

Editorials & Comments

Making Christmas Real

By Hoyle H. Martin Sr.
Post Executive Editor

Nearly 2,000 years into the past, God sent his greatest gift to mankind. As a forerunner to this, the Greatest Event in human history, God commissioned an angel to tell the troubled and sinful world, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11).

"Suddenly," THE LIVING BIBLE tells us, "the angel was joined by a vast host of others - the armies of heaven - praising God: 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,' they sang, 'and peace on earth for all pleasing him'" (Luke 2:13, 14). We must however, note that there has been no "peace on earth" because neither the ancient masses living when Christ was born nor modern man has fully accepted the real meaning and significance of Christ's birth, and thus embraced a real Christmas. The ancient masses, to paraphrase one Biblical scholar, did not desire to be saved from sin, their iniquities or vices, nor did they intend to love their enemies or receive a Savior. They wanted to be saved from political oppression and economic inconvenience and they wanted a strong king who would crush their Roman enemies. The fact is, in spite of the prophecies proclaiming the coming of Christ, ancient man was so preoccupied with his sins and vices that he rejected the Savior from the very beginning. Luke (2:6,7) says "and she gave birth to her first child, a son...and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the village inn." In effect, these riotous living people turned away from Jesus.

Modern man appears to be no different, no better nor no more committed to making Christmas real than was his ancestors from biblical times because many of us too have rejected the Christ. Writer Sydney Harris has eloquently expressed this view in an often reprinted article where he asks the question, "If there should be, on Christmas night, a second coming, would there not be soon a second crucifixion? And this time, not by the Romans...but by those who proudly call themselves Christians?" Harris asks further, would we not "attack" the Christ, "castigate Him...denounce Him...despise and reject Him" because his preaching and actions might be "threatening to our ways of life"?

Way Of Life

The way of life we are referring to is reflected in the absence of true brotherhood and human rights among men. The Christ himself cautioned man about this when he said, "If anyone says 'I love God' and hates his brother, he is a liar" (I

John 4:20) and "Inasmuch as you did it to the least of these, my brethren, you did it unto Me" (Matthew 25:40).

Jesus' words have so much more meaning at Christmas time when we are so eloquently talking about brotherhood and "peace on earth" when in fact on the holy ground where Jesus taught and preached there is hatred among men, death, killing, hunger and violent crime in the streets.

Therefore, while the Christmas season is one that unites families, friends, and neighbors for warm, affectionate brief periods of togetherness, forgiveness and thankfulness, we wonder is it all real or just a meaningless ritual. We wonder about the realness of Christmas because we allow hunger to exist, we have a heated passion for war, we put politics ahead of principle, we lie and cheat and we abuse our fellow man at every opportunity.

Acts Of Violence

Evidence of our failing is seen in the many acts of violence and crime in the streets of America, in our inability to say "I love you," and in our hell-bent passion for glorifying all that is evil, immoral and wrong.

