

Editorials & Comments

America Loses A Great Man

Joe Louis - Dignity And Candor

The legendary "Brown Bomber," Joe Louis, who reigned as heavyweight boxing champion for over 12 years is dead. For those of you too young to grasp the significance of these few words, or more accurately the man - Joe Louis - means that you cannot fully appreciate the greatness of a man and his era.

Louis, a man of humble means was born Joseph Louis Barrow in Lafayette, Alabama, and grew to manhood in Detroit. A professional boxer for 17 years, Louis won 68 of his 71 fights. His record includes 54 knockouts, 12 occurring in the first round. A 6-foot, 1½-inch, 200-pounder, Louis relentlessly stalked his opponents until he struck with quick, jolting jabs and rapid combination punches to the head and body that usually kayoed his opponents.

A man of little formal education, Louis nevertheless characterized dignity and candor. Following one of his rare defeats to Max Schmeling, Louis simply said, "He just whipped me, ma." On another occasion, when a racist news photographer asked Louis to pose eating a slice of watermelon, he refused saying he did not like watermelon, when in fact he really loved watermelon.

On still another occasion when Muhammad Ali was heavyweight champion, he hired Louis as an advisor. When appearing on television together, Ali said,

"Joe, you really think you could whip me?" Louis replied, "When I had the title I went on a what they called a bum-of-the-month tour." Ali asked, "You mean I'm a bum?" Louis answered, "You woulda been on the tour." The "tour" seemed appropriate considering that Louis defended his title 25 times during the 12 years that he held the heavyweight title. This was in an era when people truly believed the champ was the greatest man on earth.

Louis left an impact on the world of boxing that expanded far beyond his opponents. When he knocked out Max Schmeling in 1938, after a loss two years earlier, the fights had had international significance. Under Adolph Hitler's "Aryan supremacy" doctrine, German-born Schmeling was an Aryan hero and certainly could defeat a black man; in less than two minutes Louis had beaten the Aryan hero badly.

In spite of being boxing champ in an era of racial bigotry, Louis was the nation hero of blacks and whites. With his quiet dignity and practical candor, Louis was more than another sports personality - a force that contributed to easing racial tension. Undoubtedly, too, he opened the door for the acceptance of blacks in many other sports.

Joe Louis, a man among many who don't deserve to be called such, truly deserves to be called "The Champ."

Vote To Preserve Districting

Included in the nine-part, \$53.4 million bond issue, voters will be asked to vote for an April 28 will be \$4 million in a Trade Street boulevard, new sidewalks and school zone warning signs. These projects, as well as the transit mall mentioned last week, should be supported because of their practical contribution to making Charlotte a better place to live.

The proposed \$2 million Trade Street boulevard would provide a 15-foot wide grass planted median for Trade Street. It would stretch from Irwin Avenue near the I-77 exit to West Trade Street to Kings Drive near CPCC with the exception of a block near the intersection of Trade and Tryon Streets. This project will certainly compliment the transit mall. More significantly, it will contribute to cleaning up the current environment on West Trade Street as well as serve as a more pleasing gateway into the City via I-77 at West Trade.

At a cost of \$400,000, a low cost item in the overall bond package is the need for standardized school zone warning signs. This

would cover the cost of needed school zone traffic signs at over 100 locations.

These uniform signs will contribute to the City's transportation commitment. Of greater importance, is the fact that these

signs will make it much safer for our children by slowing traffic in school area. This is more than adequate reason for supporting the school zoning warning signs item in the bond package.

Another item in the bond package worthy of your support is the \$1.6 million for general sidewalk construction. Support of this project would allow the City to continue its needed program of

sidewalk construction throughout the City. This would allow the City to respond to neighborhood requests from a pool of funds for needed sidewalks. It would certainly be wise, however, for neighborhood groups to monitor the City's engineering department's methods of determining priorities to assure equitable distribution of sidewalk construction if the bond item is approved.

Blacks' Destiny In Own Hands...



Letters To The Editor

Craig Lawing Demonstrates True Leadership

Dear Sir: When the election day results were known on November 5, 1980, the Equal Rights Amendment was declared dead in North Carolina by many proponents. To both the House and Senate, North Carolina voters had elected a slight majority of anti-ERA members and in my opinion, for reasons other than ERA. The opponents then proceeded to force a vote on the issue.

