

# EDITORIAL / OPINION

## HATE MONGERS STRONGER

by John E. Jacob

There's a terrible complacency about the growth of racist and neo-Nazi activity in the country today. It's as if people don't understand that allowing the hate groups to flourish puts our democracy in grave danger.

In recent months there have been racist incidents reported on scores of college campuses, among other places, as well as numerous acts of violence directed against African Americans, Asians, Jews, Arabs, and other members of minority groups.

Last year, the New York City Police Department recorded over 500 violent incidents of this kind, a 100 percent increase from the previous year.

White supremacist groups have bombed homes, hoarded military weapons, and engaged in shootouts with law enforcement officers.

Even the homes of decent people aren't safe from the inroads of the hate-mongers--in some cities they've aired their messages of violence and racism over cable television.

Of course the most visible sign of the way racism has become respectable is the election of a Klansman to a state legislature, something that caused shock waves to run through national political parties. The fact that he ran as a Republican damaged that party's attempts to win over black voters. But Democrats

couldn't have been too happy about it either, since it served as a reminder that another avowed racist won a Democratic nomination for a state office a few years ago.

Even business is subject to harassment by hate groups seeking to bring white supremacy to the employment office. Last month AT&T stockholders sided with management in beating back a stockholder resolution that sought to eliminate the company's minority hiring program on grounds that African Americans have "inherently low intelligence."

The outfit that launched this particular drive calls itself the National Alliance, and its views are reflected in its choice of Adolph Hitler's portrait to adorn its monthly magazine, celebrating 100th birthday of the history's most evil racist.

The new racism got a boost from the mood of the past decade that pretended we are a color-blind society and fostered indifference to growing inequality and to civil rights.

Law enforcement agencies need to gear up to closely monitor hate groups and disarm them. Congress should pass the proposed Hate Crimes Statistics Act, which marks a beginning of a more effective national law enforcement drive to reduce racist violence and harassment. Above all, no one can afford to be complacent or to fail to enlist in the battle against bigotry.

## AT THE SUMMIT: THE PROCESS OF NATIONAL RENEWAL

by Ron Daniels

Faced with a deepening crisis characterized by a growing economic underclass, drastically deteriorating inner-city ghetto neighborhoods, an explosion of drugs, violence, crime and a dramatic widening of the gap between the haves and the have nots in the National Black Community, hundreds of African-Americans heeded the call of former Gary Mayor Richard Gordon Hatcher to come to New Orleans for an African-American Summit. It was time once again to reinitiate the process of Black National renewal.

Seventeen years ago it was Hatcher who had graciously consented to convene and host the historic Gary National Black Political Convention in 1972. More than 8,000 African-Americans converged on Gary seeking to find answers to the crises still confronting African-Americans in that period. Cong. Charles C. Diggs, Imamu Amiri Baraka, Hatcher and a host of other leaders had called the convention to shape a "Black Agenda" and to forge strategies for African-American empowerment and development. The preamble to the Gary Declaration offered a profound analysis of the nature of the problem facing the Black Nation. "A Black Political Convention, indeed all truly Black politics must begin with this truth: The American system does not work for the masses of our people, and it cannot be made to work without radical fundamental change." As the delegates gathered in New Orleans it was abundantly clear that this basic proposition has not changed. Speaker after speaker rose to address the frightening and escalating crisis facing African-Americans, particularly our children and our youth. Over and over again the anguishing cry of, how will we save our children echoed throughout the conference chambers. In seventeen years some things had changed, but much remained the same.

But something else is also wrong. Somewhere along the path to "success" the African-American nation has lost its way. Overwhelmed by the "illusion of progress," the idea of a Black agenda was no longer popular or practical within the framework of mainstream politics. In the 1988 presidential campaign the concerns of African-Americans were seldom noted by either political party. Richard Hatcher begged to differ. It was dangerous to be caught without a black agenda. Hence the urgent need for the Summit.

Some notable national leaders may not have shown up and the attendance may not have been as massive as the Gary Convention, but at New Orleans we began to rediscover the basic tenets required for our survival and development. A Black Agenda; the Cultural Offensive; networking; and a renewed recognition that "power concedes nothing without a demand." Where there is no struggle, there is no progress.

The challenge today is no less imperative than it was at Gary. "It is the challenge to consolidate our own Black role as the vanguard for a new society". The tide of history has turned us in the right direction.

## THE ABC'S OF PROTEST

by Dr. Lenora Fulani

All over our country African American and Latino college students are rising up to protest racism on campus--the so-called "isolated incidents" of racial harassment perpetuated by white students and all too often condoned by indifferent administrators; the neglect of Black Studies program; the failure to recruit and retain Black faculty; inadequate services and rising tuition costs that hit students of color hardest.

