

On getting serious about our survival

NEW YORK -- It's time in the black community that we put our money where our mouth is and our action in front of our rhetoric.

We are inundated by talkers. They talk about freedom and economic development -- and continue to spend \$3 billion a year at conferences discussing white racism and black poverty, fueling the very racism and poverty they meet to discuss. Leadership becomes nothing more than rhetoric and the politics of demagogic envy.

There are compelling reasons for this process to end. The projections for the year 2000, some 14 years from now, are 70 percent black male unemployment and 70 percent black female-headed homes. In other words, the end of blacks in America as we have known them could be nearing.

It is certainly time for blacks to get serious about their survival. There are signs that we are

TONY BROWN Syndicated Columnist

The National Association of Real Estate Brokers followed President T.L. "Thom" Holmes' advice last week at their annual meeting in Dallas and signed up 150 of their brokers as Freedom Businesses. A portion of their money will go back into black hands.

The National Urban League is also making gigantic strides. President John Jacob had promised that a portion of the \$5 million spent at the League's annual meeting in San Francisco would go to black-owned businesses in the Bay Area; i.e., San Francisco/Oakland.

Unlike some blacks who head organizations and direct millions of dollars in purchases, Jacob backs up his talk with deeds. Since blacks do not own any of the major hotels and only one or two restaurants there, this was

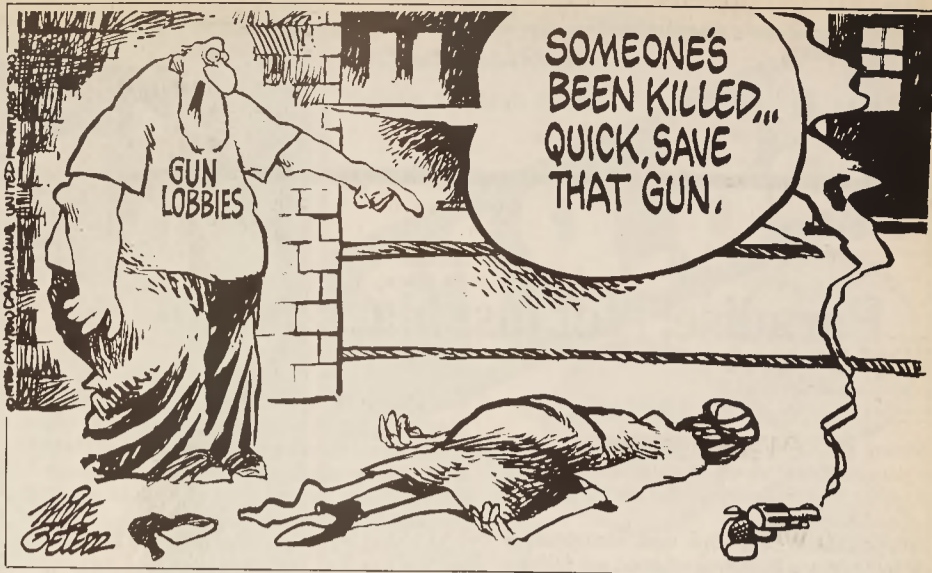
not an easy task.

The responsibility was given to Howard Mills, one of the best convention coordinators in the country. Buy Freedom Coordinator Paul Brock provided Mills with prescreened black-owned enterprises that have, in turn, made a commitment to return some of their income to, and provide jobs for, the black community.

These "Freedom Businesses" not only sold popcorn, balloons and inexpensive gifts to the delegates, but served as an additional resource for the Anheuser-Busch reception. Anheuser-Busch is always there as a "Freedom Partner."

The League hired other Freedom Businesses for security, photography and various other functions.

It's impossible to report the exact number of dollars earned by black-owned firms in the Bay Area, although the best guess is that the 25 Freedom Businesses



earned around \$200,000.

What is possible to report accurately is that most of the 16,000 delegates and visitors felt a sense of pride knowing that they were creating jobs and strong black families by recycling their wealth back into their own community.

The League, whatever its critics want to say, is practicing economic development while creating the stable black families that were called for in the seminars.

None of this would have been

possible had San Francisco Mayor Diane Feinstein's special assistant, Rotea Gilford, and Moscone Convention center General Manager Dick Shaff not made it possible for the Freedom Businesses to operate inside the convention center.

These officials even placed some of them under contract to provide services.

The point of this story is that a lot can be accomplished from a clear vision, determination and cooperation. That may be the

blueprint that this Freedom Team of Urban Leaguers, delegates, blacks in business, city officials and corporations utilized.

You might say that \$200,000 is not a very large slice of \$5 million. But keep in mind that we do not own big moneymakers (hotels, airlines, restaurants, etc.) However, if we continue to nurture the popcorn, photography and gift stores, they will grow, and we will retain more of our \$200 billion income -- certainly
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Angela Davis: Activists today are 'more sophisticated'

Black activist Angela Davis, quoted in a *USA Today* interview with Barbara Reynolds on a variety of subjects:

NOTED AND QUOTED

Who's saying what and why

• The attention given in the United States to the issue of South African apartheid:

"The solidarity movement with people struggling in South Africa is very important. As black people, we have been told to keep our hands out of the international arena. We were told to mind our own business and to worry about our own back yards. What we should do is a combination of both.

