

Not all news coming from Africa is that bad

By John William Templeton
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

Not all the news from Africa is bad news. As of Dec. 31 Zimbabwe's stock market recorded a 70 percent gain from 5,000 to 8,500. Ghana's equity exchange was up 40 percent by year's end and Mozambique had a 26 percent increase in foreign investment.

On Jan. 25, Angola's long-awaited government of national unity will be sworn in, with South Africa's President Nelson Mandela putting the prods to former rebel leader Jonas Savimbi, in his role as head of the 12-nation Southern African Development Community. The crisis in the Great Lakes region is real, but it should not obscure some of the most hopeful news from the world's second largest continent in 40 years, nor the sources of the real problems.

Kofi Annan's first speech after his ascension to the post of United Nations secretary-general may not have been the most historic speech by a Ghanaian in New York during December. The address of Sam Jonah, chief executive of the \$2 billion mining conglomerate Ashanti Goldfields of Kumasi, Ghana, to the New York Society of Securities Analysts' first seminar on investment in Africa may actually do more to increase the paltry sum of \$4 billion in foreign investment that goes into Africa. Jonah, Zimbabwe's A.M. Chambati, South Africa's Cyril

Ramaphosa and other business leaders are increasingly becoming the new face of Africa to the outside world.

The kind of oligarchy represented by Zaire's Mobutu Sese Seko and Nigeria's military regime with the attendant diversion of national wealth being put into private hands is becoming increasingly untenable in large part because of the peer pressure of governments that are making progress in meeting the needs of their people while attracting international investment. More than 2,000 enterprises - from airlines and steel mills to glass factories and hotels - are in the process of being sold into private hands by government owners across the continent, fueling the growth of a dozen new stock markets. The citizens of the affected countries are eager to share in the wealth creation. The initial public offering of Kenya Air attracted 200,000 individual investors. South Africa's exchange has added several new Black-owned companies built from acquisitions from the large mining conglomerates brokered by the new Black-majority government.

One of the impacts of the torrent of disaster news from Africa is to blind Americans to the potential markets and investment opportunities. The top five nations investing \$450 million into Mozambique last year were Portugal, South Africa, Britain, Hong Kong and the Netherlands. African Americans are particularly affected by the notion of Africa as a place to be ashamed of, as witnessed by the

performance of some national "leaders." Dr. Leon Sullivan, whose Sullivan Principles helped turn the business screws on South African apartheid, is once again taking the initiative in turning those sentiments around with the Fourth African American/African Summit June 20-26, in Johannesburg, South Africa and Harare, Zimbabwe. Prior to this year, the summits were held every two years. Some 47 African heads of state attended The Summit in Dakar, Senegal last May.

Planes are taking off from 19 American cities to ferry U.S. participants on a journey across the southern part of the continent. Sullivan has always been my pick as the epitome of a "black leader" because of his insistence on practical results, from the Opportunities Industrialization Centers to the Sullivan Principle to the summits. You don't hear him speak often, but you see his work around the globe. Like him, all Americans should understand that we have a vested interest in the success of the African continent. That interest must extend beyond extracting the precious metals and energy for our economies, to making a reciprocal investment in raising living standards. Unlike the failed foreign aid strategies of the past, we can even make a profit, in the process.

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Letters To The Post

Police cameras not the solution

The unfortunate incident with the armed Police Officer and the unarmed Mr. James Willie Cooper starts with one basic principle, fear. This, I think is the main issue.

We all, as humans, fear others at some time or another who are different and possibly display identities of certain profiles. These profiles may include outrageous attire, very unusual hair styles, certain ages, sizes and races of individuals. Fear within a person may or may not be changed/modified through additional outside stimuli, such as recognition and awareness training. In this culture, we should not allow fear to govern all "legal" actions. It does not in most cases. Individuals involved in violent behavior with another person fear some type of consequence. Whether it's fear for personal safety, fear of losing something and/or fear for the protection of another person or property.

In any case, logical, correct and legal judgments should take place. I hope that the City of Charlotte is not sending the message that police officers are god-like, where there actions are above any other citizen. I hope that the City of Charlotte is not sending the message that a citizen that fears a person, for whatever reason and/or background, can harm another person because of that fear, alone. From the reports on the television, radio and newspaper, this citizen displayed actions that probably anyone of us in this city would display. Should we be met with an armed law enforcement officer with fear, I would hope not. I would imagine if this incident involved two citizens in the middle of the street, one would be dead and the other would be charged and probably convicted of first degree murder. To put fear in its proper perspective, would we approve of the following;

1. A commercial pilot in fear of his duties, pertaining to the aircraft and other planes.
2. A surgeon in fear of responsibilities that may be incurred in the process of an operation.
3. A chef in fear of the preparation of a gourmet meal.
- Or 4. An armed police officer in fear of the persons he is suppose to serve and protect.

