



# BLACK EMPOWERMENT

By Dr. Nathaniel Wright, Jr.  
Human Rights Activist

## BLACK SUPPORT FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

One of the seeming ironies of the struggle for women's rights is the fact that black Americans, both men and women, have often shied away from giving their fullest possible support.

Historically, blacks have played important, and sometimes crucial, roles in the women's rights movement. Phyllis Wheatley, the black poet and author who became the second woman published author in America, was a firm and often lonely advocate for freedom of opportunity for all people, including women.

Then there was Sojourner Truth who was one of America's most heroic roving prophets. When women's voices were raised feebly for women's dignity in the mid-19th Century, her voice was always heard with uniquely and superbly telling effect. Whenever this legendary figure—whose name will become increasingly known as our racial patterns in American history change—spoke at early rallies for women's rights, men who opposed women's rights trembled and they and their arguments were put to scorn.

There is no more illustrious male champion of women's rights in American history than Frederick Douglass. Douglass' life was devoted to human freedom. In his own personal life, he rose from an enslaved man to a place of distinction in the U.S. diplomatic corps. Abraham Lincoln's widow esteemed him so highly that, after her husband's death, she presented Douglass with one of the late president's favorite canes, noting that Mr. Lincoln would have wanted Douglass to have something deeply personal which had belonged

to him. Douglass is credited with persuading women to demand, in their national deliberations, full equality including suffrage for the first time in American history. He was a true prophet, believing that prophets must be ahead of the popular clamor and belief; for in leading thought and action rather than in following thought and action was there alone, so he believed, true prophecy.

What, then, of the role of blacks in the struggle for women's rights today? Must they abandon the movement which owes to them an incalculable debt which, in many ways, can never be repaid? Why do blacks look with mixed feelings today on the struggle for women's rights? In replying directly to this last question, we may respond simultaneously to issues underlying the other two questions.

—Blacks tend to resist and to resent the myth that women are a minority. Women are a majority in our country's population. If women are classed as a minority, then it is perfectly true that many job opportunities due on the basis of equity for black males will be earmarked for white women. Blacks, then, should commit their fullest weight to the Equal Rights Amendment and, at the same time, work to see that women have themselves declassified as a minority.

—Blacks tend to resent the myth that white women are poor. The majority of this nation's corporate wealth is owned by women. This stems chiefly from the fact that their husbands die younger and leave their estates to widows.

If white women wanted a

simple and workable quick strategy for freedom for themselves and for all true minorities, they would only need to concentrate on getting a few leaders of white women's large-scale corporate wealth to organize. They could require—not just present a "demand"—that equitable opportunity be afforded women and those who are minorities forthwith! Otherwise, the white male corporate managers of white women's corporate wealth would be fired instantly.

Cruel? No. Simply a reasonable, just and effective strategy to set right what have been ancient wrongs which are long past due in terms of being righted.

—Blacks recognize that there is a danger in the myth of the basic necessity of a "second breadwinner" in the vast majority of white homes.

We must grant that many white homes need greater resources. It would still be both fair and pre-eminently necessary to make known the fact that the vast majority of "second breadwinners" in white American homes simply work to largely perpetuate America's wanton waste and greed regarding the world's resources. We use, as a nation, five times our fair share of the earth's food and fuel. Is not the inherited wisdom of our culture correct when it says: "The earth is the Lord's (or the Creator's) and all the fullness of it"?

Black Americans must not be found wanting when it comes to fully supporting the Equal Rights Amendment. Still the crucial issues which separate white women's rights and those of America's minorities deserve to be understood and dealt with.

## HISTORY-MAKING BLACK HAPPENINGS:

(For your continuing calendar of major black events. Please cut out this column and keep it in your own notebook. Please mark the date of each entry.)

### On The International Scene...

**South Africa** — The visit of automobile magnate Henry Ford II to South Africa to inspect his company's manufacturing operations continued to shake the world diplomatic community.

While the United States' State Department was escalating its pressure for withdrawal of economic supports for the Vorster apartheid government, Mr. Ford found satisfaction with his huge Ford Motor Company of South Africa Ltd.; and he suggested that his operation would doubtless be expanded.

Meanwhile, the overwhelming majority of the 1,100 blacks employed in the South African operation at Port Elizabeth were said to have urged Ford to stay. Still they wanted more equality in treatment, in opportunity to advance and in pay schedules.

"We are not going to move out," Mr. Ford emphasized. Ford, the largest United States employer in South Africa, has a payroll of nearly 5,000. It was not until 1967 after major U.S. disturbances—including the burning of the inner city in Detroit—that Ford began hiring blacks in its South African operations.