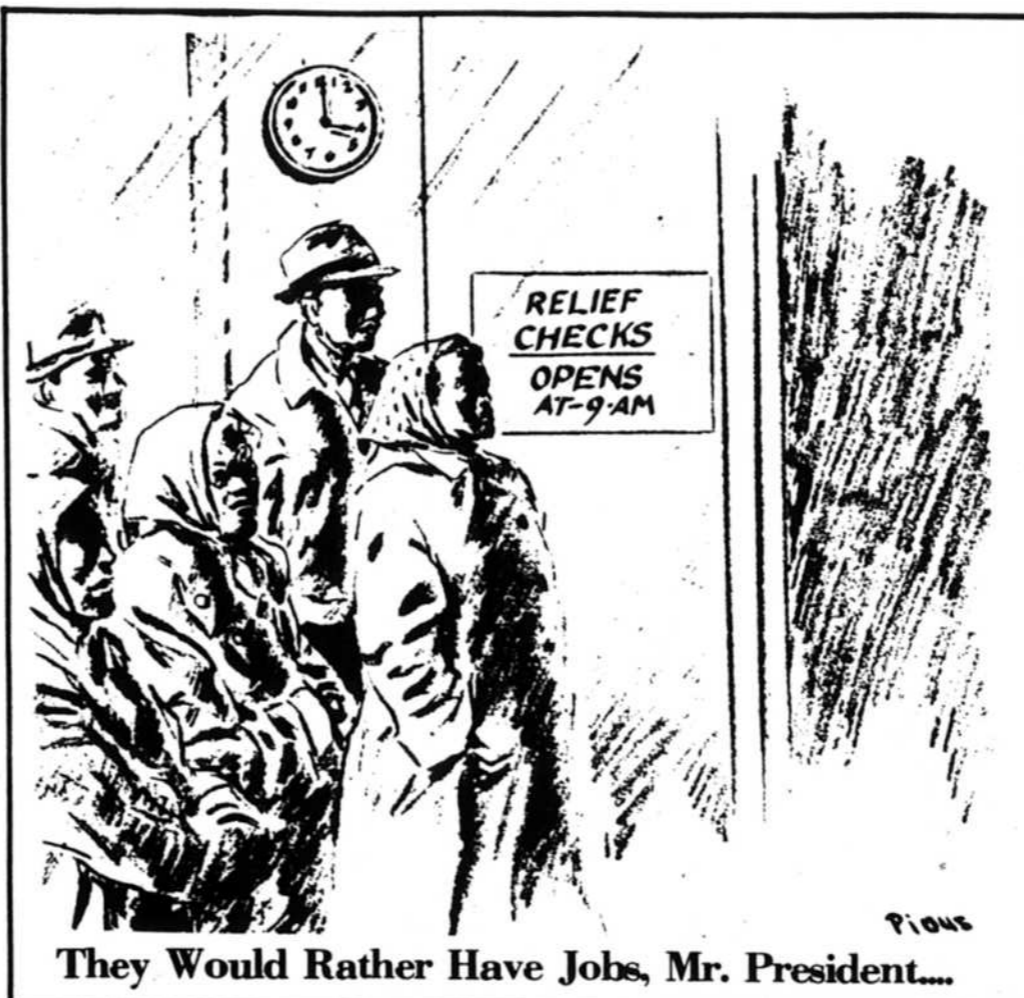
The Holy Bible warned us of such wayward living by saying, "...and the earth was filled with violence" (Genesis 6:11). Worst yet, we act as if this Bible verse is a self-fulfilling prophecy that we must live by. Not only does the news media clearly inform us of crime and violent

behavior, movies and television glamorize and glorify rape, murder, robbery and the like on the assumption that it is entertainment and, more significantly, because too many people appear to have an appetite for violence, crime and the exploitation of their fellow man.

Therefore, in this Christmas season as merchants exploit the fuller meaning of Christ's birth, and we eagerly respond, let us pause at some point in the hustle and bustle

of it all to ask, what can I do in my own way to help make Christmas real again? A kind word or thought to or about someone you think you dislike, expressions of encouragement to a child, some act no matter how small to reduce someone's hunger, acts of love and brotherhood, and prayer for thanksgiving and forgiveness, these are the symbols of a real Christmas.

Thus, as we experience the joy and good tidings of another Christmas, let us begin anew to embrace the courage of true brotherhood, peace on earth and good will toward men and in so doing contribute to making Christmas real again.



They Would Rather Have Jobs, Mr. President....

Where Will It End?

Prices And Taxes Are Wreaking Havoc With Us!

Millions of economically upward-bound Americans have been caught in a bind between their dreams of a good life and the harsh realities of an abnormally persistent inflationary trend with its increasingly erosive effects on purchasing power. And there is no dependable sign of an early change for the better.

Current events on the economic scene are not unexpected, of course. For several years, prices and taxes have been going up faster than wages and salaries. The inevitable result of that imbalance is reflected in the fact that dollars which once afforded comfort, with something to spare, now barely provide for necessities.

That sad fact is made apparent by recent statistics. According to the government's latest study of how much a typical family needs to live at "an intermediate level" in metropolitan areas, precious little is left over after the necessary bills have been paid.

An "intermediate" household budget, devised as a model by the U.S. Labor Department, allows practically all or more than \$16,000 family income for essential goods and services such as food, clothing, transportation, housing and medical care. Unfortunately those are the five costs which have skyrocketed most unmercifully.

