

Read The Post Each Week!

Three Gentle Women

By Richard T. Elmore
Special To The Post

"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love, mercy and to walk humbly with thy God."

Micah 6:8

This story is about three women - all black (I am white). These women are gentle. They are vitally interested in the growth - in the stature - of their race. So am I. Why? I consider that the race problem is acute and getting worse.

Miami! A black man was brutally beaten to death by four white policemen. The policemen were tried by an all white jury. Acquitted! Result: Anger! A large portion of the city was devastated. Death came to both blacks and whites.

In the Charlotte Observer (Sun., June 15, 1980) this appears in the headlines: "Spartanburg blacks upset after 2 shot by deputies." The deaths occurred in two separate instances. The police claimed self-defense against the blacks who were resisting arrest. William Davis, age 24, suc-

cinctly stated the situation: "They didn't have to die. Police didn't have to shoot to kill. There must have been some other way to handle it - some better way - it wouldn't have happened in a white neighborhood."

The Spartanburg incident is in Charlotte's backyard. The Rev. Peter Jones, a black, pointed out that they were trying to cool the terror in the city and stated: "We pray, very much, that someone with authority will act before there is bloodshed. Any outburst in Spartanburg is going to trigger tension in Greenville, in Charlotte, in Gastonia and all over."

If you wonder about the above reference to race, the answer is because it is pertinent. If you wonder why this article is about women rather than men, just remember that when there is a situation - bad or good - the French expression *Cher Chex La Femme* applies. My three gentlewomen, through their gentility and sensitivity - could play a major role in our present racial crisis.

My first lady is Inez Parker. Mrs. Parker is presently the archivist in the James M. Duke Memorial Library at Johnson C. Smith University and the author of "The Johnson C. Smith Story," which was well done and widely read. She received her M.A. degree from the University of Michigan. She taught English at Johnson C. Smith University for twenty years. A statement in the preface is interesting:

"In these inward moments, two years after the surrender to Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox, the Henry J. Biddle Institute, the embryo of Johnson C. Smith University was founded in 1867, in the impoverished wasteland of the fallen confederacy. The wonder of its inception is that in the disconsolate period it was conceived as the brain child of two pioneers - one a southerner and the other a northerner."

I am not sure but there may be a tinge of cynicism. Understandable! Yes! As a Virginian I would like to point out that General Robert E. Lee was a compassionate man. He was famous and occupies a very important niche in history. His personal life was exemplary.

The northern gentleman was The Rev. S. C. Alexander. The southerner was The Rev. Willis C. Miller. Mrs. Henry J. Biddle - a widow - gave the first substantial gift to boost the organization of what is now Johnson C. Smith University. Rev. Miller was a southern planter and slave owner. Mrs. Parker pointed out that he "repented" and later furthered the cause of the freed slave who was to receive an education - a prerequisite for progress. My forebear's status was similar to the Rev. Miller. My great grandfather was a southern planter and owned many slaves. My early attitude regarding the race situation was not what it is now. Thank goodness! My great grandfather, of course, died before I was



Inez Parker
...Retired professor



Daisy Twitty
...Devout Christian



Hattie Russell
...Retired CMS teacher for the Biddleville or Five Point community is headed by Dr. Jonnie McLeod, who has a genuine sensitivity for the less fortunate, unable to help themselves.

born. His daughter, my grandmother, I did know because she did not die until 1924. She was a noble woman whom I revered. I know her father did not mistreat his slaves. They were loved. In fact I owe my life to the daughter of one of his slaves. Due to my mother's ill health and inability to nurse me, a black woman was my wet nurse. Simultaneously she suckled her son at one breast and me at the other.

My second lady is Miss Hattie R. Russell. Miss Russell, who is a retired teacher of the Charlotte Public School System, received her B.A. degree from Johnson C. Smith University and her master's degree from Columbia University. Miss Russell's father, the Reverend Pickney W. Russell taught at the University from 1900-38. He was twice Dean of the college. Reverend Russell also spoke Arabic, French and German. He studied at Columbia University. He was later awarded an honorary doctorate. Like Billy Sunday, who did not academically earn a doctorate, he prefers to use the term "Reverend."

