

IT COULD BE A MERRY MERRY CHRISTMAS



**SELF HELP
SELF IMPROVEMENT
MUTUAL AID - CO-OPERATION**

Christ Is Born

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

(And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

—St. Luke 2:1-14

If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who propose to favor freedom and yet depreciate agitation are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the oceans majestic waves without the awful roar of its waters.

—Frederick Douglass

Things You Should Know



**John Fletcher
HURST**

1834-1903

...A.M.E. Bishop, born in Salem, Md., a graduate of Dickinson College and a student at Halle, Germany. He taught theological history at Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, N. J. In 1873 he became their President. In 1880 — a Bishop. Writer of many texts, his

outstanding scholarship won great awards for the college. In and out of the church, he fought bravely for Negro Rights!

To Be Equal

The Gift of Christmas

By Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

Christmas celebrates nothing less than the gift of life and the birth of fresh hope. That's why it touches a universal chord, why all of us look forward to the Christmas season with anticipation and joy.

For many, Christmas means a renewal of basic values and of the necessary commitments those values imply. Chief among them is compassion and help for those less fortunate.

It is more important than ever before to affirm those values and those traditional Christmas seasonal reminders of man's brotherhood and the goodwill we should hold for all.

Just a quick look around us shows the need for a rebirth of compassion and caring generosity.

Millions of people are starving in the famine areas of Africa. Millions here at home are jobless this Christmas. Millions of families will celebrate the traditional Christmas dinner with the only meat they'll eat this month.

And many of those meager Christmas dinners are possible only because of food stamps or welfare payments or other means society provides to supply the barest minimum necessary for sheer survival, and little else.

We should think of those people — people in trouble, people who are homeless, people who are hungry — while we celebrate our

own good fortune. That's what this season means — to transcend our own concerns and embrace others in the full spirit of humanity and sharing love of one's neighbor.

But unfortunately there's another spirit abroad in the land in this Christmas season, a spirit of selfish hard-heartedness, a spirit of indifference to those who are poor or who are black, a spirit of meanness.

I suppose we can call that the spirit of anti-Christmas, and it is strong, very strong. It is strong enough to masquerade as part of the season's good cheer and hearty fun.

Just consider one particularly ugly example of the spirit of anti-Christmas. There's a nasty board game making fun of poor people and welfare recipients that will probably wind up under some Christmas trees — the fewer the better, as far as I'm concerned.

Players draw cards that read: "Your son is beat up by an ethnic gang while being bused across town to school; pay hospital \$200." Another is "pitch pennies all day." Losers draw cards like: "working person's burden." Land on a box marked "illegitimate child" and you get play money welfare grants.

It is disgusting that the sufferings of the poor are so callously treated by people making fun of their miseries for profit. The very

idea of well-off people playing a game that reinforces racial stereotypes and derides the poorest of the poor is obscene, especially in this Christmas season.

And how ironic to give such a poisonous game as a gift to impressionable children, helping them to learn racism and contempt for those less well-off than their own families, many of whom once were dirt poor themselves less than a generation or two ago.

One stupid board game wouldn't bother me; what gets me is the mentality behind it, a mentality of me-first, damn-the-poor, hate those who are different or poorer.

Poverty isn't a game for those who are poor. It is in the humblest homes that the true spirit of Christmas will reign this year, where people will share the little they have and take solace with the love and warmth of their families and friends.

This Christmas let us all strive to rise above the petty race and class hatreds so prevalent in our society; let us dedicate ourselves to the lasting values of the Christmas tradition.

In this season of rebirth and fresh hopes, may we resolve to give fresh meaning to the spirit of brotherly love and joy to all mankind. In that spirit, may I wish you and your loved ones a happy and joyous holiday.

Business In The Black

Carter Aid Cries Cheaper Housing Cost

By Charles E. Belle

Would you believe the White House hopes to have cheap housing for the poor before Reagan rushes into the Oval Office? Well, open your ears and hear this, from the financial chief of housing, Jay Janis, Chairman, Federal Home Loan Bank Board. Mr. Janis, speaking before the nation's home loan lenders at their 88th Annual Convention of the U.S. League of Savings Associations in San Francisco, speculated on a tax incentive for savers theme. "Such a program would aid first-time home buyers and those who otherwise could not afford housing at market rates," suggested Janis.

A tax incentive for savers would benefit banks, savings and loans and other financial depositories by providing more funds, as well as giving them an opportunity to meet the housing needs of the people by making more mortgage loans. In addition, it would cut into inflation since the more people save, presumably, the less they will spend.

Several bills have been introduced in Congress to collar inflation and grapple with the disastrous housing dilemma. However, this tax incentive idea for savers is surely worthy of the attention of the White House occupant for a few days now — or in February, 1981. Finding a way to cover the loss of \$500 million per year to the Internal Revenue Service in cost caused by the proposal was a tricky problem.

Robin Hood's idea is seized by Janis. Tax those with homes twenty per cent on their capital gains when they sell their houses, says Sir Janis. People without houses can run with that response!

