

Editorials & Comments

Christmas Everyday

Nearly 2,000 years ago, God sent His greatest gift to mankind. As a forerunner to this gift, the Greatest Event in human history, God commissioned an angel to tell the troubled world, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11).

"Suddenly," the "Living Bible" tells us, "the angel was joined by a vast host of others - the armies of Heaven - praising God: 'Glory to God in the highest Heaven; they sang, and on earth for all those pleasing Him'" (Luke 2:13-14).

In spite of this background and these meaningful Biblical words, modern man's general attitude toward his fellowman is one of scorn for the needy, the institutionalization of the oppressed, opposition to the creativity of the young, and in general, offering expressions of selfishness, hostility and apathy toward his fellowman for all but probably the few days of the Christmas season.

Upon a second look, we should realize that the historical setting from which these Biblical phrases come is one of leading 20th century man to say in this season that recognize the birth of Christ, "Peace on Earth and Goodwill Toward Men." This statement, in a practical sense, means that during the Christmas season, we give to the needy, sing carols to the oppressed,

encourage the young to laugh, and in general, offer affectionate expressions of togetherness, forgiveness and thankfulness. These can be summarized in the word "brotherhood."

"Human brotherhood," the late John F. Kennedy said, "is not just a goal. It is a condition on which our way of life depends."

"The question for our time," Kennedy continues, "is not whether all men are brothers. That question has been answered by the God who placed us on this earth together. The question is whether we have the strength and the will to make the brotherhood of man the guiding principle of our daily lives."

It is the latter part of Mr. Kennedy's statement, "the guiding principle of our daily lives," that should cause us some concern during this the 1980 Christmas season. This concern should center around the fact that true brotherhood cannot be limited to a few days related to the birth of Jesus Christ. Brotherhood must be "the guiding principle of our daily lives." Thus, in the Christmas season compassionate feelings for others must be extended to being year-round, that is, Christmas Everyday!

To do less is to degrade the meaning of Christmas and to reject the love of Jesus Christ - a love without which there can be no brotherhood, and without brotherhood there can be no Christmas. Let's practice brotherhood, let's have Christmas everyday.

Black Economic Plan

"Blacks have a hairstyle, a walk, a talk and a handshake, but we have never had an economic plan," according to Greenville, S.C. businessman L. R. Byrd, as quoted in a POST feature story last week.

Realizing the need for such a plan, Byrd began nearly two years ago to develop what he calls the Black Economic Education or BEE plan. This plan, Byrd contends, can be the answer for blacks in perilous economic times. "It deals," he says, "with the concepts of doing business with those who are willing to do business with us. Too much of our money is leaving our community. Black-owned businesses are failing because of a lack of patronage...many blacks are losing their jobs and ending up on welfare. Therefore, we as a group have got to do something to start bringing our dollars back into our communities."

We believe Mr. Byrd is right in that blacks should employ "selective buying" strategies to promote the business and employment opportunities of black Americans. We agree too that an aggressive "Black Economic Education Plan" is a vital part of any "selective buying" program.

We are pleased too that Byrd's

"buying" plan is based on a positive assumption; that is, if a business employs blacks in all levels of jobs and deals with black businesses in its buying and selling program then it is deserving of black consumer dollar support.

While Mr. Byrd's idea is not new, it is the most refreshing thought on the subject since Richard Nixon's shallow concept of black capitalism in the early 1970s. Byrd offers an ingredient not adequately stressed in previous black economic development strategies - i.e., the need for blacks to be educated, to be aware of where they should spend their dollars.

Realistically, with small business, and by comparison all black businesses are small, failing at an even faster rate due to inflation, mergers and foreign competition, black consumers need to realize that they have a personal investment in the survival of black business.

Reducing Byrd's observations to its basic meaning tells us that if black business and black job opportunities everywhere are to survive, black people must fully support black businesses and engage in constructive selective buying programs.

Support of black business in your community will result in support for your community.



Blacks Destiny In Own Hands

How Blacks Can Survive In The 80's

By Clyde Pulley
Special Correspondent
The conservative political mood of the approaching decade looks gloomy, and at best uncertain for Black Americans. Those in high government and industry positions who harbor racist attitudes and practice racial discrimination find comfort in the new conservatism and can be expected to step up their efforts.

Blacks must be on guard and prepared to effectively fight racial discrimination. Following are some helpful suggestions:

-Racists, as other oppressors, are reluctant to try to abuse a person if they know they will face a confrontation and lose. Frederick Douglass, Rosa Parks and American prisoners of war were examples.

