

Point of View

"I Love New York" Is JUST a Song

by Tony Brown

Last week in New York, the City Bureau in charge of attracting tourists claimed that the reduction in visitors was the result of reduction in its budget. The number of people flying into New York has dwindled, the number of people staying in New York hotels (the most expensive in the country) has gone down, and the number of murders has gone up.

This week, a home in a "white" Brooklyn neighborhood recently purchased by an African American store manager was set on fire. Wilfred Phillips and his family had planned to move in the next day.

"When I saw the disaster inside, I cried. Tears came from my eyes. I never thought anything like that would happen," Phillips sadly recalled.

In September of 1987, three African American teenagers walking home from their supermarket jobs were in this same Canarsie area were chased and beaten by a "white" mob, using baseball bats. All of which led the chairman of the Community Board to conclude: "It's the act of a few hooligans that can destroy the good name of a community. There are no racist problems in Canarsie." The same thing was said in Bensonhurst and Howard Beach where African-Americans were lynched in the near past.

Denial of reality is a very low level of psychological defense mechanism guaranteed to lead to more and bigger problems.

For example, the New York of the 80's has become synonymous with the Mississippi of the 50's. Increasingly, New Yorkers talk in terms of "Black and White," literally.

On top of the ethnic enclave and restricted passage of outsiders, some New Yorkers have concluded that being nasty is being a New Yorker. Frequently, retail help won't help you make a purchase and many cab drivers are nasty by profession (if you're African American they may not pick



you up).

It would seem that the tourist bureau should focus on the racial-cultural attitudes of the population and the lack of courtesy that goes with the service. For example, **a jingle as effective as "I Love New York" with lyrics that explain how good it would be to live in a city with clean streets might help eliminate filth and litter in some of the dirtiest communities in the country.**

A campaign could also remind New Yorkers that their Central Park could become a real magnet for attracting tourists, if it were cleaned-up, fixed-up and made safe for family outings.

But most of all, New Yorkers need to travel themselves. They need to experience people from racial and ethnic backgrounds other than their own.

How, one must ask, can a city continue to sing "I Love New York" when New Yorkers are unsafe outside of their own turf? Why will people continue to choose a racist environment to visit when their options are plentiful? **Maybe New Yorkers have sung themselves to sleep, but there is a big country between New York and Los Angeles—and it's called America.**

The residual effects of slavery wrecked the post-Civil War economy of the South. And racism is turning New York into the new symbol of racial intolerance.

You want to know why tourists are avoiding New York? Because they found out "I Love New York" is just a song.

POLITICAL POINTS

By

Assemblyman

Wendell P. Williams

Is "Just-Us" Blinding America?

A person accused of a crime is innocent until proven guilty. This principle is said to be the cornerstone of justice in democracy. It was established as long ago as the year 1215 in the Magna Carta, the English charter of personal liberties. It is supported in the 5th and 14th amendments to the Constitution of the United States, which forbid either the Federal Government or a state government to deprive a person of life, liberty or property without due process of law. By "due process of law" we mean fair laws and fair rules for carrying them out - that is justice.

That sounds good in a high school government class, but in the real America in which we live today, those words are as distant as a walk down a country road, in the minds of some people living in this nation. Moreover, if America was as real as it proclaims to be on paper, then we would truly be the land of the "big melting pot." The land based on democracy, true justice, equality and freedom. But the most frequent place these ideals are seen is on paper.

When the first amendments were added to the Constitution, the 8th one addressed the issue of making bail. It states that excessive bail shall not be required. This intent was to allow persons charged with a crime to be able to carry on their lives and maintain their family obligations until he or she goes to court to be found guilty or innocent. But the question comes with the qualifications of the term "excessive bail". For a man who has a family of four and working at minimum wage, a \$25,000 bail would be excessive, but that same amount may seem like pennies to a wealthy family. If these two men were charged with committing the exact same offense, the wealthy man would not sit in jail and



To Be Equal

What Happened to the PEACE Dividend?

By John E. Jacob

Just a few months ago, in the heady days of the Malta Summit meeting and the eastern European revolt, all the talk was about the "peace dividend" -- the huge budget savings made available by the end of the Cold War.



John E. Jacob

Now all the talk is about how the peace dividend never existed, doesn't exist, and never will exist.

I don't buy that. Simple logic suggests that if the threat of imminent super-power war no longer exists,

males is behind bars or on probation or parole. The report based on data from the U.S. Justice Department said that 23 percent of the entire African-American male population between the ages of 20-29 were under control of the criminal justice system in 1989. That exceeds the number of all ages of African-American men in college. The Constitution is a great document -- if only it were great in the marketplace. Is "just - us" blinding America?

Points in History - 123 years ago on March 2, Howard University was chartered.

196 years ago on March 3, Richard Allen founded the A.M.E. Church.

Point of View - A government that can give liberty in the constitution ought to have the power to protect liberty in its administration.

Extra Point - On March 5, it will be 220 years since Crispus Attucks died at the start of the American Revolution. Isn't it ironic that the first to die for America's freedom was not free himself.

then world realities should be reflected in national security plans and in the defense budget.

Those realities are that the defense budget can be cut drastically at no danger to national security interests.

It's not as if anyone is arguing to cut national strength to the bone -- after the huge multi-trillion dollar Reagan arms build-up of the 1980s, the defense budget is

John E. Jacob is President of the National Urban League

so swollen with fat that even radical cuts won't begin to weaken us.

Defense Secretary Cheney has suggested some cuts in future defense spending, but they don't begin to represent reasonable post-Cold-War levels.

They're just cuts from earlier projected estimated budgets, not real dollar cuts. But real dollar cuts are what the economy needs and the public expects.

A New York Times-CBS News poll in January found that three out of four Americans believe the warming US-Soviet relations can result in cuts in military spending and two out of three want the peace dividend spent on resolving problems like drugs and homelessness.

An article by Jack Beatty in the February Atlantic Magazine says that the Stealth bomber, whose main mission is to "hunt Soviet mobile missiles" has already cost \$22 billion and the Air Force wants to buy 132 of the planes for \$79 billion -- \$600 million per plane.

That alone is enough to fund an Urban Marshall Plan to revive our cities and prepare tomorrow's workforce to become competitive.

It will take only \$3 billion to provide enough funds to ensure remedial teaching for every eligible disadvantaged child in America.

And the government would actually make money on the

See JACOB, Page 20

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