

THE NAACP AND YOU



Rev. Jesse D. Scott
President
Las Vegas, NAACP



THE NAACP CELEBRATES HOMECOMING

Nineteen hundred ninety three is now ushering in it's fall season which invites all good NAACPers to come home to the NAACP.

Homecoming this year takes on a special significance because we have the single honor of having the first and only African American woman ever elected to the U.S. Senate as the NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet speaker, Friday, Nov. 5, 1993 at Bally's Hotel.

Believe me when I say this sister is tough enough. Just a few of her attributes which include but are not limited to all she has going for herself. The person that I speak of is none other than the Honorable U.S. Senator from Illinois, Carol Mosely Braun.

Senator Braun is lovely, charismatic, intelligent and very articulate. NAACPers who miss this Homecoming Gala will miss contemporary history in the making.

The legacy of which you will leave for your children and your grandchildren, and when you pass to the great beyond, the memory of having met Senator Braun.

Senator Braun was the first African American woman ever to hold an executive office in Cook County government in Chicago, Illinois.

Senator Braun received her law degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago. For three years she worked as a prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney's Office.

She also served in the Illinois legislature and introduced the bill that barred the state of Illinois from investing funds in South Africa until apartheid was abolished.

Senator Braun will be introduced by the leader of the California Assembly, Willie Brown.

This year special emphasis will be placed on this Homecoming because the NAACP has set a goal to sign up five thousand NAACPers before the end of 1993. Your help is needed now!

Our goal should be easily obtained when one considers the fact that there are more than one hundred thousand African Americans living in Clark County, not counting many, many thousands of our white friends who also live in Southern Nevada. Contrary to many people, the NAACP serves the needs of all people, which includes all races and nationalities. Most people are surprised when we inform them that the first three members of the NAACP were white.

One of the themes of our Homecoming festivity is to "reach out and touch all people." If you plan to take an ad in the Souvenir

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"ALONG THE COLOR LINE"

MARCH ON WASHINGTON - AN ASSESSMENT

PART II

By Dr. Manning Marable

The sun towering above the crowd in Washington, D.C. last last month was brutal. By noon, the temperature reached into the nineties, and a dull haze obscured the long view from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial back toward the towering Washington monument. Tens of thousands of marchers clustered in hundreds of different groups, carrying posters, colorful banners and signs of all kinds. Veterans from the previous Marches on Washington in 1963 and 1983 embraced each other, and recalled the triumphs and tragedies of their political past.

Although there was spontaneous singing and chanting in unison, the noise from the crowd was muted by the high humidity and overwhelming heat. The U.S. Park Police estimated at 3:30 p.m. that the crowd numbered some 75,000 people. NAACP leader Ben Chavis placed the size of the demonstration at 200,000. As I stood at the foot of the podium, looking back upon the waves of people, I roughly judged the gathering at 100,000 at least. But regardless of the specific numbers, the crowd was certainly one of the largest political demonstrations led by African-Americans in the twentieth century. People had come to bear witness to memory, and to find the road back toward a new militancy.

One sign of this occurred at the very beginning of the public addresses. As Eleanor Holmes Norton was speaking, the security perimeter which separated

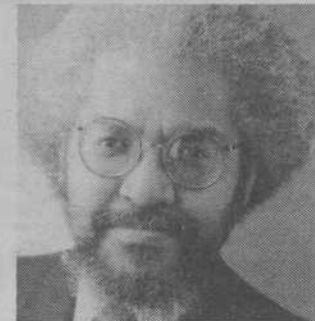
the large crowd from the speakers' tent and the media was breached. Over one thousand marchers tumbled forward onto the small seating area near the platform, and at the base of the Lincoln Memorial steps. Symbolically at least, the vast distance between the "leaders; and "followers" was at one accidental stroke eliminated.

The 1963 March on Washington's program had contained only thirteen speakers. By contrast, thirty years later, over sixty people were scheduled to take the podium. The spectrum of speakers crossed racial, ethnic, gender and ideological boundaries: actresses Eartha Kitt and Halle Berry, John Sweeney, President of the Service Employees International Union; Marian Wright Edleman, President, Children's Defense Fund; Phil Wilson, Director of Public Policy of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force; William Gray, President of the United Negro College Fund; Cardinal James Hickey, of the U.S. Catholic Conference on Justice; Jose Velez, President of the League of United Latin American Citizens; Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell of Colorado, a Native American; Norman Hill of the A. Randolph Institute; John Jacob, National Urban League; Jose Serrano, the Chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus; and Kweisi Mfume, Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus.

