

Editorials & Comments

Paradox In Black-On-Black Crime

By HOYLE H. MARTIN SR.
Post Editorial Writer

The propensity to commit violent acts was not a cultural trait of the thousands of indentured servants and slaves brought to America from Africa. In fact, studies show clearly that violence and crime in general is something the blacks learned after arriving in America.

Of greater significance, however, is the fact that black Americans have undoubtedly been the greatest victims of crime. As reported by the National Crime Survey of 1975 (the latest national data) per thousand people in the population, blacks - who comprise only 11 percent of the population - were victimized by a ratio of nearly 2 to 1 when compared with whites. The data shows per one thousand -

Victims	Black	White
Motor vehicle theft	26.8	18.5
Burglary	128.8	87.0
Murder (per 100 victims)	47.0	51.0
Sexual Assault	1.2	0.9
Personal Larceny	21.2	8.4

"Given the right set of circumstances, any person can become a crime victim," says Bard and Sangrey in their recent publication, "The Crime Victim's Book." They contend further that since we have a value system that says people generally get what they deserve or, rather, deserve what they get and that crime victims are thus different from others - people who are not victims.

Bard and Sangrey conclude, "labeling the crime victim different - a loser, a sucker, a mark - is only a small step away from blaming the victim for being involved in the crime at all."

Blacks are considered "losers" because of the impact that institutionalized racism has upon every aspect of their lives and they are "suckers" because of their continued acceptance of the lifestyles that racism imposes on them.

These labels are partly justified by the failure of blacks to (1) accept openly and candidly the fact that most crimes against blacks are committed by blacks, (2) stop being sympathetic to blacks who rob old people and once imprisoned shout they're political prisoners, (3) stop accepting poverty and racism as a justification for criminal acts and (4) confront and deal with the paradoxical question of being disproportionately victimized on one hand and being treated primarily as a victim with the accompanying stigmas of being inferior.

In analyzing these four points it must be noted that while blacks are victimized in disproportionate numbers, they also commit a disproportionate number of the crimes that create the most fear. This may be in part one means for blacks to release the anger and hatred that James Baldwin refers to when he says, "To be a Negro in this country and to be (racially) conscious is to be in a rage almost all the time."

Nevertheless, the percentage of crimes committed by blacks is rarely mentioned by liberal whites for fear of offending law-abiding blacks and blacks don't talk about it for fear of reinforcing the attitudes of racial bigots or the latter's prejudices of whites victimized by blacks.

Political Prisoners

Secondly, UN Ambassador Andrew Young's statement a few months ago that there were many black political prisoners in the United States met with considerable objection because of the over-generalization

nature of his comment. Thus, blacks must stop protecting and supporting those blacks who rip-off the community and then cry "I'm a political prisoner" when jailed.

The "Loser" Image

Thirdly, blacks must resist any effort to condone black crime. In fact, if urban living, unemployment, poor education, inadequate housing and poor health are making blacks "losers," crime simply compounds the "loser" image and further assures the reality. Blacks are only victims of the "loser" characteristics if they accept them and avoid the challenges that may offer a better life. Engaging in acts of crime is the surest way to confirm a "loser" status and acceptance that I can't make the system work for me as an individual.

Last, and probably the most significant of our four points centers on the hard reality that blacks are disproportionately victimized (usually by other blacks), yet if we look to the larger - mostly white - society for pity and sympathy, there may be a tendency for whites to conclude that this further justifies their own feelings of superiority.

Washington Post columnist William Raspberry has written, "There is no surer expression of superiority than to treat people primarily as victims. There is no more crippling an attitude than to think of yourself primarily as a victim." He adds, "victimism (teaches black youth) to see themselves not as intelligent beings with the capacity to shape their own destinies but as victims of a racism they can't do anything about..." Such a situation evokes a sense of "pity the poor weak, inferior blacks" on the part of most whites and a sense of renewed rage by blacks vented by more crime usually against other blacks.

Thus, it is past time for black people to rise up against those who would victimize their communities and begin to show that they don't support the over-kill phrase "...a nigger ain't s..." theory that too many at least subconsciously accept.

