

# Point of View

## Mother's Day: A Cause For Celebration

Some mothers would argue that everyday should be Mother's Day and perhaps rightfully so. Nonetheless, it is but once a year that we shower our mothers with cards, flowers and gifts as tokens of our appreciation for all they are and do.

Just how did we come to set apart a day to revere motherhood? The idea of officially honoring mothers may be less than 100 years old in the United States, but goes back centuries in other parts of the world. According to The World Book Encyclopedia, ancient civilizations — such as the Greeks, Assyrians and Romans — compared nature's creative powers with those of a mother, because they believed a mother is the source of life.

A day for honoring mothers was observed many years ago in England, and in Yugoslavia. In the United States, people began holding their own celebrations in honor of their mothers, but it was Julia Ward Howe in 1872 who made the first known suggestion for an official Mother's Day. In 1907, Anna Jarvis of Grafton, West Virginia and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, began a campaign for a nationwide observance of Mother's Day. By 1912, a delegate from her church introduced a resolution naming her the founder of Mother's Day and the second Sunday in May as the day of observance.

Finally, on May 19, 1914, President Woodrow Wilson signed a joint resolution of Congress recommending the government's recognition of Mother's Day. This led to the proclamation in 1915 of the national observance of Mother's day each Spring.

This Mother's Day (Sunday, May 10) why not take time out to recognize the vital roles mothers play in our lives. There is perhaps no group more deserving of our appreciation.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editors:

The very disturbing headline, "Black Press Declares War on Japan" that ran in the 16 West Coast Black Publishers Association newspapers on Sunday, March 22, has compelled us to write this letter to you.

We are the National Coalition for Redress and Reparations (NCR), a national organization whose goal is to win redress and monetary compensation for the 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry (only half of whom are alive today) who were forcibly relocated and interned behind barbed wire in America's concentration camps during World War II.

We formed in 1980, and for the past seven years, have waged a struggle not only against the U.S. Government for justice long overdue, but a struggle to educate the overwhelming majority of Americans, who, to this day, refuse to believe that a grave injustice was committed against an entire people based solely on their race.

One of the most persistent misconceptions that we have had to address has been the failure to make a distinction

between the actions of the Japanese Government and Japanese corporations, and American citizens of Japanese ancestry.

It is therefore extremely unsettling to us that the West Coast Black Publishers Association has itself failed to make that distinction between what the U.S. Government did to its own citizens in 1942, and the negative role DFS/Dorland Worldwide and Toyota are currently playing with regard to the Black press. We would hope that you would continue to support efforts for redress and reparations based on what happened 45 years ago, and not tie your support to the current dispute with DFS/Dorland worldwide and Toyota. NCR does not agree with DFS — Dorland Worldwide and Toyota's refusal to advertise in the Black press. We do not agree with many other practices of both the Japanese Government and Japanese corporations, such as their lack of affirmative action policies in Japanese companies doing business in the U.S.; their investments in South Africa's apartheid regime; their discriminatory policies

## To Be Equal

# College Aid Cuts Hurt Low Income Students

By John E. Jacob

Black enrollment in the nation's colleges and universities is down sharply from just a decade ago, and a large part of the reason has to be the unenlightened federal policies that have cut access to financial aid.

The alarming decline in the black student population has taken place even though the pool of black high school graduates has grown. Thirty percent more blacks are graduating from high schools than in the mid-1970s, but 11 percent fewer go on to college.

The decline is most easily explained by the shift from direct student aid to reliance on loans, a shift that effectively prices young poor people out of higher education.

In 1975-76, less than a fifth of student aid was in loans. But over the past decade federal loans have tripled to account for about half of all student aid from all sources.

Meanwhile, the total value of federal grants and

scholarships fell by 62 percent. The purchasing power of the average Pell Grant — the federal aid program targeted to the neediest students — declined by about 40 percent since 1980.

The effect of this policy shift is documented in a recent study by the United Negro College Fund. Since 1980, the proportion of students at the Fund's 43 member institutions dependent on loans rose from 4 percent to 46 percent. Over 80 percent of students at those schools depend on student aid to meet

college costs, and as the aid mix shifts from grant programs to loans, fewer can stay in school. The median family income of students at UNCF schools is \$10,733, one-third the median income for all families with a child in college. Almost half are from families with incomes below the poverty line. So, many students are being asked to take on loan obligations larger than their

family's entire income. Those students are also more dependent on federal aid than other students because they are poorer, tend to come from states that offer little or no student financial assistance, and attend institutions that are unable to offer much financial help.

But those colleges have a proven track record of providing the social and



John E. Jacob

academic nurturing that helps their students mature and achieve high levels of excellence.

With the nation facing serious shortages of people with the skills and education necessary in a post-industrial society based on information, the obvious sound policy route would be to increase direct aid programs to expand access to higher education.

Instead, the government

*John E. Jacob is President Of The National Urban League*

cuts aid programs and asks young people to take on debt obligations that are frightening to poor people without the resources to repay them.

Small wonder then, that many poor young people today pass up the chance to go to college, even though that is the surest and best avenue out of poverty.

A Washington lawmaker with a secure income can afford to talk about making students pay their own way by taking out loans. But the picture looks a lot different when you're a 19-year-old from a family whose total income is \$5-6,000 and you are told that if you want to go to even a low-cost college you have to sign up for loans that amount to what seems like a fortune.

Public policies should encourage young people to seek educational opportunities, and that means returning to direct student aid rather than to a policy of burdensome loans that operate to squeeze the black poor out of higher education.

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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*Words of Marcus Garvey*  
By Kofi Tyus

"Negroes should be more determined today than they have ever been, because the mighty forces of the world are operating against non-organized groups of peoples, who are not ambitious enough to protect their own interests."