

LET'S WORK TOGETHER FOR A SAFE COMMUNITY



Editorial

Let's Do Something About Crime

Con conversationally, crime is like the weather: everyone talks about it, but no one does anything about it.

And when it comes to crime in the black community, most of it committed by blacks against blacks, the conversation is even less productive because the issue gets bogged down in a lot of other issues.

Racism is the major issue that colors any discussion of crime, and what can be done about it in the black community. Many blacks resist the concept of "get tough" on crime because they feel that such an attitude sanctions a "police open season" on black people.

These people point out that while law enforcement officials appear ready to "get tough" on certain so-called street crimes, they appear even readier to wink at so-called white collar crimes.

But that discussion notwithstanding, the black community suffers from crime, the most of which is burglary, robbery, and various levels of assault, up to murder.

We must do something! But what?

Studies and statistics show that most of today's crime, particularly violent crime and most property crimes are committed by repeaters, so-called recidivists who spend most of their lives walking in and out of prison's revolving door. If we can do something about recidivists — rehabilitate them maybe — we could make a significant impact on the levels of crime in our community.

We have to be able to show criminals how to stay out of prison, and how to begin leading more productive lives.

WE HAVE TO DO THAT! We can't wait for a federal program, or someone else to do that for us.

But how can we reach recidivists?

Basically, there are three categories of people who must be involved in any effort to help criminals stay out of prison, and to change their lives as well. They are: the recidivist, his or her family, and potential employers.

Thus, we must develop in Durham an effort to involve these three groups in the process of change. We suggest the following:

- * A comprehensive public education program designed to help all of us better understand crime, why it occurs and how it can be changed. All media serving the black community should be involved in this educational effort.

- * A family-based counseling and advocacy program should be developed to help mothers, fathers, wives, husbands, children, etc., deal better with the recidivist, first while he or she is in prison and finally when they get out.

- * A training program for employers and others who have to make hiring decisions to help them better evaluate the level of rehabilitation in a person applying for a job who also has a prison record.

Who's going to pay for all of this? We are! There are currently enough resources in the black community to launch this program, and we at The Carolina Times will soon call on many of you to aid us in an effort to take a positive step toward solving our crime problem, and to relieve prison overcrowding.

And when we call on you, don't give us excuses. Give us your help, because if you haven't been victimized by crime yet, just wait, your turn is coming.

Things You Should Know

Daniel Hale WILLIAMS

1858-1931

Born in Hollydaysburg, Pa., he moved to Janesville, Wisconsin. His father died leaving a large family in poverty. Williams entered medical school at Northwestern University. He graduated in 1883, but stayed there as an anatomy instructor! In 1891 he founded Provident Hospital in Chicago, helping to set up the first training school for Negro nurses! Later, President Grover Cleveland appointed him to head Freedman's Hospital in Washington, D.C.!



To Be Equal

The Shrinking Black Middle Class

By John E. Jacob

Executive Director, National Urban League

It seems only yesterday that the media were selling the myth of the black middle class, which they redefined in such a way as to include the majority of black people.

Without denying the growth of that class in the sixties and seventies, and without questioning its importance, an observer would still have to conclude that it represented not some emerging new majority but rather an oasis in a desert of poverty.

One reason why we don't hear that much about the growing black middle class these days may be because it is no longer growing. While the white middle class too, faces difficulties in an age of recessions, the erosion in its living standards is far less serious.

That is not meant to be callous or to reflect indifference. Rather it is to simply indicate the

truth of a situation in which the white middle class has the resources to sustain even a prolonged period of hard times while the black middle class is composed of families whose middle class incomes have only recently been attained. They have had little chance to build an earnings and savings cushion against hard times.

And let us not forget that the current Depression impacts blacks much more than whites, if only because the last-hired, first-fired tradition means the loss of newly won jobs for blacks. The federal government layoff patterns fully reflect this.

Because government agencies were often willing to hire blacks when many private sector businesses were not, disproportionate numbers of blacks worked for the government. In the past ten years

some of them began to achieve the administrative and supervisory positions we think of as being "middle class."

But the federal program cuts have had their greatest impact on those minority administrative employees. They have lost their jobs at twice the rate of non-minority administrative workers in the current round of federal layoffs.

Overall, in all positions — administrative and otherwise — for every two non-minorities that lost their jobs through the federal staff reductions, there were three minorities laid off.

A similar pattern holds for state and local governments that are also tightening their belts. And it holds too, for the private sector jobs where minorities and women are relative newcomers.

Other signs of pressure

on the black middle class are found in the sharply higher rates of business failures, personal bankruptcies, and home mortgage foreclosures.

While there are no definitive breakdowns by race on such key indicators, it is reasonable to assume that the newest and most vulnerable part of the middle class — including much of the black middle class — are disproportionately affected by these phenomena.

The tragedy of the black middle class lies in its betrayal by a system that barred the way to middle class income and status for so long and then, shortly after lifting those barriers, dealt such a crushing blow to people who played by the rules of the game and deserve better.

The terrible message that sends to the low-income majority is that

even earning middle class status leaves black people vulnerable in our society.

The expansion of a confident, secure middle class is a necessity if black people as a whole are to make significant progress, and that is why the current crisis afflicting that relatively small group is of such immense importance to all black people and to the nation.

For most Americans, "making it" means having the attributes of middle class status — a home, a car, a steady income. The Great Society programs of the 1960s, by opening opportunities for work and education, helped bring that dream closer to reality for millions of whites and blacks. The Mean Society cutbacks of the 1980s threaten to plunge them back into hardship and disillusionment with a system that failed them.

