

POINT OF VIEW

Our View

McMillan a true pioneer

The city lost an icon with the passing of Dr. James B. McMillan.

Beyond his accomplishments — becoming the first black dentist in the state, the first black to make a bid for the U.S. Senate and the first black appointed to the Nevada Board of Dental Examiners — was a man whom his wife remembers as powerful, yet sweet, humble yet happy and whom many in the community thank for firing the first salvo in the war against discrimination. He died Saturday of cancer.

McMillan led the NAACP from 1956 to 1960. In 1960, the civil rights group challenged the Jim Crow policies of the white gaming industry. On March 17, 1960, he made an announcement: "We will hold a 'spontaneous' peaceful demonstration similar to what has occurred already in the South," he said, referring to the growing tide of sit-ins, marches and demonstrations held to protest discrimination in public accommodations.

The march, set to take place down Las Vegas Boulevard, would likely garner national attention on the racist casino policies: Black entertainers could perform in the Glitter Gulch and on the Strip, but couldn't stay in those hotels. Instead, they were shuttled to motels and boarding houses on the Westside, the blighted predominantly black side of town.

The march never took place. Averse to negative press, casino owners and CEOs caved in. The planned march garnered the attention of the state's heavy hitters — Las Vegas Mayor Oran Gragson and other local politicians, as well as Gov. Grant Sawyer — and led to the erasure of de facto segregation in the gaming industry.

Truth be told, there was no march planned, or at least not a major one. McMillan admitted that he acted without approval from other NAACP leaders and NAACPers were forced to accept his edict because it was too late to retreat. His gamble has helped remove some divots in the attempt to level the playing field: The city's 150,000 African-Americans have more than \$1.2 billion worth of economic clout; blacks have management positions in the casino industry.

McMillan served with the Army Dental Corps during World War II in the China-Burma-India campaign. He graduated from Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry, the country's first black medical college, with his Doctor of Dental Surgery in 1944.

He ran a dental office in Detroit until 1953, when he came to Las Vegas to join friend Dr. Charles I. West, the first black doctor in the state.

That year, McMillan received his license to practice dentistry in Nevada but was called back to service for the Korean War, his wife said. While he was away, his home in West Las Vegas was used to house black entertainers who performed at Strip hotels.

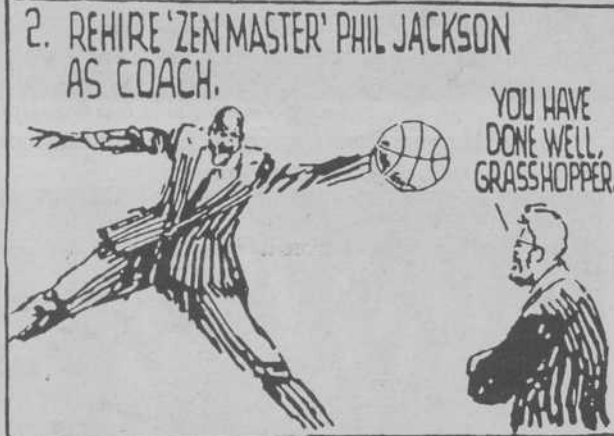
McMillan negotiated the formation of the Human Rights Commission in Las Vegas, serving on the Clark County School Board from 1992 to 1996. A school in northwest Las Vegas — James B. McMillan Elementary is named after him.

In 1962, he ran unsuccessfully for the Clark County Commission. In 1991, he ran unsuccessfully for City Council Ward 1. McMillan was also a pilot.

He will truly be missed.

REXBABIN TIMES UNION

MICHAEL JORDAN'S PLANS AFTER RETIREMENT...



Strengthening bonds of trust

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Public safety and civil liberty can peacefully co-exist in America's black and Hispanic communities.

Not only can they co-exist, they must co-exist if the social peace of American society is to be preserved.

That is why in recent weeks a national movement involving many black and Hispanic leadership organizations, other civil rights groups and ordinary citizens has coalesced to stop the "racial profiling," low-grade abuse—and unjustified violence—the law-abiding among America's people of color too often endure from some white police officers.


The immediate causes are the horrific police shooting deaths of two African-Americans and a West African immigrant from Guinea—in, respectively, Riverside, CA, in Pittsburgh, PA, and in New York City—which have occurred since December.

But it will not do to pretend these are "isolated" incidents. In fact the issue of police misconduct has been simmering for years among Asian-Americans, African-Americans and Hispanic Americans. It can no longer be ignored.

That point was expressed in varying words, but with equally impressive passion by civil rights leaders representing the African-American, Jewish, Asian and Hispanic communities of America, as well as prominent business persons

To Be Equal

By Hugh B. Price
President
National Urban League



and other influential figures at a news conference the National Urban League held recently in Washington.

Our purpose was to support the effective policing of black and Hispanic neighborhoods and the protection of its residents—and to condemn the pernicious idea some seem to favor that it's a fair trade if we people of color give up some of our civil liberties in order to produce the sharp declines in crime American society is enjoying.

Instead, we urged President Clinton to become directly involved in resolving these issues and defusing this crisis.

In his March 13 weekly radio address the President responded to the words of our partners and the voices rising from all parts of the nation, and to an open letter the National Urban League had sent him proposing specific action.

The President promised, among other things, that the Justice Department will vigorously investigate and prosecute law enforcement officials who are suspected of excessive use of force or

outright brutality.

He said that Attorney General Janet Reno will hold hearings around the country to examine how proven crime-reduction methods which do not compromise civil liberties can be successfully implemented in other communities.

And he added that the federal government will help fund efforts to make police forces more racially and ethnically diverse and better trained and educated.

These initiatives represent an encouraging start. Some are contained in the Administration's \$1.3-billion 21st Century Policing Initiative he said he will soon

send to Congress.

We are encouraged by them, and by Mr. Clinton's stated determination to "strengthen the bond of trust between police officers and the communities they serve ... to build bonds of understanding and trust between police and citizens."

However, for all the good dedicated police officers have done to reduce crime, often working with dedicated community activists, much work on "building trust" remains to be done at the state and local levels.

That was dramatically underscored by the response of Jim Pasco, the executive director of the national Fraternal Order of Police, to a *Newsday* reporter's inquiry about the controversy.

"I'm not sure we have to do anything with respect to our relations with members of these communities," Mr. Pasco is quoted as saying, "but it's clear we have a problem with leaders of their organizations. A few (See Trust, Page 11)

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