When I interviewed Miss Russell I tried to get her age, but exercised her feminine prerogative. She humorously told me that she retired several years ago so I could guess her age.

My third lady is Mrs. Daisy Twitty, age 84. She

has lived in her home, 402 French Street since 1921 - 59 years. This is in the Biddleville community. Mrs. Twitty is a very devout Christian. She is a member of the St. Stevens Pentecostal Church and told me "she works for the Lord." This far surpasses a BA, MA or Ph.D.

Mrs. Twitty worked for many years for the white families around Charlotte. Although she and her husband were not blessed with children of their own, she told me she helped raise the children of some of the white families in Charlotte. She worked for Mr. Tom Martin who is the maternal grandfather of Mr. William Beck, a successful automobile dealer. I talked with Mr. Beck who has kept in touch with Mrs. Twitty and was delighted to allow me to use this story given to me by her.

When I interviewed Mr. Beck, his eyes lit up when I talked about his quasi-mother. The tone of his voice showed the affection he has for her. How is this for race relations? That is what we need. We must accomplish this for the world is aflame with anger and hatred.

All three of my ladies have contributed a good deal, not only to the Biddleville community, but to all of Charlotte. All of them have helped UNCC in its University Year for Action Program in the Biddleville community. This project

The UYA Program comes under the Department of Human Resources at UNCC.

If this article diverts only one person from anger and hatred of his fellowman to love, I have received my reward.

Recently I witnessed the television program, "Good Morning America," concerning the rioting in Soweto, South Africa. Why are the suppressed blacks revolting? Apartheid! This is like our former slavery that is not too remote in our history. A philosophical statement: God did not look with favor when man enslaved his brother.

We think of slavery as only relating to our black citizens (formerly called Negroes). If you are a student of history you will know that slavery existed in times of Christ. Many statements in the Bible refer to slaves. In warfare the Romans conquered and enslaved the Greeks.

We need to act now! This country is "wallowing in anger." Anger begets hate. Presently in Greensboro the trial of those involved in the riots several months ago, is in progress. Howard Covington of Raleigh, National Head of the Nazi Party, said for the press, "We do plan to descend on Greensboro with all manner of agitation if the men see THREE Page 10

Sexual Ignorance Is One Cause Of Teen-Pregnancy

Why are school boards throughout the country considering sex education and family life programs? Here are some of the reasons.

Each year more than one million teenagers become pregnant. Seventy percent of the pregnant teenagers do not finish school.

More than a quarter-million cases of VD among teenagers are reported annually.

One of every five 13- and 14-year-olds has already had sexual intercourse; more than half of all teenagers are sexually active before the age of 20.

In "School and Parents - Partners in Sex Education," Sol G. Gordon and Irving R. Dickman offer parents and teachers guidance on how they can provide young people with the information and values they need to develop healthy, responsible and mature sexuality. The 28-page Public Affairs Pamphlet includes a model curriculum for family life education programs and a list of resources for further information. Copies are available for 50 cents each from a nonprofit Public Affairs Committee, 381 Park Ave. South, New York, N.Y. 10016.

Just about everyone agrees that the primary responsibility for sex education lies with parents. "One problem," Gordon and Dickman point out, "is that too many parents are uncomfortable in the role as sex educator...All too often parents are confused, tongue-tied, reluctant to discuss sex with their children, uncertain of their own information and knowledge, unclear whether the values they themselves

grew up with apply to today's young people."

For many children, friends or the media are their main source of information - or misinformation, unless they are fortunate enough to have an effective sex education program in their school.

