

Building on one another

MELODYE MICERE STEWART

In the spirit of Ma'at



"Only by being reconciled to ourselves will we be able to build upon the resources we already have at our disposal."

Martin King's critical observation has been noted by numerous black leaders. Mary McLeod Bethune wrote it in her "Legacy" in 1955:

"I leave you the challenge of building confidence in one another." Bethune was succinct in her reasoning: "As long as Negroes are hemmed into racial blocs by prejudice and pressure, it will be necessary for them to band together for economic betterment."

Her statement is of particular importance considering our combined income totals \$400 billion. Where is the political power and respect that 400 billion dollars should generate? Again, our history indicates that we must do some inside work for the next level of outside change. We can no longer afford our disconnectedness and alienation. Repairing the internal bonds of our race must become a priority for the waning years of the 20th century if we are to move as a whole people into the next millennium.

All of our historical leaders have advocated racial unity as a necessary step for achieving racial equality. African American leaders who, many in the face of death, exhorted us to unite for strength and power begins with David Walker, Frederick Douglass and Martin Delany. The call for racial unity and the power within continued with W.E.B. DuBois, Carter G. Woodson, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, William Monroe Trotter and A. Phillip Randolph.

The Black Panthers, SNCC, SCLC, King and Malcolm made the same exhortations, only to be echoed by Farrakhan today.

The power and strength that racial unity generates makes this country nervous. The reality of a million African American men coming together in peace, unity and vision caused the entire world to stop, look and listen. It is time to take ourselves and our race seriously. It is interesting to note that whenever and wherever there is evidence of or calls to racial unity, we are viciously attacked, muzzled, cajoled or neutered into silence.

Racial unity is a crucial prerequisite for true liberation and equality. Is this not one of the lessons of the church burnings? (Lest we forget, nearly 70 black churches have burned in suspicious fires over the past 18 months.) It is our personal responsibility to cultivate racial unity with one another.

Rwanda violence reported

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access to the Mukamira military camp where most of the detainees are believed to be held, sources said.

The report's findings add to those of another U.N. report blaming the Rwandan Patriotic Army for an increase in government-sanctioned killings.

Rwandan troops reportedly killed 62 people in May, 124 in April and 226 in July.

The government says it is investigating some of the civilian deaths. It maintains that many of them occurred when people tried to escape questioning.

The Charlotte Post

A volunteer state



First Union Vice Chairman John Georgius presents the bank's Volunteer of the Year award to Bartina Edwards.

Edwards lauded for her work

SPECIAL TO THE POST

As a school volunteer for four years, Bartina Edwards knows first hand the difference that a mentor can make in a child's life.

Her enthusiasm is so contagious that she has now recruited 120 school volunteers in her division. Last week, First Union National Bank named her Volunteer of the Year and presented her with \$1,000 to use in her school projects at Billingsville Elementary or Johnson C. Smith University.

Edwards, who works in the Charlotte-based bank's Capital Management Group, was one of six employees nominated for the award. The award was presented by First Union Vice Chairman John Georgius at the company's Excellence In Education breakfast.

Edwards has been the coordinator for First Union's partnership at Billingsville Elementary for four years. She helped implement and expand the school's Rainbow Achievement Program. Teachers say the mentoring program has improved students' self-esteem, motivation, academic performance, attendance and overall behavior. She also helped recruit and volunteers for the school's tutoring program, which is also helping students improve their academic performance.

At Johnson C. Smith, Edwards has worked closely with the business and economics department as a speaker, mentor and intern supervisor for the Inroads program.

"She has advised students on career planning and various job readiness skills, and has also helped them to procure specific employment opportunities," said Debra Frazier, director of JCSU's Banking and Finance Center of Excellence.

"Bartina's professionalism and eloquence have helped to motivate, educate and inspire our students to emulate her," Frazier said.

Other nominees for the award were:

Staci Benson, First Union Insurance Group - volunteer coordinator at Lincoln Heights Elementary; John C'hepul, Corporate Tax - volunteer for Hands On Charlotte; Sean Lowther, Corporate Security and Compliance Division - volunteer coordinator at Northwest School of the Arts; Beth Phillian, Retirement Administration - tutor at Huntingtowne Farms Elementary and South Charlotte Middle School; Peter Schwindt, First Union Home Equity Bank - volunteer coordinator for Junior Achievement.

First Union employees volunteered 53,666 hours last year. That total includes 1,000 Mecklenburg County employees, who contributed 31,000 volunteer hours.

Farrakhan visit angers U.S. government

Continued from page 1A

Gadhafi. That money, which Farrakhan said would go toward joint ventures with businesses and financial institutions to help blacks, also was barred.

U.S. officials had doubted whether Gadhafi was serious in parting with the funds in the first place. The donation was

not mentioned at the rally.

Farrakhan's visit angered U.S. officials, coming just weeks after Washington sought to put more pressure on Libya and Iran by requiring penalties against foreign firms that invest in their energy sectors. That complements U.S. sanctions imposed a decade ago as part of Washington's attempt to isolate

Gadhafi.

Libya is also under U.N. sanctions, which were imposed in 1992 to force it to surrender two men wanted in the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jet over Lockerbie, Scotland, that killed 270 people.

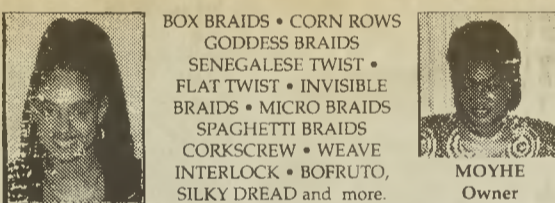
The measures include a flight ban and prohibit the sale of some oil equipment.

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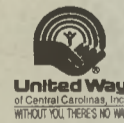
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THERE WAS A TIME WHEN SHE WOULDN'T LISTEN TO A WORD HER PARENTS SAID.



LIZZIE BIELE AND HER MOM

It's news no parent wants to hear: your child has a major hearing loss. Steve and Debbie Biele acted immediately so their 14-month-old daughter would have every chance to communicate with hearing aids and intensive speech therapy. When their insurance no longer covered sessions at Charlotte Speech and Hearing Center, United Way was there to provide a scholarship. Today, Lizzie's words are music to her parents' ears. Charlotte Speech and Hearing Center



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