



Jeri Young

Tell the truth

Black media has duty to inform, too

My grandmother was right. She always said that telling the truth would never get you any friends.

Folks, she always said, hate the messenger.

Nana also said that people will be offended by the truth. It hurts because it challenges what you think you know.

No matter what, she warned, always tell the truth.

I pretty much live by my grandmother's words. I think that is why I like working for a newspaper. Newspapers are here to tell the truth, put the word out.

Occasionally, as my grandmother warned, the news, the truth challenges long-held beliefs.

It forces us to take a long look at our leaders and sometimes our friends.

It disappoints us, leaves us emotionally bereft. It shakes the foundation on which we stand.

None of us likes this feeling. It puts us on the defensive.

It's natural. Between the African American community and African American press, there has been a certain cautiousness.

The mainstream press's traditional insistence on only reporting the negatives left African America with only one outlet for positive news.

The black press was aware of this. We often saw African America through gray glasses. The good of the whole was key. The truth, if known, was sugar-coated.

Times have changed. The African American press has a renewed commitment to its readers. That commitment is our Hypocratic oath. It means that sometimes we offend folk. It means that sometimes we hurt feelings. It means that sometimes we shake foundations.

If we didn't, we would not be doing our job.

It is our job to ensure that our leaders are held accountable. That readers know what is going on. That we know if government or individuals are misusing our hard earned gifts.

It means that Bob Walton could be a hero and a villain. It means that Marion Barry is not above reproach. It means that Ben Chavis can be replaced.

The truth is that if people know that no one is holding them accountable, they place themselves above reproach. They become power hungry and power is corrupting.

Therefore, truth, even when it is ugly, must be told. We have to make our readers aware.

We have to remain non-partisan. True not to our individual preferences or emotions but to the truth and our constituency.

That is all that we can do. It is the best that we can do.

Behind my desk, is a plaque with the Credo of the Negro Press. My favorite part is "fearing no man, the Negro press strives to help every man..."

We have to remain true to our creed, our readers, ourselves.

Like my grandmother always said, everyone gets mad at the messenger.

JERI YOUNG is an administrative assistant at The Post.

Free and transparent national elections in Zaire

By Emery Okundji Nj
SPECIAL TO THE POST

Africa continues to suffer socio-political instability because of its leaders who, no longer having a legitimacy within their own country, are saving their energy to buy a legitimacy from the exterior.

Free and transparent elections will permit all Africans to punish their officials who worry little of the country's need for evolution.

Will certain African countries, led by people who have no notion of pedagogical politics, begin to accept the verdict of the urns?

To truly hope to have free and transparent elections in Zaire, as many of my compatriots have already said, certain preconditions must exist: The security of the people and their goods; media access to current politics and political actions; the improvement of the methods of communication.

Of course, the first step would be to neutralize the army and the security services which are currently com-

pletely faithful to the "Marechal du Zaire," Mobutu Sese Soko. For, if this man truly understood how he is viewed by the Zairian popular opinion, he wouldn't dare run again in the next elections. But if he remains obstinate, it is only because he hopes to obtain a new legitimacy by anti-democratic means. That is, by the army, the police, corruption, and, of course, trickery.

It is certain that Mr. Mobutu will suffer a manifest defeat in the next elections, not just because the Zairian people have learned all too well his mechanisms for domination, but also because he is held in such feeble opinion throughout the entire Republic of Zaire. The case of his native region is striking - at the Equator, more precisely in the sub-region of South Wbangi - the Zairian head of state is known by the name of "Bgelewi," a Ngwaka term which means "stranger." And if he is treated like a stranger in his own home, what treatment is reserved for him in other regions of Zaire?

If Zairians have arrived at their current state, where some are at the edge of survival, and the others are on the brink of death, it is because of egotistical characters,

clutching on to power for power, men without morals who are only looking for easy gain. They are incapable of understanding that the meaning of power is to serve the people. In short, the destiny of a large country like Zaire has been left in the hands of hateful politicians. As James Baldwin said, hate destroys those who hate.

