

editorials & comments

Demise Of Black Families?

The National Urban League's "State of Black America" annual report released last January and data from the recently published report, "U.S. Children and Their Families: Current Conditions and Recent Trends" offer a bleak picture of the present and a sense of growing despair among many, if not most, black Americans.

Despite some positive gains in education with increases in black student enrollment in 4-year colleges; and the share of black families earning \$20,000 or more annually, up from 32 percent in 1970 to 33 percent in 1981, Harvard University psychiatrist Alvin Poussaint says increasing numbers in the black population are experiencing serious psychological depression.

The dual impact of major cuts in social and welfare programs by the Reagan Administration, and the devastating economic recession among blacks with a jobless rate of 18.9 percent, or twice that of whites. In addition, an unbelievable 48 percent unemployment rate exists among black youth, and these are not the only reasons for feelings of depression.

Economic conditions among black Americans and their social consequences are approaching the point of destroying many black families. Undoubtedly, the high levels of unemployment among black men is related to two other factors that lend themselves to concerns about the demise of black families. First, in the 20-year period between 1960-80 the number of one-parent families with black children living only with their mothers rose from 20.6 to 44.1 percent of all black families. Secondly, the number of black families receiving welfare assistance jumped from 19.1 percent in 1969 to 28.1 percent in 1981. This means that over one in every four black families is living or surviving on public assistance. This is nearly five times the number of white families on welfare.

Greatest Threat

Even among those lack families where one, and in most cases two parents, are employed, their annual income in 1981 was only 56 percent of that of white families, down from 61 percent in 1970.

Undoubtedly, the greatest threat to existence of black fa-

milies is seen in the plight of black children. A related and contributing factor to the 44.1

percent of black children living only with their mothers is the disturbing data on the number of children born to unwed mothers. In 1970 37.6 percent (5.7 among whites) of all black babies were born out of wedlock. That rate leaped to 55.3 percent in 1980 (11.0 among whites) Furthermore, among all black children, 50 percent live in poverty and 8.5 percent don't live with either parent.

Not too surprisingly, the divorce rate for blacks was 220 per 1,000 married couples or 22 percent (over 1 in 5) in 1982, twice that of whites.

