

Editorials

The Charlotte Post

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CIAA Vs. Division I

A headline sports story in The Charlotte Post on March 26 raised the question, "Is the CIAA Ready For Division I? Without even a second thought, and even before reading the article we offered a resounding "No!" Our immediate response is based largely on three things: money, money, and money. Money to build and maintain first class facilities, money for athletic scholarship, and money for top quality coaches and tutors for the athletes.

Having made these observations, we are reminded that even with more more money the CIAA schools would not fair well in NCAA Division I. Why? Again we can start with money; that is, no matter how much money the black schools might have, the larger, predominantly white schools will have even more. Secondly, these other institutions have the best of both worlds. They can recruit and get the bats white and the best black athletes. This is an option that the black colleges don't have.

The proof of the pudding on these hard realities is that when black colleges have the rare, and very rare, opportunity to compete against the predominantly white schools, they do so poorly. For example, N.C. A&T State has been to the NCAA Basketball Tournament at least four of the past five years and has on each occasion list in the first round, usually by rather big scores. Furthermore, even when black colleges are playing white institutions of comparable size they still usually come out as losers. Johnson C. Smith lost its post season basketball game this year to a Kentucky school by a wide margin. More easily observable is the fact that the black colleges that participate annually in the small college WBTV Basketball Classic rarely if ever will and none has even won the championship. Again, it's primarily a matter of the best of both worlds that the black schools are competing against.

More important than anything that we have said thus far as to why black colleges, public or private, should not even consider moving to an NCAA Division I level is that their considerable limited resources and energies must be devoted to far more important aspects and priorities of institutions of higher learning.

For example, a recent study revealed that a disproportionately high percentage of the students at all the black, four-year colleges in North Carolina, both public and private, and a few of the white schools, too, made relatively low scores on the most recent National Teachers' Examination (NTE). This somewhat historic pattern has resurfaced the possibility at such schools losing their state-certified teacher training programs.

While the many supporters of black higher educational institutions in North Carolina may take some comfort in that North Carolina ranked near the bottom in scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) taken by college-bound students last year, the NTE results have helped to resurface again the role and place of the five state-supported, predominantly black colleges in North Carolina. In

June, 1986, The News and Observer of Raleigh suggested the establishment of a broad-based commission to make recommendations on how to reduce or eliminate some or all of these historically black schools.

Furthermore, predominantly black colleges, which historically are in a never-ending struggle for adequate financial resources, are now facing a double-barreled problem also involving money. While there has been an overall 11.3% increase in black student enrollment at the full 16 campuses of the UNC system, pressure on the predominantly white institutions to recruit more blacks means in part that at least some of the black schools are getting less talented students. This situation results in more money needed for such things as remedial programs to offset weak high school academic backgrounds.

Combined with drastic cuts in federal student grants and loans many black youth are being discouraged from seeking a college education. The numerical significance of the problem is in the fact that the typical black family income even in 1987 is only \$57 for every \$100 for a white family.

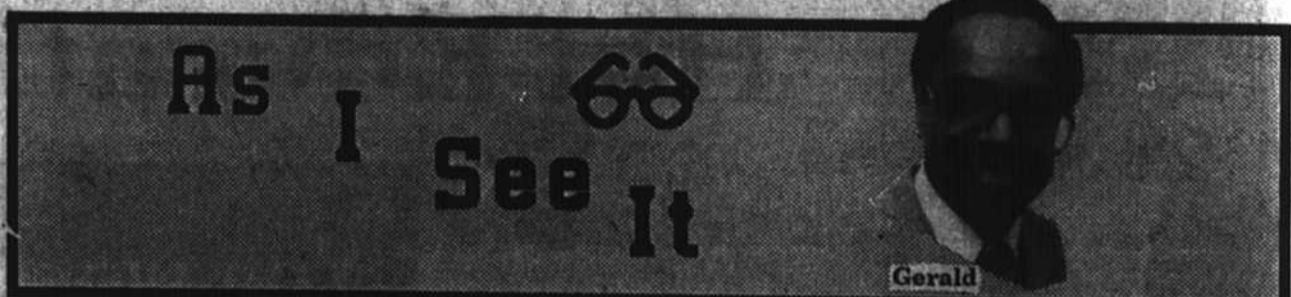
With these kinds of problems and challenges, and their implications for black higher education at the dawn of the 21st century, black colleges and universities have far more important things to sink more resources into than a preoccupation with advancing to Division I level collegiate sports.

Let us hastily add that we are strong supporters of collegiate sports programs. We believe such activities are vital to the moral building of an institution's supporters, it helps develop well-rounded students and helps them to appreciate the value of healthy competition. We believe CIAA schools would do better to reassess what they have and begin to improve on that instead of thinking that they can ever realistically compete with the UCLAs, Michigans, and UNC Chapel Hills of the collegiate sports world.

Undoubtedly, some CIAA schools would be better off eliminating costly football programs. At many large universities football and basketball are the two revenue producing sports that help to subsidize other intercollegiate sports. At far too many of our small, black schools football and, sometimes basketball, must themselves be subsidized just to reach a cost break-even point.

