

Editorials

What Are Our Black Leaders Saying?

The Post has problems understanding what our black leaders are saying, especially those in education, when they refer to the controversial Proposition 48, a new academic rule the NCAA put in effect recently.

It was not too long ago when these same leaders were yelling to the entire world that black youth were graduating from the major colleges and universities without the basic knowledge of being able to read or write their own names.

When the NCAA responded with Proposition 48, a firm rule to improve the academic progress of the student-athletes at these same schools, the leaders began shouting just as loudly that our kids didn't have the ability to maintain a 2.0 grade point average in the core subjects.

Who do they think they're kidding. If given the same drive that motivates them to become exceptional performers on the athletic fields, black youngsters could and would perform equally as well in the classrooms.

It is our belief that black kids are not inferior in the classrooms or anywhere else and they will perform beyond expectation if encouraged to do so. Black leaders need to stop telling black kids they cannot achieve. For example, if you start telling a kid that he's no good when he's young he will grow up and prove that you were telling the truth. At the same time, if you told the same kid that he was someone important and should work hard to become a contributing citizen, he will accomplish that also. That's our belief.

Reap A Bonanza

The Post finds it disappointing that some black leaders in education have the opinion that Proposition 48 is a "blessing in disguise" for the Division II schools because these schools are not affected by the new rule. According to their beliefs, the small colleges, especially the predominantly black schools, will reap a bonanza with the overflow of youngsters with outstanding athletic abilities and very low performance records in the classrooms.

Bob Moorman, the distinguished gentleman who rules the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association from the position of commissioner, put this theory to rest when he cautioned: "Division II schools are not clearing houses for the academically unprepared." Moorman continued, "Some of these kids who can't read or write aren't going to be able to get into our schools, either. One thing you have to understand is that some of the standards in our schools may be higher than what these players have had on the outside."

The shocking fact is that our leaders in education are missing the boat by not looking seriously at the core of the problem. Our major problem as black people is not education as some will have you believe. Rather the problems that are plaguing our race center on pride. It's one thing to attend a predominantly white college or university in search of a quality education. However, if

if one does not feel good about himself and his race, he may find himself or herself attending a predominantly white school just for the brag rights or fraternizing with white people.

Nationally-famous correspondent Tony Brown says it best in his popular column, "No movement will ever be successful among blacks unless it first makes them feel good about being black. And no current program in this post-segregation era that is not economic in its orientation will succeed."

Perhaps if they'd spend as much time in search of a solution to the problem as they do in publicizing it, our kids would approach their college careers much better prepared for the challenge.

Black people comprise a nation of tremendous wealth. Our history reveals us to be an intelligent and imaginative people who have shown extreme courage, progress and productivity in breaking down the barriers of education as we achieved high levels in a variety of competitive areas.

Set Higher Goals

Yet blacks have difficult times in proving to blacks that they are capable of competing with any race on any level. Blacks must be taught to set higher goals, and develop group progress.

It's time for black leaders to combine their resources and blend their voices in a mighty chorus for the single purpose of gaining the right to control production and generate jobs for the people of their community.

They cannot achieve that by telling our youth or anyone else what they cannot do. Black leaders must teach unity in the black community that will focus on mutual progress. And, at the same time, they must point out that voting as an expression of unity, delivers power to the powerless, plus the fact of heavy black ballot in itself spells we are a nation within a nation.

Black leaders should be reminded that we are a nation within a nation of tremendous wealth and resources, not in comparison with the Caucasian race, of course. Our history reveals us to be intelligent people who have shown extreme courage, progress and productivity in not yielding to the forces of racism and repression.

Because we are a sports-loving people we have submitted to the thought that playing professional sports for large sums of monies is the quickest route to solvency. In the meantime, we've disregarded the fact that even if our kids can overcome the more than 2,500 to one chance of making it in the pros, they'll need a good education just to survive.

We therefore must commit ourselves to the task of making sure that our youth take education more seriously. We must see to it that they spend equal time in the study halls as they do on the athletic fields.

We must instill in them the importance of making a positive contribution to black history each day of their lives.

UNITED COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP...NEEDED NOW



LONG RANGE PLANNING SHOULD FIND BLACK BUSINESSES, PROFESSIONALS AND POLITICIANS TO THE FOREFRONT OF PLANNING IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY. IT IS ONLY BY ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CLOUT THAT ETHNIC GROUPS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ADVANCE.

Is President Reagan Dreaming Again?

By Sabrina Johnson
Special To The Post

Over a 100 years ago the mere idea of flying seemed ridiculous. Today, flying is one of the most popular modes of transportation.

More Americans fly to their destinations today than the '50s and '60s. The rapid growth in the industry has had an unnerving effect on the industry. Amid the hoopla of this industry growth, airlines have gone under, merged, changed direction, modified equipment; and to add to the multifariousness, President Reagan in his State of the Union Address spoke of a hypersonic jet that could fly from Washington to Tokyo in two hours. Was Reagan dreaming again? The world has just recovered from the "shock" of the Concorde flying from Washington or New York to London or Paris in some four hours seemed unrealistic.

Now they are telling the world that going to Tokyo from Washington can take less flying time than flying from Boston to Miami. No, Reagan is not dreaming again - the Pentagon and U.S. aerospace companies



Sabrina

have been working for several years toward making that vision a reality. The proposed aircraft has been dubbed with the name Orient Express, which would soar through the atmosphere into space and back, flying at 25 times the speed of sound. A little tough on the ears!

