

Expressions Expressions

The VOICE would like to share your expressions. Please submit all articles to The VOICE, Rudolph Jones Student Center by March 23, 1979.

BEING BLACK IN '78

by Jeffrey Melvin

Stop the world I want to get off. This is not a suicide statement. I have always held a deep and abiding reverence for life; suicide is meaningless. I believe life is dear yet I now question the quality of life. It is a sad but inescapable fact that we live in an apathetic world. The 70's is a non man's land of selfishness, disinterest and despair. I am in a venomous mood and I have to get something off my chest. It saddens me to think that the hope and high ideals generated by the Activism of the 60's, a decade of rebellion, has given way to the cold, unfeeling world of today. It has been a sharp and noticeable decline from the cries of Black Power, Anti-War Movements, Student Unrest, JFK, RFK, and M.L. King, Jr. to disco fever.

The most visible, energetic fervor capturing the fancy of this country is disco. We save our demonstration for the dance floor. Everyone is getting funky; everyone is getting loose; everyone gets off and no one gives a damn that inevitably Africa will be engulfed by war; war between Ethiopia and Somalia; War in South Africa; War in Rhodesia. Having forgotten Mozambique, Angola, Biafra, Zaire and the Middle East. No doubt, we will soon forget impending deaths that could possibly involve the whole of Africa in racial war and continue dancing the night away.

The 60's was a time of turmoil, civil rights, voter registration, desegregation; black pride was born out of that decade. Hope for the future was the gift of the 60's. How easily we have forgotten. Freedom and equality were the by-words. Was it so long ago that we were the by-words. Was it so long ago that we were marching on Washington, boycotting in Montgomery, looting in Detroit, burning in Watts; was it so long ago that we cared about each other? Look around you. Who are your heroes? Do you remember Martin Luther King, Jr.? What ever happened to Angela Davis, Huey P. Newton? Eldridge Cleaver? Bobby Seale? I almost cried when Lyman Bostock was killed. Did you care? Will you forget Jonestown, Guyana? I'm 23 years old, I have seen death, seemingly senseless tragedy, lost at love more than once and yet I have not cried since I was a teen-ager. I'm not alone, this is a hard, unforgiving world that we live in and it seems that no one cares. I sometimes wonder if I will ever be moved to tears. It's sad to think that I'm incapable of tears. Where do we go from here?



Testimony Of A Black Woman

by Lillie Booth

I've been known to accept lies, to believe what I wanted to believe. I've been known to hide my feelings or to tell others what they should feel. I've on occasion boasted an ego that couldn't be pulled down with a ten foot pole and on other occasions I've told myself I have no purpose for being here. I've at times wanted something or someone so badly that I would have sold my soul to the Devil in exchange for it. I've experienced love so sweet and magnificent and I have seen how hate can destroy people. I've questioned why Death has to steal loved ones from me and I've watched in awe and gratitude as I've brought new life into the world. I've said a heavy-hearted good-bye to a love that's gone off to war and I've rejoiced and enjoyed other patriotic benefits. I've done things impulsively and later asked myself, "Why didn't you think?" I've had dreams of being rich and famous and I've fought times of not having enough to make ends meet. I've at times scorned my heritage and imitated others, and I've learned how to put it all in a proper perspective and deal with the real me. I've known what it is to be a young, inexperienced girl of sixteen and I've watched myself blossom into a woman. Not just a woman but a strong, proud, black woman. Proud of my heritage. But most of all, worthy of it.

Poetry In Motion

What's sadder than the sight and sound of a senior who discovers, the night before commencement, that he or she hasn't met all the graduation requirements?

Almost nothing, thinks Charles J. Milhauser, the registrar at Cornell College in Iowa, who urges seniors to check such things the fall before graduation. In fact, he sent Cornell's seniors this poem:

'Twas the night before graduation when all through the dorm,
Not a creature was stirring, not even in Ror'm.
All diplomas were signed by the pres'dent with care,
In hopes that the graduates soon would be there.
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter:
Some seniors just learned of a terrible matter.
More rapid than eagles the registrar came
And he counted their credits and called them by name:
Flunk, Marsha; flunk, Spencer; flunk Frances and Dixon;
Flunk Como, he's stupid; flunk Donna and Nixon;
Then up the Hilltop the parents they flew
With all sorts of threats and a lawyer or two.
All said, in a twinkle, "The registrar's good.
He's hemming and hawing, but where is the proof?"
As they drew out their check-books while turning around,
Down the hallway the registrar came with a bound.
He spoke just this word as they reached for his neck:
"I asked every senior to come for a check!

In early September I bid them come in,
Both to look at their records to know what has been
And to learn what remains and what still must be done
If they are to finish in time for May's fun.
We talk about transcripts; requirements, too;
And I mark on a sheet all they need to get through.
Your child was invited to come for a check.
Had he done so he would have avoided this wreck."
The proof was conclusive the punishment paid.
'Twas foolish t'ignore such a valuable aid.
The next group of seniors was quick to forsee
What a wonderful benefit checking can be.
Just a minute or two of your time and your mass
Will insure that you know what you must do to pass.
The students whose records were checked in the fall
Are enjoying the year and just having a ball.
But those who neglected their visit to pay
Are they who have throw graduation away.
Special thanks to Mr. Frank T. Barreca for submitting this item.

