

Winston-Salem Chronicle

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Ernest H. Pitt • Ndubisi Egemonye

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Editorials

Tribute To a Hero

The memory of Dr. Martin Luther King stirs the soul. He had ten times more courage and heart than the most courageous of us.

Many African-Americans dared to speak of discrimination because of Dr. King. His great and awe-inspiring sermons brought new rays of hope into the hearts of many whose oppression was deep and burdens were great.

Many white people had their eyes opened to racism for the first time because of Dr. King. He was the first black man to get their attention. His appeal to the heart and his use of reason and intellect shed a new light on racism.

They saw in him a leader, a role model, just as many African-Americans did.

People loved to follow him. He was a humble man with glorious ideals. He was a modest man with a rich heart.

Many leaders recognized his charisma and power, but not all were favorably impressed. His ability to inspire people, coupled with his increased alliances with union organizers, made him a threat to both government and business.

Dr. King's efforts to end discrimination were noble and far-reaching. And yet, few people have taken up that torch. It is one of the hardest rows to plow, and there are no guidelines, no one to coax and support you, no one to show the way.

But discrimination will be stopped: it's simply a matter of time. And to end it, more of us must travel that road, must speak out and not be silent when we see discrimination acted out before our eyes.

May his memory inspire us to take up his torch.

Give Blood

Less than 10 percent of blood donors are minorities. There are specific factors in blood which are singular to specific races. Different protein combinations common to each race are crucial to patients in need of multiple blood transfusions.

One in every 400 African-American babies is born with sickle cell disease. The chances of finding the right blood for a sickle cell patient are increased when the donor is of the same race.

Monday, Jan. 18 from 1-6 p.m., African-Americans can show their support of each other by joining in the blood drive at the Triad Blood Center, 650 Coliseum Dr.

African-Americans must support this event. Giving blood is a gift from a donor to a patient who could not survive without it. Giving blood is safe. It is impossible to get any kind of disease from donating blood; all equipment is sterile. It is used one time and then discarded.

On Sunday, eat healthy, get lots of rest. Monday, head down to the Blood Center (Red Cross) and give the gift of life to someone.

Remember, you or your loved one may be the one in need of that gift someday.

People of all races must donate blood.

"Give Honor To Whom Honor Is Due" Rename Reynolds Park Recreation Center

To The Editor:

I attended a meeting of the Winston-Salem Parks and Recreation Commission Jan 5, 1993. The agenda included a recommendation that the Reynolds Park Recreation Center be renamed for Alderman Larry Womble and or James A. Garner, Sr. Sixteen persons spoke supporting the name change. Twelve spoke for James Garner and four for Larry Womble. We are all aware of and appreciate the service that Alderman Womble has provided this community. But James Garner is an unsung hero who almost single handedly caused the reopening of the Reynolds Park Recreation after it was closed down rather than serve African-Americans back in the '60s.

I found the meeting very interesting and the speakers strongly supportive of the center being renamed. Some felt that if a recommendation is sent to the Board of Aldermen for the center to be renamed Womble/Garner, it would not pass because Larry is a sitting alderman and a conflict of interest might surface. That makes sense to me. However, I continue to prove to Larry how much we love him when it isn't necessary and will surely fail. There are many very fine individuals who have given themselves unselfishly for many years. James Bunk-A-Dee Garner is one of those persons. Give honor to whom honor is due. The Center should be named for James A. Garner, Sr.

Yours Truly, Robert Hunt

Congrats, Ben Piggott

To The Editor:

I am writing to congratulate Benjamin (Ben) Piggott, the City of Winston-Salem's 1992 'Employee of the Year.' He is, indeed, so worthy and deserving! I have either read or heard of the many positive and wonderful things that he has done for the betterment of our society. He has molded the lives of young people in such a special way that I would be remiss if I did not commend him on his unselfish and caring attitude.

It is my sincere wish that Ben will continue the excellent work that he has exhibited in his tireless efforts in making the difference in so many young lives. He has touched several through his "mission" in helping those who reach out for his help, his guidance, advice, and his love. Ben is God-send to the young people who have seemingly



STIDE

Enel LaGuerre shouts loudly during a demonstration Saturday by about 250 Haitian exiles at the gates of Miami's federal immigration camp where 45 Haitian detainees entered the tenth day of a hunger strike. The Haitians are protesting what they say are unfair U.S. immigration policies.

CHRONICLE MAILBAG Our Readers Speak Out

lost their directions in life. He is a God-send for the elderly who have put their trust in him to help restore and revitalize the Happy Hill Gardens community, a community where I grew up.

In closing, whereas his family is proud of his accomplishments, I too, am equally proud! I am grateful to know Ben, a wonderful and determined young man who has made such a great impact on the lives of those he has helped. From one city employee to the other, Ben is number one! I pray that he will continue the excellent work!

Sincerely, Florina G. Byrd

Blacks' Media Image

To The Editor:

I am an 18-year-old African American high school senior with prospects of going to college after graduation, and I would like to share my opinion about the media image from the African American youth perspective. What I mean by "media image" is the portrayal of us with negative messages. Sure, I listen to rap but I'm not going to go out and rob or shoot somebody because of

what was said by the artist. I grew up without a father figure in the home but it doesn't mean I am going to turn around and father a child then abandon it once it's born. How can you (media) say that I'm an endangered species when I know that I have a long life ahead of me? Whenever it's printed that my chances of becoming 21 are slim, I get very despondent because that tells me that I've been written off with no chance of salvation.

