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Mosley's Crusade

Northwestern High School Principal Boyce Mosley knows how to stir up controversy and bring attention to problems he feels are being neglected.

His proposal to eliminate home economics, woodshop and interscholastic sports at his school in order to bring in several reading and math teachers to help raise the scores of his students on tests in those areas, have created an uproar.

He recently met with parents who denounced him with a fervor that might serve their students better in Annapolis lobbying for more school aid. Mosley says that the only way he can accomplish the elevation of standardized test scores at his school is to bring in the extra reading and math teachers and eliminate the other subjects and activities.

Mosley does not dislike those subjects; he just has to work within his school budget. He says he cannot keep woodshop, home economics and interscholastic sports and have money left over to bring in the other teachers he needs.

Either the extra money must be found or Mosley's plan should be given serious consideration. Also, this city must set its priorities straight.

Dreams of a professional sports career are futile for all but a very few. Everyone needs to know how to read. Therefore, either the money must be found to fund the total school program or the money must be spent to do the greatest good for the greatest number of people. It's a hard choice but an imminent one.

MTA service

The MTA's giving in to the protests and pressure from citizens who live in the northwest corridor of Baltimore to restore regular bus service after the subway closes is a clear victory for rationality and the irate bus riders.

The MTA's policy of forcing riders of the numbers 5, 7 and 28 to disembark at Mondawmin Station and reboard a bus running the same route from Mondawmin further north made sense during Metro operating hours, but made no sense at night.

Riders were forced to catch a second bus in the cold, and this exposed them to possible muggings or worse, late at night, when fewer buses run and fewer passengers are around.

Northwest residents felt that the forced bus changes were unnecessary after the Metro closing and they seem to have persuaded the MTA of the correctness of their position.

Listening to the pleas of customers is a good step for the MTA, but it would be better to use a little common sense and have some consultation with consumers also before making other ill-advised changes in service.

The Metro is an asset, but it is still not the backbone of public transportation in the metropolitan area; bus service is. Bus riders must be cared for as well as Metro riders.

Letters

VA hospital myths

As the supervisor of the Baltimore office of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), I feel compelled to address some fables that have assumed the character of facts in too much national news coverage. These fables involve the management of the Veterans Administration (VA) medical system.

If somebody doesn't point out the difference between fact and fiction, America could default on her commitment to the men and women who answered her call to duty during times of war.

One hears, for example, that any vet over the age of 65 can get VA treatment for any medical condition, regardless of ability to pay. Not true. It's also said that vets would receive better and cheaper care if the government turned them over to the private medical economy. Facts indicate the opposite. The listing of disinformation could go on and on.

The reality goes like this. The VA's patients are either service-connected disabled veterans or they're poor — possibly both. They came to the VA for treatment because they had little or no money, no health insurance, and nowhere else to turn for the care they desperately need.

But they're the lucky ones. A quarter of a million vets are turned away from care at VA medical facilities each year because the agency just doesn't have the space and resources to take them in.

A recent Harris poll found that a majority of veterans with incomes lower than $1,000 had little or no medical insurance. Low-income vets were also more likely to suffer poor health and multiple medical problems. Half the vets with no private insurance and 42 percent of those with incomes under $10,000 said the VA is their most likely source of medical treatment and advice.

Vets who have decent medical insurance or are otherwise able to pay for their care don't usually go to the VA for treatment of conditions not related to military service. The few who do try the VA don't get care from the agency.

Public Law 96 - 330 requires the VA to develop a very real financial means test that disqualifies even moderate income vets for treatment of non - service - connected medical problems.

Now, what about the myth that taxpayers would save money if private sources of care, rather than the VA, provided treatment for vets. A study done by the Grace Commission — claiming that government care costs 18 percent more than private care — is often used to support this assertion.

A recent incident at the Denver VA Medical Center demonstrates how outrageous this claim really is. A water main break forced this VA hospital to shut down for five days. Patients were transferred to non-VA hospitals and clinics.

When the emergency was over, shock set in when the VA received itemized bills for private services provided during the shutdown. Analysts who reviewed the situation found that, if that single VA facility were shutdown for a whole year, it would cost the American taxpayer $31 million.

Yet the myth that VA care costs more than private care persists. And no wonder. With the encouragement of the Department of Health and Human Services and its predecessor, HEW, private and not-for-profit medical facilities have gone on a buying and building binge over the past two decades. Now they've got empty hospital beds and lots of expensive equipment sitting around, not being used enough to justify costs.