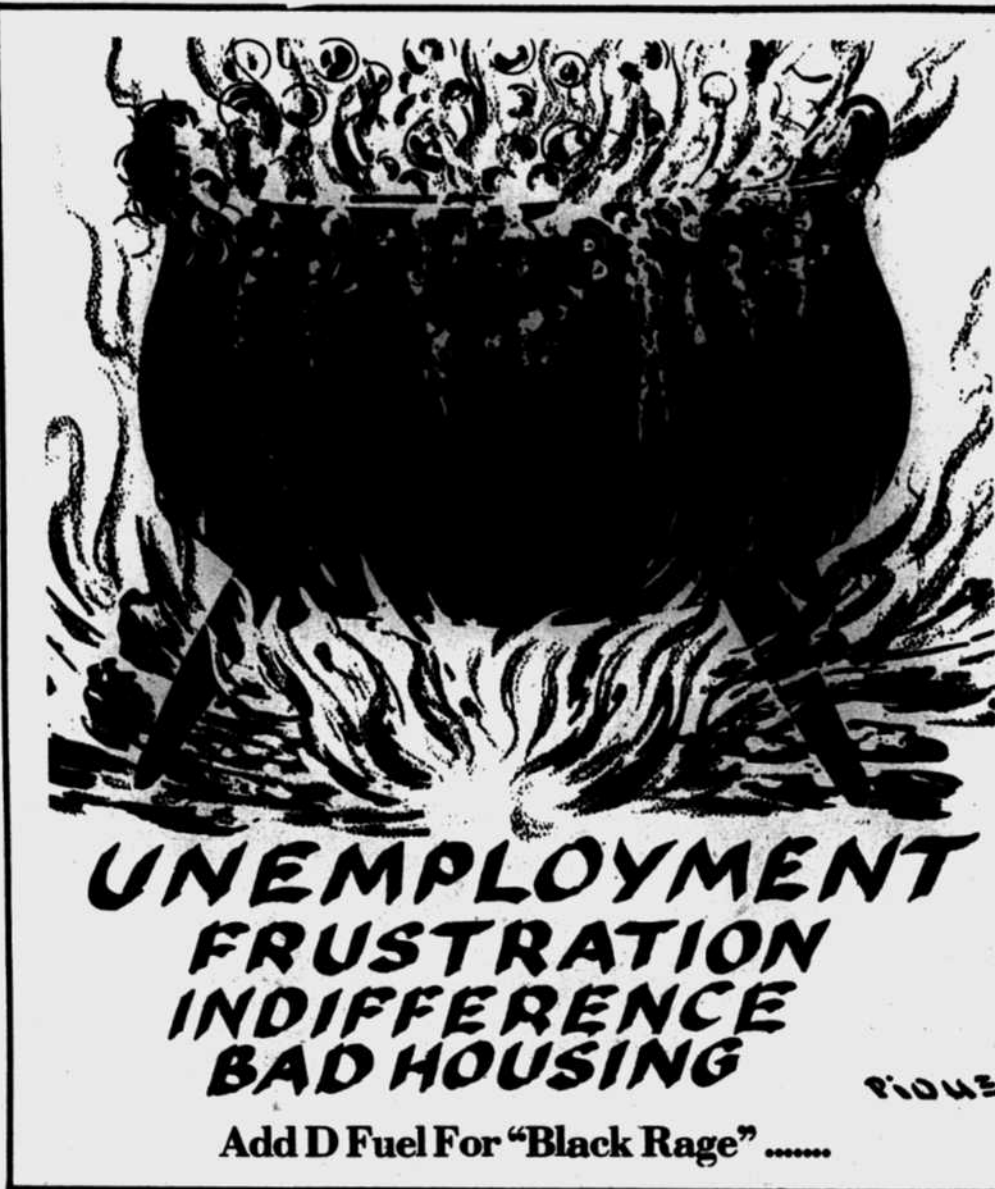
It's your life, your child, your home, your community, your state and your nation and it's your crime problem. Control the latter or we won't for very long have the former.

Taxes And Inflation

Reprinted From The AFL-CIONews
National debate over the terms of President Carter's proposed 1980 "austerity" national budget is justifiably focused on attempts to cut programs vital to the well-being of American economic and social life.

There is danger, however, that the intensity and urgency of this debate will tend to move attention from a basic injustice of federal economic policy - the fact that American workers and their families now pay considerably more than their fair share of the federal tax burden.

