

editorials

& comments

Albright's Challenge

Equity And Excellence

Rooted in 600 years of academic regalia tradition and ceremony, Robert L. Albright was inaugurated last Sunday as the 11th and youngest president of Johnson C. Smith University. The ceremony was the culmination of a week-long series of events blended with the 117th anniversary of the founding of the four-year degree-granting institution.

Dr. Albright told the 800 persons in attendance at the dual ceremony in his inauguration address that, "...the most vital role for a president of a college is to establish a clear vision for the university...and pursue the highest standards of quality..." Almost within the same breath, Dr. Albright said, "I fervently believe in the value and significance of the nation's historically black colleges - for they are institutions which have...provided meaningful educational opportunities for depressed and disadvantaged populations when few other institutions were willing or able to take on such an assignment..."

Ironically, most predominantly white colleges still don't and won't take on the task of educating disadvantaged youth by whatever definition. Ironically, too, the black institutions with their meager resources, higher staff costs, and many predominantly white institutions attracting the better academic students and faculty members, somehow continue to survive and play at best a beginning role up the educational ladder for many, if not most college trained black youth, and at worst try to bring other youth to the lowest step on the higher educational ladder who, in too many cases, will

National Disgrace

The barroom gang-rape of a young woman on a pool table in the state of Massachusetts last year, and the national attention given the recently ended trial with the media focusing more on the character of the victim than on the rapists, is a continuing example of how Americans abuse females. Now, we hear of a California day care center that has molested literally hundreds of very young children - rape, sodomy and porno movie-making.

Tragically, in the abuse of children it is not just the

experience academic failure when they might have been quite successful in a non-college career. However, having tasted defeat in the educational arena, many such youth abandon all hope of pursuing other educational options.

Albright stressed the fact academic excellence will require strong support from alumni and supporters of black colleges. He might have added that giving by foundations is often gauged by alumni and supporting giving.

Undoubtedly, too, academic excellence and equity, particularly at black colleges and universities, must begin in the high schools or earlier, so that collegiate resources do not have to be used for remedial course, that is, subsidizing the high schools' course work with instructions and learning that should have occurred before a youth enters college. Black colleges and universities carry a disproportionate share of this burden, both academically and financially.

Thus, Johnson, C. Smith like so many of its fellow black institutions of higher learning, is in the midst of a new but continuing crisis in the pursuit of equity and excellence.

These characteristics (equity and excellence), are being placed in the fabric of JCSU by new mentor, by a man who knows the value of vision and has a vision of the future for Johnson C. Smith University. Because of his courage in offering himself, alumni, friends, faculty and students and new challenge to heighten their quest for equity and excellence, we wish Dr. Albright well in his endeavor to create a NEW JCSU.

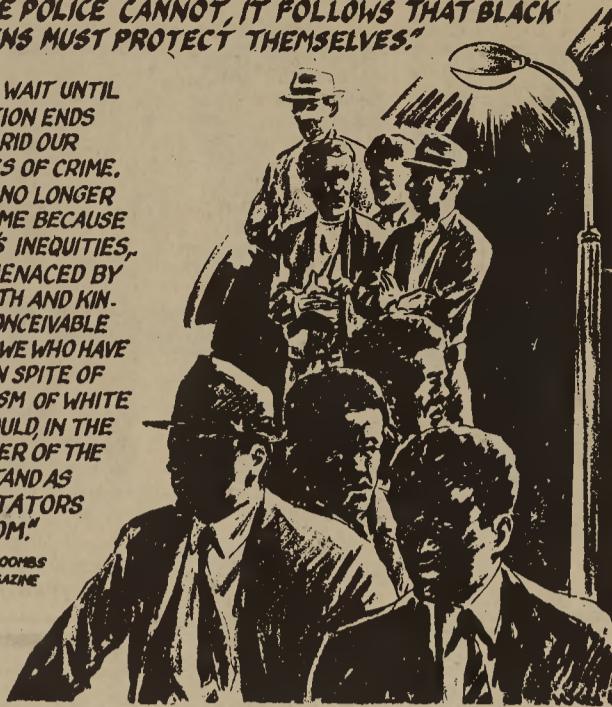
sadistic acts of those doing the molesting. There should also be a concern about those sick-minded people who would choose to see porno movies involving little children.

It is long past time for firm laws to be enforced and passed to protect the minds and bodies, psychologically and physically, from the deranged minds of some adults. With more women entering the workforce and needing child care assistance, our national disgrace becomes increasingly urgent. Let us act now as your child and mine may be next.

'IF THE GOVERNMENT WILL NOT PROTECT US AND IF THE POLICE CANNOT, IT FOLLOWS THAT BLACK CITIZENS MUST PROTECT THEMSELVES.'