In times like these, when there's a feverish search for waste and inefficiency in government spending, it's often easier to peddle fables about government spending then to portray reality. With federal deficits spiraling out of sight, people want to hear about leaks that can be plugged in government spending.

As a organization of disabled veterans, the DAV isn't opposed to plugging such leaks, if and when they're found. But finding them in the VA medical system isn't going to be as easy as some would lead American taxpayers to believe.

As costs in the private medical economy have skyrocketed over the past two decades, the VA health care system has been operating at nearly constant costs in terms of real dollars.

In the meantime, the agency has managed to treat a greater number of patients each year. The cost today is less than a penny out of every tax dollar. The VA is a model of efficient health care management.

Is the VA giving the American taxpayer good return for this small investment. We of the Disabled American Veterans believe the agency is a bargain. And we believe the American public — armed with facts rather than fables — will agree.

Elmer Sewell
DAV National Service Office

Karen Chancellor
A pattern of black voter intimidation

In the 8th Congressional District of Indiana, there was a hotly contested congressional race between incumbent Congressman Frank McCloskey and Republican Rick McIntyre.

The election, riddled with apparent voting fraud, incredibly complex rules for disallowing ballots to be counted, and outright theft of votes, was too close to decide a winner.

The contest has been turned over to the House Administration Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives to make the final decision.

There is no doubt in my mind that the black wards in the 8th Congressional District were disenfranchised in this election and were targeted by the republicans for that sole purpose.

Almost 4,000 ballots were rejected during the recount and of that number, about one half were rejected in the black portions of the congressional district.

In Vanderbury County, Indiana, 2,000 votes in the black wards were rejected. Reasons given for the rejection were:

(1) They were initialed by the wrong poll taker; (2) The election judge failed to initial the ballot before turning it into the election supervisors, and various other nit-picking allegations.

The Evansville Chapter of the N.A.A.C.P. and the Southern Indiana Central Labor Council have launched a series of protests against black disenfranchisement.

Sol Stevenson, a charter member of the N.A.A.C.P. said, "This is a violation of our constitutional rights ..."For years we have encouraged people to vote to overcome their apathy, now they are witnessing that their votes do not count, we can not afford to let that happen.

During the debate over the seating of McIntyre, I spoke to the House of Representatives urging that he not be seated because of the gross violation of the constitutional rights of the black voters in the 8th Congressional District of Indiana.

When I raised this issue, some Republicans began to make animalistic noises, but I quickly silenced them by saying, "You who profess to love this country ought to be the most zealous of all in the protecting this basic constitutional right for all citizens".

Former Congresswoman Katie Hall, a black from Indiana, lost her seat to a white republican primarily because of the same tactics used in the McCloskey - McIntyre contest. I urged her to take an official challenge but she was reluctant to so do because of other condo because of other considerations not known to me.

These incidences bring to mind the shoddy tactics attempted by the Republicans in the 7th Congressional District of Maryland in last fall's election.

You will recall that so-called "Republican monitors," some of whom were "snot-nosed kids," arrogantly attempted to intimidate and harass black voters. They did not succeed because black people were simply not going to tolerate that kind of skullduggery.

In Indiana, Reverend F. P. Miller of the Evansville Ministerial Alliance said, "It is ironic that the citizens of Indiana's 8th Congressional District stand here ... on the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., praying that their votes will count."

It is more than ironic, it is despicable that the Republicans have resorted to such base tactics, that they want to win so badly they are willing to disenfranchise black voters. For shame! For shame! For shame!

Anthony Armstrong
Moses, Hooks and Lewis

Peter became the commissioner of baseball, Mary Lou the dearly of America and Wheaties, and Greg won the 1985 Sullivan Award but; as life would have it, Edwin got charged with soliciting sex, Valerie has gotten little or nothing at all.

Edwin Moses, Valerie Briscoe Hooks and Carl Lewis, if you don't know, are all world class athletes. Each of them competed successfully in the recently completed Summer Olympic Games, in Los Angeles.

Each of them, even before their Olympic victories, have been recognized as the finest athletes in the world, in their respective sports.

The new commissioner of baseball, Peter Ueberroth was justly credited with doing an outstanding job of managing the Summer games; he was rewarded with the biggest and richest contract ever extended to a commissioner of baseball.