But is it true that the more teenagers learn about sex, the more sexually active they become? Is sex education a cause of increased teenager pregnancies? Paradoxically, say Gordon and Dickman, "those who are most active are usually those who know the least...Indicators are that good sex education programs do reduce teenage pregnancies and lower the incidence of venereal disease."

So far, only 15 or 20 local school systems offer adequate sex education, or family life programs, Gordon and Dickman estimate. "As a nation, we haven't really tried sex education yet."

Sex education should deal with anatomy and biology, but also with feelings, attitudes, standards, and human relationships. "At a minimum," Gordon and Dickman suggest, "a good sex education program ought to help young people to achieve:

+ An enhanced self-concept, a greater self-respect and self-worth - and that means not agreeing to unwanted sex 'because everybody's doing it';

The key to an effective sex education program is the extent to which students are helped to understand the basis of their decisions; why they do what they do - and the consequences.



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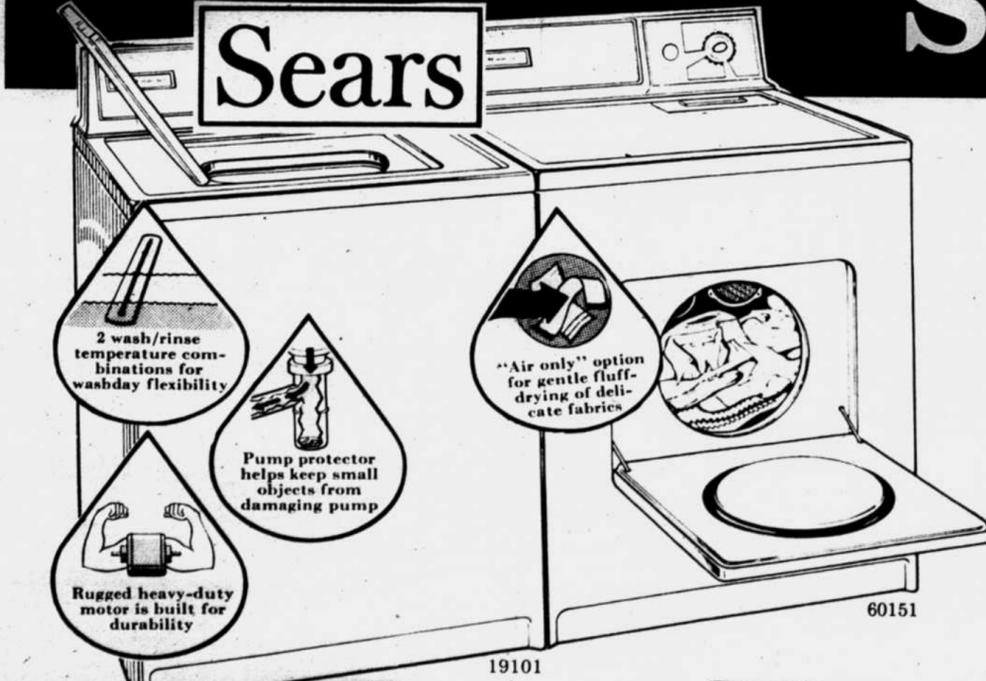
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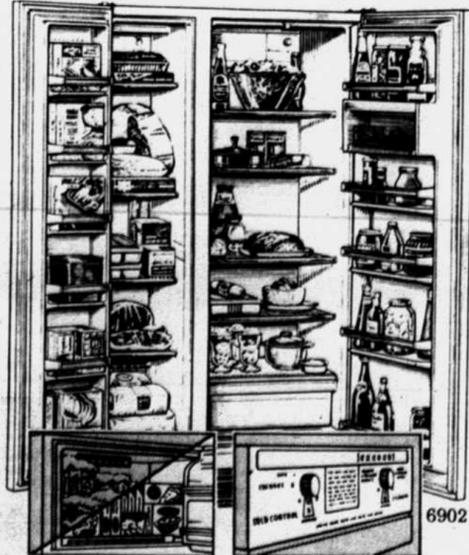
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