

African-American Voice

October 2000

PMB 145, 2920 S. Grand Blvd. Spokane WA 99203-2530 (509) 455-8274 rlloyd@cet.com

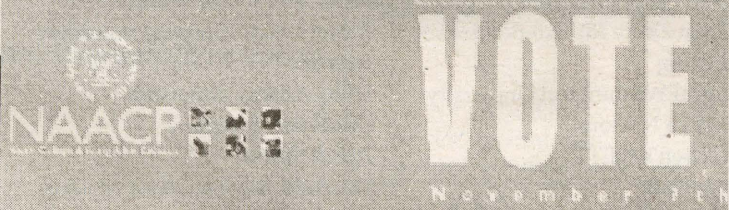
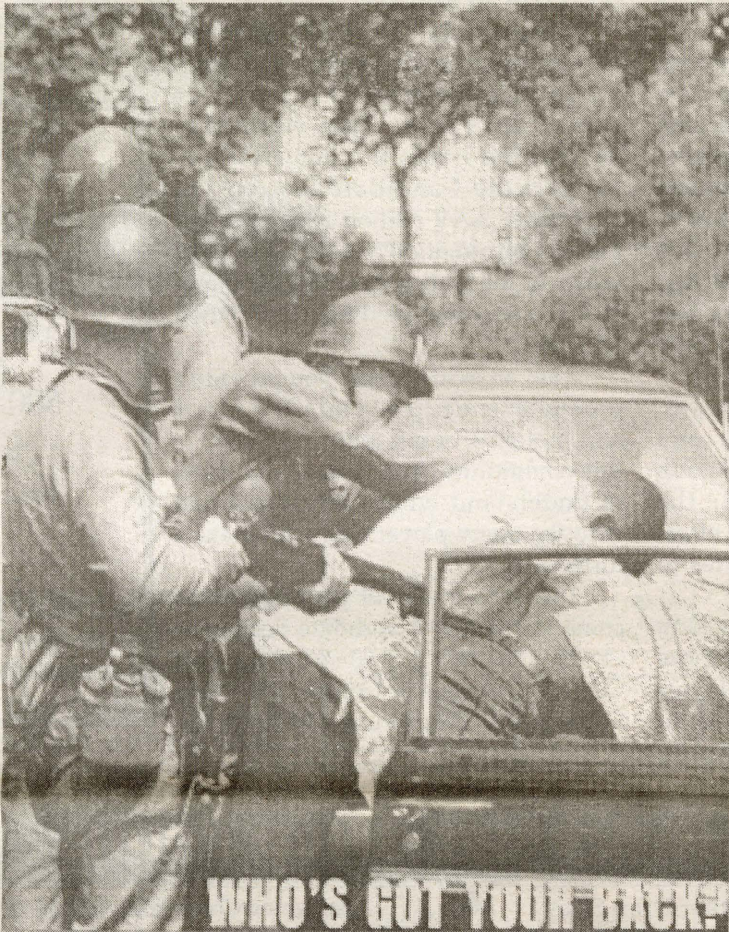
Volume 5 Number 5

Strong Mayor Race Tightens

BY ANTHONY BRADLEY

Spokane voters narrowed their choices for strong mayor on Tuesday when they chose incumbent John Talbott and new-comer John Powers over Jim West and Robert Kroboth. Prior to Tuesday's run-off (19 September, 2000) the candidates had numerous debates with the last one being Sunday, 17 September, 2000. The candidates sent their last messages to the voters when they debated at Gonzaga Prep for a local news station. The message from Jim West was that his wealth of political experience and government contacts was just what the city needed. He wanted the council members to stop bickering and concentrate on repairing Spokane's streets.

Mayor John Talbott reassured the audience that the city was doing well and the City's government was an open one. He cited the



Neighborhood Cop shops as a sign of the progress being made. He stated that if he were reelected he would continue to eliminate the closed door and back alley politics. He stated that the City Council members were not bickering, they were just having heated discussions and making progress.

John Powers stated the he wanted to take the business of running the city to the people. He wanted his concern for the citizens of Spokane to play a part in his decision making, unlike the current situation where the citizens are the last to know about what their city government is doing. He felt that leader should listen before they try to persuade the citizens. He

assured the audience that if he were elected, the problems of the city would be solved with consideration given to all sector of the community.

Robert Kroboth felt that just his presence at the meeting would ensure that the council would do the right thing. He decided to run because Steve Eugster did not. An indicator of how the citizens of Spokane received those messages could have been in the way they voted.

Surprisingly, Powers won with 41% percent. He felt that "the people of the city had spoken". He said he knew all along that he would do well, although early campaign polls indicated John Talbott as the leader. Talbott finished second with 31% of

the votes. He stated he was proud of his showing and cited the reason for his lackluster campaign effort as "the people of Spokane had elected me to govern and not to campaign." (See related story on page 2) He did acknowledge that he had a lot of work to do before November.

Jim West finished with 26% of the vote and saw it as

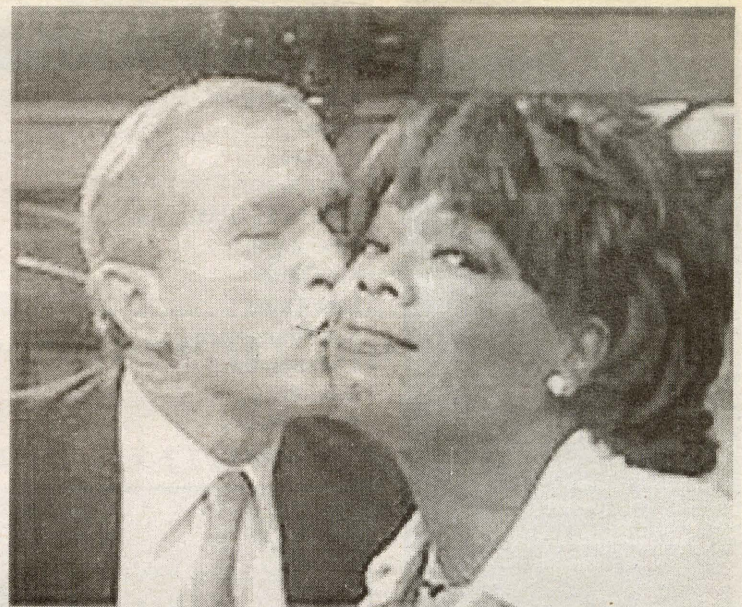
a message from the people telling him not to quit his job in the Senate. The dark horse candidate Robert Kroboth finished a distance fourth with 1.6% of the vote. Talbott and Powers will surely be debating up until election day, November 7, 2000.

They both will be seeking the 26% of the vote that Jim

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CONTEST

Leaders we have
 known and
 admired



Who is this man

Ask your parents, ask your teachers, ask a librarian, ask your community leaders.

At the end of a year's issues, will you know the name of each leader?

Youth who write a short article for the history page earn \$25 if accepted for pub-

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 Sacred Heart Catholic Church

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 All About Travel

Cheryl Rathbun

NAACP's first Candidate Forum

I would like to offer a heartfelt thank you to all those who made NAACP's first Candidate Forum a success. It is always a risky venture to try something new.

I am proud of the NAACP Political Action Team for carrying through on a strategic goal set last year and for their determination in shaping the Candidate Forum to be a pro-active and inclusive affair.

I apologize to Marianne Mishima, our wonderful moderator, for misspelling her name all over town...and will apologize here if I get the following names wrong. The panel of human rights activists included: Marta Reyes, Ben Cabildo, Vickie Countryman, Bob Lloyd, Mary Ellen Myrene and Ben Desjarlis. Pastor Rodney McAuley was slated to be a member, but had a time conflict.

Their knowledge of the issues, passion for the needs of their various communities and ability to ask hard hitting and insightful questions made the evening not only a success, but effective in challenging the candidates to really "see" this group of voters.

I thank the candidates who took the risk to come before us. Even those with opinions strongly opposed to our stances had courage in being true to

their beliefs.

I thank the audience who came, for you truly made the night a success. No forum is effective if the only people who show are the staff of the candidates. I've seen that happen. The 85 members of the audience said volumes about believing in the power of the vote and the responsibility to hold politicians accountable.

I especially thank the passion, commitment and support of Robert Lloyd and the staff of the African American Voice. You went way beyond the limits in your efforts to support the Candidate Forum. The September AAV edition was a masterpiece of information and integrated the issues of the Native American community in a way that paid homage to their struggle.

I am an avid reader. You provide a unique avenue to see into the hearts and thoughts of my fellow travelers in this community. You help in my effort to understand what's important and who the many players are who make a difference.

I want to invite all your readers to come to the next Candidate Forum on October 20, 2000 at 7:00 PM at the East Central Community Center: 500 South Stone Street. This forum will be direct-

ed to the city, county, legislative district winners of the primary...and any state-wide candidates who will be available. The structure is different this time. Candidates will make opening statements and answer questions from the audience within strict time limits.

Again...thank you all and ...see you at the Forum!

Valerie Smith

NAACP Political Action Committee

NAACP

General Election
 Candidates Forum
 East Central Community Center

500 S. Stone Street
 Spokane WA
 For more info call
 323-6368

Nethercutt and Talbott were no shows at the last NAACP Forum. Will they be at this one?

A A Voice Drop Points

Churches:

- Bethel
- Calvary
- Full Gospel
- Holy Temple Mt. Zion
- Morning Star
- Mt. Olive
- New Hope
- Refreshing Spring
- Salvation Inn
- Solid Rock
- St. Matthew's
- Zion Temple

Other Drop Sites

- Casey Family Partners
- CCS Institute for Extended Learning
- Central Washington University
- Chicken N More
- Children's NETT
- Crosswalk
- Department of Children and Family Services
- Global Folk Art
- Downtown Public Library

- East Central Community Center
- East Central Community SDA
- Eastern State Hospital Volunteer Services
- EWU African American Education Program
- Excell Stores
- Fairchild Air force Base African American Club
- Gonzaga University
- Unity House
- Group Health

(Lidgerwood)

- Hampton Institute
- Hastings (Valley)
- Jantz High School
- Jose Vigil Imagemakers
- Juvenile Court
- Larry's Barber and Styling
- MLK Center
- North East Community Center
- North Idaho College
- Moon Shadow
- Multicultural
- Salon East
- SCAN
- SCC Multicultural
- SCC Single Parent Program
- SFCC Multicultural
- Spokane City Hall
- Spokane Mental Health
- TASC
- University of Idaho
- Multicultural
- University of Washington
- Washington State
- University Multicultural
- West Central Community Center
- Western Washington University
- Multicultural
- Whitworth College
- Multicultural
- Yokes (Sprague & Sullivan)

*The Spokane, Pullman
 African-American Voice*

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Gore-Vey!

Joe Lieberman, Jewish Mobility, and the Politics of Race in America

By TIM WISE

I am a Jew. And according to what others of my faith tradition tell me, I should be beaming with pride at the fact that Al Gore -- a Southern Baptist whose denominational leaders once said God didn't answer the prayers of folks like me -- has picked a fellow Hebrew as his Vice Presidential running mate.