But what about Edwin Moses, a man who has been justly acknowledged, by track and field experts, to be the best hurdler to ever don a pair track shoes. Why only an arrest for him, and particularly on charges as trumped-up and ridiculous as Billy Dee Williams having to buy affections.

Little dearly Mary Lou Retton, who "stole" everyone's heart at the Los Angeles Olympics, has been roundly rewarded with million dollar endorsement contracts, the love of an appreciative nation and her picture plastered on millions more boxes of Wheaties, "the breakfast of champions".

Valerie Briscoe-Hooks, on the other hand, is a name no one would hardly know unless they happened to be a female track and field "nut".

Mrs. Briscoe-Hooks has been winning track meets and setting records for years; she continued her stellar performances during the recent games, too.

However, this obviously fast, obviously personable, obviously beautiful young woman is nowhere near "household" word status and, even further away from the Wheaties box.

Carl Lewis was being talked about in the same breath as the world renowned and now late Jesse Owens. You remember Jesse Owens, the thorn in Adolph Hitler's side and the man who single handedly destroyed the concept of a superior Aryan race.

You remember Carl Lewis too; Lewis also won four Olympic Gold Medals, just as Owens had done four decades earlier. Owens went on to become one of the most accepted figures in the world. He was respectable, he was accommodating, he was liked by almost everyone - especially the press.

Carl Lewis is another matter entirely. He has been criticized for not over-extending his considerable athletic talents, by "not being willing to compete hard enough".

Lewis has been accused of wearing his hair "the wrong way". The press ain't fond of Carl Lewis.

Greg Luganus, an Olympic swimmer, just a few nights ago won the Sullivan Award as the best amateur athlete in America. Now Greg didn't win four gold medals but, he's a handsome fellow who presumably wears his hair just as the press would have him do.

Greg, incidentally, is raking-in the money too, appearing in made-for-T.V. movies and selling truck loads of pin-up posters.

Image is so important in our country, more important than substance in far too many cases. And the press, Oh the press; they can make or break you with the stroke of a pen.

To argue with the press about who is this and who is that is never a winning battle. Yet, here, in the person of these more than fine performers, what is it the press has found, that makes them so unacceptable for the same spoils the other Olympic stars have received?

If you say race and race alone, someone will fast call you narrow minded. So I'll be narrow minded.

Fact is Moses, Hooks and Lewis are not receiving their just rewards because they are black. They are being subjected to the highest form of racial character assassination. They are being used to distort a peoples' image about themselves.

After all, if an Olympian isn't acceptable, then who among us is? If after all the hard work you still can't receive any credit in America, why work hard?

It's a message none of us should buy. Moses, Hooks and Lewis - champions, champions, champions, champions, champions. Now!

Walking the Hallowed Halls
No sense in getting angry

By Clarence W. Hunter

I know I should be angry with Education Secretary William Bennett's suggestion that students who would be hurt by proposed fiscal year 1986 budget cuts in federal student aid give up their cars, stereos and beach vacations.

I should be — but I'm not. Why waste the energy.

I wasn't angry because how can you be angry at someone who apparently does not know any better. How can you be mad at a man who is supposedly an intellectual but seems to be so lacking in intelligence that he is willing to back a proposal which before too much longer is gonna find a lot of minorities in this country wonderin' if they can get a college education.

You just can't be angry at a man like that. Insults would just roll off his back like water off a duck. He's not gonna care about that kid who can afford a college education and can't qualify for any aid. He's got his and he's got the power and to hell with anyone else. A man like that my friends is to be pitied.

Unfortunately such an emotion does not exist in me for him.

For those who came in late, Bennett during his first press conference as Education Secretary last week said he fully intended to back Reagan's proposal to put a $4,000 cap on annual aid to any students and not provide any assistance to students whose family income tops $32,500.

Then he said the cuts might require "divestitures of sorts" for some students like "stereo divestitures, automobile divestitures and three weeks at the beach divestiture."

I heard the howls that went up. I'll even admit I sputtered a "say wha—" when I heard it.

But what the hell did anyone expect from a man like Bennett, who walks around with horse blinders seeing the world only through his own narrow perspective. This is the man who in his previous job said he didn't believe in quotas.

He wasn't even sorry for what he said, stressing the fact that he said some students, while pointing out that many students, work to help pay for colleges.

Big deal.

While the statement from Bennett didn't surprise me that much the reaction from the educators also did not surprise me. Buzz words like insensitivity and confusion left from their mouths stating the man has done a general disservice to the hard working students in this country.

