

# Point of View

## The Hollywood Struggle Must Continue

### Black Tune-In Means Millions For Television Networks

The Cosby Show is strong, meaningful and positive in terms of Black participation in television. The same can be said for the Oprah Winfrey Show.

While this may be true, these shows should not and must not serve as full redemption for the evils and racism of the television industry. As we look at this matter, we must remember that the stars we see at night are in the heavens during the daylight hours. Stars need the contrast of darkness to shine. The television industry, as does the film industry and recording industry, uses the masses of Blacks as contrast fodder to allow the few Blacks in these industries to shine.

As I write these thoughts, I am appalled to have learned recently that Phylicia Rashad has agreed to do a two hour version of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and young Lisa Bonet from the show has done a movie in which she performs an interracial sex scene that has received an X rating from the MPAA.

Money could not have been the motivation for either lady. Why would they drag their images and dignity down to that level?

As horrendous as the actions of these ladies are, they are consistent with the deplorable state of affairs for Blacks in television.

Black dollars support the advertisers who pay the millions of dollars that keep television alive.

Black viewers in homes have a disproportionate impact on the ratings that determine who gets the dollars. In fact, Black home viewers are the balance of power that determines who wins the ratings, and thus who gets the most money.

Yet Blacks have been the most severely affected in the various layoffs that have plagued the industry. Television has virtually turned its back on Blacks.

Blacks must learn what makes television tick and learn new and more intelligent levels of protest so that our clout can be used to force television to hire a fair number of Blacks at all levels.

Dollars in television from advertising are based on rating points nationally and locally. We focus on national ratings today because they affect the major networks who get the monster's share of the money.

There are some 87.4 million television homes in America. A rating point is one percent of the television homes, or approximately 874,000 homes. One rating point means a difference of thousands of dollars.

You often hear or read about the ratings battle among networks. You hear how the Cosby Show and the NBC Thursday night lineup is making NBC the Number One network.

What does that mean?

In a recent week, NBC won the week with a 17.9 rating. ABC was second, with a 15.6 rating. CBS was third, with a 14.1 rating.

That represents a difference of 2.3 between first and second. The difference between second and third is a deviation of 1.5.

The gap between first and third is 4.8 rating points.

How does this reflect on the owner of Black viewership?

In another recent week, the numbers for several shows makes the point profoundly.

In that week, Knotts Landing had an overall rating of 19.4. In non-Black homes the rating was a mere 17.3 rating. The Black rating was a whopping 28.8, bringing the overall rating to 19.4. The show is on CBS.

ABC's Spenser for Hire, which has a Black actor in a featured role, received an overall rating of 13.0. The show got an 11.9 rating in non-Black homes and a 20.7 rating in Black households.

And NBC's Cosby Show, the current leader, got a 34.9 general rating, but a much higher 48.7 rating from Blacks.

This is very revealing. It is also power. Power that Blacks don't use for their own advantage.

Blacks grumble about the lack of Blacks on TV, the lack of fair Black coverage of news, the lack of Black employment

## To Be Equal

by John E. Jacob

Bayard Rustin's death at the age of 77 removes one of the founding fathers of the civil rights movement from the struggle. And only death could have stopped Bayard, for his every moment was spent in activism to make ours a better society.

Some of today's younger militants were at odds with many of his positions, but they have to remember that he paid his dues. He spent time on Southern chain gangs, was beaten, hosed and vilified for his efforts to end segregation, and lived to become the elder statesman of the movement he helped bring to maturity.

The list of causes Bayard championed is endless, ranging from fighting apartheid in South Africa to defending human rights behind the Iron Curtain to helping Haitian and Vietnamese boat people to combatting AIDS.

He was the civil rights movement's ambassador to the labor movement and to the Jewish community, healing the frictions that occasionally arose and forging the coalitions so vital to black progress.

He was a pacifist who hated war and fought it all his life, even spending 28 months in prison for refusing to serve in the military. He was devoted to life, not the taking of life, and that faith in human possibilities informed his activism.

He once wrote: "The principal factors which influenced by life are 1) non-violent tactics, 2) constitutional means, 3) democratic procedures, 4) respect for human personality, 5) a belief that

at TV channels. Blacks are the first ones fired when stations cut back. Blacks are kept out of the corridors of television power.

This happens, but Blacks, through their watching specific shows, provide rating points that bring millions of dollars in advertising revenue to the stations. Blacks then go out and buy the products advertised to them.

We make a double contribution to the pocketbooks of the television monster that ignores us, doesn't employ us and takes our economic needs as a people for granted.

It's time for a change in television and we have the power to demand those changes and to make them happen.

Western Black Publishers Editorial. NNPA National Editorial.

## BAYARD RUSTIN REMEMBERED

all people are one."

And unlike many who profess high ideals, he lived his —those principles informed all of his actions.

Bayard first made his reputation as a firebrand, condemning A. Philip Randolph for calling of his scheduled March on Washington in 1941 after the government acceded to some of the



John E. Jacob

March movement's principle demands.

He later became Mr. Randolph's closest associate, helping him plan and organize another march — the historic 1963 March on Washington. It was Bayard

Rustin whose organizing capabilities helped make the March a success and who helped plan and implement the massive civil disobedience strategy that killed Southern Jim Crow.

Bayard Rustin was a founder of CORE, a participant in the first "freedom ride" in 1947 to protest segregated public accommodations, and organizer of numerous demonstrations and picketings against segrega-

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tion. He was an organizer of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and worked closely with Martin Luther King, Jr.

He led boycotts and demonstrations in the North too, fighting school segregation in New York and elsewhere.

But while others remained locked into the demonstration tactics, Bayard recog-

nized that the achievement of civil rights aims meant the necessity of opening up another front in the struggle —to achieve economic parity.

Above all, his was a democratic vision of equality. He wrote: "I admit that most likely we will not achieve such equality next month, or next year, or even in this decade. But it is a goal we must hold ever before us, even in the darkest of times; and it not only confers dignity upon our struggle, but it should indicate to us how we must act toward one another today if we are to preserve for tomorrow the possibility of a just society."

He started his public life as a teenagers who conducted a one-man sit-in at a Chester, Pennsylvania restaurant that refused to serve him, and he ended it as a fighter for civil rights for all people and as a leader in the effort to end apartheid.

Bayard will be missed and will be remembered by all who value civil rights, justice and equality.

## CHILD WATCH

By Marian Wright Edelman  
President  
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### ROBERT BORK AND YOUR LIFE

Soon, the United States Senate will make a decision that will affect your life and my life for many years to come. The decision is whether or not to approve President Reagan's nomination of Judge Robert Bork to the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court may

seem like a distant institution far away in Washington. But what this court does affects all of us in our schools, our neighborhoods and our homes. For black Americans the Supreme Court's decisions over the last 40 years have often helped to open doors and break down the barriers of segregation.

But Robert Bork would like to change that. He wants to take our nation down a different road, one that would lead us far back into the past. Based on Judge Bork's record, here are some of the things that could still be hap-

pening to you, if he had his way:

© You could be refused housing or shelter because of your race. As long ago as 1948, the Supreme Court outlawed racial restrictions on the sale of housing. But Robert Bork has questioned that decision. He also strongly opposed passage of those parts of the 1964 Civil Rights Act that banned discrimination in public accommodations (hotels, motels, restaurants). Only later did he claim that he had changed his mind.

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