

Editorials

The Past Is Upon Us

"I am the marginal man between two forces, and possibly I will be crushed. But that is where God has placed me and I have accepted the vocation." These sincere words, no doubt, bring thoughts of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and cause us to wonder which book, sermon or civil rights speech these utterances came from. King, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, had made many such profound statements in the 1960s as black Americans sought equal justice.

This quotation, however, is not from the charisma of Dr. King but, rather, from another black Nobel Peace Prize winner of 1985, Bishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa. Tutu's emotion-laden statement reflects the bitter ethnic struggle that rages in South Africa today in 1985. It is a reminder to those of us who remember America's civil rights struggles of the 1960s and it is the past upon us for younger blacks who too often take for granted the opportunities at their fingertips. It is a reminder, too, that the struggle for justice and equal opportunity is

worldwide and never ending.

Bishop Tutu and others like him in his far away homeland are engaged in a far more serious racial and cultural conflict than black Americans encountered some 20 years ago. Yet black Americans need not look far to realize that their struggle too is far from ended and that we must keep up the good fight in support of the causes of civil rights wherever injustice exists.

Therefore, black Americans must expand the support of their black brothers across the Atlantic to the south. After all, it is only when all men are free that any one of us is free.

Yes, the past is upon us and we are reminded in a most shocking way of just how great and how difficult the struggle for justice and fair play truly are.

We must wish for Bishop Tutu and his supporters God's blessing as they reflect our past in their quest for dignity, respect, and freedom.

\$8 Million Is Not Enough

In this column last week we said "...the responsibility for preserving black colleges and universities does not rest on the back of corporate America. Black alumni...have the primary responsibility for contributing to the efforts necessary to maintain or reestablish such institutions on a strong financial footing."

The Post's headline story last week quotes Hilliard L. Lackey, vice president of the Council of National Alumni Associations as saying, "The more than 800,000 graduates of historically black colleges are being urged to send a minimum of \$10 (each) to their respective alma maters on September 30 to show that they are willing to pay financially to keep their schools open and to preserve this part of our valuable history."

This fund raising, to be held in conjunction with National Historic Black College Day, is, without question, an excellent idea except that the challenge and the request of \$10 per person is too little. It is good to talk about how many black Americans have graduated from these fine schools. However, studies have shown that in any alumni efforts a 35 percent response is considered good. Thus, with a 100 percent response, the \$8 million divided equally among the 107 black colleges would give each a mere \$74,769. If even a 50 percent response is realized as opposed to 35 percent, that \$74,769 will be halved to only \$37,389 per institution. With today's costs for anything these dollar amounts are terrible insufficient in preparation to the great need.

Therefore, we strongly believe, as we commented last week, that with the wealth and personal gain that many black Americans have achieved, especially over the past 20 years, that the challenge for giving for support of our black colleges should be substantially greater or more like \$50 to

\$100 per person. Frankly, anything of this kind of a fund raising nature that does not generate at least \$1 million per school will have relatively little positive impact on those schools and the services they are providing.

In effect, one of our handicaps as black people emerging from the ashes of slavery and institutionalized racism is that we tend to think only in small terms and small things. Success requires thinking big and accepting the challenge to do big things. This means, for example, if black colleges want to make big megabucks from football, they must have alumni support to build multi-million dollar athletic stadiums, substantially increase their athletic recruiting budgets, and pressure the NCAA-rated white schools to play them. After all, these large, predominantly white institutions themselves have built their athletic programs on the talents of black youth and get large television contracts. There are some primarily black colleges and universities - Jackson State and Grambling, to name a few - that could do very well in really big time football with an initial and sustained network support system from their alumni.

Black schools must first think big if they want to do big things.

What's On Your Mind?

Do you have something to say? Then do so for everyone to read. The Charlotte Post, the only other voice in town, welcomes all letters on various subjects.

Letters to the editor must include your signature and address, both of which may or may not be used per your request.

Please limit letters to 500 words.

Letters should be addressed to: Editor, The Charlotte Post, P. O. Box 30144, Charlotte, N.C. 28230.

