EDITORIALS

John J. Oliver, Jr.
Chairman of the Board

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President

THE VOICE OF BLACK AMERICA SINCE 1892

Independent black colleges

Genocide is an ugly word — one that is universally shunned in the higher education community. Yet, one of the major proposals concerning higher education in Maryland, amounts to a form of genocide.

It has been suggested that colleges and universities be merged, if they are physically near each other. It was intimated that a Morgan State and Towson State merger would be beneficial, as would a combination of Salisbury State and UMES.

Some of the media have trumpeted loudly that a proposed merger of the schools mentioned would be economical, halting the drain on the state education budget, and also slowing the progress of integration of the other state college campuses.

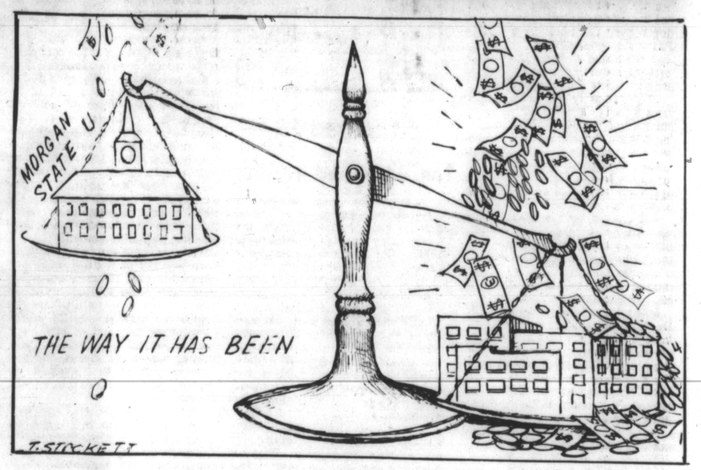
Completely overlooked is the unique position black colleges occupy in the black community. How the traditional black colleges and universities are able to deal with the vagaries of preparing black youth to deal with the high-tech business and cultural atmosphere of the 90s.

For too long, the traditional black colleges have had to subsist under inadequate funding, even to the extent of necessary physical repairs to existing structures.

Before a college can be adjudged mediocre, it must be given the opportunity to reach par status with all other institutions in its political jurisdiction. In the case of Morgan State University, this has not happened. Each request for adequate funding is met with skepticism almost to the extent that the powers that be wish the school would go away.

And this is exactly what must not be allowed to happen. The black community must retain its identity and be held accountable for equipping black youths to cope in the world markets of the day.

We strongly urge that the independent status of Morgan State University not only be maintained but significantly strengthened. It is not only good for the black community of Baltimore, but for the entire state.



The Reagan legacy

It has been a big joke during the past eight years: if one would spell Ronald Wilson Reagan's last name backwards — and listen to how NAGEAR sounds — one would get a pretty good idea of why he has been so hard on black folks. The word it sounds like, according to the dictionary, means "A vulgar, offensive term of hostility and contempt."

Reagan, called the Teflon president, has held the poor, blacks and the elderly in contempt.

For blacks, he usually acted like they didn't exist. One or two came through his front door, but not many. For the poor, he led an assault on every good program from school lunches to college scholarships; and for the elderly, he talked about a safety net at the same time punching in big holes so that they could fall through.

Was he popular? You bet! And the Confederate flags that now fly from even some state and federal buildings show you just how popular. The skinheads are now out in the open in America, once more reminiscent of the days of the Klu Klux Klan and 12 percent of the population is suffering.

Incoming President George Herbert Walker Bush must have been deep in thought about Reagan when he made that now historical remark that he wanted a "kinder, gentler" America.

Already, Bush has shown the need to include all of the people in his deliberations by sitting down with people poor Reagan didn't know how to talk to. He has met with the Rev.Jesse Jackson, church leaders, civil rights leaders and large groups of just plain folks from across the country.

Bush and his wife, Barbara seem to have no qualms about admitting the country needs to go in a new direction and fast — to prevent the debacle of the Reagan years from destroying every bit of progress made in the last 200 years.