The President's proposals attack the vitality of federal programs that directly affect workers. He would cut back social security benefits on which most workers depend. He would hold down efforts to fulfill the promise of the Occupational Safety & Health act. He would trim job-producing programs and weaken the federal supports for a whole series of carefully constructed social endeavors.



Another Side Of The Coin?

by Dr. Maggie Lamb Nicholson
Special to the Post

Jay Robinson, CMS Superintendent, was talking recently about firing teachers, poor grades and broken homes. There is another side of the coin. Under this system, some teachers are so busy applying the segregated rules they forget that the most important thing is the child. Maybe the teacher was a product of the desegregation system that Charlotte has been laboring under for the past eight or ten years. This system is also one of the reasons for the bad grades. So why fire the teacher for something that the system is to blame for?

The broken homes that he wants to place the blame on also are not always the blame. My child was reared in a broken home and she graduated in the top ten of her class before she was sixteen. I also know many other students who did the same thing and I told Mr. Robinson that when he told this to a ministers' conference over a year ago. But he insisted that the broken homes were one of the main reasons for school failure. Why not say some broken homes?

Under this system, children are getting run over, partly because the drivers are tired from sitting in school so long, then having that long drive to make with children that are also tired, dejected and disgruntled.

I also see some relief from the gas prices. It costs \$7.00 per day to cross bus. Of course, there are some counties that love their children and want to save their taxpayers some money, so they integrate their schools. This enormous amount of money could help upgrade the schools and build the needed ones. Then a lot of students could come back to public schools. I for one, would benefit since it costs money that could go towards helping children's parents. It is surprising to learn that so many people do not know that Charlotte is not integrated. Charlotte is only desegregated. Neighborhood schools are integrated schools if everyone in a geographical area is allowed to attend the school that they are nearest. When there are two schools in the same neighborhood, and certain people go to one school and the others go to another school, then that is



Dr. Nicholson

segregated school. That is what we had here in Charlotte before desegregation began. I feel that Charlotte needs to grow up and stand on her feet to see to it that all her children get a chance at an education without intimidation. Sometimes I think that Mr. Robinson is closely related to a broken home or a child-abused one or he would not take the stand that he does.

In a local newspaper some time ago, it stated that there were 191 classes with all black students and over 200 with all white students. That's carrying them from one side of town to the other all in the name of desegregation. To integrate would do away with all the segregation among the races as far as school is concerned. This system is prejudiced against all students that are not ethnic white or ethnic black. Maybe you will throw this article aside, button up your lips, stop up your ears and close your eyes as has been done since this evil started in our system by cross busing.

All the system has to do is integrate, then McMillan's Law-Rules will not be needed any longer unless the system should err down the way. What will it be Charlotte, high gas, cross busing, illiterate children or better integrated local schools? Parents are a very important ingredient in their children's learning, whether the parent can read or not. I was assigned (volunteer) to a teacher who has what it takes to be a great teacher. All of his students are anxious to learn; they seem to love him and he shows that he has his students' interest at heart. I hope to say

more about this great humanitarian in the near future.

There are 80,000 persons in Charlotte-Mecklenburg that can't read. Do you want this number to continue to increase? Ed Williams in his notes and comments, "How Can You Help Schools," said that our children need all of us. It's our fault that the students can not read. But with the proper system the child and/or the conditions will be at fault.

When students are recognized as students rather than a segregated race of names with race tags on them, then all of us will see a difference for the better. I can't blame a student for refusing to go to a school that has been tagged as inferior. A person on the bottom who wants to get to the top doesn't need that kind of tag hanging on his back. The next thing we must remember is that to integrate the schools does not mean that the hearts are integrated, so don't go there looking for that; just think of the equal opportunity. Treat everyone as you would like to be treated. Get your education!

Phil Berry states in the Observer, January 10, that he "was disappointed in our results and that Charlotte should set the pace (for the state), not follow it. Well, Phil, what you don't know is that many counties right here in N.C. have already integrated and can tell you without going out of the state on the taxpayers money to be told how. They are already in the lead since the early sixties. They have transportation but not cross busing. Yes, Charlotte is a pacesetter but not for the benefit of all her students which is her most valuable asset. They are the ones who are going to correct today's failures. We need more people like Phyllis Falcone who will speak out. It will fall on deaf ears for a while, but if others continue to pound on their heads, then maybe the place will be knocked out of the ears of the superintendent and the chairman and all others who continue to hold our children back.