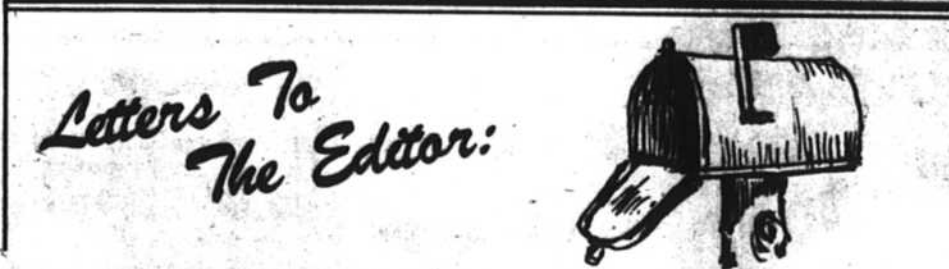
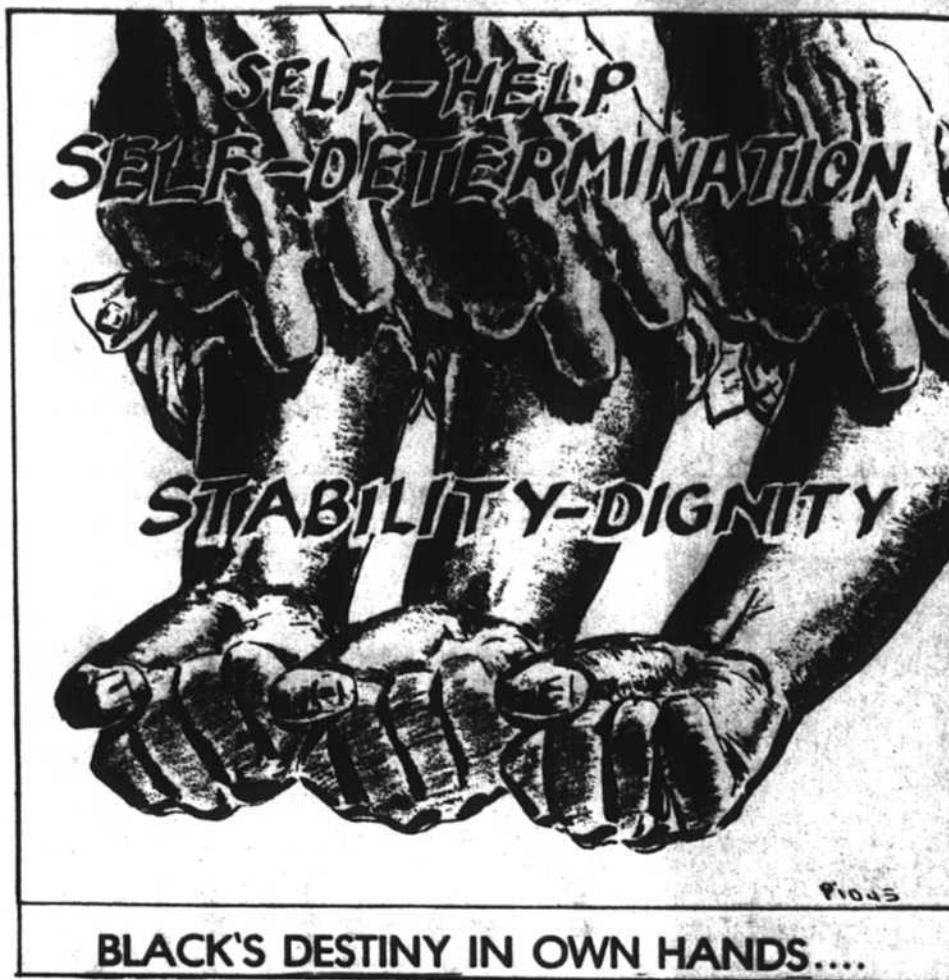
National Concern

These statistics, depressing as they are, should be reviewed and considered initially within the context of a national concern about these issues for the following reasons: -Nearly 12.5 million children (one in five) live with their mothers only in part as a result of high divorce rates and out-of-wedlock births, which quadrupled since 1950; -20 percent of all children live in one-parent families.

From a black perspective, this alarming state of the conditions and environments that threaten the very existence of the black family as a social institution, must be turned around or by the year 2000, the black family may be on the brink of becoming extinct.

Black ministers, doctors, educators, psychologists, civil rights leaders, politicians, and most of all parents and young adults, must begin to grapple with these troubling factors impacting upon black family life.

While blacks do not yet control or have adequate influence in economic matters, that is, the providing of jobs, we can and we must assert ourselves in educating, advising, counseling and attempting to change some of the values and behavior patterns and the instilling of motivation in young people that there is hope for the future if they want to make it so. These things black can only do for themselves but it must be done now for tomorrow may be too late.



But Do Little Or Nothing

U.S. Government Will Talk

Mr. Bill Johnson, Editor
The Charlotte Post
P. O. Box 30144
Charlotte, N.C. 28230

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I would like the following "Letter to the Editor" published in your newspaper.

What will the United States government do if history is any guide? They will talk tough but do little or nothing. The ruthless Communist murder of 269 innocent victims, including the world's leading anti-Communist, might receive no more attention than other acts of Communist terrorism we have seen worldwide. United States Congressman Lawrence P. McDonald, National Chairman of the John Birch Society, produced a film about Communist terrorism before he himself was a victim of it.

We need not see what the government will do; we can do something ourselves. Let this be the outrage which finally wakes up the American people to face the reality of the horrors of Communism, and to act in their own defense. We must not wait until any more of us are murdered in cold blood. Rather, let us rally together in the organization which more than likely frightens the Communists so much that they would apparently commit such an atrocity to

silence its leader.