The American people now have a new president from the same Republican party who has already shown in a little over two months that he is not cut from the same cloth. We hope he will take a good look at the mess Reagan has left and move swiftly to put America's house back in order.

Window shopping

Most of us have looked through the eyes of desire at one time or another in our lives, especially when circumstance forbids us from partaking of the fruit of possession.

We are very much like the man who wistfully gazes at the diamond necklace in the jewelry store window, wishing there was some way he could afford such an expensive bauble for his lovely fiance.

It's at moments like this, when the body of our emotions are held captive by the caressing fingers of enticement that the "serpent of temptation" whispers its beguiling voice in the inner-ear of our conscience, testing the very fabric of our principles with the seducing promise of fulfillment, beckoning us to break the sacred commandment "thou shall not steal."

Not surprisingly, there are those — such as myself, now incarcerated — who, when confronted with the socially forbidden apple of crime and moral corruption, bit deeply into its deceptive succulence, not caring about the rotten core of suffering and grief that our actions would cause to others or the civil death of prison that inevitably awaits us should we be so fortunate as to survive our folly.

So, if you've ever wanted something so much and knowing you couldn't have it just made you want it even more, no matter what the consequences, here is a word to the wise from the fool.

"If it's worth having it's worth waiting for the opportunity when it can be yours without violating the life, liberty or property of someone else.

TY'REE CRAWFORD

Kweisi **Mfume**
U.S. Congressman

Parting the waters

Occasionally, there arises some form of artistic expression which adequately tells of the person struggles and sacrifices of African-Americans in the fight for civil and human rights.

As a member of the Congressional Arts Caucus, I am aware of the many fine artistic contributions that Americans of African ancestry consistently make to the cultural life of our Nation and the world.

Unfortunately, there are too few works that express the very personal nature of the struggle. After all, it was not some anonymous "stranger" that struggled, it was us, our friends and families.

Fortunately, the general public is presented with two different art forms which tell of the personal struggle for civil rights within the context of the larger movement.

Taylor Branch's non-fictional account of the civil rights movement is entitled, **Parting the Waters: America in the King Years 1954-1963.**

Published by Simon and Schuster, Branch's work is over 1,000 pages and presents to us history as biography, and not just the biography of central figures like Kennedy or King.

Most history is concerned with major characters and major events. Biography is often background for the events considered the real stuff of which history is made.

On the other hand, the civil rights movement gave birth to a different historical reality. The struggle, as Branch clearly demonstrates, which had crept along since Emancipation, was suddenly pushed along by the heroism of proud but humble folk like Rosa Parks, or by the martyrdom of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, the three Freedom Riders who were murdered in Mississippi in 1964.

With Dr. King at the center of the whirlwind, the civil rights movement had a voice. But as Branch documents, the interest of the media gave the movement other faces as well.

Dozens of lesser known incidents composed of many unknown persons were broadcast into the homes of millions of Americans who saw for the first time the ugly face of racism in the South.

America watched stories on the evening news of small black school children who were target of spit and slurs, or the orderly demonstrators who peacefully suffered both the water cannon and police dog. The media exposure elicited sympathy and support from many.

Branch asserts that these many unknowns were the real heroes and heroines of the movement. The countless number of black people who had endured too much, and who now had at last put their lives on the line to further the cause of justice.

Parting the Waters is also one of the few historical works that puts in proper perspective the pivotal role of organized religion in the civil rights era. Its treatment of the significance of the black church cannot be emphasized enough.

Taylor Branch provides us with the personalities of that era in a vivid and realistic manner. He brings together the wide panorama of the civil rights struggle by focusing on ordinary people who heroically forced change by following the dictates of their conscience during extraordinary times.

I enthusiastically recommend this book. **Parting the Waters** is a major contribution to the growing body of African American History which tells of a crucial and personal stage in the struggle for civil and human rights in America.

It will be a worthy addition to your family library.

