

EDITORIALS

Educating Our Children

Income disparities between the rich, the poor and the middle class continue to grow with African-Americans receiving less and less of quality life and more and more of the maladies that plague impoverished communities.

The incomes of the nation's wealthiest citizens have increased so much in recent years that the richest 2.5 million Americans will have nearly as much after-tax income in 1990 as the 100 million Americans with the lowest incomes.

Stated another way, the gap between the very rich and other Americans has become so great that the top one percent of the population will have almost as much income after taxes as the bottom 40 percent. At the same time, the share of the national income going to middle-income Americans has fallen to the lowest level since the end of World War II.

The majority of our problems in African-America can be attributed to a single source. Although we may believe that the government and white male-dominated institutions are the cause of our ills, the crux of the problem actually lies within our own economic infrastructure.

Keith T. Clinkscales in Urban Profile believes educating our children assures our future. Once we agree on the goal we must determine how we will educate our children, he says.

African-America, he says, like no other ethnic group in this country, is an economically divided society. The blood, sweat and tears of demanding our civil rights has led a portion of our society to substantial economic and social prosperity. However, this prosperity comes at a considerable cost. A large number of African-Americans remain trapped in a situation that is economically and morally unforgivable. In the black community, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find consistent and sustainable linkages between the "haves" and the "have-nots."

Therefore, what is remaining is a divided black America with two agendas: the agenda of the middle class (the "haves") and the agenda of the underclass (the "have-nots"). And despite our best attempts to reconcile the two distinct agendas into a common plan for the black collective, the undeniable class distinctions that exist in our society makes this goal untenable.

Thus, we come to the inescapable conclusion that somehow, we must take steps to eliminate the economic disparity in our society. The most expedient means of accomplishing this is to invest in the future of our children.

"Education must be the method we employ to empower our children, families and communities," Clinkscales says. "Education enables our people to transcend barriers of status and class to work together for the common good of all of the people."

"Once we agree on the goal we must determine how we will educate our children. The current system will never embody the entire solution because it is rooted in an institutional bias against people of African descent."

"Trying to change the current system by improving the curriculum, changing standardized tests, and putting more African-Americans in positions of power are all valiant undertakings and must be pursued, but the short-term answer lies in ourselves. Parents, families, and communities must become seriously involved and concerned with the educational process. We must fill in the cultural blanks which are omitted in our children's textbooks. History, science, English, math, and business must be taught in our households, and communities."

At The Margin

Despite progress, many working minority individuals and families are struggling. They are relatively unskilled and often hold jobs as laborers, farm workers, or domestics. Many live close to the edge of poverty, yet opportunity and advancement for their children remain in sight. Many subsist on minimum-wage jobs and drift in and out of work. Others hold production jobs threatened by economic change. Most are too underskilled for the emerging high-tech workplace.

Life for poorly skilled working people, whatever their ethnic group, can be very difficult. But it is especially harsh for poorly skilled blacks and Hispanics. These citizens are the forgotten victims of economic upheaval in the United States, vulnerable to every change in the economic landscape—automation, foreign competition, changes in immigration policy, and plant relocation.

According to the National Research Council, many poor two-parent families have a full-time worker and, hence, qualify for little public aid. Most do not qualify for Medicaid and many have no health insurance; a serious medical emergency can drive these families to their knees. Unemployment insurance and food stamps can only be considered failures for this group. Only one-third of unemployed workers in 1984 were covered by unemployment insurance. Food stamps provide only 60 cents per person for each meal for families with incomes at one-half of the poverty level.

The education and employment status of young white adults who are members of the minority working poor is cause for particular concern. Hispanic unemployment is almost 20 percent higher than that of whites; black males are twice as likely to be unemployed as white males. At the same time, analyses of the educational attainment of 17-year-olds indicate that the average proficiency of black and Hispanic students approximates that of white 13-year-olds.

These findings have ominous implications for minority youth in light of anticipated changes in the workplace that can be predicted with some confidence.

In the latest Census Bureau report, statistics revealed white households have 10 times the median wealth of black households which do not reflect any significant difference than those in 1984, the year covered in the bureau's first report.

