

BILLIE ROWE'S NOTEBOOK

Africa's Famine: What We Don't See

NEW YORK CITY — First it was the commuting to Detroit. Now it's the Nat'l. Newspaper Publishers' Assoc. (NNPA) confab in Winston-Salem which leaves nothing in your schedule for this week's column, so here writes Nancy . . . Djibril Diallo, chief of Info. United Nations' office of Emergency Operations in Africa, penned a report that says that life in the African countries of Mali and Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta) is not so good. His article "Famine's Hidden Impact" in the June-July edition of Africa Emergency Reports he states that the rush in 1984-85 to get food and medical supplies to famine victims left no time to consider life after the emergency. Mali and Burkina Faso are just as drought stricken as Ethiopia, but received little press coverage in America's general circulation media. According to Diallo's report, both are off the critical list, but need close monitoring.

In Mali the Dogon community in the northern section "is threatened with disintegration because of the relentless cumulative effect of over a decade of drought." The Dogon was once a thriving community. They were able to grow vegetables and millet at the foot of the rocky cliffs in Bandagara. Today many young Dogons are abandoning the land of their ancestors to go to countries like the Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria, Libya and off the continent to France. Those that remain must adjust to lasting changes in their highly structured society. Social class is determined by how close one lives to the top of the mountain — the closer to the top the more prestige and power. Due to the drought and consequently the diminishing population, almost all the people must "scramble down the mountain in search of food and water, twisting totally the existential hierarchy which is an integral part of Dogon life."

Burkina Faso is in the midst of a governmental experiment in decentralize decision-making. More and more rural areas are beginning to have the final say in areas such as health, education, and even the

formulation of the country's five year plan. Though the idea seems to be working, there are still pockets of areas where people continue to die for diseases caused by malnutrition.

NOTES FROM YOUR DESK - reveal that some pretty big names were no shows, for some reason or another, at the Copasetic St. Peter's Church memorial for John W. Bubbles. However, Maurice Hines remembered the father of rhythm tap in a routine he did during his stint at the Vegas Hilton. A note from a stage-sitter said that Hines flies through the air. Oh yeah where's my autograph from Nina Mae McKinney who was also in the memorial . . . After all that fussin' last year, the NAACP will disclose in its report, on the recording industry, that things aren't as bad as they thought they were . . . Because of the NNPA Confab you missed Dick Campbell's 83rd b'day surprise. The tossing chores

were left to Fred O'Neal, Sir James Randolph, Hilton Clark and Judge Bruce Wright. Dick is America's No. 1 activist for the rights of Sickle Cell sufferers . . . Entertainment historian Delilah-Jackson says that Joyce Wein, wife of JVC Jazz Fest, producer George, "is as sweet as she can be." It seems that for the past six yrs. she has arranged for Jackson and retired musicians to dig the sounds on the house . . . Mary Wilson, an original Supreme, may soon get her place in the spotlight. They say she's looking and sounding as sharp as a tack . . . W'Chester's Nap Holmes must be rich. He's hired a p.r. lady and is hosting major networking sessions at his Palace Disco. At a salute to Afro-American elected officials in the tri-state area there were far too many to mention . . . That area's County Center, a major exhibition hall in the tri-state, feted retiring foreman Jesse Davis to an alfresco dinner.

THEY'RE AT IT AGAIN — Like a bad child, the Nat'l. office of the NAACP has again slapped the wrists

of the B'Hills-H'Wood Branch. Its reported that it's over a recent cable to Coca-Cola concerning Columbia Picture's \$40 mil. earmarked for Richard Pryor's Indigo Prods. The Branch wants Col. Pics. to take the money and set up a Minority Enterprise Small Business Investment Corp. (MESBIC) for the sole purpose of producing Black films . . . Shaw U. will receive no more loans from the U.S. Dept. of Ed., due to its defaulting on \$1 mil. worth of previous fed. loans. To make matters worse, the I.R.S. has placed two liens for back taxes totaling \$740,000 on the school . . . "Motown Remembers Marvin Gaye" is a treasure. It's a collection of some of his unreleased material covering the 60s and 70s . . . Over 2500 students and professors have been jailed since the beginning of So. Africa's Emergency Order . . . The Food Foundation has given \$16,000 to the U. of Dakar, Sengal, for a confab on teaching and researching internat'l law. Jackson State U. picked up \$22,000 from the Foundation for a confab on Social-

Welfare policy in the American South. It was also gifted \$100Gs from the Gannett Fund. The three-year grant will enable the U. to appoint a visiting journalist to a professorship for an academic year . . . When Eldridge W. McMillan was elected chairman of the Georgia Board of Regents, instead of getting tongue-tied when asked about being the first Afro-Amer. he simply said, "It's very nice to finally have a Black person in that spot." . . . Susan Taylor, v.p. Essence Communications and editor-in-chief of the magazine, is off to Moscow for the

Goodwill Games. She was invited by Ted Turner whose sponsoring the competition

ARE YOU READY FOR THIS? — "Soul Man," a yet to be released movie, is about an ofay who passes for a bro. to get into Harvard Law School. Sounds like a twist off the "Jazz Singer." annual family reunion . . . If Kipper of musical group Tease ("Firestarter") thinks that droppin' his pants in the group foto will bring added attention — he's right, but it's the wrong kind . . . IT'S BEEN REALLY FOR Nancy Hite hitting the keys of Billy Rowe syndicated columnist.

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