G. James **Fleming**
Public Affairs Commentator

Jesse Jackson: what's next?

Would that the Rev. Jesse Jackson had a specific calling — a job or a profession — big enough and important enough to satisfy him and contain him.

This lacking, there is the temptation to be the perpetual campaigner, the orator par excellence and the ready dabbler in one opportunistic, headline-making venture or another.

PUSH, the respectable civil rights organization founded some years ago by Jackson, does not seem to be sizable enough or substantial enough to spread his talents or to provide him with the national, multi-faceted base which he seems to require.

If only Rev. Jackson was pastor of the "largest Baptist church in the country," or if he were head of a national religious organization, or if he had some political office to which to return, following his recent primary and post-primary exposures!

The several other primary candidates who lost last year, except Jackson, each returned to his regular calling — to a seat in the Senate or House of Representatives, to a governorship, as head of a national church organization, or to a law practice.

In past years, some of the political clout of Congressman Adam Clayton Powell came because he was always the pastor of a great, urban church, in the same manner that the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was the pastor of another important congregation, to which he could return with status and influence if and when his freedom crusade was over.

* * *

If the Rev. Jackson believes being an everlasting candidate and campaigner is the sure way to the presidency, he may recall that two other notable orators, William Jennings Bryan and Norman Thomas (and some others, high and low), who were constant campaigners a good part for their lives, never won election to the White House. Oratory alone was not sufficient.

There certainly are advantages to always being in the limelight, always the center of attention, always being featured as "the principal speaker," but there are also disadvantages —especially when being in the limelights become one's chief or only occupation.

The more one talks, and talks, and talks — almost "at the drop of a hat" — the more is one apt to make a faux pas, to say something which turns large numbers of people against him or her, to be put in the position of defending one's self. The "gift of gab" may make one a Solomon; it can also paint one as a fool — sooner or later.

* * *

Not that anyone would want to hide Rev. Jackson under a bushel or shut him away in a closet. Far from it. Furthermore, it could not be done, as long as the silver tongued orator has breath in his body.

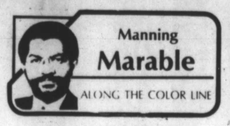
Nevertheless, there may be room for re-grouping of the troops, for re-ordering of the priorities, for re-planning. All such re-assessment may even lead to a decision for "honorable retreat" — a decision whether one is going to be a perpetual candidate or whether there are other ways and other places to serve.

Fortunately or unfortunately, in the United States there is no official "Majesty's Opposition." Those who are defeated have no status or voice in the government and no corresponding income.

In another system, during this Republican administration, there would be an official, recognized and respected role for Michael Dukakis and even Jesse Jackson. In our system, as it is, those who are out are out, those who are defeated are defeated — often never to return.

Every once in a while, as evidenced by President Bush, a candidate can say, to paraphrase the Brooklyn Dodgers, "Wait 'Til Next Time" and live to see that "next time" come. Rarely, however.

COMMENTARY & OPINIONS



Manning **Marable**
ALONG THE COLOR LINE

An agenda for empowerment

A half century ago, the black community's leaders bought into a political strategy of reliance and dependency upon the Democratic Party in national elections. The goal was to increase our collective power within the electoral system, and to eradicate Jim Crow segregation.

Unquestionably, for a time, this single-party approach yielded substantial benefits. Civil Rights legislation, economic and social welfare programs, minority set-asides, and affirmative action were largely byproducts of this coalition approach which gave millions of black votes to white Democrats.

But as last year's presidential elections only reconfirm, the old liberal coalition has become permanently unglued. The leadership of the Democratic Party is rapidly moving rightward on questions of race and economic justice.

More importantly, apparently Democratic presidential candidates lack the capacity to win national elections against the Republicans, despite the party's continued domination in the Congress. Since 1969, Democrats have controlled the Executive Branch of the federal government for only four years.

Since the vast majority of black administrators and would-be public officials are Democrats, this has meant that they are generally shut out of decision-making posts within government.

