

Eurocentric curricula damages Black students

By Hazel Trice Edney
Special to Sentinel-Voice
WASHINGTON (NNPA) - Millions of students who attend America's public schools are being indoctrinated with "Eurocentric" curricula that diminish their history and cause them to feel less than their White counterparts.

That is the contention of Carl Noldon, a senior honor roll student at the Bronx High School for the Visual Arts, in a speech written for a Black History Month program that, amidst controversy, he never presented.

"What I have to say is designed for the enlightenment of those who suffer from a school system that hypocritically manipulates Black history in a way that causes a disconnection from Black students and their history," Noldon writes in the speech. "If you try to make a Black child co-exist with a racist

school system or a Eurocentric school system, then you are basically putting that child back into slavery, perhaps mental slavery... There is something wrong with the educational system and the country. I believe the parents should take an active role in challenging the school system and even the curriculum of this school so that any residue of Eurocentrism is gone."

Noldon continues, "All the history teachers I ever had were White, and from every last one of them, I never received the link to the genius of Africa. Those teachers always taught European history with a much stronger emphasis. The result... I was brainwashed. I was brainwashed because I thought genius equated to White people, because the teachers talked about how much a genius a person like Einstein was or the Greeks.

"Later on, I had to realize that those people that the White history teachers talked so greatly about were used as devices to implant a slave mentality in me and an inferiority complex. But, what the textbooks never taught me was how Europe took a lot from Africa and how Africa precedes Europe with thousands of years of philosophical, religious, mathematical, scientific, artistic, and medicinal knowledge. The African represented a genius so powerful that advanced civilizations flourished even before the concept of Europe was thought of."

Noldon, set to graduate June 27, wrote the speech for a Black History Month assembly held Feb. 27. Instead, he ended up calling the NNPA News Service, pleading, "I want my voice heard."

Noldon said in an interview that he never got to do the speech — for one main

reason: "The principal was basically talking about how he wanted me to change what I was saying in the speech... There were certain things in my speech — the content, you know — he wanted me to change it to make it appeal to everybody. The principal gave me two options. The first one was to omit what I was saying in my speech, the other option was to not read my speech at all."

Contacted by NNPA, the principal, George York, who is White, praised Noldon, calling him "one of our brightest and best." But, York declined to discuss specific details of why Noldon did not do the speech.

"We offered Carl [Noldon] every opportunity to share his article with our entire student community. We wanted him to go into classes, faculty meetings, assemblies, etcetera. We even spoke to Carl on several occasions, myself and my assistant principal [Ms. Debra Logan], about finding a scholarly venue to publish his fine work... Carl demonstrates the excellent education that he received at the Bronx High School for the

visual arts, that he was able to do this research on his own on a topic that he is so passionate about," said York. "He is really on to something that's so important. It was really Carl's decision not to present."

Though the speech hasn't been presented, the message is riveting, says Ron Walters after reading excerpts of it, which NNPA shared with him. Walters is director of the African-American Leadership Institute at the University of Maryland and author of "White Nationalism, Black Interests" and "Freedom Is Not Enough."

"The first thing I want to say is, 'Wow,'" Walters said after reading excerpts of the speech.

Walters said Noldon "points out the major contradiction of any student expecting an objective education — that the institutionalization of racism within the American system of education causes African descendant students to adjust to a one-way pattern of socialization... in a manner that devalues their own humanity, history and culture."

Walters added, "He quite

rightly calls for a new paradigm of American education that respects all cultures... The problem here is that his perspective, a Black perspective, has been sacrificed by Black leaders, parents and others in order to position Black students into a framework of viability with the American economic system as the primary function of education."

Noldon's mother, Anna Noldon, says she was not surprised at her son's views.

"All he does is comes home and studies," she said. She said he was getting failing grades through elementary school until his uncle, Vincent Noldon, began teaching him about Black heritage and middle school teachers took an interest in him.

On the day of the Black History Month program, "He called me at work and he was very, very upset," she recalls.

"He said they were not allowing him to do his speech."

Ultimately, she said she met with York and told him, "I wanted everything to be resolved. I told the principal (See Student, Page 18)

China gives Nigeria COMSAT

BEIJING (AP) - A Chinese rocket blasted a Nigerian communications satellite into orbit, marking an expansion of China's commercial launching services for foreign space hardware, state media said recently.

The official Xinhua News Agency said it was the first time a foreign buyer has purchased a Chinese satellite and its launching service.

The launch coincides with the opening of the African Development Bank's annual board meeting in Shanghai this week, reflecting growing African-Chinese ties.

The Nigerian Communication Satellite, or NIGCOMSAT-1, was launched by a Long March 3-B rocket from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in southwest China's Sichuan province early last week, Xinhua said.

The launch was part of a \$311 million deal signed by China and Nigeria in 2004, and the satellite will be used to expand cell phone and Internet services in central Africa, Xinhua said.

China has been commissioned to send about 30 foreign satellites into space and signed several contracts offering commercial launching services for foreign satellites, including one with Venezuela, it said.

The satellite, which was developed by the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp., will be monitored and tracked by China's Great Wall Industry Corp., it said.

Xinhua said the launch represented "China's wish to cooperate with developing countries in the peaceful use of outer space and to promote a closer relationship between China and African countries."

Africa warned on China's work

SHANGHAI, China (AP) - Chinese-funded dams and other projects potentially threaten Africa's environment and local populations, an environmental group said recently, urging Beijing to avoid similar mistakes made by Western donors.

Civic groups need to be engaged over projects such as the Merowe Dam in Sudan, which is forcing 70,000 people from their homes in the Nile Valley into the Nubian Desert, the U.S.-based International Rivers Network said in a statement.

The statement was issued during a visit to China by activists that coincides with Shanghai's hosting of the African Development Bank's annual meeting, a sign of China's growing engagement

with the continent, where its companies have fanned out to build infrastructure and seek resources such as oil and gas.

That deepening relationship is putting Chinese firms increasingly in the center of local disputes, including one between Muslim rebels and the government of Ethiopia. A rebel group, the Ogaden National Liberation Front, killed 65 Ethiopians and nine Chinese oil workers in a raid on April 24.

Ali Askouri, a representative of Sudanese groups opposing the Merowe Dam, said Chinese-funded projects could worsen such disputes if they failed to address local concerns.

"China should consult African civil society groups

and affected communities in the projects it finances," Askouri said.

Daniel Ribeiro, a water expert with Mozambiquan group Justica Ambiental, said he was in Shanghai to raise concerns over a planned dam funded by China at Mpanda Nkuwa on the Zambezi River, something he said would have a major impact on the entire Zambezi Delta region.

"As a developing nation, China is in a unique position to offer advice and support to African countries," Ribeiro said. "China should learn from the mistakes of Western governments, and should not turn a blind eye to corruption and environmental destruction in the projects it promotes."



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