

Atlanta: America held hostage again

Myra Jewel George

Less than three years ago, Atlanta was cited by a leading magazine as one of the three most desirable cities in the nation for blacks to live. The article said that the city was growing at an amazing rate and had unlimited employment opportunities. It did not say, however, that within a few years the city would be plagued by a mass murderer preying on young black children. Already, the number of children either dead or missing has reached 22.

History seems to be repeating itself in a gross and violent way. A few months ago, America was held hostage in Iran. Now, we are held hostage again—but in a different way and place—because what is happening to Atlantans affects us all and we are bound to each other by our feelings of horror, fear and most of all, helplessness.

The effect of the murders on Atlantans is very obvious. Young children live in constant fear, not knowing who to trust anymore. They watch sadly and without understanding as their playmates' or neighbors' names are added to the list of 22 children. Parents must sit idly by and issue warnings and precautions to their children, wondering who will be next. Their tension mounts each second that their child is late from school. The usual trips to the mailbox and park have turned into heavily guarded missions.

In much the same way, the situation affects us. While we sympathize with the families of the 22 children, we also wonder when the murderer will move on to another city. We speculate on who could be responsible and wonder when it will all end.

The situation is tragic not only because of the 22 children but also because the situation has lasted so long and no amount of money or specialists have been able to stop the senseless murders. President Reagan recently sent 1.5 million

dollars to aid in the investigation. On our campus, individual organizations and persons have raised funds to help the Atlantans. The point is that even with all the money, no one has been able to solve the murders. This is a paradox to all that we have been brought up to believe. Ours is a society which believes that a lot of money can solve anything. Money is usually considered our last resort. I wonder if this was what the President had in mind.

All the specialists, investigators and psychics haven't been able to stop the crimes either. So, where do we go from here? Can we wait for the murderer to tire of these killings and join the ranks of Son of Sam or Charles Manson? Or do we sit around and speculate on who it could be, all the while huddling our young loved ones closer to us? We don't seem to be able to stop him or catch him. At this point, we are doing all that it is in our means to do and still the murderer is free. What it all boils down to is that we are at the mercy of the murderer.

He has killed 22 children without getting caught and he won't get caught until he's ready to be. When he decides that he's bored with it all, he'll begin to get sloppy. But it won't be because of our money or our expertise. It will be because it is his will.

I don't have any clues about the murderer's identity. My views are as unfounded as the next person's. I only say "him" out of familiarity. While I don't have any clues, I do have a few questions. Why Atlanta? Why those children?

I am a person who believes the opposite of the popular beliefs and so I don't believe that the murderer is a member of the police force. There have been lots of other suggestions: a woman, a minister, different people. I don't know who it is and I don't care who it is as much as I care about when it will end. I don't know how much more we can take.

The essential question is this—What will it take to end these murders? But then, if we knew that, there wouldn't be a problem.



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BANNER

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APRIL 21, 1981

Letters to the editor

Southerner reacts

To the Editor:

The President's Ball is a ball for all the students, faculty, administration and staff of Bennett College.

It has been carefully planned as a very special occasion by the Campus Relations Improvement Committee at Bennett. It will be the first annual ball.

The committee feels that it is time for such an event to occur on our campus to change the common stigma of the "DISCO FAD." After a few years of the fast paced, tight pants, blasting music, and boogie down, get funky disco scene, we thought it would be nice to have a formal ball. This will add some cultural sophistication to the student life and the campus' image.

One of our first balls was so

beautiful that it received recognition from Ebony magazine honoring Bennett College for its uniqueness, good taste, and fine women.

We are hoping that everyone at Bennett will attend with a date. For those students who have no dates, a special sub-committee will provide escorts so that those students won't have to come alone.

A lot of hard work is being put into this event to make it a very special and memorable occasion for all of Bennett College to look forward to and remember for years to come.

Venus McDowell

Dear Editor,

I would like to respond to a recent letter in this paper about Northerners vs. Southerners. I am

a Southerner and contrary to what the author thinks, I do hold my head up high. I am not ashamed of being a Southerner and I do not feel inferior to Northerners in any way. I don't think that other Southerners feel inferior either.

If she has experienced any negative feelings, maybe it's because of the way that she comes off to people and not because she is a "northerner." In fact, I understand that she is a mid-westerner since she's from Chicago. I thought the letter was in poor taste since we all have to live here together and I was very offended. This is not just my opinion, but that of my friends.

I think the paper should be more careful about what it prints. A lot of people were offended.

Leslie Thomas

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