

# EDITORIAL / OPINION

## GUEST EDITORIAL:

### Congressman Flake Blasts Congressman Michel's Racial Statements

Congressman Floyd H. Flake (D-NY) said Congressman Robert Michel (R-Ill) should consider stepping down from his position as Minority Leader of the House of Representatives because of the racial insensitivity he demonstrated by demeaning the demise of minstrel shows and bigoted song lyrics in a recent interview.

"Congressman Michel's callous racial comments, and attitude which makes them possible, are a serious danger to us all, and he should step down because of this," Congressman Flake said.

Congressman Michel said in a television interview that he used to love to imitate Kingfish and Amos 'n' Andy. He said that he never thought of this as disparaging, but that it was just part of life, and fun. Congressman Michel actually imitated these characters during the interview, in which he also compared the removal of racially offensive language from spirituals to the rewriting of history books in the Soviet Union.

Congressman Flake said that Congressman Michel's bizarre enjoyment of imitations and caricatures that are directly demeaning to Black people is insidious and dangerous.

"Has Congressman Michel forgotten the roots of blackface minstrel shows? Can he not see that they display and promote bigotry?" Congressman Flake said.

"Nostalgia for racism is scary any way you look at it," he continued. "If Congressman Michel is latently racist, he should not be in Congress. And if he is so obtuse that he cannot see the harm in racist entertainment, he should go back to grade school history class.

"It is clear from Congressman Michel's statements that he doesn't understand that stereotypes, jests and derogatory names are harmful in and of themselves. They do more than reflect established prejudice, they cause new prejudice on their own," Congressman Flake said.

Congressman Flake went on to say that there has been a dramatic increase in race-related violence in the past several years, and that some of the blame for this must be placed on the bigoted comments of elected officials and public figures.

"Al Campanis, Jimmy the Greek and Congressman Michel make bigoted statements and racial slurs more acceptable when they use them in public," he said. "They also contribute to the racial violence which is a consequence of these types of statements."

Congressman Flake said that Congressman Michel's apology to those who were offended by his remarks was not good enough.

"Congressman Michel should resign his position to demonstrate to everyone that there is no place in our country for supposedly humorous caricatures and racial slurs which maliciously insult a specific group of people, and which promote racial disharmony, alienation and bigotry," he concluded.



By: Harold C. Williams

## The Miracle Family

In these days and times with the identity crisis, economic turmoil, and total confusion in our society, it is a miracle that the Black family is together at all. The thing that has kept us together is love, caring, and prayer. The basic foundation in which the Black family gets its substance for existence is the church.

The Black family has come to understand that we must never forget that we are the most ethical people in existence. The Black family is revered because it is a miracle that the Black family exist at all when genocide has been practiced on the Black family since slavery.

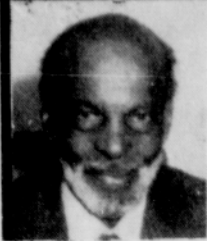
During this holiday season, the Black family must embrace itself, hug itself, kiss itself for the fact that is still here.

To give birth to the spiritual voice of Mahalia Jackson, to give hope to the dream of Martin Luther King, Jr., to open the halls of politics of Barbara Jordan, and to give the '80s a new vision through Jesse Jackson, we are a great family.

There is none like the Black family to walk the face of this earth and it is time that the Black family move away from its ills and applaud its strengths. Truly the Black family is the soul of the human race and from that soul all that is positive has come forward. We are in season and we cannot be stopped. This holiday season lets applaud the dream because the Black family is headed to the mountaintop.

To all mothers and fathers in the struggle, we love you. Happy Holiday!

## Perspectives



Professor McKinley Burt

### Don't Let Them Put You Down

PART I

"It was a dark and stormy night - Black Monday on the New York Stock Exchange - His heart was as black as sin - A soul as black as evil itself."

The carefully contrived literatures and histories put forth by the establishment are filled with thousands of similar pejorative (degrading) outpourings of the black races. Nor do our contemporary newspapers, magazines and television formats shy away from this racist syntax. It is interesting that early on (in the south of Europe, in Africa, Arabia, Mesopotamia, India, and in the New World) religious paintings, statues and other icons depicted the Black as representing the highest order of spirituality and 'good' - including the Black Madonnas and Child.

