

Editorials

There's A Message For Blacks

All over the nation, even as many among us cry the tears of a youngster whose "federal" lollipop has been snatched away, there are many, many other blacks preaching a new message.

It is a message of self-determination, a message that is much more hopeful, practical and far more positive in its long range impact than the droning litany of doom spilling from the mouths of some of our older leaders.

The message rings forth from Greensboro where A&T's new chancellor, Edward Fort, says enthusiastically, that for black colleges to survive, they must build strong internal systems, hire highly skilled specialists to manage those systems, retain and attract highly competent teachers and compete in the mainstream for the best students, while maintaining the university's traditional heritage.

In Durham, Dr. Mabel B. Phifer, president of the Moton Memorial Institute, speaking to alumni and friends of the five historically black state universities, challenged North Carolina's blacks to give \$100 a year for the next three years to a black college of their choice.

"We've got to stop 'fun-raising'," she said, "and start fun-raising, and the easiest way to do that is to write a check."

And in Chicago, a black Catholic priest says: "We cannot determine our destiny until we accept responsibility for each other."

And so the message is clear and the challenge is before us. That challenge is frighteningly simple: If not now, when? If not you, who?

The Word Is Out

Well, folks, the word is out. Black America, with an annual gross "national" income of about \$150 billion, making it the world's ninth largest consumer "nation", is not poor.

So, it's going to be fairly hard to convince many people to be sorry for those of us who need some help.

The emptiness of much black rhetoric has been exposed also, and so a lot of what is being said about oppression, discrimination, etc., is falling on deaf ears. In fact, America's guilt-bank is about bankrupt.

And just in case you have not heard, we (black Americans) are smack dab in the middle of "the age of destiny". In other words, they're draining the baby pool that we've been wading around in for years. And now we must either learn to swim in the mainstream or drown.

Yep, that's the word that's out. The day of protest has died. Today and tomorrow are days of competitive contests.

Yes, the word is out: we've got to stop hoping that whites will somehow benevolently finance our survival and success. If we don't do it, it won't get done.

And so the final word is simple: dig deep, come up with all the money you can, and put it to work, because if we don't the last word we'll hear is DOOM.

On The Longer Days

Daylight saving time is upon us again. The time to SPRING forward, and what a joyous time it is. Suddenly now we get about an extra hour of sunlight.

Now after work, we can play a little softball, work in the garden, walk in the park, and do a number of things that are just a lot more fun in the waning warmth of the day.

But gaining an hour of daylight also obviously means that we lose an hour of night. And that hurts the sleeping time. And losing an hour a night of sleep means that by the time we FALL back to Eastern Standard Time on the last Sunday in October, we will be 180 hours behind on our sleep.

Boy, no wonder we feel so tired in the wintertime.

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 ocean's majestic waves without the awful roar of its waters.

—Frederick Douglass

Things You Should Know

Dr Henry M.
MINTON

Born in Columbia, S.C., in 1871, educated in New Hampshire, he was class orator and co-editor of his college paper. He got his Ph.D. in 1895; his M.D. from Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, in 1906. As a scientific researcher, he made medical history with his pioneer work on the causes and prevention of tuberculosis. He was also a celebrated chronicler of Negro history.

—Continental Features

To Be Equal

Mixed-Up Priorities

By John E. Jacob
Executive Director, National Urban League

As an example of mixed-up federal priorities, it would be hard to beat the plan to spend over \$4 billion to relocate people in the event of a threat of a nuclear attack.

The Administration is under the illusion that eighty per cent of the population could survive a nuclear attack, and that it could move two-thirds of the population to "safety" within a week of an imminent nuclear war.

The plan says it can move us by "taking advantage of extensive U.S. transportation resources." I wonder if the plan's author ever tried leaving a major city during the rush hour or has traveled on those "extensive transportation resources."

Last I heard, the time warning for a nuclear attack would be something like fifteen minutes. Why does the Pentagon expect an enemy to give us as much as a week? Or does it think they'll mail a declaration of war through the U.S. postal service?

Someone also ought to tell those planners about radiation. An all-out nuclear attack would leave most of the nation exposed to lethal fallout. And what are the evacuees supposed to eat and drink while waiting for the all-clear signal?

But that suggests possible new avenues for civil defense. For example, the food stamp program could be expanded to ensure the evacuees will be able to buy food.

Surely, federal improvements in mass transit systems should be part of the plan.

Since so much money is available to the Pentagon these days maybe it could establish a transportation arm to fund improvements in our deteriorating bus and subway systems.

The plan would be too silly for comment if it did not indicate how out of touch with reality some officials must be. The threat of nuclear war is so serious that even hawkish citizens favor a nuclear freeze agreement to halt the escalating arms race.

Contrary to what some officials say, a nuclear war would be unwinnable. And contrary to what even the President has said, there is no such thing as nuclear superiority. One side may have a few more missiles than the other, but the blunt fact is that both the United States and Russia have far more weapons than are necessary to completely obliterate each other.

A Senate committee slapped the plan down within hours of its unveiling, but it still approved an increase for civil defense spending.

A few days after this fiasco, the March unemployment figures were released, showing more Americans out of work than at any time since the Depression. The jobless rate for blacks was an astronomical eighteen per cent — almost one in five. And even that figure understates the true total since discouraged workers and parttimers who want to

work full time are not counted as unemployed.

Anyone concerned about America's defense has to realize the policies that weaken our economy and waste human resources are a greater danger than any foreign foe.