-Executives, administrators, and supervisors cannot stand up to public scrutiny and keep their positions intact if they openly practice racial discrimination.

-Blacks should acquire an adequate knowledge of the Affirmative Action Plan at their workplace, Equal Employment Opportunity laws, and basic constitutional rights.

-Every black employee should not only be conscientious and competent in his or her job, but be above reproach in their personal and social lives. Double standards of administrative and personnel actions, disciplinary procedures, and dismissals have always applied to whites and blacks in the workplace.

-If racial discrimination is suspected or evident, keep timely and accurate records of each incident, and those instances in which whites were treated differently.

-When obvious discrim-



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inatory practices exist in an organization, keep local black community leaders and organizations informed. These organizations and individuals can often exercise influence privately or publicly to stop the practice.

-Cultivate a close relationship with fair-minded whites and blacks in the local news media - T.V., radio, and newspapers. Those who discriminate cannot stand up to public scrutiny of the press.

-If discrimination exists and a personal appeal to organizational officials brings no corrective action, seek a solution outside of the organization, i.e., NAACP, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) or the news media.

-Become involved and be supportive of other blacks who fall victim to discrimination, and counsel with the few blacks whose performance is substandard when they unjustifiably allege discrimination.

-Report all cases of obvious racial discrimination in employment, housing rental and sales, credit and other acts of discrimination to appropriate authorities. Racial discrimination is a violation of the law.

Constitutional powers are vested in three

branches of government. While a President exercises great influence on public policy, his powers are limited. The Congress passes the laws, appropriates money, and is the ultimate body of government - capable of overriding a presidential veto, a Supreme Court ruling, or even amending the U.S. Constitution. Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren showed that conservatives sometime become ultra-liberals.

The political and religious makeup of Americans would not permit government to become so insensitive and irresponsible as to "let blood run in the streets" if blacks continue to be oppressed to the point of rebellion. That was evident after the racial upheavals in the 1960s.

The United States is not the only country with racial and ethnic minorities who suffer discrimination. The problem exists worldwide. In many instances the denial of employment, the struggle for promotions and upward mobility, layoffs, and dismissals are geared to economic and the scarcity of goods and services.

But the United States is unique. It is a nation which takes pride in rule by law, even though laws are only as effective as the people who enforce them. The United States Constitution, the commitment to law, the ideals of human equality and the concept of justice are powerful influences. This tradition can lead to further progress of Black Americans.

Despite the conservative political trend and actions by some whites to impede black progress, the condition of blacks can improve. It cannot be done without personal sacrifices.

By Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

TO BE EQUAL



The Gift Of Christmas

Christmas celebrates nothing less than the gift of life and the birth of fresh hope. That's why it touches a universal chord, why all of us look forward to the Christmas season with anticipation and joy.

For many, Christmas means a renewal of basic values and of the necessary commitments those values imply. Chief among them is compassion and help for those less fortunate.

It is more important than ever before to affirm those values and those traditional Christmas seasonal reminders of man's brotherhood and the goodwill we should hold for all.

Just a quick look around us shows the need for a rebirth of compassion and caring generosity.

Millions of people are starving in the famine areas of Africa. Millions here at home are jobless this Christmas. Millions of families will celebrate the traditional Christmas dinner with the only meat they eat this month.

And many of those meager Christmas dinners are possibly only because of food stamps or welfare payments or other means society provides to supply the barest minimum necessary for sheer survival, and little else.

We should think of those people - people in trouble, people who are homeless, people who are hungry - while we celebrate our own good fortune. That's what this season means - to transcend our own concerns and embrace others in the full spirit of humanity and sharing love of one's neighbor.

But unfortunately there's another spirit abroad in the land in this Christmas season, a spirit of selfish hard-heartedness, a spirit of indifference to those who are poor or who are black, a spirit of meanness.

I suppose we can call that the spirit of anti-Christmas, and it is strong, very strong. It is strong enough to masquerade as part of the season's good cheer and hearty fun.

Just consider one particularly ugly example of the spirit of anti-Christmas. There's a nasty board game making fun of poor people and welfare recipients that will probably wind up under some Christmas trees - the fewer the better, as far as I'm concerned.

Players draw cards that read: "Your son is beat up by an ethnic gang while being bused across town to school; pay hospital \$200." Another is "pitch pennies all day." Losers draw cards like: "working person's burden." Land on a box marked "illegitimate child" and you get to play money welfare grants.