Further scrutiny of that analysis reveals another shocking truth: Leaving out transportation, price of the other four essential items rose 7.5 pct. each year between 1970 and 1975. That annual rate of increase was 44 pct. higher than any recorded for "non-

essential" commodities. But aspirations of those at the income level under consideration here extend beyond needs classified as "basic." A college education, or some technical skill training beyond high school, is regarded not as a luxury but a must. Yet the price of higher education puts it almost out of reach.

Depending upon one's choice of an institution - state-supported or private - the College Entrance Examination Board estimates fees ranging from three to five thousand dollars each year. And those figures allow only for what is required by the school - after one gets there.

This affects not only the young but elders as well. On frequent occasions, a person already equipped with a substantial measure of expertise and experience seeks further training for promotional purposes - or a new role in a constantly evolving work world.

One of the more poignant aspects of our economy's cruelty is its nullifying effects on progress made by Blacks and other striving minority group members. For they got as far as they are despite deeply rooted prejudice and blatant acts of discrimination which cluttered the paths they trod.

But, with luck and perseverance, an appreciable percentage of these disdained minorities finally made it to middle classdom only to find the lustrous promise of that exalted realm heavily clouded by the uncertainty of making their new ends meet.

When added together, these constantly reoccurring incidents of stress and strain give due cause for the revengeful

anger toward an inflationary trend which has run rampant through human hopes. And that urge for revenge explains what one observer has called unmistakable signs of a "middle class revolt."

That turn of events, and its politically troublesome consequences has not escaped attention in a White House already beleaguered by a multitude of high priority problems. Under these circumstances, President Carter finds himself deprived of satisfying answer such as those once offered by Roosevelt's "New Deal."

It is not so much that today's Democratic hierarchy lacks the humaneness exhibited by yesterday's leadership. Rather, facts of the matter suggest that sharp changes in the economic game point to a need for drastic new rules designed to protect human health and development at all vulnerable income levels.

Economists are in general agreement that real income is not likely to rise again soon. If that is the case, this nation is headed for an era of political turmoil the likes of which has never been seen.

Sanitation Division

Whether you were home for the holidays or out of town, you probably have extra household trash this week and no place to store it.

On Thursday and Friday of this week only, the Sanitation Division will collect refuse from the curb and provide your regular backyard service. Be sure trash is at the curb at 7 a.m. on your collection day.

By Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

TO BE EQUAL

Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

Season's Greetings

The Christmas season is in full swing and everyone's out with their gift lists in hand. I've got a list too, a little list of gifts beyond the ability of one person to bestow, but gifts that would make this a happier country.

My first and foremost hoped-for gift is jobs for the jobless.

Without getting into the statistical morass of how many people are really jobless today, the best informed estimate is about 13 million. They need jobs and the country needs their productivity and their human resources.

So here's a societal gift - jobs for everyone who wants to work. Income for people whose living standards fall beneath the minimum standards. Opportunities for those without them.

For white Americans - the gift of freedom from racism, freedom from the self-engendered fears that imprison people in suspicion and irrational dislikes.

Everyone knows the terrible price imposed on black people by racism, but too many people remain unaware of the full costs of whiteness. Historically, racism has operated to give majority Americans a false sense of superiority, weakened their communities and labor movements, and deprived them of the full range of human expression.

So the gift of overcoming racism and its habits is just about the best package most people could get.

For black people, perhaps the most relevant gift is continued perseverance in the face of discrimination and poverty - the will to keep on fighting the odds.

This is a familiar gift for black people; it's the one that helped us survive and even to progress despite oppression and now, indifference. Perhaps this is the year to use the gift of perseverance to overcome the ills that afflict our communities - the bad schools, the street crime, the failure to register and vote, and others. Perseverance ought to mean redoubling our efforts, both to pressure the larger society to change, and also to make our own communities more liveable.

For President Carter, there is the gift of remembrance. It's been a rough year for the President, but maybe next year will be better if he remembers the hopes and beliefs he engendered in black people and other minorities and led them to vote for him in overwhelming numbers. Remembering the promises that led to this devotion, and fighting to fulfill them, is the best gift he can have.