We must demand that the complete text of all recorded communications relating to this mass murder be made public at once. Every American should view the anti-Communist programs produced by Congressman McDonald and insist that they be given coverage in the broadcast media.

Justice will come to the Communists when we elect hundreds of dedicated

anti-Communists in our next election. Then perhaps we will have a government which will stop the sale of high-technology computer chips and other items which are now being used in the guidance systems of Communist missiles. Korean Air Lines flight 007 was shot down with a Soviet missile built with the help of U.S. aid and trade.

Dr. Thomas B. Sulter Jr.
Rocky Mount, NC 27801

Disappointed With The Post

Route 4, Box 1160
Huntersville, NC 28078
August 28, 1983
The Charlotte Post
P. O. Box 30144,
Charlotte, NC 28230

Dear Sir:

I have subscribed to your paper for three years and last year I supported the "Churchwoman of the Year" contest by sending three subscriptions out of the state and a year subscription for myself. I do not plan such support this year.

First, we were very disappointed that you did not feel the appointment of W. T. Sherrill to the courts by the governor merited your attention. Also your paper has failed too often to inform us of prominent blacks who are to be in our

area. Many times only a few of us are able to meet or hear what they had to say and then it is often through the other news sources.

In my opinion you fail often to report news that is important information for our community.

Yours truly,
Mrs. A. Brown

Editor's Note - Like any other newspaper, The Charlotte Post does not cater to class. Our services are open to all. I am sure that if Mr. W. T. Sherrill or any interested party had contacted The Post and informed us of his appointment, it would have been printed. We regret you are disappointed with our services. However, it should be noted here that, to us, all people are prominent.



'80s And Working Women

They are the new dropouts. Women who breeched through the early 1970s with all the right things, including law degrees and MBAs. They were successfully climbing the corporate ladder until... motherhood.

During the 1970s it was difficult to find a female qualified to take on a management position. However, the problem for the 1980s is keeping qualified women after the birth of a child.

Many successful women find it difficult to return to their careers because there seems to be a major contradiction in their loyalty to the company and responsibility for a child. Granted, some women breeze through these times and come out on top of both situations - valuable employees and good mothers. However there is that vast majority of women who find the situation stressful causing them to suffer from severe fatigue and anxiety. Thus in the end - less productive employees. New priorities in the woman's life pull at her emotions and the only way she can cope is by resigning from her position.

According to Majorie Hansen Shaevitz, a counselor at the Institute for Family and Work Relationships, LaJolla, Calif., "It has nothing to do with the woman's willingness to work hard, or her ability." Traditionally women, even very successful ones, still bear the responsibility of child-care. Some superwomen can do this, but others believe it to be impossible living a triple life-career woman, mother and wife. They simply drop out.

Companies lose in their investment when women quit. They allow women to take maternity leave with the intent of return because she is recognized as a good employee - however, if her work is not up to par upon return, corporate hands are tied until the woman makes the decision to leave. If women who become mothers continue to leave their jobs after child birth - this could undo all the impressive gains women have made in all fields in the past 10 years.

One solution to the problem of having women quit after maternity leave may be to offer them part-time hours or a job sharing program. This would allow the woman to spend time with her child and be a productive, valuable and calm employee.

Companies are insensitive to women during child-rearing years: They must realize that a 40-45 hour work week will take its toll. Companies must respond to the changing times - mothers DO work and ARE productive during child-rearing. They just need programs that allow them to do both with support. Anyone's work will be below average after a leave of absence. A man or woman. But companies do put more pressure on women because we constantly have to prove ourselves!

Executive mothers suffer from stress in the worse way - in silence. They keep all the problems and anxieties in until their work suffers, their families suffer and they break down emotionally and physically. Women must discuss these situations with their bosses, for it is not a sign of weakness but intelligence. How can a company help an employee if it does not know the problem.