Black married-couple households had a median net worth of \$17,640 compared with \$1,460 for households maintained by black males and \$760 for households maintained by females. The comparable figures for white households were \$62,390, \$16,580, and \$22,100. The median net worth of black married-couple households was not significantly different.

Home ownership accounted for 68 percent and motor vehicle value for 11 percent of black household net worth. Net worth is defined in the report as the value of assets minus debts.

Multi-Cultural, Yes; Minority, No!

BY KEITH O. HILTON
Guest Editorial

We were probably not the first, but are proud to be listed among the leading education sources to question the whole notion of "minority."

Nearly 10 years ago, while working at a university in New York Town, I recommended—and it was approved—that its Office of Minority Student Service be

changed to Multi-Cultural Student Affairs.

Recently I saw a job announcement from that university that continues to state "multi-cultural."

Why multi-cultural rather than minority? We prefer to use the word multi-cultural or m-c for several reasons. It is more accurate.

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CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

BY BENJAMIN F. CHAVIS, JR.
THE TRUTH OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

There is no better way for the people of the world community to remember and pay tribute to the living legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. than listening again to the truth of Dr. King's expressed opposition to U.S. warmaking policies. Today as hundreds of thousands of armed forces are caught in a geo-political conflict in the Persian Gulf crisis, the words of Dr. King still ring loud and clear.

While we have already gone on record in expressing our opposition to war in the Persian Gulf it is important that we continue to speak out against any attempt to justify war for the sake of the control of oil.

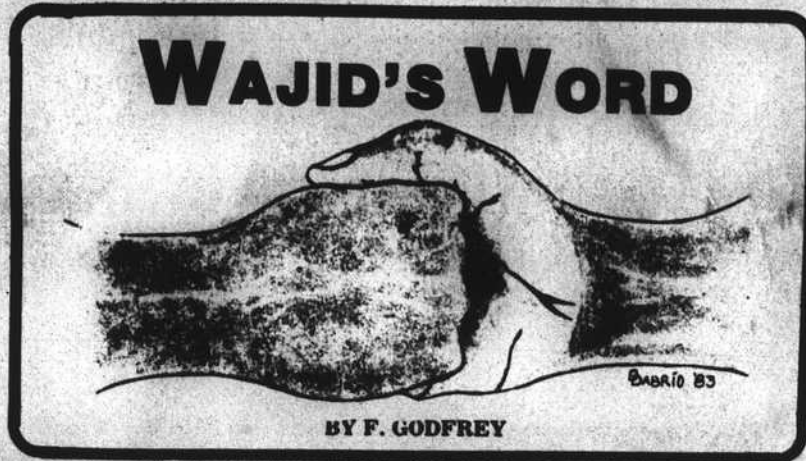
As Dr. King expressed his opposition to the Vietnam War, we must be just as vigilant to express our opposition to the Persian Gulf War. It was on April 4, 1967, one year to the day before his tragic assassination, when Dr. King delivered his famous sermon at Riverside Church in New York City. For Dr. King, this was the time to "break the silence."

We believe it is important for you to hear these particular words of Dr. King once again. Dr. King emphasized, "There is at the outset a very obvious and almost facile

connection between the war in Vietnam and the struggle I and others have been waging in America... It seems as if there was a real promise of hope for the poor—both black and white—through the poverty program. Then came the buildup in Vietnam and I watched the program broken and eviscerated as if it were some idle political plaything as a society gone mad on war, and I knew that America would never invest the necessary funds or energies in rehabilitation of its poor so long as adventures like Vietnam continued to draw men and skills and money like some demonic destructive suction tube. So I was increasingly compelled to see the war as an enemy of the poor and attack it as such."

Dr. King continued, "Perhaps the more tragic recognition of reality took place when it became clear to me that the war was doing far more than devastating the hopes of the poor at home. It was sending their sons and their brothers and their husbands to fight and die in extraordinarily high proportions relative to the rest of the population. They were taking the black young men who had been crippled by our society and sending them 8,000 miles away

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The "liberation" of Kuwait has begun! But is the war in the Middle East really about liberation? And if it is, just whose liberation are we talking about? I really don't believe this latest U.S.-initiated and implemented attack on a Third World country has anything to do with the liberation of anyone, and certainly not Kuwait.

