

## OUR VIEW

# Enough is...

How many more funerals do we have to attend? How many more mourning mothers do we have to console? How many more families have to be shattered? How many more neighborhoods have to be imperiled? How many more residents have to cower in fear, living by the code of the streets, in which silence saves lives? What do we have to do to encourage people to speak up when they witness crimes? When will we be able to confront and dismantle the anti-snitching culture, convincing witnesses that speaking out is the right thing to do? Will police ever be able to protect those who put their lives on the line and testify against the urban terrorists that turn local streets into killing fields? Aren't you tired of reading headlines and watching news stories about young people dying? Can we answer these questions before another body drops?

James Givens III is no longer with us. He was 15 when he was fatally shot at the corner of Englestad and Gilday. Published reports note that residents said they heard 15 shots when he was gunned down on Nov. 20. So many shots, yet no forthcoming witnesses. We must ask ourselves why? Why is the village not doing its job? Does it indeed take a village to raise a child? Or does it take individuals, who collectively comprise this village, to raise a child? If the latter is true, why is that the individuals in the village are falling down on their jobs?

Surely, someone in the neighborhood knows who killed Givens or, at least, who was involved. People talk. They brag. They gossip. Someone has to have heard something, seen something. Keeping information confidential is detrimental. It hurts law enforcement's ability to bring closure to violent crimes. It emboldens the thugs who run roughshod over the neighborhoods—they can do what they want and not worry about being identified. It cheapens the lives of the deceased. What are we saying to them we remain silent? That we don't care?

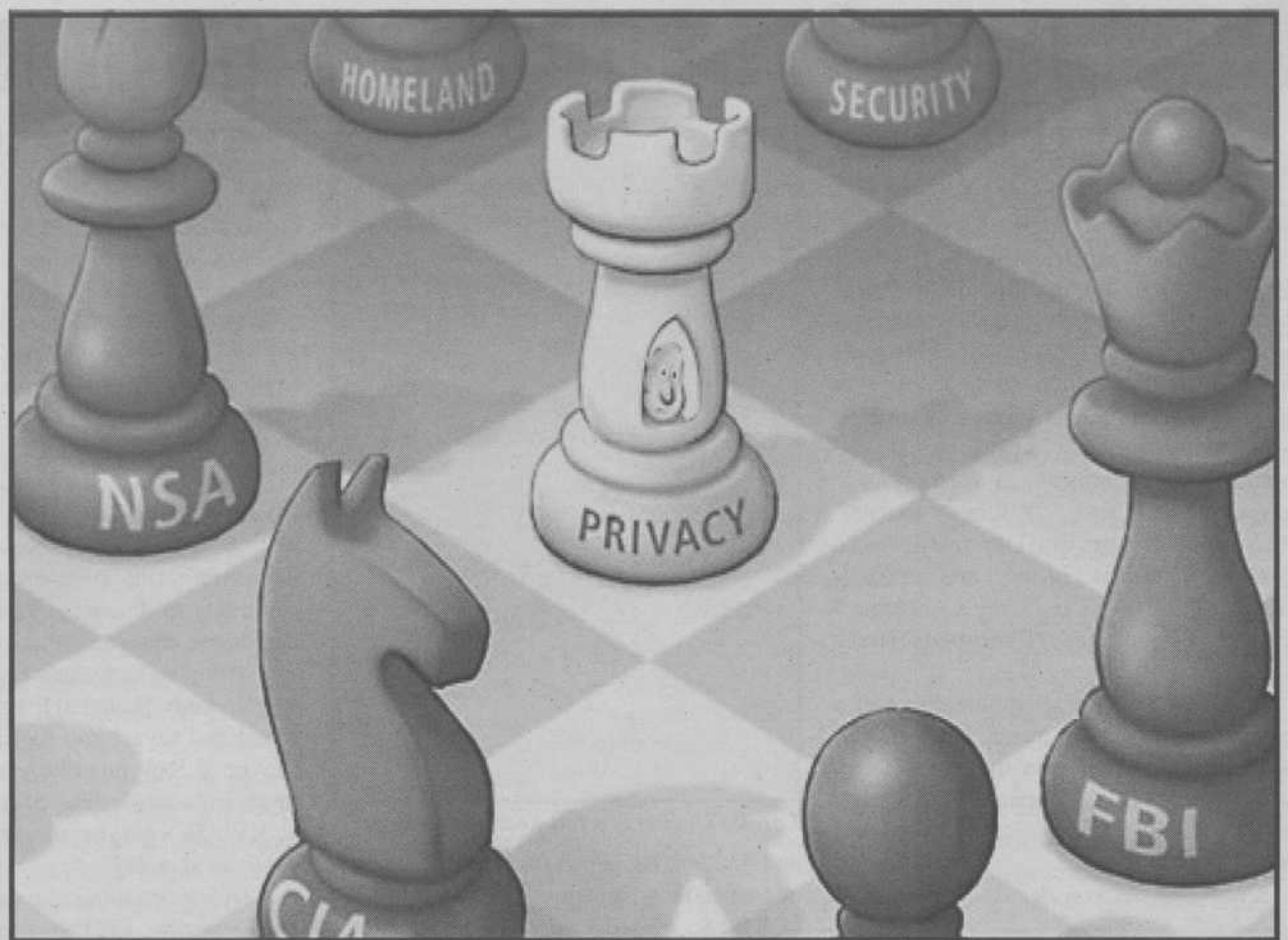
The question is: what are we going to do about this? We, as citizens. Not the police. Not the FBI. Not special task forces convened to target youth and inner-city violence. We! Not just those of us who live on Carey Avenue and Martin Luther King Boulevard, on Sierra Vista and Cambridge, on 28th Street, in Naked City behind the Stratosphere, on Pennwood and Arville and other areas known for crime. But also those of us who live in Summerlin and Green Valley, Mountain's Edge and Aliante, Spanish Trails and Seven Hills. Crime isn't exclusive to a certain neighborhood or an ethnicity. We can't move away from it, no matter how much we relocate. Every young person who dies violently, whether it happens in Green Valley or Gerson Park, is important. Givens is no longer here. If we don't do something, he will be forgotten, replaced by the next young murder victim.