Because the civil rights organizations are heavily linked, politically and financially, to traditionally Democratic constituencies, their political clout in the Reagan administration was virtually nonexistent.

Facing the apparent permanency of the white electorate's conservatism, a number of black political leaders and political commentators are now suggesting that the solution to the dilemma of black powerlessness within the electoral arena can be gained by the move to Republicanism.

Roy Innis, head of CORE, suggested recently the need to cultivate a bipartisan approach to electoral politics. For different reasons and employing a different approach, Tony Brown basically takes the same position.

A larger number of entrepreneurially-inclined, younger African-Americans have already joined the GOP, attempting to reap the potential benefits of opportunism and tokenism. Most of the new Black Republicans do not support Reagan and Bush for ideological reasons.

Unlike the Black neoconservatives Thomas Sowell and Glen Loury, they have no ideological commitment to laissez faire economics or an avowed hatred of affirmative action.

The new black Republican simply recognize that the GOP is basically a white party, which for purposes of political appearance must nurture and promote a tiny number of middle class blacks.

It's no longer acceptable in American political culture to appear to be vulgarly racist, so a certain number of Blacks provide a proper cover to justify repressive policies against the Black community as a whole.

Racism may underscore Bush's entire social and economic agenda, but the new administration must nevertheless go through the motions of appointing a token number of African-Americans mostly in symbolic positions.

These few nonwhites who participate at the doors of the corridors of power are well-rewarded.

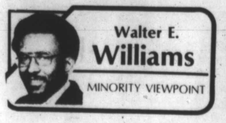
But the solution to the question of Black powerlessness is not to be found by leaping from the political frying pan into the fire. The Republican Party is dominated by the most conservative and reactionary constituencies in white corporate America; the entire leadership of the Republican Party throughout the South is largely the old Dixiecrat, segregationist reactionaries who opposed Dr. King and the civil rights movement.

We can only begin to address our own political dilemma by establishing two things: an independent, aggressive political organization which can articulate the legitimate grievances of black working people and advance our own public policy agenda; and by setting strategic goals for the achievement of that agenda, no matter who occupies the White House.

An agenda for Black Empowerment must tackle the long-term issues which every black community across this nation must address; hunger, poverty, inadequate housing, poor public health care, the lack of economic self-sufficiency and development, affirmative action.

We need to develop a better strategic relationship with that section of the Hispanic community, the Puerto Ricans and Mexican-Americans, who share a number of common economic and social problems with us.

But most importantly, we must develop a political vehicle and a coherent agenda which advocates our interests without reservations or qualifications. Neither the Democrats nor the Republicans can liberate us. We must do so ourselves.



Walter E. **Williams**
MINORITY VIEWPOINT

Israel's war gainst capitalism

Jews are successful all over the world, except Israel. Israel is a basket case rceiving nearly 15 percent of her gross national product (GNP) in handouts from the United States and other countries.

Professor Alvin Rabushka and Steve Hanke, of the Hoover Institution and Johns Hopkins respectively, tell us why in a new book, "Toward Growth: A Blueprint for Economic Rebirth is Israel-based Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies.

During the 1950s and '60s, Israel's prospects for economic growth where far brighter than these of the four "Asian tigers" — Singapore, Hong Kong, Korea, and Taiwan.

She is turning in a 9.2 percent real annual growth, attracting talented immigrants, becoming industrialized — making the desert bloom.

Since the 1970s, Israel has been a stagnant economy growing at 0.4 percent a year. Living standards haven't increased for more than a decade.

The Rabushka/Hanke book shows that the four Asian tigers have averaged a phenomenal growth rate of 6 percent or better since 1970. Between 1986 and 1988 alone, Hong Kong grew at 12 percent, Korea 12 percent, Taiwan 10 percent, and Singapore 10 percent.

The authors convincingly argue that Israel's problems are her hostile neighbors; rather, they're a direct result of the marriage between Zionism and socialism. Israel's "economy is socialist from top to bottom, and private property, free markets and prices are viewed with great suspicion."

