

EDITORIAL

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The DuBois Legacy

BY BERNICE POWELL JACKSON

We know him as a scholar, intellectual and philosopher. He graduated from Fisk in 1888 and in 1895, after also studying in Europe, became the first African American to receive a doctorate from Harvard. He taught at Wilberforce University and Atlanta University.

We know him as a prolific and powerful writer. He was the author of a book in 1903 that is often still quoted from today, nearly a century later. It was called The Souls of Black Folk and predicted that the problem of the 20th century would be the color line. It delved into the duality, the double consciousness, which all black Americans must face -- the fact that we are African and American and what that means. It examined black life -- from the role of religion in the African American community to the living conditions most black found themselves in. His 1935 work, Black Reconstruction, was monumental and even at his death at age 93, he was working on a massive undertaking still unfinished, The Encyclopedia Africana.

We know him as a thinker who believed that black people must be given the chance to complete intellectually and that those who could lead their people had an obligation to do so. So he developed the notion of the "Talented Tenth" who would be the leaders of the race. This idea was in direct conflict with Booker T. Washington, who advised black folks to cast down their buckets where they were and

who urged vocational training for black Americans. That dialectic -- those two trains of thought -- are still a part of the dialogue in the African American community today.

We know him as a social activist and champion for the rights of oppressed people everywhere. A founder of the Niagara Movement in 1905 which became the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, he was a visionary who also became the editor of that organization's important magazine, Crisis. His dedication to fighting oppression eventually led him to socialism and then to communism.

For these social positions and his opposition to nuclear weapons, the U.S. government made him into a pariah and refused to grant him a passport to travel outside the country. Only after a long legal battle did he receive one in 1958 and he traveled to China and Russia at the age of 90.

His name was William Edward Burghardt DuBois. He was a giant among men and women of all time.

I knew all of that about him before I visited Ghana a few weeks ago. What I did not know was that W.E.B. DuBois was so much more than that. He was bigger than we have been allowed to see him. He was an African American in the true sense of the duality of that term, he was a citizen of the world.

When you visit DuBois' home in Accra, where he lived his final days and where he is buried, you understand how important he was to the Pan Africanist movement and to the thinking of the great African leaders.

For three days this week, a group of educators, ministers, elected officials, judges, parents, civil rights leaders, radio & TV personalities, school superintendents, teachers, parents, and policy-makers met in Chicago to discuss the successes and failures of America's system of urban education.

U.S. Education Secretary Richard Riley; "Savage Inequalities" author Jonathan Kozol; NEA President Robert Chase, and Ron Glass of the AFT; Executive Director of the Council of Great City Schools Michael Casserly; the school superintendents of Chicago, Oakland, Baltimore, & Atlanta; Kennedy-King Community College President Dr. Wayne Watson; Senators Carol Moseley-Braun and Tom Harkin; Representatives Jesse Jackson, Jr., Richard Gephardt, Maxine Waters, and Bobby Rush; Dr. Barbara Sizemore--along with many others--were called together by CEF & Reverend Jackson to "move the national debate from ebionics to the state of emergency in education."

As Rev. Jackson summed it up: "There needs to be a national defense plan for the education of our children. We must rebuild this country's crumbling infrastructure, and close the gap between our wealthiest schools and our poorest ones. A few of our children are go-

NATIONAL RAINBOW COALITION

Yale, Not Jail

ing to Yale, while too many are ending up in jail. We must change our direction."

To that end, the conference concluded with a 10-point program for equal opportunity in education, to achieve the American Dream:

(1) We need to rebuild our schools to create the facilities infrastructure that has the capability to join the computer age. As Senator Carol Moseley-Braun has persistently pointed out, many of our school, urban and rural, have crumbling infrastructure. They need wiring simply to plug in a computer, let alone connect to the Internet. But to wire these schools, you must first go through walls of lead paint and asbestos. Many of our schools have leaking roofs, lack heat and sanitary bathrooms, and are overcrowded.

(2) We affirm the need for higher academic standards, sound management, and accountability.