One cause of our economic weakness is the enormous resources sunk into wasteful military spending. Billions are going for tanks that break down, for planes that are obsolete before they are produced, and for weapons systems so loaded with unnecessary electronic gear they won't work under battle conditions.

At the same time, job and training programs that upgrade the skills of our work force, and social programs that enable poor people to survive, to get a decent education, and to take advantage of opportunities, are brutally cut.

What good are all those sophisticated weapons if we neglect the investments in education that produce people with the skills to maintain them? What good are military contingency plans if cuts in infant nutrition programs result in fewer people healthy enough to serve their country?

Even an Administration devoted to a military buildup has to understand that it can't just throw money at the Pentagon to get a strong defense. Ultimately, military strength depends on an educated, skilled population with a strong stake in society.

Cuts In Education And The Flight of the 'Floogie Bird'

By Congressman Augustus F. Hawkins

At a delegation dinner in 1948, President Truman responded to critics of his progressive initiatives by offering these comments, "... Those men who live in the past remind me of a toy I'm sure all of you have seen. The toy is a small wooden bird called the 'Floogie Bird'. Around the Floogie Bird's neck is a label reading: 'I fly backwards. I don't care where I'm going. I just want to see where I've been'."

Thirty-four years later, these words outline a scenario which is about to unfold should the Administration persist in its efforts to cut funding for educational services for our nation's children and college students. Once again, we may be witnessing the flight of the 'Floogie Bird'. Back to a time reminiscent in our history where only the well-to-do could afford an education.

Among the most disheartening of the Administration's cuts in education is the budget reduction in Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education program. First enacted in 1965, Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was designed to provide remedial and compensatory instruction in reading and mathematics for educationally disadvantaged children living in low-income areas. Through the years, recent evaluations have demonstrated that this is a program that works. Title I services improved children's reading and math scores

significantly over those of children in need but not served by Title I.

Under President Reagan's current budget proposals, only \$10 billion would be allocated for all Federal education programs, down from \$13 billion in 1982. As a result many young people will find the cost of a college education out of reach. Similar cuts in vocational education would deny thousands of students a chance to obtain a marketable skill and shot at a worthwhile career.

In Los Angeles alone, these cuts could mean that the school district may lose \$62 million in Federal education assistance, and as a result may be forced to terminate nearly 4,000 school employees.

Along with most Americans, I believe our nation has a vested interest in promoting the educational development of our children. By investing in our young people, we invest in the future of our country.

During testimony before the Education and Labor Committee, Secretary of Education Terrel Bell agreed that although Title I programs have worked, they still must be cut because of 'budgetary constraints'. It seems that everything the Administration's budget axe falls on, is justified by the cold and impersonal phrase, 'budgetary constraints', regardless of their positive return to society. The impact of the over-

zealous budget cutting activity which resulted in the Omnibus Reconciliation Act, is now being felt by the public. The Administration and some Members of Congress are trying to explain the rationale for these cuts, and now seeing the human implications, are finding it harder and harder to do so.

It is apparent that the Administration has lost sight of the vital need to continue to advance the educational achievement of our children. America's visionary concept of a better land filled with opportunity for all has somehow been suspended. For what meager budgetary savings might be realized now, will surely be lost in the years ahead. More importantly, the negative impact of cuts in education will do irreversible damage to our children.

What has escaped the imagination of the President and his policy makers is the timeless truth that must be restated and translated in practical terms: a legitimate foundation for progress is based on a country's capacity and willingness to invest in its citizens. This is the message that must be carried to Mr. Reagan, and it is incumbent on all of us to make sure he hears it above the rhetoric.

Like the small wooden toy, the 'Floogie Bird', the Administration is thrusting the educational potential of America backwards. It is up to the American people to let the President know he is going in the wrong direction.

Civil Rights Journal

Farewell To Rehabilitation

By Dr. Charles E. Cobb

Executive Director
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The importance of due process within our legal system and the administration of justice is our only protection against the arbitrary rule of government. One of the oldest legal procedures employed to ensure that protections of the constitution are uniformly applied throughout the country is the writ of habeas corpus. This doctrine originated from English Common Law and was then used to order the jailer to produce a prisoner in court.

Today, the writ is primarily used by inmates in state prisons who are requesting that the federal courts review the constitutionality of their convictions, after the state courts have refused to provide such a review.

The Attorney General, William French Smith, has frequently referred to the inconvenience involved in what he has termed a "flood" of habeas corpus petitions by state prisoners. Why it is so inconvenient for approximately 600 federal judges to hear an annual average of 8,000 petitions — which means each judge must read only thirteen petitions, totally eludes me.

The Reagan Administration has responded to the whinnings of Mr. Smith by sending legislation to Capitol Hill seeking to limit the availability of habeas corpus relief. Under the proposed legislation, the Federal Courts will be barred from hearing these petitions if the prisoner does not complain within one year after all state appeals have failed or if he has unsuccessfully litigated his claim in the state court.

Have the Attorney General and the President forgotten that fairness and equity, and not convenience, are the "hallmarks" of our judicial system.

I am not saying that every prisoner has a legitimate constitutional claim. But if it is just one innocent prisoner who was convicted in an unconstitutional manner, then the courts should be required to hear their claim whether it be one or ten years later. They must maintain the commitment guaranteed by the constitution of due process.

We must not allow the President or the Attorney General to renege on this commitment.

... the only genuine, long-range solution [for America] lies in an attack — mounted at every level — upon conditions that breed despair and violence. ... All of us know what those conditions are: ignorance, discrimination, slums, poverty, disease, not enough jobs.

—Lyndon B. Johnson

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