

NATIONAL ALLIANCE AGAINST RACIST & POLITICAL REPRESSION

"RACISM IN MEDICINE"

By James S. Tate, Jr., M.D.
N.A.A.R.P.R. President

I am sure that most people would assume that when you

reach a certain point in life and a certain level of achievement that you can escape the rigors of racism in this country. Let me

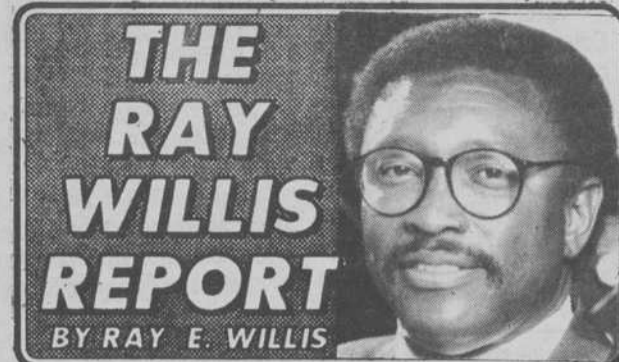
assure you brothers and sisters that nothing could be further from the truth. No matter how far you excel or how well you think that you do in your chosen profession, the beast of racism remains your constant companion. I can attest to that from personal experience. In addition, the situation here in Las Vegas is somewhat unique in that we have had three African physicians, who have tasted first hand the rabid bite of racism. The first most people are familiar with was Kimble McNair II. The well known Gynecologist, who was trapped and undoubtedly setup by the cities racist minions. He is now serving a life term in prison. The second and third you have probably not heard of. One individual in point is a Neurosurgeon (Yes, there are African Neurosurgeons) by the name of Andrew Rhodes. Doctor Rhodes migrated to this city from Kansas City, where he had done Neurosurgery for fifteen years and was considered an expert Neurosurgeon. In the four years that Doctor Rhodes has been in Las Vegas, he has been unable to obtain staff privileges in Neurosurgery at any of the hospitals, and has been in a constant legal and political battle over his privileges. The lily white Neurosurgeons club in this city has decided that Andrew Rhodes is unworthy to join their exclusive club. They maintain that it is not for any racial reason and I am sure that the Ku Klux Klan, when they lynch an African, maintain that it wasn't for any racial reasons. However, the criminal that gets caught perpetrating a criminal act can not alibi his way out of it based on what his motivation was. It is still a criminal act. The denial of Neurosurgical privileges to Doctor Andrew Rhodes is clearly a criminal act. The next brother is Doctor Harriston Bass. Doctor Bass is a Board certified General Surgeon here

in Las Vegas. He went to the same schools, paid the same dues, and did the same training as all of the white surgeons in town. But apparently the Nevada Board of Medical Examiners in an unprecedented move publicly announced that they were going to investigate charges of malpractice against Doctor Bass. Malpractice charges are something that are fairly common these days among the best of physicians. These are issues that are normally settled in a court room, not in a newspaper. The Nevada Board of Medical Examiners for reasons that it has not announced, has indicated that they were going to investigate this brother and have indeed begun to try this brother publicly without there ever having been a trial in which he was judged to have been negligent or practicing bad medicine. This issue here is why was Doctor Bass singled out. I am sure that those who sit on the Nevada Board of Medical Examiners, will cry foul if you

accuse them of being racist, but clearly that is what they are, and the fact that an African women sits on that Board, but is the only one that sits on that board is no excuse. Racism is clearly racism no matter how you try to hide it. And those are not the only examples. If you talk to any African physician, especially African surgeons who have sought to practice in this town, they will each tell you a very similar story of what it is like to have to struggle continuously in what appeared to be a never ending battle to obtain privileges, to get your fair share of referrals, to deal with racist nurses in various units including Intensive Care Units that could not accept that a black man can think, who has to insist as they do for example at Desert Springs, that if there is a black surgeon involved, you have to have someone white to really take care of the patient. (Why do you think that there is only one black General Surgeon on the staff at Desert Springs?) But let us not leave the other



JAMES S. TATE JR., MD
hospitals including UMC and Valley out of this, for they all have their racist elements and to some extent it is the fault of the black physician, that we have allowed them to get away with it. A humble suggestion for those readers who go to African physicians as their primary care providers. Perhaps the next time your African physician wants to send you a non-African specialist, you should find yourself a different African primary care physician and choose your own African specialist. It is fine to talk about buying black, black dollars and black business directories etc., but it is either time to put up or shut up. If you don't entrust your care to your own people it is doubtful that you will entrust anything else to them.
La Lucha Continua. The Struggle Continues.