Well, excuse me if I pass on the L'chayim-fives and teary fulminations about what a grand day this is. Given Lieberman's voting record, which places him in the Benjamin Netanyahu school of political Jews, I

find it a bit difficult to be ebullient at the sight of such a person on any political ticket.

While certain neo-Nazis are predictably attacking the Senator as a card-carrying member of the monolithic Jewish conspiracy, the most disturbing noise arising from the nomination has not been the vitriol of perennial losers looking for a Talmudic scapegoat. Rather, what has been even more disconcerting is the patriotic blather offered up by the Jewish community itself, which takes his nomination as "proof" that, in America, anything is possible, and anyone can make it:

even a nice, rich Jewish boy.

This recapitulation of the myth of individualism, together with a not-so-thinly-veiled nod to the notion of Jews as a "model minority" who confirm America as a land of promise, may seem benign to some. But as with all symbolic politics, there is a danger, and the danger in this imagery should be apparent.

Fact is, the notion of model minorities has always been about one thing: contrasting said model citizens to those per-

ceived as members of a perpetual deficit culture; specifically, African Americans, viewed by many as the nation's not-so-

The Ethnic Myth: Fact is, Jews haven't all been successful, and pretending otherwise harms the less-than-affluent Jews

model problem child. Thus, it should be of more than a little concern that the resurrection of the Jewish Model Minority concept will inevitably cause folks to

ask: "if the Jews have made it in America and are successful, then why can't blacks do the same?" and thereby serve to justify all manner of malign neglect of the barriers to equity still facing black folks in this country.

But in the real world, as much as ethno-cultural supremacists like Nathan Glazer might deny it, the Jewish success story is anything but a simple tale of struggle and sacrifice. Indeed, the measure of our success has been proportional to our acquiescence with a decidedly non-Jewish cultural norm: No

Continued on page 8

now that's a beautiful sight.



The bus gives her the independence to get out and go wherever she wants. To the store, to her friend's house, to volunteer at the hospital. That's what's beautiful.



Arts and Culture

You Ask Me Why I Weep "Liftin' Ev'ry Voice"

This past year has been exciting, challenging and, well an emotional journey. Working at the school district for years, I have never been challenged to see beyond my privilege. In my new position working in Equity, my blinders have been blown off. Not only do I see various forms of discrimination, but also see my own biases and the pain of a choice I made long ago - to "pass" and not be okay with my mixed cultural heritage.

*I see the blind man when I am walking.
He is not new. I see him often.
He gropes along between pedestrians and pauses to
Listen to traffic before he crosses the street.
People pass him and smile.
I see admiration in their eyes but they do not speak.
I admire his courage, but do not weep for him.*

*Julie sits and types on her computer in a silent world
Surrounded by our laughter and sharing
We share stories of our children and grandchildren
While pictures of her children sit unnoticed on her desk
On social occasions, she joins us and we use limited
Sign language, or speak slowly so she can read our lips.
I have compassion for Julie, but I do not weep for her.*

*Susan lives her life in a wheelchair
Once she danced...and ran...and walked,
She played tag in the park, and she climbed the highest tree.
Now, she sits quietly in her chair.
She climbs the tree of perseverance,*

*And she dances in her heart.
I honor Susan, but I do not weep for her.
In a nearby school district, a young man is threatened
Because the color of his skin.
He does not understand this hate,
But he understands his fear.
He does not know where to reach for help
So he stands alone.
I fear his fears, but I do not weep for him.*

*You ask then, why I weep?
I weep for my blindness;
I weep for the lens of indifference that covered my eyes;
For I do not see the beauty of a soul.
I weep for my deafness.
I weep that I close my ears to those in need;
For I do not hear the song within their heart.*

*I weep for my crippled limbs.
I weep for my arms when they do not reach out to embrace others
For I do not feel the warmth of their human touch.*

*I weep for my broken heart.
I weep for my heart that does not seek those that are different
For I do not learn our sameness*

*You ask why I weep?
I weep for me.*



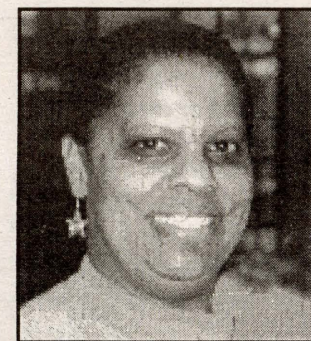
A program of traditional Negro spirituals - "Liftin' Ev'ry Voice" - will be presented at noon Friday, October 13, at Eastern Washington University.

The free public program will be in the Music Building Recital Hall on Eastern's campus in Cheney, a presentation of the EWU African American Education Program and the EWU Department of Music. For information, please call (509) 359-6150 or 359-2241.

The sister-brother team of Nancy and Carol Nelson use narrative, song and percussion to present the history of dark skinned people who created America's first music form.

Nancy Nelson, director of the EWU African American Education Program, is a vocalist with a passion for African American music history. She has performed at universities, conventions and at many other venues in the Northwest, New York City and Los Angeles.

In the "Liftin' Ev'ry Voice" performance, she




Nancy Nelson explains how the spirituals served many purposes - as maps to freedom, expressions of the pain and harshness of slavery and singing for pure pleasure.

Carol Nelson has studied various styles of West African drumming and has performed with Ocheami and is director of his band 'The Let's Dance! House Band!' He is also co-founder and director of Let's Dance, a smoke- and alcohol-free environment where families dance to live bands.

"Liftin' Ev'ry Voice" has been performed at the Cheney Cowles Museum, Festival Sundiata in Seattle and many other locations.

1999



They paid
for your
right
to
Vote

Coretta Scott King at YWCA luncheon

This year's YWCA Women of Achievement benefit luncheon on November 2 at the Spokane Convention Center feature Coretta Scott King, the widow of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

This luncheon is the Y's major fundraiser of the year, and recognizes women in our community who have provided outstanding leadership in art and culture, community service, the professions, or racial justice as well a Young Woman of Achievement.

Tickets for the lunch are \$100. Proceeds go to support YWCA programs such as the confidential safe shelter for women and children leaving violent homes; the after school program for homeless children, and the professional clothing bank for women re-entering the work force.

Call the Benefit Luncheon Information Line 326-1190 ext. 127 for more information.

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EVENTS

NOTE: Events may change between the time we receive the information and we go to press. You may want to call accompanying phone numbers for confirmation.

Job Fair

October 12

The Diversity Recruitment Committee is sponsoring a job fair at Spokane Community College's Student Lair on Oct. 12 from 11 AM to 4 PM. SCC is located at 2000 N. Greene Street.

The DRC is an organization of human resources personnel from businesses and institutions in the region seeking to bring job seekers of diverse backgrounds together with employers seeking job candidates.

For more information call:

Jeff Toney 509-891-2353
Mary Mullendore 326-2234

Get Lit! Literary Festival

Jesus' Son

Oct 4 Wed 3:15, 5:45, & 8:10 PM The MET. Film based on the short stories of Denis Johnson.

Quincy Troupe

Oct 5 Thurs 7 PM Premier African American poet, novelist, essayist. American Book Award and Peabody Award winner. Co-author of Miles: the Autobiography. Showalter Aud. EWU Campus, Cheney.

Poetry & Literature Readings

Oct 6 Fri 5 PM Rockwood Bakery Northwest Poets, 7 PM Hotel Lusso Student Open Mic/Welcome Reception
Oct 7 Sat 11 AM Children's Museum, 1 PM Auntie's Books, 3 PM Gonzaga Univ., 7 PM Hotel Lusso.

Panel Discussion on Writing Children's Literature

Oct 7 Sat 1 PM EWU Downtown Campus

Young Adult Reading

Oct 7 Sat 3 PM Auntie's Bookstore

Poetry Slam

Oct 7 Sat 9 PM Mootsy's Tavern. Eric Bergloff & The Seattle Slam Team & The Olympia-Seattle Writing Group

General Admission \$10. Children's events free. Call 509-623-4286

Just Painting

Sept 25 - Oct 20 8 AM - 4 PM Mon - Fri, 11 AM - 2 PM Sat. Works by Lanny DeVuono, Linda Kraus-Perez, Melissa Lang, Richard Schindler and Richard Twedt. Spokane Falls Community College Art Gallery. Call 533-3746.

Salty Gravy

KPBX Kids' Concert
Oct 7 Sat 2 - 3 PM Folk songs. Riverpark Square.

Waiting for Lefty

Readers Theatre
Oct 8 Sun 7 PM Spokane Civic Studio Theatre. 325-1413.

Ballet Stars of Moscow

Oct 9 Mon 7:30 PM The MET. \$15 - \$25. Call 328-9767.

Youth Issues Candidates Forum

Oct 10 Tues 7 PM Chase Youth Commission sponsored discussion of youth issues with student reporters, followed by a mock vote. City Council Chambers, Spokane City Hall. Call 625-6440.

Job Fair

Oct 12 Thurs 11 AM - 4 PM. Spokane Community College Student Lair

Unity in Our Community

Oct 13 8:15 AM - 1:30 PM Spokane Community College Student Lair. Keynote speaker, workshops. Tickets \$15 through Oct 6, \$20 at the door. Call 533-3034.

Spokane Jazz Orchestra

Oct 14 Sat 8 PM
The MET. \$17.50 - \$19.50.

Million Family March

Oct 16 Washington DC

Shreelata Suresh

Indian Dancer
Oct 17 Tues 11:30 AM and 7 PM Spokane College Community College Student Center Auditorium. Call 533-7090.

Art Cinema

"Shower"
Oct 18 Wed. 3:15, 5:45, & 8:10 PM
The MET. \$6. Call 624-0810.

Crimea River

Oct 20 - Nov 5 Comedy at Spokane Civic Studio Theatre. \$8. Call 325-2507 for dates, times and tickets.

NAACP Candidates Forum

Oct 20 Fri 7 PM East Central Community Center 500 S. Stone. Call 534-2167.

Art Cinema

"The Tao of Steve"
Oct 25 Wed. 3:15, 5:45, & 8:10 PM
The MET. \$6. Call 624-0810.

Cubanismo!

Oct 27 Fri 8 PM The MET. 15 piece orchestra of Cuban all-stars. \$15 - \$17.50. Call 624-0810.

Northwest Coalition for Human

Dignity 14th Annual Conference
Oct 27 - 29 DoubleTree Hotel,

Boise Idaho. Registration \$15 - \$25. Call 206-233-9136.

Nosferatu

Oct 27-28 8 PM Film with live organ music. St. John's Cathedral Grand & 12th. Tickets call 325-SEAT.

Halloween Gala

Oct 27, 28, 31 6 - 8 PM The Children's Museum of Spokane costume party with a magical theme. 110 N. Post. 624-KIDS.

SymFunnies

Halloween Spooktacular!
Oct 29 4 PM Spokane Opera House 325-SEAT.

Maya Angelou

Nov 1 Wed 7:30 PM Martin Centre, Gonzaga Univ. Tickets \$10 - \$40. Call 509-323-3548.