New York City's public colleges are still rocking from protests over a proposed \$200 a year increase in tuition that would have made it impossible for thousands of students--most of them poor people of color--to get a college degree. Their militant and well organized strike action, which began on the Harlem campus of City College, had spread to 19 of the 20 senior and community colleges in the City University of New York system before Mario Cuomo was forced to back down. He vetoed the tuition hike legislation an hour before the midnight deadline.

Many of those who took part in the city-wide strike, which is still going on at some campuses over the issue of amnesty for leaders of the protest and cuts in services, said they felt betrayed by the attempt of state legislators to ram the higher tuition through, and by the failure of liberal Democrats, Black and white, to stand up for them. They have been betrayed.

But it's no coincidence that a CUNY

education, which had been free for 130 years, first got a pricetag tacked on it when Black and Latino students began seeking admission in large numbers. New York City's Mayor Ed Koch, Governor Mario Cuomo and US Senator Patrick Moynihan of New York, all of whom came from poor working class families--Jewish, Italian, Irish--are all CUNY graduates. Now these Democratic Party politicians are among those pushing shut the doors of opportunity--doors that were opened to them.

The students are right to be angry. They are right to be fighting for amnesty. But if their protest is going to be effective, then its leaders have to bring the struggle into the Coalition for a Progressive New York that is taking shape around many independent mayoral candidacies; otherwise they will find themselves being pitted against rank and file labor, the Black and Puerto Rican communities, and other traditional Democratic Party constituencies which are forced to compete with one another in the divide-and-conquer shell game the Democrats and their partners in crime the Republicans play with our people's lives. It's a losing game, one that sets working class students up to fight for funding against workers, the homeless, people with AIDS and the elderly. Now that the students have won this round, they must demand that no other constituency or community be made to pay the price.

## CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

### PROTECT VOTING RIGHTS

by Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

and others who are still not registered to vote.

The voting rights of African Americans and of other citizens of this nation continue to be eroded. This is due to a systematic form of institutionalized racism in the voting processes in effect in most regions of the United States.

We all should be reminded of the heavy price that was paid in blood, seat, tears and numerous jailings to get the right to vote for African Americans and others. But the right to vote has to be exercised by the community if it is to have an impact.

Unfortunately, the trend over the last several years has been low voter turnout in racial and ethnic communities, with the positive exception of the momentum engendered by the Presidential campaign of the Rev. Jesse Jackson.

It should be noted that President Bush was elected only as a result of half of the eligible voters actually going to the polls to vote. The truth is that millions of other persons would have voted in the last Presidential election if they were registered. Somebody needs to ask why in 1989 are there still millions of African Americans, Latin Americans

We believe that the entire process of voter registration needs to be reformed drastically. There are many elected officials in state legislatures as well as in the Congress of the United States who actually fear massive voter registration and participation because they know they would be voted out of office. Some of the changes that we recommend which would lead to a reform of the present voter registration system are the following: 1) a requirement that all municipal, state and federal agencies do on-site voter registration; 2) establishment of a one-time, lifetime voter registration for all citizens; 3) to eliminate racial discriminatory roll-purging of voters from voter registration rolls by local officials and 4) the establishment of "same-day" registration, which would permit citizens to register and vote on the same day of election.

If the United States is to be a nation where justice prevails for all people without the injustices of racism and exploitation, then voting must continue to be used as an effective strategy to ensure that the "voiceless" will have a greater voice in the affairs of this nation.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:



To The editor,

I'm writing in response to John E. Jacob's article in the Portland Observer of April 27, 1989, Common Sense on Guns. There are numerous errors that need to be clarified regarding his article. He refers to a past article of Time magazine which stated "that a 30 round banana clip is not correct for deer hunting with an assault rifle". It is illegal to use a large capacity clip exceeding five rounds for deer hunting. The selection of assault rifles available to the consumer are equipped to use a 5 round clip.

The terminology between assault rifles and traditional semi-auto rifles, pistols, and shotguns is vague. Semi-automatic firearms have been with us for the last century used by legitimate hunters. So why is Jacob writing this article on this issue now? Gangsters used semi-automatic weapons in the 1920s and 1930s, with impunity. Why is there a new concern with this statistically small phenomenon? The definition between semi-auto firearms and assault rifles is so unclear that if legislation was implemented against assault rifles, this would outlaw over 60% of all firearms, pistols, rifles, and shotguns

The legal users of Federally licensed machine guns have never misused their arms in a criminal manner. Why bother with an area of legal recreation that is not a problem? Statistics have shown that when gun restrictions and bans have been implemented worldwide, the crime rate has increased. Switzerland requires all males to keep a fully automatic assault rifle in their homes, and they have a lower crime rate than Japan or England. Does this say that we should keep assault rifles in our homes to reduce crime? No America has sociological problems which breed domestic disharmony. The African-American community is particularly hard hit, suffering the most with 7 out of 10 gun deaths in our country today.

