

Point of View

Editorial

The \$15 million library bond issue is at stake this very moment and the end result will affect the entire community - in particular, the Black community.

The Greater Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce and two high-ranking officials, former Nevada governor Grant Sawyer, and Ed Fike, member of the Nevada Development Authority and past Lieutenant Governor, along with Jeff McColl, secretary-treasurer of Culinary Local 226, have announced their support of the bond issue. Sawyer and Fike, incidentally, have been named honorary chairmen of the Committee supporting the issue.

A question on the bond issue will appear on the May 7 municipal ballot. If approved, the money would be combined with \$4.7 million in matching state funds to build six new libraries, including a central Las Vegas library and children's museum. The projected plan calls for ten community branches to be expanded and the Flamingo Library would be renovated.

But, what about the West Las Vegas Library, 1402 North "D" St.? What about the total library needs of the Black community? According to the thinking of some library staffers, the facilities are under-utilized. Oh, really!!! What is offered? Is the location conducive to proper utilization? Are the real concerns of the populace considered when one speaks of "under-utilized"? It has been noted that the West Las Vegas Library does not have adequate reference materials. As a result, one has to travel to the Main Library on Flamingo Road to supplement the needs.

There are two contrasting views from the Greater Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce and Nevada Black Chamber of Commerce presidents. Elaine Blake of the Greater Chamber says, in explaining the group's endorsement of the measure, "our current library space is simply inadequate to meet the needs of the community".

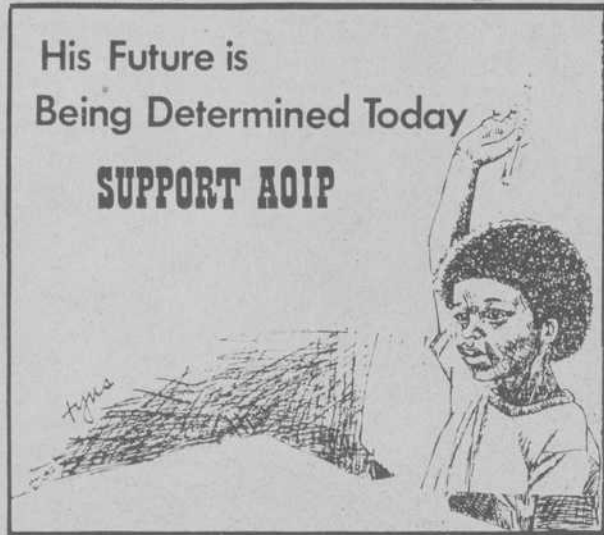
Bob Bailey, president of the Nevada Black Chamber of Commerce sees it differently. "The position is that they are asking us to support an issue that negates the expansion and educational development of the West Las Vegas Library. There is going to be a Board of Trustees meeting Thursday morning (Apr. 25). We will have 3 representatives in attendance. We are going to appeal to the other Chambers to re-think their positions. Unless it gets some consideration, we'll have to take a dim view of corraling any support."

There have been "some strong discussions on the expansion and possible relocation of the West Las Vegas Library", said Bob Wiseman, Director of Library Development.

There are a lot of questions to be answered...the one at the moment: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

His Future is
Being Determined Today

SUPPORT AOIP



To Be Equal

NEW CIVIL RIGHTS ACT A PRIORITY

by John E. Jacob

Passage of the proposed Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1985 should be a major priority of this Congress.

The Act, which has broad bi-partisan support, is necessary to correct the harmful effects of the Supreme Court's decision in the Grove City College case. In that decision the Court ruled that an institution receiving federal funds is not required to comply with federal civil rights laws - only the department or the branch of the institution actually receiving such funds is covered.

The effect is to nullify important federal civil rights protection for minorities, women, and handicapped Americans.

Just days after the Grove City decision, the Justice Department dropped sex discrimination charges against a university's athletics program since no direct funding was involved, even though the university itself received federal aid.

As the months went by, horror stories abounded. A woman instructor at a college charged sex discrimination, but since her de-

partment didn't get federal funds the case was turned down for investigation, although the college itself received federal monies.

Similar cases involved charges of discrimination



John E. Jacob

on grounds of race, sex, and disability. In each of those cases federal action could have been taken to protect civil rights before the Court's Grove City decision. After the decision, those complaints went uninvestigated and violations of civil rights laws went uncorrected.

Reversing the effect of the Court's decision is overdue. Last year, Senate die-hards killed a similar civil rights measure. This year won't see a repeat of that sad story if Congressional

leadership makes passage of the bill a top priority.

The urgency comes from the fact that the negative effects of Grove City are just beginning to be felt. The powerlessness of the government to act in the face of discriminatory abuses means that federal tax dollars are subsidizing dis-

To allow the Grove City decision to create loopholes permitting discriminatory violators of the law's intent to escape scott-free would be a double tragedy. It would encourage a return to the worst evils of discrimination, and it would make the civil rights laws ineffective fictions at a time when

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crimination while the laws on the books are rendered ineffective.

The proposed Act would ensure that the protections of such key rights legislation as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, are interpreted by the courts in the way they were intended when Congress passed them.

Those civil rights laws are responsible for ending racial segregation, for creating new opportunities, for ending various forms of overt discrimination.

they are most needed.

Support for the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1985 cuts across party lines, recalling the joint, bi-partisan efforts that passed previous civil rights laws. That is as it should be, for civil rights is not a partisan issue. It is an issue supported by people of all parties and ideological preferences, for it is nothing less than adherence to the Constitution that governs us all.

America has travelled too long and too far on the road to full civil rights to allow a misguided, narrow decision by the Supreme Court derail it.

Understanding And Dealing With 'Black Functional Illiteracy'

Editor's Note: We have begun deviating for the first time ever from our policy of the past by sharing space in this previously 'sacred' column with distinguished national leaders who are as equally committed to Black solidarity as an essential means of achieving the equity and justice needed for our nation's overall good as are we who are opinion molders in the Black press. There never can be equitable empowerment for all people unless Black needs are addressed from the unique Black perspective just as White needs always have been addressed from the White perspective. The only predicament has been that—in the past—our point of view was left out with the result that there is a great imbalance in

the bargaining power of Black Americans. In order to help correct that grave imbalance, we urge our readers to share these columns widely.

We have heard a lot of talk about Black functional illiteracy...and for many of us, there is question in our minds as to what precisely this term, of expression means. Also, almost as a reflex action, we wonder how this evidently-perplexing situation came about—and what we can do about it.

Fortunately, when I was elected (and became inducted) as the new national president of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., I also inherited what is called an 'oversight' position, re-

served for my fraternity, in that national coalition of well over 80 organizations known as the Assault On Illiteracy Program (AOIP). That function is as National Co-chairperson of AOIP's Public Education Committee. (Each of the other national Greek-letter organizations serve in similar capacities over other AOIP committees). Thus, on an immediate basis, I had to become familiar with all the 'answers'...and, in this column's brief space, I'd like to share with you what I feel are some important

highlights of this unique and comprehensive phenomenon around which all of us easily can make some positive contributions. So, here they are.

The Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice welcomes expressions of all views from readers. Letters should be kept as brief as possible and are subject to condensation. They must include signature, valid mailing address and telephone number, if any. Pseudonyms and initials will not be used. Because of the volume of mail received, unpublished individual letters cannot be acknowledged. Send to: Letters to the Editor, The Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice, 1201 S. Eastern Ave., Las Vegas, Nevada 89104.

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