It is even more interesting to find that several French anthropologist at the turn of the century reported on ancient fears of the Saxon tribes in respect to Blacks. These fears were generated 4,000 years earlier when as shown on their maps the Africans sailed as far north as the British Isles to mine Zin for the production of bronze. Obviously, they left their genetic imprint as is the case in many parts of Ireland. Egyptian descriptions of these expeditions described the inhabitants as "white, skin-wearing creatures who fled into the woods and peered at the newcomers from behind trees" (Diop, African Origin of Civilization). Here, probably, was the origin of the first 'Cargo Cults,' nautical style.

There are many other attempts to Put Down Blacks - by the reversal of historic roles, done by authors who think that Blacks don't or won't read. We have the racist distortions of books like Tim Newark's, The Barbarians: Warriors and Wars of the Dark Ages. The 'revisionist' dares to lump the culture-bearing Moors - predominantly Black, North African Moslems - with the looting, raping Mongols, Vikings, Franks, Huns and Visigoths "who swept through Europe and struck fear into the saul of civilization." Of all the racist Put Downs against Black people, this is one of the easiest to

counter with documentation. Yet,

It was the Moors (Shakespeare's Othello) whose religious, cultural and scientific revival of Europe (10th and 11th centuries) brought about the Renaissance, ending the century-long period of the Dark Ages of ignorance, turmoil and savagery. These African/Arabian scholars, astronomers, mathematicians, architects and poets revitalized a Europe left intellectually, spiritually and morally bankrupt by the disintegration of the Roman Empire.

It is Hogben in his book, Mathematics In the Making (p. 72), who describes Rome as "The same 'gangster' which butchered Archimedes, destroyed the first library of Alexandria (Alexander The Great), institutionalized the gladiatorial contest and the public crucifixion of slaves" - and of course, Christ. And it is against this backdrop of a degenerate culture which fed human beings to wild animals for public entertainment (and enslaved the Jews) that we can well appreciate the "Fall of the Roman Empire". Strange that so many Americans of the 'Establishment' practically worship this Evil Empire as the epitome of Western Civilization.

So it is, then, that when 'they' try the Put Down, remind them that the Moors are the ones who rescued Europe from its tragic pitiful condition by reviving and translating the great works in astronomy, mathematics, medicine and literature developed a thousand years earlier by their forbearers in Northern Africa (many of whom bore 'Greek' names. Let all know that you are aware that it was the astronomical talents of the Moors, and their schools of navigation in Spain and Italy, that made possible the exploration of 'unknown' parts of the world (unknown to Europeans, that is viz a viz Magellan and Columbus). Asin Ireland, the Moors left their genetic imprint here - all the way to the middle of France and Germany.

(Continued Next Week)

## CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL



### Help Free South Africa

by Benjamin F. Chavis Jr.

We all should be aware of the tricks and disguises of the racist apartheid regime of South Africa. Yes, there have been some recent but reluctant indications in South Africa that some changes may soon occur. The fact that South Africa has not tentatively signed an accord with Angola and Cuba, regarding withdrawal of South Africa's armed forces from Angolan and Namibian territories, is a welcomed event. The fact that South Africa has recently released several political prisoners who have been unjustly held for many years is another welcomed signal. Yet, these welcomed actions by the government of South Africa should not disguise the determination of racist forces in South Africa to stay in power.

Thus, the anti-apartheid movement in the United States should accelerate efforts to ensure the passage of the Dellums-Cranston Comprehensive Sanctions Bill in the next session of Congress. Nelson Mandela and thousands of other political prisoners are still being unjustly held in the custody of the apartheid regime.

Mobil Oil and Shell Oil Companies, based here in the United States, continue to fuel the

death pumps of apartheid. While most of the established news media in the nation have stopped giving consistent news coverage about the unfolding situation in South Africa, we should be aware that the social and political climate in South Africa has deteriorated.

Fascism is on the rise in South Africa to the point that, within the last several days, a member of a white neo-fascist group based in Pretoria opened gunfire on a group of unarmed Black South Africans. In this incident, three people were killed and at least ten were wounded. These incidents continue to escalate throughout South Africa. The perpetrator of this violence was a former policeman, Barend Strydom, who is a member of the Afrikaner Resistance Movement, a neo-fascist, swastika wearing group Africans.

As we approach the Christmas season which stresses good will and peace on earth, let us remember our responsibility to help free South Africa from the tyranny of apartheid. The new Bush Administration needs to be pressured by the African American community along with the growing anti-apartheid movement to stop the United States' "destructive engagement" and support of South Africa.

## Fighting Crime In Our Communities

by John E. Jacob

Crime is a problem that the black community must begin to provide the leadership to deal with. So long as crime is perceived as being a problem confined to the black community, the broader society will continue to ignore it or follow narrow, self-defeating policies.