Wayne K. Drake
Charlotte

Panthers do Carolinas proud

Everyone across the USA sports world seems surprised by the success of the Carolina Panthers. The way they are "cutting down" the established teams in the NFL is phenomenal. It has never happened before. The Panthers are unapologetically kicking butts and calling names, and making a Carolinian shout, "This is no fluke, bring 'em on."

No matter where they come from all of the Panthers to the man have adopted that real Carolina attitude. A kind of arrogance that comes from the soil, the smell of oak wood burning, the water of Carolina and its loyal people of North and South Carolina.

Thomas H. McPhatter
San Diego, Calif.

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.

What DuBois would say about Ebonics

By Sidney E. Morse
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When the Oakland, Calif., School District sanctioned so-called "Black English" as an official language, is stated justification for this controversial move was to "negate the stigma" placed on African American students who come from communities that have developed their own dialect.

Sometimes, in order to strategically understand where we are going, it is beneficial to understand where we have been. Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, arguably the most famous African American intellectual of the 20th century, attended both Fisk University and the University of Berlin before becoming the first person of

African descent to obtain a doctorate from Harvard. Throughout his life, both his vision and scholarship emphasized education as a key to improving the standard of living for African Americans nationwide.

Dr. DuBois, seemingly always wise beyond his years, anticipated the ramifications of change and positioned himself on "the cutting edge" as the period ruled by agriculture gave way to the "Industrial Revolution" in the late 1800s.

If he were alive today, in his wisdom, he would see similar dynamics occurring as we witness the age of information taking control in preparation for the arrival of the 21st century. In the summer of 1906, W.E.B. DuBois would give a now famous speech, "The Hampton

Idea," assailing the reliance of Hampton Institute and others like it on the delivery of practical education in an effort to prepare the then considered "less capable" African American for jobs; a perception I might add, that has since been changed. He would go on to use these same themes across the country to warn African Americans of the dangers of this ideology and how it would not only result in the handicapping of intellectual ambition, but also create a comfortability with "second-best" status in society as a whole.

In this debate, Dr. DuBois would astutely observe that as was true at the turn of the century, the power and ability of a people to move up the socio-economic ladder in America is profoundly impacted by its ability to read, write, interpret and cal-

culate.

Dr. DuBois would have most assuredly declared that the promotion of "Black English" as an official language is to say that illiteracy is OK for African Americans. He would also strongly denounce it as a condition that is unacceptable in the context of our struggle. He would not retreat to a secondary language that would imply in any way, form or fashion that we cannot compete with any measure of intellectual prowess.

Just as he did then, today, Dr. DuBois would recognize that English is the verbal currency of commerce the world over. He would have grave concerns about Ebonics because he would also know that so-called "Black English" will not be the contextual language of the near 60 million people now using the

Internet to create a new venue for a global economy.

No, in the end, William Edward Burghardt DuBois would not be happy to see an investment in regression, occurring at the very dawn of progress he foresaw and hoped would be realized in his own lifetime. He would promote a language that stimulates growth, opportunity and participation in an ever expanding socio-economic universe. Lest we completely forget our common sense, contemporaries concerned about African American progress and that of the nation as a whole, would be wise to do the same.

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Too much political power, not enough economic independence

By C. Mason Weaver
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

What is the goal of the black community? Economic power or political power?

Political power is a group experience; it is usually acquired through a structured organization, run by clearly defined leaders for the purpose of meeting mutually agreed upon goals. People can join together for political power under many different organizations and groups. You can be a member of a political party or an ideological constituency.

You can work toward gaining political clout as a member of a group like the Concerned Women for America, the National Organization for Women, John Birch Society or your local church. This is a proven, successful way to ensure political power. But does political power ensure economic power?

Have you ever noticed that Japanese "communities" do not seem to worry about how many Japanese Congressmen there are? Ever wonder why you do not have a Korean Congressional Caucus? It seems odd to me that "Arab Americans" and "Jewish Americans" with such strong and traditional political priorities seem more interested in economics in America than politics. Why? Because economics, not politics, is the path to achieving real personal freedom. However, economic power empowers the individual, not social leaders. Social leaders of every group are only interested in political power because that empowers them. If the individual becomes powerful that individual does will not need a leader. That is why we have so much focus on political power,

not the power of self-determination.

