National NEWS

A Somali woman and child shy away from U.S. Marines by the roadside between Baidoa and Bardera

Somali Leaders Sign Peace Accord

MOGADISHU, SOMALIA - Somalia's two most powerful regional leaders - generally referred to as "warlords" - last week signed a peace accord aimed at ending two years of bloodshed and anarchy. Mohamed Farah Aideed and Ali Mahdi Mohamed were once allies when they fought side-by-side to overthrow former Somali dictator Mohamed Siad Barre. However, when Aideed was selected interim president, Ali Mahdi objected and the battles between warring militias began. The agreement between the two was viewed as a good omen for the future of the famine plagued east African nation. Most observers had feared a return to chaos and violence once the U.S. forces leave the country. U.S. Commander Lt. Gen. Robert Johnston has already indicated that the U.S. forces will not try to disarm the warring groups.

Black Youth Challenges "Hate Crime" Law

KENOSHA, WIS. – The U.S. Supreme Court decided last week to determine whether states can impose longer sentences on people convicted of a crime which was motivated by racial bias. The case the court will decide is that of a young black Wisconsin man who was convicted of the 1989 beating of a white youth. Todd Mitchell, then 29, allegedly initiated the attack on Gregory Riddick, 14, because he was white. As a result the judge doubled Mitchell's sentence from two years to four using a state law which allows harsher sentences for bias-based crimes. But Mitchell challenged the stiffer sentence and won his appeal in the Wisconsin Supreme Court. The state court went along with Mitchell's argument that the longer sentence amounted to punishing him for his thoughts and speech and thus violated his First Amendment right to free speech.

At least 21 states have "hate crime" laws which allow stiffer sentences for crimes committed because of a person's race, sexual orientation, disability or gender. If the Supreme Court upholds the lower court ruling, it would have the effect of declaring most hate-crime laws unconstitutional. Originally, the laws were aimed at punishing attacks against blacks and gays. But recently increasing numbers of blacks are being charged under the laws for attacks on whites. The court decision is not expected until next year.

Anti-Black Japanese Politician Gets Promoted

TOKYO, JAPAN - The Japanese politician who two years ago started an international controversy by comparing U.S. blacks to prostitutes has been promoted to the most powerful position in this country's most powerful political party. Seiroku Kajiyama was named secretary general of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Despite its name the LDP is actually a conservative party.

In 1990, while on a raid of a red light district in Tokyo, the 66-year-old Kajiyama complained that foreign prostitutes "ruin the atmosphere" of Tokyo neighborhoods "like in America when blacks move into white neighborhoods."

Several Japanese politicians have made racist statements about African-Americans including one who charged that a major reason the U.S. was losing its world dominance was because the country had "too many blacks and Hispanics who were mentally inferior."

Rally In Support of "L.A. Four" Turns Violent

LOS ANGELES, CALF. - A rally last week in support of the four black men accused in last spring's beating of white truck driver Reginald Denny started peacefully but turned into a mini-riot. In the end there were reports of minor looting, brick and bottle throwing as well as at least 60 arrests.

Apparently, the originally peaceful demonstrators were angered by a police show of force. Ironically, last week's disturbance occurred at one of the flashpoints of last spring's riots - Florence and Normandie Avenues.

Blacks Win Legal, Political Battle

CINCINNATI, OHIO - U.S. District Judge Herman Weber has ruled in favor of a lawsuit filed by a group of African-American voters in Cincinnati. The lawsuit charged that Cincinnati's at-large system of electing members to the city council was discriminatory because it diluted black voting strength and made it harder for blacks to win election. Judge Weber agreed, and gave the city until December 31 to submit a new election procedure.

Elder Nominated For Surgeon General

Dr. Jocelyn Elders

Dr. Jocelyn Elders, nominee for Surgeon General, speaks at a news conference in Little Rock, Ark. on Thursday. Behind her are President-elect Bill Clinton and Zoe Baird, the nominee for Attorney General.

Family Support from page A1

care for the younger ones. When they were finally tucked in bed, Anita hit the books again.

Charles Alex Ford can now laugh and tell stories about those days, but it wasn't easy helping his wife attain her dream. He lost a few friends over it. Some men felt he was not the "macho" man he should be. But although some friends fell by the wayside, he quickly found new friends who encircled him in loving support.

What is particularly beautiful about this family's story is the way they pulled together and made sacrifices so they could have a better life.

Charles Ford could have walked away from his wife and her dream. He could have bowed to the peer pressure of his so-called friends who said he was a wimp for devoting his time to the family. He could have left those children fatherless.

