

**PERCEPTION AND REALITY**

In the aftermath of the verdicts of the first Rodney King trial there was unrest in Las Vegas. Several prominent businesses, including the Black-owned Nucleus Plaza, were either gutted or damaged. One person died.

Almost immediately, Las Vegas city officials charged in to assess why it happened, and to try to institute programs to ensure that it didn't happen again.

City Councilman Frank Hawkins saw the need to form a specialized group to counter unfounded stereotypes about the Westside and its residents. The result was a group called the Perception of West Las Vegas Committee. For almost two years now, this group has been meeting on the first Monday of each month at the West Las Vegas Library to discuss topics of mutual interest and concern.

The group is comprised of key members of the local news media, along with a few Black elected officials and civic lead-



By James S. Tate Jr., M.D., Chairperson, NAARPP

ers. One must always be careful when disregarding sound advice so that one does not have to turn around at some later point and say "You know you are right I should have taken your advice." A friend of mine has always advised me never to argue with "Christmas" and I have disregarded her advise recently, but I must say that she is correct. In this case, there was a discussion at a dinner regarding some of the significant problems for us as a people, that is an African living in the United States. This woman's feeling was that the devil was the cause of all of our problems. In trying to find out how she was defining the devil, I found it was not the blond hair, blue eyed devil that Malcolm use to speak of when he was with the Honorable Elijah Muhammed. No, it was the Devil devil. Now it is unusual in my opinion for someone to really believe that your problems are being caused by the devil, so naively I pursued this discussion trying to find out exactly what she meant. My contention was that in the United States there had been no group of people, who has been subjected to the same kind negative survival pressure that Africans have with the exception of na-

"I envisioned this group to be a catalyst for changing the media's opinion and perspective of West Las Vegas," said founder Frank Hawkins, whose city council district encompasses West Las Vegas.

The proof of Councilman Hawkins' intent was evident at the November meeting of this group, during which an intensive discussion ensued about the value of the group's efforts. As usual, most of the news organizations in town were represented; Channel 3 and 8, the R-J, the Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice, and even Jim Rogers, owner of Channel 3.

Unlike previous meetings, this time there was no formal agenda. The session turned into a free-form discussion about the impact the meetings have had on how news about the African-American community is reported.

After heated debate, most of (See Ray Willis, Page 5)

**NATIONAL ALLIANCE AGAINST RACIST & POLITICAL REPRESSION**  
**"A TRULY ARROGANT BROTHER"**

tive Americans. Her contention was that the Jews were enslaved. I pointed out to her that slavery or alleged slavery in ancient Egypt was not the same, in that if you were a slave and you gave birth to a child that child, was not a slave, but free. You were enslaved because you just happened to be the one that got caught. She then decided that the Bible says something different. I pointed out to her that the Bible is a spiritual instrument and not a historic one. Well, at that point the you know what hit the fan. Now she became extremely annoyed and in the ensuing 30 minutes of discussion or argument, which ever way you want to look at it, one of the comments that she made was that I was the most arrogant man that she had ever met. Now I started to think about that ...I realized, not having given it much consideration in the past, that it seemed to me that what this person was really saying was that "I have adopted master's religion. I have swallowed it hook

line and sinker and Master has told me that I must convince any other Africans that they must follow this religion. If I don't have the intellectual capability of pointing out the correctness of my position, then per master's instructions I am degenerate to the level of insults in order to convince you to follow masters religion. The folly of this approach was not too apparent to this person but it did serve to get me to thinking about what it is that is so important about getting someone to accept master's religion. I personally have no quarrel with whatever religion that one decides to adopt. I also have no quarrel with a person who adopts no religion, a person who does not believe one way or another in God or in any particular religion. If you have discovered God, a religion, a belief or whatever that is fulfilling and that makes you happy, by all means believe in it, but do not attempt to force or coercion anyone else into believing it. There has been incalculable deaths attributed to



**JAMES S. TATE JR., MD** people attempting to force one religious belief or another on someone else. Indeed it was the fashion of the European colonialism in Africa, Asia and elsewhere to first sending the missionaries to try to begin to covert people and then later to send in the mercenaries to take over the land etc., after the missionaries had done their job of softening up the resistance.

Our people now are engaged in a struggle of survival. The crucial issue here is not whether we bow to the East and pray to Mecca or get down on our knees (See NAARPP, Page 5)

**NLV...THE WESTSIDE STORY**

**TO JUSTIFY**

By R.K. Brown

When I hear the conversations of some white observers, I begin to realize that no matter the plight of black America, or the minority world; true understanding is an impossible mission.

To many whites, blacks must somehow "justify" all of the passion and discontent we feel for the American system. Time and time again in the national media, blacks have to defend their resentment for the racist American legacy.

Logic suggests that the AMERICAN GOVERNMENT has only functioned in a non-racist mentality for ONLY the past 30 years! Any other statement is an absolute untruth. The great race riots of the civil rights era didn't end until the 1970's, so I am being generous! So from the inception of the country, to until 1970, the standard of absolute racism RACISM was stamped into the constitution. The ONLY rights that minorities were rewarded

in that era were greater access to jobs and voting rights.

There is no need for some local whites to say that, "we are in this together," because a 400 year legacy has proven otherwise. I don't need to justify the fact that America has always been a racist country, because history is my physical witness!

Some white man calls a local brotha a racist. What a joke. The word racist originated because WHITES felt they were superior to all non whites. To show you how absurd whites became with their own foolishness, they even began to believe that special whites were the only ones good enough for society. Not even other WHITES were good enough to live. Now that's a racist!

Nazis, until this day, feel that they are the only whites who are fit to live. All other whites, and of course all of the people of color, should be murdered from the face of the earth.

Why should any black man have to justify the poverty of the

ghetto, when the national government has concluded that the black man can't even get a break in the job market. Here racism prospers like no where else. Well, maybe like nowhere else. Black men get locked away at slave like standards everyday but no one seems to care.

Blacks live in poverty like nobody's business, but the government looks the other way. Blacks try to do right, get a job, help the community, become positive role models for the youth, but they can't get on TV. Let a black youth get pulled over for suspicion and his face will be all over the local news at 5! Innocent until proven guilty?

To me there is no need to justify the racist legacy of America because if we still have to do such a basic thing today, almost 400 years later, then there is little hope that historical truth and logical facts can better a racist mentality or viewpoint. peace...

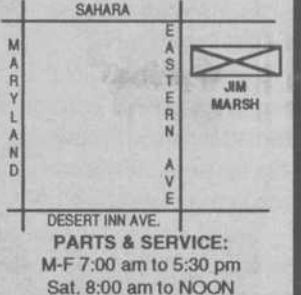
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