The major speakers included Coretta Scott King, AFL-CIO leader Lane Kirkland, SCLC leader Joe Lowery, and Chavis. The most dramatic presentation was delivered, not surprisingly, by Jesse Jackson. Drawing parallels between 1963 and 1993, Jackson observed that on both periods, a "conservative congress" and "young president" had failed to "deliver" on their promises to black people. Jackson demanded new federal initiatives for reform, including full employment legislation, an end to police brutality and racism within the criminal justice system, and the adoption of "a single payer national health care plan that makes health care a right for everyone." He explicitly denounced Clinton's North American Free Trade Agreement as a treaty "that will drag our workers down, and drain our jobs South." Jackson urged activists to go forward "to build new structures for freedom, new vehicles for hope in our quest to redeem the soul of America."

The major controversy to erupt at the march was the refusal by march organizers to

permit nationalist leader Louis Farrakhan to speak. Back on August 13, Rabbi David Saperstein of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism issued a "confidential and personal" fax to the top leaders of the mobilization — King, Fauntroy, Jackson, Chavis, and others. Saperstein observed that hundreds of Jewish organizations and synagogues throughout the northeastern states were going to be contracted to participate in the March. Unfortunately, Saperstein commented, two "major problems have arisen" which might culminate in the withdrawal of "all Jewish groups." Saperstein had been informed that "a tentative decision was made yesterday to invite Rev. Louis Farrakhan. I don't need to tell you," he noted, "what a devastating blow this would be to the solidarity of the coalition supporting the march." Saperstein also opposed the decision "to extend invitations to representatives of the Palestinian and



DR. MANNING MARABLE Israeli peace delegations to speak." Although NAACP officials and other March leaders refused to comment directly on the Saperstein memo, some kind of discussion occurred between the principals over the potential controversy. A decision was reached not to permit Louis Farrakhan to speak. Even activists who are critical of Farrakhan expressed surprise at this decision, especially considering that he had been permitted to speak at the 1983 March on Washington. Despite this controversy, the March accomplished it's major objective — revitalizing the spirit of activism in black America.

NOTES FROM THE SCHOOL OF AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY

Part of this column last week mentioned the fact that I am a full time student at the University. Now there's nothing unusual in that however, I discovered something interesting on my way to school the other day and I'd like to share that with you.

For some three years now I've been attending UNLV during which time I've taken basically the same roads to get to this institution of higher learning. After so many miles down these roads I've almost blindfoldedly been able to get to school.

On this particular day however, I noticed something I had never before, or simply never paid attention to. It was a tall building standing proud off in the distance. I immediately assumed it was the Humanitarian building at the University and as I drew near my assumption was confirmed.

Remember, I said I had never seen this building before but the immediate assumption about this structure opens to the fact that I must have seen it at some point in my travels but never really paid it any mind. My ignorance of this building does not negate the fact that it existed all along.

The point this week is simple. There are many things in our minds daily that we simply aren't aware of or just plain ignore, but this state of unawareness and ignorance does not eradicate the realities about us. It is worth noting that every week I try to help you see things that you have never seen before or have simply ignored but your own efforts to find and explore new and different things far outweigh my meager efforts. I do what I can but the rest is on you.

How many times have you been in a situation where someone tries desperately to get you to see something and you simply cannot see it? This person is very explicit as he explains what he sees and where he sees it but, for whatever reason you don't see. eventually one of two things happen: you either get frustrated and call him a fool or you look hard with determined eyes to see what he has been describing to you.

You may or may not ever see what there is before you but the latter of the two potential mentioned above means that your mind is open to the possibility of it's existence. And, when you do see it, you never forget it because you "discovered" it on your own.

I've presented many ideas over the past few months, some you may have agreed with, others you probably had a problem with, but just like the tall, proud building I "discovered" the other day on my way to school, these ideas have been, are and will continue to be and must be dealt with. To ignore them does not negate them. It is great when I can be the vehicle to your enlightenment but it is even greater when this eureka comes from within. Until next week this has been the Minister of Information. Alafia!

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