

# Editorials

## Escalated Joy, Ultimate Tragedy

The American people have been conditioned by the medium of television to want and expect instant gratification. Our mentality has become one of expecting to solve all problems in 30 to 60 minutes, less a few seconds for commercials, and the blissful joys of happiness of all or at least the "good guys." So-called fast food restaurants, fast cars, TV dinners, and TV instant replays are all a part of this mentality of swiftly moving from a situation to escalated joy and extended happiness.

Last week, the reality of the culture of instant gratification bolted the nation into "culture shock" as the escalating joy of the space shuttle Challenger exploded just 75 seconds after lift-off, leaving us with the ultimate instant tragedy.

The disaster on that Tuesday morning took the lives of a "Rainbow Coalition" of Americans ranging from a black to white to Japanese-Americans, men and women, school teacher to scientist, civilian to military and from Jewish to Christian. The witnessing of the sudden and instant deaths of these seven American - five men and two women - was a shocking reminder of the down side to instant gratification and an example of the fragility of man's technological advances.

Ironically, at a time when the American

black family is once again being portrayed as an endangered species, primarily because of the absence of too many fathers and male role models in the home, we find in the ashes of the space shuttle Challenge a real meaningful role model - Dr. Ronald E. McNair. A native of Lake City, South Carolina and the only black in the seven-member shuttle crew, McNair is an excellent role model for both black and white youth alike.

Dr. McNair, a mission specialist of the Challenger space shuttle, was a physicist and laser expert. An honor graduate of N.C. A&T State University in 1971, McNair received a doctorate degree in physics from MIT in 1976. He was formerly employed in the physics department of Hughes Research Laboratories in southern California. He was then selected as one of three black astronauts and was the second of the three to fly a space shuttle mission. Dr. McNair leaves behind a wife and two small children. One youngster in Lake City recalled Dr. McNair said to him, "I am an astronaut and you can be whatever you want to be."

Americans all salute Dr. McNair and his six colleagues for giving their lives in the ever-dangerous quest for peaceful space exploration and advanced technology.

## The Positive Plight Of Blacks

Bill Moyers' recent shocking but not too surprising television documentary, "The Vanishing Family - Crisis in Black America," the National Urban League's "State of Black America - 1986," the 1984 Black Family Summit and Daniel Patrick Moynihan's 25-year-old study on the same basic issue all appear to have painted a negative picture of American blacks. Some newspaper columnists and anti-black organizations have taken parts of these reports out of context in order to support some negative viewpoints that they are seeking to convey about black people.

Even with this kind of negativism, the plight of black America can only begin to be improved if we as black people are willing to publicly discuss the issues and challenges we face because such discussion is the first step toward finding lasting solutions. Nevertheless, there is also a need to remind some of us and to inform others of us that all of black America is not caught in the web and grip of poverty, joblessness, out-of-wedlock parenthood and repeat generations of welfare dependence.

While we must all continue to be our brother's keeper, especially our poorer, less fortunate brothers, we must also announce to the nation that poverty, joblessness and welfare are not within the social fabric, life style and culture of all black Americans. It is important for blacks to know this as a motivation force for the self-esteem of many who lack hope. Whites, too, need to know that all of black America is not a welfare dependent sub-nation and that many blacks are, in fact, a part of the same

socioeconomic system that they (some white people) are in. Such knowledge will tend to encourage an increasingly larger number of white people to develop new and better attitudes about and behavior patterns toward black people.

As we put the past 40 years of the black experience in historic perspective, we should be able to see signs of real progress even within the context of our current dilemmas. In fact, 40 years ago as World War II was coming to an end, black Americans were beginning to emerge from the psychological chains of a "racist caste system." Alvin F. Poussaint and other social scientists have said,

In 1954 the U.S. Supreme Court struck down racially segregated public schools as being unconstitutional. This was a first major step in ending many white myths about blacks and set the stage for the civil rights struggle in the 1960s. This, too, was the beginning of black self-pride and black awareness.

From these humble beginnings, the number of black high school and college graduates grew and blacks secured jobs in trades and professions that in earlier years were not available to them. In the fields of science and technology we have astronauts; in religion, bishops; in education, school superintendents and university presidents. In politics, historic firsts: black Lt. Gov. of Virginia, L. Douglass Wilder, and a black Borough president of Manhattan, New York. Most important, even with the problems of 1986, people with initiative can exploit opportunity to make progress.

Miller Says:

## Blacks Should Recount Journey Up Socioeconomic Ladder

By Sherman N. Miller  
Special To The Post

Black History Month is a time for black Americans to recount their journey up America's socioeconomic ladder. I believe our celebrations should also highlight the significant contributions of many low key black unsung Christian heroes who are the backbone of black America's socioeconomic progress.

