

JOURNAL

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ployment. Certainly, there are now more Black managers and top level executives than ever before. But let's also remember that in New York alone, factory jobs—the traditional first rung for the unskilled—have declined by 130,000. In fact, in 1986 only 21% of employed African Americans and only 16% of employed Hispanics held managerial, professional or technical jobs. This in a city which is 50% African American and Hispanic. These figures also point out the poor and sometimes non-existent education which these racial and ethnic youngsters must seek to overcome.

Dr. Marion Wright Edleman, president of the Children's Defense Fund, noted in a powerful keynote speech at last year's Congressional Black Caucus that, "A significant cause of [the] black family problem lies in young black men's eroding employment and wage base."

This is not only true, however, of young African American males. In March of this

year the National Association of Black Journalists revealed their study showing that the number of racial and ethnic employees in broadcast news had actually dropped and that "all of this decline has occurred among Black men."

For African Americans—both male and female—the employment figures for executive jobs show that racism is still alive and well in America. A National Law Journal study two years ago showed that in 246 of the 250 largest law firms, African Americans composed a mere 1.5% of the lawyers at these firms. And don't ask about African American law partners—the figure is too minuscule even to mention.

As was noted in the Harvard Business Review, "There was strong emphasis in the 1970's for getting the right numbers of black managers. But now we're stagnating.... Many companies hired aggressive, self-motivated, high-achieving blacks who are now feeling deep frustration."

The theory that class is more important than race has

many dangerous pitfalls. It can make those who are the targets of that racism so foolishly complacent that they are no longer capable or prepared to continue the struggle. In these times of increased racism and racially motivated violence—against those in expensive Ralph Lauren suits as well as those in jeans—such complacency could be life-threatening. Equally important, it can make the tenuous African American middle class forget "from whence they came" and their responsibility to other sisters and brothers still shackled in poverty.



Black Explorer Henson Finally Gets Hero's Burial In Arlington

by Chester A. Higgins, Sr.

NNPA News Editor

Matthew Alexander Henson, the Black explorer who 79 years ago preceded Commander Robert E. Peary to the North Pole, thus becoming the first explorer to reach that point on earth, was finally given a hero's burial in Arlington Cemetery.

The burial in those hallowed grounds climaxes years of effort on the part of the Black press, his admirers and family, and a dedicated Black Harvard University professor of neurophysiology S. Allen Counter, who is also a student of the lies of major Black American figures.

Henson, who died in 1955 at the age of 88, had been buried in an undistinguished grave in Woodlawn Cemetery, the Bronx, N.Y. His body was disinterred, as was that of his wife, Lucy Ross Henson who died in 1968. Both were then reinterred, side-by-side, beside Peary in the famed Washington, D.C. military cemetery of heroes.

Henson's relatives, including four Eskimo descendants of a son Henson fathered out of wedlock during his celebrated Arctic sojourn, were on hand for the historic ceremony. Peary also fathered a son out of wedlock in the Arctic and several years ago both sons, Kali Peary and Anaukaq Henson

came to the United States for a "North Pole Family Reunion." Descendants of Peary were invited to attend the Henson reburial but reportedly were unable to come. Peary originally hired Henson as a valet but soon came to rely on him as a skilled navigator, Arctic expert and even a communicant with native Eskimos. Peary died in 1920, but by then he had become recognized worldwide as an explorer the equal of Marco Polo, Magellan and Columbus. Meanwhile, Henson spent most of his post-Arctic life in obscurity as a clerk at the Customs House in New York.

At the graveside, Dr. Counter expressed the feelings of those attending the ceremony, including the many who fought denial of Henson as a hero during his lifetime and since. Said he: "(Henson was denied proper recognition in life) because of the racial attitudes of his time. We are assembled here today to right a tragic wrong, to right the record. Welcome home, Matt Henson, to the company of your friend Robert Peary. Welcome home to a new day in America. Welcome home, brother."

Peary too would have welcomed him for, according to reports, he once praised his co-explorer by declaring: "He must go with me. I cannot make it without him."

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH IS PERFECT TIME FOR RETIREES TO JOIN SCORE

Chairman John Mangan of SCORE Chapter 243 in Las Vegas stated today that May has been designated as Older American's Month throughout the United States by Presidential Proclamation from the White House.

First started in 1963 under President John F. Kennedy, the month was set aside to emphasize the contributions of retirees and other seniors to the economy of the Nation. SCORE, the Service Corps of Retired Executives is highlighting a month-long effort to recruit retired executives and professionals with business-related experience. They can join local SCORE chapters as members who counsel men and women starting businesses on their own or are now in business and in need of management advice.

Mangan said, "This is the very best time to join SCORE. More small business ventures are starting up in America and they are in des-

perate need of advice and counsel. SCORE's volunteer professionals counsel these business beginners and guide them to success. There is no charge for the service, and it is completely confidential."

For older Americans, membership in a local SCORE chapter brings with it the rewards and satisfaction of helping neighbors to prosper. Although there is no pay, all volunteers are reimbursed for travel expenses.

To learn more about SCORE membership, call the Las Vegas Chapter at 388-6611.

IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE

JACOB

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We need to put resources into urban schools so that their kids get the help they need to meet higher standards and tougher demands.

The Carnegie report paints a frightening picture of the miseducation imposed on minority youngsters. In one Chicago school, it found that only ten percent of tenth-graders could read well. One Los Angeles school had a seventy percent dropout rate.

Those kinds of educational outcomes don't happen by themselves. They are the result of years of total neglect. And they're the result of a poverty and alienation so deep that it creates a social environment that discourages academic achievement.

Instead of pinning the blame for that situation on the kids themselves, or labeling them "dumb" or abandoning them, this society is going to have to do whatever it takes to get them functioning up to grade level and to make their schools work for them as well as suburban schools work for affluent kids.

The Carnegie report rightly calls the chaos in urban education "a major failure of social policy." And the way to correct failures of social policy is to put in place sound social policies that create opportunities and engender hope.

That means school reforms that work, and massive federal investments in child care, early childhood education programs, compensatory education, health and nutrition programs for disadvantaged kids.

It means creating coalitions between legislators, educators and parents to make the schools work for every American child.

And that means more solid action and fewer reform proposals that ignore the reality of urban education, and the needs of the urban poor.

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NOTE

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