

—NAZISM, RACISM: REVISITED—

Make no mistake about it, we all let it happen. What am I talking about? I'll tell you. I'm referring to the recent revelations concerning the Imperial Palace's "Nazi War Room."

You know, it's easy to allow things to happen so long as they happen to other people. Well, I have a scoop for you — there are no other people. There is just us—all of us—whatever we are and whatever we look like. We are all, after all, the people.

Remember a few months ago or so, I wrote you concerning an annual spring bash. You remember the thing that had to do with some organization having as the theme of its little fling: "Gone With The Wind"? Near the end of that little essay could be found suggestions for future themes for future spring bashes.

Among them, as I recall, were such as: "Holocaust Revisited," "Hiroshima Flashback," and a few others. The whole thing, of course, was tongue-in-cheek with the point being that there would be some who would indeed be offended at such displays of insensitivity and well they ought to be. However, simultaneously, those groups who would have been offended at such themes obviously saw nothing wrong with the "Gone With The Wind" theme in which a time in the history of a part of our country, where a portion of our population was brutally enslaved and dehumanized, have descendants among us today who were and are indeed of who were and are indeed of offended by such a theme.

I was bothered by it and so I both said something about it and I wrote something about it. I'm certain that I was not alone in being bothered but I am equally certain that I was alone in voicing, publicly, my displeasure with it. I suppose the lesson is that we must all be ever ready to become vocal when we discern such oversights on the part of party planners. As I said in that earlier essay, I'm certain that many of those who participated in the function did so without malicious intent and had they had a heightened sense of awareness, they would not have and they would have quite possibly stood among the ranks of those few of us who spoke out.

Sometimes an illusion is created that seems to suggest that it is ok to treat certain people badly. It is only an illusion. It is never ok to treat anybody badly. Now, don't get me wrong. I do not mean to include in this sim-

plistic dictum those occasions when someone or some group have elected to violate your basic rights as a human being and/or citizen of a nation. Instances, any steps taken by the projected victim to protect his person and/or property is appropriate.

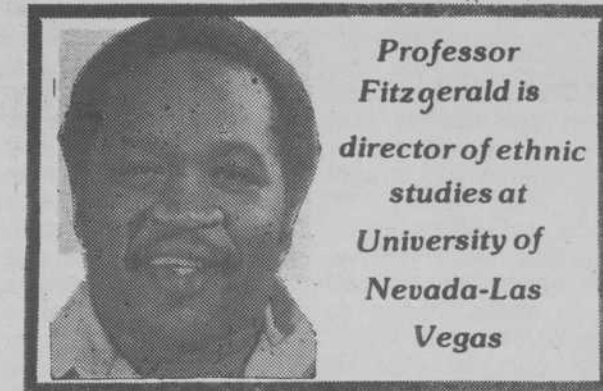
When we allow anyone or any group to be, in effect, oppressed, we create or, at the very least, nurture an environment in which we might expect to be the next victim. If for no other reason than the selfish motivation of protecting ourselves from future violations of that sort, we must be ever vigilant in protecting the rights of others and we must also be ever prepared to come to the aid of whomever is under attack. We must always be bigger than the small-minded people we have come to despise.

A week ago, when I first read of the Imperial Palace's "Nazi War Room," my first reaction was: "WHAT?" "WHAT?" I could not believe my eyes. I looked to the top of the article to make sure that its author was not Dave Barry. It was not. I read the whole thing for a second time and still I could not believe it. That part of me that has been around longer than the rest of me — my memory — said, "Believe it."

My mind quickly encircled the recent conflicts between some blacks and some Jews that have taken place. What my mind was doing was looking for a reason to give me an excuse to not be concerned about some person who seemingly glorified Adolph Hitler. That part of my mind was being taken over by my emotional self. Thank God for Mr. Spock. My rational self came to the rescue. I kayoed my emotions and shouted out at the rest of me: *Now hear this, now hear this . . .*

MEMORIAL From Page 5

Since the first one in 1966, which will take place in Senegal from June 1 to June 30, and will include a ceremony at the Almadies Headland



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One of the things that I've noticed is that whenever something occurs that has a direct impact on a certain group, that group responds to it. Others might be aware of it but rarely become involved because, after all, it has nothing to do with them or so they think.

I believe that there is a hierarchy of oppression and there is someone or some group on the top who is oppressed by no one and that there is someone or some group on the bottom who is oppressed by everyone else and in-between there are groups that are oppressed by those above and who oppress all those beneath and that everyone or group who is beneath someone else of some other group, seeks to impress their immediate oppressors to the extent that they will be admitted into their in-group and can thereby begin to oppress not only those whom they've oppressed all along but also those in the group that they've recently vacated.

Oppression is the key. It must be obliterated and when on one or no group has power over another to the extent that it can influence the treatment and/or quality of life of others, we will come

and on Goree, at the sites where the Memorials will stand.

A reception followed the launching of the Memorial at the United Nations, and featured performances by the Senegalese Ballet and the Niger Ballet Companies.

another from the turn of the century, which shows black people in very debasing terms. To possess such things do not suggest that the collector condones what those artifacts represent.

If the articles we have read in the past week are accurate, what has gone on at the Imperial Palace is much more than simple collecting. We have reports of birthday parties honoring Hitler, of the owner being dressed in a Nazi uniform. We have been told of bumper stickers which read: "Hitler Was Right," and of toasts being made honoring the fiend of the 20th century.

Since those revelations, there has been an outcry from the Jewish community. This is as it should be. Leading Jewish organizations have made public their displeasure. Individual Jews have written letters of protest to the editors of the local newspapers and even spoken out on radio talk shows and on television. Such responses are great but there is a need for more.

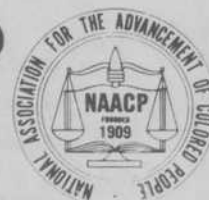
Black, Hispanic, Chinese, Japanese, Native American, Filipino, Italian, Senior Citizens and all of the numberless other social, civic, religious, fraternal and business organizations ought to join in

protesting the presence of this display in our city. This affects all of us . . . Somewhere, somebody who is thinking about visiting Las Vegas must now ponder on whether such attitudes are widespread. They must ask themselves: "If they condone such acts in regards to Jews, how do they feel about the group of which I'm a part? When they see that all of us are condemnatory and represent what is good and honest and decent, their fears will be put to rest. I warn you, though, before you get involved in such activity, you must be prepared to do so each time that someone or some group is humiliated or threatened or held up to ridicule or any other form of abuse. If enough of us who represent enough different groups grabbed ahold and didn't let go, we would soon find that there would be fewer occasions in which there would be a need for such actions. We would all get along fine. It would help our space program because then we would really have to get out there and find other forms of life on planets where no one has gone before, because we can't go for too long without having somebody to hate. Wouldn't it be wonderful hating "E.T."?"

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