

P O I N T O F V I E W

OUR VIEW

Black media has purpose

Every now and then situations, what is being said and especially what is being repeated, needs clarification.

The scope of the fourth estate is enormous, far-flung and formidable. This is clear about the media. Not so clear, however, is distinction and purpose, when the vast media is segmented and not seen as a whole.

From the very beginning, the Black press was distinct in its purpose from the White press. We are aware of what was printed by John B. Russwurm and the Rev. Samuel E. Cornish, founders of Freedom's Journal, the first Black newspaper in the United States:

"We wish to plead our own cause. Too long have others spoken for us. Too long has the public been deceived by misrepresentations, in things which concern us dearly, though in the estimates of some mere trifles; for though there are many in society who exercise toward us benevolent feelings; still (with sorrow we confess it) there are others who make it their business to enlarge upon the least trifle, which tends to the discredit of any person of color."

Purpose and distinction between the White media and Black media remain as clear as on March 4, 1827, when editors Russwurm and Cornish printed what is akin to a mission statement.

Our View here is clear. We see purpose and distinction as well as we know and practice it. We are the Black press. The Black press or Black media lumped with media in general, especially in the areas of purpose and intent, is problematic. It sends the wrong message.

There are times when political correctness does not serve us well. This is one of those times. When accusations are made about how stories are reported and played, people making public comments need to draw distinction. This is a sore point with us, the Black press.

Where others seek to damage and ruin reputations, our purpose is to build and lift up. We see ourselves as the vanguard, righting wrong and leading the right for equal rights. Where other media show up at crime scenes, when a brother or sister has taken a wrong turn, we show up at the Black Community Organizations Network 26th Annual Baccalaureate Ceremony, not forgetting to mention the Caucus of African-American Nevadans (C.A.A.N.) community-based luncheon.

We hope starting now that those who make public pronouncements about media will become more articulate, if not savvy, in drawing distinctions on purpose alone. The record of purpose and distinction is clear and recorded weekly on the pages of the Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice.

The New York Times from May 31 through June 5, ran a daily package of stories on Las Vegas. The scope was wide, ranging from jobs, education, strippers, wayward teenagers and the skyrocketing cost of housing. However, the reports left out reporting what African-Americans are doing in Las Vegas.

Nary was a word mentioned about the solid leadership of the Black elected officials in our community.

Also, it is widely known that Las Vegas has the most churches per capita than any major city in the United States. The New York Times failed to include this in their six-day package called "American Dreamers."

The New York Times must return and make good on this omission. We are American Dreamers, too.



Real vs. fake in White House race

By Louie Overstreet
Special to Sentinel-Voice

As a person who, by his own admission, has difficulty staying on his rocker, I am going to give you a chance to prove that I am certifiable. I am going to pose a series of questions (Q) then provide you with the hidden agenda answer (HAA) intended for public consumption, followed by the real deal answer (RDA). If you just so happen to agree with my real deal answer, then you would have to conclude that I am not as crazy as you might have first thought.

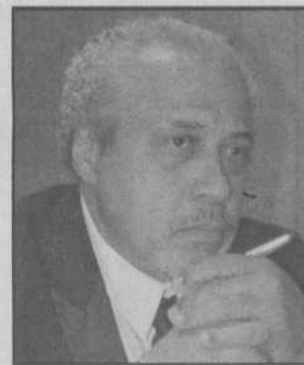
Q-1: The defining question that has been asked during the last several presidential debates is "are you better off today than you were four years ago?"

HAA: The current occupants of the House White say that the jobless rate is down, employment and the stock markets are up. Thus, more Americans are better off today than four years ago.

RDA: However, if you are a member of the lower middle class, working-poor or been unemployed for so long that you have stopped looking for a job, then the siren "Rosy Scenario" doesn't look too alluring to you.

Q-2: Is America safer as a result of our country invading Iraq?

HAA: If you own stock in the companies that are profiting from the war effort,



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then your answer would be yes.

RDA: If you have loved ones who have died in the conflict or are a part of the generation that is now reaching adulthood and will have to live your lives in constant fear, then your answer would be a resounding no.

Q-3: Are Christian churches filled with good people who are going to heaven after they die?

HAA: If you believe in forgiveness of sin and denounce Satan, then you will enter the Kingdom of God.

RDA: Churches are filled with as many good people as bad. These bad people, who always keep mess going on in church, think by tithing that they can buy their way into heaven. Also, don't look for too many preachers to say anything to them because a number of them know that bankers can't tell whether or not the money comes from saints or sinners.

Q-4: Are all African-American students slow

learners?

HAA: Based on what test scores the school district chooses to release, then the subliminal, implied, implicit, or explicit answer is yes.

RDA: The real deal answer is no. The greatest predictor of student achievement is not the race of the student or the educational level of parents.

The greatest predictor of student achievement is family income. Given what has been the history of this country, then you know that as African-Americans we are overrepresented in the economic class of "poo-folks." By in large, however, Black students who have wealthy parents are doing just fine. The second greatest predictor is the years of experience possessed by a teacher.

As a side bar, here in Clark County, the Clark County

Education Association (CCEA) could pay a meaningful role by encouraging their membership with years of teaching experience to work in schools where test scores need to be improved.

However, do not expect things to change. No school board or superintendent I know has the courage to level with the public about the need to target money for areas where families with low incomes reside. Thus, look for a continuation of things as they have always been in this country.

Another way of looking at the problem is to cite examples. The saving grace for students who are not the best performers on tests is that it has little to do with how well students are going to turn out in life. The poster child for low achieving students is the

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