

RACIAL REALITY

This story had its origins back in 1961 when I was in the sixth grade. As a member of my all-Black racially segregated elementary school's safety patrol, we eagerly looked forward to attending a special end-of-year party for Black and White school patrol teams at an amusement park in my hometown, Fort Smith, Arkansas. It was especially meaningful for me and my fellow patrol boys from the all-Black Howard Elementary School because this was the only time we could enter the park. The facility was totally segregated.

We often stole away from home and gaped at the train through a chain link fence as it sped noisily around the track which followed the park's perimeter. When the train came past our watchpost we could catch a whiff of the fumes bellowing forth from the smokestack as it chugged by. This only served to further fuel our desire to one day ride the miniature iron horse. When the long-awaited day finally arrived, we were raring to go.

Once we got to the park, we headed straight for the train—even stopping like most of the other boys did, to get ice cream, cake and sodas. Since we were first, we boarded the first car just behind the engine. In just a few minutes though, I felt a gentle tap on my shoulder. A stern Ozark Mountain voice said, "You colored boys are going to have to get out and ride the caboose." And so we did, without knowing full-well that we had just been discriminated against. We were too young to understand. And besides, we had suffered far worse over the course of our then short lives.

It wasn't until some time later that it fully dawned on me what had actually happened.

What prompted me to reminisce about my true-life experience was something similar that happened this very month, during 1991, in South Carolina involving two Black Cub Scouts. It seems they were denied admission to a water park because of their race. Said one of the mothers of the two boys in the aftermath of the incident, "This kind of stuff happened when I was a child, but I would never have dreamed it would happen to my son."

To say the least, then as now, it is a rude lesson in reality. Hard to believe thirty years really hasn't made that much of a difference.

ON ANOTHER NOTE - In the Open Mouth and Insert Foot department, I'd like to make amends for a couple of serious but unintentional oversights in last week's column, "Party Places." It wasn't enough that I failed to give space in this column to Sarann Knight-Pretty's Club Rouge or even to the New Town Tavern, but I was remiss in not even mentioning them! I'd like to set the record straight, here and now. To Baboo and Dan Curtis, keep-on-keeping-on, bringing us such top talent as The Clean Up Women Betty Wright, Mr. Turning Point Tyrone Davis, and all the superb Chittin' Circle talent that you have become famous for. The Food's good too. By the way, Tyrone is supposed to have a return engagement in October.

And especially to Sarann Knight, whom I have known personally since I first moved to Las Vegas many years ago, thanks for providing us with a full-service Black establishment such as the Moulin Rouge/Club Rouge. Not only do groups like Nevada Black Chamber of Commerce and numerous other frequently hold official functions at Sarann's place, but the Rouge also is an established party place in and of itself. And while the Club Rouge should definitely be on anyone's Party Place list, it has a succulent array of excellent soul food served from a full kitchen on the premises.

Please patronize the Moulin Rouge/Club Rouge and the New Town Tavern, two especially real live Party Places on anyone's list. By the way, I'll have more on the Moulin Rouge in a special column later devoted specifically to this stellar establishment. As a preview, the Rouge has been purchased as of recently by the , bring the landmark establishment into the soul fold—lock, stock and barrel. Congratulations Sarann! Until next week.

Black Governor Likely To Announce For President Labor Day

By Franklin Tate

Senior aides to Virginia Governor L. Douglas Wilder recently had dialogue with Democratic Party officials that indicated the 60-year old governor will officially announce his candidacy for President around Labor Day.

Wilder (D-Va.) became the nation's first ever black elected governor in 1989 when he won the gubernatorial race with 41 percent of the white vote. Virginia has only a 19 percent black population. The City of Richmond where the governor sits, ironically was the first capital of the old Confederacy that fought the Civil War to maintain slavery.

In an exclusive interview for the NNPA (National Newspaper Publishers Association), Wilder sounded like a political physical who had diagnosed the nation's ills and had the prescription for the cure.

Concerning President Bush's very high post-war approval rating, Wilder said, "the rating is superficial. It has nothing to do with pocketbook issues."

Wilder, who in April launched

a presidential exploration committee, then gave a preview of the message voters could expect from him. "(The presidency) is about being service-oriented to the people of this country...jobs for people who live (in America)," he said rhetorically.

"We need better educational opportunities for Americans," he continued, "cleaning-up our water and making our air safe to breathe" should be presidential priorities. Fighting crime and the "spread of drugs", he said, should be waged within the context of "reclaiming our youngsters, and the dropouts."

"The madness in our cities," Wilder explained, has the African-American male "being disproportionately tarnished, and sometimes permanently. Education is the key to reducing the market for drugs."

Through vocational education as well, the governor said, for every young black male "that we can keep out of prison, we should make certain that we kept him out of the slaughter-house of drug abuse and keep him in the classroom...and put him in the workforce."

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RESOLUTION SUBMITTED UNDER ARTICLE X, SECTION 2 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE NAACP 1991 - PART II

Resolution for the United States Government to Consider Reparations to African-Americans.

Approved

WHEREAS, in the United States, a nation forged in a revolutionary struggle for inalienable human rights, natives of Africa were torn by force until the year 1808 from their homeland and subjected to the barbarities of institutionalized slavery; and,

WHEREAS, in the post-revolutionary United States, slavery was maintained by governmental fiat, with violence, depriving African-Americans of freedom of association, privacy, life, liberty, property and sue process of law in complete abdication of the spirit and letter of the Bill of Rights from its inception and ratification to the enactment

(See Resolution, Page 17)

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In May, Wilder and Senator Terry Sanford of North Carolina chaired the first African-American Males Conference in Washington. Three more are scheduled.

Wilder interjected that the Bush administration also had not addressed the domestic issue of "healthcare. Millions of people in this country are without any healthcare."

Regarding federal wasteful spending, he said "I'd submit, you could trim \$25 billion administratively from the budget in just fat...and give just half of that to the mayors of our cities to help them see some relief."

Regarding the President's rejection of the Civil Rights Bill, Wilder spoke in very strong terms, "It is a lack of moral leadership. (Bush) has a moral responsibility to put fourth an act which protects the rights of the locked-out people."

The President's argument that the proposed 1991 Civil Rights Bill is a "quota" bill does not fly with Wilder. "(Bush's) nomination of Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court, if that isn't quota...what is it?" he asked. "Affirmative action says...when you get ready to hire again, why not hire these people who have been left out forever."

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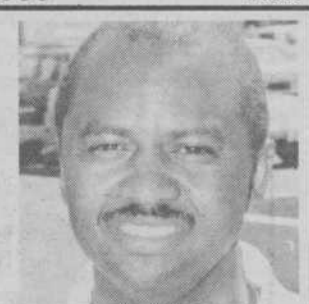
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