Our Party Is Alive And "Blooming"

Dear Editor:

Last spring when we last met together in convention, our party reminded me of all the trees and plants in Charlotte. We had experienced a hard, chilling, killing winter. Limbs and branches on the plants were dead, and there was a question in our minds then whether the plants and our party could survive.

The plants did--and so did we.

Look around you today in Charlotte and see those plants that were limping along last year. They are in full bloom today. Thanks to the loving care of many of our gardeners, and the strong roots, hidden from view, that would not let those plants die. Thank goodness.

And so is our party alive today--and blooming. Thanks to each of you, and to all those who form the strong roots of our party. Thanks to the leadership of Cathy Hughes and Ron Harper, of Syd Thompson our 9th District Chair, of Wade Smith and Jim Van Hecke and Linda Ashendorf, our state leaders, of young Democratic leaders in high positions--Ward, Lecil, Betsy, Anita--optimistic hard workers all, Democratic men and women and seniors and teens pushing hard through a tough year and now beginning to bloom. And all of you, making precinct meetings happen--even when they didn't want to.

Blooming--with great success in the city elections. Office holders (from the Lt. Gov. and Mayor to the Soil and Water Commissioners) that we can be proud of--who are so good that the whole county looks to this community as an example.

We have a group of candidates in whom we can take great pride--this spring and this fall.

The question of last year having been answered: We are alive and blooming. What is this year's question? I think it is the question that must face every group of survivors of any great tragedy--genocide, the Holocaust, the great Depression--can we move beyond a continuing preoccupation with merely surviving -- and turn our faces toward the future again?

Dare we begin again to dream? Dare we begin again to dream?

Can we again focus on the way things could be and not just the way things are? Will any of us be able to stand up and shout, "I have a dream."

Dare we begin again to dream?

Do you remember Dickens' old Christmas tale, "A Christmas Carole?" Scrooge, a name that will live in infamy. The ghosts of Christmas past, present, and future. We forget the story sometimes and just remember the characters. But it is a serious story and terrifying one, in which a man is plucked out of his preoccupation with his present day-to-day ritual and thrown into a confrontation with how his life looks and will look to others.

It was only through that experience that Scrooge was able to see how his own self centeredness was so self destructive.

If we could move into the future as Scrooge did and see the results of our actions and inactions today, what would we see? What would we see 10, 15, or 25 years from now?

Dare we begin again to dream?

Will we see another generation of children locked in 80 percent unemployment in Piedmont Courts because their mothers were locked in poverty and nobody knew how to break the cycle?

Will we see a whole people handicapped by an inadequate education, because we cared more about ourselves than our future?

Will we see our free enterprise competitive economic system destroyed and the economic power concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer giant companies because nobody fought to keep the market place open to the little guy?

Will we see another generation of youth whose bodies and spirits have been broken in wars that no one will remember starting and no one will know how to stop?

Will we see a nation of people broken by dependence on drugs and crime, because no one had the courage, vision and strength to beat them?

Will we see a nation void of religious spirit and commitment--destroyed by a rigid insistence that everyone worship the same way?

Will we see a smoky land of dirty air and smelly water and poison earth and dead trees, because it was too complicated and expensive to protect the environment?

Remember the shock and horror of Scrooge when he saw his future as it would be if he did not change it. How can our shock and horror be any less when we see our future as it will be if we do not change it?

Dare we begin again to dream?