"Economic Equality For Blackman: A Parable"

by Manning Marable

"I am Blackman," said the young man. A middle aged, white official pushed himself away from his desk with a sigh. "Yet another black applicant?" he asked himself. "When will they simply learn to remain at home in their ghettos?"

The nervous official turned and studied the young man's face. Oval glasses, a small beard - "good Lord, I hope it's not another militant?" The young man was not wearing a dashiki, however, but a neat white shirt and dark blue blazer. From his vest pocket hung a shiny, new Phi Beta Kappa key, attached to a small gold watch chain. The official was reassured, and promptly asked the young black man to take a seat.

"This position calls for the utmost in professionalism," the white official began seriously. "But prior to our interview, I must ask one important question. Do you believe in economic equality?"

Blackman was startled. "I don't believe that one's political views are exactly relevant to the post I am applying for," he replied somewhat cautiously. "Nevertheless, I believe that every individual must make his way into the business world on his own, through his own initiative. All people cannot possibly achieve basic economic equality, at least, under our present free enterprise system."

"Precisely so!" smiled the white official. "A splendid answer, my boy. Er, what was your name again?"

"Blackman," responded the young man.

"Now, I have already received your academic records and various letters of support. I must say that they appear to be quite impressive," added the official, skimming through a folder on

his desk. "But, as always, there are a few questions that must be asked before I can officially give the position to you."

"Yes sir," stated Blackman.

"How do you feel about affirmative action?" the official asked.

"I believe that the government should have the right to make certain changes in hiring practices and educational procedures to guarantee equal opportunity for historically oppressed minorities, such as blacks, Hispanics and women."

"Well, that's no longer a problem," the white official responded. "Ever since the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, racial discrimination has virtually disappeared. The real danger today is reverse discrimination against white people. I'm sure that you've heard about the Bakke decision. Anyway, within a few years affirmative action will no longer be used, a dead legal principle."

The white official cleared his throat. "Now then, what about employment policies? Do you believe in the original concept of the Humphrey-Hawkins Bill?"

"It seems to me that every able bodied person should have a right to a job," Blackman said. "Permanent unemployment creates social discontent, a lack of initiative and real political chaos in deprived areas."

"My boy, you're not thinking correctly," the white official smiled. "Secretary of the Treasury Blumenthal has already said that inflation, not unemployment, is our major economic problem. Unemployment for whites at five percent, and ten percent for blacks, is in reality full employment! We'd have tremendous labor shortages if every black man who wanted to work actually got a job. Our economic system cannot function if everyone was actually working."

The official smiled. "You're still somewhat inexperienced about the mechanics involved in private enterprise. But you'll learn, I'm sure of that. Tell me, what are your views on President Carter's new anti-inflation program?"

"The Carter Administration seeks to hold wage increases to 7 percent and price increases to 5.8 percent next year," Blackman noted. "President Carter also intends to cut federal government expenses by not hiring 20,000 new employees. But this doesn't address the central questions of permanent black unemployment and the lack of economic development inside minority communities."

"Minorities be damned--present company excluded," the white official snapped sharply. "The path toward economic health involves wage freezes, cutting jobs and allowing prices to rise. That's the way this country became great!"

The white official shuffled several papers on his desk. "There's one additional question, Blackman. What do you think of national health insurance?"

Blackman thought for a minute. "My mother died when I was a child," he explained. "We had no health

insurance because we couldn't afford it. There are millions of black and poor families who desperately need more than just health insurance. They need a national health care system that provides for all hospital and major dental services, regardless of their financial situation."

The white official frowned tightly. "I see you haven't understood the general problems facing our economic system. If we grant decent medical care to every black welfare mother demanding it, we'd go bankrupt in a year. Some people have to die in order for our current system of private health care to survive. It's perfectly logical - just like when we burn crops in order to maintain high prices for farm produce. That's the way our system works."

"I see," said Blackman. He rose quietly and began walking to the doorway.

"But the interview isn't over yet, Blackman," said the white official. "Are ... you offended by anything I've said?"

"Not really," Blackman commented. "I'm only disappointed with myself."

"But don't you want this position?"

"Not any more. But what I really want," Blackman stated determinedly, "is economic equality."

John Wayne, Honorary
Crusade Chairman



Maybe we'll
cure cancer
without your
help,
but don't bet
your life on it.

The way it stands today, one American out of four will someday have cancer. That means it will strike some member in two out of three American families.

To change those statistics we have to bring the promise of research to everyday reality. And to expand our detection program and techniques. And that takes money. Lots of money. Money we won't have - unless you help us.

The American Cancer Society will never give up the fight. Maybe we'll find the answers even without your help. But don't bet your life on it.

American
Cancer Society

This space contributed by the publisher