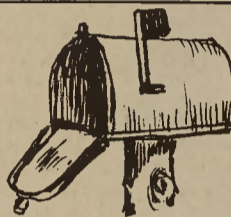
'WE CANNOT WAIT UNTIL DISCRIMINATION ENDS BEFORE WE RID OUR COMMUNITIES OF CRIME. WE CAN NO LONGER EXCUSE CRIME BECAUSE OF SOCIETY'S INEQUITIES. WE STAND MENACED BY OUR OWN KITH AND KIN. IT IS INCONCEIVABLE TO ME THAT WE WHO HAVE PREVAILED IN SPITE OF THE BARBARISM OF WHITE PEOPLE SHOULD, IN THE LAST QUARTER OF THE CENTURY, STAND AS MUTE SPECTATORS TO OUR DOOM.'

ORDE COOMBS
N.Y. MAGAZINE



Teamwork Can Stop Dis-integration Of The Black Communities

Letters To The Editor:



Are They Meaningless?

How Important Are Polls?

By Ann Robey
Special To The Post
Hardly a day goes by during this busy election year without a new poll appearing in the newspapers or on television.

Today's poll might show Mondale with a slight lead, and tomorrow, it might be Hart who holds the edge. How important are these polls? Are they worth the time and money spent to do them? That all depends on who you are, according to Dr. Ted Arrington, professor of political science at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

"For the general public, the polls are meaningless," said Dr. Arrington. "There is absolutely no relationship between what the polls say now and the result of the election in November."

On the other hand, Dr. Arrington noted, "Polls are very useful to the candidates. They can find out where they need to campaign, what kind of campaign to run, what the issues are, and where they can exploit the weaknesses of their opponents. Private polls are particularly valuable in this regard."

According to Dr. Arrington, polls have been in existence since the 1930's. However, exit polls are

relatively new, having only been used in the last 10 to 20 years.

"Exit polls are used as a check," explained Dr. Arrington. "The numbers you get from the election offices are all mixed up. You can't tell how many voters were male, female, young, or old. With exit polls, you get a better idea of who actually voted. By comparing these figures with pre-election polls, you can at least establish the degree of accuracy of your polls."

Polling operates on two prime assumptions, both of which Dr. Arrington said are false.

First, the poll sample represents accurately the population. False. It can be mathematically determined how likely the sample is to be representative, but it is nearly impossible to represent the population exactly.

"The more people you poll, the more accurate you are likely to be," said Dr. Arrington. "The margin of error with 600 people could be plus or minus five percent, while with 2,000 people, the error rate could drop to plus or minus three percent."

The second assumption is that pollsters can talk to strangers and be told the

absolute truth. According to Dr. Arrington, people don't always know the answers to the questions. They make up answers that make themselves look good.

"The trick," said Dr. Arrington, "is to ask simple questions that people can answer and will answer truthfully. For example, do you usually vote Democratic or Republican? Or, if the election was held today, who would you vote for? They might not know the answer to that last question, but then they may not know on election day either. At least this type of question comes closer to mirroring election day."

One result of polling is that it tells candidates which campaign strategies are working. When asked about candidates, people mention things that are apparent in the campaigns. Tying Walter Mondale to special interest groups is an example. If it had not been used as a campaign strategy, it would not be mentioned as an issue.

"Polling is a vital part of democracy," he said. "If a candidate tailors his campaign to voter concerns then fails to follow through when elected, he is dishonest."

From Capitol Hill

Achievements Of Black Caucus

Alfreda L. Madison
Special To The Post

Recently this reporter had lunch with some black women from Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina, who were in Washington attending Women's Aglow Fellowship, a religious group which is closely allied with the Born-Again Christians. They asked me what were the black members of Congress doing? There is no black congressperson from either of their states.

Since blacks still look more to the white press for information on government issues that affect their lives, with very little attention given to the black media, they are ill-informed about the many accomplishments of the Congressional Black Caucus.

There are 435 members of the House of Representatives with only 21 of that number being black. Since a few states have more than one black congressperson, there are only 16 of the 50 states plus the District of Columbia with a black member of Congress. These 21 persons stay in the forefront fighting for issues that affect the whole nation, with specific concerns for the 26 million blacks, other minorities and the poor. The Caucus members have to wage an



Alfreda L. Madison

overwhelming battle to get this country to accord the same treatment to countries with a large black population as it does to white populated nations.

The advent of the Reagan Administration and its brazen attempt to reverse the civil rights gains, the Congressional Black Caucus' (CBC) task has become more burdensome. Yet, notwithstanding all of the enormous tasks, the Caucus has had tremendous success.

During the first half of the 98th Congress that ended in 1983, CBC achieved many of its legislative priorities. Each year, since Reagan has been President, the Caucus has presented an alternative budget. After presentation on the House Floor of the Democratic budget, with addition and deletion of its amendments, the House budget resolution ended

with the inclusion of 75 percent of the Caucus' 1984 budget.

Representative John Conyers reaped the fruits of his 15 years introduction on the floor of the House, a Martin Luther King holiday. While the Reagan Administration was not in favor of the bill, he was left with no alternative but to sign it because of the House vote of 338 to 90 in favor and the Senate vote of 78 to 22.

