

Spectacles: A Closer Look The Assault on the Black Male

By Ada M. Fisher

Where are the black men? Looking around across the nation, the paucity of black men is striking. From all flanks, the black male is under attack with the murders of young black male children and young men in Atlanta as but one symptom of the on-going personal assault which our men face.

Society at large plays cruel games with black men which enhance their demise. At birth, there are approximately 103 to 106 black males born to every 100 black females. At birth and thereafter, the black male infant is more likely to die than all others due in part to socio-economic circumstances. Hence, by age two, there are less than 100 black male toddlers to every 100 black female toddlers. In adolescence and young adulthood, what numbers accidents don't claim, homicide and suicide do. In later life, high blood pressure, diabetes, strokes, etc., will claim the lives of over fifty per cent of black men before they reach the age of 65. This means that plans to up the retirement age to 70 will force the majority of black men to work all of their lives without any hope of retirement.

Black men have fought valiantly in all wars that this nation has chosen to enter. From Crispus Attucks in the American Revolution to our friends, lovers, and neighbors in Viet Nam. Disproportionately have we laid down our lives in combat only to return to rejection at home and slow infrequent advancements within the military ranks. The prisons swell with our men and some statistics note that 40% of all prison populations are of black males. From a group that represents only 12% of the total population, it seems inconceivable that the justice being meted out is equal or blind.

As the black athlete's face has gained center stage in the ball parks, attendance figures have declined. The Bakke Case reaffirmed the lack of commitment we have had to equal opportunities and affirmative action for blacks. Those fields such as medicine, where we once were gaining, now again show a decline in the number of black males participating fully. Looking out upon the sea of graduates at predominantly white institutions, the sprinklings of black faces showed a majority of them belonging to black women, even though the black male athlete has often brought fame and fortune to these institutions.

Amidst the shrinking ranks of those black males left to our communities, their masculinity and survival is being challenged daily. For many, the homosexual lifestyle is becoming an option of choice, leaving fewer black males for black females and causing many to question the survival of black families. On their home front, many black men feel that their role as "breadwinner" is threatened by their inability to find gainful employment, especially in economic hard times such as these. The conflicting love-hate relationship between black men and black women is supposedly driving them from the arms of black women to those of white women. And, the pseudo-glamour of the "playboy" superficially black male, so painfully illustrated by the seventies era of black exploitation films, has confused many minds with a subsequent desertion of responsibility to children and families being realized.

Hundreds of black men suffered public castrations and hangings inflicted for real or imagined liaisons with white women. The open shootings of black men in Buffalo and the hanging of a black man in a southern city should be a reminder that things haven't changed as much as we'd like to think. For all of our criticism of the Reagan Administration, his is the first since the Johnson Administration in 1967 to have a black man as a cabinet official. But let us not be deceived, one man does not point to a commitment to fairness nor do tokens thrown in our way.

The saddest event occurring before our eyes is the "tuning out" which many young black men are now doing. No matter how boring the work may seem, without a good education, a black man doesn't stand a chance in today's computerized society. You don't get it standing on the block with the Afro comb propped in your hair, while publicly grabbing yourself. The tragedy of black youth today is that so many are castrating their most important organ, their brains, by failing to get an education and develop their minds and talents. Whether you realize it or not, we are engaged in a great Civil War. The tools of this arena are education and credentials. Even those who have them may not win, but without them, the battle is lost before it has begun.

Black People Wake Up! The vicious attacks on the black male continue with his help, with our help, and with society's blessings. Black men, you must save yourselves. We must make society accountable for its indifference to your plight and we must quit making excuses and defend ourselves against attacks to your personhood. Let's we all forget, we are black and the color of our skin dictates that the way shall neither be easy nor the rewards comparable to our suffering. We must prevail for the future of our sons and daughters demands that we not downplay the value and significant role of black men.

Blacks United In Government To Meet

Blacks United In Government, Inc. will convene Saturday, 9:30 a.m., September 26, at Saint Augustine's College, Raleigh.

