

## VOICE EDITORIALS



### Education Is Power

By Thomas E. Wilson,  
Ph.D.

School is out! What a wonderful feeling! No books! No bus rides! But before we get on with the holiday mood, let us take a few moments to reflect on the past school year.

Did you master that problem that was plaguing you at the beginning of the school year? Do you honestly believe that you put forth your best efforts in all aspects of your school work? Did you pay any attention to those who tried to tell you about the value of education, or did you pay more attention to those who tried to persuade you that school was "for the birds," and that you were smart for either not attending some classes at all, or for quitting school altogether? Did you make proper use of the teachers' desires to help you either before or after the school day when you were having problems with a particular subject? Did you make every effort to see that the teachers and your peers felt that you were an asset to the school? Did you make good use of your time while in class or at home? Were you punctual in class attendance? Were you on your best behavior at all times?

If the answers to any or most of the questions above are "no," then it is time for us blacks to take stock of ourselves and find out what happened.

What can we do during the summer to make up for the deficiencies we might have caused for ourselves through some of the actions mentioned above?

One of the best ways to become a better reader is to read. The Clark County Library system has many books that will appeal to practically every interest group. Just one hour a day spent in reading a worthwhile book will do wonders for our reading ability, not to mention the enormous amount of information that one may gain by doing so. If one becomes a good reader, it is practically a proven fact that he will do better in his other subjects. If one improves in most of his subjects, it naturally follows that he will develop an improved self-concept, thereby becoming a better person.

In responding to the question, "Did you master that problem that was plaguing you at the beginning of the school year?", one must, of necessity, reflect on what the problem was. If the problem was a personal one, then one might find someone in whom he could trust to help him overcome the problem. Perhaps the school counselor, a teacher, a parent, a minister, or a very close friend (boy or girl, man or woman), might help by becoming a "sounding board," or offering advice based on personal experiences or as a result of training. In my opinion, there is always a solution to every problem, although this solution may be beyond our grasp. If the problem was an academic one, perhaps some tutoring sessions might have helped.

Any attempt at responding to the question of "Do you honestly believe that you put forth your best effort in all aspects of your school work?", would be fruitless. Only the individual himself/herself knows for sure. When we put forth our best efforts, we feel good on the inside, and usually reflect this feeling in our behavior.

How much attention we paid to either positive or negative remarks about the value of an education will be reflected in our attitude toward schools and things academic. It would appear that we have an obligation to ourselves and to our posterity to develop an attitude in which we can say that education has value for both the present and the future.

Time and space do not permit further discussion of these concerns. However, there is a Latin sentence well worth remembering at this time. This sentence is "Spectemur agendo," meaning "Let us be seen by our deeds." If our deeds this summer can help us to advance academically, the summer months will have been well spent.

Indeed, Education is power!

BENJAMIN L. HOOKS



FCC COMMISSIONER

First Amendment rights as embodied in our Constitution should apply equally to rich and poor, powerful and weak white and black and brown and yellow and red; male and female.

To the popular mind, however, the poor, the black and other minorities stand most in need of the protective provisions of this stalwart amendment which forms the base of the all-important first ten amends to our Constitution. These amendments are referred to as the Bill of Rights.

The politically weak are most often in need of First Amendment protections. But the powerful or seeming powerful may, strangely enough, also at times need to invoke its provisions.

I am speaking now of Presidential candidates. Especially major Presidential candidates. Not too long ago, Ronald Reagan, a GOP Presidential hopeful, went to the national television networks requesting prime time with which to address the body politic.

Now almost everything Mr. Reagan stands for, I abhor or oppose unequivocally. But I remember how I sweated long and hard during what seemed to be an interminably long time before one of the networks finally granted him the prime time he requested.

Mind you, candidate Reagan was not asking the networks to give him the time, but to sell it to him. But for a while it seemed that in this most so-called advanced world -- that not one of the three commercial networks would furnish this major candidate for the highest office in

the land, pre-convention time in which to come before the American people and tell us what he will do if elected our President.