The Zairians are no longer little children, and they no longer allow themselves to be thrown about and carried away by every wind of doctrine, by the deceptive whims of men who use their trickery to mislead the people. The future elections will truly be a precious moment if they are free and open to punish men who constitute the current Zairian political class.

This way, any person or group of persons who try to cheat the Zairians and scorn the popular will by coming to the aid of the dictatorship will demonstrate his mediocrity in front of the entire world.

EMERY OKUNDJI NJ is a representative of the Zairian Democratic Forces in Charlotte.

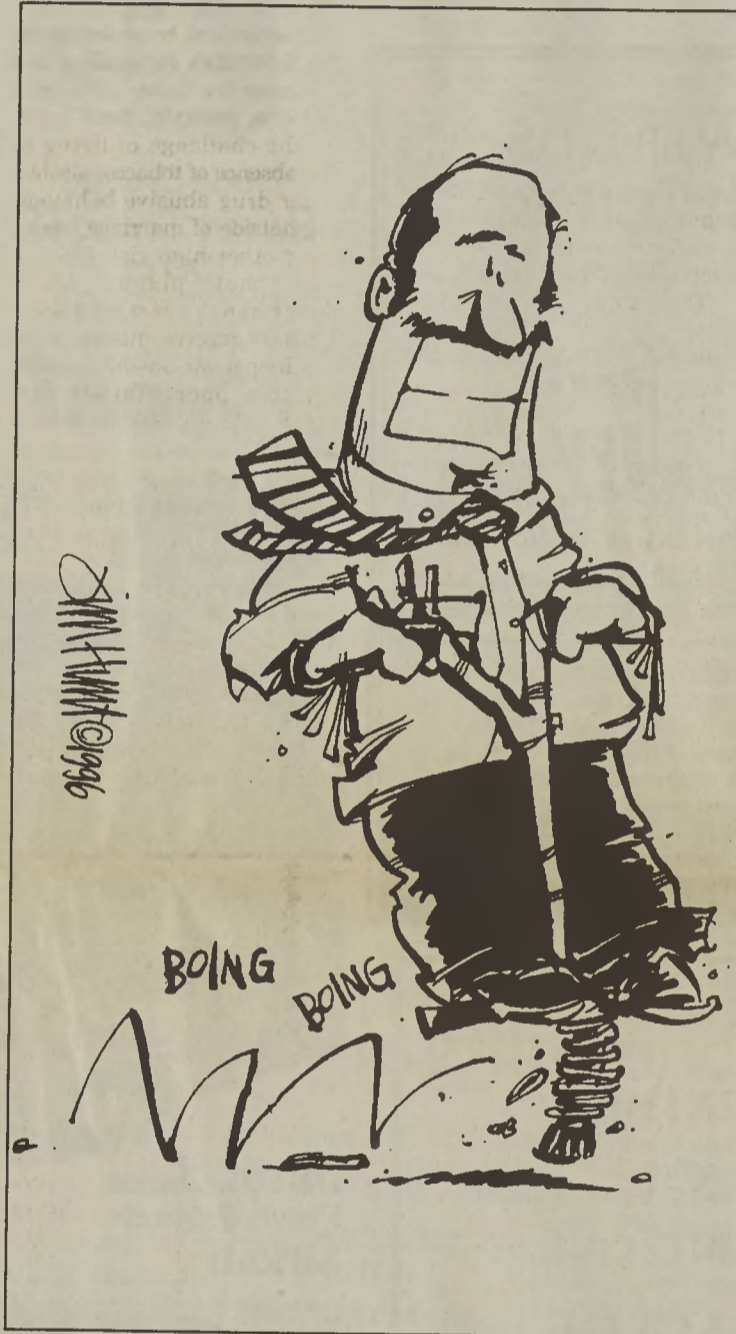
Bouncing back to spring higher

By Junious Ricardo Stanton
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER
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The word resilience means: The capacity to bounce back to the original form after being bent, stretched or compressed; flexibility, elasticity, the capacity to bounce back quickly from misfortune or illness.

