

Clinton in excellent position to help Africa

Lower tariffs would boost trade, restore health to the continent

By Kwame Ansah
Special to Sentinel-Voice

President Clinton is a brilliant man with experiences in dealing with matters of race. He is fully aware that the majority of Americans feel morally obliged to aid Africa, but that a powerful minority opposes any initiatives for economic assistance which take funding away from their own foreign policy constituency.

So, what does he propose to offer Africa when he visits the continent next month? Is he open to a dialogue on issues that affect millions of Africans?

My view is that he is leaning towards opening the doors to a Pan-Africanism that will allow genuine African-American linkages, unhampered by traditional government zealots who earn their livings classifying different cultures and peoples as threats. To be sure, the very fact that Clinton is going to Africa will mean a boom for tourism there and counter the vicious propaganda that it is unsafe to visit.

In fact, it would be a wonderful gesture for

him to fly into Lagos International Airport and, let Nigerian officials tell him first-hand about the racism that stopped direct flights between that country and the United States on allegations that it was unsafe. The secretary of transportation who approved the ban would not have dreamed of imposing such restrictions against Columbia and other Hispanic locations, with a history of hijackings, bombings and crashes. Nigeria had none of that, but flights were stopped anyway.

Pan-Africans perceive Nigeria and all of West Africa as a single economic and social entity, to be enhanced by more traffic across post-colonial borders, not less. The people living in Nigeria are our brethren and nothing we do or aspire to achieve should ever seek to exclude their involvement. Additionally, many of the largest potential market centers in Africa, and among Blacks throughout the world, are in this land of prime crude petroleum reserves.

Nigeria has its faults, but the cultural dynamics and history of its peoples are such that African prosperity cannot occur without their

active input. In fact, nearly one out of every eight persons of African descent in this world today lives in Nigeria.

Both Marcus Garvey and Kwame N'Krumah fervently pushed the concept of an African merchant marine fleet to foster trade among the various peoples of Africa, the Americas and Caribbean. Even before them, men like Captain Paul Cuffee following the American revolution in the 1780s and later Major Martin Delany after the Civil War, tried to do the same, but encountered opposition from vested economic interests.

With the Cold War over, President Clinton is in a unique position to help Africans achieve a long-held goal — ocean freighters and barge traffic by Africans, for Africans. The problem now is that international tariff rates and agreements are such that European and Asian shipping firms control what goes in and out of Africa, in most cases earning more than the shipper.

The current situation is horrible. It effectively

discourages churches and others from shipping donations to Africa, as money is most often consumed by import shipping charges. And most African exports are discouraged. The tariffs were put in place when Africa's ports were part of European colonial empires, and not much has changed. Black Star Shipping Line (established by N'Krumah's government) cannot even pick up American-donated emergency medical supplies without charging a rate far above what they would deem reasonable.

We propose a 20-year lend-lease of ships and support to a Merchant Marine Authority established by African heads of state in conjunction with the United States, which would provide surplus vessels and other resource. It should be exempt from international protocols restricting ports of call and pick-up of cargo, if it can be shown it is part of approved economic development plans. It is the only way to beat the automatic inflation that makes most shipments of commercial value to and from Africa impractical.

Grandparent

(Continued from Page 1)

"We hope that our program will become the catalyst for other organizations to emulate for this 'forgotten' population."

North Las Vegas City Councilman John Rhodes, who collaborated with the sorority on the project wants other civic-minded organizations to piggyback on the concept.

"My hope is to create another community based program in the near future with other established organizations such as Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority," Rhodes said. "We must support the elderly as they have supported us."

Russell the sorority will provide attention, love, companionship and social activities to the residents. The 185-bed facility houses the elderly and disabled and has alzheimer's unit with ambulatory and non-ambulatory residents and short



Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

North Las Vegas Care Center officials (left), North Las Vegas City Councilman John Rhodes and AKAs in kicking off the Adopt-A-Grandparent program.

term rehabilitation for younger residents.

Rhodes, who provided the keynote speech, said he intends to bring more empowerment programs to North Las Vegas residents. Guests dined on black eyed peas, macaroni 'n cheese, glazed ham, candied yams, corn bread and peach cobbler.

