

The Opposition is Helms

by John Hinton
Columnist

As a black journalist and native of North Carolina, I thought it would be a good idea to look at Sen. Jesse Helms' remarks about Blacks during the civil rights movement.

So I picked up a copy of **A Lot of Human Beings Have Been Born Bums -- Twenty Years of the Words of Senator No. Jesse Helms.** After reading it, I can't think of another politician in the country who dislikes Blacks more than the ultra-conservative senator from North Carolina.

Researched by *The North Carolina Independent*, the book is mainly a collection of editorials from Helms' television spot called Viewpoint. It seems that every weeknight, WRAL-TV in Raleigh gave Helms an airwave forum to espouse his racism; not only did his broadcast go to 70 of the state's radio stations, but many were printed in 200 newspapers across the country.

Here are a few of the Senator's greatest remarks from the 1960s about Blacks and the civil rights movement:

"Society is beginning to ask the inevitable question: Are civil rights only for negroes? White women in Washington who have been raped and mugged on the streets in broad daylight have experienced the most revolting sort of violation of their civil rights...The hundreds of others who had their purses snatched last year by negro hoodlums may understandably insist that their right to walk the street unmolested was violated..."

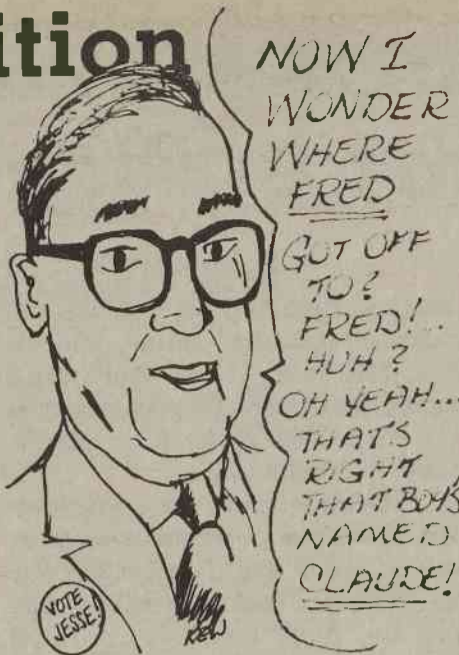
"The negro cannot count forever on the kind of restraint that has thus far left him free to clog the streets, disrupt traffic and commerce and interfere with other men's rights...Mob action invites mob action; violence invites violence; lawlessness invites lawlessness."

"Candy' is hardly the word for either the topless swimsuit or the Civil Rights Bill. In our judgement, neither has a place in America --unless we have completely lost our sense of morality."

Most notable however, was Helms' character assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. which began in 1965 and has not ended.

"We live in a day of far-fetched labels," Helms said in March 1965. "The Russians call their government 'the people's republic' when in fact, it is neither a republic nor a government of the people. Martin Luther King repeatedly refers to his 'non-violent movement.' It is about as non-violent as the Marines landing on Iwo Jima, and it is a 'movement' only in the sense that mob action is moving and spreading throughout the land."

King won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1965 for his role in the civil rights movement, but a year later, King's award became the subject of one of Helms' harangues.



"It is interesting to note that the Nobel Prize won't be awarded this year," Helms said. "When one recalls that Martin Luther King got the prize last year, it may be just as well that the committee decided not to award one this year. Perhaps it was too difficult to choose between Stokely Carmichael and Ho Chi Minh."

After all of those comments from Helms, one would think that he wouldn't have anything more to say about King after the civil rights leader was killed in 1968. But, Helms just couldn't resist in October 1983 when the Senate passed a bill honoring King's birthday with a national holiday.

"King's view of American society was thus not fundamentally different from that of Communist Party, U.S.A. or of other Marxists," Helms said, according to the 1983 Congressional Record. "While he is greatly remembered today as the pioneer for civil rights for Blacks and as the architect on non-violent techniques of dissent and political agitation, his hostility to and hatred for America should be made clear."

"What bothers me about this whole scenario is that this proposal is to set up Dr. King as a role model for young Americans," Helms said. "The palpable truth is - and many Americans are learning it - that you cannot eat politics. Dr. King has been presented as a hero to his people by a generation of people who qualify as myth makers."

Helms also stated that he opposed the holiday because the day off for workers would cost the government millions of dollars.

I understand now why so many blacks say that Helms is a racist. His mindless dribble about the civil rights movement and Martin Luther King Jr. proves that he is segregationist clinging to the customs of the Old South.

Unquestionably, Helms is responsible for his racist image. No one pointed a gun to his head in the 1960s when he lambasted the civil rights movement and King. Nor was his arm twisted when he opposed every civil rights measure during his 12-year tenure in the Senate.

Political experts say that Helms is fanning the King holiday issue to appeal to the diehard racists in North Carolina. His strategy might work, but it will be a cold day in hell before I vote for Helms.

editorials

IT'S COMING UP

African/Afro-American Film Festival

October 23: EPHEBUS
Documentary account of a Sunday evening service in a Black "Holiness" church. People, sounds and happenings are all authentic — nothing was staged for the camera.

October 30: MAU MAU
The story about Mau Mau, the Land and Freedom Army which was a political and military response to repression and armed aggression in Kenya. When Kenya was handed over by the British government to an African government composed of 'loyalists,' Mau Mau thus was lost through Kenya's independence.

No Easy Walk To Freedom

by Herman Bennett
Special to the Black Ink

Since 1912 and year after year thereafter, in their homes, in provincial and national gatherings, on trains and buses, in the factories and on the farms, in cities, villages, shanty-towns, schools and prisons, the African people have discussed the shameful misdeeds of those who rule the country.

Year after year they have raised their voices to condemn the grinding poverty of the people, the low wages, the acute shortage of land, the inhuman exploitation, and the whole policy of white domination. But instead of more freedom, repression began to grow in volume and intensity and it seemed that all their sacrifices would end in smoke and dust.

This passage from Nelson Mandela's **No Easy Walk to Freedom** characterizes the daily struggle with which South African Blacks are confronted. Mandela, who is serving a life sentence in South Africa's dungeons, symbolizes the resistance to apartheid--white supremacy--in South Africa.

Today, South Africa is the last bastion of white supremacy on the African continent. In order to maintain the status quo, the South African government has enforced a policy of systematically oppressing the Black population, making the situation increasingly explosive. The recent riots in Sharpeville where an estimated 60 people lost their lives is indicative of the level of tension that exists.

But the roots of racial tension are deep in the history of South Africa. The initial residents of what is presently called the Republic of South Africa were the Zulus, Xhosa and other Black nations.

During the period of European colonial expansion, however, South Africa was subjected to Dutch rule after a period of severe warfare between Dutch and Africans.

In 1806, however, the British conquered the region and a struggle for domination ensued between the Britons, Africans and Dutch Creoles (who called themselves Boers then and Afrikaners today).

During the next 100 years, British strength in the region diminished as the Afrikaner nationalism grew. By the outset of World War II, the Afrikaner Nationalist extremists formed links with Nazi Germany and hoped for a German victory which would permit the establishment of an independent Afrikaner Republic.

Central to the Nationalist philosophy was the establishment of a society based on cheap land and cheap labor. The labor was provided by the Black population which was also socially segregated and denied all political rights.

In order to maintain white minority rule, the Afrikaner leaders created a religious justification which legitimized the oppression of the Black population. The religious argument states that the Afrikaner were a chosen people with a manifest destiny to rule South Africa. God, they maintain, had given the Black African his inferior position, and it would be wrong for the master race