

Point of View

Editorial

On Monday night, March 14, 1983, this writer viewed a television program entitled "Mothers Against Drunk Drivers" (M.A.D.D.). This was a struggle of one mother whose thirteen-year-old daughter had been killed by a drunk driver to see that laws were placed on the books that would serve as a deterrent to driving while drunk.

The actors and actresses who played the parts on the program projected well the agony, the suffering, and the frustration that the relatives and friends of the victims of drunk driving accidents must suffer, and the political machinations that must be overcome before anything of consequence is done to those who cause the problems.

The question that comes to this writer's mind is "What is being done in Nevada to combat the incidence of drunk driving?" We have personally known at least five persons who have been killed by drunk drivers during the last ten years, and have read of many more.

Our elected representatives may state that "there are enough laws on the books in Nevada to take care of the drunk drivers." However, this appears to be a way of evading the issues, because all of us are aware that the punishment for killing a person while driving drunk is much less than under any other circumstances.

Why will our elected representatives not pass more effective laws to be used in dealing with the drunk drivers? It is because so many of our elected officials drive while under the influence of alcohol? If so, why are they not brought to trial for drunk driving just as anyone else? Just asking.

To Be Equal

ATTACKS ON FREE SPEECH

By John E. Jacob

I'm troubled by some recent developments that raise serious questions about the attitude of some government officials toward the Constitution they are sworn to uphold, and especially toward First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech.

Labelling films and keeping tabs on the people who view them has less in common with democracy than with its opposite, as practiced in many authoritarian states. When government intimidates its own citizens and hampers the free flow of opinion, it takes a dangerous step

other.

There are already laws on the books to prevent conspiracies to fix prices. If further action is needed, it can be taken without tearing up the Constitution.



John E. Jacob

And if federal snoopers will be monitoring phone calls of corporate chiefs, what will stop them from keeping tabs on civil rights leaders, newsmen, or even opposition politicians?

Of course, those Justice Department actions are clearly unconstitutional and have little hope of prevailing, at least while the courts are free. Far more dangerous is the Office of Management and Budget's proposed new

regulations that would limit the free speech of organizations that hold government contracts.

OMB has proposed new rules, supposedly designed to limit "political" advocacy and lobbying activity among federal contractors. They are so sweeping that they represent an attempt to muzzle free speech.

There are already regulations that prevent recipients of federal money from lobbying, and others that limit the amount of resources spent on advocacy work.

But that's not enough for OMB, which appears to be trying to force into silence all critics of current policies. The new regulations would prevent organizations from filing court briefs, dealing with regulatory boards, or contacting legislators, even when such contacts are for informational, not lobbying, purposes.

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Long live "Mothers Against Drunk Drivers."

Last Saturday members of the local NAACP, after a strife-torn year, elected new officers. We congratulate those who were elected and have every faith that they will carry out their duties and responsibilities well and will work for the good of all in the community. Rev. Allen, the newly elected president, has pledged this and is eager to begin. He has called for an early Executive Board meeting and has extended a welcome to all to attend.

In turn, it is hoped that all factions of the community will get behind this much needed organization, become involved in it and support it. In order to be effective, the NAACP must have the support and in-put from the community it serves.

It is important to note that one organization, the Minister Alliance, has announced the indefinite postponement of its scheduled nationwide boycott of Las Vegas and has said that it will work with the now-functioning NAACP to overcome the injustices it has been trying to eliminate here in Las Vegas. This is a commendable step.

It is hoped that this can herald a new beginning in West Las Vegas and that other organizations will, in turn, join these two groups in working to correct the many community problems that face us.

We have a golden opportunity to make a fresh start toward COMMUNITY UNIT. Let's not throw this opportunity away, for 'IN UNITY THERE IS STRENGTH.'

We hope to see a large attendance at the NAACP Executive Board Meeting on Tuesday, March 22 at 7:30 p.m. in the organization's offices at 1040 W. Owens Ave.

PEOPLE, PLACES and POLITICS

By Joe Neal



At this writing the Martin Luther King Birthday Bill seems to be stalled in the Assembly, mainly because the prime sponsor of the bill does not want to accept a compromise of less than what the Assembly bill 99 was drafted for.

The governor, Richard Bryan, had indicated that he would be willing to give up one of his optional holidays, which he, as governor, has the authority, under Nevada statutes, to designate at his pleasure.

Gene Collins, the prime sponsor of the Martin Luther King bill, has been unwilling to accept this offer. Gene seems to want the King holiday to rank with Labor Day and Christmas. These are days which require certain institutions, such as banks, savings and loans, schools and all public institutions, to be closed. These are the very groups who have appeared to be in opposition to the King holiday, because in time of budget-cuttings, the school district and local government could not afford to pay people to take off another holiday.

The above groups do not object to the governor rendering one of his optional holidays for this purpose. It would seem then that this would be a logical compromise. Gene Collins has indicated to this writer that he would campaign on the floor of the Assembly to defeat this option. Given the lukewarm support for the King bill, Gene could easily do this, because most of the Assemblymen would find this to be an easy way out of voting for the compromise, if a black was arguing against the passage.

It is difficult to understand Gene Collins' reason for not compromising on this issue of King's birthday, because the governor's optional day would be what is being asked for with nearly the same force and effect as in Gene Collins' original bill.

You cannot hold the legislature hostage with a Martin Luther King bill. If this could be done, I would have thought of it long ago. The only interest in the Martin Luther King holiday is because Gov. Bryan had the courage to call for it in his "State of the State" address.

Mr. Collins does not understand that when you have a governor such as Richard Bryan, who is willing to extend himself politically in recognition of a major black figure when it could end his political career for doing so, he deserves the support of the black community and its representatives in the legislature.

One would have to be very naive to think that there aren't more important issues than Martin Luther King's birthday. The calls I have been getting have been about money for Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) and jobs. Therefore, there is no real bargaining power in the King issue, other than the support of the governor, which is his right to withdraw at any time.

The governor has offered his compromise, which is one of his optional holidays that he can declare. If you cannot have the whole loaf, you accept a part of the loaf and just maybe at another time, you can go back for the other part. You cannot take the position of a "take it or leave it" attitude in politics.

The Martin Luther King holiday is a political issue and politics is the art of compromise.

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