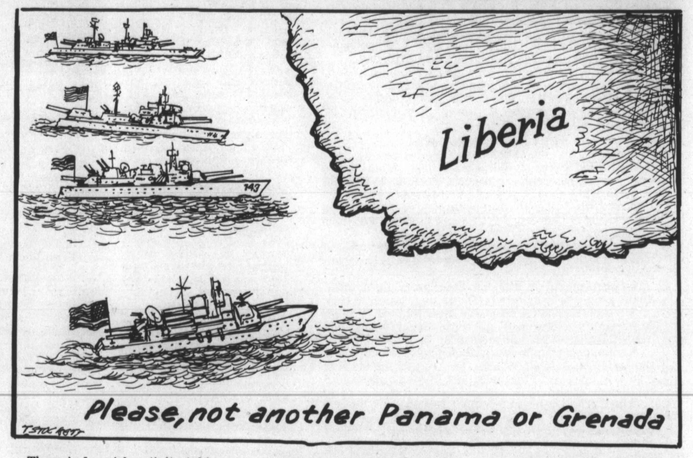
Although the current president Samuel Doe has announced he will not seek re-election, rebel forces, led by Charles Taylor who was once an official in the Doe government, are reported to be just a few miles from Roberts Field, an international airport some 30 miles from the capital city of Monrovia.

American personnel is being evacuated from the country, and the Navy ships and 2,000 Marines aboard them are then, according to the State Department, to insure the safety of U.S. citizens in the country.

President Doe has asked for U.S. help in negotiations with the rebels and Doe's military commander, Lt. Gen. Henry Dubar, appears to be counting on the Marines to step in and save the capital.

As he put it: "The armed forces of Liberia would not consider a Marine landing an invasion. The rebels are Libyan - backed, so we felt the United States should come to our aid immediately."

We have already given Liberia $25 million in aid this year — let that be enough. We don't need to risk the lives of our young men too.




## Black graduates 1990

By Calvin M. Miller

Yes, where are you (Black graduates 1990) going? And may we add, what will you think? What kind of person will you be? What kind of alumnus?

Many of the answers were given or were suggested in numerous commencement addresses throughout the Commonwealth and throughout the U.S.A. at large.

We concentrate here on three large predominantly Black universities in Washington, D.C. and in Virginia (Howard University, Norfolk State University and Virginia State University). All of these speeches, coincidentally, were made by outstanding Black men and Black women.

Beginning with Marion Wright Edelman, who spoke to the Howard graduates, ten rules were given (as reported in the Washington Post, May 16, 1990, p. A-19): "...(1) Remember that Black folk can never take anything for granted in America, and we had better not start now as racial intolerance resurges all over the land; (2) Remember your roots, your history and the forebears' shoulders on which you stand; (3) Remember that forming families is serious business and requires a measure of thoughtful planning and economic stability; (4) Set goals and work quietly and systematically toward them.

(5) Sell the shadow for substance. (6) Worry more about your attitude than your aptitude or lineage; (7) Assign yourself; (8) Use your political and economic power for the community; (9) Never work just for money: and (10) Don't be afraid of taking risks or being criticized.

The philosophical ideas in (5), (6) and (7) above are the most important ones because one's attitude will set the direction for right action. "Sell the shadow for substance; worry more about attitude than aptitude and then assign yourself!"

Our own Governor, the Honorable L. Douglas Wilder, while speaking to the graduates at Norfolk State University, rather appropriately announced to this group and the Commonwealth of Virginia that, "...all state agencies and educational institutions must sell their investments (divest) that are linked to South Africa."

Rather than pounce upon the predominantly Black graduates at Norfolk State University, the Governor, with verbal niceties, gave a lesson in statesmanship about race relations.

The divestiture of Virginia funds in the Union of South Africa spoke loudly and clearly about the Governor's position on the racist policies of South Africa. The Governor understood that Mandela was free; but, South Africa remained South Africa.

