

A Series: THE BLACK FAMILY AND THE CHALLENGES OF THE 80's

Part VI - OUR CHILDREN

Acknowledging the importance of the resurgence of the family to American and particularly Black American society, and in keeping with the recent Proclamation by the Clark County Board of Commissioners designating the 1980's to be the "Decade of the Family," the Las Vegas SENTINEL-VOICE continues this series of articles by MAUDRA JONES on "THE BLACK FAMILY AND THE CHALLENGES OF THE 80's." In offering this special series, we salute the Black Family during this "DECADE OF THE FAMILY." We dedicate the series, with love and appreciation, to the families of America and hope that our readers will be inspired to promote and develop opportunities for strengthening the institution of the family in all areas of community life.

By Maudra Jones

Dearly Beloved, if we are to become more enriched by a knowledge of our history; if we are to acknowledge the legacy of our love, faith, courage, strength, caring and togetherness left by our forefathers (and mothers); if we are to hold on and strengthen the bonds of spirituality that unite us under God; if we are to become awakened to a new vision of humanity; if we are to chart new directions for achieving socio-economic progress; if we are to become more sensitive to our own internal and external resources for improving the quality of life for ourselves and others whom we touch; if we are, indeed, to come together and proceed with implementing "The Black Leadership Family Plan for the Unity, Survival and Progress of Black People" - then we must do all this for the sake of our children.

For as H. Carl McCall,

noted civic leader and Senior Vice President of New York City's Channel 13, recently posed the questions "...what can we accomplish if our children do not live? What can we save, or be proud of, or show to any part of the rest of the world, if we have not given our children the strength, the endurance, the will and the way to continue their journey through these places we have already travelled?"

Our children are the "tomorrow that any nation can ever hope to see" - or that any community can ever hope to be. Our children, in the words of McCall, "represent the workers, the thinkers, the contributors, the hopes, dreams and the reality that remains the construct of any future we can expect to experience." One of the great documents of history is the legacy of Mary McLeod Bethune, famed educator and founder of Bethune-Cookman Col-

lege. Born of slave parents in South Carolina, Mrs. Bethune took the vow of courage at an early age and refused to give in or give up her dream to build a school for Black girls. This courageous saint "dreamed herself out of the cotton field and created a great institution, shaping the vision of a whole generation of youth, before her death in 1955. Mrs. Bethune left her people a rich legacy of love, hope, faith, confidence in one another, a thirst for education, respect for the use of power, racial dignity, a desire to live harmoniously with our fellowmen and finally, a responsibility to our young people. Prescribed in her last will and testament are the words:

"...The world around us really belongs to youth, for youth will take over its future management. Our children must never lose their zeal for building a better world. They must not be discouraged from aspiring toward greatness, for they are to be the leaders of tomorrow. Nor must they forget that the masses of our people are still underprivileged, illhoused, impoverished and victimized by discrimination. We have a powerful potential in our youth, and we must have the courage to change old ideas and practices so that we may direct the power toward good ends..."

My Black sisters and



Maudra Jones

brothers, we are not without the courage and the spirit of Mary McLeod Bethune. We, today, have the will and the power to save our children from the frustrations and fears, the hopelessness and despair, the pain and the shame that pervade an increasingly complex society. The 1980's are calling us to rededicate ourselves to the traditional values of Black family and community life that will enable our children to become confident, self-assured, spiritually and morally grounded to deal successfully with the difficulties of the 1980's, to attain a sense of purpose in their lives and to assume their roles as responsible and contributing adults.

A moment of reflection will help us recall that we have come this far because of those traditions and values practiced by our parents - the richness and strength of our heritage - our true nature - too often taken for granted or replaced by other people's values. We must become awakened to our reality, do our own thinking and adapt those

rich traditions to the 80's. We can instill the values of our heritage in our children in the 1980's in spite of societal changes. Dr. Alvin

important responsibility of providing the foundation for learning and for nurturing cultural traditions in our children - and above all, for

"Look at your children and you see yourself; our children, above anything else, are our impetus and we Black men and women are the change if change is to come."

Haki R. Madhubuti (Don L. Lee)

Poussaint noted, in his recent address to Las Vegas, that the family and the church are "falling-off" from traditional practices in nurturing the pattern of (African-American) Black life. The Black family and the Black church have an important job to do in clarifying values in our children and in socializing them to the challenges of the 80's. As parents, we have the

"making children precious to us as key individuals, in a cooperative, communal spirit." (Poussaint)

The following statement on how children become who they are was authored by Dorothy Law Nolte. It serves as a practical tool and guidepost for beginning our examination of the "world" in which our children are growing and learning.

CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

- If a child lives with criticism, He learns to condemn.
- If a child lives with hostility, He learns to fight.
- If a child lives with ridicule, He learns to be shy.
- If a child lives with shame, He learns to feel guilty.
- If a child lives with tolerance, He learns to be patient.
- If a child lives with encouragement, He learns confidence.
- If a child lives with praise, He learns to appreciate.
- If a child lives with fairness, He learns justice.
- If a child lives with security, He learns to have faith.
- If a child lives with approval, He learns to like himself.
- If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, He learns to find love in the world.

PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE WEEK

Plan and schedule one evening or night each week as "Family Time" in your home. Devote at least one hour to talking with each other about issues that affect the family and the community. Allow your children (all ages) to interact and to express their feelings, concerns, needs, joys, dissapointments - whatever. Seek solutions to problems together.

KCEP To Present Second Gospel Extravaganza

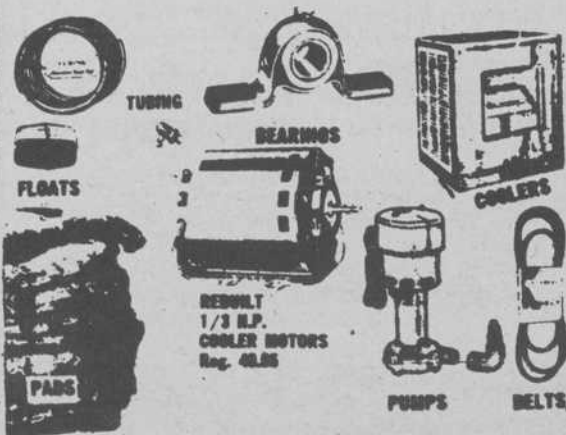
ON Saturday, May 28 at 7:30 P.M., KCEP Radio will present the second of a series of FREE GOSPEL CONCERTS at the Angelic Church of God in Christ, 3329 Coleman Street in North Las Vegas (Highland to Cheyenne, left on Cheyenne to first street which is Coleman Street, then right on Coleman; church is located across the street from the water storage tank). Angelic Church of God in Christ is pastored by Elder Noble Williams.

of gospel music will be performed by such popular local groups as "The Swan Jubilees" and "The Sensational Gospel Tonics." Minister of Music Cheyenne Cook and Evangelist Lawrence Cook will be featured in this soulful experience to benefit KCEP Radio.

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