"We intend for this program to become a permanent

community service program that we sponsor in addition to our National Black Leadership Initiative on Cancer, the Black Family, Education Project Read and the AKA-teens which is our youth enrichment group for teenage girls," Theta Theta Omega President Jacqueling Hall said.

New welfare law may hurt, not help

Special to Sentinel-Voice

MONTPELIER, Vt. — At least two-thirds of the states have adopted welfare overhaul policies that threaten to put the poor in worse financial straits, a study released Monday said.

Researchers at Tufts University's Center on Hunger and Poverty concluded — via a survey on how all 50 states implemented the new federal welfare law — that, "The majority are failing and failing badly."

Evaluate 34 policy decisions that the federal government left to the states under the 1996 welfare overhaul law; areas covered include providing child care, expanding health coverage and offering education and job training.

Only 14 states, led by Vermont, revamped their welfare systems in a way that is likely to be beneficial to the poor. Idaho's policies were the worst in the nation, the study reported.

The majority of states adopted policies

that generally make it more difficult for people collecting welfare to rise above poverty and support themselves, the report contended.

The areas states are doing the worst in are: improving the eligibility of the poor for benefits, increasing the amount of those benefits and in requiring work.

Conversely, the study found that most states are doing a better job of assisting welfare recipients in obtaining the child care they need so they can job search and maintain employment.

Every state has created some type of tax-free savings which allows people more take-home pay.

States in the Northeast scored the highest in the study, while those in the South and Midwest did the worst.

The best possible score on the scale devised by Tufts was a 22. Vermont scored a 12 and second-place Oregon scored a 7.5. The worst possible score was a negative 38. Idaho got a negative 15.5 and Wyoming a negative 12.

Rahner

(Continued from Page 2)

Her friends are rejoicing in her death, believing she has been re-united with her husband who died in 1989. She never really adjusted to his death.

The noted community activist was unable to accept her award at a Feb. 14 Black History Month Celebration at the Cheyenne Campus of the Community College of Southern Nevada. She died Tuesday, February 17 at 4:10 a.m. in Sunrise Hospital's ICU unit after a second heart attack.

Rahner is survived by two sisters Doris Weeks-Shade and Evelyn Bailey, a brother William Weeks of Atlantic City, a brother Harold, and wife, Virginia of Lee, New Hampshire, an unknown number of nephews and nieces and a host of grieving friends and associates.



LISA R. RUSSELL, B.A.
Certified Alcohol & Drug Abuse Counselor Intern
A.C.A. Member

*Community
Counseling
Center*

Individual • Families • Group
Saturday Appointments Available
1120 Almond Tree Lane, Suite 207 • 369-8700

The 1997 Tax Season Is Upon Us

FOR FAST & ACCURATE RETURNS

*M. R. Bookkeeping
& Tax Service*

Located at:

716 S. Sixth Street, Suite B

Office Telephone:

\$ 386-6001 \$
VoiceMail: 391-5530

**INDIVIDUAL AND BUSINESS
RETURNS & ATTACHMENTS**

- Electronic Tax Filing Service
- Computerized Tax Returns
- Friendly Professional Staff

**\$ 5% DISCOUNT ON
RETURNS DONE BEFORE
FEBRUARY 28, 1998**

Let M.R. Bookkeeping process your
returns and advise you on 1998 tax tips

Colon & Rectal Surgical Associates and

Joseph P. Thornton M.D., F.A.C.S.

Are Pleased To Announce The
Association Of

STEPHANIE A. WISHNEV, M.D.

We Specialize In The Following Diseases:

- Hemorrhoids
- Anal Fistula & Abscess
- Colon Cancer
- Anal Fissure
- Diverticulosis
- Pilonidal Cysts
- Ulcerative Colitis
- Colonoscopy
- Crohn's Disease
- Anal Incontinence

3006 S. Maryland Pkwy., Suite 560

3150 N. Tenaya Way, Suite 270
Serving the Northeast & Summerlin Areas

369-9941

se habla español

Serving Las Vegas Since 1978