How resilient are you? This is not an idle question; it is meant to stir self examination, contemplation and introspection. Life affords each of us more than enough rough spots, ups and downs, so that at one point or another we have been bent, stretched, compressed or flattened. How well do you bounce back? If you are an African in America, the reality of white supremacy which confronts us daily has provided countless bumps, bruises and knocks, both hard and soft and a good share of frustration, disappointment and pain. How do you handle it? What is it that prevents you from throwing in the towel, that enables you to get up one more time? What is it that gives you the courage and fortitude to keep on keeping on in the face of uncertainty, obstacles, racism and even self-doubt and fear?

No one escapes the vicissitudes of life. No one is exempt from pain or suffering; that comes with living. We all must taste the bitter fruit of loss and sorrow. All of us are subject to what Shakespeare called "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." But just as life has its depressing downs, it also has its euphoric ups. The thing that sets high achievers apart from those who accomplish little is resiliency. We all have problems. Having problems is no excuse for giving in or giving up! The only people with no problems, troubles or challenges are those in the cemetery. While many are terrified about the idea of our own mortality, the fact remains: None of us will get out of here alive! Given that and given the fact that we will all



have our share of ups and downs, doesn't it make sense to devise an effective way to bounce back from life's pitfalls and setbacks?

One of the reasons many of our people don't attempt anything outstanding or extraordinary is because they are afraid to fail. Well I've got news for you: Success is impossible without failure. No one bats 1.000; no one hits a home run every time at bat. While no one is per-

fect, there are many successful people in the world. If you ask them, they will tell you they've had their share of misfortune and woe. What is it about them that sets them apart from those who allowed the same or similar misfortune to discourage or defeat them? More than likely it was a resilient spirit, a determined and optimistic attitude.

When we wanted to learn to roller skate or ride our bicycles, we had to persist despite the many times we fell down,

scraped our legs or bounced on our butts. We were willing to pay the price to get what we wanted - to ride that bike without training wheels or anyone holding us up. The same determination, perseverance and resilience we exhibited when we were children is what we can use today. In fact, what we need today is more bounce-back power. We need to cultivate the ability to bounce back now more than ever.

To be successful requires weathering many storms, taking the big hits and keeping our legs moving towards the goal even though the wind has been knocked out of us. We have to re-learn how to bounce back. Bounce back from that relationship that didn't work out. Look for the lesson in the loss and bounce back. Bounce back when the bank turns you down for the loan you needed to start your own business. Bounce back and still hold on tight to your dream. Look for other funding sources. Bounce back from not getting that promotion.

Bounce back even though your ego may be bruised. Bounce back and hold your head up. Look around and figure out what you can do to better demonstrate your worth to your employer. If after you've given your best, they still don't value your services, start looking around for another job, not out of revenge or malice but out of a genuine desire to maintain your dignity and self-respect.

The key to bouncing back is not taking the loss or setback personally. There is always a message in a mess and a lesson in a loss. Look for it and learn it. These lessons will strengthen you and prepare you for success later on. Bounce back better, stronger, wiser than you were before. Bounce back, you are more resilient than you realize. Bounce back and keep gettin' up. Bounce back, baby!

JUNIOUS RICARDO STANTON is a National Newspaper Publishers Association columnist.

If Clinton wins minimum wage increase, he loses



D.G. Martin

Why would Bill Clinton want to lose his battle to raise the minimum wage?

Why would Bob Dole hope that no balanced budget agreement is reached this year?

The questions shouldn't make sense. Not if you believe Clinton's and Dole's big talk about the importance of these issues to the future of the country. Bill Clinton is eloquent in his pleas to give the working poor fairer, better treatment. Bob Dole and his congressional allies are the same in their pleas to adopt a plan to bring the government's budget into

balance over a reasonable period. But I suspect each of them is trying every trick they know to keep from winning these "critical battles" this year.

Why?

