

A SERIES: THE BLACK FAMILY AND THE CHALLENGES OF THE 80'S

PART VIII — FOR OUR CHILDREN...

THE QUEST FOR TRUTH... OUR BEST LIVING REALITY

By Maudra Jones

... SEARCHING FOR SOLUTIONS

WE WEAR THE MASK

By Paul Laurence Dunbar

We wear the mask that grins and lies
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes —
This debt we pay to human guile;
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,
And mouth with myriad subtleties.

Why should the world be otherwise,
In counting all our tears and sighs?
Nay, let them only see us while
We wear the mask.

We smile, but O great Christ, our cries
To Thee from tortured souls arise.
We sing, but oh the clay is vile
Beneath our feet, and long the mile;
But let the world dream otherwise,
We wear the mask.

As we embark on this phase of our search for meanings and solutions, let us examine the concept of myths as shared by Dr. Broadus Butler. In a comprehensive treatment of the subject, Dr. Butler states that there are three main image myths which have been most damaging to the American Black's self-image. These image myths, he says, have also been the greatest contributing factor in depriving the American Black of the opportunity

to see himself as an equal to other Americans and to live as a free and equal American.

The first of these is the "myth that we have no cultural past" (textbooks and American history books bear this out — as Minister Farakan puts it: "... when we read or study from textbooks in our society, we don't see ourselves and we have nothing to 'connect' with"). So our true history is written by Black historians and scholars; and is often

viewed as a separate history — although it is a vital part of American history. (When we celebrate Black History Month, we should be celebrating American History Month.)

Dr. Butler lists the second image myth as the "myth of biological and social inferiority" (when, to the contrary, our history past and present has produced a



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strong line of kings, queens, leaders, statesmen, scientists, scholars, artisans — "giants" in every field). The Negro Almanac, compiled and edited by Dr. Harry A. Ploski of New York University and Ernest Kaiser in 1971, lists over 300 known

inventions by Blacks. The patents dated between 1834 and 1899 include significant contributions to the industrial development of our nation, from cotton planters to steam engines. These are but few of the facts that we recite during our celebrations of Black History Month — but do we internalize the meanings? — do we grab hold of the power in them? — have we forgotten who we are?

The third image myth

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which Dr. Butler discusses is the "myth of Black poverty" (it was Leronne Bennett, Jr. who reminded us, in his speech to an audience at Las Vegas High School in recent years, that we are a "sleeping giant" — economically and politically). At last count, we had exceeded 100 billion dollars in annual spending power, in our nation. A recent study showed that the total

income for the West Las Vegas community exceeds 100 million annually. Black poverty is a myth — the lack of organized Black dollars is a painful truth.

The answers have come, time and time again, from the voices of the past and present. Frederick Douglass spoke of the difference between achieving real freedom and that of feeling the necessity to eke out a bare physical and economical survival. Benjamin Hooks, you

Benevolent Associations and the building of strong, thriving Black communities? Part of the answer is: "we have strayed..."; we are living "out of our natural clime." Our history tells us that whenever we have "answered the call" and whenever we have taken on the "vow of courage," we have overcome — what's more, we have excelled! The answers are clear.

What do we see when we look in the "cultural mirror" of today?

(to be continued)

Greater Votes, Greater Power

Community Baptist Church Sets Two Services June 9, 10

Community Baptist Church, where Rev. Sam Roberson is the pastor, will hold two special programs this weekend.

On Saturday, June 9, Rev. L.D. Lewis and Bro. Nathaniel Whaley will be in a Pre-Men's Day Musical starting at 8 p.m. On Sunday, June 10, the

church will hold its 5th Annual Men's Day Services at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Rev. Prentiss Minner of "Love All People" will deliver the morning message.

Both programs will be held at the Zion Methodist Church Education Building, 2108 No. Revere Street.

CHURCH MOTHER OF THE WEEK

MOTHER JOSEPHINE NEAL LEAVES ONE OF TWO MESSAGES: "GONE TO CHURCH" OR "GONE FISHING"

Each week, Mid City Furniture, 501 N. Main Street, salutes the Church Mothers. This week's honoree is Mother Josephine Neal, 69, a native of New Orleans, Louisiana and the mother of six children — all boys. Among them are State Senator Joe Neal, Willie, Charles, Cliff, Tommy and Jerry. She was raised in Maguee, Arkansas. The family moved to Las Vegas about 50 years ago.

A 25-year employee, Mother Neal retired from the Desert Inn Hotel 4 years ago.

"She would fish every-day if you would give her a chance," commented Lisa Barnes, the grand-

daughter of Mother Josephine Neal, Church Mother of the Carver Missionary Baptist Church, 1221 North "J" Street in Las Vegas,



Josephine Neal

pastored by Rev. S.S. Rogers.

When the Las Vegas

SENTINEL-VOICE tried to reach her Monday afternoon, Mother Neal had fled the city and was on her way to fulfill her strong desire to "make the big catch." She was part of a fishing party.

"Will she be home later today?" we asked.

"No, she won't be back until sometime Wednesday," said Lisa Barnes. "She always does this. Nothing gets in the way of her church work or her fishing."

A couple weeks ago, the Las Vegas SENTINEL-VOICE attempted to reach the first Church Mother honoree for the April 5 issue. Here again the message was: "She's

gone fishing."

We have learned that she has two principal avocations — doing church work and 'goin' fishing!

Mother Neal works very closely with Rev. Rogers in many phases of church work. She is heavily involved and is a strong pillar in the church.

Mid City Furniture will forward a lovely gift to the church for Mother Neal. It will be presented to her by Rev. Rogers during this coming Sunday morning service.

We salute Mother Josephine Neal — Church Mother of the Week!

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