Like I said what did you expect.

Ronald Reagan has been tryin' to reduce the federal role in education and cut student financial aid for the last four years. He hasn't been all that successful but that's partly because T.H. Bell, the former education secretary, was running interference. He at least saw the reality behind the budget cutting effort.

I dunno about this man. He's gonna lead Ronnie's charge and if they get a third of what they want those who want a college education but can't afford one are gonna find themselves in a Catch 22 situation.

At at least 90 percent of the black students attending black institutions are in that group.

I mean let's face it. College cost took another jump this year and Ronnie wants to keep the black (and minorities) from getting the help they need. We're talkin' about cutting the Pell grants, eliminating the supplemental grants and the work/study program; cutting the Guaranteed Student Loans by a million bucks and slashing the National Direct Student Loan program by over $187 million.

So you ask how much chance do these proposals have of succeeding. Who can say? But the players in this game have changed only slightly and the advocates for equal access in education have managed to win enough rounds so a difference can be made.

But the noose my friends is tightening.

Samuel L. Banks
Nelson Mandela: profile in courage

The olive branch proferred Nelson Mandela by the racist South African government after 20 years of cruel and barbarous imprisonment constituted the rankest form of hypocrisy, duplicity and venality.

Prime Minister P.W. Botha, South Africa's chief spokesman for the odious system of apartheid, in approaching Mandela after 20 years of demeaning and cruel imprisonment for advocating full freedom, political rights and dignity for the majority Black population, knew full well that the promise of conditional release for Mr. Mandella was a sham and empty gesture.

The fact of the matter is that Mr. Mandela never should have been imprisoned 21 years ago for seeking elemental and fundalental rights for his people.

Mandela's open, audacious and unequivocal repudiation of Botha's vacuous and self-serving gesture was a sparking and inspirational witness for freedom and human dignity. In short, he refused to be bought by the racist Botha regime for the proverbial mess of pottage.

The statement of rejection issued by Botha through his daughter, marks him not only as a paragon of courage, but in a time of enormous ferment and unrest in South Africa, as a freedom fighter extraordinaire.

The demonstrations and arrests at the South African Embassy on Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. in Washington, D.C. provide additional and powerful evidence that Mandela, his intrepid and courageous wife, Mrs. Winnie Mandela, and his black compatriots in South Africa are not alone in their just and necessary struggle for freedom.

The protests in Washington, D.C. and other cities in the United States support the basic demands of the South African majority:

1. The unconditional release of Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners.

2. The dismantlement of the vicious and brutal system of apartheid.

3. Good faith bargaining in order to effect an equitable and fair political solution. There will not be domestic tranquility in South Africa as long as five (25) million Black South Africans, an overwhelming majority of South Africa's population, are excluded from the pooitical and socio-economic mainstream.

The offer of Bishop Desmond Tutu to serve as a mediator of the current conflict was a very heartening sign. Bishop Tutu is a highly respected and trusted public official who is unwavering in his commitment to freedom and social justice for all.

The majority black South African population has made it abundantly clear that they intend to be free and heard in proportion to their numbers. The dehumanizing policies of oppression and suppression utilized by the Botha government cannot stop the majority South Africans inexorable march toward full freedom, political participation and social justice. The persistence, resolve, sacrifice, drive and determination to be free represent a glorious epic in world history.

Black Americans, in particular, as an African people, should feel a special sense of pride and encouragement that our ancestral Brothers and Sisters are working and struggling to end the scourge of racism in Southern Africa.

It, too, should serve as a special motivation for us to redouble and amplify our efforts for full equality and social justice in our nation. The monumental and costly struggle of the majority black South Africans conveys a clear and unmistakable message to 37 million Black Americans: be serious.

The time is long overdue for adult black Americans to reject the romance of Peter Panism. The supreme tragedy of Peter Pan is that he never grew up. Our Brothers and Sisters in South Africa "have grown up" and have resolved to be free and equal partners in their native land. The process cannot be deferred much longer by the ractionary and racist Botha government.

The corollary for us as black Americans is that we must mobilize the will, commitment and resources to make our way in an era of retreat on human and civil rights.

The retrenchment indicated in President Reagan; $974 billion budget, the pull-back in terms of a strong advocacy of human and civil rights of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the very conservative mood of the country depict the need for us to cohere as a people and regain our sense of community and caring for each other.