(3) We need a strong emphasis in

the home, church, school, and mass media on character educations. Ethical standards are the key to our growth as a nation.

(4) Greater parental responsibility and involvement, in partnership with our schools, are needed to support the education of our children. Parents with jobs or an economic livelihood are key to this partnership. We plan to mobilize 2 million parents (40,000 parents in 50 cities) and 5,000 ministers and judges to reclaim our youth.

(5) We need Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer leadership that is empowered to achieve these goals.

(6) We need mandatory training for public school teachers in their subject areas, and an increased salary and benefit base that lends itself to more professionalism, accountability, and stability among our teacher workforce.

(7) Our youth must be taught the skills of survival and success. They

must have a grasp of the economic system, to allow them to effectively pursue jobs and create wealth. Our youth must be taught to market, barter, sell, and trade--to gain the entrepreneurial skills that allow them to apply economic principles and make money legally.

(8) Our children need health care and early childhood education programs. Studies demonstrate the correlation between physical and mental well-being, Head Start opportunities, and the ability to learn.

(9) In a world where everyone is a neighbor--one button away on the Internet--multi-lingual education is essential.

(10) We encourage the media--a primary factor in the development of the minds and values of our children--to stop the demeaning stereotypes that unfortunately shape the visions of our children's future. By age 15 our youth have:

- seen 18,000 hours of television;

- listened to 22,000 hours of radio;

- seen one quarter of a million conflicts resolved by killings;

- spent 11,000 hours in school; and,

- spent less than 3,000 hours in church.

Media has, quantitatively, more access to the minds of our youth, and a qualitatively greater impact than churches and schools combined.

White corporation, Black worker

BY EUGENE RASHAD

Conflict between black workers and the corporation they work for is nothing new. Texaco Inc., Shell Oil, and Avis, are but a few companies facing diversity issues.

The question becomes what can be done to reduce friction between minority employees and their employers. One Avenue more companies are taking it to hire a diversity trainer. A consultant conducts day or week long sessions.

These seminars cover everything from racism to differences based on cultural and economic background. But too many companies rather than solve the problem, treat the symptom. Joy DeGruy-Leary meets the challenge companies face with minority workers through an unorthodox teaching method.

"Some companies view diversity like parsley on a plate--nutritious but few of us eat it. This has to change," she said. Among the issues that come up is her sessions are:

- the company culture needs to be more inclusive of its employee base.
- the lack of or infrequency of minorities promoted to senior management positions.

Stand up today, tomorrow is too late

Letter to the Editor:

Curfews, mandatory sentencing, welfare reform, gang violence, youth on youth crime, drug houses in the community, babies having babies, homeless children (street children) and the list goes on. What is really going on in America? In every city, both large and small, across America all you need to do is pick up the morning paper and the newspaper reads the same.

The ever increasing crime statistics across the country are indeed alarming. Truly, people are afraid to leave their homes for fear of being hurt or killed by a stray bullet or having their property for which they have struggled so hard to obtain stolen. But, the answers to the problem are even more alarming.

The political establishment is saying tougher laws are the answer but, are they? Let us take a serious look at what is being proposed. Curfews for the teenagers seem to be at the forefront of the agenda. This supposedly will curtail the gang violence and youth on youth crime that is affecting our society. However, the perpetrators which commit these crimes would not honor a curfew anyway. The only persons which will be affected will be the youth which are attempting to live an upright lifestyle and obey the law. So, what if the curfew fails, what next? Will we resort to institutionalizing all the offenders or maybe even penalizing

This is the group, DeGruy-Leary says, sets the tone and creates the culture for the company.

She is an expert in the field of diversity training. She holds a bachelor of science degree in communication, a master's degree in social work, and a master's degree in psychology.

Her work has taken her to hundreds of companies, working with Portland Police officers, employees at Nordstrom and Liberty Insurance, and companies throughout the United States, Canada, and Southern Africa.

So how does she do it? Perhaps the best way to understand the present is to understand the past.