For Senator Hubert Humphrey, two gifts. One, good health. His courageous battle against cancer has won him the respect of all and those of us who are his firm friends, who remember how he stood by black people and decent causes throughout his phenomenal career, pray for his full recovery.

His second gift - passage of the Humphrey-Hawkins Bill, is a fitting milestone to a great legislator who always fought for jobs for the jobless.

And for the rest of us, peace on earth, plenty and prosperity for all.

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as i see it

Christmas Just Ain't Christmas Anymore

By Gerald O. Johnson

Due to popular request, we are re-running this Xmas article of last year.

It is Christmas time again and everyone is going through the hustle and bustle of shopping. To most people this is what Christmas is all about. It is not the people's fault. The society is a capitalistic one whereby stimulating the economy takes precedence over everything else. This fact has caused Christmas to be more unbearable than merry.

I would like to say though WGIW and other organizations are doing a fine job in helping those people who can't afford the hoopla of Christmas. I am one of them.

Anyway we have gotten so wrapped up in trying to appease those people on our shopping list that it makes shopping a chore rather than a joy. Asking everybody what they want for Christmas takes the element of surprise out of the entire event. I mean, knowing what you got before you get it is "Merryless."

counts" should have my shopping list.

I think it foolish for people to force themselves to shop for items that someone said they wanted. If you don't like what I will give you this year, then I can remedy that problem for next year. I will give you my prayers.

As I said last Christmas, Christmas will not be Christ-mas until we put "Christ" back into it.

WHAT'S IN AN EDUCATION

A lot of people have been misled by the fact that a college education prepares one for the job market. Nothing could be further from the truth. A college education prepares you for nothing. If you can not be content with knowing that you know, then a college education will not benefit you. If you are considering being rich, then a college education is not for you. A college education does one thing. It provides a means of evaluating your learning capacity in an array of subject matters as compared to your peers.

The most educated people in the world can be found on a college campus. The poorest



Gerald O. Johnson

people in the world can be found in the same place. QED. What going to college will do for you is make you accessible to the job market. It is still the place where businesses go to select prospective candidates. But there is a big difference between being prepared and being pooled for the job market.

difference that has caused turmoil in the education community.

This is the primary difference between a trade school and an institution for higher learning.

Many students graduating today and not finding jobs are blaming the schools.

The schools are only to blame because they tend to give people this impression. It is a drawing card; to tell people that you get a better job if you are well educated. This does not guarantee a better job.

For example, a student majoring in Black Studies will be hard pressed for a job upon graduating. I mean who needs an expert on Black Studies? This is a case of a well educated person who can not do anything. The school did its part. So who is to blame? This and other points about what is in an education will be exploited in future articles.

IRONIES OF BLACKS

I have a friend that told me that while he was working the other day a client of his told him "I deals with the white

man downtown." He told her "Lady who do you think sent me down here." I thought the story had a light side to it, but I realized the seriousness in the story, also.

Here we have a young black man in a position that ten years ago no black man in Charlotte held. Do to the affirmative action programs that came about through a period of turmoil and racial unrest, black people are getting opportunities that never before existed for black people. Yet as black people we fail to support the very things we are fighting for. This irony is one of the reasons that programs designed to benefit blacks ultimately meet harsh criticism because blacks fail to support the programs.

Another example to elucidate the point happened to me last month. I called four black contractors to do some repair work around my house. The job would have amounted to a substantial sum of money. Each contractor told me he would get back in contact with me to set up a date when he could come out and look at the house. I haven't heard from any of them yet. The irony of

this is the black contractors of the country are lobbying congress to guarantee that so many of the government contracts are given to blacks. They claim that this is necessary to keep them in business. Yet the very same contractors lack the business protocol to remain in business.

It doesn't take a Ph.D. in anything to realize that our thrust for equality is not firmly secured with out support and responsibility for equality.

It appears as if we are fighting for a black airplane, pilot and once we get one, we as black people fail to fly with him.

The question that must be asked, is, why bother to fight for equality? It is time we start accepting the responsibility of equal rights and start doing for ourselves. What better way to start the New Year than with independence. Keep your out-of-town friends informed on what's happening in Charlotte by sending them a copy of the Charlotte Post each week. The cost is only \$10 per year.