I hate to beat a dead horse to death, but I for one am not at all fooled by Operation Desert Storm's purported purpose. I strongly believe that the real mission here is to remove Saddam Hussein from power and to neutralize Iraq's military strength. Not because Saddam is so evil or that Iraq might become the new Germany.

Hussein was rapidly moving toward pulling many of the Arab countries together under a unified front, thereby giving Arabs more control over oil-rich resources and creating an imminent threat to the United States' watchdog, Israel. You will note for example that the biggest praise for Bush's action came from the big oil companies, who to reward Bush for his action froze gasoline prices. In addition, many individuals made millions of dollars on Wall Street over the past few days.

When Qaddafi began to gain recognition among many of the African nations, he was accused of terrorism and we sent in the bombers with support from the European countries. When the "wrong" candidate wins any election in any Third World country, he or she is quickly overthrown by CIA-backed groups like the Contras in Nicaragua or is assassinated.

When Malcolm X began to make moves toward bringing unity among many of the African nations he was assassinated. When Dr. King began to unite young black

men around the evil of the war in Vietnam and thereby threaten a ready pool of cannon fodder, he was assassinated.

Many have suggested that Hussein showed no movement in attempting to respond to the United Nations' (United States') demands. Are we so quick to forget that he released all so-called hostages who wanted to leave Iraq and Kuwait? Was this not an indication of his willingness to bend? Was the releasing of hostages the action of a "madman?"

I am also amazed at how the U.S. military and many U.S. citizens are cheering at the so-called success of our "campaign." Praising our efforts against a small country like Iraq which is smaller than most states is similar to praising the San Francisco 49ers for their efforts against some high-school football team.

There was much cheering when we invaded the tiny island of Grenada. There was the same cheering when we invaded the small country of Panama and which we still occupy with military forces, by the way. The same cheers were heard when we bombed Libya. Two common threads run through each of these "campaigns": the victimized are small countries and the citizens of these countries are non-European.

Yes, the "liberation" of Kuwait has begun, but I am not cheering. What I would like to know is when will the liberation of the blacks in South Africa begin? When will the liberation of the Palestinians begin? When will the liberation of Northern Ireland begin? When will the liberation of the African in America begin? When will the liberation of all oppressed peoples throughout the world begin? Peace!

Letters To The Editor

To The Editor:
Our soldiers who serve our country are in total confusion—but they are willing to serve our country with love and blood. But most politicians are just as uncertain about the economic standpoint.

So our homeless go on feeling disappointed, our families go in hibernation not telling the truth to their children, and the year continues without an answer. So after all this our taxes are raised. Jobs are in limbo. And even people are thinking about they are better off on drugs than to face this reality.

Answer: No one cares anymore. Remember, this is a one-on-one issue. We the people who care must make selections in our voting attitudes and take hold of the situation at hand.

Of course there should be some taxes raised at a given point, but not in an outrageous way to satisfy a politician's appetite, because yards, city parks and other areas to be looked at—those taxes that are increased should be monitored and dispersed in all areas of the city; not some, but areas which are neglected the most.

change—not greed. I have found it is greed that has afflicted the country's well-being, not love. So think on these things that can make a new way of living—and if oil is a problem in our economy, let everyone ride a bike for once. It's healthier and economic. If we could do this we could save on taxes, and conserve energy for a future of tomorrow.

Most of all, let's pray for a positive change for the groups in the desert and our government's decision.

Oriando M. Currie, Sr.
Raleigh

BIBLE THOUGHT

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day.

Psalms 91:1-5

TONY BROWN'S JOURNAL

WAR AND HISTORY: WINNERS AND LOSERS
"WAR," screamed the headlines of the Columbus Dispatch and the Dayton Daily News on Jan. 17, the day after the U.S.-led allied forces struck military and industrial targets in Iraq.

I arrived in Dayton on Jan. 16, about 30 minutes before the air attacks were announced. Another historic element became a part of my day when I was assigned the "Paul Laurence Dunbar" suite at the Marriott Hotel.



BROWN

Like everyone else, I expected war, but emotionally was hoping it would never come. And like President Bush, the mothers, fathers, wives, husbands and relatives of those in harm's way, I hoped for the last casualties if it did start.

