

Value of the truth

It's necessary for living right

MELODY MICERE STEWART

In the spirit of Ma'at



Ma'at is the ancient spiritual value system of truth, justice, righteousness (correct living), harmony and balance. It is a code of conduct instituted by the people of Kemet, today known as Egypt. According to "The Husia: The Sacred Wisdom of Ancient Egypt," Ma'at provides both a moral and spiritual foundation for correct living that, if utilized consistently, guarantees good health, prosperity, honor and purposeful living.

The way of Ma'at has never been easy, yet, it has been one of the spiritual mainstays in the evolution of our people. During our long and protracted struggle for equality, truth and justice were/are the moral antecedents that ensured victory.

For example, Frederick Douglass said, "Truth is proper and beautiful in all times and all places." Martin King assured us that the arc of the universe bends toward justice, hence our fight for equality would one day see fruition. The grand poet of the '60s, Nikki Giovanni, wrote, "If now isn't a good time for the truth I don't see when we'll get to it."

Of course, who could forget the words of the America's poet, Maya Angelou, who wrote, "You may write me down in history with your bitter, twisted lies, You may trod me in the very dirt, but still, like dust, I'll rise."

Sadly, America is a country built on lies. From the Lying rhetoric of the founding fathers to the lies of emancipation and reconstruction, to the backsliding lies of the '60s to Watergate, CIA/FBI secret lies and a whole era of governmental lies coming to light, America, at times, seems confused as to what is a fabrication and what is really truth.

White historian James W. Loewen has written a powerfully truthful book entitled, "Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong," detailing the extent of the lies perpetuated in American school classrooms on a daily basis. As a society, we have come to accept Lying as a fact of life - except when it comes to black people Lying. Then, as usual, there is a penalty to pay.

As African Americans steadily striving for all America has to offer, we must not forget the basic value system of Ma'at and the honor of our ancestors. But in terms of a historical lesson, we must learn, once and for all, that what Euro-Americans get away with, we cannot.

NAACP wants restitution

Continued from page 1A

been some closure to it an we will have to do what is necessary to move forward."

Alston said the state executive board will meet on May 31 to formally replace Alexander and to fill any other vacancies that may result. The person selected to head the organization would serve until the fall elections, Alston said.

The Rev. Conrad Pridgen, current president of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg NAACP chapter, said he could not comment on the Alexander matter because he had not received official word on the board's action. Pridgen said the local chapter would abide by the board's decision if it suspends Alexander from official participation in NAACP affairs.

Other NAACP officials, including Alexander critic Valerie Woodard, also declined comment. Woodard, chairman of the Civil Service Commission, is second vice president of the state conference.

After Alexander's suspension, the national board called for an audit of state conference financial records. That audit was never completed because financial records were not made available by Alexander and bookkeeper Linda Crite-Gaines, who was treasurer of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg branch.

Alexander's resignation in November followed an ultimatum from the national board to turn over any and all financial records justifying his expenditures from the Merrill Lynch account.

Alexander said the account was set up in 1989 as a temporary repository for NAACP funds. An operating account was maintained by the state conference's treasurer. Half of NAACP funds were deposited into the Merrill Lynch account, Alexander said.

The state conference budget is usually about \$200,000 per year.

The organization's treasurer at the time, James Florence, also maintained a bank account for the organization in the United

National Bank in Fayetteville. Florence was authorized to pay bills for the state NAACP from that account.

As much as \$700,000 was deposited in the Merrill Lynch account over a seven years, according to financial records obtained by The Post.

Alexander was the only person authorized to use the account.

State NAACP board members said they were unaware that the Merrill Lynch account was being used for regular expenditures until a new board was elected in October 1995. Their questions about that account and other financial matters led to Alexander's suspension and the subsequent audit. An authoritative audit could not be completed because financial records such as canceled checks and minutes approving expenditures were not made available to auditors.

State officers said the organization's president is not authorized to spend money directly and that checks should be written by the organization's treasurer.

Poverty's last stand in county?

Plan is to wipe it out in 5 years

By Herbert L. White
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Societies have tried to eliminate poverty for centuries.

Mecklenburg County believes it can get the job done in five years.

County commissioners endorsed Tuesday a plan that links 10 institutions working to eradicate poverty by 2002. The 10 institutions combined are called the Customer Fusion Decagon, an attempt to lift the poorest people into jobs and self-sufficiency.

"This Board of County Commissioners has the opportunity to set in motion the process that wiped out poverty in our community," commissioners chairman Parks Helms said. "This is the legacy for which I would like this board to be remembered."

From overcrowded jails and prisons to government assistance for welfare and housing, poverty affects everyone, Mecklenburg Social Services Director Richard Jacobsen said. Mecklenburg's plan would do more to check dependency on government assistance.

