

Forum

Why a separate history for us?

very few exceptions, historians have never dealt with Afro-Americans.

have written of the sufferings or otherwise portrayed us as foot- for the most part, we have able or at most portrayed as to American history part of it.

have cried out against this, so what happens? We are again. The masters set February as

ack/African/Afro-American Month -- another appendage.

the virtual beginning of on, which was founded the quest for freedom of Afro-Americans have been the success of America's

ally, when this nation won dence, Afro-Americans that they had just begun to the "Americans" who a revolutionary war to win m would just as willingly war to deny Afro-Ameri-

struggle for freedom in a the central theme of Afro- history, and consequently of American history, yet (including Afro-Ameri- too little about it.

do our children know all George Washington but not

about George Washington Carver? About Benjamin Franklin but not Benjamin Banneker? About H.G. Wells but not Ida B. Wells? About Thomas Jefferson (who called slav- ery a "great political and moral evil")

full appreciation for the contributions of Afro-Americans to the growth and development of America, the designation is by its very nature separatist, and our acceptance of it implies an acceptance of the Jeffersonian notion



AGAINST THE GRAIN

By ROOSEVELT WILSON

but not Isaac Jefferson (one of Thomas Jefferson's many slaves)?

The answers to all of the above are deeply rooted in the way traditional White America historically has perceived even "free" Afro-Americans -- as anything but equal.

The paradoxical Thomas Jefferson once wrote about Afro-Americans: "Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that these people are to be free. Nor is it less certain that the two races, equally free, cannot live in the same govern- ment."

Historians have exhibited that same attitude in their records, and thus virtually discount or otherwise ignore the contributions of Afro-Americans to this nation.

While Afro-American History Month is better than nothing in our quest to help this nation develop a

that Afro-American history is differ- ent from American history.

That is analogous to having biol- ogy as an elective for a medical stu- dent, or making apples optional for apple pie.

It is time we rejected the patron- izing attitude of America toward our history. We should reject the concept of Afro-American History Month and insist on an accurate American histo- ry. We should take an active role in the selection of the history books being used to teach our children. We should demand that teachers use only those books that tell the full story, the real history.

Afro-American history is not an option. Let's stop treating it like one.

Roosevelt Wilson teaches journal- ism at Florida A&M University in Tallahassee, Fla.

Chronicle Mailbag

From Page A4

is the real reason?

Editor:

ian Burke has offered explanations for her Dec. 4,

1: She voted for the per- th the most capabilities. If on is valid, why did Mrs. note for herself as Public Committee chair and pro tempore?

2: She decided that it e good for the black com- and a source of pride for men and youth to have a female as mayor pro tem- with such dastardly, con- as, outrageous and politi- scidal behavior, how can ke think that her vote ed and would make any ean proud of her?

3: She wanted to promote rmony. Mrs. Burke, there e been this much racial rmony in Winston-Salem e 1968 unrest after the ation of Dr. Martin Luther ur actions spit in the all that Dr. King represent-

4: To cover up her inepti- dman Burke then stated didn't sit up half the night to figure out how to do lks in. This is a clear-cut "race baiting" (trying to ouble between the races). eents incoherent thinking eponsible leadership.

5: She stated that there is power in chairmanships. ke, chairmanships are e of leadership, and lead- power and clout. There- when you voted with the eans to evict Aldermen and Womble from their e of political power, i.e., e, your arrogant and e denied them their e continue to lead. Your e robbed the Democratic e well as the Afro-Ameri- munity of leadership

6: What was the real reason or for your vote, Alderman

Afro-American communi- more importantly, the citi- the Northeast Ward, are e a rational explanation. e Northeast Ward did not elect e put Republicans in posi- e power and evict Demo- Afro-Americans from posi- e power in the name of

racial harmony, fuel racial fires via "race baiting," and politick for the ceremonial position of mayor pro tempore at the expense of Afro-American leadership.

Ricky Wilson
Winston-Salem

Patronizing "our own"

To The Editor:

The experience of the lady who patronized "our own" florist business reminded me of my two efforts to do so with "our own" gasoline stations.

