

Lonise Bias' Tragedy, Hope



DG Martin

One-On-One

She looked like a teenager. But her grown-up son died three years ago. Lonise Bias. Do you remember her son? Len Bias. Almost everybody remembers Len Bias. The picture of the happy first draft choice of the Boston Celtics: That bright smile flashing across the photo showing him holding his new team's jersey. Prospects of a multi-million dollar contract and a long career as a professional basketball player. Role model. We remember. The crazy, stupid death. Drugs confirmed.

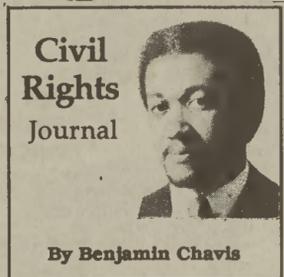
Bias gone. Dead. Cold. It settled in on us like a quiet winter snowstorm--the realization that drugs were bringing down our best. We understood, at that moment, that the drugs that killed Len Bias could kill our country, too. We have not forgotten Len Bias. But why would his mother come to North Carolina to talk to a group of college students and administrators at a recent conference on alcohol awareness sponsored by the state ABC commission? Mrs. Lonise Bias answered that question. "I didn't come to eulogize Len Bias. But God took one man to save millions. Len Bias has done more in death than he could have ever done in life." "Get to the root of the problem" said Mrs. Bias. The problem of drug and alcohol abuse on college campuses is not drugs and alcohol, according to Mrs. Bias. It is the negative feelings and low morals of many college kids. Their low valuation of their own selves makes them susceptible to believing the big lies that bring down so many young peo-

ple. What are the "big lies?" Here are some of those she mentioned: If you can just get new clothes (or a new hairstyle, or a new car, etc.) you will be happy. If you join the right group, you will be happy. If you do what the rest of the group is doing, you will have a good time. You have the worst problem in the world. If you have sex you will feel so good. These are the big lies, according to Mrs. Bias, that college kids often believe. Seeking popularity, kids begin a path of self destruction that often leads to alcohol abuse and drug use. What does Mrs. Bias suggest that the kids--and the rest of us--do? "If you want to be popular, first love yourself. Get to know yourself. And don't believe the lies." The kids loved her. They listened and gave her enthusiastic responses. And if they really believe what she said, maybe Len Bias and all his dreams will not have died in vain.

U.S. Immigration Policy Needs Change

Now that a new Commissioner of the U. S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has finally been confirmed, it is hoped that the cries of thousands of persons seeking immigration or an adjustment in their INS status will receive timely and fair responses. There have been many allegations concerning racism and discrimination involving the process of immigration to the United States, particularly for those persons from Latin American, African and other nations from the developing world. In addition, there has been gross discrimination aimed particularly at undocumented workers who labor throughout the nation under often difficult and inhuman standards.

The news from the city of Los Angeles concerning current U. S. Immigration laws and the plight of undocumented workers sheds a ray of hope for thousands. Los Angeles has taken the lead on this issue by establishing a formal program to help find jobs for day laborers, most of whom are undocumented workers whom the U. S. Immigration and Naturalization Service would like to deport. Most of the workers in this pilot program are Hispanic. Having a job is critical to making it in this society. Despite the myth of laziness of the immigrant community, thousands of persons come to the United



Civil Rights Journal

By Benjamin Chavis

States not to steal, not to loathe, but to make an honest day's work and to make a contribution to society. The whole concept of "illegal aliens" has been used to systematically discriminate against certain immigrants, again particularly those immigrants who are non-European racial and ethnic. According to the New York Times the city of Los Angeles plan to facilitate the finding of jobs for day laborers "is technically legal despite its clear challenge to the 1986 Immigration Law, under which it is illegal to hire illegal aliens." In many cities the INS has carried out raids on sites where day laborers gather. To be sure, the present policies and laws on immigration need to be made more humane as well as the enforcement of present immigration restrictions needs to be done even handedly and fairly without ra-

cial discrimination. Many cities particularly in Texas, Illinois, Florida, New York and in California will be monitoring the Los Angeles experiment. The success of this project may provide a unique bridge to change some of the other discriminatory practices of the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

