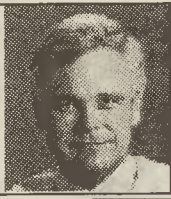


New Year's predictions - mine and yours

D.G. Martin



The new year used to be such fun for me.

Like some other columnists, I burdened my readers with my predictions for the coming year. It was always an easy column to write. And if any prediction came true, I could remind my readers (and my editors) how wise I was.

Then, several years ago, I really struck out. I predicted the fall of Castro in Cuba that very year. (Castro in case you haven't noticed is still in charge down there.) I predicted the return to power in Russia of my hero, Mikhail Gorbachev. (Gorby, it turns out, is the most unpopular person in all of Russia.)

After that disastrous set of predictions, who would have the courage to try again?

Not me. Well, not me, until now. But I have three ideas about what is going to happen in the coming year. They run counter to what most people are thinking. So I want to share them with you and see what you think.

1. North Carolina's General Assembly will agree on a new congressional redistricting plan by the April 1 court imposed deadline. Most people don't think that our legislature can do it. The task assigned by the courts would be difficult enough under any circumstances - eliminating racial gerrymandering while still giving racial minorities a fair chance to win election to Congress.

The task is made much more difficult by the division of party control over the two houses of the legislature. When the Democrats controlled both houses, they drew

congressional districts to favor Democrats. If the Republicans were in total charge they would do the same thing. With divided control, folks think the task will be impossible.

Here is why I think they will get the job done. The main consideration in drawing election district lines always turns out to be - protect the incumbents. This year, too, the most powerful interests at work will be the 12 incumbent U. S. House members. Each of them will be working with their political allies in the legislature to draw a district that will give that representative a fair chance of being reelected.

Each of them knows that if the legislature fails to meet the April 1 deadline, the districts will be drawn by the courts - without regard to the protection of the incumbents.

With that pressure from the incumbents, the legislature can - and I think it will - come up with a plan that will give all of the incumbents a fighting chance to be returned to congress, and give most of them a real good chance of winning.

2. Newt Gingrich will not retain the speakership of the U. S. House of Representatives.

The experts seem to think that Newt can "weather the storm" created by his admitted ethical violations. He seems to have his party's House members lined up to reelect him speaker. Compared to some of the things that go on in our government, his sins do not seem to be all that bad. In the last few weeks he has acknowledged his wrongdoing and done the right things from a public relations standpoint to get the matter behind him. Also, since the house Democrats would just as soon have a wounded Gingrich in charge, some of them don't really want to push him out.

Still, he won't make it.

Why? The Republicans have President Clinton and the Democratic fund raisers in their sights and have every

intention of exploiting their vulnerabilities.

But as long as Gingrich is their leader, it is going to be hard for them to throw rocks at Clinton and the Democrats. When given the choice between protecting Gingrich and going full steam after the president and the Democrats, the Republicans will abandon Newt.

The Republicans may hold together to reelect him speaker. But they will toss him overboard before the year is over.

3. China will be recognized as our most important foreign policy challenge.

Historically, our culture is largely European. We still look there, and the Middle East and Africa, to exert our influence. There is plenty in those places to keep us busy. But the important threat to our interest is no longer there.

It is clearly in Asia - with China.

An Asia dominated by China no better for us than an Asia dominated by Japan or a Europe dominated by Germany would have been 60 years ago.

Some scholars suggest that we could have prevented World War II by standing up to Germany's aggressive acquisitiveness earlier and stronger. On the other hand, some also say that we could have prevented war with Japan by being a little more accommodating of its "legitimate" interests.

Without arguing either of those points, our policy dilemma with China will be standing up to its growing and confident aggressiveness while giving proper consideration to its "legitimate interests."

The finality of the turnover of Hong Kong will put all that into stark focus this year.

Now, do you agree? What are your predictions for the coming year?

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Letters To The Post

Deadly force is one-way deal?

The writer is on Death Row at Central Prison for the 1994 murders of Charlotte Police Officers Andy Nobles and John Burnett.

In response to "Deadly Force" may be used when officers believe they are faced with an "imminent threat" I ask is that law reserved for the police only? Is it police department procedure to jump on and beat suspects?

At what point are we supposed to feel "imminent threat?" I too was an unarmed black motorist who was forced to defend myself from the realm of police brutality before I was killed - only to have Internal Affairs rule "no wrong was done." Even though the law of "imminent threat" is what I attempted to use, I was not allowed to use it. For all of my efforts, I was awarded the death sentence for not allowing the police to kill me.