INHALE/EXHALE

It's been several months since I reviewed the best-seller novel *Waiting To Exhale* by female African-American novelist Terry McMillan in this column. For those of you who may not know, the book chronicles the frustrated lives of four fictional Black women who are "waiting to exhale," a euphemism for trying, albeit unsuccessfully, to find a dependable African-American man.

Throughout the book these women constantly whine about a good Black man being hard to find. In real life, the shortage of Black men is confusing to some Black women willing to go to great lengths to establish a loving relationship. To many of these Black women, the simple and obvious conclusion is that Black men as a group are undependable and "doggish."

But the Black male bashing theme in *Waiting to Exhale*, which is echoed by many of today's successful Black female authors, is not the only viewpoint on the subject. However, the perspective of Black men is not what America is looking for. It's Black female authors who have America's ear. And they are basking in the spotlight while dogging brothers to death!

Witness the fact that Toni Morrison and Terry McMillan are coincidentally both college professors in Arizona. Why Arizona? Why not New York, California, or even Nevada? You tell me? All I know is that Arizona was the last state to pass the King holiday. Arizona, a state with one of the lowest Black population percentages, also has one of the highest prison incarceration rates for Black men.

How coincidental that the state's university system welcomed with open arms two renowned Black female authors who just happen to be critical of Black men? I wonder whether they would have been recruited to teach if they had written positively about Black male-female relationships?

Gone are the days when James Baldwin, Richard Wright and other Black male authors dominate Black literature. Like-it-or-not, now is the time of the Black female writer.

Since most of what Black female novelists write about is fictional, why couldn't they explore positive relationship themes, at least occasionally? Why not? Because in order to sell books they must promote themes of interest to their main audience, Whites.

The catch is, I'm not convinced America wants to read about loving relationships between Black men and Black women. Make no mistake. McMillan, Morrison and the others aren't dumb. To apply the carrot and the stick analogy, if they want to be rewarded by continued celebrity and stardom, they have to keep giving their readers what they expect. So, bash on, bash on, bash on.

To know is to grow. Until next week.

NLV...THE WESTSIDE STORY EXPLANATIONS

By R.K. Brown

Recently I attended a public function, in which many matters facing the black community were addressed. What was great about the occasion, was that there were representatives present from each local valley community, white, black and Hispanic. One of the major concerns of the function was the effort being put forth to raise black children.

It was suggested, and generally agreed upon, that black communities need to do a better job of raising its kids. This was continually pointed out by residents of suburban communities. I would agree that a diligent ef-

fort has to be made in the raising of any child. Children can only learn by the circumstances they are introduced to, or by the environment they are raised in. We know that one in every four black males in America, is tied into the penal system. We know, that there are more black males in prison in the U.S., than in the apartheid country of South Africa. So... once again, there are "always" explanations for the suffering of black America.

I must admit, that it turned my stomach to hear people give "their" explanations, for what was wrong with the black community. Since it was a genuine effort on the part of all involved,

I didn't feel it was my place to correct their twisted reasoning. In many instances, whites honestly believe they know what they are talking about, in regard to correcting the plight of black America. They suggest an explanation: lack of education, sophistication, assimilation, or Uncle Tomnation; and we move to correct the inefficiency.

The tragedy is "yes", we need to make positive changes in our community, but that would do little to change our overall condition. It is the institutionalized racism, which is the principle enemy of Black America. It is the racist system set up by (See *Westside Story*, Page 4)

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