

RELIGION

Statement

By HUGH B. PRICE
PRESIDENT NATIONAL
URBAN LEAGUE
ON

Diana, Princess of Wales and Mother Teresa:

Women of Substance

The outward contrast between the lives of Diana, Princess of Wales, and Mother Teresa could not have been more dramatic:

The one, born into her country's aristocracy and thrust upon the world stage at the cusp of adulthood by a royal marriage, lived a life of glamour mixed with considerable pain and sadness and died before the promise of her youth had been fully achieved.

The other, born a commoner in Central Europe, committed herself to her faith and worked for years in obscurity among the most destitute in the slums of Calcutta before the world took note of her.

And yet, both shared qualities that compel us to mention them together because those qualities are in such short supply in the world today--as they have always been. Both shared a profound compassion for those in need and the courage to do what they could do to relieve suffering.

In that regard, both Diana, Princess of Wales and Mother Teresa shared another quality. Both were women of substance.

Some cynics no doubt will dismiss linking these two women as outlandish. It is not. The world rightly hailed Mother Teresa as a woman of extraordinary compassion after she was awarded the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize. (Some, however, continued to ignore the needs of the poor in Calcutta and elsewhere which inspired her dedication.) The importance of her life, the contribution she made is obvious.

The Princes of Wales was not a nun. She took neither a vow of poverty nor one of chastity. She lived in the secular world and lived very well. But the importance of her life soars beyond the tragic details of

her death and the gossip-column tidbits of the jet-set social circle which surrounded her.

In fact, as the outpouring of grief from millions of ordinary people suggests, she was a woman whose larger social circle, if you will, included many, many people who live far from the high-rent districts of London, New York and Paris. Some of them are in England, where the British public has shown, in the words of one newspaper report, "unaccustomedly raw emotions." Some are in the United States. Some are in Bosnia and Angola. Some are everywhere.

They realize that the Princess of Wales, against formidable odds, made herself into someone truly admirable--someone who skillfully used her fame and allure to focus the world's attention on places and people who need the world's help. She was equally at ease drawing the world's attention to adult patients in an AIDS hospice in England and to children in the Pediatric AIDS Center of Harlem Hospital in New York City, or showing the world where land mines infest living space. She seemed to love the world's children as much as she loved her own.

Like Mother Teresa, in her advocacy and compassion she did not shy away from personal contact with those most in need; she was not afraid to touch and hold those whom the rest of the world shunned. Nor was her compassion limited to Great Britain, or to "fashionable" charities, or to people who looked like her. In the end, it was not her royal connections which made her so admired, it was this ecumenical sense of compassion, and intelligence, and determination to live an engaged life and contribute to solving serious problems.

Few would have expected this of that nineteen-year-old girl we watched

in the early 1980s being drafted by the British monarchy into a seemingly fairy-tale marriage. But then, she discovered, and so did we, that fairy-tale marriages exist only in fairy-tale marriage. The quality of hers and the Prince of Wales had a quite different character, and the pain it caused her obviously resonates with many women the world over.

But if that was all there was to her--a sad ex-royal, content to wander the celebrity trail across the continents, indulging herself in her wealth and that of others--she would hardly have been paid this kind of tribute by the mass of ordinary people we've seen and heard from. It was because she had earned this tribute from ordinary people that the tribute is being given.

Was she perfect? Of course not. But it's not her imperfections that are important. It is the good that she strove to do and to spur the world to do.

That is the quality that links these two women of substance. They both shared the sentiment that Mother Teresa often expressed: "The poor must know that we love them."

In that regard, the lives of both Mother Teresa and Diana, Princess of Wales are a rebuke to the attitude of heartlessness and apathy to solving the problems of those less fortunate that infects so much of the political discourse.

The both found their own ways to declare that an individual can act--and the world can--to make life better for those less fortunate.

The brief but full life of Diana, Princess of Wales, and the long, full life of Mother Teresa, enriched the world--that is why we grieve.

Homecoming Celebration for Larry DeWayne Brooks

Sunrise: February 23, 1960

Sunset: September 4, 1997



In his infinite wisdom, The almighty has chosen to remove Larry from our midst. Larry DeWayne Brooks departed this earthly life on Thursday, September 4, 1997 at Good Samaritan Hospital in Portland, Oregon.

Born February 23, 1960 in Portland, Oregon, the son of Dee and Betty Stephens, and the late Clifford Brooks. Larry was a member of Mt. Olivet Baptist Church in Portland, Oregon. As a youth, Larry was an active member of the Youth Usher Board and Sunday School. He truly loved life and all that it had to offer. Larry always greeted everyone with a smile and a joke, as he had the natural and uninhibited gift of comedy.

Larry was a 1978 graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School in Portland, Oregon. While in high school, Larry became interested in

the technical aspect of music, theater and television, which led to his participation in the 70's soul band "Velvet". Later, he received formal training in pharmacy operations, which led to 15 years at Bess Kaiser Hospital as a pharmacy Technician. Larry's second occupation of bartender/waiter allowed him to reach a new audience with his unique brand of humor. Larry also acted as Technical Advisor for the Les Femmes annual Debutante and Cavalier Ball for many years.

Larry had many loves. First and foremost, were his three children, Andre 18, Larry II 17, and Sherica 12. He was a caring and adoring father. Larry also loved to cook and eat - he was a wonder at both. Lastly, was his love to make you laugh. Though he only appeared once on a formal stage performing comedy, you knew he had "It" Larry did not discriminate, he

talked about everyone, but that was the trait that endeared him to so many. All he ever wanted was for everyone to laugh and be happy. He is preceded in death by his father Clifford Brooks, grandparents Love and Lorraine Brooks, Gladys Haynes and Andrew Jordan.

