

Government in illegal drug supplying didn't begin with CIA

By Dennis Schatzman

Special to the Sentinel-Voice

Daryl Williams, the one time (and big time) pimp and drug dealer in Los Angeles and Denver, isn't around to comment on the news that operatives from within the CIA raised money to fund the Nicaraguan contras by selling crack cocaine to Los Angeles dealers, who then shipped it to black neighborhoods throughout America.

Had Williams, a former football star at Los Angeles High School in the 1960s, not died of a heart attack after hitting a crack cocaine pipe three years ago, he would tell a chilling story about how he would get his supply of cocaine for distribution.

Friends of the late dealer are, however, still around to tell the story. And some of them are singing like birds, which might not be good news for a former politician who once held a high office in California.

In the early 70s Williams allegedly purchased the bulk of this cocaine from a pharmacist who lived in fashionable

Hollywood Hills. "This man had a castle," one source recalled. "I mean, it had a moat and everything." The dealer and one of his operatives would arrive at the mansion and wait for the shipment to arrive.

In a few minutes, the politician and his live-in singer girlfriend would show up and shortly thereafter, another car carrying the drugs would drive up. Once the deal was consummated, the parties involved would disband. Our source made it clear that the politician was the supplier. He saw the transactions with his own eyes.

The pharmacist was later prosecuted for drug trafficking and his license was revoked. He is now reportedly on the straight and narrow, only selling legal drugs out of his drug store. The politician was never busted but there were long-standing rumors that he dabbled in drug use here and there.

The issue of government sanctioned drug dealing came to light recently after the *San Jose Mercury News* revealed the

CIA's involvement in a three-part series published in August.

According to the *Mercury News*, Oscar Danilo Blanton, a CIA informant and Nicaraguan drug dealer would supply crack cocaine to "Freeway" Ricky Ross, a Los Angeles drug dealer. Later, Blanton would help the

FBI snare Ross in a sting. A jury found Ross guilty of drug trafficking earlier this year. A federal judge in San Diego, however, delayed sentencing until U.S. attorneys could provide an affidavit from the CIA saying that the agency never "participated in or condoned"

drug dealings by Nicaraguan rebels, including the smuggling of tons of cocaine into Los Angeles during the 1980s.

The CIA is expected to deny any involvement. Daryl Williams, however, is no doubt rolling over in his grave, breaking up with laughter. No telling who else out

there is fretting nervously about what other stories might just arise up from among the tombstones.

Mr. Schatzman, a former district court judge in Pittsburgh, writes on political and legal affairs from Los Angeles. He is co-author of "The Simpson Trial in Black and White."

African-Americans are in need of an awakening

By Michael Sharp

Special to the Sentinel-Voice
In my time on this planet, I've found that if there is one axiom that has proven to be true time and time again, it is that the hardest thing for a person to do is change. As I look back at African-American history, I am filled with an immense sense of pride at what we have accomplished and, at the same time, I am filled with remorse that more of our people aren't fighting the good fight.

While there are more law-abiding African-Americans pulling their weight in our society, there are still far too many brothers and sisters who aren't. The majority of these people,

our people, are in this predicament either because of ignorance or apathy or both.

This creates a breeding ground of hopelessness and despair that eventually feeds upon itself, leaving little room for escape. It's similar to a nightmare in which you are trapped in a room full of white folk and forced to watch our people on the Ricki Lake show. Even though the African-Americans on the screen are hardly representative of the larger population, you feel uneasy. In our poorer communities, this nightmare is all too real but the solution to this problem is the same solution for a bad nightmare — an awakening!

As time passes, what is becoming brutally clear is that it is the best interest of African-Americans and other Americans to be awakened. Ignorance must be eliminated in our communities, and only we can eliminate it. Ignorance, of course, can never be fully eradicated, but surely we can do a whole lot better than we've been doing! We, as a people have to disavow ignorance, not embrace it.

I have witnessed first-hand how ignorance sneaks up on African-Americans, befriends us, lulls us into a false sense of security, then rips our whole world apart. Ignorance knows no financial boundaries, although the poorer you are, the

higher the probability that knowledge will be restricted. In America, information is a commodity. Those without access have to work harder just to get information. However, an education is no guarantee against ignorance.

There are more than a few of us out there with degrees and no practical knowledge of what we're talking about. These people can be more dangerous than illiterate, crack-smoking, gun-toting gangsters.