Nelson Mandela has paid and is paying a frightful and towering price for Uhuru (i.e., Freedom). What about you? What, in fact are, you doing in order to achieve full freedom and power for yourself and posterity? The current period of austerity and meanness demans that we support each other.

Dr. William Edward Burghardt DuBois provides a fitting challenge for all of us as we reflect on Nelson Mandela and our collective quest for equality of opportunity and social justice:

"These are some of the chief things (viz., freedom, political and economic power, etc.) which we want. How shall we get them? By voting where we may vote; by persistent, unceasing agitation; by hammering at the truth; by sacrifice and work."

The remarkable example of Nelson Mandela in his statement of conscience should spur us on to higher levels of "sacrifice and work" for universal freedom, justice and equal opportunity.

Tony Brown
Atlanta's real murder

When "The Atlanta Murders" hit television recently, the drama of fiction aimed at and hit Black integrity and Black leadership in an integrated setting. It was television at its worst.

Blacks who have provided Atlanta with political leadership in the last decade and Blacks who have emerged in "new" Black cities were stereotyped as incompetent administrations that have driven the best out of service with "reverse discrimination" and retaliatory affirmative action programs.

The fictional account of the murder of 29 young Blacks between 1979 and 1981 let no facts stand in its way of indicting Black people's capability as leaders of White people and exhonerating Wayne Williams, in some instances, by omission.

The fact that Williams stopped on the bridge and started his car from a stopped position after a splash was heard in the river near the spot where another murder victim would soon show up was left out. As was the fact that sacks of clothes that police believed belonged to the victims were in his car when he was arrested.

Lee Brown, in charge of the investigation then, said that Williams subsequently washed out his car, scrubbed down his car and burned photographs before a search warrant was issued.

Some witnesses said they saw Williams with seven of the victims and, according to one, Williams was holding hands with one man.

More than 700 fibers from 12 victims match Williams' green bedroom carpet, a blue bathmat, carpeting from his car and threads from his bedspread. Dog hairs from the victims resemble hair from Williams' German shepherd dog.

All of this has moved former Atlanta mayor Maynard Jackson to accuse Abby Mann, the writer, of producing "a set of lies and racist political statements."

He said the film's key message is that "Black public officials and police officers were unable to handle the crisis and had to be rescued by whites." Jackson's statement is a fact beyond a shadow of a doubt.

This kind of televised racism is more dangerous than the shuffling darkies on most situation comedies.

The saving grace, perhaps, is that in spite of the show's overwhelming success in mostly Black Detroit and Washington, D.C., the rest of the country kept it out of the top 10 in the Nielsen race and ruined CBS's attempt to dominate the ratings with "The Murder of Black America."

AFRO SURVEY

Will you support the new football team, the Baltimore Stars?

Billy Muse

Karen Chambers

Kenneth Layhan

James Jackson

This week the question to the man and woman in the street was, "Will you support the new football team, the Baltimore Stars?"

James Jackson, 24, unemployed, "Yes, definitely that's my team. I feel that the Stars will be better than the Colts. Plus they're the only team in Baltimore. I plan on getting season tickets."

Alan Jones, 25, community living assistant, "I suppose so. I have no reason not to. The least I can do is watch them on television. I can't get down there (to College Park where they play for the 1985 season) right now because of my work schedule. Maybe during the summer I can take some of my clients to see them."

Leon Briggs, 40, real estate salesman, "Oh most definitely. I used to play for the Bears. I love football. The style of play is different. Plus, it is a new team and new teams coming in make a difference."

James Washington, 33, lab technician, "It depends on how good they are. If they are good, I'll go to the games. If they are like the Colts forget it."

Kenneth Layhan, 25, laborer, "I plan on supporting the stars. I didn't support the Colts. I'm not really into football. It'll be the same ole thing, if as much."

Bernadette Fowlkes, 28, crane operator, "Yes, because we need a team here in the stadium. It's a joy for me and my family. We really don't have a basketball team."

Billy Muse, 46, probation agent, "I might watch them on television. In fact, I think I will go see them. Maybe the first game. I'm into football. I like good players and from what I hear, the Stars have some good players.

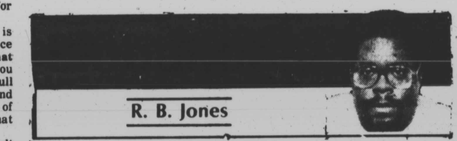
Karen Chambers, 22, hairstylist, "Yes, because I live in Baltimore. Of course, they'll be a good football team. I was too busy to try for the Co-Stars, the team cheerleaders, but I wanted to."