Some women rush back to the old grind to preserve their professionalism. These women are trying to change the feeling that workers should not be women with children without regard for themselves. They forget that child birth is a shock to the system - the body - and it takes time to bounce back to one's productive self.

Mothering is not an easy job and if it were, men would be doing it. Women must sit down and discuss what is expected of them at work after child birth. She must make her boss aware that she will be holding down two jobs - one of traditional values and one of self-imposed ambitions. Valuable women employees may want to develop a job sharing program months before they leave or they may seek a part-time agreement that will be temporary.

Whatever the case may be, women executives must make their companies realize and respond to the changing needs of its employees. Many companies are realizing that its policy of replacing people quickly is not so easy. To replace an employee a company must recruit, train and place individuals which takes three to six months - and all the while the company is losing money and possibly clients.

On Capitol Hill

The Dream Is Festering To Explode

Alfreda L. Madison
Special To The Post
"What happens to a dream deferred? Does it dry up as a raisin in the sun or is it allowed to fester and explode?"

Minorities see the King dream, after removing legalized discrimination, as not only being allowed to dry up and fester, but the Reagan Administration as injecting the festering dream with strong shots of increased joblessness, housing and education discrimination, bringing court cases against affirmative action, school busing cases that are working well, failure to enforce civil rights laws, attempt to shape the Civil Rights Commission in his own image, support of apartheid South Africa, cutting social programs and diverting huge sums of money for military build-up - a total attempt to turn back the clock on all civil rights gains and placing the economic burden on those who can least afford it, while favoring, economically, the rich.

This 1983 March was a coalition of conscience call to all the many segments of the population to have the dream explode on their own community and national elected officials and the President at the polls. Rev. Joseph Lowery strongly emphasized that



Alfreda L. Madison

dream has not dried up, bit it has been denied.

Twenty years after the March On Washington, which gave the famous American Dream speech, and resulted in the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, on August 27, 1983, amid sweltering Washington heat soaring in the upper 90s, more than 300,000 citizens from all across the country, representing all walks of life, both sexes, all ethnic groups, nationalities and religions, formed a coalition of conscience and marched to the Lincoln Memorial, for jobs, freedom and peace.

Mayor Barry said Washington is the place where destiny is made by Congress, President and the Courts, these masses of people gathered to impact on the officials of government to act in accordance with their needs and interests.

The speakers, who represented the various groups, clearly explained to the crowd how the present political, economic and social conditions affect their lives, and impressed upon them the importance of making their elected officials accountable.

Representative Walter Fauntroy, the chief organizer of the group, evaluated the day by saying it was a tremendous example of the people exercising their rights to question government officials' actions and to hold these officials responsible for legislating and executing laws that make the American Dream of promoting life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness meaningful to them.

Mr. Fauntroy says the march is the first step in this coalition of conscience, and that the second step, "will come in the state houses, halls of Congress and election booths in November."

More than 715 organizations operating in 352 cities are supporting the legislative package, which includes King's birthday holiday, passage of the Hawkins Community Act - that will provide needed community work of street repairs, sewage, public housing, schools and hospitals. Those who have been out of work for more

than 27 weeks will be given job preference. This will take them off welfare rolls. Job training for displaced workers and the youth. H. R. 425, a bill by Representative Ted Weiss to convert some defense money into commercial industry. The investment bill which has been introduced by Representative Bill Gray; to prevent any new investments by American corporations in South Africa.

Ralph Ness, Executive Director of the Leadership Conference said the huge march attendance was a beautiful commemoration of the 1963 March with its focus on civil rights and the 1983 focus was on pertinent national issues.

Mayor Richard Hatcher of Gary, Indiana felt that the 1983 March focused more on specifics that the people could take back to their communities. He felt that with 300,000 people in the 1983 March more emphasis should have been placed on asking each person to get a number of people to register and that specific pieces of legislation for accomplishing the broad objectives should have been presented.

President Reagan has ignored the voices of these people, but he should give heed to their marching feet.

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