

NATIONAL FORUM

Rainbow Lobby Urges Secretary of State Baker to Help Avert "Repression And Bloodshed" In Zaire

The executive director of the Rainbow Lobby has written to Secretary of State James Baker to urge that the Bush administration "use its considerable influence" with President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire "to help avert further repression and bloodshed" in the central African country.

Earlier this year Mr. Mobutu, whose 25 year old dictatorship is one of the world's most repressive and corrupt regimes, inaugurated a "popular consultation" allowing Zairians for virtually the first time in a generation to express their views publicly. The self-appointed president for life was seeking to mollify his supporters in the Bush administration and on Capitol Hill, who have themselves come under increasingly strong pressure from the anti-Mobutu lobby in this country to withdraw support from the Mobutu "kleptocracy." Recognizing that such a move stemmed from political weakness, Zairians from all walks of life—including students, women, workers, civil servants and a group of 12 Catholic bishops—took the opportunity to criticize the regime in the strongest terms, urging the introduction of a multi-party democracy while demanding the dissolution of the ruling MPR party and the resignation of Mr. Mobutu; some people went so far as to invoke the fate of Nicolae Ceausescu.

"The State Department's continued whitewash of the Mobutu regime is beginning to strain credulity," commented Nancy Ross, the Rainbow Lobby's executive director. "The people of Zaire are demanding, in louder and louder voices, democracy and fair elections—precisely what the U.S. is supposed to stand for. Our continued deference to

the tyrant Mobutu gives him the confidence to shoot down peaceful demonstrators. This administrator is practicing a racist double standard: multi-party democracy for Eastern Europe and tyranny for the people of Southern Africa."

With the situation increasingly tense, the Lobby and other supporters in this country of Zaire's pro-democracy movement are concerned that the regime is planning a harsh crackdown against participants in a major demonstration scheduled to take place in the Zairian capital of Kinshasa on April 15. The State Department has already confirmed that at least two people were killed in a recent demonstration, and a spokesperson for the opposition party Union for Democracy and Social Progress has reported that many university students have been forcibly removed from Kinshasa and taken to an unknown location.

"Given the U.S. government's longstanding support of the Mobutu regime, it is rather disingenuous to claim, as did one State Department official, that the United States cannot influence the behavior of the Mobutu government," Ms. Ross wrote in her letter to Mr. Baker. "A public statement from the U.S. government placing Mobutu on notice that his aid package will be in jeopardy should he crack down on the demonstrators could help avert a tragedy."

"Recently, a State Department official told me that the U.S. cannot pressure Mobutu without losing 'credibility,'" Ms. Ross continued. "We believe that the responsibility of our government is not to maintain its credibility with a brutal and corrupt dictator,

but rather with the American people, who do not wish their tax dollars to fund this extremely repressive and legendarily corrupt regime, and with the 32 million people of Zaire whose just struggles for democracy and fair elections have in the past been frustrated by U.S. foreign policy. We urge you to put Mobutu on notice that we will not tolerate continued violations of human and democratic rights: eliminate all military aid (including training) and all economic assistance except for food aid and development projects carried out by non-governmental organizations."

On April 4 the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations heard testimony from Representatives Harold Wolpe (D-OH) and Stephen Solarz (D-NY) as well as from Abukari, who heads the Lobby's Africa Desk, against the continuation of American aid to the Mobutu regime.

"With the ebbing of the Cold War and the rising worldwide movement for political liberalization and democratization... we need to distance ourselves from this government as quickly and as clearly as possible," noted Mr. Wolpe, who chairs the Subcommittee on Africa of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

"I believe that it is prudent for us to assume that President Mobutu is no more popular in Zaire than Ceausescu was in Rumania, Honecker was in East Germany, Marcos was in the Philippines, or Somoza was in Nicaragua, and that sooner or later, Mobutu will go," added Mr. Solarz. "When that time comes, it will not be in our interest to have been perceived as propping up this discredited dictator."

New Humanist Declaration Issued By Black Leaders

A new Declaration defending the need for humanism in the African-American community has just been released. It has been issued by a newly formed group, African American for Humanism (AAH). It affirms that the Black community has been among the most religious communities in America, yet crime, drugs, violence, unemployment, economic deprivation, and despair permeate much of that community. The Declaration asserts that the African-American community needs to take radically new directions. It affirms that what is essential is the need for a critical, rational, and humane approach to living.

The Declaration was endorsed by many notable Black leaders including: Ishmael Jaffree, the attorney who gained national recognition by winning a Supreme Court case in which prayer was

prohibited in Mobile, Alabama schools (Jaffree now practices law in Youngstown, Ohio); Dr. Charles Faulkner, nationally syndicated columnist, Washington, D.C.; Norman Hill, human rights activist, New York City; and James Moss, psychiatrist, New York City.

The Declaration lists important humanistic principles to be observed including:

A commitment to the application of reason, science, and critical thinking to the solving of human problems.

A concern with securing justice and fairness in society.

An emphasis on improving life here and now and in developing the individual's creative talents to their fullest.

A belief in the cultivation of moral excellence.

Skepticism toward untested claims to knowledge.

Openness toward new ideas.

The need for optimism rather than pessimism, hope rather than despair, and learning in the place of dogma.

The Declaration also examines some of the moral dilemmas plaguing the African-American community including unwanted pregnancy, health concerns, and substance abuse. The need to develop self-esteem is also stressed.

The Declaration recommends the following aims for the Black community:

The need to develop an appreciation for the great cultural contributions made by people of African descent to the world.

The need to oppose racism.

The need to cultivate "wisdom and good conduct in living" by using the scientific and rational methods of inquiry.

The need to solve problems that confront African-Americans through education and self-reliance.

The need to develop self-help improvement groups.