**Rhodesia** — The white-minority government at Salisbury began censoring reports by foreign journalists. A new law, approved early this year, forbids foreign journalists from reporting on the internal conflict in Zimbabwe (or Rhodesia) unless the infor-

mation is approved by the white-minority government.

**South Africa** — The police in Johannesburg have now, according to reports, made into an almost routine practice the opening of gunfire upon blacks attending funerals. Others have also been shot in the Durban area; but South African detectives protested that there was no link between the shootings.

**Great Britain** — Polarization has lasted for weeks now following a criminal court judge's ruling some weeks ago that right wing white nationalists had a right to air their racial views. The defendant in the case had used such words as "niggers, wogs and coons." The judge admonished the defendant to use moderate language in the future.

Britain has become an increasing center of racial unrest, as a sharp increase of migrants of both whites and blacks from throughout the Commonwealth has intensified Britain's employment and housing congestion.

### National News... On The Home Front...

**Washington, D.C.** — The Rev. Dr. Benjamin Hooks' announcement that the NAACP was urging the federal government to serve as an "employer of first resort" has met with increasing approval among all segments of the black community.

The NAACP leader also indicated that since the federal government was slow to adopt or to formulate any economic plans for minorities, the NAACP would submit its own proposals.

**Newark, N.J.** — Newark's long-time, tireless and pioneering black Mayor, Kenneth Gibson, announced plans for a reelection bid.

Most recently, Gibson has served as Chairman of the National Conference of Mayors.

**New Orleans, Louisiana** — Intrepid Ernest Morial, first black mayor of New Orleans, and a past national president of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, began to make his impact felt long before his taking office and in his role as mayor-elect.

Never shunning controversy, he had joined recently with a group petitioning for a moment of silence in Dr. Martin Luther King's memory, at the Super Bowl.

**Dearborn, Michigan** — The "Old Guard" of mayors is changing. Such, at least was the evidence as controversial and allegedly racist Mayor Orville Liscom Hubbard was thrown out of office as Dearborn's mayor for 37 years.

**New York, N.Y.** — Toni Morrison won a first place for fiction award from the National Black Critics Circle for her novel, "Song of Solomon." Miss Morrison's novel tells of a wealthy mid-western black family where the main character returns to the South seeking his own and his family's heritage.

**Santa Monica, California** — Adding further to the trophies award to black Americans was Stevie Wonder's becoming a double winner in the recent American Music Awards. At the same time, Natalie Cole received the "Female Soul Singer" award.

(For an in-depth analysis of these and other issues on black and Third World life, please see "The MONITOR Microscope" in the monthly magazine supplement to this paper.)

## "All For One"

Adocumentary about the Lamaze method of childbirth takes an interesting and suspenseful turn when complications crop up and emergency procedures are undertaken. "All For One," a thirty-minute program which follows a young couple through their classes in Lamaze training and into the delivery room, will air Thursday, February 15 at 10:30 p.m. on KLVX, TV - 10.

Donna and Ed Musselman, from Allentown, Pennsylvania, agreed to allow producers videotape their Lamaze instruction and the entire delivery of their first child in August 1977.

Although widely accepted now, not so long ago the Lamaze method was considered revolutionary, with its emphasis on involving the father in the process of labor and including him in the delivery experience. The husband is taught to coach his wife in relaxation and breathing techniques designed to help her cope with the pain of her contractions.

Toward the end of the delivery, viewers witness what happens when things do not go as planned, and how Lamaze-trained parents cope with the problem. When the baby's heartbeat suddenly disappears, Dr. Joseph Skutches, Assistant Chief of Obstetrics and Gynecology at St. Luke's Hospital, has to assist with forceps in delivering the seemingly lifeless baby. The dramatic, tension filled moments end only when all is well with baby and parents.



The system of using fingerprints for identification was started by William Herschel of the Indian Civil Service in 1858, at Jungipur, India.



As recently as 100 years ago, some people were still using a tin kitchen funnel as a hearing aid — though it only worked if you stood right next to it and screamed into it.

"Old wine and an old friend are good provisions."  
George Herbert

# ALADIN Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning

DEEP SOIL CHEMICAL EXTRACTION SYSTEM

- Living Room ..... \$12.00
- Each Extra Room ..... \$10.00
- Sofa ..... \$30.00
- Love Seat ..... \$25.00
- Chair ..... \$20.00

12 Years Experience

"I Move ALL Furniture"

382-9752