

Point of View

The views on these editorial pages are those of the artists and authors indicated. Only the one depicted as the Sentinel-Voice editorial represent this publication.

TO BE EQUAL

CONFRONTING AMERICA'S RACIAL DIVIDE

By John E. Jacob

Virtually all discussions of America's racial problems are smothered in a blanket of myths and code words.

That's why it is so refreshing to read a new book whose honest, straightforward analysis of race is aptly titled, "Two Nations: Black and White, Separate,

Hostile, Unequal." Its author is Andrew Hacker, a professor of political science at New York's Queens College.

Hacker, who is white, does what too many other observers do not — he located the roots of America's racial dilemma not in supposed black inadequacies, but in white American's sense of

superiority and privilege.

Much of the book is a statistical analysis of black disadvantage, correctly observing that: "From slavery through the present, this nation has never opened its doors sufficiently to give black Americans a chance to become full citizens."

While he gives his due to the

significant progress that has been made, he carefully measures the tremendous gap still separating African Americans from white citizens in almost all facets of life.

And he shows how those depressing statistics hide the still rampant discrimination that affects almost all aspects of our

lives.

For example, he notes that black male lawyers aged 35 to 45 — that is, people with experience and professional accomplishments — earn only 79 percent of what similar white lawyers earn, while female black lawyers in that age bracket earn 93 percent of what white female lawyers earn.

His conclusion is inescapable — that black men have fewer opportunities in our society, even at the highest levels of professional achievement.

And that in turn reflects the stereotypes and myths that pervade white America.

That approach is a useful way to look at some of the public policy issues currently dividing Americans. Poll after poll, for example, shows that a majority of white Americans are convinced that affirmative action favors black job applicants and harms white ones.

But Hacker points out that very few white Americans are in a position to lose a potential job or promotion because of policies favoring blacks.

Street crime is another issue many whites identify as a black phenomenon, but very few live in or near areas where street violence is a real threat. Irrational fears mirror racial stereotypes.

Welfare is another issue distorted by racial myths. Many whites say they resent paying taxes to support black welfare costs are a very small, and



JOHN E. JACOB

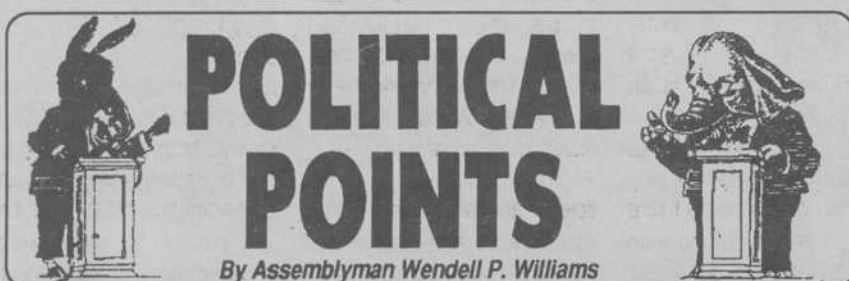
grossly inadequate, part of government spending.

Hacker isn't the only white voice being raised to call for demythologizing race. Senator Bill Bradley recently shook up the Senate with a speech that confronted the issue of race and squarely tied it to America's future.

He said: Even though our American future depends on finding common ground, many white Americans resist relinquishing the sense of entitlement skin color has given them throughout our national history. They lack an understanding of the emerging dynamics of 'one world,' even in the United States, because to them nonwhites have always been 'the other.'

If he's right, and I am sure he is, then America will be in deep trouble in the coming years because it clings to racial arrogance and privilege at a time when those traits can only harm the entire society.

Especially in an election year — a time when politicians pander to their constituents' prejudices — it's important to speak frankly and honestly about the roots of America's racial problems, and about the crucial importance of closing the racial gap so that all Americans can pull together for the common good.



By Assemblyman Wendell P. Williams

"DISCLAIMER"

The program you just heard is not the views or opinions of KCEP, its staff, management of EOB. (heard after message of Final Call).