Leon Briggs

Alan Jones

Bernadette Fowlkes

James Washington



R. B. Jones

The Black Church

During the past few days, I have been reflecting on the historic role of the black church and wondering about its future. Part of this reflection has been based on the multitude of references that have been made during Black History Month about the church.

The other part has been based on comments from friends of mine that some of my comments in this column have been construed to mean that I am an enemy of the church.

Some of my friends have said that my statements critical of ministers will play havoc with my career in journalism and others have said unless I mend my ways, no spiritual comforter will come forward to ease the anguish of my deathbed.

I pointed out to them that a lack of forgiveness is a cardinal sin in Christianity. Anyway, I have done nothing that merits forgiveness. I also pointed out that the presence of a minister at one's deathbed does not necessarily ensure a pleasant departure from this life.

I have a great deal of respect for the black church and its many contributions to black life in this society. Its contributions have endured the harshest times and it has sown seeds that have borne nourishing fruit.

The black church has been a place where the average black person could exercise leadership and decision making without the interference of white people. Black church leaders laid plans, carried them through and adjusted to changing circumstance.

In essence, the growth and development of the black church contradicted the myth that black people were mentally inferior and could not manage their affairs without white supervision.

The black church spawned institutions that benefitted the black community economically such as mutual aid societies and burial societies which later evolved into insurance companies. The AFRO had its origin as an organ of black church leaders in Baltimore.

The black church founded schools for black children and founded colleges to educate teachers to serve the needs of newly freed slaves.

The black church has provided scholarships for young people and have helped support education for black people when most of society saw that effort as useless or dangerous. Many of the colleges survive today carrying on their historic mission.

White Americans should be grateful to the black church because religion and flight to the north provided safety valves that allowed slaves to relieve the pressure of their bondage.

W.E.B. DuBois in his largely forgotten biography of John Brown stated that the Underground Railroad which helped thousands of slaves to escape, siphoned off the most defiant and daring slaves who would normally have led bloody revolts.

The release provided by religion eased the tensions of the slaves left behind.

The black church has provided its participants with an incentive to think about questions that extend beyond daily concerns into the realm of philosophy.

These questions, such as what is the meaning of life, why is there suffering and is God on the side of the oppressor or oppressed, are necessary if a people are to transcend their subjugated position.

The black church has also provided hope for its members, even in the most adverse situations. A people without hope is a people who have no reason to struggle against those things that deny their freedom.

The black church promoted the idea that justice would eventually prevail and that the last shall one day be first and the first shall be last. Hope of an ultimate victory can induce a people to struggle through the most difficult times.

Despite the many positive contributions that the black church has made there have been serious flaws as well.

One is the elevation of the minister in far too many cases to a position where he has too much power and an aura of authority that makes many black people vulnerable to exploitative clergy.

Power corrupts very easily and the divine halo that many people imagine around the ministers' heads is an extra temptation to abuse power.

Often, the black church has overemphasized the other worldly aspect of religion, allowing some of its members to get lost in escapist fantasies.

This also lead to a "wait for the Lord to change things" attitude. Some people under the influence of the church even went so far as to deny the importance of this world and attempt to deny the flesh.

Another historical fault has been the overemphasis on forgiving one's enemies and turning the other cheek. For a people as oppressed as blacks in America have been, forgiving their enemies without any gesture of atonement is irrational and counterproductive.

As long as the tyrant can strike a victim and know that all he will get in return is forgiveness, he will strike wherever and whenever it pleases him.

The black church has also been a divisive factor at times encouraging denominationalism instead of unity and encouraging some black people to think they're better than others.

These divisions are for the most part not about substantive issues, yet they can undermine broadbased cooperation.

Another detrimental factor the black church has, is its promotion of narrow-minded thinking.

This thinking often prevents the inclusion of new information into church doctrine and a kind of tenacious attachment to the status quo that does not serve an oppressed people well. If one is at the bottom of society business as usual means that things don't get better.

As humanity's store of knowledge gets larger and larger, it becomes more and more necessary to incorporate that knowledge into one's thinking.

If rational human beings no longer farm the way people did two thousand years ago then it would follow logically that religion should not be practiced the same way it was two thousand years ago.

The black church, despite its many flaws has provided valuable service to the black community in the past, but another century is rapidly approaching and this institution must adapt like any other if its future service is to equal its past.