

# DEJA VU OR THE HOMECOURT ADVANTAGE

By Roosevelt Fitzgerald

No. This has nothing to do with the Rebels.

Several days ago, after attending a basketball game at the Convention Center, I rushed home to watch the report of it on the news. I did that because, fortunately, I am not one to always believe what I see. Sometimes, verification makes an apparent reality more real. I suppose it is the same kind of phenomena which prompts some people to ask the person seated next to them at a ball game "did you see that?"

On December 31, like millions of other people, I watched the New Year "come in." I heard the fireworks and saw the exploding rockets. Horns honked and some people even fired handguns — hopefully not in the direction of others. The New Year was here and I welcomed it with "two fingers" of J.W. Dant and then watched "After the Thin Man" on local television.

Upon awakening the next morning, I could hardly wait to get the newspaper. I needed to see the date, in print, to

make the reality of the New Year real. I was prepared to officially take the step into 1981. Before I could unfold the paper, to see the date, something on the bottom right quarter of the front page caught my eye. "Judge: County officials tried to pull rank in speeding rap." After reading the article, rather than proceeding into the future, my mind raced rapidly into the past and thereby causing my memory computer to roll backwards.

The following is the script which began to unfold. Come along with me — if you like to see history repeat itself?

On September 25, 1980, in an editorial written by me which partially appeared in the SENTINEL, I stated that "what one Black person does, whoever that person is and whatever that person happens to be, is a reflection on every Black person who has ever or will ever live. . . We are not permitted individuality. White people do not suffer such a dilemma. Whatever they do, they do as individuals — it reflects

only on the person who does it and not on every white person in the world. The key to this difference is their ability to not be maliciously categorized."

I am certain that there are some people who did and will disagree. However, on rare occasions, one gets an opportunity to discuss clear cut examples which support such declaratory statements. In this instance they have come in very close proximity of each other.

On December 6, 1980, Deputy City Manager, Ernest Bryant allegedly made an illegal turn which resulted in a minor collision. Following the accident, he drove to the City Parking Garage, where a medical condition forced an inopportune response of him. While so engaged, he was approached by members of the Metropolitan Police Department. The ensuing scenario was really never clarified in the news reports.

Several questions were left unanswered. (1) Had officers been summoned to the scene of the accident before his departure? (2) Had a citation been issued to Bryant? (3) Why had officers followed Bryant into the garage? (4) Was Bryant known to the officers? (5) Was the procedure followed by the officers standard procedure? (6) Would the collision have warranted Bryant's dismissal from his position with the city? (7) Would his urinating in the City Garage, with his medical condition, have been grounds for dismissal? (8) Could his reported statement of being "a black dude in overalls" have been grounds for dismissal? (9) Was the perception of the situation, by him, totally unwarranted and thereby grounds for dismissal? (10) Could his appraisal of all of the

extenuating circumstances have justified his unsolicited resignation?

There are any number of other unanswered questions, but I believe that the aforementioned will suffice. Before all of the evidence was in, another of the local newspapers began to editorialize on the matter. Allegations of a "drinking problem" were suggested. That suggestion was based on Bryant's having been stopped sometime last year with the smell of



BRYANT

alcohol on his breath. I commend the research people of that newspaper for making the discovery. It is a wonder that his resignation was not then demanded by the same newspaper which had demanded just days before, his resignation which he submitted on or about the 22nd of December. Perhaps, a year ago, it realized that there is another prominent public official who has been apprehended on any number of occasions, while DUI, without being dismissed.

It was also stated that Bryant's accusation of being roughed up, by the officers, simply because of the color of his skin was unfounded. It might have been but, it is not a totally unknown reality, to people of color, that such things have been known to happen. Perhaps it might have been embarrassing that one city employee

would say such of another city employee during these times when most, who happen not to be racial minorities, wish to down-play racial problems. The editorial went on to say that such an allegation and recantation by him did, in effect, irreparable harm to Black people. Why would his actions have anything to do with Black people in general. Perhaps I was right, in the September editorial.

The article which appeared on January 1, 1981, was extremely interesting. It appears that two other public officials had a little skirmish with the law. For the past several years, the maximum speed limit on the nation's highways has been 55mph. We are all expected to abide by it "not because it is a good idea, but because it is the law." A recent report has shown that the number of highway fatalities in southern Nevada has greatly increased. The primary causes are DUI and excessive speeds. The two county officials were pulled over by the highway patrol and charged with going twenty miles over the limit. Whether such actually was reality or not is not important to the writer, at this point. The important thing is that the officer said it happened and the "defendants" say differently.

The initial report of January first describes the two being taken to the court of Justice of the Peace, Jack Strong. While there, the driver was described as becoming so loud and obnoxious that the judge threatened incarceration. In a revised article, appearing two days later, the judge is reported to have said that he had "never been through an experience like that" and that "they were trying to intimidate me by making it clear

they were high government officials."

It was reported that the patrolman "hated anyone in authority" and that the Metro officer, who was called in, joined cahoots with the other two officers of the court in concocting the whole story. The reputations of the three officers have come "under the gun." Their effectiveness, as in the case of Ernest Bryant, have been irreparably damaged — if irreparable damage



ARDEL KINGHAM ... protested ticket

could have taken place in either case. Bryant merely said that he was accosted simply because of the color of his skin. The County officials have said that they were roughed up by being physically pushed around and being physically thrown out of the courtroom. The whole scene was described by the Manager as being a "travesty of justice." It is their word against that of the officers of the court and, in Bryant's case, it is his word against the officers of the court.