It is disgusting that the sufferings of the poor are so callously treated by people making fun of their miseries for profit. The very idea of well-off people playing a game that reinforces racial stereotypes and derides the poorest of the poor is obscene, especially in this Christmas season.

And how ironic to give such a poisonous game as a gift to impressionable children, helping them to learn racism and contempt for those less well-off than their own families, many of whom once were dirt poor themselves less than a generation or two ago.

From Capitol Hill

CBS Sets Up Nation Black Network For Action?

Alfreda L. Madison
Special To The Post

The Congressional Black Caucus has emerged from its recent three day meeting with a strong determination to get the 27 million blacks around the nation intensively active in the political process. The group has already set in motion an effective plan for seeing that blacks become a viable political force for making all of the country's leaders responsive to issues that make for a better life for all Americans with special emphasis on the needs of the poor and minorities.

Representative Walter Fauntroy is the new Caucus Chairman. As chairman Fauntroy says he wants to fulfill the admonition, Ossie Davis gave the Caucus at its first annual dinner:

"Give us a plan for action - a 10 Black commandments; simple, strong, that we can carry in our hearts and in our memories no matter where we are, and reach out and touch and feel the reassurance that there is behind everything



Alfreda L. Madison

we do a simple, moral, intelligent plan that must be fulfilled in the course of time, even if all our leaders, one by one fall in battle, somebody will rise and say, Brother, our leader died while we were on page three of the plan; now that the funeral is over let us proceed to page four. It's not the man, it's the plan. It's not the rap, it's the map."

Around the first of the year the Caucus will announce its legislative agenda.

For carrying out this agenda, the Congressional Black Caucus has set in motion a nationwide network for political action of

blacks. In working with the organizations of National Black Councilmen, National Black Elected Legislative Officials and National Black Youth Roundtable and other local black organizations. Meetings have already been held between the Caucus members and these organizations. Through the Caucus very able staff there will be constant contact with these regional directors on vital issues, and checks on progress made by each local group in accomplishing the objectives that have been set up by the joint efforts of these groups. The Congressional Black Caucus staff members say the youth groups all across the country are anxious to begin working.

The Caucus membership has increased by two additional members over the last year. Based upon the 1980 census, there will be more areas in many states, that should have black congressmen in 1982. This, of course, will necessitate fairer reapportionment of congressional districts, instead of the present gerry-

manding which exists in many states.

The Caucus is emphasizing very strongly that Blacks must respond to the so-called Christian Right organizations such as the Moral Majority, 700 Club and many other evangelical groups. These support issues that are in direct opposition to progress and rights of blacks. These Christians are for increased military spending, cuts in domestic programs, opposition to abortion, opposition to ERA, they are for segregated private schools, the death penalty, and lifting sanctions against South Africa.

Congressional Black Caucus members will chair four important committees during the 97th Congress.

Augustus Hawkins will chair the House Administration Committee, which authorizes and supervises support services for the House of Representatives. Parren Mitchell will continue as chairman of the Small Business Committee, Mitchell was instrumental in getting legislation passed that mandates

minority businesses get a share of federal contracts. Louis Stokes will chair the Standards of Official Conduct Committee. This committee sets the guidelines for the House members' conduct and investigates alleged unethical practices.

Ronald Dellums will continue to chair the House District of Columbia committee. Efforts will be made to have the Caucus members represented on all major committees.

Each member of the Con-

gressional Black Caucus is responsible for taking leadership in special areas that are relative to minorities and the poor. Mr. Fauntroy, the new chairman says that when a spokesman is needed on these specific issues, it will be the leader in that particular area who will speak, instead of the Caucus chairman.

As a new feature, the Caucus is planning to hold monthly press briefings, with the Black Press members.

Wrap Water Heater, Cut Costs

If your water heater is located in an unheated area, chances are good that you can cut your energy bill by wrapping it with extra insulation, suggest North Carolina State University agricultural extension housing specialists.

If you have a 66-gallon electric water heater, for example, and decide to wrap it with a blanket of insulation that has an insulation factor of R-11, you stand to save about 450 kilowatt hours of electric-

ity a year. If the electricity costs 3 1/2 cents a kilowatt hour, your annual savings would be \$15.75.

If you use a water heater insulating kit, you would probably save 350 kilowatt hours of electricity a year or \$12.25.



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