

OPINION

LETTERS TO THE POST

Reggie Hubbard did the city proud

I would like to add my congratulations to the many other congrats, that Mr. Reginald Hubbard has received for being on "America's Black Forum" this past Sunday.

To those few that do not rise at 7 a.m. every Sunday morning to watch the positive sides of African America and to hear opinions of and on African Americans by positive African Americans (WSOC), you really missed a most exciting weekly news show. The show is hosted by Julian Bond and other talented African American reporters.

After all the years of watching "America's Black Forum" and seeing the great things going on throughout African America it was really great to see Charlotte on the show. It was nice to see Charlotte in a positive light and not addressing anything negative. But we know what the dark side of doing business in Charlotte is, ask the many thousands of us that have been blatantly discriminated against, per the MWBE disparity study done by D. J. Miller for our model city, the Queen City. The vast disparity in the South, between the haves and have nots was even a feature story on "Good Morning America." So they are talking about us nationally. Charlotte, North Carolina and the South is reported to be producing economic prosperity.

The Sunday "America's Black Forum" was very recently done, they even discussed the Panthers NFL football team and the growing city that Hubbard and Metrolina Dodge is located in. "America's Black Forum" highlights the ideas that we need to see going on in our city. Even if we couldn't bring all of those ideas to Charlotte, if we could bring one or two, then others can follow. As we say and know, it takes a whole village to raise a child and it is going to take a whole united people with quality, brave leaders that have not sold out and are not bought out to turn things around in Charlotte's African American business community. This is unity that is needed to provide economic enhancement to African American people, families, communities and overflow to our churches.

In the meantime, we have business leaders such as Mr. Hubbard and Metrolina Dodge keeping us on the map. Many, many congratulations I want to add to those Mr. Hubbard and Metrolina Dodge is receiving. We can see hard work and opportunity will get us success in the business community. We, African Americans, are not asking for any handout, only opportunity.

Having worked in the automotive field of corporate America, I never thought I would consider a Dodge automobile, but isn't it great how knowledge and awareness of another person's success can change how we think.

Congratulations, Mr. Hubbard, your success is encouragement to the many of us, struggling entrepreneurs as myself that hard work and sticking to doing the right thing and providing quality service will bring us success.

SYLVIA L. GRIER
Charlotte



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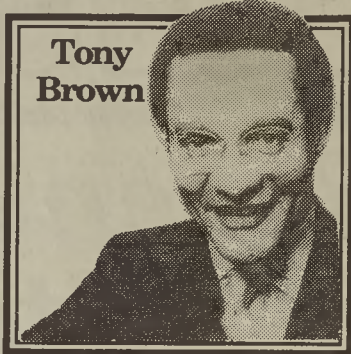
A double standard on Haiti

Blacks called George Bush a racist for his Haitian immigration policy. Bill Clinton made massive campaign promises that as president he would give Haitians the same treatment we give other immigrants and implied that Bush was a racist for not doing so.

Since Clinton's campaign strategy of sucking up to the white middle class with lies about no taxes and intimidating blacks (the Jesse Jackson-Sister Souljah ethnic spanking) succeeded in getting him into the White House, no further pretense is necessary.

Clinton has openly and lamely adopted the very same immigration policy (keep blacks out) that Bush advocated. The policy under Clinton, in fact, has grown an even uglier racist dimension.

For example, Clinton's immigration pattern allows Cuban refugees (3,000 this year already) to enter the U.S. for economic reasons and refuses to admit Haitians who are



Tony Brown

clearly fleeing political persecution.

If you recall, U.S. policy is designed to provide sanctuary for those fleeing political persecution in their native land, but not to allow immigration to become an economic jobs program.

That policy was strongly defended as long as the politically persecuted were white and the economically deprived were black. Clinton's whites-only policy is just another of his deceptive acts.

A recent episode is an example of this stark contrast. Thirteen Cubans stole a plane to get to Miami. They

received a hero's welcome. A group of Haitians who came by boat were immediately hustled away to a Florida detention camp.

This is bad enough, but an independent study reported that thousands of Haitians, especially babies, are dying as the result of the U.S.-led trade embargo.

Not only is our foreign policy a blatant double standard based on race, it is genocidal in its effect.

Where are the blacks in Congress and the "black leaders" during this crisis? Helping Clinton plan an invasion that will murder more Haitians.

These black politicians resisted the Gulf War where the threat to American interests was clear and imminent. But they want a war against peniless, starving people who are black.

TONY BROWN is a syndicated columnist and host of "Tony Brown's Journal" Sundays at 5 p.m. on WTVI (channel 42).

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Why we bash the president



D.G. Martin

"Well, if Clinton is going to be in charge, we've got to figure out how to make the best of it."

