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In Perspective

It's time to be moving on!

by Albertina Smith

WHERE ARE WE GOING? This question often enters my mind and dwells daily within my thoughts. August 27 was certainly no exception. I pondered the question as I observed the thousands of faces that swelled the streets and monuments of Washington, D.C. There was a constant and insistent reverberation within me as I wandered about and observed the masses.

Young children carrying signs pleading for a promised tomorrow. Blue, yellow, red, and "ma-ROON bal-LOONS" filling the skies and rising with a demand for jobs, peace, and freedom. Men and women with long dirty-blond hair and fresh flowers, dressed in remembrance of the sixties. Brothers and sisters with tinkling braids and wearing the bold and brilliant colors of the Motherland. Moving with a grace and soul-

fulness that permeates the very essence of our Black existence.

Music representing the cultures and histories of all minorities resounded all about. There were songs for peace and love, songs for jobs, songs for vision. There were songs dedicated to brothers and sisters of color the world over. People everywhere were getting down to the rhythmic laid-back funky sounds of Gil Scott-Heron, telling the story of the courage of Black South Africa.

Every cause was represented and every cause had a cry. Throughout the march ran a common thread—the dire need for jobs, peace, and freedom. And in every eye gleamed the initial question: WHERE ARE WE GOING?

Where are we going as a people and as a nation? With the decline of social programs and the rise in

wall with the rest of the brothers. We would trip for hours on the Greenlaw wall.

It got so bad that instead of being in the library I was on the wall, instead of being in class I was on the wall, instead of trying to boost my low-flying QPA I was on the wall.

Now, let me say this. There is something strange about the wall. It's always crowded. Never empty. There are always people cooling out there. But after a while I began to notice that occasionally "so and so" was not around anymore, and that "you know who" did not come back after fall break. There were always new faces on the wall but the old ones seemed to disappear. It was like magic. Here today, gone tomorrow.

After this hit me, my mid-term grades knocked me out. They were so bad that Hanes Hall sent a transfer form and other college brochures with the report. I started thinking about life in the Army or Navy. Playing GI Joe and peeling potatoes is not so bad when you compare it to working in a fast food restaurant for the rest of your life.

Well, all was not lost. I cutout the late-night-every-night partying, I said goodbye to my afternoons on the wall, dusted off my books, started going to class again, and spent hours buried away in the Wilson stacks. It wasn't that hard when I looked at my other options which were few and far between. It even became easier as I remembered why I had come to UNC in the first place.

Yeah, I remember my freshman year. I remember it all. And every time I see a new freshman face at all the parties and on the wall as I pass by, I will wait and see how long it takes before someone else is saying, "Did you hear about you know who? Oh well, here today, gone tomorrow."

nuclear warhead production, it is not unreasonable to wonder if there is a future promised to us. In the shadow of faltering, power hungry leadership which determines the fate of our country, we must decide to exert our own power and glory as citizens. Let the establishment know beyond a shadow of a doubt that we will not be as sheep led to the slaughter, sacrificed for the sake of greed and lust. Rather we will control and direct our destinies to a peaceful and unified tomorrow.

The message that Americans are fed the hell up with the heartless and uncompromising political and social policies of the last administration rang loud and clear. The message was seen on banners, heard in ecstatic applause and expressed in the stirring and momentous speeches of people like Harry Belafonte, Gloria Steinem, Walter Fauntroy, Coretta Scott King, and Reverend Jesse Jackson.

Now let us bring the matter into perspective. How do the events and emotions that permeated the March of 1983 affect us? Bringing the question closer home, where are you going as a young Black student in the midst of all this Carolina Blue and Whiteness?

If you are not mentally blind and can see, not socially deaf and can hear, then you know that without social, political, educational, and personal awareness you have no chance of making it. Black students at this university cannot take the risk of denying the very things that have saved generations of Blacks before us; perseverance, personal dreams and endeavors, and an essential

pride in our culture and Blackness.

The price to acquiesce to the white power structure on this campus is too high to pay. Never allow the expectations of the hierarchy to be self-evident. Rather than emulate, we should strive to create support systems to preserve our own inherent legacy. We must define and conduct ourselves in accordance with who we are and always will be—beautiful Black folk.

Let us not forget our purposes, our goals, our dreams. Let us not falter under the weight of a heartless world. Let us dare to assert ourselves and our opinions so that we will never be ignored. Let us dare to let our presence be known. Let us find the spiritual bonds between us that allow us to render strength and courage to one another. Yes, hand in hand, lifting each other along the way, IT'S TIME TO BE MOVING ON!

We are the product and culmination of decades of struggle, pain, and despair. We must forcefully exert our wills and energies so that necessary changes will take place in our lifetime. We must keep our eyes on the brightest stars, for they provide the light for our future. We must keep our minds and feet in the direction of personal and social progress. Yes, IT'S TIME TO BE MOVING ON!

We Black, proud, and progressive UNC students must ask ourselves where we are going. Find the answer, seek out our own paths and vision the promise of our destinies. Once we have done that, we need to tie on our hiking boots tightly; because brothers and sisters, IT'S TIME TO BE MOVING ON!

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