The Graduates of Norfolk State, and all others, should live a life that expresses the will to destroy the Union of South Africa and set the over 200 million Black African brothers and sisters free—absolutely free.

Again, our own Secretary of Education, James W. Dykes, Jr., spoke to the graduates of Virginia State University and, who, early on, admonished the students by saying that, "...it is not the responsibility of each of you to pick up a new responsiblity, that of a benefactor of Virginia State University, one committed to a continuation of the Trojan tradition."

He said other things including that his administration would support VSU. The most profound and necessary message was the one of responsibility and benefactorship to their own alma mater, VSU.

If education is to survive for Blacks in Virginia, the State must not only support VSU: but, its own alumni must become true benefactors by giving full (economic) support. Virginia State graduates indeed, do become benefactors.

The philosophy of Edelman, the imagery of Wilder and the pragmatism of Dykes, as a whole, spoke to all Black graduates. All of these messages must be heard and adhered to. Black graduates and Black institutions must survive.

Samuel Banks
Educator

## Entry of Mandela

There is feverish activity taking place across our nation in connection with the victorious visit of Nelson Mandela on Wednesday, June 20, 1990.

Mr. Mandela's visit, to be sure, has immense importance for Black Americans in that he personifies a towering example of a fellow-brother who has succeeded in the fact of iniquitous and monumental adversities visited upon him and his fellow-Black South African Brothers and Sisters who dared to witness boldly for freedom and social justice.

Welcome to the United States, Brother Mandela.

The fact that the South African government strove mightily and assiduously to break the spirit and will of Mandela is a palpable and inspirational reality for Black and White Americans committed to elemental human decency, the rule of law and equality of opportunity for all.

For us as Black Americans, who, until recent times, were denied equity and equal access to the racio-economic and political and educational mainstream of the United States, Mandela's arrival has a special poignancy and value.

Long before it was popular, Black citizens had a painful kinship in terms of the brutalities, indignities and egregious violations of human and civil rights that were endured by our courageous, determined and highly astute Black Brothers and Sisters in South Africa.

Through the mass jailings and killings at Sharpsburg, Soweto, Johannesburg, among other places, the majority Black South Africans remained wedded to the cause of full freedom human dignity and "one person, one vote."

The remarkable and undaunted leadership of Randall Robinson of Trans-Africa kept the dreadful and horrendous plight of Black South Africans stayed on freedom as they struggled against the heinous and wretched system of apartheid.

It is glorious, indeed, that after 27 years of imprisonment and denial of basic human dignity, Nelson Mandela's extraordinary spirit and resolve could not be broken.

He, too, throughout his long imprisonment was able to be sustained and comforted by his faithful and redoubtable wife, Winnie Mandela, members of his family, the African National Congress and the overwhelming number of the Black South African population.

The fact is, given the set of circumstances described, Nelson Mandela's release by the minority White South African government was inexorable.

Mr. Mandela's visit here is an occasion for widespread reflection and celebration by Black Americans. We owe to ourselves, our families and our posterity to make plans to greet Mandela in one of the cities (i.e. Washington, D.C., New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, etc.) that he will visit.

Our collective presence will communicate to him that we love him, he has our unqualified support in his persistent struggle for full freedom and power-sharing and we are most proud of him and our fellow-South African Brothers and Sisters.

Now is the time for us to close ranks for the terrestrial day of rejoicing there will be with Mandela's arrival. We, too, can join with the multitudes that will greet Brother Mandela with a resoundig and universal exclamation: Uhuru (Freedom).

## COMMENTARY: Baltimore City Schools

By Joy M. Tyler
AFRO Education Reporter

## Is the system on track?

It has been a long haul for the Baltimore City school system this year.

Plagued by many controversies, school superintendent Dr. Richard Hunter has managed to weather the storm, along with his administrative staff.