Let's face it, the CIAA is far from being as strong as it might be, does not compete well with non-conference foes, lacks the resources to elevate to a Division I NCAA, and has within its member institutions too many challenges of a non-sports nature that should be the major focus of these institutions' concerns. Lastly, for those of you who are wondering, only one out of every 50 college athletes makes it into the professional ranks and very few of these are from the CIAA.

We applaud the CIAA for what it has done for black youth, the development of black coaches and the recognition of black higher education--and we encourage more of the same with some shifting of priorities without dreams of Division I and contentment in improving on what they have where they are.



Covert Racism: Alive And Well

The remarks made by Al Campanis on "Nightline" last thursday night still looms in the hearts and minds of many. The fact that he made the remarks was shocking. The fact that he had no idea that his remarks were racially destructive was depressing.

It is this type of subtle racism that has created a bankruptcy of progress for Black Americans in this country. Individuals in decision making positions have developed a mindset that predetermines an individual's ability to produce at a certain level based on skin color.

This type of covert racism easily explains why less than 2 percent of baseball's nearly nine-hundred management personnel are minorities. It easily explains why, after 40 years since Jackie Robinson broke the color line in baseball, little progress has been made to truly integrate the sport.

Unfortunately, this type of exclusionary practice is not limited to baseball. It is an attitude that exists in all walks of life. It may help explain why so few Black Americans or other minorities have failed to successfully climb the corporate ladder.

The message Mr. Campanis' remarks sent to Black Americans was indeed a sad commentary for the land of equal opportunity. It said in a nutshell, if you aren't management material in a field where you have over 40 per-

cent participation, then you might as well forget any opportunity in a field where you have less than 10 percent participation.

Mr. Campanis' remarks clearly embarrassed all of professional sports. It has precipitated conversations in the executive offices of major league teams. Only time will tell if the conversations are meaningful enough to cause some positive results. It is my guess that it will create short term appeasements rather than long term solutions.

The truth of the matter is the front offices of professional sports' franchises will react to socially redeem themselves. History has proven time and time again that social redemption is short term in a capitalistic society. Long term redemption requires capital (in God we trust, all others pay cash).

The root of this problem as with businesses is the lack of Black ownership. With no Black owners in the 'good ole boy' network, my predecessors will be faced with this same dilemma 40 years from now. Hence, Black Americans are at the mercy of the social redemptive values of a white majority society.

Ask yourself this question, what if baseball's management had said "ole Al is right, you 'darkies' are unfit to manage in this league". What could we do as a people? nothing!

Yes, the players would quit

and we might strike the games, but so what. They played the game without us before and they could do it again. So, what leverage do we have? None!

Why? Because we don't control any purse strings, if enough Blacks owned enough diverse businesses, we would be in a position, either directly or indirectly, to impact the sport. The players have to wear uniforms, the game requires bats and balls which require raw materials like wood and rubber, the stadium has concessions, the teams have to travel, the list goes on and on. I am willing to bet that Blacks get less than 1 percent of all indirect money spent by all of sports.

We have a choice. We can continue to rely on the Government (the last 6+ years have shown us what that gets you) and social organizations to help us make it. Or we can encourage our own to get in business and then support them.

The ball and chain of economic deprivation that holds our community back can only be lifted through economic self reliance. economic self reliance is our guarantee that more progress for our people will be made during the next 100+ years, than has been made during the last 100+.

It is our only weapon against the covert discrimination that still exist in this country.

Will Daughter's Husband Be Black?

By Sherman N. Miller
Special To The Post

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. proclaimed, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by their character." Yet this dream still remains foreign to many blacks because their efforts appear directed at the preservation of racial purity.

The March issue of the prestigious, black magazine EBONY had an example of the unnecessary price that black females are paying to avoid joining America's melting pot. In an article, "25 Ways To Find A Good Man," the writer offered a bone-chilling statistic but no solutions that addressed the problem raised.

"According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are 1.5 million more black women than black men in the U.S.," reported EBONY. Yet this EBONY article offered merely stereotypical solutions when their data demands extraordinary efforts.

The above statistic suggests that no matter what black females do under the current system there is always going to be 1.5 million without a po-



Sherman N. Miller

tential male. That is, there just are not enough black males to go around. Thus, black females wishing to get married will have to either push for polygamy, seek mates in other ethnic groups, or marry foreign, black males.

Polygamy and interracial marriage are very radical ideas but a Pennsylvania white chap says some black professional women have let pragmatism dictate their thinking. He made this revelation on a flight from Denver, CO, to Philadelphia where he was returning from a five-week vacation. This chap claimed that black wom-

en studying to become doctors are dating white males because they recognize the severe shortage of professional black males.

As the airplane rounded the Philadelphia airport, I recalled an old friend remorsefully reporting that a divorced, black woman, with whom we had grown up, had just married a white fellow. On the other hand, I have observed or personally known, for years, interracial couples where the wife is black. I, therefore, conclude that these interracial marriages have about as good a chance as any other modern American marriage of surviving.

This, a dichotomy which presently haunts the black community is this: Contrary to blacks' diligent efforts to become assimilated into the Mainstream American culture they are trying dearly to forge a cultural link with Africa.

Will the current shortage of males be sufficient reason to make interracial marriage commonplace? Or will the marriage brokers find a boon in arranging marriages between foreign, black males and black, American females?