At one point in his life, Charles was a homeless drifter. But he turned his life around, with the help of people such as the late Rev. David L. Wilson, former pastor of the Sovereign Grace Tabernacle Church, and Dr. H. Rembert Malloy, who convinced him to enter Shaw University to begin a major in sociology.

Anita is one of 11 children, the second child in the family to finish college. Her sister, Gloria Upson, teaches mathematics at WSSU.

"You've got to have faith in yourself," Anita said, when asked how she managed to achieve her dream despite the odds.

With faith and love, and a supportive group of family and friends, we can do anything.

Avant Garde from page A1

too many niggers here. If you don't fire them, I'll fire you."

Apparently, it wasn't that the restaurant couldn't hire blacks — they could — but only if the restaurant was located in a predominantly black neighborhood. Then they could hire more blacks. But in white neighborhoods, they were to hire blacks only as busboys and dishwashers and keep them out of view. Would you have taken your family there if you had known this?

The Wall Street Journal recounts an incident in Montgomery, Alabama, when two white supervisors showed up unexpectedly, forcing the manager to hide the two black waitresses in the bathroom — out of sight. What would you have done had you discovered two black waitresses hiding in the bathroom when you took your children in to wash their hands?

Would you return to eat those wonderful scrambled eggs, bacon, toast, hot grits, gravy, French toast and syrup, fresh fruit, and hash browns, if you knew that the restaurant routinely told supervisors to "code all applications by blacks and that any such applications from blacks for headquarters were to go to file 13?"

So far, the dilemma has been easy. Of course, you wouldn't have taken them to eat at Shoney's. You wouldn't have spent one dime with those racists so-in-sos. Okay, fine.

But what do you do as consumer, now that the corporation has agreed in a recent Florida law suit, without admitting guilt, to "pay $105 million to as many as 10,000 workers if they can show that they were discriminated against?"

What do you do now that Shoney's — in an effort to right past wrongs, the corporation in 1989 — and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) worked out a plan to spend $30 million over three years to recruit more minorities, hire black vendors, and help blacks acquire franchises? But according to the Journal, several directors felt that the company was moving too fast — had gone too far — when it actually came to implementing the agreed-upon affirmative action plan.

What do you do now? Where do you take your family to eat next Saturday morning? What do you say to yourself now that you know more about the history of Shoney's? What will you ask of yourself and others regarding this issue of fairness?

Is this a simple matter of taking your family out to eat? Does it really matter where you spend your money?

Is it fair to blame the local Shoney's for what may or may not have happened there or perhaps at other Shoney's? If you're black, should you apply for a job? If you're white, do you keep your job?

According to the new chairman of Shoney's, "our commitment to diversity will continue!"

It is the little things, like choos-

Gov. Hunt from page A1

elect has ever actively pursued filling important government positions with blacks in such numbers.

He estimated that there are 200-300 positions available, from cabinet level to administrative support staff.

"We want people to know that the process for getting these jobs is not at all complicated," said Earline Parmon, a Forsyth County commissioner and a member of the local transition team. "If you know your interest or expertise, it shouldn't be hard to find the right job for you."

Taking a state job may be prohibitive to some Forsyth County residents because the salaries might not justify relocating, Ruffin said. There are, however, some positions with the state that are open here in the county, he said.

The statewide transition team is currently making recommendations to fill cabinet-level positions in the Hunt administration. One black woman, Katie Dorsett, has been appointed secretary of administration. Another black woman, Carolyn Coleman, has been appointed as special assistant to the governor.

The Rev. Drayton said the statewide transition team hopes to complete filling the top cabinet-level posts by Jan. 6, three days before Hunt's inauguration. The rest of the positions should be filled within ten weeks.

Parmon said that applicants who meet job requirements and have a record of community involvement will have the best shot at a state job. Applicants should also be willing to undergo a background check by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

There will be a meeting for interested applicants on Jan. 16, 11 a.m., at New Bethel Baptist Church, 1016 N. Trade St.

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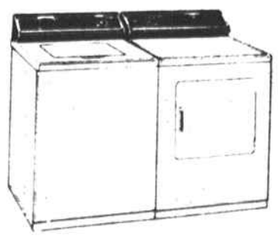

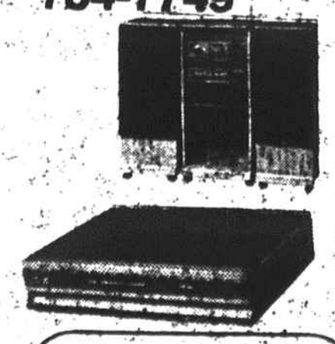
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