Now you can't tell me that the networks are unable to set aside a few half hour (one for each major Presidential candidate) in which leading candidates for the highest office in this land can put their views on issues before the public, thus enabling that public to make more intelligent choices at the ballot box.

The Federal Communications Commission does not regulate networks. Only individual stations. So, therefore, I can feel free to make these suggestions as a concerned citizen. For it is my feeling that if the networks do not get together and work out some viable means to this end, they court inevitable action by Congress. And this action may not at all be to their liking.

First Amendment rights apply to all of us. Or they apply to none of us. For what the Presidential candidates have to say, it seems to me, is vital, not just to black people, or white people, or rich people, or poor people. But to all of us.

And we ought to furnish them access to commercial network prime time as the most effective means they can use to say what they have to say.

That way we voters can accept them or reject them on their own terms and -- ours. We can ill afford the luxury of not listening to what they have to say.

### Black Colleges Are Still Important

By Bayard Rustin

It is fashionable to downgrade the black colleges with the mistaken notion that they have fulfilled their function and can't really measure up to the "elite" white universities, whether public or private. There are at least two things wrong with this set of attitudes. First, many black colleges--Howard, Lincoln, Fisk, Clark, to name a few--rank among the finest colleges in the United States in academic excellence and the contributions their graduates have made to the country. Second, it ignores the fact that there are also many secondrate white colleges and that so-called secondrate institutions have served an indispensable role in educating America.

It is hard to imagine anyone arguing that the black colleges are historically unimportant, when four-fifths of the black college graduates alive to day got their degrees at black colleges. What one does hear is the view that black colleges were necessary when blacks couldn't get into white schools in large numbers, but that they are now an anachronism.

Yet black colleges are, despite the importance integrating the University of Mississippi and other bastions of exclusivity, still important. There are over 200,000 students in the 100 historic black colleges.

Although the percentage of black students in colleges who are enrolled in black institutions declined from 80 percent in 1950 to 35 percent in 1970, the absolute number of blacks in largely black colleges has not declined, but increased. In the last decade black college enrollment has almost tripled until one out of six black youth between the ages of 18 and 24 are enrolled in college. We have passed well beyond the point where it was a distant goal that the "talented tenth" of black youth would go to college.

Unfortunately, the drop-out rate among black college students is all too high. While once the justification of black colleges was to educate blacks whom white colleges could not admit, today their function is to educate better and

more effectively. The black colleges have a superior record at educating black students. In 1974, over half of the estimated 48,000 blacks who graduated received their degrees from black colleges, even though these schools had far less than half of the black students.

The very factors which are derided as parochial and limiting are the reasons that the black colleges have been able to succeed where more prestigious and richer schools have failed. The small size of the black colleges means that they can do a much better job at remedial education. Black colleges have a sense of mission and community that is only rarely approached in the large state universities or even in the small elite colleges. Particularly for students coming from the farm, small town, or ghetto, black colleges are able to provide a social and educational environment that encourages confidence and develops untapped talents and abilities. The excruciatingly difficult transition from understaffed, crowded and inadequate high schools to the demands and rigors of college is eased by the supportive atmosphere of the black college.

Many black students who might flounder at larger, more prestigious institutions flower and develop at the black colleges and ultimately succeed at schools like Harvard and Yale. Many graduates of black colleges are able to succeed in graduate school. During the 1972-73 school year, 60 percent of the blacks who earned doctorates had earlier earned their degrees at black colleges.

The always precarious financial status of black colleges has not been eased by their successes. But the black colleges are an invaluable national educational resource that we cannot afford to lose. They have unique skills and programs that can meet the needs of not only black, but also white students from poverty and low-income backgrounds. If the alumni remember the difference that black colleges have made in their lives and the lives of all blacks and recognize that the black colleges are still desperately needed they will be able to make their much needed contributions. One way to help is to send a contribution to the United Negro College Fund, 55 East 52nd Street, New York, New York 10022.