Jana Levit, Associated Press, admits that "one teacher finds poor readers can achieve if they get support." Yes, Phil, you got the big title, what are you going to do with it?

Let me tell the Black power brokers a short story about a smooth-talking, good-looking liberal white farmer named Tom Watson who called himself a populist - loosely interpreted to mean, for the common folk. Tom felt the little farmers were getting shafted

By VERNON E. JORDAN, JR.



Protecting The Urban Environment

Coalition-building has always been a prime strategy of the civil rights movement, and it is important, in this age of growing concern about the environment, that a working coalition be achieved with environmentalists.

A key step in building that coalition was made early in April at a national conference on the urban environment, aptly called City Care. The conference was co-sponsored by a number of federal agencies, the National Urban League, the Sierra Club and the Urban Environment Conference and Foundation.

The meeting's sponsors symbolized the growing concern of black groups for environmentally-caused health hazards among minorities, the shifting focus of environmentalists to urban problems, and the government's continuing interest in protecting the environment.

The new negativist mood of the nation demands that groups working for constructive change join in creative coalition efforts. Otherwise all would be swamped by reactionary trends. But coalition also means that the partners understand each other's priorities.

For blacks, relegated to the margins of our society, the priority has to be jobs. That's why so few blacks have evidenced sympathy for proposals to limit growth. Supporters of slow and no growth theories claim that the real issue isn't economic growth - making the pie bigger - but how the wealth we have is distributed.

But black people know that our best, perhaps only, chance to achieve economic parity lies through expanding the national economy and getting a bigger slice of that growth. In a no-growth economy, the white majority isn't going to give up part of its share so that minorities can enjoy economic equality.

So a major challenge to this emerging coalition lies in devising policies of environmentally sound economic growth. Advocates of solar energy have met this challenge by demonstrating how widespread use of solar energy could create many jobs for the urban poor who lack skills.

Another area of cooperation could be in the regulatory sphere. Cries for ending federal regulatory efforts nearly always center around the very agencies responsible for cleaning up our air and water and making workplaces safer. Black people have a stake in this. Black neighborhoods are most affected by pollution while black workers are often locked into the most hazardous jobs that are most liable to result in health and safety risks.

And environmental concerns have to be defined broadly. Too many people think of the environment in purely physical terms. But the "environment" of human beings refers to all external factors affecting people - economic and social, as well as physical.

So an effective coalition around the urban environment has to be concerned with eradicating rats, with improving housing conditions, and with creating jobs.

Poverty is itself a major cause of the degradation of the black environment. Unemployment is related to higher incidence of health problems. Slum living contributes to increased hazards assumed by the poor.

A recent study found that children who do poorly in school may have learning disabilities related to high lead content in their bodies, lead that comes from auto exhausts and polluted air lead that is more frequently found in poverty neighborhoods.

The nuclear incident at the Three Mile Island plant was in progress while this urban environment conference was under way. It provided a frightening example of the importance of environmental concerns to poor people.

By throwing the future of nuclear energy into question, the incident made energy an issue of immediate concern. The Administration promptly moved to deregulate oil prices, something that will hit the poor hardest.

Poor people use less energy but spend more of their incomes for it. Although the energy crisis has been around so long it's getting gray in the beard, no plan has ever been devised to shield the poor from the spiraling cost of energy.

Here's an example of an issue this emerging coalition can run with. It can come up with proposals to defend the interests of poor people in energy matters, and fight to get them passed.

White Politicians Successfully Divide, Rule Poor People

Jeffrey Matthew

"The more things change the more they remain the same."