The Vibrancy of Israel's Democracy

By Bayard Rustin

A. Philip Randolph Institute

The viciousness and inhumanity of the massacre of Palestinian refugees in West Beirut has resulted in a worldwide outcry. Yet nowhere has that protest been stronger or the public demonstrations larger than in Israel, where the people have been outspoken and unequivocal in their condemnation of the murder of hundreds of Palestinians by Lebanese Christian militiamen.

Israeli writers and artists, trade unionists and religious leaders, as well as prominent spokesmen across the entire Israeli political spectrum, have joined in the denunciation of the heinous crime in Beirut. Members of Prime Minister Begin's cabinet have resigned to protest his reluctance to launch an independent inquiry. A massive chorus of voices has called for the resignation of Defense Minister Ariel Sharon. Many Israelis have called upon Prime Minister Begin himself to resign.

On Saturday, September 25, some 400,000 demonstrators gathered in a huge protest in Tel Aviv demanding an open investigation to determine the extent of the Israeli leadership's involvement in the Beirut massacre. As someone who spent half a year coordinating and laying the groundwork for the 1963 March on Washington, in which 250,000 demonstrated, I can only marvel at the magnitude of this spontaneous expression of Israel's conscience, in which over 10% of her people participated.

The public expression of Israeli outrage over their government's mishandling of its voluntarily assumed responsibilities in West Beirut is a testament to the vibrancy and vitality of Israeli democracy, and its fundamental commitment to humane values.

At first, Prime Minister Begin resisted calls for an independent inquiry into the extent of Israeli complicity in the Beirut massacre. But that enormous domestic public outcry pressured the Prime Minister and his cabinet into a startling reversal of policy.

There now will be an independent judicial commission of inquiry into the massacres in the Sabra and Shalatiat refugee camps. This inquiry should and must resolve all questions concerning the guilt or innocence of Israel's government and military leaders. On the basis of the facts uncovered in that inquiry, the Israeli people and their elected representatives will be able, through the democratic process, to determine the fate of those found culpable. In the words of Labor Party Chairman Shimon Peres, "The question arises whether these statesmen who made the terrible mistakes can remain in office."

That indeed is the heart of the question that all Israelis will have to confront in the weeks ahead. Yet the very fact that Israelis will have the freedom to answer this question is a testament to the strength of their democracy. Just as in our own country, the impeachment process led to the resignation of President Nixon for his in-

volvement in the Watergate coverup and just as the judicial process led to the punishment of those guilty for the My Lai massacre in Vietnam, so in Israel the democratic process will be the ultimate arbiter.

Out of the shock of Shalatiat and Sabra have come the first stirrings of a way out of the Middle East's latest tragedy. And as we justifiably join the chorus of condemnations of the Beirut massacre, we can only hope that the new Lebanese President Amin Gemayel will follow Israel's example and launch his own independent inquiry to punish those directly responsible for the outrage. Such a move would augur well for the new Lebanese President, who faces the difficult task of constructing a stable and democratic society.

The events of recent days serve to restore our faith in the judgement of the Israeli people. They have made absolutely clear that not external pressure, but the internal expression of Israeli

morality and conscience, led to the establishment of the independent judicial commission of inquiry. This recent turn of events can comfort us, but it should not surprise us. For it is another affirmation of the wisdom of the people — the fundamental tenet of democracy.

Americans should recall the long and tedious process that led to the Nixon impeachment hearings. We should recall that calls for his resignation were ineffective until that process was well advanced. We can hope that the Israeli judicial inquiry will be prompt and speedy. But the recent expressions of conscience should make us confident that Israel's people will act wisely and democratically to set their own house in order. We should recognize that in launching their commission of inquiry the Israelis are on the right course. Calls by outsiders which prejudice the outcome may well prove counterproductive.

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Business In The Black

Business Breaks Produce Bargains

Buy Bargains Only

By Charles E. Belle

"Change is merely an opportunity for profits." People who understand this theory are true capitalists. Consider, for example, the record number of damages being done to businesses and individuals in this country. Counting business failures alone will take you back to the 1930s to surpass this year's number of failures.

Facts indicate a record number of 32 million Americans including 12 million children under the age of 18, lived in homes last year with incomes below the officially described poverty line. Looking into these ashes an entrepreneur will emerge with quite a few bucks.

A bit disgusting perhaps, but, nevertheless, a familiar story. How does one find a fortune in such misery...? It is necessary to think positively at all times in order to turn a profit. "When sold a lemon, make and sell lemonade." A bit difficult and messy, but not an impossible task. The world will survive or not survive this administration. An alert individual will want to come out ahead not behind in spite of the barriers. Believing it's better to be on than off the boat.

Because there has been and will continue to be for the next year at least so much damage to the U.S. economy, opportunities will abound for good buys. Be careful. There are bad buys as well as some good ones. One must first clearly determine what you wish to purchase: whether it is a consumer product or a production facility.

Find competent and knowledgeable people to help evaluate all prospective purchases. Consider your individual interests, temperament, skills and experience. In addition to the personal and financial reasons for a purchase of any kind, consider the potential of the purchase. Fads come and go. Trends can be just beginning, midway or at an end. Everything from food and clothing to a company can be classified on a scale of start to finish in the final analysis.

A sale is often made because of a significant reason on the seller's part. Problems, particularly in this poor economic environment often beset the seller and/or his product. Perhaps this does not make the product poor, but pays less if the seller is at a handicap. "Cash is king." Obvious factors like failing health or business, as well as increased competition or obsolescence should not be forgotten by the buyer.

The present and future earning power of a business or pleasure from a product are of prime importance. If a business is not at least equal in earning power to an outside investment in securities, like stocks and bonds, or a product is inferior to other products but cheaper, do not buy. Eventually, with the damage to the economy being done now by the administration, anyone with a buck will easily with a little entrepreneurship earn several bucks for each one spent.

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