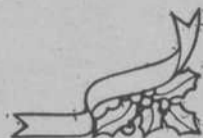


# Point of View

## THOUGHTS AT CHRISTMAS

And so we come again to Christmas with all its color and joy, its magic and wonder, its spirit of good will and warmth. But how do we come to Christmas? What it means to us depends on what we bring to it, not in gifts and outer display, but in the inner offerings of love and faith that abide in the heart.

Christmas is more than a gift-laden tree,  
It is caring and sharing . . . unselfishly.  
*Laura Baker Haynes*



What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. It is a fervent wish that every cup may overflow with blessings rich and eternal, and that every path may lead to peace.  
*Agnes M. Pharo*

*Esther Baldwin York*

## To Be Equal

# CHRISTMAS 1988

by John E. Jacob

This Christmas finds shop windows glowing with expensive gift items . . . and millions living in shelters or the streets.

That shocking disparity between affluence and misery is a year-round phenomenon, but it hits us more forcefully in this holiday season of good will and mankind's hopes for a better world.

The yawning gap between those who have much and those who have nothing is something that cannot be ignored in a season such as this, for it strikes at the very heart of the Christmas spirit and the Christmas message.

Those glaring disparities are usually thought of in political or economic terms, but there is a spiritual dimension to them that must be brought to the fore.

It is clearly a moral issue that so many people are without work, without the skills to hold jobs, subject to discriminatory practices that keep them locked in poverty, and abandoned by the affluent majority.

And it is a moral issue

when those who have much feel they can discharge their obligations to those who have nothing simply by paying taxes and assuming the government will take care of the problem, or by writing a small check to their favorite charity.

But hunger and want can't be subjected to such a dis-



John E. Jacob

tancing process. Surely, the message of the Christ whose birth we celebrate in this holy season is a message of personal responsibility and personal involvement in the struggles of humanity.

All of the world's great religions insist on the personal obligation of every person to be concerned about the fate of the poor and to ameliorate their condition.

So this is a season to con-

We were told that we would "grow out of the deficit." Instead, the deficit tripled.

Some political observers noted that the "no tax" strategy was a way of defunding social programs without actually proposing cuts. Simply put, if the well is dried up, there is not

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sider — and act upon — our common humanity, not to indulge in an orgy of materialistic concerns or to relax into self-satisfied rhetoric about how well we're doing.

Because not all of us are doing that well, it is incumbent upon those who are to do more for those in need whether through acts of personal charity, or through involvement in groups seeking to minister to the needy and

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to change public policies to move us toward a more equal society.

And this season of brotherhood demands that we re-examine their innermost feelings about other people and other groups, and eradicate the destructive impulses of hate and prejudice that poison our society.

In recent years, we've seen an upsurge of discriminatory acts and racially-based violent incidents that negate the ideals of brotherhood.

What better time of year than Christmas to expose such acts and the vicious feelings behind them? And what better time of year to fight those impulses and to pledge ourselves to live the spirit of humanity and brotherhood year-round?

It is also a time to rededicate ourselves to our young ones and pledge ourselves to help them grow to happy, productive adulthood. It's a time to recognize that the best gift we can give them is not the latest fad in toys but the moral strength and the values to lead decent lives and build a decent society.

In this season of hope and love, let me wish you a very hopeful and loving Christmas, and may the coming year be a happy one.



## BLACK AMERICANS BUY AMERICA!

Washington, D.C. — A broad cross section of major national public policy, civic, business, trade, religious and civil rights organizations, together with America's largest associations of black elected officials have issued a nationwide call for Black consumer selective buying for the 1988 holiday season.

### BUY AMERICA— A CALL FOR ACTION

We call on Black Americans, and people of conscience throughout this nation, to encourage the purchase of American made products during the 1988 Holiday Season. We make this appeal as a result of the failure of Japanese corporate and governmental leadership to understand the concern of Black Americans for the Japanese economic impact on our communities and the value of our consumer dollar. These conditions persist despite a fall summit of black leaders which protested a series of racially offensive incidents and advertising with derogatory caricatures which polarized many communities. The grave injustice that comes from tolerance of racism within Japan and its export to our shores must come to an end.

### A STRATEGY FOR JUSTICE

We mount this call in public forums, from church pulpits, across air waves, and in every publication which carries this message for a unified statement on behalf of Black Americans. We will speak out wherever prejudice and racial bigotry blights our global society. We demand of elected leaders, both here and abroad, to aggressively pursue an end to racism, whatever its mani-

festation.

We believe the BUY AMERICA CAMPAIGN WILL BE AN EFFECTIVE STEP TOWARD ACHIEVING THE DESIRED RESULT OF ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION IN THE EXCHANGE OF GOODS AND SERVICES WITH FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC MARKETS. We further seek to facilitate the establishment of educational and cross cultural exchange between the people of Japan and Black America.

### THE MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR BLACK CONSUMER

Our dollars can make a difference. Black Americans purchased more than \$250 billion dollars in goods and services in 1987 and must now mobilize this economic strength in the workplace and the marketplace. Those who would own our cities, our banks, our corner stores, and whose products we consume, cannot disrespect our worth as a people.

For further information call 202/898-1033.

### PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Black Business Council, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Commission on Racial Justice, The Congress of National Black Churches, Congressional Black Caucus, Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Non-Violent Social Change, Minority Business Enterprise Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc., NAACP, National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees, National Association of Black County Officials, National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials, National Black Caucus of State Legislators, National Black Leadership Roundtable, National Conference of Black mayors, National Council of Negro Women, National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Officers, National Newspaper Publishers Association, National Urban Coalition, National Urban League, and Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

## THE ART OF LIP READING

by Congressman Augustus F. Hawkins

We have been challenged by the incoming president-elect to "read his lips," about not raising taxes. The tax which is referred to is the personal income tax. But there are different types of taxes which may be proposed to deal with the \$155 billion deficit. These include taxes on gasoline or imported oil — and so called "sin" taxes on alcohol and cigarettes. These alternatives, which are regressive in my judgment because they unfairly penalize the poor, would not raise enough revenue to appreciably reduce the federal deficit.

Playing the "no tax" game has gotten us in a lot of trouble, and has put us in a position whereby social programs fiercely compete against each other for funds. The tax giveaways of the early 1980s, where the wealthy enjoyed bountiful breaks and major multi-million dollar corporations paid no federal taxes (and in some cases received rebates), depleted much of our revenue base.

The views expressed on these editorial pages are those of the artists and authors indicated. Only the one indicated as the Sentinel-Voice editorial represents this publication.

# Buy American!