Proponents were looking for any and every way to prevent another humiliating defeat, including asking the Senate leadership to prevent such a defeat on the Senate floor. That was accomplished and now news media and others cry "Foul." Not so! When you don't have the votes, you don't have the votes. And as I was reminded by an opponent, "If you (the opponents) had had the votes, you would have done just what we (the opponents) tried." He is right, we would have tried to force a vote. The comment that no female legislators knew about the deal is inaccurate. Several of us knew of the deal's formation, even if not involved in its conclusion.

Lieutenant Governor Green, Senators Lawing and Royall and others, demonstrated true leadership in concluding several weeks of ERA trauma by formulating the only sure method available to prevent another ERA defeat on the Senate floor. By their action, legislators can now concentrate on budget and other state matters which desperately need our attention. So now media and others can stop "crying over spilled milk." ERA in

North Carolina died November 4, 1980. The 'deal' of February only provided a quiet burial rather than a

public execution which the opponents had planned.

Sincerely,
Senator Carolyn Mathis

Complicated Wording

Dear Sir: We, in our cozy neighborhoods-Dilworth, Elizabeth, Hidden Valley, Myers Park, Clanton Park, Sedgfield, Madison Park are in danger!

Because of the complicated wording of the April 28th ballot, we must vote NO in support of District representation. Why? As a resident of the Madison Park neighborhood, I expect my councilman, George Selden, to help me out when the Charlotte Water Department fails to help me find out why my water pressure is low. At-large representatives don't have a neighborhood constituency and don't, usually, feel a direct responsibility to me. After all I only have 1 vote and an at-large politician can look to the whole city for potential supporters. In the shuffle of large government I am NOT assured that I'll

get help from the Water Department as quickly.

In contrast, my district representative would, after all, I MAY vote for him.

I believe in the Constitution. I believe that I live in a representative democracy. It follows then, I am represented by my elected officials and therefore my vote counts!

At-large representation is a direct threat to my strongest beliefs. It is a threat to ALL neighborhoods since water pressure problems, or any other problems requiring city assistance, call ALL neighborhoods.

Politicians who support at-large representation like David Berryhill and Herbert Spough apparently do not have people like you and me in mind.

Vote NO. Support district representation. Help our councilmen to act in our best interests.

Judy Vaughan, member
Equal Rights Council

Constantly Confronted With Pain Of Loneliness

Dear Sir: Please allow me a few moments of your valuable time so that I may introduce myself and explain why I am writing you this letter. I am a young man who is presently incarcerated at the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility in Lucasville, Ohio. Here, I have been incarcerated for many years, having been incarcerated before reaching manhood. In my predicament, I am constantly confronted with the pain and sorrow of loneliness; I have no friends or family with whom I may share my innermost feelings and needs and rely upon for comfort in the face of my grim situation. For these reasons, I am addressing this letter to you with hopes that you will be kind enough to publish this letter in your newspaper for me so that I may obtain a friend.

Sincerely,
Willie Johnson
P.O. Box 45699, L-2-14
Lucasville, Ohio 45696

By Gerald C. Horne, ESQ

Affirmative Action

Blindness And Discrimination

The two favorite words used by our business, political and judicial leaders to rationalize and condone discrimination are qualifications and merit. Thus, how do we account for their success? Obviously, qualifications and merit. What kind of people are they looking to hire? Obviously, those with qualifications who merit the opportunities of our society. Why do they hire or promote so few females, blacks, Mexican-Americans, Native Americans, Puerto Ricans or members of other minorities? Obviously, because they cannot find those with the qualifications or who merit the opportunities.

There are several positions and views which stem from this type of belief. It is not racism and sexism which account for the inequities in our society. We do not discriminate. If they would only qualify themselves, we would hire and promote them. If they would compete or could compete and become the best, we would promote them.

At another level, and a more insidious level because they have the victims believing the same nonsense, is the belief that discrimination is subtle, vague, difficult to define or identify.

On the contrary, as the examples to be presented will show, qualifications and merit have nothing to do with who really gets the opportunities. On the contrary, discrimination is not subtle, vague, difficult to define, or identify. In fact, qualifications and merit are the code words for racism and sexism. In fact, the arguments relative to the subtleness and vagueness of discrimination are just excuses and rationalizations that our leaders, and most notably judges, used to deny justice and fairness to minorities and females. I say this because the gatekeepers and power brokers in industry know how people are selected and rewarded.

Let's look at two examples of over discrimination dealing with qualifications and merit. Also, these examples should be analyzed within the context of the criticism leveled by Justice Thurgood Marshall, who is responsible for the Second Circuit Federal courts. Justice Marshall, at the annual conference of the Second Circuit last May, was concerned about the Second Circuit's record in cases dealing with affirmative action and anti-discrimination. He said that to win an affirmative action case in the Second Circuit, "you have to beat the judges over the head."