We agree with many immigration rights organizations that all laborers in this nation should be treated with dignity and respect. We caution the INS not to attack the outreach of the city of Los Angeles to members of its community who simply want to work and have decent living conditions. We agree with the Coalition for Humane Immigration Rights based in Los Angeles as they have challenged the hypocrisy and racism of current U. S. Immigration procedures. Ms. Linda Mitchell of the Coalition has stated, "you can either hunt them down or you can integrate them into your community... if you deny them health care, schooling and the right to work, you will just further impoverish them." Now is the time for all Americans to work harder to make this society not a place divided by racist stereotypes and institutionalized alienation but a place where we all can work together and live together to improve the lot of all humanity.

Strip Deceit From The Budget Deficit

By SEN. TERRY SANFORD
Special To The Post

The annual increase in the national debt is the deficit; all else is cover up. It is necessary to remove Social Security from budget calculations because this prevents our knowing the true amount of our deficits. Deficits have not been going down. The amount of Social Security reserves have been going up each year, giving us the illusion of debt reduction. Social Security also needs the protection that separation will provide. Right now we are spending the reserves for general purposes as fast as they come in, jeopardizing future payments to Social Security beneficiaries. It is not deficits we are trying

to reduce, as such. It is the piling up of debt -- secret debt -- that we are trying to stop and then to reduce. In a year or two we will be paying more for interest to service the debt than we pay for national defense. I do not know how we will get the debt under control, but I do know that the first step is an honest report of how much it is. My amendment, already prepared to be added to the debt limit legislation, will strip all of the deceit from our budget process. It will define "deficit" as the "annual increase" in the debt subject to limit on which we will vote.

It is imperative to remove Social Security from our budget calculations. Taking Social Security off budget, however, is not enough. We will still not reveal the full size of the deficit. Adjusting the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings reduction goals by the amount of Social Security removed will still leave a sizable amount of the deficit covered up, and will not get us to a zero deficit -- not ever. If we want to eliminate the deficits, we must have the backbone to chip away at the full deficit figure. We must stop the funny business we have used to cover up the deficit. It is not deficits we are trying

The Seasons Have Changed, But Little Else In Warehouse Workers' Complaint

By TERRY WALLACE
and BILLY RODDEY
Special To The Post

Last spring we contacted you about our problems at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools' Supply Warehouse. The Charlotte Post gave excellent coverage to the entire story, including the history and half-truths in responses by members of the school board and the administration. We have been asked over and over again by readers, "What finally happened?" We have also been given verbal support and encouragement by blacks who work in the system who know the unfairness of this situation and have often experienced similar treatment as employees of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. At every employment level there have been blacks who shared their mistreatment, and encouraged us to "hang-in-there and pursue the matter." This group included principals, teachers, assistant principals, central office administrators, and even former principals and administrators. Each had a story to tell of racism, intimidation, and discrimination that destroyed their faith and trust and placed them in a helpless, hope-

less, and demoralized state. Because The Post was such a strong voice in investigating and reporting all of the facts, we wanted to tell the Post "what finally happened" in hopes that you will share this with the readers. We have shown much courage and encouragement. To answer the question, "What finally happened to our request to appeal to the school board," the answer is NOTHING. As the Post pointed out, Ashley Hogewood, School Board Chairman, made a decision to deny us a hearing, saying that we used the wrong procedure. We knew that this was inaccurate because Mrs. Thelma Johnson handled our complaints and the investigation, and we used the same procedure that others have used who requested and were granted an appeal. He later told the school board that no report was made on the investigation and that our complaints were settled by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. He further stated that when workers file a complaint with Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the in-house process stops. All of this was false. Our conclusion was that because we are black warehouse

