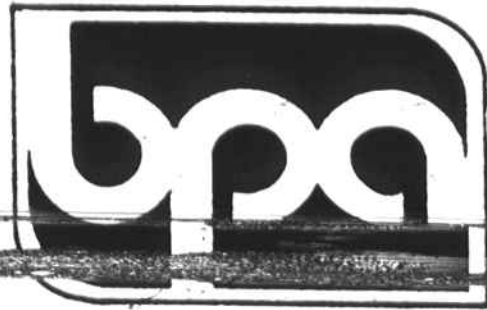


# VIEWPOINTS editorials • columns



Member North Carolina  
Black Publisher's Association

## Black Business Outlook

This month, Black Enterprise magazine has unveiled its annual listing of the top 100 black-owned firms and of black-owned insurance companies and financial institutions.

The firms, whose total revenues exceeded \$1 billion, represent a powerful testament to the entrepreneurial drive among blacks, particularly in light of the fact that 77 of the 100 firms have been formed since 1969.

However, there is one characteristic of the list that is disturbing. None of the firms listed in the top 100 businesses are from North Carolina.

Should one think that not odd, North Carolina is one of only two Southern states (the other is Alabama) not represented on the list. Maine and Vermont are the only other two states east of the Mississippi without a black-owned firm in the list.

Wait, one says. Isn't North Carolina Mutual of Durham the world's largest black owned enterprise? That's true. However, N.C. Mutual and the hometown Winston Mutual, the tenth largest black insurance company in terms of insurance in force, are listed among the insurance firms.

Although we should be very proud of the accomplishments of these two firms and the service they render, their isolation as sizable black enterprises in this state is striking.

BE's figures show the continuing need for the building of a diversified black economic base here in the state -- one that combines family owned retail establishments and service business with manufacturers, wholesalers and financiers.

The same need exists all over the country. For instance, in May, Fortune magazine published its list of the top 500 industrial companies in the U.S. Their sales surpassed \$1.2 trillion.

However, only 12 of the top 100 black businesses were manufacturing firms. The largest number among the black business list was made up of 39 auto dealers.

The achievement of the economic base necessary will take a mammoth effort. As we noted before, the current success of black businesses has occurred since the beginning of an awareness that the barriers which have limited minority firms should be removed.

That awareness has been shunted aside in the national rush against affirmative action. Yet there are still laws at the federal level which make it possible for minorities to participate in government procurement and receive technical assistance.

Now needed are similar policies at the level of state and local government. Gov. Jim Hunt has continually talked about helping minority firms obtain state contracts, but has yet to do anything tangible in that regard.

Locally, our elected and appointed officials don't even



talk about it, unless there's a federal requirement to do so.


The real advances in black enterprise will have to come from within. When blacks pool their funds for investment, when black consumers buy selectively, considering whether dollars will return to their neighborhood, then we will see the construction of the economic base which will translate into real power for the black community.

As a number of observers have commented recently, Winston-Salem's black population has adequate resources to establish an extensive economic base of its own.


Through development and investment of the \$180 million in revenue we receive such that each dollar would change hands again and again, blacks in the city could create a model for the whole country to observe.

With our own efforts, we could deal with problems such as youth unemployment and community development.

What it will take is a conscious decision on our parts to stop enriching others without some positive gain to ourselves.



## Getting Along



### Blacks Among Whites

Dr. James P. Comer

Dr. Alvin F. Poussaint

[James P. Comer and Alvin F. Poussaint are psychiatrists and the authors of the book "Black Child Care." Dr. Comer is professor of child psychiatry and associate dean for student affairs at Yale University School of Medicine. Dr. Poussaint is associate professor of psychiatry and associate dean for student affairs at Harvard Medical School.]

Dear Dr. Comer: I'm writing about your column in which a black mother says her 9 year old son was sad because he didn't have any friends in his predominantly white school. As far as I can see (which probably isn't far enough), it's all the mother's fault.

My gosh, what does she expect? If a white 9 year old lived in a black community, he would be treated exactly the same -- human nature (and/or kids) being what it is. Any child is infinitely more comfortable among his own kind and all this experimentation and force to make it otherwise is never going to work.

Dear L.J.: If you remember, my suggestion to the mother was that she not immediately jump to the conclusion that her son's problem was entirely racial. I pointed out that children of this age are often not able to talk directly about their most troublesome fears and worries.

They often draw the attention of their parents to their problem by focusing on or exaggerating a situation they know will get their parents' attention. I suggested that the mother visit the school and observe for herself before making any move or drawing any conclusions.

Here is part of the mother's second letter to me: "I did investigate the matter with an open mind, as was suggested in your column. I was observant of my son's behavior at play and in the classroom.

"Certainly he was not accepted by everyone, but he had his fair share of playmates and friends. I have talked with Edward's teacher and I have found her to be pleasant, reasonable and a personable individual. Edward does not appear to be tense when talking to her or about her. He appeared relaxed in the classroom."

