

Point of View

Letter To The Editor

Dear Editor:

Legislators ought to do something about diploma mills in Nevada. Some form of control should be established. These schools are ripoffs and leeches.

They don't pretend to educate people in any area. They seem to prey on the people of West Las Vegas. Namely many of the churches in West Las Vegas area.

Many people who did not complete the eight grade are finishing doctoral programs in six weeks, two weeks or paying \$75 and an-

swering three questions. This is shameful and disgraceful.

Why do they all seem to prey on West Las Vegas? Many of our churches are full of people who have these "things." The legislature should step in and either control or stop this shameful ripoff.

No doctoral this program can be completed in this manner. These coupons give a bogus credibility to customers who are able to buy them. It's really sad when someone who has a D.D. degree on a coupon spelling doctor "daktar".

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PEOPLE, PLACES and POLITICS

By Joe Neal



It was a summer in the early 1960's that I met him. He had been invited to give a short talk at one of our NAACP meetings. I still remember his words that day. "It's a beautiful world out there", he said, "and if you work at it, you can enjoy it a lot." These were the words of a college student from Las Vegas, who had gone off to Washington, D.C. to attend Howard University and become Southern Nevada's first graduated professional in Law. His name was Robert Archie.

The beauty was taken out of Archie's world this weekend when an all-white jury returned a verdict of guilty of statutory seduction of under aged white girls.

The darkness to the beauty of Archie's world came at the hands of a jealous woman who apparently arrived at the conclusion that if she could not have the brother she would have him destroyed.

It is obvious that in a relationship between blacks and whites, freedom still has its restraints, especially when such a relationship has to be passed upon by an all-white jury. From the evidence submitted in Court, Archie had met and had sex with a sixteen-year-old white woman. It was admitted, too, by Archie and the girl. Somehow this relationship went sour and Archie tried to extricate himself from this affair after the young woman "made a pest out of herself" by frequently calling his office. Apparently this young woman decided to set Archie up by having younger white girls come by his office with notes asking for five hundred dollars. It was at this point that Archie realized he was being extorted. Archie sought means to protect himself. But the chemistry of the situation was too great to overcome.

This black-white sexual relationship in which Archie had become involved was to act as the catalyst for activating the jury's prejudice thereby resulting in their rendering a verdict against him on four counts of statutory seduction. Archie could not have won this one; the odds were against him.

The black community and especially black men must be made aware that the forces which operated to convict Archie will operate against other black men if we do not challenge it. You can sit idly by and say "it is not I who am now in jail facing up to thirty-five years in prison," but you have to remember that Archie did not think so either.

To be framed is not an act of our own choosing. It is something that happens and, in most cases, we are unaware of the frame until it happens. I know many will say Archie brought this upon himself by fraternizing with white people. This is not the point. If we are to enjoy a measure of freedom, then we must be able to be with whom we please. It is a condition of freedom. I do not speak here that freedom means hitting the sack with under aged girls. I do believe that Archie was innocent of that.

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To Be Equal

DEATH PENALTY SHOULD BE SCRAPPED

by John E. Jacob

Over a decade after the Supreme Court overturned death penalty laws because they were "arbitrary" and "capricious," more than 1,100 people are on prison Death Rows, sentenced to the maximum penalty of all.

They are there because some 38 states adjusted their laws to meet Supreme Court

being executed are less than one in 20,000.

The death sentence depends on neither the crime nor the criminal - it depends on whether the crime occurred in a state with the penalty, and on extraneous facts surrounding the crime, including the race of the offender and of the victim.

The death penalty cannot be applied fairly.

executed while the other turns state's evidence and gets a prison term. That's what happened in Texas last year. Even the state prosecutor in the case vainly pleaded for a stay of execution on the grounds that the sentences of the two offenders were grossly



John E. Jacob

disproportionate.

And how humane can a punishment be when it results in such occurrences as the malfunctioning electric chair in Alabama that led executioners to throw the switch three times in ten minutes before finally declaring the victim dead?

The swiftness of punishment is considered to be important - at least one Supreme Court justice has complained about the endless appeals in death penalty cases that drag on for years. But he's wrong. To deny the op-

portunity to take every avenue of appeal is not to practice justice but to withhold it. Human life is more important than the tidy bookkeeping of the courts.

And the sanctity of human life is at the core of the debate over the death penalty. I know that most of the recipients of that sentence have demonstrated contempt for human life and received the sentence as punishment for murder. But that does not mean the state - the embodiment of society and its values - should kill.

With the death penalty, the state in effect says that murder is the worst of crimes, while itself taking human life. That's a morally untenable position.

The excuse for all this is supposed to be deterrence, but no one has ever proved convincingly that the death penalty deters; in fact, some claim it even incites some unstable people to commit murder.

The only moral as well as practical response to the injustices of the death penalty is to abolish it.

John E. Jacob is President Of The National Urban League

restrictions on the penalty. Those laws were carefully framed to meet the test of constitutionality, yet the death penalty remains as arbitrary and capricious as it was when the Supreme Court acted in 1972.

The experience of the past decade demonstrates that the death penalty violates the Constitution's mandate against "cruel and unusual punishment." It should be scrapped.

The death penalty fails to meet the minimum tests that should be applied to so extreme a punishment. For a penalty to be morally acceptable in a civilized society it must be uniformly applied, fair, humane and swift. There is no way the death penalty can meet those minimum standards.

Uniform application, for example, is clearly impossible. There are 18,000 homicides a year in the United States, but the chance of a murderer

It is hardly an accident that disproportionate numbers of the people sentenced to death are poor and black. It is not that their crimes are more deserving of the punishment, but that class and racial factors often are the key determinants in sentencing.

Studies of those receiving the death sentence indicate that blacks and other minorities are more likely than whites to be sentenced to death and that the sentence is more likely for blacks convicted of killing whites than for blacks convicted of killing other blacks.

It was circumstances such as these that led the Court to strike down existing death penalty laws in 1972 and those circumstances still prevail despite the formal changes in state laws.

Standards of fairness are also suspended when two men take part in a crime that results in a murder and one is

NEVADA'S LARGEST AND MOST COMPLETE BLACK COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER