

Historic Leaders Agree On Strong Sense Of Self-Esteem

Malcolm X and Dr. Martin Luther King stood upon the podium of this nation in the 1960's like two modern-day Moseses and bid America to "Let my people go!" Though differing sharply in theology, politics, and rhetoric, these historic leaders were in total agreement on two points.

The first was that Black people would never be totally and completely free until we regained a sense of collective self-esteem--until we felt that we are somebody. Thus King declared, "Psychological freedom, a firm sense of self-esteem, is the most powerful weapon against a long night of physical slavery." Malcolm X echoed the same thought when he said, "What makes other people get around barriers and obstacles is that they have a self-identity."

The second point Malcolm X and Dr. King agreed upon was that our history holds the key to helping us develop a sense of worth and self-esteem. "History books in America have denied the contribution of Negroes and intensified the Negro's sense of worthlessness," wrote King. Malcolm X agreed, "Just as the

tree within roots is dead, a people without history are also dead."

Within that historic context, Black History Month becomes a time for us to remember who we were, so we can become who we ought to be. It is time to remember where we came from, so we can know where we need to go. Walter Yates, former dean of Hood Seminary in Salisbury, put it very simply, "We can no more talk about what we don't know, than come back from where we ain't been."

Unfortunately, Black history is still not taught in our schools and Black scholars attempting to teach our history are often ridiculed, and at best not taken seriously. The erasing or remarking of Black History is as old as the earliest American history book and as recent as the newest one. Even we sometimes find it difficult to believe that Blacks have made and are making significant contributions to America and the world.

The fact is that our history does not begin the degradation of slavery in America, but it begins with dignity in Africa,

Perspectives From The Pulpit

By Rev. Bernard Sullivan
Pastor, St. Stephens AME Zion



where all things began. Our homeland is the cradle of civilization. That's a historical fact we should be proud of. Africa is the land where the first alphabet was created. That's another historical fact that should make us hold our heads high. Africa is where agriculture began, the first library was built and where architecture became an artform. And yes, Africa is the home of Rameses The Great. These are all historical facts that should make us feel good about ourselves and our heritage.

Dr. King and Malcolm X realized that any people develop a healthy self-esteem when they feel they are somebody because of their history. This month when we set aside time to recognize our historical contributions, we should also take time to bask in the pride that we should feel because of our contributions.

We should recognize we are somebody because a Black man, Benjamin Banneker, invented the traffic light and made morning rush hour less hectic and chaotic for all Americans, black and white.

We should recognize we are somebody, because we would not have ample blood supplies without the pioneering work into blood plasma of another black genius, Dr. Charles Drew.

We should tell our children to hold their heads high because Cleopatra of the Nile was Black and so was Beethoven, the world-famous composer, and

Hannibal one of the world's greatest army generals.

Finally, we should make it a point to learn as much as we can about the history and teach it to our children, not just this month, but every month of the year, realizing that what we learn is not only for the knowledge, but also for our self-esteem as a people.

WFGN-AM Promotes Bridges

By MILLICENT LINK
Alliance Staff Writer

Eddie Bridges, a native of Shelby, was recently promoted as general manager for gospel radio station, WFGN-AM in Gaffney, S.C.

WFGN is the first full-time gospel radio station in upstate South Carolina.

Prior to his promotion, Bridges was program musical director for the station.

Bridges says, "It was by accident that I am in the radio industry today. I got my first taste of radio in the navy, while on board a large aircraft carrier with a radio and television station."

After service, he enrolled in the Carolina School of Broadcasting in Charlotte.

"Working for a gospel radio station has been very different, but exciting. The listening audience seems to be more appreciable of the content of music," says the new general manager.

Bridges has been in the radio industry for nearly 17 years.

Prior to coming to WFGN, he was a disc jockey for WOHS and WXIK in Shelby.

Bridges says he wants to provide his listeners with the best in gospel. "The public's response to the gospel program has been great. I have receive calls from teenagers to age 85," he says.

Bridges works with a very small staff. "Everyone has been very cooperative. We work as a team. Everybody pitches in to help," was Bridges comment.

He is a member of the Cleveland County Professional Business Association (C.C.B.P.A.), and the National Association of Broadcasters.

Bridges and his wife Gloria reside in Shelby.

Continued From 13B.

Floyd Speaks At Friendship

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Eddie Bridges

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