Taking a cue from the Asian tigers and Britain, even Russia, China, and some African states, are beginning to recognize some of the failures of socialism and are taking small steps to permit a greater role for free markets.

Israel has remained virtually blind to the recognition that socialistic management of the economy is a losing game.

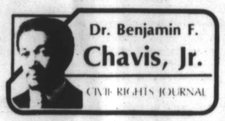
Israel's government spends about 72 percent of the nation's GNP each year. Businesses pay an effective tax rate of 55 percent. The individual tax rate starts at 20 percent on a $7,000 income, and raises to 48 percent on incomes of $27,000 and over.

In addition, there are wage, social security, and value-added taxes. Depending on a particular individual's circumstances, his effective tax rate can be as high as 70 percent.

The government imposes high import tariffs, and grants monopolies, special favors through tax write-offs and subsidies, and monopoly powers to labor unions. It manipulates its capital markets and regulates most other areas of economic life.

What's worse is: There's no significant opposition to counter government control. While Israel's major political parties differ on international policy, they're in solid agreement on government control and welfarism.

For emigrating Jews, Israel used to be the country of choice. Now Jews, including those fleeing Russia, are beginning to bypass Israel. If this trend continues, particularly among highly talented Jews, we should not be surprised to see Israel eventually adopt a Soviet-style emigration policy.



Dr. Benjamin F. **Chavis, Jr.**
CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

The courage of MLK, Jr.

"But I want you to know tonight, that, as a people we will get to the Promise Land. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord."

These were some of the last public statements made by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

It was on April 3, 1968 at the Masonic Temple in Memphis, Tennessee, that Dr. King gave this famous and last speech.

Dr. King affirmed that he had been to "the mountaintop" and he encouraged the huge crowd present to continue to make a stand for justice. On April 4, 1968, an assassin's bullet attempted to silence the dream and the dreamer.

Dr. King's tragic murder has had a continuous impact on the civil rights movement during the last twenty years. We are still in need of the kind of leadership that Dr. King exemplified with his ministry and life.

As 1989 begins and as the nation focuses on the birthday celebrations of Dr.King, we believe that it is important to re-emphasize what we believe to be one of the essential qualities of Dr. King's leadership; the courage to struggle.

Dr. King's courage to wage struggle on behalf of the downtrodden was based on his faith and the God of liberation. Dr. King's religion did not prevent him from being an activist and an outspoken articulator of the interest of the oppressed.

In fact, it was Dr. King's religious beliefs and faith that enabled him to take unprecedented risks in behalf of the cause of justice, freedom and peace.

Within the African American community across the nation, as well as in other racial and ethnic communities, there is a deep void in the kind of leadership that is present.

At a time when our communities are facing a multifaceted resurgence in racism, we are in need of bold and courageous leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr.

How will a new generation of leaders emerge to take up the torch of Dr. King? This will only be possible if a serious effort is organized by the major civil rights organizations to recruit, train, network and nurture thousands of youth who are out there searching for a meaningful future.

If the freedom movement remains reluctant to put a priority on youth leadership development, then the possibilities of future victories for racial justice will be severely limited.

The courage of Dr. King to mobilize the powerless in order to effectively challenge the powerful was one of Dr. King's remarkable characteristics. Dr. King was not interested in just getting his name in the newspaper or his face on television.

Dr. King used the media strategically to heighten the national consciousness not only about the extent of racial discrimination, but also about the determination of African Americans and others to fight against racial injustice.

Unfortunately, today there are too many leaders who allow the media the systems of oppression to use them against the interest of the poor and the downtrodden.

We will not engage in name calling but suffice it to say if Dr. King were alive, he would denounce some of the cowardly, bumbling baffoons who are just pretending to be civil rights leaders loyal to Dr. King's dream.

We believe if Dr. King were alive, he would be courageously struggling to lead a national movement against the racial bigotry that has been enhanced as a result of the Reagan-Bush years.