Not only is there a stereotyping of young African American males but females as well. I refuse to believe that teen African American females are more likely to become pregnant than a white females in the same age group. The young women of our race are not out to have babies in order to get on welfare or any other government programs. I am tired of seeing news shows reading off so-called statistics probably assumptions) downgrading us from unemployment to healthcare. It's not just once or twice, it's over and over again. It's like a psychological war waged against the African American race. If somebody is told constantly that they aren't guaranteed a future, that person will most likely give up; and that is what

I believe is happening. Even some black leaders are repeating and reinforcing what they have read or heard, confirming the stigma again. Now, I'm not blaming the white race as the source but who is it that controls most of the newspapers, radio, television, and other forms of communication? I do not consider myself a "minority" nor am I bitter racist who voices hatred, but a concerned person for his people. I do not hate white people, yet I do despise what they do sometimes. Racism is real, but don't let narrow-minded people keep you from your destiny. 1993 is a new year and a time for a change in the country. So African Americans of the Hip Hop age, I challenge you to make a difference in your life and those around you for the better.

'Don't believe everything that you hear on television; think for yourselves. With the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, you can't go wrong.

Yes, I know I don't speak for everyone but I love my color and people enough to say what I think I will benefit and uplift the African American race as a whole. Thank You.

Tas N. Turner

Malcolm X Flops At The Box Office

Never has the U.S. media so energetically promoted a commercial movie. Literally, the cover of every general market magazine hawked "Malcolm X" for the moguls at Warner Bros. and director Spike Lee.

And, to my knowledge, never has a director been so Machiavellian in the promotion of a Hollywood product. To be sure, Lee has succeeded where many of us have commercially failed. But Lee's desperation to cash in on "X" and with the legacy of a black icon has revealed his inner motives in a way his greatest enemy never could have.

Spike Lee, on salary to Warner Bros., and not the independent he claims to be, went so far as to ask Black children, who need education more than they need their mother's milk, to skip school and bring Warner Bros. \$5 at the nearest theatre — all in the name of educating them. Leave school to be educated by a movie director who can hardly complete a sentence?

"Shorty The Hustler," as critic Amiri Baraka calls the self-promoting Lee, then tried to sell Malcolm as a racial integrationist, in a failed attempt to get Whites to buy some Warner Bros. tickets. In addition to getting a piece of the action, a huge box office would have made the diminutive hawker a higher paid director the next time.

Assuming all long that he had Blacks in his hip pocket, the tee-shirt, cap, and sweater salesman

then tried to bolster Warner Bros. sales by suggesting racism and conspiracy, claiming that ticket sales were being diverted from "X" to movies made by Whites. White people hired Lee to make "X," financed it, promoted it like they have never before promoted any movie — and he calls them racist because the public stays away?

You can't say that Lee didn't try to exploit "Malcolm."

But you can say that the White people who run Warner Bros. and put up \$28 million to make the movie told the director that \$28 million was all they were going to risk on him. So Lee went to a few rich Blacks for the additional \$6 million or so of his final \$34 million.

To break even, a movie has to gross three times its production budget. In Lee's case, that's \$102 million — and he's about \$64 million short. That's because in addition to the \$28 million spent for production, Warner Bros. had to surrender one-third of the gate to theatre owners and probably spent an additional one-third of the production budget, \$20 to \$30 million, on advertising.

Although Blacks bought 80 percent of the tickets, at least at one theatre chain in California, and 80 percent of \$38 million is \$30,000,000, the White media and White people got the lion's share of the advertising dollars and only 20 markets targeted the Black Press and Black people.

Moreover, when you insult Black radio station owners and

Black publishers, you have insulted the most powerful people in the Black community.

"You can't call 20 markets the Black press," said Robert Bogle, president of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA). Bogle called it "an insult." It was Lee's intention, expressed at the

skip school to see Lee's treasure hunt, but they stayed away from the congratulator "Malcolm" after school also.

Whites struck to their tradition of ignoring serious Black people and not falling for Lee's let's-all-love-each-other "Malcolm" promotion facade. If Lee wants Whites to



TONY BROWN

Syndicated Columnist

NNPA's June convention, to use the Black Press "to get out the message," Bogle stated.

Perhaps Lee should have been honest and admitted to the publishers that he is just a hired hand — not this "independent" moviemaker he pretends to be. However, "Malcolm Revenge" settled the score. Although Warner Bros. and Lee disappointed the Black publishers and exploited the Black community once again, the public sent "Malcolm" into intensive care.

As of last week, the 3 hour, 20-minute film had only grossed \$38 million — and the big opening weeks are gone forever. "Home Alone II," with hardly any free media support, did that well the first week; it's already over \$100 million.

Not only did Black youth not

come back, he will have to return to his themes of sex-starved Black women and Black men hoodlum stereotypes. Even dwelling on Malcolm salacious "pimp" days didn't do it for Whites — or Lee's box office.

A spokesman for Pacific Theaters, a California chain with 300 screens, said over-25-year-old Blacks bought about 80 percent of the tickets. Whites didn't like the pain enough to pay \$7 a ticket for it.

Don't worry about Lee, he's made millions from his Warner Bros. salary and the sale of tee-shirts, caps and books. And he and the White studios will be back next summer with a new hype and another "epic."

You can hear Tony Brown's weekly commentaries on the Buy Freedom Network 1-900-454-0411.

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