The mother went on to describe a family situation that appeared to be largely responsible for the behavior of her

son. She is now taking steps to deal with these problems. Had she focused on the racial charge made by the youngster, she might have missed the underlying problem and made moves that would have further complicated her son's life.

It's not true, as you suggest, that human nature or normal child behavior necessarily leads to the rejection or abuse of people who are different. Children appear to be unaware of racial differences until somewhere between two and four years of age, usually about three. Their first comments are usually quite neutral inquiries about differences in hair texture, skin color, and other facial features.

Whether their responses become positive or negative depends on what they are told and how the older children and adults around them respond to people who are different. In communities where the adults feel inadequate or insecure and must put down a person of another group to feel good about themselves, their children learn to do the same.

You indicate that a child in a supposedly experimental or forced situation might not be comfortable. As I mentioned to the mother, racial isolation, rejection and abuse without adequate support could have been harmful to her child. I suggested that she consider moving if her son could not be comfortable. She indicated that this is not the case, and has decided to remain in that community to keep her son in that school.

This mother made a free and conscious choice to live where she wants. That is a decision most fundamental to American democracy and one would expect every good American to support that right. Imagining racial conflict where it doesn't exist in order to maintain and justify inappropriate racial attitudes will not help Americans to learn to get along.

Certainly there are people, places and times where serious and potentially traumatic racial conditions do exist. But it's important to do as this mother did - to investigate with an open mind before drawing conclusions and taking action.

[If you have any questions for the doctors, send your letters to "Getting Along," care of this newspaper.]

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## Speaking Out

Rodney Sumler

Dear Editor:

It is our belief that a critical need exists for the Board of Aldermen to immediately appoint a "Citizens Police Review Board" to immediately focus on and review this matter, to investigate certain incidents to insure citizens receive fair treatment, and also reprimand law officers when they use unnecessary force.

If unionization takes place without this appointment of the Board, we shall be allowing officers to commit brutality, murder, and other ungodly acts sanctioned by a union hiding behind the doctrine of "upholding the law."

Union affiliation in a desirable as well as deserving equity in some instances of assuring that employees have representation and also the right of collective bargaining. But, on the other hand, to allow law enforcement officials to become a part of such an organization is absurd.

This end of unionizing can encourage brutality and allow law enforcement officers to hid behind the law claiming to be upholding justice in an unbiased manner.

We, as citizens of our city, must make it known to our Board of Aldermen that we are against the unionizing of our law enforcement officers because we fear corruption, brutality and

racial isolation as far as justice is concerned. To

substantiate the above comments, let's examine an incident which occurred in our city recently.

On Friday, June 1, 1979, police were summoned to a black residence in the city by a white citizen who alleged that some young blacks had stolen parts of a bicycle from a white youth and had incorporated the parts into a bike that the blacks were now using.

Upon arrival, the white policeman went to the house next door rather than the house they had been summoned to and began to search the premises for stolen parts of the bicycle.

The resident of this house asked the officers to present a search warrant and stated that she would call her attorney if they could not produce one.

After making this statement the policemen became violently upset, made threatening remarks, and began to manhandle and handcuff the four female residents of this household. The ladies, in turn, began to use abusive language due to the policemen's radical actions.

Inevitably, they were arrested and charged with assaulting, cursing, obstructing an officer, and inciting violent acts against the policy by cursing. These ladies were also alleged to have scratched and

bitten the officers, but no weapons were involved.

Our question is -- do black females in this case, or, are blacks in general, given the same treatment by law officials as whites are? The answer, as we see it, is "No."

A short period of time elapsed before a similar incident involving our city

manager's daughter, took place. But she was exonerated by the so-called "court of justice" and found not guilty. In this case, the police officer stated that Ms. Powell cursed him three times but he did not use violence. Was it because she was:

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## Does East Winston Need a Bank Branch

Chronicle Camera went to Sunrise Towers high-rise apartments for senior citizens to find out reactions to the news that there could be at least one new bank branch in the immediate vicinity. Needless to say, they were quite pleased.

Mrs. Essie Mae Wilson -- "I'd like it to be a Wachovia branch. They're about the best one -- the one I deal with the most.

Lawrence Williams -- "I feel good about it. That would be the finest thing that could happen for us older people. Right now I have to do downtown to use the bank. I also think it would cut down on old people being robbed."

Thomas Vaughn -- "I would welcome it. These people around here are mostly older people. With a bank in the vicinity, they wouldn't have to pay the expense of getting to the

bank and they could get their business done too."

Columbus Hammonds -- "I feel it would be very useful. It would be such a help to us old people. It would save us a lot of steps and save us a lot of change. We need a grocery store too. You've got to walk all the way to 5th Street to get a loaf of bread. You see, a lot of people's incomes aren't high enough to meet their expenses and then also pay somebody to do things for them. It would be the best thing that could happen.



Williams



Vaughn



Wilson



Hammonds

