



Benjamin L. Hooks

FCC

Will America in this third century of its founding after tortuously groping towards that goal, finally live up to its professed ideals? Or as W.E.B. DuBois prophetically said, continue to be that "of the color line?"

I will assume new duties in August of this year -- those of NAACP executive director and secretary, and just as I did before I became an FCC Commissioner, I am deep in study and research. Before I joined the Commission, I studied the history of telecommunications.

Today, I am studying general history. I hope it will enable me better to perform my duties at the NAACP, just as my previous boning up on telecommunications helped me, I believe, become a better Commissioner.

I appreciate the fact that in 1776 when these stirring words were written: "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal, etc., etc." that this represented a distinct departure from conventional thinking in the social and political spheres.

In recent months and weeks I have read a lot of history on slavery, a pernicious social condition that is apparently nearly as old as the dawn of human history. In the early years, when man had to live by killing animals and first began to domesticate dogs and plant seeds, slavery did not exist.

Indeed, there are many historians who believe that slavery is a step forward in man's social evolution. Prior to that time, they point out, no slaves were taken in war. The conquered were simply brutally killed. It was only when man became somewhat stable and accumulated just a little more food than he and his family could eat that slavery became practical and possible.

It seems, then, in a curious way, slavery does appear to be a step forward. Instead of being killed a conquered enemy would be placed in slavery. So for those who valued life above all (and most of us do) this appears to represent progress. But like Patrick Henry who said "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" many, and I include myself among them, find slavery a totally unacceptable option in human evolution.

It is interesting to read the various accounts of slavery. Brutality against or brutish treatment of slaves was not as intense in all places. In some societies slaves were treated with a large degree of humaneness and civility. Indeed, brutality or the lack of it, seems to be systematically uneven in various societies.

But the fact remains that slavery experienced by black people in America, coming as it does, so late in the history of slavery, and to a nation that professed to be highly civilized and Christian, was particularly brutal and oppressive. It was an affront to humanity nearly 1,600 years after the birth of Christ. No man should ever enslave another.

But, if one were living in the year of 1776, when peasants and serfs were tied to the land (not necessary as slaves, but chattel that went with the land) one would, more than likely, hold the belief that if a man was born poor or to wealth, that that was the will of God.

There was nothing anyone could do about it. Few attempted to do anything about it. And those who did became the martyrs of their time, their lives snuffed out on the rack or under the guillotine.

While we may rail against slavery today, we must recognize an enlightened concept against slavery had to await the coming of a growing realization that there was something inherently wrong with it.

Not only that, but that somehow there are somethings that good and decent and civilized and Christian human beings ought to, no, must do, about it. That this growing abhorrence of slavery came about, is a testimony to man's perfectibility.

Continued on page 6

VOICE EDITORIALS

The Hughes Report

By Thomas F. Hughes



The average citizen has no area in which he can earn \$200.00 an hour, but he can by doing his income tax carefully and without errors as a rule. Sit down and spend one hour writing down on a sheet of paper any and everything you think might be a deductible item before you attempt to do your tax, go to your Tax Counselor or to the Internal Revenue Office. When you get to the tax preparation, trot out your list and ask about all these items. Remember it is your tax bill or refund that is involved and Uncle Sam does not want you to pay anymore tax than you owe. How much do you owe? That is the question and that is why all this question and answer session is going on. First you must determine what is your adjusted gross income, not what your W-2 says. If you work in a Hotel and your meals are furnished as an employers requirement he will usually show wages plus meals in the gross amount and show amount for meals. This amount can be deducted from the Gross Wages shown on your W-2. Any amount paid into I.R.A. (Independent Retirement Act) Plan can also be deducted. Any other unreimbursed employee expenses can also be deducted. When these are deducted you have the gross taxable wages. This is a direct deduction in your taxable amount. Add to this any interest received and any other Business income or loss (subtract the loss) and you essentially have the adjusted gross income. Child care is deductible in the new law even if you file short form. The amount of standard deductions have now been increased so don't miss these important amounts. The per dependent direct credit has now been increased to \$35.00 per person or 2% of gross taxable amount but not to exceed \$180.00. Persons having a child dependent under 19 or one who is a student who have an income under \$8,000 for their household are now in the position of collecting money from the Government (negative income tax) so that even if they had no withholding or owe no tax they may get a refund check up to \$400.00. If the wage earner had to pay child care services they may have a substantial deduction in their tax to be paid even if they file a short form and no matter what their income. This is a real tax reduction and should not be overlooked. You are allowed 20% of the amount paid (if you qualify) off of your tax due. This is a new provision. If you paid \$20 a week for child care you could have \$208 deducted from the tax due. Most people do not have enough deductions to beat what the Internal Revenue laws provide, but if you have very heavy medical expenses not covered by insurance, heavy Church contributions, heavy interest and taxes on your home or a heavy loss from a casualty (fire, auto accident, burglary, robbery, wind damage, etc) you may surpass the standard deductions so a long form should be completed. Any of the above could result in your saving \$200 or getting \$200 more on your refund. On Friday, Feb. 25th, I will be on "Open Line" on Station K-V-O-V 1280 on your dial from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon and I will answer tax questions and speak about my candidacy for President of the Las Vegas N.A.A.C.P. Get your questions down on paper and call "Open Line"!! Hope to be able to help you. It is payday for Uncle Sam. Maybe you can reverse it this time and make Uncle Sam pay you.

