

# Point of View

United Church of Christ  
Commission for Racial Justice  
**CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL**

BY Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.  
NEW HOPE FOR HAITI

Now that the nation of Haiti appears to be moving away from neo-colonial and military dictatorship, the people of Haiti for the first time in more than three decades are experiencing new hope for a better future. Mrs. Ertha Pascal-Trouillot has been selected as Haiti's Provisional President following the ouster of Lt. Gen. Prosper Avril, the former military leader of Haiti.

Mrs. Pascal-Trouillot has a distinguished career as an effective lawyer and jurist. She was the only woman on Haiti's Supreme Court. President Pascal-Trouillot affirmed that she intended to bring true democracy and freedom for all Haitians. She stated, "I have no other ambition but the singular service of my country. My government will be what you want it to be, constantly animated by the breath of your aspirations and your invincible hopes."

The United Nations has listed Haiti as being one of the most impoverished nations in the western hemisphere. Over the last twenty years, over one million Haitian refugees have fled Haiti seeking political refuge in other nations. Many Haitian refugees came to the United States only to be denied refugee status. Some Haitians have even been imprisoned in Florida and New York as so-called illegal aliens. Yet, for many years, U.S. foreign policy makers supported the ruthless Duvalier's dictatorships over Haiti.

If President Pascal-Trouillot keeps her promises, thousands of Haitians will probably return home to help rebuild the nation under civilian rule. The United States owes the people of Haiti not only an official apology for years of supporting the cruelty of military dictatorships, but also the United States should offer economic development aid to help reconstruct the Haitian economy.

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## Why Are the Heroes Always White?

By Tony Brown

"Why Are The Heroes Always White?" the front page headline in *New York Newsday* wanted to know. Immediately I was reminded of another question that the Indian asked the cowboy: "Why do the cowboys always win in the movies?" "When the Indians produce a movie, the Indians will win," the cowboy responded.

"Indians" and "cowboys" are euphemisms for "Blacks and White-controlled Hollywood" respectively, but their conversation is the answer to Cheryl McCarthy's *Newsday* column.

McCarthy is an African-American columnist who writes some very interesting and insightful articles, of which this one analyzing Hollywood's products is no exception. Her question arose recently when she watched the NBC movie on



Tony Brown

the Howard Beach beating of two African-American men and the lynching of a third. The protagonist, or focus, of this "Black tragedy" was the "White prosecuting attorney": "Only one man can unravel the mystery and bring the guilty to justice," NBC told its viewers.

In the movie "Cry Freedom," McCarthy wrote,

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## POLITICAL POINTS

By

Assemblyman  
Wendell P. Williams

### We Can Make A Difference To America's Children and the World's

There is talk now of the American economy facing a "third deficit" outside of our trade and fiscal deficits. This "third deficit" is said to be due to insufficient public investment in our people and economic infrastructure. Americans of African ancestry have borne the brunt of this insufficient investment. For years we have made the case that holding us back, America is being held back.

Societies are often judged by the way they treat their children. Our children move toward a future threatened today by a conservative Supreme Court that lashes out at affirmative action programs and civil rights statutes with a smug and defiant attitude of insensitivity that discounts 400 years of racial one-up-man-ship.

We, as a people, must stand before the world as perhaps the last expression of the possibility of man. We must work to devise social order for our children, where justice is the supreme ruler and law is but its instrument; where freedom is the dominant creed and order is but its principle. Only we can make it better.

At the same time, we must shape our children's minds so that they can remain strong and not assume by default or design that they are deserving of only the lesser things in life as some would have them believe.

Moreover, as we view the problems of our children, we must take a global look, because many of the problems facing America's children are repeated again and again around the globe. And, perhaps more importantly, we never forget and demand that government officials understand that government policies that help children in the U.S. can have a positive impact on children everywhere.

When America cuts its military budget to educate its children, the Soviet Union can cut its military budget to educate its own children. If this nation commits itself to solving the drug problem in American cities where people buy cocaine, there will be a corresponding reduction of violence in the Latin American villages where people grow cocaine.

There is no doubt that America's greatest tragedy is the fact that so many children, both African-American and white, are falling victim to a virtual plague of evils including hunger, AIDS, crack cocaine, and a declining government investment in their health and well-being.

Therefore, it is up to us to dismantle the evils that jeopardize our future. Let us move in a manner that says to the world, that we are going to be equal participants, and that we will persist until we succeed. We must be willing to take the risk that will be necessary in order to secure for our children a future of opportunity.

**POINTS IN HISTORY:** 15 years ago on April 8th, Hank Aaron set a new home run record.

129 years ago on April 11th, Spelman College was founded.

**POINT OF VIEW:** The tragedy of hunger affects children most gravely by denying them the future which is their basic human right. The loss of a single individual hurts all humanity - but the loss of children is especially tragic.

Mickey Leland



Assemblyman Williams

## To Be Equal:

# RIGHTS ACT COUNTERS JOB BIAS

By John E. Jacob

Congress is considering a new bill cosponsored by an impressive bipartisan array of legislators, the Civil Rights Act of 1990.

The Act aims at overruling some of last year's devastating Supreme Court

Another decision limited the rights of victims of racial harassment to sue.

And in two cases decided the same day, the Court allowed white firemen to challenge a standing consent decree enabling more African Americans to be promoted, but that it was not OK for women demoted under a two-year-old seniority plan to challenge it.

Already, those rulings

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decisions that drastically reduced federal protections against workplace discrimination.

One decision overturned a 1971 ruling that said employers had to prove a practice that has a disproportionate impact on minorities was justified by legitimate business reasons. Now, it's up to victims of such discrimination to prove that such practices are unreasonable.

have had a chilling effect on anti-discrimination efforts.

The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund found that over 100 cases were victims of discrimination and harassment sued for damages have been dismissed or are likely to be lost.

Standing local government minority hiring and promotional plans have been challenged, despite meeting the strict legal tests that prevailed before the Supreme

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## "Thumbs Down on Latest Deficit Reduction Gimmicks"

By Congressman  
Augustus F. Hawkins, Sr.

An economic battle of major proportions is underway as the nation debates the best way to meet our national priorities. Some believe that deficit reduction should be the central goal of all government policy decisions. In general, these policy makers believe that federal spending, even for widely supported worthwhile programs like education and Social Security, should take a back seat to cutting the deficit. They are motivated by a desire to calm financial interests, who skeptically view government in-

volvement in the economy. Rep. Dan Rostenkowski (D-IL) has sent up a "trial balloon" proposal that would achieve deficit reduction by freezing all federal domestic spending. In addition, he would reprogram anticipated (peace dividend) defense savings to go solely towards deficit reduction and make some tax changes, including increasing consumption taxes on gasoline, alcohol, tobacco and other selected items.

While increasing taxes on items that pose enormous

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