

**V*A FACTS

Q -- I have just been awarded educational benefits for an on-the-job training program. With the first check I received a computer card. What do I do with this card?

A -- Your employer should certify the number of hours you work each month and sign the card. You must sign the card, and you should return it promptly in the envelope provided. Your payment for each succeeding month will not be made until the card is returned and processed by VA.

Q -- When insurance premiums are made by a third party, may such person request that premium notices be sent to him or her?

A -- Premium notices will be sent to a third party only when authorized by the insured in writing.

Q -- I receive a widow's pension from the VA. If I receive a cost of living increase in my Social Security next year, will my VA pension be reduced?

A -- Public Law 95-588, effective January 1, 1979, prevents any decrease in pension solely due to a Social Security cost of living increase.

VA

A surgical method for checking whether some Vietnam veterans carry after effects of "Agent Orange" in their body fat will be tested by the Veterans administrator of Max Cleland, Administrator of Veterans Affairs, announced today.

The test is part of a VA search for a simple way to find out whether any Vietnam veterans might have after effects from exposure to herbicides in Vietnam.

Since April 1978, VA has been involved in a broad scale search for conclusive scientific evidence on the question. A key point in the widely debated controversy is whether dioxin, a contaminant that occurs in trace amounts in one of the herbicides, can be stored for long periods in human body fat.

Dr. James C. Crutcher, VA Chief Medical Director, said the answer to this question will involve studying fat samples obtained during surgery from carefully matched veteran volunteers. Tissues from veterans with documented exposure to herbicides will be compared to those from veterans with no service in Vietnam and no medical symptoms.

"If the results of this comparison are conclusive," Crutcher said, "a biosy procedure for determining the presence of dioxin in individuals may be feasible."

No link has yet been found between medical conditions observed in veterans examined by VA and herbicides, VA's top medical authority said.

"But our minds are open on the subject, and we will continue to investigate it as long as there is any possibility of adverse effects on the health of veterans."

VA chief Max Cleland, who served in Vietnam while herbicides were used, said the agency had received about 500 applications for compensation from veterans who felt they might have after effects from exposure to herbicides. Except for one applicant who was found to have a skin condition, chloracne, no medical conditions were found in the group that could be traced to herbicides. In the one case, compensation was awarded because of "residual effects of exposure to a toxic substance," but the nature of the toxic substance could not be established.

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VOICE EDITORIALS

The Hughes Report

By Thomas F. Hughes



Reed Whipple-Poor's Message To Carter-New S.S. Earning Limits

A new era in the cultural growth of Las Vegas is beginning this spring, as the newly renovated Reed Whipple Cultural Center reopens and a new combination library and arts center reaches its final building stages. These centers, which promise to add an exciting new dimension to community life for area residents, will be under the direction of the Las Vegas Department of Recreation and Leisure Activities, Cultural and Community Affairs Branch.

The Reed Whipple Cultural Center has housed community arts events, workshops and classes in the arts for the past five years. Located at 821 Las Vegas Blvd. North, it has undergone its Phase I renovation and is reopening in March. The expansion of the Whipple facility will complement the services already available throughout the community.

Features of the expanded Reed Whipple Cultural Center will include a gallery for the visual arts as well as an intimate studio theater. Rehearsal and classroom areas will be available, including a large dance studio, conference rooms and an open arts and crafts theater. March is the time to register for both visual and performing arts classes scheduled to begin in April. Included in these eight-week classes will be offerings for both children and adults in painting, drama, music and dance. March 16 marks the opening of the Rainbow Company's Children's Playhouse production of "Aladdin" at the Whipple Center.

Nearly a thousand marchers carried a "Poor People's Message" to President Carter on his visit to Atlanta, Ga., for activities commemorating Martin Luther King Jr.'s January 15 50th birthday.

Led by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Local NAACP and other organizations, they were protesting the Carter Administration's proposals to reduce the Federal budget deficit by cutting into domestic social programs.

"Unless we get a more sensitive response from the Carter Administration and Congress, it may be time to seriously consider asking thousands of Americans to embark on a cavalcade of conscience," SCLC president Dr. Joseph E. Lowery said, recalling that August will mark the 16th anniversary of the march on Washington where Dr. King delivered his "I Have Dream" speech.

Dr. Lowery made his remarks to a rally of those who had marched through windy 30-degree weather from a downtown park to police barricades set up around Ebenezer BAPTIST Church. Carter was inside the church receiving the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Social Change's Non-violent Peace award.

Mr. Carter began his acceptance speech by admitting that, "I accept this award not as an honor earned, but as an affirmation that I share the hopes and dreams of Martin Luther King Jr., and that I recognize the progress still left to be made."

According to the protestors, whose chants of "Jobs, jobs, jobs" could be heard inside Ebenezer, the President has a lot further to go in fulfilling his campaign promise to aid the economically disadvantaged.

"We are distressed that the Administration's proposals to fight inflation include reduction in the very programs designed to fight the unemployment that persists especially among blacks," read Dr. Lowery from a statement prepared by the Coalition to Save the Poor.

"Failure to save, as well as intensify, these programs will surely result in increased unemployment that will both hurt the fight against inflation and extend human suffering."

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Before The Mayflower

ROOSEVELT FITZGERALD,
COORDINATOR OF ETHNIC STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA LAS VEGAS


Lerone Bennett's "Before The Mayflower" is a splendid general history of the black experience in America. As its title suggests, it deals with a subject which had its beginning before the landing of the good ship Mayflower. It is a history of that part of America which became the United States. It is different from others in that it considers the American experience in its relationship to the black presence. It does not, however, exclude from its consideration the impact of the presence of non-blacks on the quality of life afforded black in America. It is a good beginning point for the study of the role blacks have played in the development of this country.

Most Americans matriculation through secondary school and college took place long before the development of Ethnic Studies or Black Studies programs in the schools. As a result, except for those rare instances when curiosity has been matched by enthusiasm, few Americans have taken the time to read a book or investigate the subject of black Americans. Even now when such courses are being offered in the schools they are not required in order to satisfy the needs for graduation on either a secondary or post secondary level in most instances. This relegation to the position of not being important enough to be required devalues the worth of such courses in the eyes of some.

Fortunately an ever increasing number of Americans are realizing the worth of such subjects. Ten years ago these kinds of courses were rare. Today, at UNLV several departments are offering courses pertaining to minority America. A wider range of students are being made privy to a subject matter which cannot fail to enhance their lives. The multi-cultural aspects of our society is being brought out of the closet. One group is having less reasons to be embarrassed and others are feeling less guilty. This is not to suggest that we've arrived as far as solving the racial problems of the United States. The maintenance of equality, dignity and feelings of self-worth is a never ending task.

In the coming weeks there will be a series of articles pertaining to the history of black people in America. These will take into consideration not only the personalities and events of black America but also the inter-relationship existing between blacks and whites. Hopefully we will learn more of the heritage of Black America and better understand the reasons why some of the problems we are currently dealing with came into existence.

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