The need to emphasize the central importance of education at all levels, including humanistic education, developing a humanistic outlook, but especially improving the tools for the development of critical reason in self-improvement and career training.

The Declaration was drafted by Norm Allen, executive director of AAH. A full copy of the Declaration and a partial list of the board members of AAH is attached. Permission to reprint the Declaration or to excerpt is hereby granted. The Declaration is published in the Spring issue of Free Inquiry magazine.

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Humanistic principles from The Declaration

37th Annual Lincoln University of Missouri UNITY AWARDS IN MEDIA

Honoring the best in handicapped and minority affairs reporting

It is the "Pulitzer Prize" of minority and handicapped reporting... the Unity Awards in Media sponsored by Lincoln University.

On Monday, April 30, 1990, the 37th annual UAAM will pay tribute to 42 journalists dedicated to enlightening the nation on critical issues facing minorities and the handicapped.

UAAM is enriched in tradition. The program was founded in 1949 for the purpose of acquainting black university and high school students with professionals. The program, known then as Headliner, also promoted media coverage of minority affairs.

Through the years the program progressed from a student awards ceremony to that of recognizing outstanding professionals reporting on minority and handicapped issues.

This year nearly 170 entries from across the nation were judged in the divisions of Print: General Audience; Print: Minority Audience; Broadcasting: Radio; and Broadcasting: Television.

Six categories were judged, including reporting of economics, education, politics, public/social affairs, investigative reporting and editorial writing. Single entries or series were accepted.

For the second straight year the plush Capitol Plaza Hotel in downtown Jefferson City will provide the setting for the awards banquet. The festivities will begin at 6 p.m. with the awards cere-

mony. The awards program will be followed by a cocktail hour and dinner.

During the day, university students, high school students and professionals in the field of journalism will interact in various print, radio and television workshops.

Gregory B. Freeman, assistant city editor and columnist for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, will present the convocation address.

Kansas City Call journalist Donna Stewart will receive the alumna award and will address the UAAM luncheon.

Radio pioneer Jack "The Rapper" Gibson will serve as master of ceremonies.

For more information telephone (314) 681-5114.



Carmen Fields, award-winning anchor of WGBH-TV in Boston, receives the Distinguished Alumna Award from Lincoln University President Dr. Wendell G. Rayburn at last year's UAAM banquet.

37th Annual Unity Awards In Media

Jefferson City, MO--The best in reporting of minority affairs and handicapped issues will be honored during the 37th Annual Lincoln University Awards in Media, April 30, 1990. This year, 42 journalists from a field on 170 nationwide entrants will receive their first place trophies for outstanding journalism.

The day-long program will feature workshops in both print and broadcast journalism. The day's activities will be capped with the awards ceremony and dinner hosted at the Capitol Plaza Hotel.

Three distinguished journalists will add their talents to the activities. Gregory B. Freeman, Assistant City Editor & Columnist for the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* will deliver the convocation address. *Kansas City Call* reporter, Donna Stewart, will address the luncheon program. Jack "The Rapper" Gibson, a pioneer in Black oriented radio, will serve as master of ceremonies during the Awards Banquet.

A Tribute To Black Mothers Presented

In recognition of the month in which all mothers are honored and remembered the most, 12 remarkable women of courage and strength are featured as part of "A Tribute To Black Mothers" in the May *Ebony*.

Each demonstrating their own distinctive brand of "mother love", these Black mothers, whether the actual biological parents, or just special individuals who mothered someone along the way, are selfless nurturers who've mastered the art of love and giving. "I want to be a strong mother," says Alison Leland, widow of Rep. George (Mickey) Leland, and the mother of three sons. "But I want to balance that with a strong sense of their father, so they will have a strong sense of themselves," she adds.

A Houston investment banker, Ms. Leland has assumed the task of raising their son Jarrett, 4, and his twin brothers as a single mother. Other Black mothers profiled include Mrs. Coretta Scott King, Ms. Betty Shabazz, Mother Clara Hale and poet Gwendolyn Brooks.

Do You Have What It Takes to Start Your Own Business?

New home video released to help would-be entrepreneurs

The award winning producers of the nationally televised financial affairs series entitled, "In the Black: Keys to Success", which airs over superstation WWOR-TV (Channel 9), and the producers of the home video entitled, "Your Personal Financial Guide to Success, Power & Security", will distribute a new two hour video guide entitled, "How to Start Your Own Successful Business". Learn how to effectively:

Start, market and manage your own business, set up financing, analyze business insurance needs, buy an existing business, evaluate franchising opportunities, set up a Home Based Business or Youth Entrepreneurial program, negotiate a deal and protect your ideals. In addition, we also highlight successful entrepreneurs who share their keys to success, plus much more.

Caroline R. Jones (Caroline Jones Advertising) a leading marketing executive and host of the nationally televised series, is hosting this Entrepreneurial video which also features on-location reporters. Each cassette which retails for \$29.95 plus \$4.00 shipping and handling, will also include a free Entrepreneurial workbook provided by Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. as a bonus.

You can order this cassette by sending a check or money order to: In The Black Productions Inc., P.O. Box 1229, New York, New York 10185. For credit card orders, fundraising and distribution opportunities call toll free 1-800-433-8096. A portion of the proceeds will go toward the National Entrepreneurial Youth Education Project.



Alison Leland, widow of the late Congressman Mickey Leland, and their four-year old son, Jarrett, highlight *Ebony's* "Tribute To Black Mothers."

CRED OF THE BLACK PRESS

The Black Press believes that America can best lead the world away from social and national antagonisms when it accords to every person, regardless of race, color, or creed, full human and legal rights. Hating no person, fearing no person, the Black Press strives to help every person in the firm belief that all are hurt as long as anyone is held back.

Not everything is worthy of speech, though all is worthy of thought.

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