

Black Men: The Endangered Species The CIA Readies For Action In WLWV

SECOND IN COMMAND

The Ray Willis Report

By: Ray E. Willis

On Sunday, March 25, I was asked to bring a Men's Day message to the congregation of New Bethel Baptist Church of Las Vegas, of which I am a member. The topic I chose to speak on for this occasion was "Black Men: The Endangered Species." My column this week is devoted to the text of that address.



Ray E. Willis

Bringing honor, glory and praise to God who makes all things possible. Good morning church. To Rev. Wesley, associate ministers, visitors, members and friends. The topic of my brief talk this morning is "Black Men - The Endangered Species." Let me repeat that. "Black Men -- The Endangered Species."

When you hear the phrase "Endangered Species," what does it make you think of? To me it means something or someone who is in trouble of becoming extinct. In other words, slowly dying out. Another term for this is genocide, which means "the deliberate and systematic destruction of a racial, political, or cultural group."

If you've ever watched Wild Kingdom on T.V., you've seen endangered animal species such as the condor, the American bald eagle, the buffalo and even the Panda bear. But you'll never see a story on Wild Kingdom about the most endangered species on planet earth. The Black man.

No laws exist to protect Black men from becoming extinct. But you just go out and deliberately kill a bald eagle. The consequences include severe fines and time behind bars. On the other hand, if someone kills a Black man there's no fine, and maybe no time. You see, there's no special protection for us like there is for wild animals. Just ask Keith Harrison, a Valley High School Honor student who was brutalized not long ago by the local authorities, or Rev. Marion D. Bennett who was body-slammed to the ground by police for no reason at all other than because of his color. This is the cross which we as Black men have to bear.

"Black Men -- The Endangered Species."

When you closely examine the grim statistics, they make it crystal clear what our plight as Black men will be if we don't do something now.

By Muhammad Abdullah

On May 16, 1989 the courageous residents of the Carey Arms Apartments Annex on West Lake Mead and Comstock Avenue started the Community Improvement Association or CIA for short. The association was formed by Michelle Bardlett, President, Yvette Perkins, Vice President and Dorothy Allen, Acting Secretary.

hundreds of thousands of successful Black men in this country who have succeeded against seemingly insurmountable odds.

In fact, that's the name of John Johnson's biography "Succeeding Against the Odds." Johnson, publisher of Ebony and Jet magazines, grew up dirt poor in Arkansas. He and his mother were on welfare in Chicago before he made it big. Now he's the richest Black man in America. But...You don't have to be famous or have money to be a success. Love the Lord, be a good provider for your family and loved ones, stand up for what's right and be counted. That's the true measure of a man's success. I want to commend you Black men who are here today for what you individually and collectively have accomplished. Obviously though, it's just not enough to simply say you are a success in life. Never, ever forget where you came from. Never pass up an opportunity to reach back to help a younger brother also to succeed. Remember, we can make a difference if we act to make it so. The same unity of purpose which put Bethel's Men's Day Program together can erase the bleak statistics I shared with you today. God bless you all, and I thank you for the opportunity to bring you this message.

A long list of problems with maintenance were pointed out. There were some tenants, for example, that had work orders in for up to three years!

Some of the complaints of the CIA were: 1) High turnover in management - in the last two years there have been five new managers; 2) poor security; 3) no lights on the side of buildings - there were over 22 mugging attempts at the Lake Mead Annex alley in the past year, plus 12 car burnings and tire slashings in the alley - no one parks there at all now; 4) fire hazards - many vacated units are not boarded up and some residents have abandoned furniture and are storing trash in the vacant units - some units had as much as twenty bags of trash stored on the floor; 5) many storage rooms are piled with trash - several storage rooms had trash piled as high as three feet; 6) safety hazards - exposed wiring from main electrical boxes - this reporter noted at least ten main electric boxes with no locks on them; 7) holes on the side of buildings and in the block

Bardlett said the CIA was started because they were tired of the drug sales, gang violence, muggings, lack of community pride and mainly poor security and poor management.

"I became tired of the situation and I thought about my children and their future so I decided to stop complaining and do something about it," Bardlett said.

"We got together and we circulated petitions throughout the Lake Mead Annex. There were sixty (60) residents there at the time and we collected 40 signatures. This means that people do care! We then sent a letter to Mr. Evan Williams, Secretary-Treasurer of Dalton Properties and demanded that he meet with us to discuss the matter. We told him that we would demonstrate, go on a rent strike or to the press if he did not see us to address our concerns," she continued.

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Karl Sannicks

Assistant Director of the Nevada Prisons System, Karl Sannicks, officially began his appointment on March 17, 1990. He is the second in command over Nevada's prison population and staff.

Executive Officer in Texas where he was responsible for over 38,000 inmates, 13,000 employees and a billion dollar biennium budget.

Serving 26 years in the U.S. Army, Sannicks rendered his distinguished military service in the field of law enforcement and corrections, retiring with numerous awards and honors.

Ron Angelone, Director of the Nevada Prison System, states that "Sannicks will be an asset to our system with his diverse criminal justice background and his innovative and humane approach to corrections."

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