The conference theme: "Preparedness, Performance and Productivity, A Blue Print For Equal Opportunity, will be highlighted by Senator Henry E. Frye, Greensboro; Ben Ruffin, Assistant to the Governor, Durham; and Harold Webb, Director of State Personnel, Raleigh.

The primary purposes of the organization are: (1) To assure blacks greater opportunities for

equal employment, promotions, and managerial positions in government. (2) To provide legal and moral support for blacks, who are denied equal opportunities due to discriminatory practices, procedures, or unwritten policies by governmental departments and agencies.

(To) monitor the Affirmative Action Programs and Reduction in Force Policies in governmental agencies and departments.

Reports from committees on Charter, By-Laws, Membership, and Re-organization will be presented.

**Voter Registration Books
close October 5
for voting in November General Election**

Black Social Workers To Hold 7th Annual Conference

The 7th Annual N.C. State Association of Black Social Workers Conference will convene on September 25-26, 1981, at the Sheraton Hotel in Fayetteville.

The conference theme "Networking: Black Energy Effectively Channelled Into Power" will examine the negative implications of Reagonomics and its Block Grants formula on the black community. Workshops will focus on black self-help programs such as Farm to Market and food cooperative projects, as well as workshops on black adoptions, human and health services, legislation and political action, criminal/juvenile justice, education, religion, employment and networking/communications.

Keynoters include Attorney Barbara Arnwine, Co-Convenor, National Black Independent Political Party, Raleigh; Cenie J. Williams, Executive Director, National Association of Black Social Workers, New York, N.Y.; Rev. John Fuller, Pastor, Lewis Chapel Church, Fayetteville. Dr. Stan Smith, President of Shaw University, is the recipient of NCSABSW's third Human Service Award. Previous recipients were Rev. Ben Chavis (1979) and Alderman Larry Little, Winston-Salem (1980).

Local workshop presentors will include Ben Ruffin, Special Assistant to the Governor; H.M. "Mickey" Michaux, former Federal Attorney, Middle District; Ms. Cathy Thompson, WTVD-TV, Durham; Dr. Faheem Ashanti, Psychologist, Durham; Arnold Dennis, NBIPP, Durham; Stanley Holding, NBIPP Food Co-op, Durham. Other presenters will include Representative Dan Blue; Dr. John Fleming, Shaw University; Professor Danny Houston, Black United

Front; Ms. Hattie Jackson, WPTF-TV; Henry McKoy, Department of Administration; Levi Dawson, Wake County Jail; George Fleming, Ms. Maola Mattison, Ms. Rose Kittrell, and Dr. Norman Camp, Department of Human Resources; Robert Walton, Mecklenburg County Commissioner; Darnell Baptiste, Adoption Resource Center, Chapel Hill; Dr. C. R. Edwards, State Board of Education, Fayetteville; County Commissioner.

McAllister, Fayetteville; Ms. Jennifer Henderson, Hunger Coalition, Fayetteville; Ms. Marcella Ogslesby, Mental Health, Winston-Salem; A.J. Johnson, City Councilman, Fayetteville; Clifton Graves, Legal Services, Winston-Salem, and others.

For further information, contact NCSABSW, P.O. Box 15474, Durham, N.C. 27704, or call Marshall Harvey, at 781-9468 in Raleigh, or Leonard G. Dunston, at 471-6559 in Durham after 6:00 p.m.

NCC Condemns (Continued from Page 16)

Americans to speak out against South Africa's policies in southern Africa was expressed to the executive committee and at the press briefing by B.N. Sequeira of the ministry of foreign affairs of the People's Republic of Angola. "We need your support for Namibia, for the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), which is fighting against incredible odds for its freedom," he said, "because if the South African regime can be saved, it is the United States that will save it — save it to continue its policies of inhuman treatment and oppression."

Christians in the U.S. do not stand alone in deploring South Africa's action. The Rev. Maxine Rafransoa, general secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches, Nairobi, Kenya, also attended the meeting and said, "This resolution is consistent with one we made at the fourth assembly of the All Africa Conference of Churches in Nairobi this summer and with a statement made two weeks ago in Dresden at a meeting of the central committee of the World Council of Churches. It is a confirmation that the Christian brothers and sisters of the world are together against the

system of apartheid."