CBC member Augustus Hawkins, Chairman of the House Labor and Education Subcommittee on Employment Opportunities, proposed and steered passage of the House \$3.5 billion which will create 500,000 jobs for the long term unemployed. This bill is pending in the Senate.

The most controversial amendment to pass the first session of the 98th Congress was the amendment which prohibited U.S. support of the International Monetary Fund loans to South Africa. The Caucus was able to get another South African related bill passed by the House which prohibits U.S. corporations from making any new investments in that country. Retention of this bill is being worked out in the House-Senate conference.

Another Caucus success is the \$145 million set aside

for disadvantaged businesses and organizations, with the principal beneficiaries being black colleges.

The first housing authorization bill to pass Congress since 1981 was proposed and successfully ushered by the Caucus to passage, in spite of strong opposition.

The federal supplemental compensation benefits which were increased through March, 1985, and Title 20 social services block grants increased from \$2.5 billion to \$2.7 billion were enacted because of the Caucus' work. The enforcement payments of child support passed the House without a dissenting vote and is now pending in the Senate. The 1983 Social Security Act incorporated initiatives to increase benefits to the aged, blind, disabled and poor under the supplemental Security Income. All of these social benefits are the results of the CBC's deep concern and unfaltering efforts for all the nation's needy.

Without the unceasing dexterity of these 21 black members of Congress, one shudders to think of the predicament of the 26 million black citizens, other minorities and the poor, in this nation.

WITH SABRINA JOHNSON



SCOPE

Dreams Into Realities

Now that spring has officially arrived, it is time to stop and "smell the roses." Time not only to familiarize oneself with public issues and presidential campaign promises, but to rejuvenate and forge ahead. It is a time to turn dreams into realities. Taking this into consideration, the writer has chosen not a social issue, nor a political one, but to focus on someone with a dream who is turning that dream into a reality.

The public education system and its woes are social issues. However, the writer has found one woman who has discovered a light at the end of one of the dark educational paths. Her name is Ruby Bell. She is from Philadelphia, PA, and now resides in Willingboro, NJ. Mrs. Bell has been a part of the Philadelphia public educational system for more than 25 years. Throughout her endeavors of teaching and managing, she discovered a major weakness in the students - their inability to take tests effectively and efficiently. She found a certain amount of test anxiety followed the announcement of standardized tests coming soon. Taking this information in hand, Mrs. Bell set out to devise a systematic approach to teaching children how to first take tests, and ultimately develop better reading and comprehension skills. In doing so, she combined her teaching education, experience and demands of co-workers into a comprehensive program titled "Reading Test Practice For Parents and Children". The story continues from there.

Prior to the formal publication of Mrs. Bell's reading materials, she circulated the work among her co-workers who found the materials to be most helpful in the classroom. After the positive response, Vel Bell, Inc. was developed by Mrs. Bell and three associates. (A.G. Watkins, C. H. Davis and M. H. Pierre-Louis), and since then, three publications have grown: (1) "Reading Test Practice For Parents and Children" (1981), (2) "Test Taking Practice Pull Outs" (1983), and (3) "Reading Practice Booklet" (1983). All developed with one goal in mind - improving test-taking and reading skills. These materials have proved to be successful in the Philadelphia area. But the story does not end there.

Although Mrs. Bell's educational materials are success-oriented, many obstacles have found their way into the publications' success. Vel Bell, Inc. is faced with a visibility problem. By being a small company, school boards shy away from the materials believing that large companies have better quality teaching materials for this area. Financial backing is another problem area for the company. Vel Bell, Inc. has found that because the product is new to the marketplace, potential investors are few and meek. The publications are the best of their kind, unfortunately, the three above stepping stones are acting as potential anchors.

Ruby Bell is standing up to the anchors and is fighting to up-root them. She is actively turning her dream into a reality by continuing to publish the materials, tests and update and market them to their present potential. Marketing potential for the publication can be broadened if visibility and curiosity demand increase. To do this, she and her associates are taking the materials and presenting them to as many people as possible. Formal presentations are made on behalf of the publications.

Parents complain of their children's test scores and their inability to understand what they read, board members and principals complain of the decline in test scores - well, here stands a potential answer to the problem. Vel Bell, Inc. publications have been founded, tested and found true to increasing the skills found to be weak in America's children. Through these publications can be found a ray of hope - hope that can become a reality: the reality of being literate in a world with a high illiteracy rate. This is part of the dream Ruby Bell is turning into reality. She is doing her part to combat the crippling disease of illiteracy in the United States. As it stands now, her product has only reached a small area, but as parents, teachers, principals, and board members come to terms with possible alternatives, Vel Bell, Inc. will be part of the alternative solution.

Turning dreams into realities - is that not what America is all about? Ruby Bell is turning a dream into a reality - although Vel Bell, Inc. seems to be operating against the odds - it is the long shots that prove to be the most profitable.

NOTE TO READERS: If interested in finding out more about Vel Bell, Inc. for improving test taking and reading skills, please write to: Vel Bell, Inc., P. O. Box 66, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054.

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