This "dream machine" is so real that Reagan showed a model of the space plane to students at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Annandale, Virginia.

The United States is not the only nation with such ambitious plans to develop new super fast commercial jets.

The day following Reagan's State of the Union Address, the British announced that it would provide research funds for a space plane called HOTOL (Horizontal Takeoff and Landing). The speed would be just as the Orient Express'. France joined the bandwagon with an announcement by Aero-spatiale, the state-owned aircraft company, to build a second generation of the Concorde so-called Son of Concorde. It is expected to fly at 2.2 times the speed of sound (about nine percent faster than its predecessor). The Son of Concorde will carry 200 passengers (double the capacity of the original).

Building the Orient Express will be one of the most aggressive challenges the U.S. aerospace industry has run into since putting men on the moon. Lockheed, Boeing and Rockwell have been working on the conceptual designs for the plane. The plane would take off from a conventional runway and fly into orbit like a rocket. In addition, it could launch satellites or shuttle passengers from coast to coast in 12 minutes. The ability of the plane to perform as such would come as a result of a new kind of engine that could perform both in the atmosphere and in space.

The military has its sights on the development primarily. The plane could carry star wars nuclear defense weapons into orbit. And it can be designed to compete with NASA's space shuttle, lifting payloads into orbit for about \$100 a pound, compared to the space shuttles' fee of \$2,000 a pound. Also the Orient Express can be a viable option for commercial carriers by boosting travel and commerce between the United States and Pacific rim countries.

How much will it cost to fly the Orient Express? Wall Street aviation experts speculate the cost of a one way ticket from New York to London being \$3,000 or \$4,000. Compared to the cost of a seat on the Concorde at a cost of \$2,500 for the same route.

Within a five-year period, the government may spend as much as \$800 million on space plane research. The leading U.S. manufacturers of commercial jets - Boeing, Lockheed and McDonnell Douglas - are the top contenders to construct the hypersonic plane.

Miller Says

Dr. Rolark: "If It Is To Be It Is Up To Me"

By Sherman N. Miller
Special To The Post
At the Bowie State College (Bowie, MD) Spring Convocation Celebration of Black History Month, I came to appreciate the importance of blacks deciding what programs are needed in the black community. The keynote address by Dr. Calvin Rolark, President of the United Black Fund (Washington, DC), was centered around who has the ultimate responsibility for saving Black America. His speech, a borderline homily laden with anecdotes and rhymes, etched a Black American self reliance picture on the minds of his audience.

Proclamations as, "The only savior of black people will be black people" poured forth from him. Rolark was not satisfied with merely making these proclamations; he had the audience repeat them several times until it appeared they accepted his doctrine.

As Rolark revealed the tools that his newspaper, The Washington Informer, underwent to become the first United States of America weekly newspaper to sponsor a Spelling Bee, I knew his anecdotes were strategically



Sherman

interjected to encourage blacks to challenge the system to respond to their needs. Rolark pointed out that Spelling Bees encourage people to read more. His comment had special significance because he says that recent reports reveal that approximately 50 percent of the Black American youth over 18 years old are considered functional illiterates who cannot read above the fourth grade level.

Although Rolark was offering the community a map for progress, his job was made easier by the beautiful singing of the Bowie State College choir. I was very touched by the singing of Bowie student Audrey Mikel. I think she has a voice that belongs on Broadway. Mikel possesses the rare talent that permits her to titillate the

audience's psyche whilst she projects an appearance of youthful innocence.

After the convocation, I asked Rolark about the goals of the United Black Fund. He says there are two types of corporations, profit and nonprofit, in a capitalist society. Rolark contends that blacks have not yet mastered the sophistication of buying stocks so they have very little to say about the running of the top 100 American corporations. He thinks blacks must gain control of their not-for-profit corporations so that significant black community needs not fully appreciated by mainstream American can be met.

"If we are to survive in this racist society, we must develop our not-for-profit institutions. We've got to focus on our SILVER RIGHTS," says Rolark.

Rolark believes that black Americans should emulate other American ethnic groups. He averred that B'nai Brith played a major role in Jewish Americans' upward mobility.

As I listened to Rolark review some of the programs that the United Fund underwrites, I asked him to explain how his organization avoided jurisdictional con-

flicts with The United Way of the National Capitol Area. He says the two organizations run joint annual fund raising drives and they prevent groups from applying to both agencies at the same time.

If groups want to set up a chapter of the United Black Fund in their community, they can contact Dr. Calvin W. Rolark at United Black Fund, 1625 I St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

Rolark ended our discussion with one of the many proverbs that continuously poured out from him. He deemed it, "Ten words with 20 letters."

"IF IT IS TO BE IT IS UP TO ME."

NBC Documentary

Students from Irwin Avenue Elementary School will appear in an NBC documentary entitled "Taking Children Seriously." The one-hour program will be broadcast in Charlotte by WPCQ on Sunday, March 16, at 1 p.m.

Edwin Newman is the narrator. An NBC crew visited Irwin Avenue in October and videotaped interviews with a number of students. The documentary looks at how Americans are caring for children from the viewpoint of children. It emphasizes that children feel the need for someone to listen to their views and to take them seriously.

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