

# Black Las Vegans For African Relief Effort Underway

During the past several months the world has become aware of the conditions of drought and famine in Africa. Information from the United Nations indicate that 27 countries have been hit by this drought. In 18 of those countries 29 million people are in desperate need. Because the 1984 harvest produced less than half of the normal crop output, 2 million Kenyans have needed relief in 1985. In Ethiopia, several million people are expected to die as a result of the famine.

As this scenario of human suffering has been flashed around the world via the news media, some noteworthy examples of group and individual responses have occurred. These have been truly heart-warming. And since the scenarios are about suffering in Africa, it seems eminently appropriate that some organized response should be forthcoming from those persons who are of Afro-American heritage. For this reason a committee called



Black Las Vegans for African Relief has been organized.

Black Las Vegans for African Relief has one single purpose: to raise funds to provide assistance to the people in those African countries that are experiencing drought and famine conditions.

The goals and objectives of this committee are:

To provide a vehicle for the unified involvement of Black Las Vegans in a common cause;

To involve every Black person in Las Vegas in the act of sacrificial giving in behalf of our brothers and sisters in Africa;

To collect a minimum of \$100,000 to help in the relief efforts currently underway in Africa.

The Committee comprises the following Black citizens of the greater Las Vegas area who have united in this effort and have proudly dedicated their time, talents, energy, and money to the successful culmination of this worthy

project:

Dr. Paul Meacham, chairman, Betty Brown, Ed Brown, Margaret Crawford, Barbara Griffin, Dr. Bernard Hamilton, Sam Head, Jerry Lockhart, Rev. Jesse Scott, Capt. Elizabeth Spencer, Charles Stevenson, and Dr. William Sullivan.

Though these persons hold individual memberships in many professional, social, civic and religious organizations, this effort is not intended as a project of any one organization. Because it is intended as a vehicle of expression from the Las Vegas area Black community, many religious and lay organizations will be asked to assist in this effort.

EVERY Black person (all ages) will be asked to make a monetary donation to this project. No minimum or maximum contribution for individuals has been established. However, we are considering that the Black population of the greater Las Vegas area has been reliably estimated to be in excess of 55,000. An average contribution of \$2 per person would yield more than \$100,000 for this worthy effort.

Within the next few weeks contributions will be solicited by means of the following methods:

- \* Area Black churches will be asked to support the effort by designating a special Sunday as the day for a special collection in behalf of African relief.

- \* Area Black organizations will be asked to help publicize this activity and to help provide logistic assistance in collecting donations.

- \* A special account has been established to accept individual donations during normal banking hours at any branch of the Valley Bank of Nevada.

Although no active solicitation efforts will be conducted among other ethnic groups, freewill donations from any individual or group will be welcomed.

The drive will be held throughout the area during period June 30-July 20. The kickoff effort will be made in all churches on June 30.

Every individual contribution will be acknowledged. Each contributor's name will be printed in the Las Vegas Sentinel. It is felt that such an action will make an important statement to the general public at large about

Black Las Vegans' commitment to self help.

All work done by Committee members will be on a volunteer basis. No salaries, honoraria, consultation fees or any other

form of monetary compensation will be paid to any individual for work done in behalf of this effort. All administrative expenses such as postage, printing, etc., incurred will be identified and ac-

counted for. All monies collected, exclusive of identified administrative expenses, will be turned over to the American Red Cross to be distributed through its African Relief Division.

All individuals making any collections will be identified wearing the official badge with a picture of Africa superimposed with the shape of Nevada and clasped hands.

## “discrimination is discrimination, no matter what it is based on.”

### Smokers Get a Raw Deal

By Stanley S. Scott

The civil rights act, the voting rights act and a host of antidiscrimination laws notwithstanding, millions of Americans are still forced to sit in the back of planes, trains and buses. Many more are subject to segregation in public places. Some are even denied housing and employment: victims of an alarming — yet socially acceptable — public hostility.

This new form of discrimination is based on smoking behavior.

If you happen to enjoy a cigarette, you are the potential target of violent antismokers and overzealous public enforcers determined to force their beliefs on the rest of society.

Ever since people began smoking, smokers and nonsmokers have been able to live with one another using common courtesy and common sense. Not anymore. Today, smokers must put up with virtually unenforceable laws regulating when and where they can smoke — laws intended as much to discourage smoking itself as to protect the rights of nonsmokers. Much worse, supposedly responsible organizations devoted to the “public interest” are encouraging the har-

assment of those who smoke. This year, for example, the American Cancer Society is promoting programs that encourage people to attack smokers with canisters of gas, to blast them with horns, to squirt them with oversized water guns and burn them in effigy.

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#### Zealots, stop maltreating cigarette users

Harmless fun? Not quite. Consider the incidents that are appearing on police blotters across America:

- In a New York restaurant, a young man celebrating with friends was zapped in the face by a man with an aerosol spray can. His offense: lighting a cigarette. The aggressor was the head of a militant antismoker organization whose goal is to mobilize an army of two million zealots to spray smokers in the face.

- In a suburban Seattle drug store,

a man puffing on a cigarette while he waited for a prescription to be filled was ordered to stop by an elderly customer who pulled a gun on him.

- A 23-year-old lit up a cigarette on a Los Angeles bus. A passenger objected. When the smoker objected to the objection, he was fatally stabbed.

- A transit policeman, using his reserve gun, shot and fatally wounded a man on a subway train in the Bronx in a shootout over smoking a cigarette.

The basic freedoms of more than 50 million American smokers are at risk today. Tomorrow, who knows what personal behavior will become socially unacceptable, subject to restrictive laws and public ridicule? Could travel by private car make the social engineers' hit list because it is less safe than public transit? Could ice cream, cake and cookies become socially unacceptable because their consumption causes obesity? What about sky diving, mountain climbing, skiing and contact sports? How far will we allow this to spread?

The question all Americans must ask themselves is: can a nation that has struggled so valiantly to eliminate bias based on race, religion and sex afford to allow a fresh set of categories to encourage new forms of hostility between large groups of citizens?

After all, discrimination is discrimination, no matter what it is based on. □

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Mr. Scott was a Special Assistant to President Ford and so a Deputy Director of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

## Philip Morris U.S.A.

Good people make good things