

OUR VIEW

He's 'Bushing' it

While there is reason to commend President Bush for calling for a major overhaul of America's tattered immigration system, the public should be careful to not put the cart behind the horse. The president's plan would create a program for undocumented workers now in the United States and those in other countries who have been offered employment here.

What may appear as benevolence from a president whose domestic and foreign policies have been anything but benign might be a smoke-and-mirrors plot to augur himself for a testy re-election campaign.

Since Bush will undoubtedly need his \$100 million-plus war chest to secure another term on the throne, what better way to ensure a second Oval Office go-round than to appeal to the millions of newly minted U.S. citizens that would be indebted to him?

(Peep at his gooey rhetoric: "As a nation that values immigrants and depends on immigrants, we should have immigration laws that work and make us proud. Yet today we do not. Instead, we see many employers turning to the illegal labor market. We see millions of hard-working men and women condemned to fear and insecurity in a massive undocumented economy.")

It would've been heartwarming if Bush weren't the forked tongue politico he is. But what better way to gird for what promises to be an election season full of repudiation by shark-attacking Democrats. Surely we can expect an opponent to skewer the president over the dipsy-dooing economy, mounting casualties in Iraq, his desire to gamble portions of Social Security into the moody stock market, undiplomatic diplomacy with North Korea.

Now, make no mistake, the U.S. immigration system needs repair. In fact, it needed fixing yesterday, which is to say it's long been a problem. So Bush is right in one respect: "Illegal entry across our borders makes more difficult the urgent task of securing the homeland. But our borders have been porous for more than a half century" and that labor laws should give undocumented workers the "right to change jobs, earn fair wages and enjoy the same working conditions that the law requires for American workers."

But in pandering to Hispanics for selfish purposes, Bush threatens to undermine support he received from pockets of Latinos — some deplore the drain on fiscal resources immigration has caused on their communities and their pocketbooks — and kindle racial animosities between Blacks and Latinos. If low-level jobs and service sector jobs occupied by African-Americans become Latino thresholds, nothing is gained in the Bush's misadventure. The face of unemployment will switch from Black to Brown. Nor is this situation conducive to a Bush-free future. Minority turnout at the polls is key to matching the ballot might of Confederate sympathizers and the well-heeled NASCAR nation that the GOP rode to victory in the 2000 race for Capitol Hill.

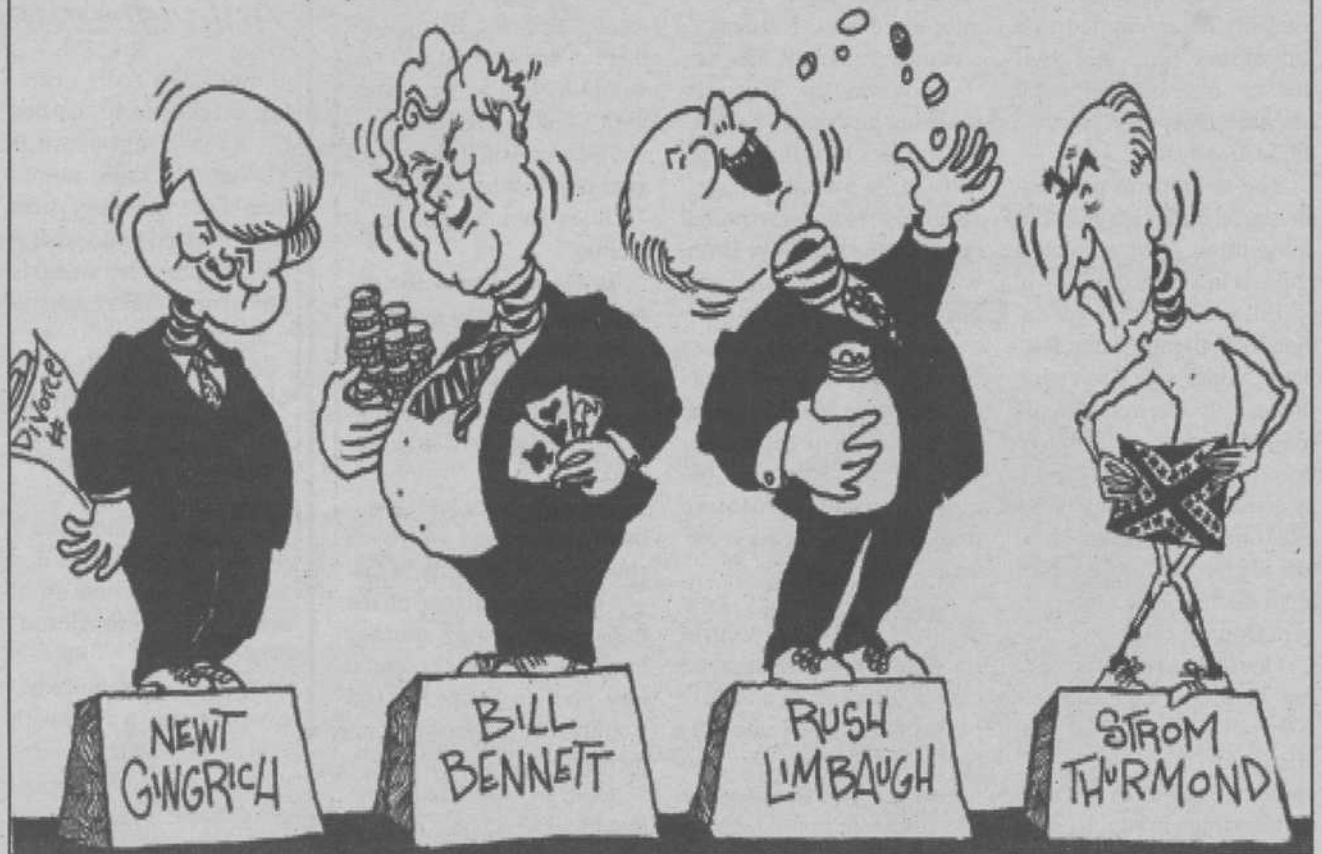
Then there's the hypocrisy of Bush's plan. As noted in published reports, Bush has flip-flopped on whether states should receive federal compensation for detaining illegal immigrants. Articles in the Houston Chronicle and Agencia EFE note the waffling. During his reign as governor of Texas, Bush chided President Clinton to force the feds to pay up.