The freedom to choose is one of the keep pillars that built the U.S. constitution. Supposedly, individuals came to America to have what they believed to be one of the most basic rights that any human could have — the right to worship as they please and to choose any religion that they wished. In fact this is one of the founding tenets of the constitution. However, today in 1992, it is still questionable if that freedom yet exists. Particularly in the African-American community.

After this nation was established, it decided to ban the very item that it sought freedom from in the first place; religion worship was not allowed for African-Americans. During the American Revolution, and prior to the great slave rebellions which later caused Southern whites to prohibit the formation of Black churches, several large Baptist Black Churches came into being in the South.

However on many occasions white men sought to abolish these churches by whipping its members and jail-

ing the pastors.

For these reasons among many, I remain puzzled as to why discrimination still occurs within religions and more puzzled as to why African-Americans themselves discriminate against each other based on religious belief.

Why did African-Americans organize their own churches in the first place? In November 1787, two months after the end of the constitution Convention, African-Americans worshipers filed into the St. George Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia. The church had always allowed them to be seated on the main floor. But church officials had grown uneasy at the large number of African Americans attending the church. On that November Sunday, they met African-Americans at the door and forced them to climb to the upstairs gallery instead.

Two prominent African-Americans, Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, founders of the Free African Society walked up the steps to the gallery with the others.

They headed to the front of the gallery and knelt in prayer. Unknown to them, church officials had closed off this spot, too. They had not been long upon their knees before a white usher pulled Jones from his

knees and removed him by force.

After prayer ended, the African-American worshipers walked out of the church together, furious at the treatment they received, firmly made a resolution to build their own. A favorite text among them was: "Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hell will not prevail against it."

Richard Allen and Absalom Jones both agreed that African-Americans had to have their own church. But they disagreed on the direction they should take in founding a new church. Therefore Allen founded the Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church. This led to many, many types of churches and denominations.

Even today, African-Americans worship in every type of church one can imagine. This is good, because choice should be available to everyone. That's what America is built on.

KCEP radio has an array of religious programming, and it should because there is an array of listeners who enjoy as I do the religious programs. There are several evangelist, several ministers and etc. that can be heard on 88.1.

All of this programming is aired at a cost to the affiliates of the minister or the minister themselves. In other words they pay



Assemblyman
Wendell P. Williams

money to have their messages aired on the airwaves. People in the listening audience have the choice to listen or not listen to any particular program.

If they all are paying for this air time, (I would hope if some are paying, then all are are paying) why place a disclaimer on one broadcast and not the others, live or taped.

Most of us will not agree totally with everything anybody says on one of these broadcast, so why not adopt the "all or none rule" when it comes to disclaim To disclaim Farrakhan and not disclaim anyone else is saying in essence, KCEP supports everything everyone else says except Farrakhan. Even though they all pay for the broadcast (I hope everyone pays). If the station is afraid of what someone says then don't air them. However, if they believe it's free enterprise, then air everybody and disclaim everybody or air everybody and disclaim nobody.

The listeners are smart enough to pick and choose what they want to hear or believe. Besides, young people don't hear a disclaimer after hearing the song that has the lyrics that says "Hey Baby Meet Me With Those Red Panties On."

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Betty Brown, President & Publisher-Editor
Lee Brown, General Manager
Ramon Savoy, Advertising & Marketing Dir.
Lourdes Cordero-Brown, Office Mgr.
Willis Brown, Production
Don Snook, Graphics
Charles Jenkins, Distribution

Contributing Writers:

Assemblyman Wendell P. Williams
Ray E. Willis (CCSD)
Rev. Jesse Scott (NAACP)
Dr. James S. Tate, Jr. M.D. (NAARPR)
W. G. Ramirez
R. K. Brown
Gwen Walker
Kimberly Bailey

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53705 (608) 238-7550

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