President-Elect Ronald Reagan is the reason Mr. Janis has a personal problem. Mr. Janis just might not be in office to offer support for his suggestion to incite investors to save. However, another thought by Janis to jump up the interest exclusion savings to \$1,000 per person from \$500 and is

bound to survive under a Reagan regime. No one will have to lie about the little money they make in their savings account on interest income with right way Ronald Reagan around the White House.

"In any event," according to Janis, "new conditions such as inflation, competition for funds, decontrol of interest rates and Federal Reserve policy shifts, have caused record high interest rates, curtailed mortgage loan money and a change in the basic home loan arrangement."

At stake in all of this, according to Janis, are jobs. In an economic sense, housing has a substantial "multiplier" effect, he says. For every hundred thousand units that are started with new homes built, 176,000 jobs are created. Construction work, material suppliers and the whole subcontractor network. No need to guess who benefits when business must demand more workers — All Americans.

Affirmative Action:

SAVE THE CHILDREN

It is now recognized increasingly that black youth are at the heart of uncounted significant political issues. Busing, the draft, unemployment, etc., all involve to a greater or lesser extent the question of black youth.

And despite the International Year of the Child, despite Operation PUSH and the Congressional Black Caucus focusing on the "black family" and "save the children," it remains true that black youths are subjected constantly to a drumbeat of attack.

Making national headlines recently and confirming what to some was obvious was a recent study issued by the U.S. Surgeon General Julius B. Richmond. He noted that while the over-all death rate in this country was dropping by 20% from 1960-78, it grew by 11% for young people from 15-24 years old; the chief causes of death for this age group were motor vehicle accidents, other kinds of accidents, suicides, etc. But for black youth, murder was by far the chief cause of death. Correspondingly, a newborn black is nearly twice as likely to die in infancy as a white child.

And those black children who do manage to survive infancy, what happens to them? Well, for starters, like so many others in this society, they'll find it difficult to obtain any kind of health care of children in two parent families. In other states, families cannot receive Medicaid because their annual incomes were considered above the poverty levels; but the catch is that in these states, the poverty level in-

come is set at absurdly low levels, e.g., Tennessee's \$2,400 per year. In other words, any family of four making \$2,401 per year or more is deemed not to be poverty-stricken and is denied Medicaid benefits. But the threshold issue is that nineteen states have denied medical funds for prenatal care, thus contributing to the unusually high infant mortality rates of blacks, who are forced by economic circumstance to rely disproportionately on Medicaid.

This same economic circumstance and social pressure detailed in numerous studies has led to many women-led families in the black community. Yet this only reflects the general national trend, as the number of United States families led by women with no husbands increased 51%, from 5.6 million to 8.5 million, between 1970 and 1979. If there was an adequate system of child care centers, the question of women-led families would not be a major social question. There are approximately six million preschool age children with working mothers; yet there are at least five million kids out in the cold — a disproportionate number of whom are black.

The right wing Reaganites who chirp incessantly about black "welfare mothers" not working, at the same time block federally funded child care; the lack of which often prevents mothers from working in this unemployment plagued economy.

The black youth who is able to survive infancy and the pre-school years, then has to enter under-equipped, crowded public

schools, where drugs are often more available than books. One does not have to be a prude about marijuana smoking to be concerned about a situation where one out of nine high school seniors is a daily user or where eight per cent of 12-13 year olds have tried the herb with half of this group still using it. The impact on thinking processes, reading comprehension, verbal and arithmetic skills, etc., is incalculable. Alcohol abuse, another "drug" problem that does not receive adequate attention, is probably worse in the schools.

The black community should also be concerned about our youths' undue watching of television. Wilson Riles, a black who is California Schools Superintendent, in a recently released study, indicated that the more a student watches TV, the worse he does in school. After surveying 500,000 sixth-twelfth graders, he concluded that the boob tube "is not an asset and it ought to be turned off. . . the dialogue that goes on in many of those programs is of very low quality and the education value (is) nil."

But a black parent without child care will use the tube as a baby-sitter, a black parent with a poverty level income who cannot afford to pay for intellectual pursuits, will use the tube as a substitute — and our entire community suffers.

The black youth who is deprived of education, health care, recreation and employment is likely to be found in a Miami-style rebellion. The explosiveness and unchanneled anger demonstrated by Miami has the potential

to turn this country upside down. This conclusion can also be gleaned from the massive 45,000 word report issued by a committee of five whites and three blacks appointed by Governor Bob Graham. The committee's chairman, Irwin J. Block, a Miami lawyer averred: "Almost 45% of black teen-agers are unemployed here. They hang around all day on street corners. They're hungry and frustrated and are being frequently hustled by the equally frustrated police. Black youths don't even mind being arrested. In jail, at least they have three meals a day." Though this may be

something of an exaggeration, it captures the tenor of the quandary. In an era when the dormitory for Olympic athletes at Lake Placid, N.Y., is now a prison for black and Hispanic youths, it is not difficult to see that the problems we are up against are immense. But, if problems for black youth are, say, three times as great, then inevitably they must receive three times the federal benefits. This is what affirmative action is all about and this is the idea that must be hammered home in demonstrations, rallies and marches if we are to save the children.

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