

EDITORIAL

by Paul C. Smith

A CLOSE UP OF THE TAX GRAB

The time has long passed for elected officials, in our city, county, state and federal governments to stop looking for more ways to levy taxes on the over loaded tax payer. They claim, and rightly so, that population increases demand more community services.

In a few communities are interested persons and groups taking a closer look at how the money is being spent. They question why it is necessary to have so many departments doing the same thing, but at different levels, for example, they say why have a city health department, county health department and a state health department. This practice of duplication cost money in office space employees etc.

They refer to number of days that our schools are idle, if the existing facilities could be used year round, it would cut down the need for more classrooms.

They advocate a consolidation of many community service functions like Police, Fire, Licensing. It is almost imperative that something has to be done to halt the tax bite.

We here in the Greater Las Vegas Area are becoming insensed because some of our county and city officials are proposing a new tax on something every few weeks.

Right now our county commissioners are looking for ways to raise funds for new court rooms for the newly appointed judges, among other things. It would be refreshing to receive a news release from a commissioner stating that he was making a study on how to use present courtrooms with all due respect to our judges. Why is it necessary for each Judge to have his own private courtroom?

It is very rare to find all of our present courtrooms in use at the same time. Is the dignity of the court lowered by using whatever facility is available?

In the history of the West, trials have been held in saloons, hotel lobbies and anyplace that had space for people to assemble. I am sure that those found guilty or those who were found innocent felt no better or worse because of where the trials were held.

The mandate is for speedy trials, not where they are to be held. The point we are trying to make is we should make the best of what we have.

It is doubtful that those who advocate more and more spending for more and more things, would be in favor of their families spending more and more money for more and more things. And would tell a wife to wear something she already has instead of buying say a new dress, or drive the car we have another year.

What we need are people in government to seek ways of UTILIZING WHAT WE HAVE BETTER and not looking for methods to tax us out of our socks.

Minority Report

by James E. Alsbrook, Ph.D.
Director
Publications and Public Relations
Central State University
Wilberforce, Ohio

(Editor's Note: Central State University does not necessarily agree or disagree with the opinions of Dr. Alsbrook.)

"BLACK ENGLISH" A SLOPPY TERM SLANDERING ALL BLACKS

Black people in recent months have been discrediting themselves by falling into one of the oldest and most dangerous of traps. They are accepting terminology suggesting that behavior of some blacks is typical of the whole group. The offending terminology is so-called "Black" English.

A class in "Black English" has been set up at Brooklyn College with a Ford Foundation grant, a Missouri University professor has claimed seriously that "Black English" is a sep-

"PERMISSIVENESS IS OVER", SAID THE PRESIDENT TO THE FBI GRADUATES...?



arate language instead of a dialect, numerous language-oriented groups have studied the nature and meaning of "Black English" and the Western Electric Company has produced a new record "to help bridge the language barrier between black and white Americans."

The term, "Black English," really is intended to denote the language spoken by some less-educated black people living in rural and urban enclaves and segregated so effectively that their speech patterns have become a closed-culture lingo--a dialect derived from American English.

But in order to get this questionable expression into proper perspective, we must recall that the term "Black," when applied to people with African-like skin coloring and hair texture, is acceptable because it then indicates the INHERENT AND PERMANENT PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS that invariable identify all members of a biological group.

LANGUAGE NOT BIOLOGICAL

Neither English nor any other vocal expression however, is a biological characteristic. Accents change with hearing and environment. Many Africans blacker than black Americans speak English with a British accent. Black people in the Caribbean area speak English with Spanish or French accents. "Black" when coupled with "English" therefore, cannot reasonably denote that the use of so-called "Black English" language is a racially or biologically controlled characteristic of all blacks.

Instead, what is called "Black English" really is a cultivated or learned lingo characterizing SOME blacks and other non-blacks who associate with them.

This simple distinction is significant, for the failure to distinguish between (a) racial features and (b) learned behavior provided the basis upon which yesterday's slaveholders and today's racists could argue that black people were inferior.

They argued that black people were ignorant and then produced ignorant blacks to prove their point. But they neglected to indicate that these black people were ignorant not because they were black but because they had not been allowed to gain knowledge enabling them to behave dif-

ferently.

INHERITED VS. ACQUIRED

The racists deliberately confused the significance of INHERITED racial characteristics such as skin color and hair texture with the significance of ACQUIRED behavior characteristics such as education, life style, and speech. The generalities resulting from this confusion led to stereotyping and to the acceptance of Stephin Fetchit and Amos and Andy types as valid representatives of most black people.

Why did linguists and other observers neglect to make noise about "Italian-English," "Jewish-English," "German-English," or the faulty English of other ethnic groups being integrated into American society? What about the country and western English or the English of poor whites? Should poor white folks' English be called "White English"?

Perhaps a better term for so-called "Black English" would be "ghetto talk."

The term, "Black English," is objectionable because (1) most black people over the world do not speak it, because (2) it does not represent the highest level of potential language development on the part of those who speak it because (3) it reinforces the arguments of those who would confuse INHERITED racial ancestry with ACQUIRED and changeable behavioral characteristics.

LAS VEGAS Voice

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER (Published every Thursday) DEDICATED to the INTERESTS and ASPIRATIONS for a BETTER LIFE for NEGRO CITIZENS of the STATE of NEVADA

CHARLES I. WEST, M.D. Publisher
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EDITORIAL, ADVERTISING & CIRCULATION OFFICES
 Sawyer Building, 301 Miller at Commerce
 North Las Vegas, Nevada 89030 * Telephone: 649-3818
 ADVERTISING RATES FURNISHED UPON REQUEST

Price per copy - 15¢ * One year - 7.50 * Two years - 12.50
 (Application for 2nd Class Mailing Permit pending at Las Vegas, Nevada)