

Life as a black woman

NATIONAL NEWSPAPER PUBLISHER ASSOCIATION

WASHINGTON - In the late 1960s, Grace Halsell, a white woman, took medication to darken her skin to work as a black woman in Mississippi. In her recently-published memoirs, "In Their Shoes," Halsell says racial discrimination remains an American dilemma.



Halsell

In her best selling book, "Soul Sister," Halsell wrote about her experiences as a southern white woman who lived as a black woman in Mississippi. In her memoirs, Halsell relates her experiences in the 1960s in the perspective of current times. "When I went to Mississippi to seek work in the 1960s as a black woman, the best job I could get, back then, was working for \$5 a day as a maid," she said.

On one occasion, Halsell was arrested for attending an all-white church.

"If I darkened my skin today," Halsell writes, "I wouldn't be arrested for entering an all white church on Sunday. But almost three decades later, we remain two nations, black and white, divided and unequal. And our churches remain the most segregated institutions in Americas."

On returning to Mississippi today, Halsell said, "Socially, the same barriers are still present. African Americans have made significant individual gains, but class discrimination based on race is as deep as ever."

North State backs candidacy of Gov. Jim Hunt

By Herbert L. White
THE CHARLOTTE POST

North Carolina's largest black law enforcement association has endorsed Gov. Jim Hunt's re-election bid.

The Old North State Law Enforcement Officers Association, which represents African American officers across N.C., threw its support behind Hunt last week. It also pledged to adopt Support Our

Students, an after-school crime prevention program for at-risk youth.

"Gov. Hunt has shown his devotion to keeping violent criminals off our streets and his support for all law enforcement officers," said Angela Rivers, president of North State. "His efforts are improving the quality of life for our state by supporting education for our youth to deter future



Hunt

criminal activity and drug usage." Hunt has made crime deterrence a central part of his campaign, which includes more prevention programs like SOS. The program brought 2,300 volunteers together with 6,000 at-

risk youth in 52 counties. North State officers will provide volunteers and financial support for the program, Rivers said.

"We believe it is an outstanding effort to deter at-risk youngsters from future crime involvement and drug usage," she said.

History that's not in textbooks

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In the spirit of Ma'at



According to Malcolm, "Of all our studies, history is best qualified to reward our research." Indeed, all of our historical leaders have advocated the study of one's history as a prerequisite for liberation, understanding that self-knowledge is a critical cornerstone for self-empowerment. The next several editions of "Ma'at" will provide a brief introduction to some of the history omitted from American history books. Enslaved Africans in America resisted the "peculiar institution" of slavery by "any means necessary." Historian Lerone Bennett records numerous slave revolts, individual acts of rebellion and group insurrections; the first serious conspiracy was recorded in 1663. The passionate desire for liberation was often accompanied by a religious calling in the minds and hearts of some of the most fearless and courageous African Americans in history.

Just as David Walker deftly utilized the Bible in his "Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World," Gabriel Prosser was fascinated by the Old Testament. Prosser's plan was to liberate

the state of Virginia; he recruited thousands of enslaved Africans to rise up in rebellion. (Bennett records the estimates ranging from 2,000 to 50,000). Armed with swords, pikes and guns, the would-be liberators were betrayed by two slaves; Prosser and 34 of his men were arrested, convicted and executed.

Cut from the same cloth, Denmark Vesey psychologically worked on the enslaved population in Charleston, S.C. for 5 years before organizing his ill-fated revolt. Vesey recruited an estimated 9,000 enslaved Africans from Charleston and the surrounding counties. Vesey's chief lieutenant, Peter Poyas, identified the weakness which would defeat them, telling a recruiting agent, "don't mention it to those waiting men who receive presents of old coats, etc., from their masters, or they'll betray us..."

Prosser and Vesey plotted and were betrayed. Nat Turner plotted and executed. Bennett provides the following description: "A mystic with blood on his mind, a preacher with vengeance on his lips, a dreamer, a visionary, a revolutionary, Nat Turner was a fantastic mixture of gentleness, ruthlessness and piety." After numerous dreams and visions to "arise and prepare myself and slay my enemies with their own weapons," Turner and six disciples started at the home of Turner's master, picking up recruits along the

way. In three days of terror, 70 enslaved Africans brought death to 60 whites in Southampton, Virginia. Following the hanging deaths of Turner and 13 associates, a massacre of blacks by whites followed. Many believe that Turner's insurrection was a landmark in the history of slavery, indirectly instrumental in hastening its abolishment.

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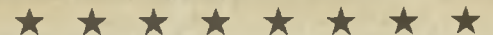
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