A number of public officials have come to the defense of the County Manager and the Budget Director. I have not read of any ranking public officials making any statements in the defense of Bryant. Why? No one has said that such behavior is unlike him. No one has questioned the manner in which law officers allegedly handled him. No one has raised the question that if Bryant, the Assistant City Manager, is manhandled, "what do they do to the guy who is just passing through." No one has said that if Bryant broke the law, why was he not arrested? No one has stated any reason to be suspicious of anything in the Bryant case. Everything is suspicious in the other matter.

I am hopeful that the powers that be will evaluate the Bryant case in light of the development involving the County officials. They will undoubtedly realize that if Bryant's resignation is accepted, those of others will have to be requested. Anything different will be a blatant example of a lack of equity of treatment.

How often, at athletic events, have you observed a referee make a bad call and get booed by the crowd and then, moments later, a similar transgression is committed by the other team and the "ref" looks the other way. "Home Cooking?" — That is what it is commonly called. That is just a game and we can live with it. In the game of life such calls should never be made and, if they are, they should not



SPAULDING

be tolerated. ding all three, in regards to their positions, should be made by their supervisors and they should all three be the same if that elusive quality of Americanism called "FAIR PLAY" is still part of the fabric of our society.

Read THE LAS VEGAS SENTINEL Nevada's Largest Black WEEKLY Newspaper



Professor Fitzgerald is director of ethnic studies at University of Nevada-Las Vegas

WHITES ARE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST

How silly can we get! Cleveland High school basketball teams most all blacks, are court-ordered to include white players - at least two white players each team, whether the whites are qualified or not.


Maybe now that the shoe is on the other foot, politicians will dare to confront the absurdity of trying to enforce "equality."

Equal "rights." yes. Equality? There is no such thing.

Not all men are created equal. Nor all women. You know this: I know this: everybody knows this. Yet we have been trying to reorganize many of our country's institutions as though that scared cliché were true.

We don't have the same pulse rate, the same fingerprints, the same tolerance for disease, the same IQ ... nor the same athletic abilities.

**LEE WALKER Can Sell You A Car. See Him Today!**



**PHONE: 731-2121**  
**gaudin ford**  
 Where fords REALLY DO cost less!  
 2121 E. Sahara at Burnham

## Panic

from page 2

commits Argentina to "adopt new measures ... that take into account (the abuse-ending) recommendations" contained in the commission report, and which explicitly upholds the authority of the commission to continue doing its work. Even while complaining about the report, moreover, Argentina wanted the OAS to know of the improvements in the year since the commission visited.

Some people would keep the heat on Argentina in order to end all abuses there and to deter a recurrence there or elsewhere. Other people, no less conscientious, would recognize changes so as to encourage the heavies in the local political process to let the country evolve back toward normality.

The junta went further last week. It joined in a consensus OAS rights resolution that named (though it did not condemn) Argentina, which

Nevada Employment Security Department  
 NO-FEE services for EMPLOYERS and JOBSEEKERS  
**EMPLOYERS call 385-0401 to fill your jobs**  
**JOBSEEKERS visit your nearest job office today:**  
 135 S. 8th St., LV  
 1801 E. Tropicana Blvd., LV  
 5243 W. Charleston Blvd., LV  
 2827 LV Blvd. N., NLV  
 119 Water St., Henderson  
**FREEWAY OFFICE-1001 N. "A" St., LV**  
 385-0441 - Short-term, industrial, and domestic workers.

Capture your wedding in unforgettable color photographs!



Imagine the thrill for you and your children when, ten years from now, you open your wedding album and see it all over again. Your dress, your husband with the ring, the families and friends. Why not arrange with us for your wedding photography. We offer candid coverage at the church or chapel and the reception, also striking portraits. And ours are fine quality professional color photographs at reasonable rates. Call us now. We'll make your wedding truly unforgettable!

(702) 453-2010 By appointment only **BOB MORGAN**  
**Morgan**  
 Freelance Photography

**Real Estate is a people business**  
 Here is one of the people at Toler Realty



Residential Income & Land Commercial  
**Kathy Fox Gay**  
 Kathy Fox Gay, a native Las Vegas, attended Las Vegas High School and the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. Her hobbies include reading, horticulture and interior design. Kathy has been a member of the Toler Realty Staff for 4 years and specializes in Residential sales and vacant land.

**TOLER REALTY**  
 1056 No. Rancho Dr.  
 Twin Lakes Shopping Center  
**648-0484**

**Custom Upholstery**

FINE QUALITY WORK BY  
**CONSCIENTIOUS CRAFTSMAN**  
 SPECIALIZING IN ORIGINAL RECOVERING FOR AUTOS - VANS - R.V.'S - TRUCKS & BOATS



JAMES-COUNCIL- OVER 18 YRS. EXPERIENCE  
 PICK-UP & DELIVERY  
**649-4807**  
**Council's Custom Upholstery**  
 1210 E. LAKE MEAD BLVD.-NO. LAS VEGAS 89030