Two days after the victorious charter change defeat, I wrote the following for a daily newspaper in a commentary on the mayoral elections: Black individuals who either enjoy social acceptance or who are perceived as being powerful among Black voters have themselves mimicked the art of science, if you will, of plantation politics and thus exploit the artificial divisions among Black voters. Simply put, white politicians are still able to successfully divide and rule poor people for a few pieces of silver. I am a student of psychology in the courtroom, and I constantly tell my colleagues that a judge or jury will respond to an attorney based on who or what the judge or jury perceives you to be. My white colleagues know this game very well, since they have practiced this principle for centuries; that's what imperialism was all about. So last May, during a fund-raiser this writer sponsored for Congressman Gray, the media-appointed leading white candidate, William J. Green, inched his way through 700 gyrating disco bodies, mouthing his famous melody that a Black mayoral candidate could not win in Philadelphia, so do the next obvious - support me. Mr. Green has repeated this slogan so often that your common criminals, gin rummy community activists and just plain ordinary folk are the only ones who don't believe it. I'd be damned, but the so-called Black power brokers have gone lock, stock and barrel for this

veiled racist statement. It is racist, because it pretends to put a Wonder Woman lasso on reason, but shifts the blame to those "other people." It proclaims one of two or more qualified candidates as a shoo-in by default.

I REFUSE to buy that, and no other statement has similarly aroused my indignation the last six months. It is my conviction that Blacks must believe in themselves politically and behave like winners; that white commentators cannot set our agenda and control our ambitions. Black political achievement throughout the history of this country has never come when Blacks were ready. In fact, all the Black mayors of large cities were elected before their own constituencies were as politicized as Black voters are now in Philadelphia. Black mayoral candidates have always had to go out there and grab the bull by its two horns.

So long as Black youth unemployment is 60 percent, so long as the average Black family earns 59 percent of what white families earn, so long as Blacks are last hired and first fired, Blacks will never be "ready." Practical politics is sometimes worst examination. But right now in Philadelphia, Blacks are at the crossroads of pulling off the most stunning stroke of independence no other large city has experienced.

It is therefore absolutely ridiculous for Black leaders in Philadelphia to bargain at this time with white candidates like Green for important city jobs. The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter vests considerable power in the mayor of this city.

who the mayor does not appoint he selects somebody to appoint that other person. It is what we call a "strong mayor" form of government. Right-thinking Black people should therefore be directing their energies at electing either a qualified Black mayor or someone in whom there's proven trust and whose word is his bond, not an individual who

puts a snarling violet to shame and does a disappearing act whenever you need him.

LET ME tell the Black power brokers a short story about a smooth-talking, good-looking liberal white farmer named Tom Watson who called himself a populist - loosely interpreted to mean, for the common folk. Tom felt the little farmers were getting shafted

by the government, so he put together a coalition of Blacks and whites in a foot-stomping, hell-raising movement, ope - did I say Philadelphia? - no, in good ole Georgia. When the white farmers got what they wanted, the Blacks could not find the great liberal and populist Tom Watson. Tom had joined the establishment. That was two centuries ago, and

today some independent Black leaders and thousands of little people don't want history to repeat itself.

Now don't misunderstand me; if a reliable, trustworthy white candidate who is more qualified than a Black candidate to govern this city asks Blacks to support him or her, we should pause and consider.

Deadline Approaching For

Compliance With Maternity Law

North Carolina employers are facing an April 29 deadline for compliance with a new federal law passed last October requiring that they liberalize their maternity benefits for female employees and spouses of male employees alike.

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act, Public Law 95-555, an amendment to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, was signed into law by President Carter on October 31, 1978. The basic principle of this law is that women affected by pregnancy and related conditions must be treated the same as other employees or applicants on the basis of their ability or inability to work.

The same principle applies in the area of fringe benefits,

such as disability benefits, sick leave policy and health insurance for companies and other organizations hiring 15 or more employees. The new law is generating many questions from employers and employees throughout the state.

Employers have until April 29 to bring into compliance any fringe benefit or insurance program. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina, the state's largest provider of employee health care coverage, has undertaken a special program to assist its more than 6,000 affected groups in upgrading their benefits to comply with the new law.

Specifically, the law says that maternity benefits for

employees must conform to the following guidelines:

-Maternity must be treated as any other condition. This means that whatever level and type of benefits are offered by the employer for other conditions must also be offered for maternity. In addition, these benefits must be offered to single women employees as well as to married ones.

-If there are no waiting periods for other pre-existing conditions, there can be no waiting period for maternity benefits. However, maternity can be treated in the same manner as other pre-existing conditions. This means that if an employer's health care program requires a waiting period before benefits are available for pre-existing con-

ditions, the same waiting period can apply to maternity care.

-Employers will not be required to pay for elective or therapeutic abortions except where the continued pregnancy would endanger the life of the mother; or except where medical complications have arisen from an abortion.



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