"Poverty is at the root of virtually all our social problems," he said. "From poverty comes

the seeds of crime and substance abuse. Those in poverty are more likely to live in inadequate and substandard housing and have children of poor health and nutrition."

"Poverty is the fundamental barrier to a safe, healthy, livable, prosperous, unified and well-governed community," County Manager Jerry Fox said. "Yet Mecklenburg County government alone cannot eradicate poverty. We must partner with others who have reached the same conclusion that wiping out poverty is the ultimate solution to many of our problems."

Federal and state programs enacted in the 1960s tried to tackle poverty and its effects, but have been given up on by conservatives and liberals alike. Mecklenburg's approach goes past government aid to a public-private approach that puts emphasis on working directly with citizens. Organizations also endorsing the plan include Central Piedmont Community College, houses of worship, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Urban League and Charlotte Chamber.

"This plan goes beyond asking government to solve the problem of poverty," Jacobsen said. "One side of this decagon asks churches, synagogues, mosques and others in the faith community to involve their members in the plan. Each individual can play a role in

helping to wipe out poverty. this is the true power of the plan - combining the organizational resources of the major institutions with the will of individuals to make the goal a reality."

More than 73,000 Mecklenburg residents - 12 percent of the county's population - live below the federal government's poverty line. Eighty-eight percent of county welfare recipients are African American, a group that has been most severely affected by programs that don't address poverty's root causes. Without asking for more government money, the Fusion Decagon is geared to redirect funds and services to people who need it.

"This community and others around it have missed the boat," Jacobsen said. "It borders on institutional racism. They tend to throw a ton of money at the problem. They didn't fundamentally change how business is done."

Although five years isn't much time, Jacobsen said the time limit is an incentive - a goal, actually - for the county to shoot for.

"The economic incentive to do this is there," Jacobsen said. "It creates a sense of urgency. I think most folks would rather spend their tax dollars on things other than poverty."

RAMADAN
Realty & Insurance
-Since 1979-
WE BUY & SELL HOMES
Foreclosures, Bankruptcies, Investments
• Closings Within 10 Days • Confidential •
John Ramadan 331-9535 office
1401 Beatties Ford Rd. 581-3491 pager

Inby's Salon of Beauty
"Beauty At It's Best"
Specializing in All types of hairstyles
Booth for Rent or Commission
700 E. Stonewall St. Ste 605
Charlotte, NC
(704)377-1387
Open 8am-until
Stylist:
Jessie, Sandra, Tina, and Ronnie

You're Four Steps Away From Owning Your Own Home.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Housing Partnership is currently building and renovating affordable homes with special financing in several Charlotte neighborhoods. Call us and find out if one of them can be yours.

- Step 1: Enroll in the Homeownership Program
- Step 2: Get your finances in order
- Step 3: Choose your home and get approved for a loan
- Step 4: Move in!

If you've spent years just dreaming about owning a home, consider this your wakeup call:

377-HOME
Don't Just Dream It. Do It.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Housing Partnership

Equal Housing Opportunity

Attractions Hair Salon
Tues - Sat 7-9
Apts. available on Mondays
*featuring the latest styles and cuts
*Senior Citizen Discounts
Darlene Eaves, Owner/Stylist
Stylists: Keisah Chisholm / Gail Hester, Janice Home
6507-E N Tryon St. Charlotte, NC 28213
704-597-6202 704-623-1696 (pager)

Alexander Mutual Burial Association
112 N. Irwin Avenue • Charlotte, NC 28202
(704) 333-1167

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance December 31, 1995.....	\$5,979.41
Receipts For Year 1996.....	773.12
Disbursements For Year 1996.....	1,181.19
Balance to be Accounted For.....	\$5,571.34
• Number of Assessments - 12 •	
Memberships in Good Standing - 171	

I hereby certify that the information given in the foregoing report is true and correct to the personal knowledge of the undersigned. Subscribed and Sworn to before me, this 14th day of February, year 1997, Annie Dewitt, Notary Public.

Officers for Year 1996

President.....Alfred L. Alexander
Vice President.....Kelly M. Alexander
Secretary/TreasurerLinda Crite-Gaines

Directors:
Robert Walls, Gladys Alexander, Margaret Alexander, Theodora Rousseau

Don't Miss The 9th Annual ANITA STROUD RADIO-THON
Saturday, May 31, 1997
10am - 4pm
The Excelsior Club Parking Lot
921 Beatties Ford Rd.
Sponsored by: ECHO & WPEG

Johnson C. Smith University SUMMER SCHOOL

Have a Great Summer!

- One six-week session: June 3 - July 11
- \$119.00 per credit hour
- Credits are transferable
- Registration: June 2nd and 3rd

First time offered:
Division of Lifelong Learning summer courses
for adults wishing to continue their education

Johnson C. Smith University 378-1016
100 Beatties Ford Road, Charlotte, North Carolina 28216-5398