I literally hate the self-serve stations, preferring to pay more for the regular services. However, I pacify my guilty feelings about the savings that self-serve offers by making certain that I receive some of the courtesies that full servicing includes. For instance, I wish to at least be asked by an attendant if I wish the insides checked, etc. -- though more often I decline such offers. The one thing I do want is to have my windshields washed. Most stations render such services graciously without being asked.

The first of "our own" stations that I patronized -- for at least eight years -- served me most satisfactorily because I trained each attendant to practice offering me the courtesies. The only reason I had to stop patronizing this station was because without fail I repeatedly had to remind an attendant to return my gas lock key. Sometimes I drove away and had to return to ask for it, and several times I didn't remember to ask for it until I was ready for another fill-up. Never did the attendant think of ways and means of how to break his habit of placing my key in his pocket and forgetting to return it voluntarily. The end of my patronage came when I couldn't find my key and neither could he. I suspected he had at last become too embarrassed to return it to me.

I thereupon patronized another of "our own" stations -- driving across town to do so. The attendant made no effort to wash my windshield until I requested such -- and then only the front. When I reminded him that he had not finished because the back was to be washed also, he loudly and begrudgingly exclaimed: "Heck, you really want to be sure to get

your money's worth, don't you?" as he walked over to undertake the task. The owner of the station heard him and merely smiled. I smiled also, only to never return. I wonder what was wrong with giving me "my money's worth" (what regular service includes) without my having to ask for it.

I will not patronize black busi- nesses because they are black but because they can render services superior to none. Sure, heck, I want my money's worth.

JFK
Winston-Salem

Thanks for coverage

To The Editor:

I take this opportunity to thank you on behalf of the members, staff, volunteers, and board of the Salvation Army Boys Club for the excellent coverage the *Chronicle* has provided our organization over the past year. I feel this has provided us an excellent base of support in the community, enhanced the esteem of the youth we serve, and projected us toward our goal of increased community aware- ness.

I pay special tribute to Robin Barksdale who has cooperated fully in covering our activities and special functions.

Thanks again and best wishes for a happy 1990.

Donald L. Moore
Executive Director
Salvation Army Boys' Club

Mistakes

To The Editor:

Many times in our lives we make mistakes; some of our mis- takes come from not obeying the voice of God. Sometimes we feel that we won't come out right because the flesh be afraid, but with the help of God we can keep down our mistakes and we won't be so uptight.

After we make mistakes and realize we made mistakes, we should move from there and learn something from the mistakes. After it's over you can see how foolish you were. You can feel a ton of bricks being lifted out of your heart.

Barbara Moore
Winston-Salem

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LIBERTY

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An Open Letter to the Community:

The Committee of Concerned Citizens of Northeast Ward will continue to circulate petitions for the recall of Alderman Vivian Burke while attempting to find some common ground in negotiations. So far, efforts on the part of politicians and friends to mediate have failed to get Alderman Burke to talk. Since I have been a friend of Alderman Burke for more than 18 years, I make it a point to talk to her regularly and will continue to do so. But so far we have not been able to reach an agreement of any substance. The major concern now is, will she -- as a Democratic and black alderman in a Democratic and black ward -- represent the people as they intended her to. If she does not, we know that the people in the Northeast Ward and East Winston will be badly hurt politically and economically.

The committee strongly discourages any vocal or physical threats against Alderman Burke. We recognize her good past record as alderman over the years and hope that by giving her time she will get back on track. We hope that she has choices and has not made a deal that will lock her in. Time will tell. The committee will not file the petitions with the elections board at this time, since that is considered the last resort.

The chairmanship of the committee will rotate from J. Raymond Oliver to another member this week, thus enabling Oliver to have time to catch up on his schedule of business and travel. Besides working with the Northeast Ward committee, Oliver will work with Civic Ventures (City-County Committee on Jobs and Economic Development), and East Winston Economic Development Task Force.

J. Raymond Oliver Jr., Chair
Committee of Concerned Citizens of Northeast Ward