Conversely, his proposed budget strips \$300 million from the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program fund used to reimburse states. This is the same program whose funding he demanded President Clinton increase. The about-face, pundits note, has upset officials in many border counties who think the feds should cover detention costs because they fumbled on keeping immigrants out.

Our View is this is a sensible enough idea. But, as history has shown, common sense is foreign to this president.

P O I N T O F V I E W

FAMILY VALUES BOBBLEHEADS



2003: Year of no change in media

By Louie Overstreet
Special to tSentinel-Voice

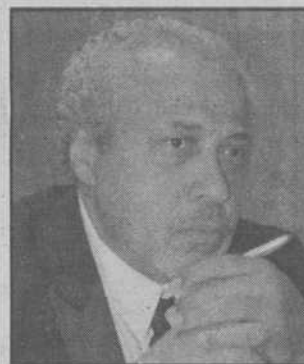
As it pertains to us, 2003 was like all the previous years in terms how stories dealing with Black life in Las Vegas were reported by the major dailies. The reporting of events impacting our community was devastatingly as simple as one, two or three.

Depending on the issue in the newspaper medium, the story was not reported, underreported or reported in the extreme.

It should come as no surprise that how news about "us" is reported can cause good or bad impressions, formed internal and external to our cultural group.

I am going to list what I believe were the top 11 news events in our community over the past year and ask you to jog your memories as to how you recall these events being reported in the Las Vegas Review-Journal (R-J) and Las Vegas Sun. This should allow you to assess whether the impact of this reporting had or will have a positive or negative impact on our educational, economic, and/or political wellbeing. If you do this in an objective manner, then you should be able to reason why the state of our collective existence, here in Las Vegas, needs to be changed through individual and communal initiatives.

1. The Urban Chamber of Commerce issued a *Blue Rib-*



LOUIE OVERSTREET

bon Committee on Race report on the impact race was having on the topical issues of education, employment and contracting, delivery of social services and the criminal justice system. Do you think the reporting on this significant event was reported as a one, two or three by the R-J and Sun?

2. What do you think of the personal media attacks that were launched against our elected African-American officials, including Kevin Atkinson, Morse Arberry and Wendell P. Williams? Would you judge these attacks by the R-J and Sun to be a one, two or three?

3. Ironically, it was the work of Arberry and Williams in the last legislative session that resulted in the passage of *Assembly Bill 7*, which called for the establishment of a *State of Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs and a Regional Business Development Advisory Council for Clark County*. The work of the commission

and council is to develop recommendations for legislative consideration to address the historical problems of lack of fairness, equity and inclusion in public sector employment and contracting opportunities for persons of color. To your knowledge did the R-J or Sun report on this milestone legislation?

4. The Urban Chamber of Commerce filed complaints with departments in the federal government against the Clark County School District and the Nevada Department of Transportation over the failure of these public state agencies to provide equitable educational, employment and contracting opportunities.

5. The reporting of crime in "Black face." Did you notice, regardless of the various locations where murders were committed, it seems that the murders were reported as being in the vicinity of MLK Drive? The portraying of

crime in Black face causes some very damaging false characterizations. The fact is that 86 percent of White murder victims were killed by other Whites and 94 percent of Black murder victims were killed by other Blacks. The public's lack of knowledge of these facts allows the R-J and Sun to report on crime in Black face with impunity. On this one, I am taking the liberty of giving the newspapers a three in that this news is being reported in the inaccurate extreme.

6. Blacks were appointed to the board of directors of two more gaming companies in Nevada. Luther Mack of Reno was appointed to the board of Boyd Gaming and Las Vegas Councilwoman Lynette Boggs-McDonald joined the board of Station Casinos. Given the struggle that has been waged over the past several years to have

(See Overstreet, Page 12)



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