Coretta Scott King

YWCA Women of Achievement Benefit Luncheon
Nov 2 Thurs Noon YWCA benefit. Donation of \$100. 326-1190 ext. 127.

If you have children that are frightened by Halloween themed costumes and decorations might consider taking them to a church hosting a Harvest Party or Hallelujah Night. Most churches offer a harvest theme atmosphere, carnival games for all age groups, and some offer concession food.

They are indoor affairs, children and adults can still dress up in costume and will still come home with a year's supply of candy, goodies and prizes.

Here is a sample of churches sponsoring this kind of event:

Northside:

First Church of the Open Bible
8303 N. Division
467-5122
6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

North Central:

Spokane Faith Center
3330 W. Central
327 (WORD) 9673
6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Valley:

Pasadena Park Church of the Nazarene
8822 E. Upriver Drive
926-5858
Wednesday, October 22
6:00 p.m.
Children under 3, \$2 up to 11, \$3 12 and up. Admission is FREE but candy donations will be appreciated

Downtown:

Harvest Christian Fellowship
1316 N. Lincoln
327-3278
6:00 p.m.

Southhill:

Living Word Christian Center
3525 E. 57th and Freya
443-6181
Hallelujah Night
6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

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More Information Contact and RSVP:

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Editorial

Best intentions won't get it

The presidential candidate that sounds the best doesn't have a snowball's chance in hell of winning. and with so many Supreme Court appointments likely to come up during the next presidential term, I think it would be a mistake to stay at home or to throw away a vote. (For a different point of view see the Nader article on page 14.)

Irregardless of who wins this election we should all immediately start organizing a grassroots campaign that will bring pressure to bear so that the next time around we do have a viable candidate who knows the support is there to reverse the drift to the right and start making some inroads on poverty, underemployment, campaign reform, and inequities in the criminal justice system.

No candidate that would serve us can get elected if we do not support them with our time, money and votes. And we need to identify them by looking at who is serving our interests now in some capacity - not someone who just shows up looking for your votes at election time mouthing love of all humanity and "freedom and justice for all."

John Talbott, George Nethercutt, and George W. Bush seem to think that's all it takes. The following excerpts are from the article "Best Intentions: Why Black People Don't love the Bushes Back " by Franklin Foer in The New Republic Online:

<http://www.thenewrepublic.com/100200/foer100200.html>

Robert J. Lloyd, Publisher

...Jesse Jackson calls W.'s good-guy pose on race the "inclusion illusion." New York Times columnist Bob Herbert complains, "The Republicans still aren't interested in blacks. They are simply trying to present a friendlier, more moderate face." ...

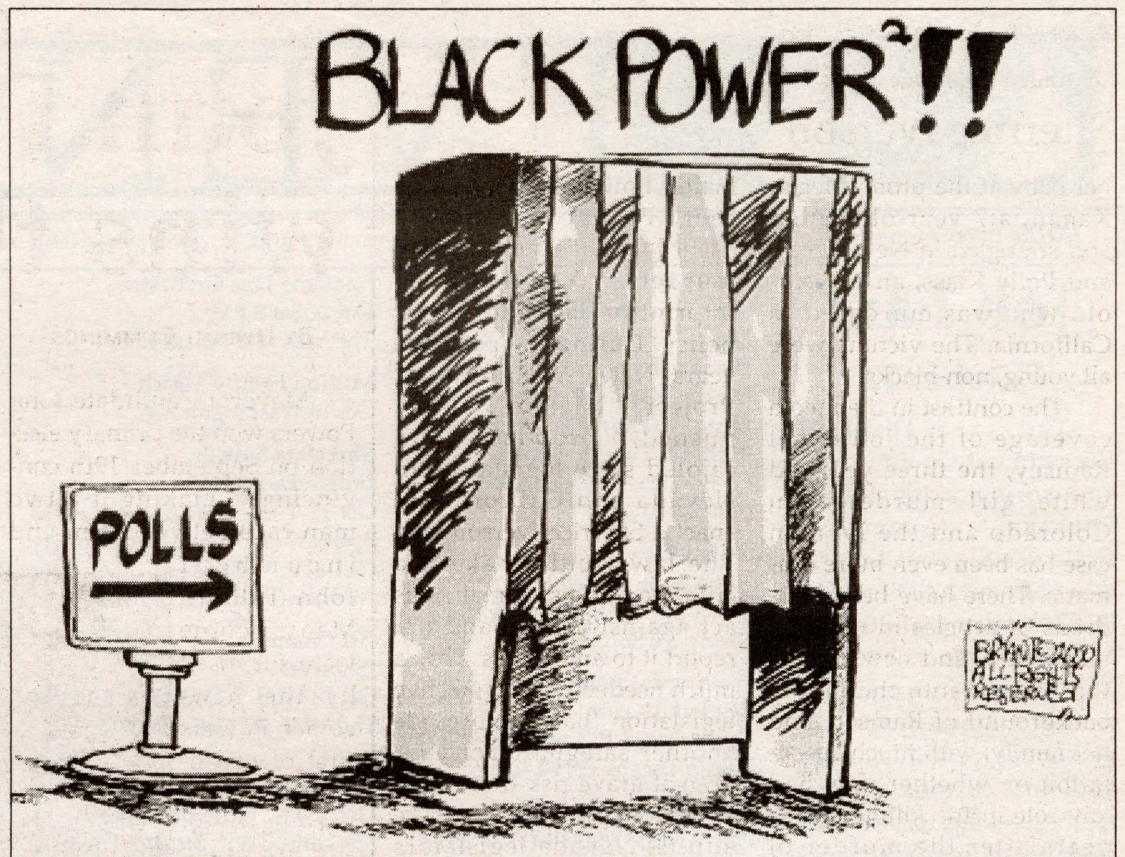
But there's a good reason to believe Bush's posture on race is sincere: It's a family tradition. During the late '50s and early '60s, few senators--not Al Gore Sr., not John F. Kennedy--had a better record on civil rights than W.'s grandfather Prescott Bush. The Connecticut Republican sponsored legislation desegregating schools, protecting voting rights, and establishing an equal employment commission. His son George led fund-raising drives at Yale for the United Negro College Fund. And when, in turn, George's own son George Walker was caught using the word "nigger," Barbara Bush washed his mouth out with soap.

In fact, the Bushes' problem on race isn't that they're insincere; it's that they're overly sincere. They're so convinced of their personal decency that they expect it to trump the deep, long-standing ideological differences that separate their party from black political opinion. Most Republicans take a hardheaded view of race: Blacks are Democrats, and there's not much you can do. The Bushes, by contrast, not only want to be loved by African Americans, they think they deserve to be loved--even when they hold political views that are anathema to most black voters. This combination of self-righteousness and naiveté creates a recurring cycle of courtship, disillusionment, and backlash. It marked President Bush's political career and is now clearly under way in George W.'s. But nowhere can it be seen more clearly than in the experience of W.'s more earnest younger brother, Florida Governor Jeb Bush, a man for whom racial politics has turned into an obsession, a psychodrama, and an utter disaster.

(The article then details the ups-and-downs of Jeb Bush's relationship with Florida Blacks, which finally foundered when Ward Connerly, affirmative action's premiere Black opponent, came to town.)

...If W. loses Florida, he will almost certainly lose the election. And that would be a bit unfair--the animosity isn't really aimed at him; he's simply a proxy for his brother. But he's not a bad proxy. W., like his brother and father, is also fixated on proving his racial benevolence....

W. probably does genuinely care about the welfare of black Americans--so do his brother and father. But the assumption that blacks vote for the candidates who show them the most personal goodwill is itself paternalistic. Black Americans, like other Americans, don't need to be loved by politicians; they want to be served. And the Bush family opposes the agenda of activist government and group rights that most black Americans, for better or worse, think serves them best. Indeed, the Bushes have not even tried to convince blacks that their perceptions of their self-interest are wrong. Instead, they have agonized over how to show blacks that they personally view them as equal to other citizens. But the best way of recognizing black equality would be to treat blacks like everyone else--as a constituent group that votes not on sentiment or image but on selfinterest. Which is what black voters keep saying when they break the Bushes' hearts every election year.



Opinions

A fitting tribute to Sherrice Iverson

EARL OFARI HUTCHINSON

California Governor Gray Davis has a chance to make history. In August the California state legislature passed the Sherrice Iverson Bill. Davis has until September 30 to sign the bill. If he does it would be the first known law in the history of the American criminal justice system named after an African-American. His signature would help bring closure to one of the most tragic and sordid cases in recent memory.

In May, 1997 Iverson, a 7-year old African-American girl was kidnapped, raped and strangled in a bathroom stall at the Primadonna Casino located 45 miles South of Las Vegas on May 25, 1997 by 18 year-old Jeremy Strohmeier, a white high school student from Long Beach, California. After an initial burst of public rage at the idiocy of Leroy Iverson, the girl's father, for leaving her unattended at a gambling casino in the early morning hours, the case dropped quickly from the radar scope.

This changed in July 1998 with the public disclosure that Strohmeier's friend David Cash who witnessed at least part of the attack on

Iverson and did nothing. He made things worse when he told the Los Angeles Times that he wasn't troubled by her death. This touched off a furor of protest that included marches, demonstrations and rallies demanding that Cash be prosecuted as an accessory to the murder. The media finally did begin to pay some attention to the Iverson case only after Iverson's mother publicly demanded that Cash be prosecuted by Nevada authorities.

But even this did not mean that the media had finally seen the light and was interested in doing human interest stories on Iverson and her family. The media sniffed sensationalism and played it up as a story of an angry black mother going after a young, devil-may-care white kid. Time and People magazine focused almost exclusively on the protest against Cash, and again probing into his life and the lives of his parents and friends. Cash was humanized; Iverson and her family were little more than an afterthought.

Newspapers featured lengthy interviews with and profiles on Strohmeier, Cash, their parents, friends, and students at the school they attended. Yet there was not

one word on the pain and suffering of the family and relatives of Sherrice. This was hardly surprising given the stark racial and class contrasts between the backgrounds of Iverson, and her family and Strohmeier, and Cash and their families.

Strohmeier was considered an extremely bright kid from a stable, comfortable middle-class home in Long Beach and had traveled widely. Iverson lived in South Central Los Angeles. Her father and mother, Yolanda Manuel, are low income workers. They were estranged at the time of the crime. This seemed yet another sad instance in which the media instinctively does a human interest probe of the background, lives, feelings of middle-class whites, while minimizing if not outright ignoring blacks, even when they are the victims.

The killing of Sherrice, though heinous and shocking, did not ignite the hyper-charged media frenzy of the cases of Louise Woodward, the British au pair convicted of manslaughter in a baby's death in Massachusetts; Melissa Drexler, an 18 year-old high school student in New Jersey who abandoned

Continued on page 7

Continued from page 6

Sherrice Iverson

her baby at the prom, Megan Kagan, a 7 year-old raped and strangled in New Jersey, and Polly Klass, an 11 year-old who was murdered in California. The victims were all young, non-blacks.