"We should recognize that if we are willing to go out and be arrested to make a statement against apartheid in South Africa, then we should be willing to take a militant stance on behalf of the homeless, the welfare mothers, the jobless, the victims of the prison system in our communities, and against the Ku Klux Klan violence in our communities."

• Why she joined the Communist Party:

"I joined the Communist Party because I have discovered an organization of people who are really committed to struggling for our progressive change -- a multiracial organization that understands the relationship between fighting for the equality of black people and the overall struggle to emancipate the working class."

• Why she feels she hasn't

become a yuppie:

"... As Dr. King said, 'There are those who climb out of the swamps on the shoulders of their sisters and brothers, and when they get out of the swamps, they forget the stench from the backwaters.' I, for one, don't want to forget the stench of the backwaters as long as any of my people remain in a state of oppression."

• On today's social activism as compared to activism in the '60s:

"I see a far more sophisticated
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Tillerson

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...the Arabs, because of leftover wounds from France's defeat by Algeria in 1962.

Moreover, what we would call the black community there resembles anything but that.

Division has kept the blacks in France weak and has made it virtually impossible for them to change any aspect of their lives.

For example, the Martiniquais,

they call them in France, have a racial feud with Frenchmen of African descent. The blacks from Martinique were taught by French missionaries that the motherland they had left was full of savages and that they should be proud of their European ancestors, who had white skin and golden beards.

Though these methods are no longer in effect, the long decades of outrageous lie have taken their toll. And, even though some people try to create black unity with clubs and magazines, etc., there are still some giant steps to be taken by blacks in France.

Being black and American in France is a whole different story. We are considered martyrs of slavery and segregation by the same people who mistreat Africans. It is not uncommon to be harassed by the police for an identity check only to find them apologizing when they've looked

at the USA stamp on one's passport.

Being American makes it harder to get along with other blacks in France because we've also had our own "divisionary education." Besides that, a lot of blacks have closed themselves in and, whether you are black or white, it's hard to get close to them.

It actually is easier to get along with whites in France than the blacks. They have a much more open attitude toward blacks than whites do in America. Even though their education necessarily contains some racism, they are able to accept a number of blacks.

But being integrated means being separated from other blacks and one still feels uncomfortable and without roots.

Some say France is becoming more and more like America as far as blacks are concerned. Let's hope that the black community in France can use the experiences of the black community in America to make France an equal-opportunity country.

Next week, Ms. Tillerson's concluding column discusses the French educational system.

A year later

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...ing special family activities." Joyner said one program begun during the year that has been very successful is the Senior Stretch and Fitness Program.

One hundred forty-six senior citizens are members at Winston-Salem, he said.

On the other hand, two programs that had strong legacies at Peterson Avenue have been dropped. The YMCA no longer sponsors boxing and football,

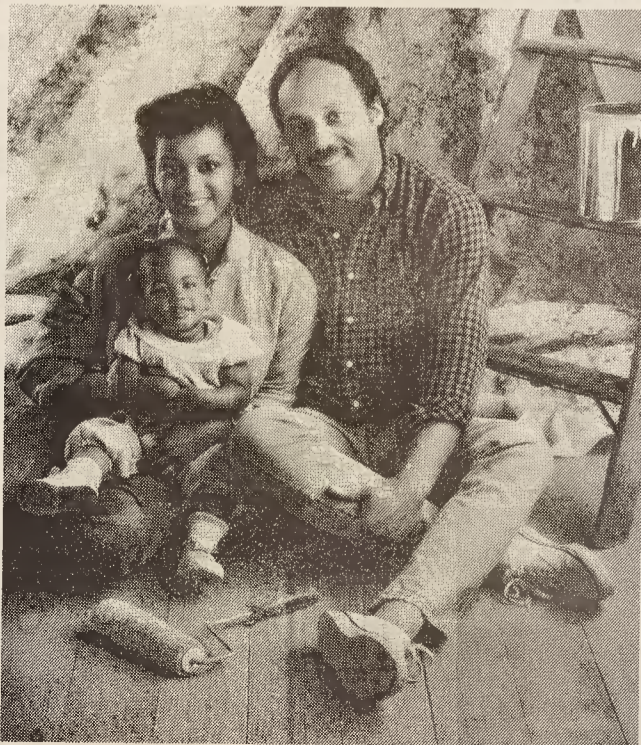
Joyner said, because of the increase in liability insurance.

As for its staff, Joyner feels the YMCA could stand some improvement.

"Our staff is not where I would like to see it," he said. "It's going to take a lot more patience on my part to recruit and train staff until we get to the level where we need to be.

"I think the staff we do have
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