On a daily basis, Baltimoreans were blasted with an unyielding diet of alleged personality/professional conflicts between Mayor Schmoke and Dr. Hunter, school textbooks, budget cuts, security measures, dress codes, and public support.

Barely having time to warm-up to the humongous task set before him in restructuring the school system for the past several years, Dr. Hunter was unfairly expected to pull a magical rabbit out of his hat to save the damaged reputation of the system in a matter of months.

Not being a product of the public school system here is Baltimore, I have had the opportunity first hand to be exposed on a daily basis as a reporter, to the problems and success stories within the system.

First and foremost in my mind stands the gossip and mud throwing by many between Schmoke and Hunter. Yes, Hunter was hand picked by the mayor to run the ailing school system.

But with years of funding being siphoned from the educational budget to go towards rebuilding the ever popular entertainment "hot spots" at the inner harbor, Baltimore schools are now feeling the blunt of neglect.

Much has changed since Mayor Schmoke took over the city. He wants Baltimore to be known as the city that reads, and in todays workforce where millions of Americans are functionally illiterate, Schmoke has started rebuilding on the right track.

Hunter came ready to implement a new learning system that would reorganize the system.

The first thing he did was to solicit the Baltimore school communities' ideas and expectations for developing a curriculum, and those goals were formulated into what is now known as "Operation Turnaround."

This program was implemented to tackle the areas of early childhood education, math/sciences and technologies, humanities, and support programs.

With much detail and outlining, the system was formulated and started. Next major roadblock funding.

It almost goes without saying that funding for this turnabout was not going to come easily.

Dr. Hunter and major civic organizations, such as the NAACP and teachers' unions, pulled together in a grass roots effort to petition the Maryland legislature for equal funding and access for Baltimore's school system and marched on Annapolis this past fall.

It was politics that neglected to concentrate more on the confusion than on the way to help students who are struggling to deal with problems of drugs, family, peer pressure and low self-esteem.

One topic that seemed to bog down the school bureaucracy all year was the frivolous exclusionary dress code.

Administrators implemented the dress code for safety claims, but students saw it as a violation to their right to be comfortable, free speech, and didn't see it interfering in their education.

Instead of taking the bull by the horns and dealing with what was surely a sore spot for all involved, school officials let it fester until students were boycotting classes, and holding protests that eventually led to a performance by students to express their feelings to the school board.

Although the board will eventually rescind some of its demands, too much time and energy was spent on students dress than what was going into their heads.

Today, it seems, teachers must not only draw up lesson plans, but play social worker, too.

There should be a mandatory counseling staff appointed to all schools to ease the burden of teachers who are over worked and often too stressed out by a few students with serious problems to teach effectively.

Not all is lost for the school system is undergoing a major transition. In a move to free Dr. Hunter to work more on the political aspect of his job, and to secure better funding and other areas that need independent supervision, Mayor Schmoke has appointed a deputy superintendent.

Many saw this move as mistrust between Schmoke and Hunter, when in essence Schmoke had publicly endorsed his superintendent and would continue to support him throughout his contractual obligations, to the surprise of many.

Though the wheels of change are rolling, time is something that always seems to run out. Ample amounts of it are needed to see progress in Dr. Hunter's formula for success, and hopefully the system can make it through.

There is much hope alive for the restructuring for Baltimore City public schools, and now the ball has started rolling.

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628 N. Eutaw Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201**



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# COMMENTARY & OPINIONS

Ron Daniels
Vantage Point

## Malcolm X Day In Omaha

The National Malcolm X Commemoration of Omaha, Nebraska was the climatic event in what the African American Progressive Action Network has declared, 1990 The Year of Malcolm X.

At approximately 2:00 p.m. Central Standard time, the strong, clear, resonant voice of actor Avery Brooks boomed out the Declaration which officially proclaimed May 19, the birthday of El Hajj Malik Shabazz, National Malcolm X Day.

