

# Point of View

## Editorial

It had to happen! And we are very proud that it happened during our lifetimes. We refer to the fact that Miss Vanessa Williams, a Black twenty-year-old junior from Syracuse University, a resident of the small town of Millwood, N.Y., and the daughter of two public school teachers, was crowned Miss America last Saturday night.

All along, we were aware of our beautiful and talented Black women, and knew that many of them were fully qualified to become Miss America. However, the time has come for all America to realize that many of our woman are as talented and beautiful as anyone can possibly be.

Another startling related fact is that the first runner-up is also Black. Miss New Jersey, who seemed just as beautiful and talented, will assume the role of Miss America if Miss Williams is unable to fulfill her role for any reason.

Times are changing, and people in our great nation seem willing to accept the fact that beauty and talent have no color lines, and that we only need

and deserve an opportunity to express ourselves in more positive ways.

The tasks involved in being Miss America are grueling. However, Blacks are accustomed to grueling tasks, and we are sure that Miss Williams can handle these tasks with dignity and finesse. We also feel that Miss Williams can handle herself well in complicated and adverse situations.

Our hope and prayer is that the press and other media will play the game fairly and not expect Miss Williams to be a "Super Lady," as is required of many Blacks in high positions.

We appreciate Miss Williams for her frankness during her first news conference; however, we propose that the press should concentrate on her beauty and talents and not on her race. We also agree with her position that, just because she is Black, does not necessarily mean that she will favor all Black positions. She appears to be a thinker in her own right, and can hold her own with anyone.

Good luck Miss Williams. We're very proud of your accomplishments. May we see many more Black women and men involved in more and more constructive activities.

## PEOPLE, PLACES and POLITICS

By Joe Neal



Did you read in the REVIEW JOURNAL on Sunday about a "Neal" making threats on Rev. Allen's life?

I looked up the Neals in the phone book and there are forty-two of them listed including 'you know who.' Why would anyone of these persons want to threaten the Rev.? It beats me! What would be their motive?

You must have a motive for making a threat. Seldom do we hear of an idle threat without a motive. Is the Rev. trying to say that he is so popular that someone wants to get rid of him? This is ridiculous!

The Rev. is dreaming of influence and power he does not have. The only thing the Rev. had going for him was the NAACP and he has been suspended from that. Not by the local NAACP Board but by the national office. I don't think the national NAACP Board would have a need or motive to threaten the Rev.'s life. The national office works through lawyers and not threats.

As far as the presence of the Rev. in this community goes, I don't think anyone would find that threatening. One thing this town will do for you is whittle your ego down to size when you don't have a job. This town demands you have a source of income if you desire to be vocal and make unsubstantiated charges without the supporting facts.

The Rev. is a threat to himself. You know, kinda like, "I found the enemy and it's me!" The Rev. should have no fears but of himself. If the Rev. could seek peace with himself, he would allay any threat which may generate from his own mind.

example, would immediately cause a massive Depression.

Too many of those 32

joining the petition to think harder about its implications, and for those in states that have already passed the measure to work for repeal.

The traditional amendment route provides for change while protecting our rights; a Convention could go far beyond its mandate to imperil those rights.

## Greater Votes, Greater Power

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## To Be Equal

# PROTECTING THE CONSTITUTION

by John E. Jacob

The Constitution is a frail document, notwithstanding the fact that it has served as our basic law for nearly two hundred years. It has survived because the flexibility of the amendment process enables it to be updated to meet changing needs in a changing society.

Traditionally, amendments are made by a process that includes proposal by two-thirds of both Houses of Congress and ratification by three-fourths of the states.

If an amendment passes this hurdle, we can be sure that it reflects a national consensus. Under this process, it is virtually, unthinkable that basic freedoms could be compromised.

But there's a second way to amend the Constitution. Two-thirds of the states can petition Congress to call a convention to propose new amendments. That hasn't happened since

the first Constitutional Convention in 1787. No subject has been considered so serious a threat to the nation to warrant a Convention.

And a Convention itself is a threat to our society — it is an unwieldy instrument that could come into being to consider one amendment and wind up transforming the entire Constitution into something very different.

Lawyers disagree about the powers a Convention would have. Some say that it can consider only the amendment for which it was called; others say it can consider any and all amendments. Nor do they agree on the procedures involved in calling a Convention — how many delegates, how they are chosen, and more.

All of this would be academic, of interest only to scholars and constitutional lawyers, if it were not for the fact that 32 out of the necessary 34 states have already passed resolu-

tions asking Congress to call a Constitutional Convention to consider a balanced budget amendment.

If just two more states join the pack, we could face the most serious



John E. Jacob

threat to our Constitution in well over a century. Once convened, the Convention could rewrite the Constitution, including the sections guaranteeing our most precious liberties.

It makes no sense to take such a risk. Even those who doubt that a Convention would tamper with the Bill of Rights, for example, can't be sure that key provisions would not be rewritten in such a way

as to weaken present guarantees.

Just think of all the so-called social issues causing ferment today — school prayer, abortion, busing and others. It is likely that a Convention could try to ram through amendments dealing with such issues, especially since the traditional amendment route has forestalled them.

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Then there's the ostensible reason for calling the Convention — to consider a balanced budget amendment. That, too, is an emotional issue that could not withstand the light of day of the traditional amendment process.

Congress and enough state legislators know that a balanced budget amendment would be a mistake. It would simply encourage governments to change their book-keeping, not their deficits. In many cases deficits make sense. A balanced budget today, for