So I ask, is it justice or just us (blacks). As Andrea Long stated "African American people can not sit around and watch them kill us." Are we to just lie down? Are we to be put on death row when we try to stop them from killing us? It's time for us as black Americans to stand. Has the KKK only changed its color to blue? We must wake up before it is too late. It's already in our back yards. Five of the seven black men shot by the police since January 1995 were all unarmed. As the students of CPCC stated "How much harm can an unarmed man do if police follow proper procedures?" We can't keep thinking "oh well." Next time it may be you, your husband, brother or sister, or the guy next door.

Alden Harden
Raleigh

Beware of sophistry's case

Journalist Dennis Schatzman:

Mike King, son of California's legendary civil rights leader and bondsman, Celes King, III, can wax eloquently with the best of them.

King and I were "kickin' it" around the state office of the Congress of Racial Equality where his father has reigned as chairman for nearly a decade, when our conversation drifted into the land of O.J. Simpson trial coverages.

"Beware of the sophisticated arguments," King warned me. "The story is not always in what is said, but more than likely, it is often in what is not said."

"Durn," I said to myself. I hadn't thought about sophistry (the art of making plausible, but false statements) at length in both my philosophy and logic classes at the University of Pittsburgh over 20 years ago.

It occurred to me that while I had observed how both the mainstream media had reported both the criminal and double murder trial and the current civil and child custody trials, and how the prosecution lawyers were serving up the information for audience consumption, and how the public was, indeed digesting what was being fed to them, I realized that much of that was a classic case of sophistry.

As journalists, you must be aware of the double-switch in stories or the omitted facts or the injection of the half-truths.

What's on your mind?

Send your comments to The Charlotte Post, P.O. Box 30144, Charlotte, N.C. 28230 or fax (704) 342-2160. You can also use E-mail - charpost@clt.mindspring.com

All correspondence must include a daytime telephone number for verification.

Globalization dehumanizes U.S. workers

Sherman Miller



As I listened to a 50-year-old professional chap pour forth his concern about his job potentially disintegrating in the near future, I felt compassion for his plight. This chap works for a multinational corporation and he knows he is too old to find a comparable job outside his corporation, but he is also too young to retire and make ends meet.

He also shared that he put his daughter through Purdue University where she earned a degree in chemical engineering. Her bubble burst when she found that after graduating

there were no jobs for a white female chemical engineer, so she had to work a year as an ordinary operator in a plant.

This father says his daughter eventually got a job, but with an outfit that hires engineers for only a year, then moves on. He said don't believe those salary reports you hear and read because his daughter his daughter makes "30 percent less than those reports."

This worried chap's story called to mind similar stories. In 1993 I chatted with a fellow in Detroit who spoke of a son with a Doctorate of Philosophy Degree in Physics who could not find a job. I spoke with a lady of Eastern European descent who was proud that her daughter had migrated from the U.S. to her homeland and landed an excellent job with a Liberal Arts

Degree. Recently, a businessman who makes frequent trips to South America shared that it is commonplace to see young American professional migrants doing very well in jobs South of the Border where opportunities are good.

We might also think about the many who are under great stress worrying about whether they will have a job tomorrow. I hear of people wanting to vomit when they know they must go back to work. I hear comments such as, "It's a new heartless environment. I survived the latest cutback. They may sell my unit any day."

A holistic look at these observations indicates that once again America views some people as chattel. That is convenient because if you dehumanize people then you feel no guilt

in placing social and material gain before their well being. Was not slavery the result of a need for cheap labor at the expense of human dignity and freedom of some people?

The real concern is that globalization now means de facto adopting the dehumanizing mind-set pervasive in Third World nations where the exploitation of the masses is commonplace. Economic bondage now enchants the United States because our leadership sold us a cock and bull story that we are a service economy while they exported our good paying manufacturing jobs overseas.

Yet a resurgence of U.S. high paying manufacturing jobs would mean a need for well paid plant engineers, operators, and so on. This would also mean that American workers can afford to purchase the high priced items Americans manufacture - a lesson that Henry Ford once taught this nation. Perhaps the present zeal to kill affirmative action is premature. Clearly, America's future manufacturing work-force needs a little help today to allow them to show that "Made in America" is once again a badge of honor.

SHERMAN MILLER is a writer based in Wilmington, Del.

Racial redistricting's results

By Eric Kearney
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER
PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

Prior to this year's congressional elections, it seemed pretty clear that African American candidates would find it difficult, if not impossible, to win in white majority districts.

However, with the results of election counted, that premise has been challenged and the strategy for redistricting must be modified, or changed completely.

As has been well-documented in every African American newspaper in the country, the U.S. Supreme Court attacked majority African-American districts in Georgia, Texas and North Carolina, where the 12th District represented by Mel Watt of Charlotte will be redrawn for the 1998 elections. The Supreme Court determined that the districts were created for the sole purpose of electing more African Americans and Latinos to Congress. Proponents of the districts, supported by years of racial animosity, both anecdotal and documented, said that whites would not vote for African Americans or Latinos. So, the only way to ensure African American and Latino representation in Congress was to create "majority, minority" districts.