The Black Nation has spoken. As an act of Kujichalgulia (self - determination), Africans in America elevated Malcolm X to his proper place at the forefront of our struggle for liberation.

As the weekend's activities got underway in Omaha, Dr. Deborah Robinson, Project Director for the National Malcolm X Commemoration Commission reported that thousands of signed Declarations had poured in from 76 cities in 25 states.

Most of the local committees have yet to report as of this writing and Declarations are still coming in. The goal of 100,000 Charter Advocates for National Malcolm X Day seems to be generated tremendous excitement and massive support at the grassroots level throughout the Black nation. Scores of local celebrations took place around the country on May 18-20.

But this year the eyes of the Black nation were focused on Omaha, Nebraska, Malcolm's birthplace, where history was to be made on May 19, Malcolm's 65th birthday.

Hundreds of people from Omaha and from communities across the nation participated in the weekend's activities beginning with a Malcolm X Forum on Friday, May 18.

One of the highlights of the Forum were some reflections on Malcolm's early upbringing provided by Wilfred Little, Malcolm's oldest brother. Robert Little, Yvonne Little, Omar Little and two of Malcolm's nephews were also in attendance.

Dr. Maulana Karenga delivered a brilliant oration on Malcolm's political ideas and the relevance of Malcolm's philosophy today.

Charshee McIntyre, who had known Malcolm as a young man in Boston, offered a series of informative insights on Malcolm's growth and development.

The most authoritative words however, came from Dr. Betty Shabazz, the wife of Malcolm X, who said that Malcolm's vision was expansive and inclusive and that this was the true source of his greatness as a leader.

Saturday, May 19 began with a moving pilgrimage to the homesite where the Little family had lived until shortly after Malcolm was born. Libations were poured on this sacred ground and ecumenical prayers were offered.

Rowena Moore, the 79-year-old president and founder of the Malcolm X Memorial Foundation, vigorously outlined her vision of an international center to be built on the Little homesite.

The observance at the homesite was followed by a snappy parade through the Black community which drew a large number of youth to Horace Mann School where the National Proclamation Ceremony was held.

Inside the Auditorium there was a definite air of anticipation as speakers like State Senator Ernie Chambers of Omaha, poets Haki Madhubuti and Sonia Sanchez, social activist Dick Gregory and Dr. Maulana Karenga filed to the podium to pay tribute to Malcolm.

The magic moment, however, was reserved for Avery Brooks, affectionately referred to as "Hawk." This multi - talented writer, actor and vocalist was charged with the responsibility of speaking the words which would make Malcolm's birthday a National African American Day of Commemoration.

As someone put it "Avery read the hell out of that Declaration." By the time Avery Brooks uttered the final words of the Declaration, the audience was on its feet screaming, long live Malcolm, long live Malcolm!

And so it was/is done. Eighteen arduous months of intensive work was consummated with this powerful Declaration from the Black Nation. In a real sense, however, May 19, 1990 established a framework and laid the foundation for utilizing Malcolm's philosophy and ideas to educate, organize, and liberate our people. Now Malcolm must live through our acts and deeds. Long live Malcolm!

Walter E. Williams
Minority Viewpoint

## One of the platoons

It was a busy week, a lecture at Holy Cross College, and another at one of the world's last refuges for Marxism — Harvard University Law School. So I could have used the rest Friday night getting ready for the next day's flight to Burlington, Vermont.

Instead, I accepted an invitation to the Granville Academy's Sixth Annual Awards Ceremony held in Princeton, New Jersey. It was a packed house, with a predominantly Black audience of about 600 guests and participants, donned in formal attire.

Let's talk about the Granville Academy in Trenton, New Jersey. Its founder, William Granville, Jr., grew up in the slums of Trenton. He did the same things as his friends — ran with gangs and stayed in trouble.

But somehow he managed to go to college, earn a degree, and is now an executive officer with Mobil Oil. How did Granville pull it off? In his words, "Nothing replaces hard work, perseverance, and quality output."