The contrast in the media coverage of the Jon Benet Ramsey, the three year old white girl murdered in Colorado and the Iverson case has been even more dramatic. There have been hundreds of articles in national magazines, and newspapers that delved into the family background of Ramsey, and her family, with much speculation on whether they had any role in the killing. Three years after the murder of Iverson there still has been only one article on her and her family.

When the public rage died down over Cash, the Iverson tragedy again receded into public oblivion. The murder of Sherrice Iverson stacked up as a near textbook example of media indifference, insensitivity and disdain for poor victims, no

matter how young and innocent. But now there's a chance to make sure that her murder makes a lasting imprint on law and public policy. During the past two years, Najee Ali, director of Project Islamic Hope, pushed, prodded, and cajoled state legislators in Nevada and California to enact a Sherrice Iverson law. The law would make it a crime to witness a malicious act against a child and not report it to authorities. This is much needed child protective legislation that will provide another safeguard for children at grave risk from sexual predators and abusive adults. Nevada legislators responded and enacted the law. Now all it takes is a signature from Davis to become law. This would give Sherrice Iverson the fitting tribute that she and children everywhere deserve.

Phone: (213) 897-0322 Fax (213) 897-0319. Email: gray-davis@governor.ca.gov
Earl Ofari Hutchinson is the author of *The Disappearance of Black Leadership*.

King: He Still Has A Dream

By TOM RAINEY

LOS ANGELES--During this hard-fought election, the candidates of the two major parties are in agreement on at least one thing: King is still cool. The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., that is.

Joe Lieberman marched with him. Al Gore admires him. Dick Cheney "has no problem, in theory" with him. George W. Bush remembers "reading about him, back in fifth grade."

But they should all worry about him, because--as Dr. King himself told reporters outside Staples Center Thursday afternoon--"I'm baaack!"

Using the latest in 3-D hologram technology, Dr. King spoke from the grave and said he is unhappy with this election, to say the least. "When I was alive, the FBI spied on me, I was put in jail, and I was shot, for God's sake. Arizona wouldn't even give me a holiday until a couple of years ago. And now, every politician who's ever seen 'The History

Channel' is in love with me," King said. "Well, if you're going to play me, you're going to pay me!"

Dr. King then outlined a plan for reparations for use of his name and likeness by politicians during this election year, saying, "All God's children should get their just reward. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until royalties roll down like waters and residuals like a mighty stream. These scoundrels have given me nothing but a bad check which has come back marked "insufficient funds."

Senator Lieberman, who has invoked the King legacy more than any other candidate this year, issued a statement which urged Dr. King to "mend, not end" relations with living politicians. "If I have to march right down into the grave to hash this out with my good friend Martin, I will," Lieberman said.

www.bushoncrack.com

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John Powers wins the primary

By DWIGHT CUMMINGS

Mayoral Candidate John Powers won the primary election on September 19th convincingly, making it a two man race between him and incumbent

John Talbott. Many people were surprised by the newcomer Powers first place finish, but I was not. I have personally seen and participated in the hard work and dedication of Powers and his campaign office volunteers. His volunteers are representative of Spokane: east, west, south and north as well as the many that live in the county and can't vote in the election.

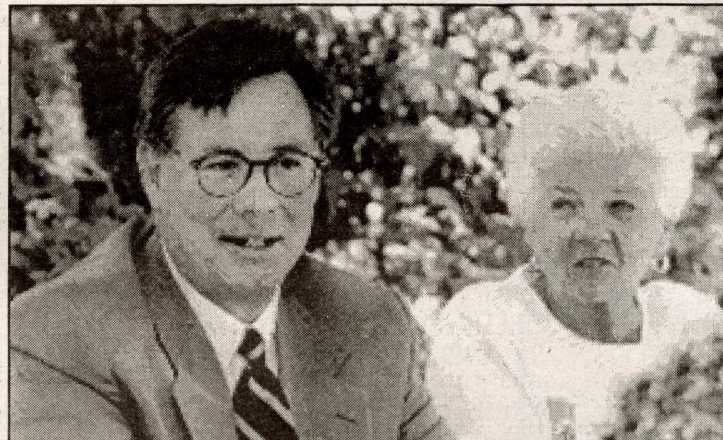
Powers believes in one Spokane and his emphasis is involving all the citizens of

the city and county to work through the current divisiveness. Powers is building a team of supporters who want Spokane to be all it can be as well as the heart of the Inland Northwest. Powers knows

Powers' vision of one Spokane and of Spokane as an integral part of the Inland Northwest success has never rung louder.

Powers has had over 500 meetings with various individuals, community groups and local organizations. He flew to Boise where a strong mayor system of government has recently been enacted to learn from the new strong mayor.

Powers is often heard to say "First seek to understand." His listening skills are phenomenal, as is his ability and willingness to communicate with Spokane citizens. A twenty year resident of Spokane, a local professional and a husband and father of four, he has a vested interest in making Spokane everything it can be.



that the true meaning of team is "Together Everyone Achieves More."

"I take deep pride in Spokane, and believe strongly our teamwork will build real progress and prosperity - not for a few but for all of us in our community, especially our children." Powers said.

If you don't play the game you cannot score

By ROBERT WILLIAMS

Let the truth be known "If you don't play the game you cannot score." The only way you score in politics is by voting. I don't know of any one that can play on both teams and win. We need to make a choice and work for the win.

If our people do not vote they will not receive anything no matter which team wins. We must vote and make a loud noise about our vote. Not enough of us vote to change many outcomes therefore when laws are passed they effect us more than others. By voting we can change that.

By the way, selling a controlled substance is against the law. Smoking or shooting up with a controlled substance is against the law. If you don't want to be part of the police lineup don't do the

crime. I worry more about the Black person that goes to work each day and still can't feed their family or pay the rent. That fool that wants to sell drugs or do drugs needs to find something to do that is productive.

Why is it that we think the law should change and not us? What makes us think we are owed something rather than us earning something? We are thinking people. We have made this country great, but we have been told and made to think that

we are about nothing and it seems as if we are trying to live down to their expectations.

We need to get off our knees, get our kids back in school began to run our households and let others know we are not second class at anything we do. They can't hide it in a book because we will find it if they do. It is time we go back to the old school and care about each other and all of us work toward a better end.

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Lieberman and the Politics of Race

more Emma Goldmans or Rosa Luxembourgs types. And our ascent has been every bit as contingent upon good fortune and the skin we're in, as anything beneath it like superior "culture."

In fact, a good deal of our community's advance has come at the direct expense of black people, and would never have materialized in the absence of their oppression, coupled with a willingness by many if not most Jews to undergo a transmogrification that, in effect allowed us to "become white," by down playing who and what we were, getting nose jobs, and hiding in our epidermal camouflage. And then our success could be heralded as a bludgeon against those of color whose ability to partake in the advantages of whiteness was circumscribed from birth.

But the truth is always more complex than the fantasy. Read Stephen Steinberg's *The Ethnic Myth: Fact is, Jews haven't all been successful, and pretending otherwise harms the less-than-affluent Jews*

who, thanks to the triumphalist image, are perceived as especially flawed in some way. Even as Glazer and others were developing the Jewish Horatio Alger image in the '60's and '70's, 15% of Jews in New York City were poor or near poor, as were 12% of Jews nationally. About a third of Jewish men at this time were working class, not the professionals and scholars portrayed by stereotype.

And Jews who came to America and succeeded hardly came with nothing. Jews from Russia came with experience in manufacturing, commerce, or as artisans: three areas that were significant economic sectors in the "New World." It wasn't our culture or values that were impeccable, but rather, our timing. Our experience in the garment and textile industries fit perfectly with an economy where those industries were growing 2-3 times faster than the economy as a whole.

Indeed, two-thirds of Jewish immigrants between 1899 and 1910 were skilled laborers, compared to 49% of English immigrants, 15%

of Southern Italians, 13% of the Irish, and 6% of Poles. And blacks, no matter their skills, abilities or ambitions, were locked out of the sectors open to many Jews, seeing as how for most of this period, 90% were still serfs on the national plantation known as the American South.

When my great-grandfather came to America in 1910, though he was poor, and a religious minority, he was offered work the very first day that was off limits to African Americans whose families had been here for

Jews with a commitment to social justice were challenging in the streets. To the extent Brother Joe has turned his back on that tradition, he is hardly recognizable as a Jew at all.

over 200 years. Not yet fully "white," he was nonetheless favored over America's untermenschen, and over time, if he played the game, and tried hard to forget the old world ways that had kept his family and people alive, and if he took special care not to teach his children Yiddish, nor act or speak too Jewish, then he could work, save some money, send his child (my grandfather) to a college blacks couldn't attend, who would then be able to get a house in a suburb where blacks couldn't live, and send his children, including my father to schools that were segregated. A hard worker, to be sure, but one whose hard work was met by access to an opportunity structure. No shame in that, but also no model minority.

And the much-heralded Jewish cultural emphasis on education is also largely mythical. As anthropologist Miriam Slater has noted, and as Selma Berrol's study of Jewish experience in New York City confirms, economic mobility and success - largely due to the above-mentioned good timing, pre-existing skills, and apartheid barriers elevating us over blacks - came before

substantial educational gains in the Jewish community. In the early part of the century, the average American Jew - supposedly part of a culture with a special affinity for education - was a seventh grade dropout, and working class Jewish kids typically received no greater level of schooling than other working class immigrant children. Indeed, a look at pre-immigrant Jewish "education" makes clear that to whatever degree "learning" was valued, it was largely non-secular, Talmud-based instruction, for male children only: hardly indicative of a special love of the life of the mind.

None of this is to take away from the accomplishments of any Jewish person or the community writ large, which, once upon a time, really did stand for something. But so much of that early radicalism has faded, to be replaced by a political, cultural, and economic assimilationism that has rendered much of the Jewish collective unrecognizable by historic standards, even as it has paved the way for our material enrichment.

We have been reduced to what Herbert Gans has called "symbolic Judaism," typified by an "objects culture" of mezuzahs, dreidls, and stars of David on the one hand; a popular culture of food, Jewish comedy and entertainment on the other; and all of it topped off by a "problems culture" preoccupied with Israel and anti-Semitism: a negative identity based on real and potential victimhood. This deculturation was the "price of our ticket" for the commodity known as America, and increasingly I wonder if it was a fair trade.

In the final week of my grandfather's life, I recall how he - knowing he was sick, and wishing to finally share stories from his father about life in the old country - tried desperately to conjure up some memory, fable, or seminal event about struggle and triumph. And I remember the look in his eyes and frustration in his

voice as he realized that all he knew could fit in the space of about two minutes. This was what he had been given: a silence about what it had really meant to be Jewish: and that silence was all he could pass on. For the sake of "becoming American," - and that meant to become white - one had to give up what one was, in order to metamorphose in Kafkaesque fashion into something one was not: a white man.

At the end of the day, even with the advantages that come with transformation, one has to wonder if it was a decent bargain: to trade your traditions and political-cultural soul for a permanent guest pass at someone else's club, and a shot at the vice-presidency. The self-doubt we Jews have on this score is likely part of the reason we cling to the model minority myth with such dialysis-machine like ardor: it allows us to think it was worth it after all.