The premise - whites won't vote for blacks - seemed easy enough to accept. And while it may still be true, the recent election does not prove it.

All five African American members of Congress whose African American districts were erased by the courts, won. They won in districts where the majority of voters were not African American. Further, only



Watt



Wilder



Patrick

one African American member of Congress lost his seat, Gary Franks, a Republican from Connecticut.

There are now 37 African Americans in the new Congress compared with 38 in the last session; this is despite the radical change in the make-up of some of the districts.

There is only one new African-American member of Congress. She is Indiana Democrat Julia Carson. Congresswoman Carson was elected from a white majority district in the Indianapolis area.

What does this mean? In some respects, it could be viewed as a victory for race relations in America. African American incumbents were able to hold their seats, even in districts where the racial make-up changed substantially.

On the other hand, only one African American in the country won a "new" seat. This shows that there is some reluctance to electing African American candidates. Moreover, this "new" seat was in the Midwest, and not the South which is the center of the Voting Rights Act litigation. Additionally, there are still only two recent examples of African Americans who have garnered statewide appeal: Douglas Wilder, who was elected governor of Virginia, and Carol Moseley Braun, who is a

U.S. Senator from Illinois.

The debate over impact and intent will continue to rage on, but the terms of the debate must change after the results of this year's election. No longer will the comparison between a district's elected minorities and its minority population be enough to prove racial discrimination. The intent behind the drawing of a particular district will now get more attention.

The change in personnel in the Clinton Administration will also have an effect. Deval Patrick, assistant attorney general for Civil Rights, an outstanding lawyer and intellectual, is leaving his position. His replacement's approach to African American representation will determine the types of Voting Rights Act issues which are brought before the Supreme Court.

It is good to know that African Americans in Congress can maintain their seats. However, for the Voting Rights Act to have real meaning, there must be gains, like that of congresswoman Carson.

ERIC H. KEARNEY, a Cincinnati attorney, is president of Sesh Communications, an African American owned publishing company. Send your comments to him at: P.O. Box 1691, Cincinnati, OH, 452011691.

The love of black people

By Conrad Worrill
SPECIAL TO THE POST

The word love is probably one of the most used and over-worked words in the English language.

According to most European definitions love is "a feeling of strong personal attachment induced by sympathetic understanding or by ties of kinship."

And, of course, we are most familiar with the usage of the word love in connection with "Tender and passionate affection for one of the opposite sex."

From time to time we also hear the word love used as an expression and articulation of one's love for black people.

During this Kwanzaa Season our love for each other, as a race of people, should be emphasized in our discussions of the seven principles of Kwanzaa, the Nguzo Saba.

It is without question that segments of the African community in America have lost all sense of moral and ethical relationships with other African people.

This is demonstrated day in and day out by the increased number of African people killing each other, mentally and physically abusing each other, stealing from each other, being dishonest with each other, and the list goes on and on and on.

I can truly say I love black people no matter how frustrated I get with the negative behavior of so many of our people.

I love black people because I understand that the creative force of the universe has endowed us to make the great contributions we have made to the world and continue to make.

A simple inspection of the ancient Nile Valley civilizations of Kemet (Egypt) should cause all Black people to love each other.

Ancient Kemet and the Kemetic people (Black people)

were the creators of math, science, architecture, writing, government, astronomy, medicine, and so much more.

The ancient Kemetic people produced wisdom that was written down in their language called Medew Netcher, the language of the blacks, or what the Europeans called hieroglyphics.

We can examine this ancient Kemetic wisdom in Dr. Maulana Karenga's book of translations, The Husia, which gives us insight into how our great ancestors viewed life, death, human relations, marriage, parenting, use of power, God, family, and standards of moral and ethical conduct.

Reading The Husia brings out all my love for black people in a most profound and spiritual way. Listen to the words translated in The Husia by Dr. Karenga:

"Do not terrorize people for if you do, God will punish you accordingly. If anyone lives by such means, God will take bread from his or her mouth. If one says I shall be rich by such means, she will eventually have to say my means have entrapped me."

This passage continues with "If one says I will rob another, he will end up being robbed himself. The plans of men and women do not always come to pass for in the end it is the will of God which prevails. Therefore, one should live in peace with others and they will come and willingly give gifts which another would take from them through fear."

Our love for each other and the wisdom of our ancestors, should give us the inspiration and motivation, during this Kwanzaa season, to re-dedicate ourselves to the continued struggle for the liberation of African people worldwide.

CONRAD WORRILL is chairman of the National Black United Front in Chicago.