Granville wanted to instill this value in other Black youths. Year after year, he tried to get help and support from Black politicians with his idea to start a business training program for inner - city Black youths. But the politicians weren't much help.

Then, in 1983, he started Granville Academy. Each spring a five - member committee selects 24 to 30 students from among those recommended by teachers, guidance counselors, community leaders, and/or business professionals.

The selection committee interviews students and parents. The students attend 15 evening sessions, at Princeton University and Rider College, in Lawrenceville, New Jersey, taught by Fortune 500 executies and other business professionals.

After graduation, Granville Academy's entry students join its advanced group where they begin college preparation classes as well as advanced studies in science, accounting, and engineering. All are required to take college admittance tests; some get a chance to be interns at major corporations.

The awards ceremony was to recognize Granville's graduates. Each student, accompanied by his parents, came to the podium to give a brief description of his work and aspirations.

Some showed a bit of stage fright, but we heard impeccable English and saw parents beaming with pride.

The guest speaker was Ossie Davis who gave a rousing speech on excellence and the need to confront problems in Black neighborhoods through self-help and self-reliance.

Davis asked us to remember that the civil rights struggle had its birth in an educational issue, Brown v. Board of Edueation, and look at Black education today, nearly four decades later.

The Granville Academy is Bill Granville's brainchild, but he receives a lot of help in the form of private charitable donations. But just as important, he has a dedicated staff who performs the day-to-day nitty-gritty of managing the Academy.

Granville says the urgent problem for Blacks is that, "Future jobs will require knowledge of high technology and other advanced education. This leads to a classic mismatch: plenty of jobs, but not enough properly prepared people to fill them."

As bleak as things are now among a large segment of the Black community, it is by no means hopeless, especially when we consider that Blacks have faced other awesome obstacles and have overcome them.

Dr. Ramona H. Edelin
On The Cultural Offensive

## Perestroika and glasnost

The Summit visit of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev holds many meanings of the people of the world.

The Summit meeting between presidents Bush and Gorbachev itself has enormous potential benefits for the planet's security and harmony, particularly if significant gains can be realized in arms reduction and if further de - escalation of the historic Cold War can be accepted.

Yet, beyond the vast implications of the Summit meeting, there is great meaning in the ideas which Mr. Gorbachev has introduced into the Soviet political reality; *perestroika* and *glasnost*. What can these ideas mean in the context of the African American cultural offensive?

*Perestroika*, openness and inclusion in the social and political life of the nation, and *glasnost*, truth and honesty in affairs of the state, are mature, progressive concepts which the young United States of America would do well to seriously study and emulate.

The racism, classism, sexism, exclusion and lies which continue to plague people of color and women in America are not only personal and group-wide problems, they threaten the economic well - being of this nation in the same way that Mr. Gorbachev has indicated he feels they threaten the economic well-being of the Soviet.

We need *perestroika* and *glasnost* if the America of this decade and the new millennium is going to be one, whole, competitive world power.

America's cities will be the first testing ground of the nation's ability to remain both racist and competitive in the global economy.

Death, police - community tension and distrust, flames, looting — urban riot — are bitter legacies of the period during which the Urban Coalition Movement was born. The recent disturbances in Bensonhurst and student demonstrations against racism on college campuses in Cambridge, Mass and Philadelphia are chilling specters of 22-year-old unmet commitments to make authentic change in America's cities.

One by one, the movements for women's equality, gay rights, full opportunity for the handicapped, children's and spouse's protection, and the humanity of the homeless, have used the arguments and methods of the 1960's to prevail and advance.

Television has made these tremendous advances in human evolution seem naturally episodic — somewhat like shifting from football season, to basketball season, to baseball season.

We desperately miss Monday Night Football for a couple of weeks; but as soon as Air Jordan and Pat Ewing take to the courts, it becomes difficult to remember who won the last Super Bowl.