Miller Says

Try High Cost Of An Illusionary Trip To Gentryland

By Sherman N. Miller
Special To The Post

Jacob Jacoby and David Mazursky in their article, "The Impact of Linking Brand and Retailer Images on Perceptions of Quality," reveal how a store's poor quality image can adversely affect the good quality image of products they sell. These chaps write, "When a product having a high image for quality is linked with a store having a lesser image for quality, the store's image is helped by this association...and the brand's image is harmed by this association." Nonetheless, I wonder if these findings are working to the detriment of many small businesses seeking good inexpensive equipment to significantly enhance their sales.

I am often asked to give my recommendation on what is the best computer for an individual to buy. I usually respond with the same advice that a computer back and salesman gave me. His advice was to call everyone old enough to have any interest in a computer into a room and write down what they want the computer to do. One can then use this list to screen computer systems on the availability of soft-



Sherman

ware and system cost. It is important to note that without software the computer is much like a record player without records. This computer hack's method saved me several thousands of dollars and our computer is used everyday by someone.

When pinned down to reveal the brand name of the computer my family chose, I first give people the items on our computer "do" list: Professional Word Processing, Spread Sheets, Graphics, Data Base Management, Financial Analysis programs, Children Learning programs and Games. Once I see that they realize we have some very serious computer uses in mind, I reveal that we have a Commodore 64. I bring them out of shock by suggesting that they do a cost and benefit assessment on



Polygraph Is In Error One-Third Of Time!

Sam Ervin called it "20th century witchcraft." Some courts consider it inadmissible evidence and others believe it. What is "it" - lie detector tests.

Why do some presidents, police and private citizens believe in the polygraph or lie detector tests? Research has shown that the polygraph is in error one-third of the time. While this is stated fact, a least one million of American citizens will submit to the test this year.

Although the polygraph is not the most appealing of methods in proving guilt or innocence, a great many people do believe in them. It is becoming common to see the polygraph used in screening job applicants and investigations of losses in business and industry.

Frank Horvath, Director of the American Polygraph Association Research Center at Michigan State University, views the accuracy rate of the polygraph at 90 percent instead of the accepted 70 percent. The basis for this belief being fair and realistic in measuring the polygraph against other accepted methods used. For instance, psychiatrists are commonly believed to be right 50 percent of the time - eyewitness information about the



Sabrina

same. So upon conducting an investigation or screening, it can easily be seen or understood why some citizens believe in the polygraph.

Horvath goes on to state that no one should be denied or convicted solely on the polygraph results - but it should be used along with other information or evidence to make the decision. In addition to this, there is some scientific information that people are not offended or scared of the polygraph. And the reason they consent is due to the method of questioning or line of questioning and who is administering the test.

On June 28 of this year the House overwhelmingly approved the Young Amendment, 333-71. The Amend-

ment authorizes a program of random counter intelligence polygraph examinations of all Defense Department personnel with access or clearance to classified security information. The reason for the Amendment is that the polygraph exams are one of the best tools available to combat espionage. For more than 30 years the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Agency have conducted the exams with noted success in detecting possible negative factors that could jeopardize national security.

Adm. John Butts, Director of Naval Intelligence, views the polygraph as a form of screening to be a big deterrent to espionage. What Adm. Butts is basing his decision upon is the fact that many convicted spys and the like, who know they would not pass the test, claim that they would not have contrived the acts they are accused of. Valid point! But if the Department of Defense is not responsible for national security - then who is? The Young Amendment poses to place the necessary tools in the Department's hands to be used, intelligently, in the effort to combat espionage.

The real question or problem with the polygraph is how widespread the use of it in the private sector has become. In most states, employers require job applicants to submit to polygraph tests or when an obstruction has occurred. It is at that time that suspected employees are subjected to a kangaroo court - the polygrapher acts as the judge and jury in the case and the punishment being dismissed from the position and ostracism. A bill that would prohibit this has been introduced in Congress. Laws similar to this have been enacted in several states. Nevada casino operators rely heavily on the polygraph whereas they are not admissible in New Jersey - New Jersey has a lower theft rate among casino employees than Nevada. Business in Minnesota is still going on as usual even after the 1976 outlawing of the polygraph. However, a potential employee in Miami, Atlanta, Dallas, or New York more than likely will undergo such a test, unless Congress puts its foot down and enacts strict guidelines which will state the specifics on when, where, and how the polygraph is to be used.

It is ironic that lawmakers appear to want the polygraphs used in the Pentagon more and less, if any, in industry.

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