If American Jews want to feel good about Joe Lieberman so be it. But how sad that we have come to define our progress by how high some of our individual members are able to climb. How sad that we need so terribly to believe that this says something truly amazing about our country and its openness to equity. How sad that we fail to realize the irony here: Joe Lieberman is a fully-functional white man, sans kippah, I might add, beholden to the same corporate interests as all gentile elites; the same corporate interests that a few generations ago, Jews with a commitment to social justice were challenging in the streets. To the extent Brother Joe has turned his back on that tradition, he is hardly recognizable as a Jew at all. In the end, he might just be a guy who walks to work on Saturday.

Tim Wise is a Nashville-based activist, writer and lecturer. He can be reached at tjwise@mindspring.com.

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Baha'i Faith convenes in Spokane

Members of the Baha'i Faith, an independent world religion, will attend the annual Baha'i district convention in the Spokane Valley Sunday October 8th. Baha'is from Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho will be among approximately 150 who will meet at West Valley High School to elect delegates to the National Baha'i Convention.

The Baha'i electoral process is unique among election procedures in that nominations and electioneering are not allowed. The voter, after prayerful consideration, selects the person believed to be best qualified for the position. Delegates elected to the national convention then elect the nine members of the national administrative body by

this same procedure. Once every five years these nine members meet with their counterparts from over 150 countries to elect the nine members of the world administrative body of the Baha'i Faith called the Universal House of Justice. The world center of the Faith and its holiest shrines are in Israel.

The Baha'i religion, with over 5 million adherents worldwide, has a membership of approximately 133,000 in the United States. Its scriptures and literature have been translated into more than 800 languages. Followers of Baha'u'llah, the Prophet-Founder of the Baha'i Faith, come from diverse backgrounds and include representatives of over 2,100 tribes and minorities.

The African American Voice speaks of your choice.
But only you have can **Vote** your choice.

Unintended Messages

BY ANTHONY BRADLEY

I recently returned to school to enhance my education. I must admit at first I had some anxiety about being the oldest person in my classes. The concern soon passed because I knew it was the right thing to do, and incidentally, I have not been the oldest person in any of my classes as of yet. There is such an variety of people in school today. There are young, old, married, single, parents, domestic and foreign students from different economic backgrounds - a snap shot of our society.

This point became painfully apparent during my last quarter. During Finals Week I heard a presentation on Hawaiian vacations and at the end of the presentation the instructor asked one of the students "who owns over half of the Hawaiian Islands?" The person seemed surprised at the question and searched her mind for an answer, then she calmly replied "The Chinks". I could not believe I had heard correctly and as my classmates began to laugh I turned and asked the student next to me "What did she say?" She repeated "The Chinks". I was in shock. The instructor merely said "No, the answer is the U. S. Army" and dropped his head.

The class session soon ended and I spent the rest of the evening thinking about what the student had said.

There was several issues that upset me: the ease with which she said it, the acceptance by the class with their laughter, and the lack of response by the instructor. But most of all I was ashamed by my own lack of response. I decided to speak to the class the next day. Initially, I was going to speak to the individual because I had worked with her during the quarter and had found her to be nice, pleasant and considerate. Since the class condoned her statement with our laughter and silence, I felt a needed to talk to the class. I told them that there was no place for this type of behavior and language in our class or society. Our silence and laughter was our acceptance of her insensitive comments. I informed them that I was ashamed of my behavior. Also, I was not willing to accept her comment and let it pass without voicing my disapproval.

The class acknowledged that laughing at the comment was inappropriate. The person that made the comment regretted it and apologized. I informed her and the class that the apologies were good but the damage was done. This incident could serves as an example of why we should be careful of our actions or lack of action, because we could offend others and in the process send the wrong message about or image of ourselves.



Diversity Dome

If you think you've got a problem because of your race, because of your ethnicity, because of your religion you ought to try building a dome in a Spokane development. The banks look at you funny, the realtors look at you funny, even Spokane architects look at you funny. People just don't like difference. Why can't we have a community that allows tolerance for difference?

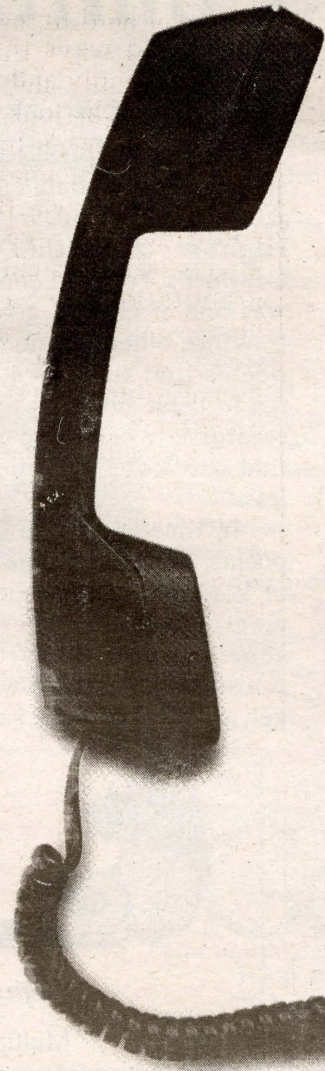
So far I have only found one minority sub-contractor. He promised a list of other minority contractors but it has not yet been forthcoming. Tommy Flynn, recent senatorial candidate and carpenter has also promised to forward the names of minorities in the building trades.

What we need to do is send lots of minorities down to the Spokane Home Builder's Association Apprenticeship Program or to the Spokane Community College Building Trades programs so we can start some folks up the pipeline.

This article is part of a series on the dome that diversity is building.

The A A Voice is trying to compile a list of diverse contractors, suppliers, building trade workers, artists and craftspersons, landscapers, interior designers, suppliers of furnishings, and anyone else who thinks they have something to offer to this project. If this includes you or someone you know write the AAV at PMB 145 2920 S. Grand Blvd. Spokane WA 99203.

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Illinois landlord charged with racial discrimination

On September 1 The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development charged the owner and manager of a Belleville, IL, apartment house with housing discrimination for refusing to rent to a woman because she is black, Secretary Andrew Cuomo announced.

HUD filed the charge on behalf of Wanakee Holman against the owner and man-

ager of a four-unit apartment building located at 62 Hillside in Belleville. The property is owned by Dennis Fournie and managed by Patrick Daniels.

"Discrimination that comes with a smile is just as common and just as insidious as more blatant forms of discrimination," Cuomo said. "But regardless of how it is presented, all discrimination

is equally illegal and intolerable. No smile can hide its ugly face."

Holman, whose voice is racially identifiable, told HUD that in July 1999 she called the rental office about an ad she saw for an apartment and was told by Daniels the unit had been rented. About a week later, Holman noticed the same unit was still being advertised for rent. When she called a second time about the apartment she was again told that that it was rented.

Later, while driving around the neighborhood looking for a place to live, Holman noticed that the same unit appeared to be empty. She asked one of the neighboring tenants if it was occupied and was told it was not. The neighbor, who is white, called the rental office on Holman's behalf and was told it was available.

In early August, Holman telephoned Daniels a third time about the apartment and

was told for a third time that it had been rented. Holman then asked some co-workers to call. A black co-worker who called was told nothing was available, while two white co-workers were told just the opposite.

Holman then filed a discrimination complaint in August with HUD, which began investigating the allegations. Investigators interviewed a number of witnesses who corroborated Holman's allegations. HUD determined that the unit was still vacant when Holman filed her complaint, and that it was finally rented in September to a white man who first applied after Holman was rejected.

Fournie and Daniels deny discriminating against Holman.

"I've always known that racism exists but to experience it personally disappoints me greatly," Holman said. "I'm grateful that HUD is there to confront racism by

enforcing the Fair Housing Act."

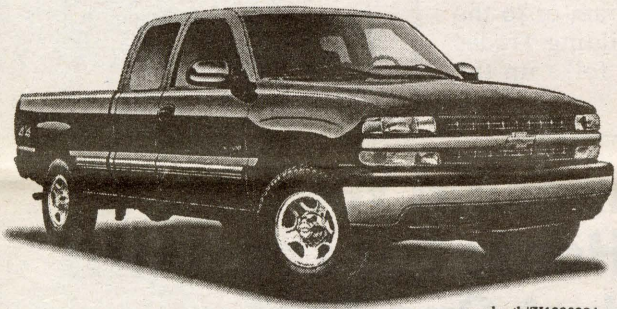
Housing discrimination charges heard before an Administrative Law Judge carry a maximum civil penalty of \$11,000 -- provided there are no prior violations of the Act -- plus actual damages, injunctive or other equitable relief, and attorney fees. If either party requests a trial in federal district court, the federal judge can award punitive damages.

The Fair Housing Act bars housing discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, disability, family status and national origin. The Act covers the sale, rental, financing, insuring and advertising of most of the nation's housing. Fair housing investigations are conducted by HUD investigators, state and city agencies working with HUD, and by private fair housing groups that receive HUD funds.

Publisher's note: People who believe they've been harmed by housing discrimination can file complaints with HUD by calling 1-800-669-9777, TDD 1-800-927-9275 or on the Internet at www.hud.gov/hdiscrim.html.

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Comfort's Top 42 Poems

BY GAYE D. HIGHT
 REVIEW BY ARKAME B. CURRY

Finding inspiration is a special thing - and that is just what you'll find in Gay Hight's collection of Comfort's Top 42 Poems. It was one of Hight's goals to convince others through her poems that there is a god! An in these hectic days, the creator is working in ways that can leave you speechless.

In these down to earth poems, there is reminiscence of Wednesday night prayer meetings and witnessing someone give a heartfelt, soulstirring, "makeya wanna get up an shout" praises be

to the creator for my joy and pain, testimony!

I know poetry is not to everyone's liking, however these poems are easy to read and understand, as they speak in direct terms. These poems are about people sharing their struggles, pain and adversities with drugs and other unhealthy behavior patterns. They also share a common thread that reflects on having to STOP, LOOK and LISTEN in order to do a self-examination and assessment of one's life, as one's condition has more to do with one's choices than how

others have tricked, blamed, or abandoned us.

The two particular poems that stood out for me are "Pressure" and "The Turning point." Again the common thread is once you have done a self-examination, it is important to acknowledge the Creator/God in your walk through life and in this collection of poems you can feel the human spirit just jumping off of the pages.

This reflective art displays the changes in the life of the author that funnel through in words expressing hope, dedication, resilience and victory if not for just this one moment, one moment at a time. Read this collection for yourself, or make it a gift for someone in need of a kind word or two, and let Gaye D. Hight know if she's met her goal.

If you would like more information on Comfort's Top 42 Poems, you may contact "Success - Poems That Impress" at 1428 E. Queen Ave., Spokane, WA 99207 or call/fax at (509) 484-1796.



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AHANA News!

The African, Hispanic, Asian and Native American (AHANA) Business and Professional Association was created to empower minority businesses through training and creating networks, collaboration and coordination with other businesses to improve AHANA's economic base, opportunities and contributions to the economic and cultural development of Spokane.

motivational message on making your dream a reality, Mr. Dunn also shared the challenges he faced as a minority trying to start a business and succeeding in spite of prejudice and lacking a high school diploma.