In the first case, a black employee at IBM claimed that he was discriminated against for opportunities for promotions because of his race. According to the pre-trial transcript and other evidence, the black technician had invented the IBM Automatic Impurity Profiler. According to the black employee, he was denied a promotion because he had not written and published any papers. The manager, in his testimony under oath, said that in fact, he had rejected the worker's promotion because a requirement for the promotion was "the writing and publishing of papers." He also recommended that the worker "should get out of the development and engineering area because he lacked the ability to work in that kind of environment." It should be noted that the employee received two patents for his inventions while working in the area.

From Capitol Hill

Will Common Sense Or Gun Control Laws Prevail?

By Alfreda L. Madison
Special To The Post
Again we've been faced with the tragedy at the hands of an assassin's bullet. No one can forget the horrible television sight of seeing President Reagan being pushed into a limousine by the secret service and three men lying on the cement walk bleeding from bullet wounds. Congress, immediately recessed and people either crowded around the television listening for reports of the shootings or talked to anyone around.

We can all be thankful for the miracle that no one was killed and that all four victims are improving nicely.

At the White House, the evening of the shooting, there was none of the jubilation and jokes that reporters usually carry on between getting news and reporting. Everyone was crowded around the several televisions anxiously awaiting any word from the hospital.

Press Secretary Jim Brady, is greatly liked by all correspondents. He is a



Alfreda L. Madison

very cheerful person, who being a team player, doesn't always give forthright answers to the reporters' questions, but being such a witty and affable person, he is able to get away with responses or lack of them without answering the questions.

As the one most often lone Black reporter at the White House among a host of white reporters, who has to ask about issues as they relate to Blacks, with very scarcely any follow-up by other reporters so my questions as is not the case with the white reporters, Jim Brady seemed special to

me. In his press briefings he always recognizes me for questions. When reporters try to have a personal word with him immediately following the briefings, he has just about always found a moment for me. Once when I was in the room of the Deputy Press Secretary having a conversation. Jim knocked on the door and said, "Alfreda, don't leave, in forty-five minutes the President will come to the press room and make a statement on Atlanta. I believe it will be of interest to you." Then upon my second trip to the transition-team press conference having asked questions relative Blacks and Jim had to acknowledge that he didn't know the

answer. I went to him after the conference and said, "I work for Black papers and I have to ask the Black questions." He replied, "I understand but I'll have to find some answers for you." So I along with all other White House correspondents certainly hope that Jim Brady will soon return to his post of duty.

This shooting just goes to show that with all of our law enforcement protection, big defense build-up and talk about Soviet threats, we can't save ourselves from the harm of our own guns. It is incumbent upon our national leaders to turn the search light inward and focus attention on saving us from ourselves.

As after the assassination of every great leader, there is a public outcry for gun control, and congress goes into action of investigating to see if negligence was the cause. Some organizations and some members of congress have been trying for years to get a gun control bill through congress, but the ever present lobbying of the rich National Rifle Association's anti-gun control sentiment always prevail.

Yearly, hand guns in the United States kill and injure more than 240,000 people. The hand gun proponents argue that hand guns are protection. President Reagan voiced favor for the use of hand guns and Mrs. Reagan said that her husband gave her a small

gun. Notwithstanding, that and being surrounded by secret service and police with revolvers, these were no protection from the assassin's hand gun.

Senator Kennedy together with Representative Peter Rodins are co-sponsoring a gun control bill. However, the Senator admits that the bill doesn't have very much of a chance of getting through this conservative congress.

There is an organization composed of a number of prominent Americans called Handgun Control, Inc. This group intends to mobilize a force of at least a million or more citizens to demand that congress pass the Kennedy-Rodins Handgun bill. If congress fails to do this, the organization intends to develop its own political war chest to defeat the gun advocates in 1982. The group has also urged the Attorney General to make gun control a top priority in his task force.

This organization's action can serve as a signal to President Reagan or Vice President Bush, that if

they have any idea about a second term, it might be wise to reassess their gun control stand.

Presbyterian To Honor Its Junior

Volunteers

Presbyterian Hospital will honor its Junior Volunteers Saturday in its annual Junior Volunteer Appreciation Day, held this year in the Fellowship Hall of St. John's Baptist Church.

The young volunteers will be treated to a brunch and be entertained by mime Eddie Williams. Presbyterian currently has 264 Junior Volunteers, 100 more than last year. Among them, they clocked more than 40,000 hours of service in the past year.



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