

# THE RAY WILLIS REPORT

# CRYSTAL BALLING IT

by Ray Willis

Some call it predicting the future. Others call it futurism. The term I like to use for forecasting trends, lifestyles and the world of the future is "Crystal Balling It". Let's apply crystal balling to what America might be like racially-speaking 50 or more years from now.

During 1990, a *Time* magazine article stated, "By the year

2056, the average U.S. resident will trace his or her descent to Africa, Asia, the Hispanic world, the Pacific Islands, Arabia — almost anywhere but White Europe."

Right now today in our neighboring state of California almost 60 percent of the residents are Black, Hispanic or some other non-White minority.

Aligning present-day realities

with futuristic predictions, let me outlay my own notions about life in America during the second half of the 21st century. Here goes!

Whites will remain the power elite but will comprise a dwindling minority of the nation's population.

The time-honored concept of "one drop of Black blood makes you Black" will become passé,

giving way to new categories descriptive of multi-racial and bi-racial people of African descent.

The net impact of the multiple sub-groupings for Blacks and other minorities is to be divisive. In so doing, a temporarily false numerical advantage will be restored to those of European descent.

In the second half of the 21st century, social standing, wealth

and educational level combined will determine class distinction. Race will be of lesser importance, but it will still matter.

Access to education will determine an individual's destiny and station in life.

Racial stereotyping will wane as media images of African-Americans depict us in much broader range and depth.

Well, that's just a partial per-



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spective of the future as I see it. On the whole, it sounds pretty good, doesn't it? I think I'll just stop right here and for good reason. I don't want to get too carried away and have you thinking I wear rose-colored glasses all the time.

## HUNDREDS ATTEND "A NIGHT OUT WITH OUR YOUTH PROGRAM" AT WEST L.V. LIBRARY



Members of the Kappa League perform a skit written by Greg Aikens that was a reenactment of a fatal gang confrontation.

by Muhammad Abdullah

As part of a weekend series of events, the Martin Luther King Committee sponsored a "Night Out With Our Youth" program at the West Las Vegas Library, on Wednesday evening, January 16, 1991.

Mrs. Marie Jordan, director, WLV library and staff, along with M.L.K. Committee members, are to be commended for the fine job they did in handling the overflow crowd of hundreds that lined the tiny conference room walls as all available seating were taken. People young and old could be seen crowded in the hallways and the lobby as they anxiously awaited the start of the evening's program.

In a telephone interview with Mrs. Dora Harris, president, M.L.K. Committee Las Vegas Chapter reminded this Sentinel-Voice writer that the general theme of the week's activities was "Save the Children." The theme unfolded as Harris turned the microphone over to Linda

Porter, local journalist and staff member at WLV library, who introduced the Master and Mistress of Ceremonies Stacy Pittman and Angel Washington, who did an excellent job in presenting the performances for the evening.

Many anxious parents, relatives, teachers and onlookers watched patiently for their child, friend or relative to perform. The program included piano selections, a flute selection, dancing, rap groups — both male and female, "Negro National Anthem", poetry recitals, excerpts from "I Have A Dream", speech of Rev. Martin Luther King, martial art exhibits, and the highlight of the evening, a dramatic, true-life skit which was introduced by Larry Weekly, Community Affairs Director, KCEP radio.

Weekly introduced Greg Aikens an ex-gang member who encouraged the crowd to pay special attention to the skit because it was a true story. Aikens

narrated the skit and talked about how he was a changed man after the incident. According to Aikens one of his best gang partners of the "Crips" was shot in cold blood, ten years ago, in a California high school by two rival gang member of the "Bloods".

"This scene was the turning point in my life", he said ... "After my friend was shot, I no longer cared or respected life, my attitude led me to a life of crime ... Eventually, I received a prison term of ten years ... The person who was holding the dead friend after he was shot in this scene was me!!! We must join together and "Stop the violence" ... Stop the senseless killing of our youth ... We need to learn to love each other and protect each other as brothers and stop destroying each other!" he said.

Ron Wilkens, a publicity executive with Anheuser Busch Brewing Company, dispensed with business for the moment and stirred the interest of the crowd particularly the youth when he talked about how most of his friends "gave in" to despair and hopelessness and tried to discourage his educating himself and trying to excel. Wilkens



Writer/director, Greg Aikens, speaks to an inspired audience at the youth night program.

left an impression of "hope" on the minds of the youth and said that he would make himself available for counseling before he departed from the city to return to his regional office. He reminded the young people not to let any one or any obstacles stop them from achieving their dreams.

Dora Harris closed the evenings program by acknowledging members, of the M.L.K. committee, W.L.V. library director and staff members, and program participants and parents who spent tireless hours in re-

hearsals to make the program a success.

Harris reminded the wall to wall crowd to remember the "urgent need" for more space. "Make sure that each and everyone of you call Charles Hunsberger, director, Clark County Library District and encourage him to approve a larger auditorium at the W.L.V. Library." She said at present there are plans to build a 250 seat auditorium. Groundbreaking should take place in several weeks.

All those who participated in

the performances displayed tremendous talent. With the increased growth of the African-American population in Clark County and the increasing number of community organizations sponsoring weekly events, it is extremely important that we put our support behind this effort to increase circulation at the W.L.V. library and continue to present more cultural awareness programs to showcase our upcoming and talented young people.

The Dream Lives! Let's keep hope alive. Our library needs us. Let us show our support.

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