As of this writing, the allied forces have performed in an exemplary manner, kicking Saddam's nuclear and chemical war capability where Bush said he would. As the days progress, I predict these winners and losers:

George Bush will win big because he pulled it off and in so doing drove consumer and investor confidence up with a "quick, decisive" victory over Iraq's mad hatter, while keeping casualties down.

Saddam Hussein will lose the war and his economic and military base. All he will be left with is his sizable delusions of self-worth and Arab nationalism. His people will suffer the most and his country will be occupied by Turkey on the northern border and maybe Iran on the east and an allied force for sure.

The European community, with the single exception of England, and Japan, held back support and watched America do their dying and spending to guarantee them a low energy bill. It won't be forgotten.

The stock markets around the world showed renewed confidence in the future; Tokyo saw its 10th largest rally ever and Paris had biggest one-day runup in history. The price of oil fell and the oil companies froze gas prices.

In spite of war, there was a lot to be thankful for. We can now return to the problems of a busted economy, poor education and racism. And for more inspiration, we can look to the past.

I'm sitting, writing these words under the eyes of Paul Laurence Dunbar who was born in Dayton in 1872 and went on to become a giant in black history as one of America's most prolific writers.

"Tony Brown's Journal" TV series can be seen on public television in Raleigh on Channel 4 (WUNC). Please consult listings or phone station for air time.

OTHER VIEWPOINTS

BY RONALD D. STEELE
WHAT ABOUT THOSE PERSISTENT WHITE RACIST STEREOTYPES?

The recent survey results on European-American racial attitudes, by the National Opinion Research Center, at the University of Chicago, reveal that most of them harbor negative, racist stereotypes of African and Hispanic Americans. This disclosure should fuel the movement for a multicultural school curriculum, to at least begin to change those views for future generations.

The report revealed that most of the whites surveyed see African-Americans as "likely to prefer welfare to hard work and tend to be lazier than whites, more prone to violence, less intelligent and less patriotic," according to the Washington Post.

Those views are entrenched and for good reason. America's educational system, from grade school through college, is a virtual hotbed of prejudice and bigotry. European-Americans fashioned an educational curriculum predicated on their notions of white supremacy. If a fact didn't conform to this doctrine, it was discarded or revised. They fashioned their institutions to reinforce this belief system, creating a "false environmental reality." Almost the entire nation is constantly inundated with the same form of white supremacy through the media, political, justice, cinema and other American institutions.

Without a comprehensive reference of who they are, too many African-Americans, too, have bought unconditionally into the notions of white supremacy, which necessitates the belief of black inferiority and subsequently, black self-hate. This self-hate is illustrated, for example, by the many blacks who are outright killing themselves and one another at a frenzied pace, through homicide, alcohol and drug abuse, lack of diet nutrition and poor lifestyle choices.

African-Americans may never change white views, in spite of the facts. But African-Americans must change their view of themselves from Eurocentric to Africentric; from someone else's to their own; from self-ignorance to self-awareness; from self-hate to self-love.

One of the most effective, if not the most effective tool of both making that change and resisting the vain, fallacious, wicked notions of white supremacy is through knowledge of the African-American history, heritage and culture. The multicultural curriculum arms all to dismiss the desperate cry of white supremacists, and compel African-Americans, in particular, to proceed to unify, empower themselves and achieve self-determination, in spite of what any other group thinks or perceives about them.

For example, such a curriculum should teach the fact that African-Americans are the offspring of God's first humans, black Africans, encompassing the world's oldest known people, dating back more than three million years. African-Americans have the blood of their ancestors, whose accomplishments include the invention of civilization and all of the arts and sciences. Africans introduced civilization to the world. Those achievements include the pyramids, the sphinxes, the great temples of antiquity, gold smelting, the invention of math, the calendar, medicine, all of the arts and sciences, and much, much more.

Although conquered, uprooted and exported to a foreign land, then oppressed, exploited and enslaved, African-American forefathers built the infrastructure of the United States. In America, it was the African-Americans' free labor, from "sunup to sundown," and their ingenuity which fueled and blessed the United States to become the land of wealth and opportunity that it is today.

Africans in America invented the "Real McCoy," a self-lubricating device for machines; industrial food chemistry; carbon filament method for the incandescent lamp; the traffic signal; first open heart surgery; blood plasma; the incubator; and much, much more. Essential-

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