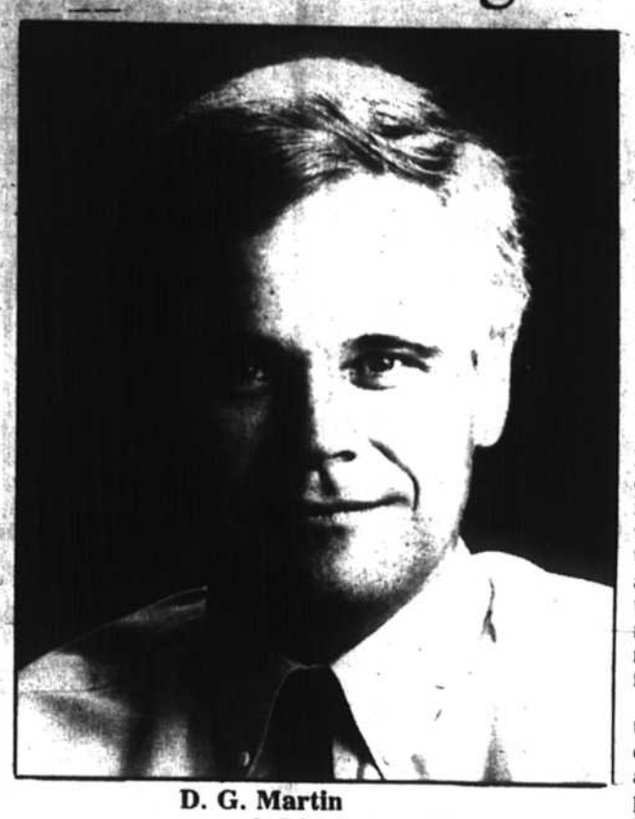
To dream of a country where enonomic strength and opportunity and free enterprise is open to everybody--a country that is strong and peaceful--a country of educated people --a country that fights the backbreaking absence of spirit of those locked in the cycle of poverty and unemployment--a country of strong and diverse religious spirit--a country of clean air and water and blooming trees and plants.

We can have it for our children and grandchildren and ourselves--with hard work and planning and winning the right elections. We can earn the right to stand up 10, 15, or 25 years from now to say, "We really made a difference."

We can do all of that if we this day begin again to dream!

Dare we begin again to dream? Answer with me - we are not afraid to dream again.

Sincerely,
D.G. Martin



D. G. Martin
.....9th District candidate

Jim Crow Resurrected

Dear Editor:

On the 27th day of March, 1986, I entered I-85 in the beautiful city of Charlotte, N.C., going South Atlanta. I made a stop at 2640 Little Rock Rd. (Sunoco Station) to buy gas. While I pumped my gas, my wife and our two small grandchildren got out of the car to use the rest room in the building.

They went to the left side of the building, walking away from the pump area and met one male and female (white) coming out of the rest rooms with the keys to each rest room in hand. After they turned the keys in to the station manager or keeper, etc., my wife asked the manager or keeper for the keys, which he refused to give, release, surrender, etc. He said there were two toilets over on the other side and you don't need a key.

Entering these toilets my wife found that they were portable heads or similar to that. Besides being filthy, it was also dangerous (unsafe) for small children to use.

The service station worker who came and stood by me while I pumped my gas, said that the two restrooms in the building were under construction or repair. This I fail to believe- some can and some can't (use the toilets). I thought Jim Crow died "forever."

Thank you,
Cornelius Fedrick Sr.
16713 Kallin Ave.
Cleveland, Ohio 44128

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Speaking Out

Thanks To Thousands Of Carolinians

Dear Editor:

Thanks to thousands of Carolinians who answered the call to "Share the Warmth," hundreds of needy families were warmer this winter because they received help with their heating bills.

Four months ago, Duke Power asked customers to contribute up to $10 to a fund that our shareholders would match; the plan was to donate the money to assistance agencies across the Carolinas to help the needy pay for heating, regardless of the type of fuel they used.

The response was more than we could have dreamed. During the three and a half months that the program was operating, Carolinians showed their true spirit of caring by contributing $332,719 to the Share the Warmth fund. With our shareholders' match, the total disbursed among 49 counties was $665,483. In Mecklenburg County the Crisis Assistance Ministry received $86,413.78 to meet its commitment to folks who needed assistance this winter. In all, 70 agencies in the Piedmont Carolinas received funding through the Share the Warmth program.

The news media's help in spreading the word about this program also contributed to its success, and we say a heartfelt "thank you" to the Charlotte Post for its part in this effort.

Sincerely,
F.E. West Jr.
Duke Power Company

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