One of these black heroes was the late Milton W. Marshall of Wilmington, DE. He started out catching chickens in Dagsboro, DE, at a chicken factory and rose to own his own trucking company. But Marshall never let materialism become a god for him.

I wondered why Marshall dared to start a hauling company in the early 1950s when segregation and racial bias were overtly practiced.

"Milton wanted a little more out of life than somebody telling him what to do," says his widow, Thelma Marshall. "He wanted to get out and see if he could make it on his own. He did real well."

Yet Marshall did not hoard his wealth. He shared it.

Mrs. Marshall went on, "Milton had a big heart. If he



Sherman

could help you, he would help you...he would take time off and go out with those fellows and help them find what they were looking for."

Marshall firmly believed that there was only one standard on which to operate a business. He built a reputation for operating on mainstream standards.

"After business started picking up people began to find out they could trust him," says Mrs. Marshall. "The contractors, they call for trucks, he said he could get them. He would do it. If he couldn't do it, he would call them back and tell them he couldn't do it."

I felt compelled to learn what techniques Marshall used to talk to white contractors prior to the civil rights movement. I asked Mrs. Marshall to share his

"THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING ECONOMIC CLOUT IS OBVIOUS. CLOUT IS NOT MAINTAINED WHEN BLACK DOLLARS ARE GOING INTO BUSINESSES THAT PUT THE MONEY INTO THE SUBURBS INSTEAD OF BACK INTO THE BLACK COMMUNITY ECONOMY."

MICHIGAN CHRONICLE



Black's Destiny In Own Hands

## America Is Celebrating 100 Years Of Convenience, Luxury, Steady Growth

By Sabrina Johnson  
Special To The Post

The year was 1885, the place was Germany - Carl Benz successfully drove the first car which was a three-wheeler with a four-cycle gasoline engine. In 1886 Benz patented the DRP 37 435 which paved the way for the motor vehicle as a complete unit. Several years later, in 1895, the first United States automobile advertisement appeared, a Benz ad in The Motorcycle. It was sometime during those 10 years that Americans "fell in love" with the automobile. The love affair has grown into a tremendous business that now faces competition Carl Benz, Gottlieb Daimler or Charles Duryea dreamed of.

America and the world are celebrating 100 years of the car: 100 years of convenience, luxury and steady growth. In 1900 6,192 cars were built that increased with only two major backslides - the stock market crash and World War II. Last year, 1985, 2,204,704 cars were built in the U.S. alone. This figure does not include imports. Since 1979 the big 3 (General Motors Corp., Ford Motor Co., and Chrysler



Sabrina

Corp.) have sold 11.3 million cars. If the economy continues to be strong, the car manufacturers can look forward to a fourth year of healthy recovery.

Automobile competition now puts the buyer in the driver's seat and the world, not the industry is the driving force. For most of the 78 years since Henry Ford began selling the Model T, American car makers have had the world's market to themselves. In the late 1970s the domestic auto industry had to learn to co-exist with the inexpensive, fuel efficient Japanese imports. The 1980s bring additional com-

petition into the market. Yugoslavia and Korea have introduced more inexpensive import cars while Japan has stepped into the higher priced market long dominated by U.S. auto makers.

The new challenge for domestic auto makers is to make profitable cars that people want to buy. Why? Twenty-six auto makers compete in the American market. The big three are trying to win the race against 22 foreign firms selling cars. Last year American Motors Corporation was passed as the number four car maker by Honda of America Manufacturing, Inc., which the U.S. subsidiary now counts as a domestic company because it built 145,325 Accords in 1985 in Marysville, Ohio. Plus, it imported another 400,000+ from Japan.

Last year import car sales hit an all time high, selling 2.8 million cars in the domestic market - that is more than a quarter of the new car market. Data resources predict 34 percent by 1990. Which means that it is economically possible that import car makers' share of the marketplace could exceed 40 percent by 1990.

The bottom line to the scenario is that domestic auto makers face a possible 10 percent decrease in their market share in 1986: which breaks down to \$3 billion in lost profits and 300,000 in lost jobs - the equivalent of 2 1/2 Chrysler Corporations. That will have a tremendous and destructive impact on the economy.

Car competition is so tense that 10 years ago a popular car model could expect to sell 1.5 million units but today's can look to slightly over 400,000 in popular sales.

Domestic car makers are at a competitive disadvantage with the Japanese, who

build subcompacts for \$2,000 less than American subcompacts. Now Detroit is fighting back with computers to help close the five-year gap in design and introduction. It is forming joint ventures with foreign competitors.

Launching new projects that stand to revolutionize the auto business beginning with the design of a model ending with delivery to the customer.

Domestic car makers are also trying to overcome the reputation of inferior quality. Foreign car manufacturers have been successful in convincing customers that foreign made cars are better.

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