As Larry starts his new life, he leaves to mourn on this Earth his parents Idee and Betty Stephens of Portland OR and stepmother Florence Brooks of Seattle, WA; children Andre Brooks, Larry Brooks II and Sherica Brooks of Portland, OR; brother Wendell Brooks and sister-in-law Captain Dana Brooks of Travis Air Force Base, CA; sisters Rica Brooks and Andrea Stephens, Portland, OR; stepbrother, Phillip Black, Seattle, WA; aunts Lucille Allen, Tualatin, OR and Genevieve Brooks, Jackson, TN; uncle Harold and Jean Brooks, Oxnard, CA; uncle Chester Brooks, Jackson, TN; niece Sheila Purvis-Stephens, Portland, OR; nephew Sean Black, Seattle, WA; special cousins, Arizona and Ted Johnson, Seattle, WA; Deborah and Curtis Mayes, Portland, OR; Roxanne Buchanan, Seattle, WA; Maria Allen, Tigard, OR; Sharon Allen, Tualatin, OR; Karen and Byron Ridgeway, Portland, OR; Herman and Rhonda Buchanan, Seattle, WA; Tamara Mayes, Portland, OR; special friends, Danielle and Chanell Whitfield, Ramona, Bernard, Renee Blackely-Ward, Michael Bontemps, Dennis Temple, Samuel James and Tony Wilson, all of Portland Oregon as well as a host of friends and relatives.

Since Larry was such a caring person, the family saw fit to donate the cornea of his eyes to the Lions Eye Bank at Good Samaritan Hospital.

SUBMISSIONS: Community Calendar information will be given priority if received two weeks before the event date.

Your Marvelous Mind

Faith: Indispensable Ingredient Of Success

By MICHAEL A. GRANT, J.D.

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" - Hebrews 11:1

No one accomplishes greatness, no one lives a triumphant life, and no one does anything of historical significance without faith. And yet, holding onto one's faith is not easy. It takes tremendous effort to move into the darkness of uncertainty, hoping in spite of discouraging appearances that "The day desired will come."

From our sometimes shaky belief in the almighty to our troublesome concerns about our love mates, our job stability, our health or the future, many of us struggle daily to hold onto the belief that our efforts are not in vain.

Faith, if fostered, will get you wherever you are trying to go. Faith puts us in touch with the genius of our subconscious minds and the power of the universal mind of God.

Faith is the great connector between our present predicament and things hoped for. Faith (with the help of modern medicine) shrinks cancerous tumors, lifts determined souls from poverty, confers college degrees, fires the entrepreneurial spirit, stands and defeats the odds, crushes doubt's destructive defenses, frees the mind of countless worries, and calls us back into battles that we once thought we would never re-enter.

Faith is "the bomb." It gives courage, its armor and love, its endurance.

Faith lifts purpose to a place of adoration and weakens despair's allure.

Faith beckons us onward and upward to answer the call of noble sacrifice and genuine contribution to making this a better world for ourselves and others.

Maintaining faith, however, is not easy. Faith is fed only by choice that is deeply rooted in character. Our choices emanate from our core values. Who we are and what we value determine the quality of our faith.

If we nurture strength of spirit that is born of disciplined effort, we do -- by conscious choice -- build a solid foundation for an enduring faith.

How we react to failure, pain, and disappointment determines whether or not we make ourselves more capable of sustaining a fortified faith "in things unseen."

And faith begets more faith. The more we see the fruits of our faith, the stronger it becomes.

Our minds are mental magnets. We attract to ourselves that which we believe will happen. And our beliefs -- which are the fledglings of faith and the unmet desires of our hearts -- help us to create the lives that we live. Steadfastly believing that our dreams will materialize if we refuse to give over to doubt, refuse to give in to weak effort, and refuse to give up on tomorrow's possibilities, leads inevitably to the rewards that faith can bestow.

Faith took Ebony Magazine's John Johnson from poverty to an empire. Faith took Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. from local preacher to global personality. Faith took Booker T.

Washington's idea for rejected sharecroppers from insight to institution. And faith cause educator Marva Collins to turn children failing into successful students.

Faith will work for you too. Decide what is most important to you. In the hierarchy of your priorities, what ranks as number one? What really drives you? What causes you to periodically move out of your comfort zone? What is your purpose, your reason for living?

After you have determined what is truly important, you have set the stage for bringing some new reality into being. Whatever it is that you

will create, faith will be your "bridge over troubled water." How stable that bridge will be is determined by the mental toughness of the builder. And please believe that weak faith is always a prelude to collapse.

So commit yourself to a daily process of building stronger faith. And as you move to the realm of the unknown, you will have cause to celebrate. For deep within, your sweet conviction will echo with the reassurance that you are traveling with "The substance of things hoped for," and buttressed by "The evidence of things not seen."

God bless!

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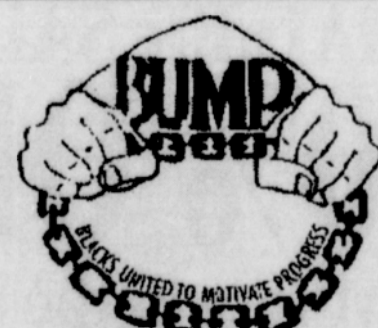
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is always a traumatic experience.
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