I was eavesdropping on a conversation that took place just the other day. But it took me and my memories right back to the early '60s.

The conversation I overheard was probably typical of what you'd hear from semi-successful, young, white, businessmen these days. Listen to them for a minute. You'll find out that they don't care for our President, or his wife, or his daughter, or any of his appointees. Nor do their conversations show any hint that the President's policies are good for this country.

The talk is of the stupidity of taxing business more. It is of back-breaking government intervention and regulation. It is of government spending gone wild.

And there is always more. Health care reform is said to be a cover for socialization of medicine. There is talk of sellouts - to labor, to blacks, to gays, to "liberals" of every variety.

And there are insults about his military record, his sex life, and on and on.

How could such conversations take me back to the early 1960s when the John Kennedy was President?

Back then such talk about the President had more impact on me. After all, I had grown up during the Eisenhower years. And though there was disagreement with President Eisenhower and questions about his leadership, I don't remember much disrespect or meanness creeping into the conversations about him.

I had the notion that you gave the President the benefit of the doubt and that you steered away from criticizing his person. I remember the awful shock of the meat-spirited criticism aimed at President Kennedy.

Disrespectful talk about a president is less a surprise these days - post Vietnam, post Watergate, and post Beavis and Butt-Head. But it is still unpleasant.

During the past few weeks, we passed the same marker.

Like him or not, it is hard to imagine our country without Clinton as president.

How did it happen? Why?

The passage of time is a part of it. It always takes a little time to get used to new leaders. New ministers, new school principals, new heads of businesses, new coaches - they all have to serve for a time under the shadow of comparison with their predecessors.

Another part of it though is that Clinton earned it - by being different from his predecessors in ways that make a difference for the country.

D.G. MARTIN is vice president for public affairs for the University of North Carolina system.

The GOP is a party full of deceit

By James Strong
SPECIAL TO THE POST

I usually define a Republican as an insatiable liar with an amazing ability to fabricate truth. Of course, this definition can also apply to Democrats and Libertarians and neo-nazis and most other public and private organizations.

But with the Republicans, lying has become an art form - a combination of cans, pipes, faucets and tire rims collected from every trash bin in America and melted into tin for display in the museums of politics, religion and any other forum for unsuspecting Americans to imitate, explore and dissect.

Who can forget Richard Nixon lying about Watergate or Ronald Reagan lying about the Iran-Contra affair or Clarence Thomas lying about Anita Hill during his Supreme Court nomination hearings.

Now Ed Rollins, former Republican political consultant for New Jersey Gov.-elect Christine Whitman, has added an unusual piece to the museum. In 295 pages of sworn testimony, Rollins said he lied when he told reporters that the Whitman campaign spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to suppress the black vote.

Rollins said he fabricated the story to heap insult upon insult on James Carville, the principal campaign consultant for Democratic New Jersey Gov. Jim Florio, whom Whitman defeated. Rollins explained that Carville "made my life miserable for weeks. I was trying to make his life miserable for a few weeks."

In a public apology published in several newspapers nationwide, Rollins said, "for reasons I cannot fully explain, even to myself, I gave a false - there's no other word - account of what went on. I spun myself out of control. . . I made up stories about things that did not occur."

But if Rollins says he lied to a group of reporters about suppressing the New Jersey black vote, why should we believe he's telling the truth?

When Whitman was 25 percent behind Florio in the polls, whom did she call on for help?

She called on Ed Rollins. She wanted someone with a diabolical reputation, someone with a perverse ambition that hesitates at nothing, a maniacal purpose insensitive to humanity, an obsession for victory that disregards the law, an insane desire to manipulate public opinion, a criminal conscience willing to pay off the opposition, a power-hungry lunatic who could bribe presidents, a professional liar who could smear priests. So, she called on Ed Rollins.

Moreover, to dump more horse manure on Rollins's recantation, reports are surfacing that seem to substantiate his initial black vote-suppression statements.

The Rev. Keith Owens of Kaighns Avenue Baptist Church in Camden, New Jersey, said several members of the Black Ministers Council of New Jersey described offers they had received from people identifying themselves as Republicans consistent with Rollins's description of the campaign tactic.

The Asbury Park Press reported that Cullen Banks, a

deacon at the Shiloh Baptist Church in Trenton, New Jersey, said three poll workers told him Republicans had paid them to refrain from getting out the vote. They were told to "just stand on the street and look like you're doing something -- but not do anything," he said.

So our question is: Who's telling the truth, the first Ed Rollins or the second Ed Rollins? Both are plump with Republican dishonesty. In fact, Rollins's morality appears to rest on a premise common to most political consultants.