I go into communities and I see 16 and 17-year-old kids with beepers on their hips, driving \$30,000 cars while living in the projects. I know their mothers didn't give them the money.

And I know that if they paid cash, they didn't work to get it. At least not in legal jobs. That ought to be obvious to everyone, but as long as such conditions are confined to the black community, the broader society shows no interest.

Three decades ago, the prisons did not have majority minority populations. All of this is a new development. During some of the most oppressive times for black people, we were not the ones who populated the jails. Something has happened over the last two to three decades in our neighborhoods.

So the black community must begin to put in place programs that address crime. We run a major crime prevention program in the National Urban League. We call it: "Crime is not a part of our black heritage."

That program is based on the need to do several things. We have to insist that black people in our community live by our traditional value system that says we will not steal from each other. We will not have drugs in our community and have kids afraid to go to bed at night because of the gunshots outside

their windows, or old people unable to go out of their apartments because somebody is going to take their Social Security checks.

We have to instill and reinstate in our community that value system that says we must care for each other and protect each other.

Today, committed people are organizing neighborhoods and communities saying, "Let's tell the

They're demanding that the police protect black neighborhoods with the same concern with which they protect white neighborhoods. And they're bringing that message to housing projects and homeowners, young people and family heads.

At the same time, we've got to keep up the pressure to provide our young people with clear alternatives to self-destructive behavior. It's a double-edged problem - getting tough on those who violate community standards will work if there are incentives that pull kids away from the street.

That means drawing young people into tenant's patrols and other anti-crime activities, while providing athletic and recreational activities for them that channel energies into fun, not destruction.

And it means fighting even harder for the social changes, better education and training opportunities, and more human policies that give kids a better chance in life.

Clearly those are responsibilities of the larger society, but whatever society's unmet responsibilities, we can't allow our communities to be ravaged by predators preying on their neighbors.

We should not and do not have to tolerate crime and drugs in our neighborhoods.

## Letters To The Editor:

Dear Editor:

I have just received a copy of the October 20th Portland Observer. Your warm welcome to the City of Portland and the thanks for the role of Black Law Enforcement Executives in the Criminal Justice System is greatly appreciated by me, and I am sure all of the other black executives and their spouses who visited your lovely city.

This type of positive journalism from

minority owned newspapers like the Observer is certainly encouraging for individuals in the law enforcement profession.

Good luck to you and I hope that your paper will continue to prosper.

Sincerely,

HAROLD L. HURTT  
Assistant Police Chief  
Special Operations Division  
CITY OF PHOENIX



## Along the Color Line

Dr. Manning Marable

### The Demise Of Liberalism

(Part 1)

The recent victory of George Bush over Michael Dukakis in the 1988 presidential election has been interpreted as a victory of the Republican Party over the Democrats. The Republicans have won five out of six recent presidential elections, and seven out of ten national contests since 1952. But more accurately, Dukakis's defeat represents the political deadend of liberalism, and more generally, the public policies which most Black Americans support.

The American political system is becoming increasingly stratified by race. In 1984, for example, 66 percent of all whites voted for the reelection of Ronald Reagan as president. This year, roughly 60 percent of all whites nationally, and approximately 70 percent of all Southern whites, cast ballots for George Bush. In contrast, nearly nine out of ten Black voters supported Dukakis. Since 1964, the Black vote for the Democratic presidential candidate has averaged approximately 88 percent.

Dukakis recognized that he had to win a larger percentage of the middle class white electorate than either Mondale or Carter if he was to have any hope of capturing the White House. To do this, Dukakis

decided to distance himself from Black issues in general, and from Jesse Jackson in particular. He didn't campaign in a Black church or a major Black community until only several weeks before the general election. He blandly assumed that blacks would vote for him, because with Bush as the alternative, they had no where else to go. But Blacks were so disgruntled with the Massachusetts Democrat that thousands simply stayed home on election day, producing significantly lower turnout rates and damaging all other Democrats on the ballot.

Blacks distrusted Dukakis because, unlike Mondale, he lacked any political credentials in civil rights activism or support. But they also sensed a degree of political opportunism in his refusal to identify himself as a "liberal" throughout most of the presidential race. For the vast majority of Black Americans, "liberalism" is a political terminology which has overwhelmingly positive connotations. The institutionalization of civil rights legislation, the creation of job training and social welfare programs, the implementation of affirmative action, minority economic set-asides, and public education programs.

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