Reverend Lonny Bingle was the other speaker, who gave us practical wisdom on the various stages of corporate growth and skills and ability vs. personality.

We are also grateful to the businesses and business owners whose participation made this a success: Amelia Bedelia's Maid Cleaning Service, Lou Lee of KHQ-6, Jim's Bike Repair, Gemstone Memorial, Mike Barrow of 101.9's Heart & Soul, Sign-A-Rama, Carole Shook of N-Shira-Pa, Bailey Groce's Janitorial Service, Hydraulics Unlimited, Trombley Masonry, Trombley Hair Design, Body Blessings Spa, Partylite Candles, PMS

AHANA's first Business Empowerment Seminar was a success and we would like to thank Spokane Faith Center for hosting the event, providing a wonderful luncheon and great door prizes. Thank you Josh Bingle, Jessica Emery, Sarah Erskine and Ricardo Perez for serving us lunch!

Mr. Paul Dunn; CEO of Preacher Boy Clothing Line, a multi million dollar company. Empowered us with his

Leasing Equipment, Dave Clark Construction, Siemens Construction, Rebel Janitorial Service, Commercial Lender - Bob Kenney, Internet Auto Sales - Tom Greenfield, Donnell Smith, Jeremiah Smith, Michael Sheaver, Pat Tascherae, Free Lance Writer -Tanya Jones, Joshua Emery, Web Site Designer - Gil Mendez, Pastor Eric Hawkins, Pastor LaShund Lambert, Pilot - Lee Price, Tammy Reams, Angelina Moreno, Jean Smith, LouAnn Wilkins, Sheryl Barrow, Char Price, AHANA President Ben Cabildo, AHANA Vice President Paul Smith, AHANA Treasurer Ced Barela and AHANA Secretary Charity Doyl.

Membership Meeting: Tuesday

Gonzaga University
October 17, 2000
5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Washington / California Room (2nd floor) C.O.G. (Center of Gonzaga University campus) Sharp St.

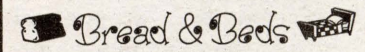
Quincy Troupe at EWU

Award winning African American poet and writer Quincy Troupe is the featured speaker kicking off The Eastern Washington University Get Lit! Festival this week on Thursday October 5 at 7 PM in Showalter Auditorium on the Cheney campus.

A two-time winner of the prestigious Heavyweight-Champion of Poetry (1994 and 1995) sponsored by the World Poetry Bout of Taos, New Mexico. He has received American Book Awards for both a book of poetry (Snake Back Solos in 1980) and for Miles: The Autobiography which he wrote with Miles Davis in 1990. His latest volume of poetry is Choruses (Coffee House Press 1999).

Currently Troupe is

Professor of Creative Writing and American and Caribbean Literature at the University of California, San Diego and the founding Editorial Director for Code, a monthly style magazine for "men of color."



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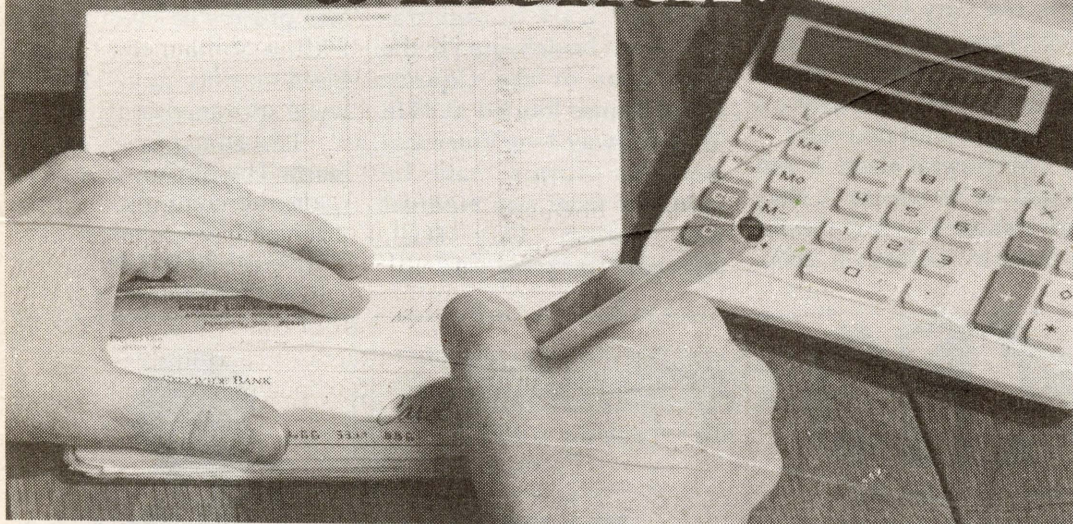
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The Leader of the Month was Patricia Harris

BY JOHNATHAN BRADLEY
AGE 12

Born in Illinois in 1924, Patricia Roberts Harris rose above the race and gender boundaries of her time to become an important political figure in the twentieth century. Patricia Roberts Harris had a remarkable career in several areas, hitting her heights in the fields of law, education, Politics, and civil rights. She broke barriers of both race and sex, and was appointed to important positions by no less than three American Presidents.

Ms. Harris graduated, Summa Cum Laude, from Howard University, where she would later be named the first female Dean. She graduated first in her class from the law school at George Washington University.

In 1963, President John F. Kennedy appointed her co-chairman of the National Women's Committee for Civil Rights. Ms. Harris worked on the presidential campaign of Lyndon Johnson, and in 1965 was appointed by president

Johnson ambassador to Luxembourg-the first black person to head a US Embassy. When President Jimmy Carter appointed her Secretary of Housing and Urban Development in 1977, she became the first Black woman to be named to a presidential cabinet position. In 1979, President Carter appointed her US Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, a post she held until 1982, when she was appointed a full-time professor at the George Washington National Law Center.

Throughout her career, Harris gave special attention to the needs of the disadvantaged and distinguished herself as an advocate of fairness and equity for all Americans. She died of cancer in Washington, DC, on March 23, 1985.

Johnathan Bradley has won \$25 for recognizing the photograph in last month's "Who is this person" column and writing an article about her.

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Rapper Ice T speaks at SFCC

Grammy Award-winning rapper Ice T will give his take on "The Future of Music" Friday, Oct. 6 at Spokane Falls Community College.

Now a featured actor in films and television, Ice T will not be performing rap but he'll have plenty to say about controversies tied to Internet marketing of music and other issues, said Justin Core, SFCC coordinator of student activities and recreation.

The lecture is at 7 PM in the SFCC Music/Performing Arts Building auditorium,

Bldg. 15, and will open with a rap performance by a local hip-hop group. Tickets are \$10 for Community Colleges of Spokane students and \$15 for the general public, and may be purchased in advance by calling 533-3569, or at the door depending on availability.

A onetime Los Angeles gang member, Ice T's first break came in the 1980s when the producers of the film *Breakin'* asked him to rap in the movie. Forming his own record label, he released a

string of ground-breaking rap records that earned him a Grammy Award, plus recognition as "Best Male Rapper" by Rolling Stone magazine readers in 1992.

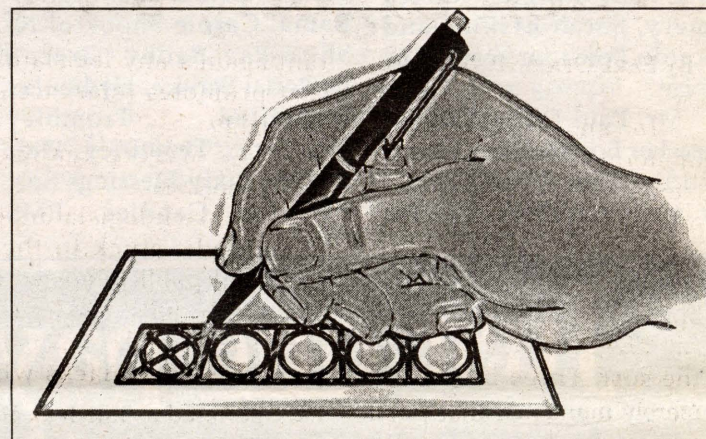
Most recently, Ice T has been an advocate and spokesman for youth through his music, his book "The Ice Opinion," and lecture tours of high schools, colleges and prisons. Also an accomplished actor, he begins his first season this fall as a regular cast member of "Law and Order" on NBC television

Continued from page 1

Mayor's race

West received as well as the vote of anyone else they can convince that they are the right person for the strong mayor job. In addition to the mayor's \$109,000 salary he will appoint all the city's department heads, write the city's \$330,000 budget, and will not be required to attend any city council meetings and will be able to veto any vote by the City Council. In turn, the City Council will have to approve the appointment of department heads and can override the Mayor's veto with at least five votes.

The general election will be held on November 7, 2000, registration by mail should be done by October 7, 2000.



Registration walk-ins will be accepted up until October 23, 2000. All walk-in registrations must be delivered to the 2nd floor of the County Court House located at 1116 W. Broadway Ave. Voter registration forms can be obtained from any manned fire station, City Hall, schools, libraries and the

Court House. For comments and questions about the election process or voter's registration contact the County Election office at 477-2320 or www.spokanecounty.org.

The candidates can be reached by phone or email at:
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Positive Power for HIV positive gays

BY LORENZO HERMAN

Programs such as Friend to Friend, Spokane Multi-faith AIDS Care Teams, Odyssey Youth Group and others have been used to educate particular HIV negative people about the AIDS epidemic. Men that are affected by the disease rely on case managers for social needs and their doctors for medical attention. But there has not been a program specifically designed for men who are living with HIV/AIDS that does not preach safe sex.

HIV positive gay and bisexual men know about practicing safe sex already. Positive Power is a place where these guys can get involved with a group that sees them as a whole person and not only focus on their sexual behavior or HIV status. Discussions are usually about disclosing their HIV status, dealing with the family, work, education, dating, etc. Seattle has a Positive Power program through the HIV/AIDS Project Development and Evaluation Unit (HAPDEU) that has

been successful for the past two years. Our program will serve both eastern Washington and North Idaho.

The discussion group encourages men to connect and learn from each other's experiences. Positive Power does not offer solutions but it does give them choices. The discussion groups give the men a safe and confidential environment for them to discuss issues that pertain to them without "outsiders" influencing their decisions. It's also about taking control

of their lives and finding out what works for them.

Positive Power is the freedom to choose how to live. The first discussion group will be held on six Thursday evenings beginning November 9th at Spokane AIDS Network.

For more information contact *Lorenzo Herman, Positive Power Coordinator or Terry Davis, Prevention Program Assistant at 455-8993.*

When bigotry's victims become bigots

BY EARL OFARI HUTCHINSON

In an open letter to California's black state legislators a group of Los Angeles ministers demanded that they oppose four bills in the state senate and assembly they branded a "homosexual agenda." The bills were nothing of the sort. Three of the bills merely mandated that public schools develop and promote materials that teach tolerance. The fourth bill would create a state human relations commission to promote tolerance among all groups. The fact that the bills mentioned discrimination based on sexual orientation as one of the nonos instantly raised the hackles of the ministers. The twist is the bill's opponents aren't the hard core Christian fundamentalists that routinely

rant against any legislation that promotes tolerance of gay rights.