workers rather than black professionals, he has no intentions of being bothered so he misled the board and distorted the truth. We questioned why Mr. Hogewood took it upon himself to deny the hearing in the first place, without ever bringing it to the other board members. Nevertheless, in a memo from him on May 18, 1989, sent after we wrote him a memo on May 12, 1989, and told him that our issues had not been settled, he agreed to discuss our situation with Dr. Relic, Superintendent, and Mr. Battle, Vice-Chairman, and let us know about the hearing. WE ARE STILL WAITING for Mr. Hogewood. He has not responded or granted us the hearing we're entitled to although five months have passed since his letter. He has ignored us and lied to us, but the problem has not gone away. We remain second class workers with nowhere to go to bring a change to the oppressive conditions which have been known to administrators and board members for years. We are dismayed and confused by Mr. Hogewood's actions and leadership. We expected an

Letters To The Post

Encouragement For Gantt To Run

Dear Editor: It was a pleasure to read Tony Brown's column (Oct. 26) regarding the newest evidence that we're all descendants from black "Eve", symbolic, I suppose, of the commonality of men and women--whether we like it or not. I hope to do observational research in Africa if I live long enough and I'm glad to know I'm returning, so to speak, to the "Garden of Eden," the cradle of us all. I've always suspected there was some strong genetic evidence lurking around, trying to tell us what we already

know and feel--our "differences" are largely the result of economic inequities. It's good to read and hear about changes in Charlotte, even when so much remains the same. I was grateful Harvey Gantt didn't involve himself in another mudslinger with Sue Myrick. He ought to involve himself with a real pro--that other Jesse, Mr. Helms. You'd have my vote because you think globally. Just go to the people, especially the little folks who don't know you. There's 35 percent of the white

vote out there, if you know how to find it. You charm white women, and you are less threatening than many black men to white establishment males. Even if you lose, remember: Jesse Helms is largely remembered all over the U.S. for destroying character. Eventually, he'll reap those evil seeds. In some ways, I see his opponents as real heroes. So if you think and feel the time is right--"Do the right thing."
MAGGIE BRAUN
Carbondale, Illinois

An Apology For TV Comments

The writer is principal at J.T. Williams Junior High School. Dear Editor: During a recent interview with Tom Brokaw of NBC News and in the presence of a reporter from The Charlotte Observer, I used an inappropriate word in response to a question. Although I realized my mistake immediately and apologized to my superintendent

and area superintendents in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, to the staff of our school, to our PTSA Board and to our school committee, I believe it is also necessary for me to apologize to the community. I deeply regret my choice of words and wished as soon as they left my lips that I could erase them. I also regret any embarrassment that I have

caused my school community, former educators at J.T. Williams Junior High, and parents of our students. I have invested my heart and soul in our students and staff and take my position as a role model very seriously. I assure the community, our staff and our students that they can count on me not to let them down in the future.
VICKI HAMILTON

WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

Let us hear your comments, ideas and opinions. Write to:

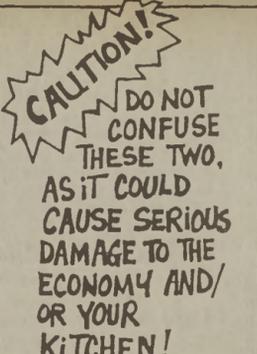
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FOUND IN NORTH AMERICA, THIS SPECIES DOES NOT BELONG TO ANY ONE POLITICAL PARTY OR OFFICE. FORTUNATELY, IT TASTES GREAT AND IS MORE FILLING...



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FOUND IN WASHINGTON, THIS PECULIAR SPECIES SPENDS MOST OF ITS TIME HIDING AUTOMATIC PAY RAISES, IGNORING DEFICIT SPENDING, AND RAISING YOUR TAXES! USUALLY LEAVES A BAD TASTE IN YOUR MOUTH...

CAUTION!
DO NOT CONFUSE THESE TWO, AS IT COULD CAUSE SERIOUS DAMAGE TO THE ECONOMY AND/OR YOUR KITCHEN!
KINDA MAKES YOU WONDER IF THERE IS ANY DIFFERENCE!