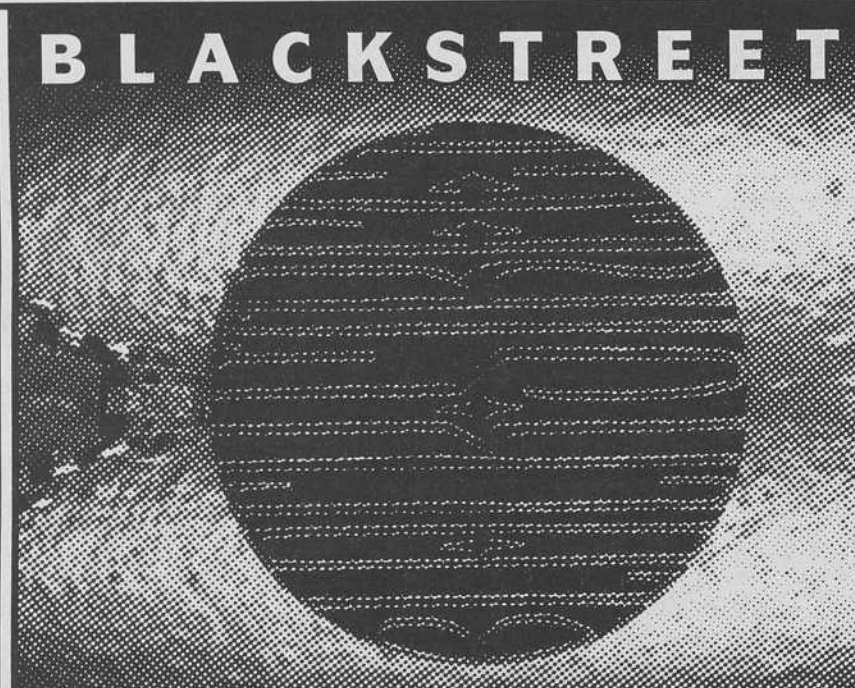
By being educated far beyond their competence, some people conspire to keep us in disunity. Whether they have good intentions or bad doesn't make much of a difference because the results are still the same.

The time is now to change — not just change for the sake of change but for the positive, life-enhancing, race-fortifying change. Instead of standing idly by as our lying and conniving segment — you know and they know who they are — continue to exploit the system, do something about it. I'm not saying get a gun and take on the nearest gang. Be smart. Lead by example. Give younger brothers and sisters someone to respect and admire. You may not get the recognition you want or even rightfully deserve, but if it was easy everybody would be doing it.

If you have children, educate them on how great America really is and how much better it can become. Show them how to take responsibility and not government handouts. Teach them that everything has its price, that "ain't nuthin' free." Teach our boys to be men, and our girls to be ladies. If you know people who have kids and aren't raising them, ask them what their problem is. If you see young kids out at night and you know where they live, take them home. If that doesn't work, get some friends and publicly chastise them at the grocery store.

Do something. The world is always changing. It's constantly presenting us with new challenges and different situations. Either we wake up, unite and promote our brightest and our best, or we let ignorance continue to wreak havoc on a great people.

Michael Sharp, a member of the national Advisory Council of the African-American leadership group Project 21, is a freelance writer in Toledo, Ohio.



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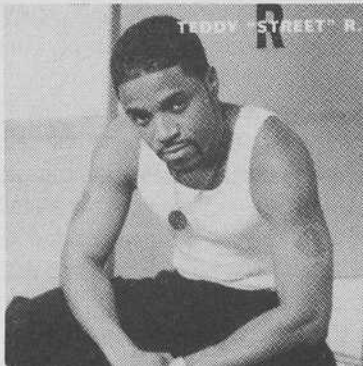
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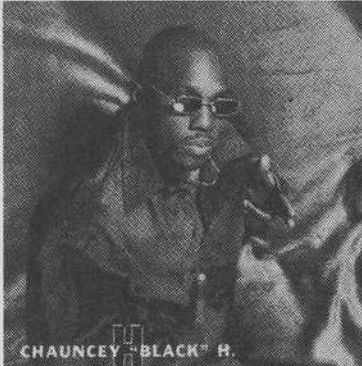
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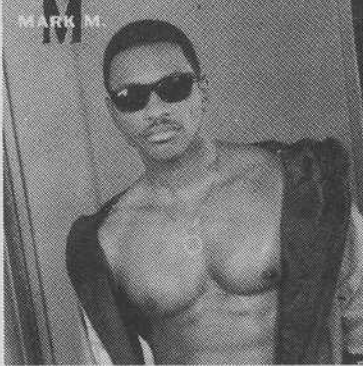
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