She teaches how the ancestors and their struggles to survive created a set of values that persist to this day. The following example shows DeGruy-Leary at work with a group of employees and their managers.

THE SET UP

It's a typical Monday morning. An Hispanic secretary is upset because her boss sped by her desk without a greeting. A slight? Depends on a person's temperament, one might say. DeGruy-Leary has this take. "The boss is operating

from a "man to object value system," while the offended secretary works from a "man to relationship" value system," she said. So how does the problem get solved?

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

One of the tools she uses is the research done by Dr. Edwin Nicholas, a former researcher and author of "Prehistoric Agriculture." In her sessions she explains value systems people bring to the workplace that were worked out some 5,000 to 8,000 years ago. The time was the end of the Ice Age when small groups of people roamed cold lands of northern and eastern Europe. These nomadic groups carved out an existence with tenacity and fierce planning.

They were glacial hunters and used prehistoric agriculture systems such as calculating when the nine-month winter ended and the three month planting season began.

The highest value was "man to object because a premium was placed on accurate counting and measuring. This is extremely important for people who live in rigid cold climates with short planting seasons and long winters.

You Don't Work, You Can't Eat

the parents for allowing their children to be caught out on the streets after their curfew?

Penalizing parents which are already low income and not able to make ends meet as a family. Let us look at mandatory sentencing, a law that is already being enforced. This is surely an answer to the problem. It will take all of the gang members and juvenile offenders off the streets for a minimum of five years. Locking them away in adult institutions with hardened criminals will alleviate society's ills. This will teach them a valuable lesson that they need to learn; when problems seem too big to handle, turn your back on the problem and it will disappear (out of sight, out of mind, right). In doing this, has society actually solved the problem which it (society) for hundreds of years helped to create?

On the other hand, who has the largest percentage of juvenile offenders neatly locked away from society? What happens if this doesn't work? Maybe mandatory life sentencing or even mandatory death sentences are the answers to society's ills.

Next, we will look at another one of the problems that society is faced with, babies having babies. The political establishment proposes to solve this problem by welfare reform. Yes, I must agree that something must be done about the billions of tax dollars being spent on taking care of unwed mothers and

their illegitimate children but, must we starve these children and deny them proper medical attention just to prove a point. Did the children ask to be born? Are there really enough jobs to employ every mother on welfare? Maybe forced abortion is an alternative to illegitimacy. After all, low income persons don't need children right? Certainly, that would cost taxpayers less money, or will it?

It seems as though we, as a society, are looking for a quick cure to a problem that goes much deeper than we care to go. We will be treating the symptoms of the problems, but, what about the problems themselves. The answers are not in reforms, mandatory prison sentencing or curfews but, the answer is pure and simple; community involvement. "A community involved in the rearing of the children is a community which raises a quality of children that it can be proud of."

Time is out for America's Black citizens to look to the political establishment to solve their problems. After all, just look at the Federal Government's involvement in drugs entering into the Black community. What about the senseless shootings and attacks on our young men by our so called law enforcement officers. How can a society that breeds prejudice, distrust, hatred and overall discontentment for its citizens of color be expected to lend a helping hand to the same youth which it has aided in

corrupting? People, correct your own problems. Stop expecting the government and the status quo to help you raise intelligent, strong, independent, educated young people. Stop looking for a handout.

Come together as the strong community that you are and raise and educate your own children. Lend a helping hand to one another. We, as a strong Black community, have the skills, knowledge and wisdom within our communities to produce the young men and women that will make us proud as a people. The laws being introduced to alleviate society's ills are directed at our young people. We must stop the impending genocide of our young people by coming together as one and standing up for our young people. Society will continue to have it's ills. There will always be those who will continue to point a crooked finger at others and blame them for their problems. But, if the Black community will take care of it's problems and begin to raise competent, respectful, law abiding young people, that crooked finger can only point back at themselves. This is a tall order to fill and I must admit a difficult one. If we stand together as a community of one, treat each young person the way we desire for our own children to be treated, it is a task that can be accomplished.

Ms. B. Jackson,
Northeast Portland Resident