The answer: If they win their battles, they lose their best election issues. And, right now, the opportunity to lead for the next four years is more important than winning a policy victory.

For that reason, Bob Dole and his congressional allies are going to do all they can to give President Clinton a victory on the minimum wage issue sometime soon. And Bill Clinton is going to try his best to work out a deal on the balanced budget issue - one that would give Dole a victory.

When you think about it in campaign terms, it makes perfect sense. If Bob Dole can make us believe that the only thing

standing in the way of a fiscally sound and balanced federal budget is Bill Clinton, he has a powerful campaign theme. Everybody wants our country to have a good strong financial situation. And if we think Bill Clinton is standing in the way of a balanced budget, he is in trouble. Just where Mr. Dole would like to have him.

But, if the balanced budget plan is in place and all settled, how can Bob Dole blame Mr. Clinton?

He can't. Dole loses an important defining issue. And he loses the support of all the people and interests whose government programs had to be eliminated or cut back to get the budget in balance.

If Dole wins, he loses. If he loses, he wins. It is the same thing in reverse on the minimum wage issue. If Bill Clinton can make us believe that the only thing standing in the way of an increase in the minimum wage is Bob Dole, Clinton has a good campaign issue. Lots of working people who are "swing

voters will vote against Dole if they think he is keeping their wage levels down.

But if the minimum wage issue is settled, how can Clinton say that it is Dole who is in the way?

He can't. He loses a good issue. And he loses the votes of those who think that a minimum wage increase hurts the economy and weakens small-businesses' efforts to increase employment opportunities for the marginally employable.

If Clinton wins, he loses. If he loses, he wins. Do you think I am too cynical? Too political?

Maybe. But just watch things in Washington these next few weeks. Look how our leaders try to avoid winning. See if you don't agree with this rule - If he wins, he loses. If he loses, he wins.

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Letters To The Post

City should keep arts funding as is

I am an educator in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system. My school colleagues and I are generous supporters of the Arts and Science Council. In fact, of the 60 United Arts funds in the United States, the Charlotte fund realizes the highest per capita giving from teachers. You might ask why we teachers give a portion of our salaries to the Arts and Science Council? On a daily basis we see the direct benefit to the children that we teach.

This past year over 900,000 student visits were made to or from the Arts and Science Council affiliates like Discovery Place, The Mint Museum, the Afro-American Cultural Center, and the Children's Theater to name a few. Each of these organizations receives, as do others, large grant awards from the Arts and Science Council in part because of the funding the City Council provides the ASC.

Among many competing priorities, ASC has made arts and science education its multi year priority. By board policy, a significant portion of all new Arts and Science Council dollars goes into the schools to directly benefit the students. Over the past three years the ASC has used these dollars to make 115 direct grant awards to support 407 ASC programs in the Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools. These grants have developed serious partnerships between cultural groups and schools. Our partnerships have touched the lives of children in many ways.

How fortunate I have been to have experienced the Arts and Science Council Arts In Education grants in action. Their arts and education grants have allowed me to attend the summer institute for teacher training - called Arts Alive, they have brought local artists to work with students in the summer Betty Stovall Spectrum Of The Arts - a summer program for students that are highly talented in the arts. They have allowed me to be trained by artists on how to work better with students with special needs, and most dynamically, they have funded artists to come into my classroom and school. I have seen the enthusiasm and "life" this provides to a school. I have seen the gleam in the children's eyes as they work side by side with a "real live artist," and I have grown professionally from the expertise of these artists.

These arts and education grants are touching more children than any other program I know in such a positive manner. They are helping to bring the community and the schools together in a way that no other group has been able to. They are allowing teachers that want more for their students to obtain it by writing grants to fund their ideas.

Linda Kiser
Charlotte

What's on your mind?

Send your comments to The Charlotte Post, P.O. Box 30144, Charlotte, N.C. 28230 or fax (704) 342-2160. You can also use E-mail - charpost@clt.mindspring.com All correspondence must include a daytime telephone number for verification.