The entire episode damns Republican politics as swine. It characterizes Republicanism as a schizophrenic lacking the spiritual ability to imitate the divine, as a blind man incapable of appreciating moral beauty.

Republicanism so confuses and distorts truth that, under its influence, Christians may call evil good and good evil, scientists may mistake a thermometer for a bottle and a bottle for a thermometer and doctors may prescribe vitamins instead of aspirin and aspirin instead vitamins.

Hence, we have no reason but to believe that Rollins lied in his deposition, a lie that will eventually hurt him more than his willingness to suppress the New Jersey black vote.

Make no mistake about it, Rollins is a limb of dirty tricks; and when he dies, his obituary may conclude with these words: He rose from wealth to poverty, from strength to weakness, from power to disintegration.

JAMES STRONG is a syndicated columnist.

The death of the civil rights era

By Joe Williams
SPECIAL TO THE POST

The reason for the lack of growth and development in the African American community is that the civil rights movement is dead.

Until we admit that there is no real movement, that there is no effective leadership or vision, we will remain in this present state of ambivalence and confusion.

The African American civil rights movement is dead. It is not dying - it is already dead. This is our dilemma. This is the reality we must accept in order to move forward.

Many black writers, including myself, have criticized the Rev. Jesse Jackson for his vacillation and political opportunism. But Rev. Jackson isn't really the problem. Many, many of the civil rights leaders have fallen into the pit of ineffectiveness since the '60s. The real problem is that America, and the world, have changed so drastically in recent years that civil rights ideologies, tactics and strategies have become outdated. This is hard for many to accept. It is hard because people have become secure with what has worked in

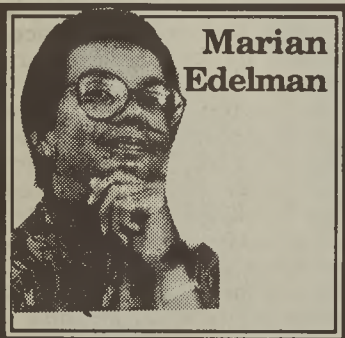
the past. Leaders and activists have literally given their whole lives to the "struggle." However, it is time for us to understand the old adage, "The only thing permanent is change." We must not only understand that, but we must accept it and move on. We must move past the stage of bickering with each other about failed programs, marches, demonstrations and policies. The future demands that we change. We must accept our new challenge; we must assume new roles.

The black community is not the homogeneous community it once was during the '60s. We have developed various classes of black people with different agendas. We now see black faces in positions where there were once only the faces of white oppressors. We have blacks in the establishment who are quite willing to suppress and contain other black people.

The hard fact is that for many of our people, times are harder now than they were in the '60s. The problem is that there are no leaders or organizations raising holy hell about the situation.

JOE WILLIAMS is a columnist with the National Newspaper Publishers Association.

Remember the sisters



Marian Edelman

In last week's column, I wrote about black males in crisis, our brothers who are spiritually, physically, economically and morally drowning and calling to us for a lifeline. But, we can't describe the plight of black males without talking about black girls and women. While our brothers are facing many serious challenges, they are not alone. Our sisters are in trouble, too.

A black girl today has less than a 1 in 21,000 chance of receiving a Ph.D. in mathematics, engineering or physical sciences. She has a 1 in 891 chance of becoming a physician and a 1 in 356 chance of becoming a lawyer. At the same time, that black girl has a 1 in 21 chance of being the victim of a violent crime during her teen years, a 1 in 7 chance of dropping out of school before graduation and a 1 in 6 chance of having a child before her 20th birthday.

On any given day in America, 827 black teenage girls get pregnant, 448 black infants are born to teen mothers, 220 black infants are born to mothers who received late or no prenatal care and 133 black infants are born to mothers who already have a child.

Starting at age 20, the ratio of black men to black women drops sharply, reflecting the steady loss of black men to violence and early death, incarceration and hopelessness. This contributes to the growing number of out-of-wedlock births and the declining rate of marriage in the black community.

New, even more alarming trends are emerging today. Young black and Latino women are joining gangs and committing violent crimes at a much higher rate than before. Just like young black men, they are frustrated by crumbling family structures, inadequate education and lack of job opportunities. The gangs act as surrogate families, providing a sense of community and protection in unstable, often violent, environments.

Low self-esteem - at the root of many of these crises - is epidemic, whether from abuses suffered in childhood or adolescence or the lack of positive role models, options or portrayals in the media and popular culture. The movies, music and television shows that our young people consume so hungrily nearly always depicts them in stereotyped and negative ways.

In the black community and throughout America, we have to do better than this! We owe it to ourselves, our families and - most of all - our children. We must take positive action now!

MARIAN EDELMAN, a native of Bennettsville, S.C., is president of the Children's Defense Fund.