They were prominent black ministers.

The black legislators to their credit stuck to their guns and publicly vowed to support the bills. The legislature passed three. Yet the puzzle is why blacks who have suffered as much as any other group from bigots and hate mongers could look and sound so much like those same bigots and hate mongers?

There's a warped, if not tragic, reason for their intense fear and loathing of gays. Many blacks, mirrored America's traditional fear and hatred of homosexuality. They swallowed whole the phony and perverse John Wayne definition of man-

hood, that real men talked and acted tough, shed no tears, and never showed their emotions.

When men broke the prescribed male code of conduct and showed their feelings, they were sneered at as weaklings, and their manhood questioned. While many Americans made blacks their bogeymen, many blacks make gays their bogeymen and wage open warfare against them.

Many blacks also have been deeply influenced by the preachments of countless numbers of black ministers, such as those who utter baseless threats against the black legislators who refused to support discrimination. They shout and condemn to fire and brimstone any man who

engages in what they label the godless and unnatural act of having a sexual relationship with another man.

If they have any doubts about their bigotry, they fall back on the Bible. They can, as generations of bible-toting white preachers still do, flip to the oft-cited line in Leviticus that sternly calls men laying down with men, "the abomination." Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan has frequently denounced homosexuality as an unnatural act and actively discourages the practice whenever and wherever he can.

Some black rappers, writers, and Afrocentrists have joined in the gender assault. They routinely include negative and offensive lyrics and

Continued on page 17

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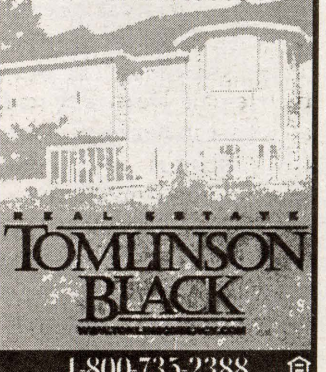
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Avista attempts to raises utility rates

BY ANTHONY BRADLEY

In October, 1999, Avista Utilities requested increases of their gas and electricity rates. As a result, on September 1, 2000, Avista raised their fuel rates by 28 percent. The hike breaks down to about a \$10.00 a month increase in everyone's bill. Avista assured the public that the price hike was due to the increase in fuel prices and Avista did not stand to profit from the move. In addition to the gas rate hike, Avista had also requested an increase in electricity rates. Since the gas rate hike and the requested electricity rate increase there had been a large volume of complaints lodge with the Attorney General's office. The complaints prompted an investigate and ruling by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission. The commission ruled that an electricity increase was not warranted. Instead, all Avista customers should be given a \$50.00 credit and have their electricity bill reduced \$1.00 monthly. Also,

the commission ruled that the gas increase would only be about \$2.75 instead of \$10.00 monthly. The rulings were based on profits Avista made from the sale of a power plant. All these changes hinge on whether Avista appeals the ruling. If not appealed, the rate changes could occur by the end of November.

For customers there are some measures that could be taken to make your residence more heat efficient. They should consider wrapping their pipes, adding insulation, and sealing cracks around doors and windows with stripping. For those needing help with their utility bill, they could be eligible for some assistance from the Spokane Neighbor Assistance Program (SNAP). There will be a program in place to assist low income clients with their utility bills. Also, Avista offers a comfort payment plan and other payment options. For more information contact SNAP at 456-7111 or Avista at (800) 227-9187.

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Walk Against Hate Oct. 29

Last year's Walk Against Hate sponsored by Churches Against Racism was a real traffic stopper up at 20th and Grand. This year's walk on October 29 will begin at 2:30 PM at Chief Garry Park, 2500 E. Mission and proceed to St. Aloysius Church, 330 E. Boone. Bus service will be available to bring walkers back to the starting point after the brief interfaith prayer service at the church.

The number of religions,

denominations, and churches participating from all over the Inland Empire last year was stunning. The simple service presented by adults and young people of many faiths was moving. Don't miss this chance to join together and speak out against hate and renew your commitment to take action.

Churches Against Racism is a group of concerned clergy and laity, from diverse Christian denominations,

joined for the purpose of responding to racism within our Inland Empire. On Pentecost Sunday, 1998, hundreds of individuals and community churches endorsed the Covenant of Mutual Respect initiated by Churches Against Racism. The Covenant of Mutual Respect is an ongoing commitment to racial justice. For more information contact Ron Greene 329-1410 or Rev. John Tusant 326-8327.

Taking A Long Hard Look At Ralph Nader

BY CEDRIC MUHAMMAD
JULY 17, 2000

Those Blacks who have bought into the line that a vote for Ralph Nader is a vote for George W. Bush better think again. The logic, according to Democrats and Gore supporters is that by voting for Ralph Nader, people are only taking votes away from Al Gore and helping Gov. Bush walk into the White House - directly benefiting from Gore's loss of the traditional Democratic votes that Nader represents. But can any self-respecting Black honestly say that Blacks have benefited under Clinton-Gore - enough to automatically extend their reign for another 4 years - with no questions asked? Clinton-Gore have done in eight years what Reagan and Bush could have only dreamed of (according to the common view that Blacks have of conservatives): they ended welfare as we know it, locked up droves of Black Men, ordered stiffer sentencing for lighter crimes and subtly moved the public discourse away from its previous attention to racial discrimination in favor of a more palatable class-based approach to the country's racial problems.

If Ronald Reagan had done these things, Blacks would have been in an uproar. But because a Democratic administration did them, Blacks could only manage a whimper and before too long - forgiveness. Many Blacks honestly believe that Bill Clinton is the closest thing we have ever had to a

Black President. As long as a white man has a "D" after his name instead of an "R" many Blacks can see no evil. Because Bill Clinton and Al Gore have that magical letter after their names, many Blacks, like parrots, repeat the "prosperity" song ad nauseum - that somehow Blacks are better off economically than they ever have been. The height of this insult occurs when Al Gore and Bill Clinton claim that the Black unemployment rate is at its lowest level in history - somewhere around 7.9%. What they neglect to tell their cheering Black audiences is that if the increased Black incarcerations (during their administration) were taken into account they would see the Black unemployment rate back up to near 10%.

Instead of clapping so loudly, Blacks should ask what good are a few more jobs paying \$8-\$10 an hour if more and more Blacks - men and increasingly women - are filling jail cells and making the unemployment numbers better? And furthermore how much longer can blacks allow Democrats to earn their vote just because they successfully point out that the Republican party doesn't care about the Black Electorate? Sure the charge is true but it certainly isn't a pro-Black agenda. Dissing the Republican Party and Congress may produce great applause but isn't doing anything to solve Black poverty and a failing criminal justice system.

Enter Ralph Nader.

Nader, in many respects, represents the conscience of the Democratic Party that Clinton and Gore have successfully run from for 8 years. His campaign raises many of the issues that Blacks expected Clinton-Gore to raise 8 years ago. His candidacy addresses the rightward drift of the Democratic Party designed by the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC), a group of Democrats, started with Al Gore's help 15 years ago, that turned the Democratic Party in the direction of corporate interests and moderate Democrats and away from the civil-rights movement and liberal Democrats.

Gore proudly proclaims that he helped write the DLC's first press release. How many Blacks are even aware of the DLC and the hindrance that they have been to the causes championed by Black leaders inside of the Democratic Party? Not many. And that is why Gore can get away with parading his affiliation with them so boldly - as he recently did this past Saturday.

Ralph Nader has a stinging critique of the DLC that every Black should listen to before they give Gore a free pass simply because he wears a "D". Instead of looking at American politics in terms of a narrow-minded Democrat-Republican dichotomy, Blacks should increasingly look at politics in terms of their own best interests. Sure, such a strategy will find plenty in the Democratic Party worthy of support but it also

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Close look at Nader

will reveal plenty to be disgusted about.

So, I think that Ralph Nader deserves a long, hard look from Black America. Hopefully Blacks will not fall victim to the weak scare-tactic that a vote for Nader is a vote for Bush. While few Blacks may realize it today, a vote for Clinton-Gore in '92 and '96 may have been a vote for Bush, or at least some of the worst policies championed by Reagan-Bush. And if that wasn't the intention of Clinton-Gore, in many respects, the effect on Black America has been the same, as if they (Clinton-Gore) were Republicans themselves. This is very clear on matters of criminal justice issues. A look at some of what Ralph Nader is saying makes this abundantly clear.

A good starting point to get familiar with some of Nader's thinking is his recent address to the NAACP convention:

<http://washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/onpolitics/elections/nader071100.htm>

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BIG is celebrating its 25th Anniversary. Their continued existence however, only reminds us that the unjust experiences African American public servants encountered 25 years ago still requires that there be an organization such as BIG to address them 25 years later.

BIG was conceived by

Department of Health Education and Welfare (DHEW) employees at the Parklawn Building in Rockville, Maryland in 1975. It quickly grew to an umbrella organization of federal employees. Initially, it was thought that it would address only the problems at the federal level. However, it was soon determined that state, county and municipal Black employees were faced with the similar employment problems. They united to protect themselves. It now functions as a knowledge-

able, problem identifying and solving organization for Black civil servants dedicated to:

- establishing and operating a mechanism for gathering and disseminating information to Blacks in government;
- eradicating all vestiges of unlawful treatment towards Blacks in government;
- eliminating institutionalized racism and discrimination which opposes Blacks and violates barriers to full and equal opportunities for Blacks in government;
- encouraging pride and

motivation in Blacks so as to promote achievement of full potential and recognition of societal contributions;

- sponsoring a national effort to promote the well-being, education, and professional development of Blacks in government;
- acting as an advocate for equal employment opportunities and conditions which affect Blacks in government and
- providing a non-partisan platform on major issues of local, regional and national significance that affect Blacks in government.

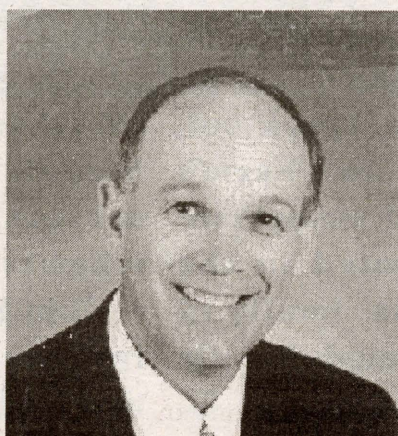
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Socio-Economic Status of Older Black Americans

By ROBERT C. WILLIAMSON JR.

With all of this talk about a robust economy, this writer began to wonder how African Americans were faring in this prosperous economy. I always come across little blips in the newspaper about how African Americans, Hispanics and Native American poverty has improved by 2%. I'd just like to know if anyone that falls into the poverty category is feeling 2% richer.