Dr. King would simply not compromise the truth about the injustice of current domestic and foreign policies. It is our prayer, in the advent and wake of the national celebrations in tribute to Dr. King's Legacy, that more of us will be inspired to shoulder more of the leadership responsibilities toward an effective socio-economic transformation of this society.

We all should contemplate and take up the courage of Dr. King's leadership.

Ruth **Jenkins**
SOB SISTER

Just luck I guess

Just lucky, we guess. That's how come we never have to join the next-day raucous rush to stores to exchange Christmas gifts.

Lucky, we guess. Because our family and friends never inflict us with gifts which need to be returned for defects in color, size, style or service. Or on general principles.

No burdensome gifts like fur coats, or yachts, or sports cars, or stereo rack systems, or spa equipment. Or even plane tickets to island resorts.

They say that our efficiently apartment is too small to accommodate these doodads. Funny, that's the same excuse Best Beau uses for not giving us an engagement ring.

Our gift donors are of the 'thinking' class. They tap their noggins and come up with unique ideas for our presents. Unique and less expensive than jalopies and jewels.

One longtime friend sent us a batch of 'instant winner' lottery tickets. The easy kind, where you scratch the latex coating off six little windows which cover monetary amounts. If any one block reveals three matching figures, that's how much money you win.

This lottery had a top award of $10,000. With lesser prizes of $2, $5, $10, $50, and $100. There were over twelve million winning tickets, so how could we miss.

We didn't miss; we hit. But with our luck, our triple-number paid only $2. Now, let us mention that this particular windfall is part of the Virginia state lottery. Because the donor lives in Richmond. So now after much pondering, we are packing to go to Richmond to collect our jackpot.

We have lately gone on the crossword-puzzle kick. So another pal gifted us with membership in a crossword craze club. The kind with puzzles that require brain brilliance. (The games we had mastered require only a dunce-cap IQ).

We are stumped by clues like 'light,' when they don't specify what kind. Does it mean light in color, or light in weight or light in electric bulb? We get snagged on a clue like 'fair.'

And that's just our travail with the English language. Consider the trauma of bilingual demands. To fill in blanks for 'old French coin,' (ecu); 'Russian co-op', (artel); Brazilian tree, (araca); British gun (sten); 'Roman numeral 1154', (MCLIV); and 'Spanish conifers', (pinos). We didn't even know what an American conifer was until one scratched us.

But we will not be intimidated by some old worrisome word game. We shall overcome the challenge even if we have to suffer assistance from our kindergarten critic — a neighbor's smart-alecky grandson.

He's the kid who disdained our first puzzle effort. Asked to fill in a three-letter word for 'housecleaner' the answer to 'Mom'. Then the kid smugly corrected the answer to 'Mop.' A real show-off, that brat. Just because he's a Headstart graduate.

We count it a blessing that nobody gave us that remote-control novelty. Sensitized to a lamp, or radio, or TV or whatever, it turns the appliance on or off when you clap your hands.

Hokay, so we often applaud a TV show, even though the performers can't hear the ovation. Oh come now, you guys hoop and holler and hoo-ray adventure or sports feats both at the movies and on TV. So gals are equally entitled to such eccentricities.

Several holiday productions stirred us with sentimental or spectacular performance. Like the Nutcracker ballet; the Ice Capades with Debie Thomas, and the Kennedy Center of the Performing Arts tributes with Alvin Ailey. Oh yes, and Philly's monumental 12-hour Mummers' Parade, when 20,000 colorful cavorters courageously traipsed through New Year's Day snow flurries.

We clapped a lot. So one of those clap-hands contraptions might have got us run out of town. By flashing on/off lights wildly throughout the neighborhood. Maybe even at major department stores, on the Ben Franklin bridge and probably on the City Hall yuletide tree.

Good thing we don't have one, 'Cause we wouldn't want the offended stores to tear up our credit cards. Nor the mayor to tear up our voter registration.

We shopped for Christmas bargains
At sales the next day
Got yule cards half-price, but stamps —
Post Office said "no way."