EDUCATION IS POWER

today. Some important parallels exist. We have only to seek them out.

Thank you Alex Haley for telling and reminding us of our rich heritage. When the odds appear overwhelming, maybe we will remember what we can accomplish with unity and well defined goals.



Education is Power

By Thomas E. Wilson, Ph.D.

We have been asked to write a column on our perceptions of the television version of "Roots", by the great writer, Alex Haley. To express our perceptions of "Roots" calls for every reserve reaction that we can muster because of the highly emotional and explosive nature of the experience.

To begin with, in our opinion, the actors and actresses played their roles extremely well. It appeared that only the best actors were chosen for the parts. Levar Burton played the part of Kunta Kinte in a way that defied any criticism. He projected himself into the role in a way that made it difficult to think that he was an actor and was not actually experiencing the events portrayed in the series.

John Amos, the adult Kunta Kinte, seemed a natural for the continuation of the role. In addition to being a good actor, he also represented the strength of character that was needed to make the part seem real.

The other actors and actresses were equally as good and deserve the same attention as has been given to the ones mentioned above. O. J. Simpson, Leslie Uggams, Orson Welles, Edward Asner and others did a superb job of acting. Chicken George represented the ingenuity portrayed by many slaves to show that they too had feelings, perceptions, and an enormous amount of intellectual ability.

Historically the events portrayed within the series are virtually correct. Majority historians have presented Blacks as happy-go-lucky, and even lacking in intellectual ability. Most middle-aged Blacks grew up in an era when advertising formats implied that Blacks were homely. Stereotypes cast upon Blacks have been humiliating. Characters in "Roots" saw themselves and each other as beautiful. They had pride in their marvelous Black bodies.

"Roots" presented the heartbreak that was hidden behind the smiles. The bowing and other subservient mannerisms were defenses adopted in hope of getting more humane treatment or at least postponing mis-treatment.

The character presented by Kunta Kinte displayed the frustrations and utter despair felt when a keen mind and virile body have been suppressed. Kunta displayed the struggle to identify with his origin and his culture.

It is interesting to note that knowledge of the culture was passed from generation to generation by people who were denied formal education. The concepts of family unity, community pride and traditional ceremonies continued to be passed down throughout slavery.

The women played roles of great strength, but the matriarchal structure, referred to by sociologists, was not evident, except when there was no father present. The man was obviously the leader in the family. The women were very supportive of their husbands. Kunta Kinte, Chicken George and Tom must have felt ten feet tall when they were around their wives. These women seemed to try to be balm for the stinging humiliation that these men suffered as a way of life.

The ban on educating blacks was evidence that intellectual ability of Blacks was recognized and considered a threat to the slave system.

What does all of this mean as far as educating the Black child is concerned? For one thing, it filled in some gaps in Black History, particularly pointing out some areas in Africa where slaves came from. It also left out some areas of Black History that may be filled in by any student who will read a good book on Black History, such as BEFORE THE MAYFLOWER by Lerone Bennett. It challenged us to read to fill in the gaps in our own families. It pointed out some of the direct relationships between the period of time when there was slavery in America and

OVER 40,000 LAS VEGANS READ THE VOICE.