

**YOUTH COMMENTARY****I Never Ran From The Klu Klux Klan**

By Vanessa Thompson -  
Western High School

Ralph Ellison, a famous black author once said, "There's nothing in the world as dangerous as a sleepwalker."

Picture it, 1963, a hot sizzling day in Atlanta, Georgia. A black baptist minister steps forth to deliver a speech about a dream, a dream that was once engraved in the hearts of so many African Americans. True enough, this dream is still alive today but we as adults seem to be asleep to this dream.

Paul Robeson once said "Negro action must be decisive. We have the power to end the terror and win for ourselves peace and security throughout the nation."

We are asleep, asleep to the facts that have been and are being hidden from us today about our history, our people and of the great contributions given to America and other nations by our race.

Some members of groups such as the skinheads and the Klu Klux klan say that we are niggers, apes, baboons and other cruel names which are too numerous to list. They say "we" do not belong in this beautiful land of America. I say "we" as beautiful African Americans, were not all given the chance to decide in the first place for it was a decision made by the Caucasians' ancestors when they robbed us, beat us, and took us from our native land *Akublimlum*, which is the original name of Africa before it was robbed of its name and culture.

When I was younger and couldn't read, my parents and grandparents told me stories of a time when all African Americans stuck together for one cause and one purpose. No matter what job they held, or exactly where they lived, they were still respected by other African Americans both male and female. Thirty years ago we were fighting for equal rights and equal opportunities throughout the United States. Now, in the year of 1991 we are fighting for our own lives in our own communities.

"I have never had to run from the Klu Klux Klan so I shouldn't have to run from a black man" was a lyric from rap artist Kool Moe Dee in the "Stop The Vio-

lence" movement made by east-coast rappers in 1989. Regardless, if its Kool-Mo-Dee, or Malcolm X, that made this statement, no statement could be more true today.

Since the beginning of the Summer of 1991 there had been

several deaths. School officials hoped that the residual effects of these deaths would not cause any unnecessary chaos within the schools so far their wishes have been granted. There have not been any major disturbances on school grounds. However,

outside of school grounds students have been affected. In the past 2 months two young and very focused African American men have died senselessly, Calvin Long and Ron Spencer.

Calvin Long, a former Bonanza High School student, was

an innocent victim of senseless violence. While sleeping in the back seat of a friends car awaiting a ride home, Long was an innocent victim of a drive-by-shooting.

Long was said to have been asleep even after the shooting began. Calvin Long was in his second year at Dixie Jr. College and had intentions of leaving that day to return for the upcoming fall semester. Unfortunately his destiny was not met. Long planned on pursuing a degree in Law and could have been another promising African American Lawyer, but we will not be able to see this dream come true.

Dr. Martin Luther King often spoke of the day when we will all live as one, no matter what color, race, or creed. I once thought that we had reached that point in

time. But now I feel as if it was all a part of my own personal fantasy. My own way of keeping my eyes shut to reality.

Ron Spencer, a seventeen-year-old senior at Western High School was killed Friday, September 6th 1991 while trying to enter a car after violence broke out at a local club. Family, friends and classmates were all devastated by this tremendous loss. Spencer was said to have been quiet and very cheerful, on and off school campus.

We all need to wake up out of our dreams and pay attention. Not only to the reality of violence, but also in the reality that to ignore and turn your heads to this problem is in its own way "Black on Black crime". The African American is asleep and it is now time for us all to WAKE UP!

**Minority Scholarship For Study Abroad Offered**

Applications for the second annual American Institute For Foreign Study College Division Minority Scholarship for the fall 1992 semester are now being accepted. The scholarship is being offered in an effort to help increase the participation of ethnic minority college students in study abroad programs.

The scholarship, which is applicable in semester AIFS programs in Austria, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico and Spain, includes both tuition and room and board. Applications for the scholarship will be accepted from African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, Native-Americans, Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Selection of the scholarship winner will be made based on the fulfillment of certain program requirements, financial need, academic accomplishment, demonstrated leadership ability, extracurricular activities and a written statement by the applicant concerning the objectives for wanting to study abroad and why the scholarship will contribute to the applicant's personal and career goals.

The College Division of the American Institute For Foreign Study is a nationwide organiza-

tion that provides comprehensive overseas study and travel programs. Since the company was founded in 1964, over 500,000 students and teachers have participated in programs in Europe, Australia, Asia, Mexico and the Soviet Union.

Application forms and further information may be obtained by writing: Minority Scholarship Selection Committee, Attn: Anne Decker, AIFS, 102 Greenwich Ave., Greenwich, CT 06830 or by calling (800)727-2437, ext. 6106.

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICIALS MONITOR FINANCES, STAFFING**

School officials are keeping a close eye on factors affecting district finances—the possibility of state budget cuts and enrollment figures, in particular—and their potential impact on staffing levels during 1991-92, Superintendent Brain Cram said.

Staff layoffs are a likely result if the district is forced to cut its budget to help make up for state revenue shortfalls, Cram said. Gov. Bob Miller has announced the possibility of cuts of 4 percent, 8.5 percent or 12 percent. District officials, meanwhile, are waiting for further word from the governor, which could come later this week or next week.

"Cuts of these magnitudes would be difficult to absorb without some effect on the education program and to employees," Cram said. "If reductions are imposed, every measure will be taken to avoid impacting serv-

ices to students."

The district currently receives \$3,212 from the state for each student. If either enrollment or the amount of state aid per student is reduced, the district's budget would be adversely affected. Conversely, the state would receive some financial relief if enrollment figured fall below projections because it would not have to provide as much money to local districts.

Based on preliminary enrollment figures, however, layoffs are unlikely, Cram said. Officials are optimistic regarding enrollment because students have continued to enroll since an unofficial count earlier this month showed figures to be about 1 percent below projections. Officials expect enrollment on the official count day of Sept. 20 to be close to the 129,500 students projected for this school year.

**School District**

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much as last year, when 1,200 more students registered during that time span. Clark County also has a tradition of continued enrollment growth throughout the school year. "We anticipated that our growth would be more moderate than the past two years," Cram said. "We are fortunate that we have taken a conservative approach to projections and staffing."

Cram sees the slowdown as a reflection of local and national economic trend, including such factors as new housing starts, occupancy rates and employment levels. The lull allows time for both the district and community to reflect—rather than react—on how they will deal with future growth, he said.

The slowdown offers yet another advantage: the ability to get a better price for schools yet to be built from the district's \$600 million bond issue, Cram said. That means the district can get more schools for the same amount of money. It does not mean, however, that the district has overbuilt. With class-size reduction and other special programs, there are always plenty of uses for district classrooms, he said.

Officials, meanwhile, are continuing to evaluate factors that affect enrollment projections and are consulting with other agencies to look at growth trends.

Cram emphasized: "This community has successfully met the challenges of extraordinary growth, so I am confident we can deal with future growth issues."

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