In reviewing some research that was conducted by Robert Joseph Taylor and Shirley A. Lockery, both from the School of Social Work and Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, I came across some statistics that conclude that older African Americans are not doing well. The research looks at the areas of education,

income, poverty, political participation, and religious involvement. For the sake of time and space I will share a few statistics from the areas of education, income and poverty.

The study concluded that present cohorts of older Black Americans are survivors. They were born and raised during a period of time when the rule of 'separate but unequal' was enforced by Jim Crow laws and limited opportunities in diverse areas such as education, health care, housing, and the labor market.

As compared to the non-elderly, older Americans possess fewer economic resources. This disparity largely results from transitions and disruptions in economic status and income sources that are associated with growing older. Upon retirement, elder-

ly people relinquish their role as active earners and the associated incomes and benefits that are associated with that role. In many cases this leads the elderly into poverty.

Racial comparisons of the economic status of the elderly indicate that white elderly have substantially higher incomes than their Black and Hispanic counterparts. In 1989, white elderly had an annual income of \$9,838 whereas, elderly Black and Hispanic elderly had incomes of \$5,772 and \$5,978 respectively.

Race differentials in income and poverty are also evident in indicators such as the degree of home ownership and the net worth of elderly adults. With regard to home ownership, 72% of white elderly adults own their own homes as opposed to only 58% of elderly black adults. Net worth consists of home equality, bank accounts, financial investments, real estate and business ownership. Black and Hispanic elderly adults had much lower net worth than their white counterparts. The median net worth of white households (\$81,648) was double the net worth of older Hispanic households (\$40,371) and almost quadruple the net worth of older Black households (\$22,210).

Consistent with research which indicates the low socio-

economic status of Blacks, work histories and retirement patterns of Blacks and whites are drastically different. It was argued that individuals retirement experiences have their roots in previous work histories and life experiences. Basically the research is saying if you are living from payday to payday now do not expect great things in retirement once you have given up your day job. The lack of pensions and other benefits may force a portion of the elderly Black population to work long past the average working age of persons in the majority population.

With regards to education the literature reveals that Black-white differences in education are rooted in historical inequalities in basic opportunities to obtain an education. To compare educational attainment differences among Blacks and whites outside of this historical context is extremely problematic. This is particularly true for Black elderly who have faced higher levels of overt racism in education than their younger counterparts.

Elderly Black Americans have much lower levels of educational attainment than their white counterparts. Elderly whites are much more likely than elderly Blacks to have graduated from high school (57.9% vs. 24.6%) and

college (11.7% vs. 4.6%). Over half of all elderly Blacks (57.3%) have completed less than 9 years of formal education.

Relatively high percentages of elderly Blacks can be classified as functionally illiterate, that is completing no more than 4 years of elementary school. In 1980, roughly 10% of elderly whites were functionally illiterate as compared to 34.3% of elderly Black males and 22.4% of elderly black females. The percentage of elderly Blacks who are functionally illiterate has declined tremendously since 1950 (64.4% and 59.9% of elderly Black men and women, respectively were functionally illiterate in 1950).

As I mentioned earlier the research took a look at several areas and this writer just wanted to give a sampling of the research. This brief review of the literature has revealed the extremely low levels of income, education and high levels of poverty among elderly Black Americans. The research concludes that although Blacks have been able to rely on strong informal support networks of family, friends and church members, these networks are no substitute for government programs which provide an adequate income and access to quality medical care (e.g. Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid).

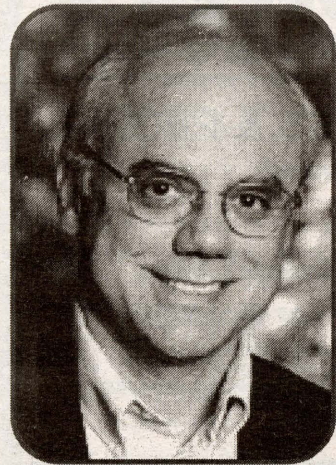
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You, too, have first amendment rights. Hate must be exposed and denounced. Buy an ad. Help news organizations achieve balance and depth. Do not debate hate mongers in conflict-driven talk shows.

Goodness has a first amendment right, too. We urge you to denounce hate groups and hate crimes, and spread the truth about hate's threat to a pluralistic society. An informed community is the best defense against hate.

You can spread tolerance through church bulletins, door-to-door flyers, Web sites, local cable TV bulletin boards, letters to the editor and print advertisements. Hate shrivels under strong light. Beneath their neo-Nazi exteriors, hate purveyors are cowards, surprisingly subject to public pressure and ostracism.

- When the 20-year-old "national leader" of the Aryan nations in Canada was exposed by the Prince George Citizen, he resigned and closed his Web site. "I don't want to have this plastered all over the place," he said.

- Floyd Cochran, a former recruiter for the Aryan nations, recalls the night he and founder Richard Butler traveled to tiny Sandpoint, Idaho, to intimidate a human relations meeting. When they found 300 people, they were intimidated themselves. "I didn't go back to Sandpoint because of the turnout," Cochran said.

Dealing with Media

- News outlets cover hate crimes and groups. Don't kill the messenger. Consider hate news a wake-up call, revealing tension in the community. Attack the problem. Reporters will then cover you, too.

- Name a press contact for your group. This keeps the message consistent and allows the press to quickly seek comment or reaction to events. Invite the press to all your meetings.

- The media likes news hooks and catchy phrases like "Hate free zone." Propose human-interest stories, such as the impact of hate on individuals. Think of "photo-ops". Kids make good subjects.

- Educate reporters, editors and publishers about hate groups, their symbols and their effect on victims and communities. Put them in touch with hate experts like the Southern Poverty Law Center. Urge editorial stands against hate.

- Criticize the press when it falls short. Remind editors that it is not fair to focus on 20 Klansmen when 300 people attend a peace rally.

moting tolerance was that discrimination against gays can't be compared to discrimination against blacks. This is flimsy and self-serving.

Discrimination whether based on race or sexual orientation is still discrimination. One would expect black ministers who played the pivotal role in sparking and leading the battle against racial injustice and exclusion in the 1960s to be the first to charge the barricades to oppose discrimination against other groups.

That some respected black ministers align themselves outspoken bigots on the issue of discrimination against those of differing sexual orientation is more than a twist, it's an embarrassment. The black legislators who refused to bow to their threats did the right thing. When bigotry arises no matter who promotes it other blacks must always remember the suffering and misery bigotry wreaked on them and oppose it.

sively gay, and even if it were known much of what passes for traditional family values has long been turned into shambles.

There are all sorts of family combinations in the 1990's that were barely imaginable a generation ago. There are single working women, single working men, grandparents, single sex male and female couples, step parents, foster parents, designated guardians, foster homes, and even children that are raising children. The mightiest destabilizers of the black family are: poverty, unemployment, educational neglect, chronic disease, violence, drugs, alcoholism, and an astronomical incarceration rate for black men. The so-called gay lifestyle is not one of them.

The ultimate fall-back line of the black ministers that denounced the bills pro-

Continued from page 13

Afrocentrists have joined in the gender assault.

diatribes savaging gays in their songs and books.

The anti-gay feeling runs so deep among many blacks that there is a virtual taboo on any discussion of the activities of black gays. Black gays and lesbians have held a number of National Black Gay Conferences since 1987. Yet there is only the scantiest mention of them in the black press. The national gay and lesbian publications are virtually unknown outside of the gay and lesbian circles.

Some blacks justify the out-of-sight, out-of-mind exclusion of gays from black life by arguing that the gay life style is a major threat to the black family. This hinges on the shaky assumption that there are thousands of gay men lying in wait to subvert traditional family values. But no one really knows how many black men are exclu-

Dis train ain't goin' nowhere without you. Don't want to speak for you, only want to provide a vehicle for you to speak through. We need your help. If you like the way this paragraph is written, we need you...

By J.L. WILBORN, JR.

William A. Halter, Deputy Commissioner of Social Security, visited Spokane recently to talk with the people "in a way that speaks to everybody in terms of their own experience" and "to get the information about this program out."

Halter describes the social security program as "one that will contribute significantly to your retirement income." He says many Americans aren't aware of the "protection that social security's already provided."

For example, Halter cites survivor's benefits for a family of four, which "provides the equivalent of a life insurance policy of \$350,000. The disability benefit program provides insurance that is the equivalent of a \$250,000 disability insurance policy."

In the case of retirement, Halter says, "Social Security is critical income protection for many Americans." Halter says that if the social security program were to go away, "half of our nation's elderly would wake up poor," and "two-thirds of African American seniors would wake up poor."

On the matter of employment opportunities for African Americans within the Social Security Administration Halter says, "I am very proud of the fact that our organization has done extraordinarily well in terms of the recruitment of a diverse population of Americans." Halter says the percentage of the 65,000 employees of the Social Security Administration who are African American "far exceeds that of African Americans within the population in the Northwest."

Starting this month, Medicare coverage to people who still work in the state of Washington will be expanded. Medicaid coverage will not be expanded in the state at this time.

Starting early in 2001, Social Security and Supplemental Security Income disability beneficiaries will receive a ticket they may use to obtain vocational rehabilitation and other employment support services from an approved provider of their choice. Benefits could be stopped if the beneficiary's earnings exceed \$700 month. However, the \$700 cap was recently approved by President Clinton to be automatically adjusted for inflation each year.

The SSA has established a toll free number, Internet address, and a Work Incentive Advisory Panel to receive and act on customer feedback. Halter says feedback is received in many ways and is encouraged, "we have a strong culture within this organization that is focused on that and we're initiating a number of different activities that are provided to get that feedback."

Anyone can log on to the SSA web site (www.ssa.gov) and sign up for a free e-newsletter with up-to-date SSA information delivered monthly to a requested e-mail address. A retirement planner for an immediate response on future retirement benefits is available at the site. Also, people can request Medicare replacement cards online. In about a month, people will be able to file for their retirement benefits online.

The SSA can also be contacted at the toll free number (1-800-772-1213).

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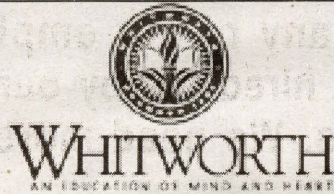
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INHS - HR
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What to Expect:

- A chance to network with a variety of employers in the Spokane area
- An opportunity to hear what jobs are available from employers
- A chance to sell yourself and your skills

Suggestions for conducting a live resume:

- Introduce yourself
- Give a brief description of what you are looking for (i.e., a clerical job, an engineering job, an accounting position, etc.)
- Your career goals (long term or short term)
- Bring copies of your resume

Guidelines

- Keep it brief
- Don't talk about personal information, keep it job related
- Remember, this is an excellent opportunity to get connected with multiple employers at once.

WE ARE EXCITED TO MEET YOU!

- If you are not comfortable talking in front of a group of people, you're not alone. After introductions, the bulk of the time will be spent NETWORKING with companies in one-on-one conversations.

Remember If someone doesn't have a job available now, they might in the future. Please be sure to let any DRC member know if you get a job through these meetings. And feel free to come back to future meetings:

3rd Wednesday of each month

1 PM

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