We need to face the problem of social conflicts in America realistically. The stability of the family and the reduction of drug and alcohol abuse must be attended to if we are to reduce our fellow human being's suffering. Chris Brown History Student Portland State University Portland, OR

## PERSPECTIVES

### BLACK GENIUS, WHITE COVER, V

As we close this series on African literature and music, and move on to other things in the weeks to come, I am struck by the incredible range of our pioneering contribution to the world of letters. We speak of the people who, according to Plato, "invented language... numbers and astronomy". But then, the establishment prefers to ignore this fact, and attributes the dawn of civilization to the Greek students. Knowing full well that Homer was illiterate!

It is so fortunate for us that during this era of an African-American rediscovery of self, we find that our ancestors in Egypt, Ethiopia, Nubia, and Arabia wrote on stone--and that we have their well-preserved papyri to document the greatness of a race. Thus we have verification of our novels, epics, short stories, folktales, biographies, vignettes, proverbs, parodies, epigrams, epithets, aphorisms, rhetoric, metaphors, similes, hyperboles, treaties, statepapers, you name it!

Guston Maspero, that noted authority in the matter Popular Stories of Ancient Egypt, University Books, 1967, tells us that even in the realm of folktales and fairy tales, Africans were "the fathers and the Founders." He establishes an "unmistakable similarity" between the themes of *The Arabian Nights* in Arabic literature and *The Story of the Two Brothers* in African literature. Further, he goes on to note "a curious similarity" to the Biblical episode of *Joseph and Potipher*.

Maspero goes on to trace a pervasive seminality of the African model to the German and French fairytales, and to the same genre in Hungary, Romania, Transylvania, Russia, Greece, Anatolia, and even India. This should not be all that surprising since I have been documenting for the last year the fact that

thousands of years ago the ancient Africans mounted explorations, trade missions and conquests to these places with maps still found on ancient temple walls.

As a matter of fact I would say that the material presented in this column could be taken as a **Master Baseline Essay** covering the fields of mathematics, science, history and literature in respect to African and African-American contributions. In any case I have a publisher now for key elements of my works, and several books will be out winter and spring, 1989-90. One text will have the same title as this last series. "Black Genius, White Cover" (copyright McKinley Burt, 1989).

Written a "thousand years before Moses", this papyrus is considered by Egyptologists as the model for the **Ten Commandments**.

The Soul's Declaration of Innocence This declaration was to be made by the soul in the Judgment Hall of Osiris in the presence of the council of forty-two gods. The heart being weighed against the symbol of truth and found correct was then restored to the deceased who entered upon the life of the blessed.

O ye Lords of Truth! I have brought you truth. I have not privily done evil against mankind. I have not afflicted the miserable. I have not told falsehoods. I have had no acquaintance with sin. I have not made the laboring man do

more than his daily task. I have not been idle. I have not been intoxicated. I have not been immoral. I have not caused hunger. I have not made to weep. I have not murdered. I have not defrauded.

# BAN APARTHEID!

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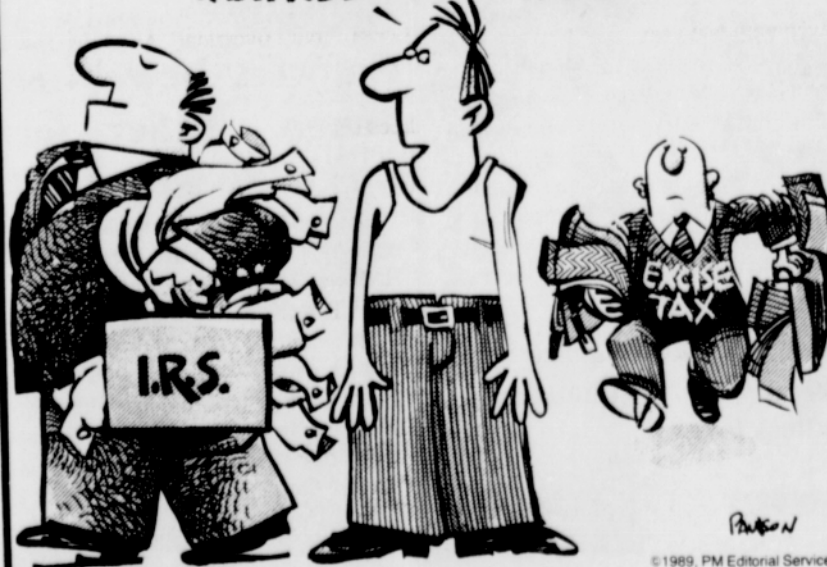
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