In other action, the executive committee asked the president of the council to send a letter to President Reagan urging him to "direct (United Nations) Ambassador Jean Kirkpatrick to vote against the seating of the Democratic Kampuchean (Pol Pot) delegation in the United Nations, either by supporting the 'vacant seat resolution' or simply by abstaining from voting on the issue" when it came before the General Assembly September 16.

In taking this action, the committee pointed out that the Pol Pot authorities have been discredited before the world as genocidal and that they control only a small portion of Kampuchean territory. Committee members were reminded that during the U.S. presidential campaign in 1980, Ronald Reagan denounced the "gross hypocrisy" of the Carter administration because it "supported the Pol Pot Communist Cambodian regime, which had slaughtered millions of its own people, in the United Nations."

The executive committee of the Council consists of representatives of the council's 32 Protestant and Orthodox communions and meets quarterly to guide the work of the Council.



Durham's New Bookmobile

Ms. Joanne Abel and Harold Chestnut of the Bookmobile staff, proudly show off Durham County's new Library Bookmobile. Much smaller and more efficient than the old eight-ton Gerstenslager bus, the new vehicle holds about 350 adult hardback books and about 800 paperback books. It is on the road five days a week. In addition to numerous special stops for story telling and film programs, the bookmobile also serves to register people to vote. Estimated mpg. of the old vehicle averaged 2-3 gallons while the new vehicle is expected to 14 mpg.

Photos by Roy Harris

Savers Certificates Available Oct. 1

Thousands of small savers in North Carolina will find the new All-Savers Certificates one of the Best investments they can make, according to Wachovia Bank and Trust Company.

The new certificate provides a high-yielding, medium-term savings instrument and offers a tax break for those who invest in it. The maximum yield on the one-year certificate will be 12.61 percent when it becomes available on October 1.

This view of the value of the All-Savers Certificate varies somewhat from opinions generally expressed about the certificate. In many circles the new certificate has been considered only for individuals in high tax brackets.

"When you factor in the effect of the federal income tax exemption (\$1,000 for an individual and \$2,000 on a joint return) the actual yield of the All-Savers Certificate can be higher than the after-tax yield of many other consumer certificates," said James Brewer, head of Wachovia's Retail Bank Department.

For example, Brewer said that a person in the 28 percent tax bracket investing an individual \$10,000 in taxable income between \$10,800 and

\$12,900 would realize slightly more net income in one year from a \$5,000 All-Savers Certificate yielding 12.61 percent than would be earned in one year from a \$5,000 30-month certificate yielding 16.54 percent.

"We expect a considerable number of our certificates to range from the \$500 minimum to \$7,500, which means that many 'small savers' will be investing in the certificate," he said.


"Most of the total dollars going into the new certificates is likely to come from six-month, \$10,000 minimum money market certificates, however," he said. Approximately \$1.5 billion in these certificates mature during the last three months of the year at North Carolina banks, and many of these certificate-holders will be able to realize a greater return by moving money into an All-Savers Certificate because of the tax-exemption feature associated with it.

"At the same time, the tax exemption will make it more difficult to figure the actual return after taxes," Brewer said. "To simplify this process we have developed a chart which will be available to consumers from personal bankers at our offices around the state.

"There are other factors which need to be considered on the All-Savers Certificate, such as tying money up for 12 months and the possible availability of higher rates on other savings plans," he said. "We are providing intensive training on all elements of the certificate for our personal bankers, and the best advice I can give to consumers is to encourage them to discuss the merits of the certificate with someone where they bank."

The All-Savers Certificate, approved last month by Congress, is intended to provide an incentive for people to save, to help the savings and loan industry and to stimulate housing. It will be available from October 1, 1981, through December 31, 1982. It allows maximum exemptions on federal income taxes of \$1,000 for an individual and \$2,000 for a couple filing a joint return.

The maximum yield will be equal to 70 percent of the investment yield on one-year U.S. Treasury bills. The initial yield of 12.61 percent will be revised on October 5 and once thereafter. The rate on an individual certificate is fixed for the term of the certificate.



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