## Lost causes?

African-American Democrats held a mock caucus on Saturday at West Prep in an attempt to familiarize voters with the 2008 presidential caucuses upcoming on Jan. 19. Hopefully the turnout isn't a precursor of things to come. If so, then we've got some issues to address as a constituency. The showing was shameful; less than 100 people came out. Where was everyone? We could come up with any number of excuses: not enough notice, confusion about the dates, etc. No explanation is sufficient.

African-American voters in this town had best mobilize and mobilize fast if we want to be players and not benchwarmers in the most important presidential election in nearly two generations. We've watched as our political clout has weakened and the Congressional Black Caucus has been marginalized (a largely self-inflicted wound). Because of this, we can't afford to be complacent and lose our seat at the table of democracy. Too many issues need to be addressed. To name but a few: repeals on affirmative action, mandatory minimum drug sentencing, redlining, racism, hate crimes, predatory lending, police-Black relations, support for Historical Black Colleges and Universities. Our issues are important.

They must be heard. We can't do that with 100 people.



A man's home is his castle.

## Is Mitt Romney a closet racist?

By Harry C. Alford  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

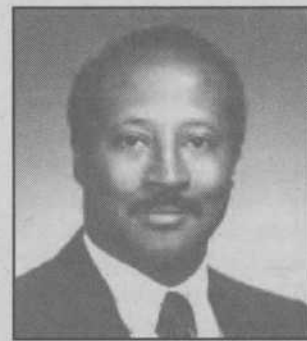
That is a very important question to raise about someone who is seeking to become the president of the United States. This nation has a racist pedigree, and it took a lot of bloodshed, holocaust and struggle to overcome it. If it is to survive in this ever-changing and unpredictable world, it must never return to that flaw, for it will, indeed, be fatal.

So, when I repeatedly hear about this issue of whether or not Mitt Romney is a racist, I find it more than coincidental. Things keep popping up on this matter with the greasy-haired candidate.

Ron Paul voted against giving Rosa Parks a Congressional Gold Medal. He was the only congressperson to do so. That sticks on him permanently, but that is all I know about his racial demeanor. But with Romney, there is always something new.

First of all, Mitt Romney has been raised a devout Mormon. He's a leader in the group. The founder, Joseph Smith, was actually an abolitionist who vehemently fought against the ills of slavery and welcomed Blacks into his new religion, replete with its own bible, The Book of Mormon, which was written by members of this group.

Smith's successor was Brigham Young, who, in-



HARRY C. ALFORD

deed, was a racist, and who introduced the doctrine that Blacks were descendents of Cain, the bad son of Adam and Eve; thus, they were cursed with the mark of Cain (their Blackness) and are forbidden entry into heaven and prohibited from the priesthood of the Mormon Church.

This started during the time Jim Crow laws were being written throughout the nation during the late 1800's and post-Reconstruction. It wasn't until 1978 that the Mormon Church felt encouragement to change this policy.

In the meantime, the Romney families were thriving under it. A member of the Carter Administration's Justice Department decided that if the Mormon Church wants to embrace a racist doctrine they should no longer be given 5019c(3) tax exemption status. As the federal government was about to make its move, the Church proclaimed that God visited their president and twelve apostles and proclaimed the curse lifted. Blacks from here on have a chance beyond

Hell. How convenient.

Romney as an elected official has been known to make racial slurs. He has recently referred to a construction boondoggle, The Big Dig, as a "Tar Baby" he needs to avoid. Tar Baby — that's an old school racial slur: It's not something we want a presidential candidate to have such a thought process about and then to state something like Romney did.

Romney's successor as governor of Massachusetts is the Honorable Deval Patrick, a Black elected official who served as chief of the Civil Rights Office of the Clinton Administration's Justice Department. That is the same office that went after the Mormon Church's racist policies in the late seventies. There seems to be some serious "bad blood" caused by that.

It is a long tradition that when inaugurating a new governor in Massachusetts

they have a ceremonial passing of the gavel. The outgoing governor stands and hands over the gavel to the new governor and exits the building as the new Governors stands at the podium and delivers his inauguration address. For the first time in history — and without comment — Mitt Romney refused to participate in the ceremony and recognize the new Black Governor Patrick. That sounds like the old George Wallace or Strom Thurmond type of stuff. The people of Massachusetts were outright embarrassed.

Very recently, well known Black Republican Congressman J.C. Watts publicly complained that the Romney presidential campaign was absolutely devoid of Blacks, Hispanics or any other ethnicity, other than White. It was lily-white, and this needed to be corrected, proclaimed the former elected  
(See Alford, Page 9)



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