Today there can be no question of the fact that the urban crisis is not, and was never, over.

We face staggering, full blown problems of poverty, ignorance, race and class conflict; problems of joblessness, homelessness, abysmally poor schooling and of maintaining good, affordable health care; problems of declining resources, decaying infrastructure and deteriorating housing for which rehabilitation is just not in the cards right now; problems of disease, addiction and moral and legal decadence sufficient to make the United States a second class nation by the turn of the century, just ten years from now.

Only continued racism and discrimination will prevent us from properly preparing our children — our greatest domestic resource and best hope for true national security — and repairing our cities, for the leadership and the work place of the 21st Century.

Never have we needed to realize the power of unified leadership, in the spirit of *perestroika* and *glasnost* more than we do right now.

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Parren J. Mitchell
Former U.S. Rep.

## Memorial Day — Black soldiers

We honored those who have died serving their country. There were parades; dedications; and religious services. We honor them in death, but I want to honor them for what they did while alive and in the military.

While it is true that the armed services have made truly significant advances in combating racism and discrimination, none of us should forget how the armed services not only tolerated but encouraged racism and segregation.

The four young Black lieutenants, fresh out of officer training school at Fort Benning, Georgia, reported to their first assignment at Fort Huachuaca, Arizona. The army base there is quite isolated from any urban area, and housed mostly Black soldiers and their White officers.

The four Black lieutenants, after getting settled in their quarter, went to the officers club to eat dinner. They were met at the entrance to the club by a White lieutenant who told them they could not eat there because it was for White officers only.

The four insisted and after many angry exchanges, the Post Commander arrived at the scene with a squad of White military police. The Post Commander threatened them with arrest and court martial.

The four young men stood their ground and finally the Post Commander muttered, "Let them in and serve them."

I don't know if any of those young Black men were later killed in combat, but they by their defiance, had won a victory over segregation in the military.

Dr. Clinton Knox, a young Black Ph.D. from Harvard, after being drafted into the Army, was assigned as an orderly to the White officers' quarters where he was supposed to do any of the menial chores the White officers ordered him to do.

He refused the assignment and was threatened with an army court martial. Knox stuck to his guns and argued persuasively that a court martial would only disclose how the army wasted the talents and abilities of its men.

He was not court martialed and was reassigned to other duties.

I don't believe he ever served in combat but he had fought his war well, the war against racism in the armed forces.

The all-Black 92nd Infantry Division was being moved to Louisiana for maneuvers. At a small town in the South, the troop train was stopped.

The soldiers on the train saw German Prisoners of war being taken off the train to get a meal in what was a medium sized diner, while brown bag lunches were being served to them on the train.

Infuriated, they threw the food to the floor, or out the windows of the train (in those days, you could open train windows) and vowed they would go on a hunger strike.

The senior officer on the troop train went from car to car telling the soldiers that there was no facility nearby which could feed all of them.

Shouts were hurled, "Then bring the Geman prisons of war back on the train and let them too eat brown bag lunches." The German P.O.W.s were lined up and put back on the train before they could be served in the diner.

Another skirmish in the war against racism in the military had been won.

Although it may sound like military folk lore, a myth not based on fact, it is absolute truth that Black soldiers in Germany and Italy were the victims of the most scurrilous lies and smears perpetrated by White American soldiers.

They told the native Germans and Italians that all Black soldiers were diseased and had tails. It is a whole truth that native children often asked Black soldiers if they could see their bushy tails.

Often, the Black soldiers had to patiently explain to the native populations that the things they had heard were lies, and they must have done so with great success because they could always find female companions, and some left their offspring in Berlin and Stuttgart, in Naples and in Rome.

Black servicemen underwent scores of indignities and humiliations, but they fought back in many ways, and comported themselves with dignity.

Many of them died in the defense of their country, but thousands of them lived in defense of justice and equality.