While we prepare ourselves for the season of black cultural awareness, let us prepare ourselves for independence from our cultural chains. While we honor Martin Luther King Jr. in January and clothe ourselves in African clothes during February, let us remember the reason some of us still feel oppressed by drugs, crime, high taxes, bad schools and welfare is due more from lack of money than lack of political power. I do not care how you define the "black culture." If the culture has no strong semi-independent economic base, then it resembles a plantation, not a community. The civil rights movement was very much about gaining control over economic means, and not so much about gaining political power as an end in itself. Of course, voting rights were a very important issue during the civil rights movement, but the March on

Washington, boycotts, demonstrations and civil disobedience often focused on jobs.

Jobs were the reason Martin Luther King traveled to Memphis the week of his assassination. Jobs were the inspiration for the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the motivation behind the passage of affirmative action laws.

Civil rights are of little help if the individual cannot secure income and take advantage of the right to live and work where he pleases. Economic freedoms are not decided by political parties or a social culture, they are decided by the individual who is willing to sacrifice all he has for all he desires. That is freedom and that is America.

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Fresh prints of Bundy

By Dennis Schatzman
SPECIAL TO THE POST

Critics, like CNBC's Geraldo Rivera, are claiming that "the other shoe has dropped" on acquitted double murder suspect O.J. Simpson after another series of 1993 photos have surfaced allegedly showing the pro football Hall of Famer wearing the infamous Bruno Magli shoes.

Although the first photo, which appeared in the supermarket tabloid *The National Inquirer*, has been pretty much deemed a fraud, the second series of photos show an equal number of inconsistencies.

A close look at the photos, allegedly taken at a Buffalo Bills football game, show that Simpson is wearing a jacket with a pin in the lapel and a handkerchief in the upper pocket. The first photo, however, shows a different jacket and no pin or hankie. Go figure. The releasing of these latest photos, and Superior Court Judge Hiroshi Fujisaki's admittance of them, has brought additional howls from blacks nationwide that the civil trial against Simpson is "fixed" and that the news media and major talk show hosts are heavily biased against Simpson.

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Parallels for black empowerment

By Keith Hilton
SPECIAL TO THE POST

The Million Man March, like the 1963 March on Washington, was bigger than any one man, however, four men deserve to be recognized at this time - A. Philip Randolph, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad and Minister Louis Farrakhan.

We strongly urge readers to take the time to re-read Dr. King's entire "I Have a Dream" speech. Don't just recite the sound bites that you/we hear each January. As to the Million Man March: You can't separate the message from the messenger. In other words, those who were in favor of the 1995 March should continue rallying around Minister Farrakhan rather than distancing themselves.

It should be noted that even when pressured, Mandela refused to denounce Castro, Arafat, Gadhafi and others who supported South Africa's liberation movements. To paraphrase attorney Johnnie Cochran, who said in his closing arguments in the 1995 O.J. Simpson trial, "If you cannot believe the messenger, you must reject the message." Therefore, "If you cannot believe Minister Farrakhan, then you must reject his correct call for black re-empowerment." It is important to note that Dr. King's organization, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference was supportive and right on stage at the Million Man March.

If in 1995 SCLC remained true to the legacy of King, then it stands to reason that he would be proud of his organization, the Nation of Islam and the other groups that came together on Oct. 16.

By 1968, five years after the

1963 March on Washington, Dr. King, however, was also being criticized by some groups that praised him earlier. They didn't like the fact that he was "straightening his black back" when he opposed the Vietnam War.

Some who now criticize Farrakhan and evoke King's name also distanced themselves from King because he made such an "anti-American" statement; "...My nation is the greatest purveyor of violence in the world."

Those who say that the MMM was bigger than one man are correct, however, one man stepped forward in the tradition of Randolph, Delaney, Trotter, Muhammad and Garvey and initiated a call for re-empowerment just as another man did 32 years earlier.

Although Minister Louis Farrakhan continues to downplay his role in this march, he deserves full credit for jump-starting this event. Only the disciplined, strong Fruit of Islam could have organized such a massive march.

"One million black men will not be ignored," he said. "We must rise up in this time and seize the hour, seize the moment, because this moment can never be again."

Some may be surprised to find that King's message about black empowerment was very consistent with that of Minister Farrakhan's speech about black re-empowerment. The 1963 March on Washington was about jobs and freedom. Yes, racial equality was an important issue then and remains so today, however, the March was primarily about empowering the black community.

KEITH HILTON is a syndicated columnist.