

Point of View

The views on these editorial pages are those of the artists and authors indicated. Only the one depicted as the Sentinel-Voice editorial represent this publication.

TO BE EQUAL

1992—YEAR OF DESPAIR AND HOPE

By John E. Jacob

It's not easy to categorize the events of any twelve month period in a few words, but I think most people would agree that 1992 was a year of bleak despair countered by fresh hope.

The despair derived from two aspects of 1992 that brought pain and suffering to so many Americans.

First, of course, was the devastating recession that hung on stubbornly and refused to go away.

By year's end, all the experts were crowing about how the economic statistics were look-

ing better. The consensus is that we're on our way to recovery.

But those optimistic statistics were joined by reports of new layoffs as giant corporations accelerated plans to close plants and even whole divisions.

Over the past two years, more than two million people became unemployed, and even if the jobless figures improve slightly, continued high unemployment is expected.

So it's hard to muster much enthusiasm for an economic recovery that doesn't put people back to work.

African Americans are especially dubious about reports of the end of the recession. We recall that while everyone was celebrating the economic boom of the 1980's, black workers suffered double-digit unemployment.

A recession isn't over until there's full employment, and no one — whether economists or government leaders — should pretend otherwise.

A second negative aspect of 1992 was the rise in racial tensions, so vividly dramatized by the Los Angeles riots.

That eruption of anger was

sparked by one of the historic miscarriages of American justice — the acquittal of the policemen who brutally beat an unarmed black man.

It was natural that attention was focused on Los Angeles, but there were disturbances in many other cities. The conditions of despairing anger that drove so many people in Los Angeles into the streets could be duplicated in virtually every city in the nation.

Unfortunately, there doesn't seem to be much evidence that the nation is willing to act.

Just as in the 1960s, the riot

was followed by a commission report, some small-scale to improve conditions, and a bit of soul searching followed by a monumental national silence.

Surely, more of a response was demanded by a situation that amounted to a test of whether this nation of diverse peoples can learn to live together with respect and dignity for all.

Too many Americans can't see beyond their own particular grievances and stereotypes. They need to be educated to see that issues such as race, poverty, and the survival of our cities will determine our national future for good or for ill.

In 1992, there was a glimmer of hope that such understanding could come about through invigorated national leadership.

Bill Clinton's ability to unite Americans of vastly different ideologies, races, and ethnic and economic backgrounds into an electoral coalition certainly inspire hope in that direction.

CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL MORE TRUTH REVEALED IN SOUTH AFRICA

By Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

Everyday inside the racist regime of South Africa, more and more evidence emerges about the systematic death-choke that apartheid maintains against the people of South Africa. Now, F.W. de Klerk has been forced to admit and confirm that South Africa's military has an ongoing "covert third force" that has engaged in political assassination and terrorism



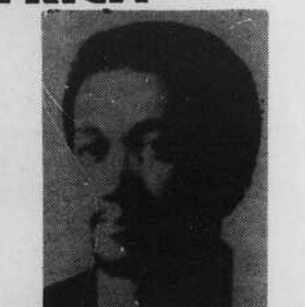
JOHN E. JACOB

But an election campaign is very different from governing, and winning votes from diverse groups is very different from constructing firm biracial, multi-ethnic alliances.

Still, it is remarkable how much hope has been sparked by the Clinton victory. Even among the most hardened cynics, there is a feeling that for the first time in so many years the nation has a leader that not only believes in diversity, but is willing to champion it with youthful vigor and powerful communication skills.

Whether the expectations will be realized remains to be seen, but it is good to end the year on a note of hope, rather than a note of despair.

CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL MORE TRUTH REVEALED IN SOUTH AFRICA



BENJAMIN F. CHAVIS, JR.
against the African National
(See Civil Rights, Page 3)



RESOLUTION FOR REVOLUTION

This is the time of the year when almost everywhere that you go, people are talking about their New Year's Resolution. The fact that most of us, at the very least, think about adopting at least one New Year's promise; indicates the fact that most of us would like to make either some type of self-improvement or self enhancement.

The idea of making a New Year's Resolution goes back to ancient Roman times and the idea is good even today. Good, because in order to follow through on resolutions, one must also develop persistence, courage, determination, perseverance and dedication. All things that will in some way enhance or improve one's life. However, the problem with the idea of New Year's Resolutions is that experts claim that of all the people who make new promises to themselves at the start of every new year; only 25% of them keep them beyond one week. We've all made them and kept them, and we've all made them and broke them.

With this in mind, I have finally decided what I'll make as this year's resolution; "I will not wait until the new year to make a resolution." Yes, people that really understand change and the need for change will make a serious resolution on the spot; while others continue to wait for the so called "right time."

The following is just a short lookback at a few in our community who didn't wait for the new year to get serious about doing some things to enhance 1992.

* National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression takes a history making stand against insensitive and out of control police department. This group led by Dr. James Tate adopted a resolution that they are committed to as long as it takes. In fact, you may remember the last weekend in June, Dr. Tate was arrested for trespassing while collecting signatures at the Department of Motor Vehicles. The NAARPR has not given up their resolution as 1993 approaches. If you are looking for a good cause to join in '93, this is a good one.

* WAAK-UP didn't wait for the new year to make a resolu-

tion either. After attending a March 1992 school board meeting, they decided then, to adopt the resolution to do everything possible to improve the conditions of West Las Vegas students. With that resolution, WAAK-UP led by Debra Jackson and Marzette Lewis forged changes that were long needed for the Clark County School District. They utilized all the things that I mentioned that are needed for following through on good resolutions; namely, persistence, courage, dedication, perseverance and determination. WAAK-UP has no time limit on their resolution, therefore you can also join in with this resolution as well.

Resolutions are tough to keep, because too often we find it tough to stay determined and to develop a desire for change. But it is the least that we can do. Change and struggle will never be easy. If it were to be easy, everybody would be doing it. This is what separates men and women from great men and women. Great people are only ordinary people who stick to their resolutions. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said it best on February



Assemblyman
Wendell P. Williams

4th, 1968 while speaking at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, GA. While delivering a sermon entitled "The Drum Major Instinct," King talked about "greatness." King said: "Everybody can be great. Because everybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You don't have to know Plato and Aristotle to serve. You don't have to know Einstein's Theory of Relativity to serve. You don't have to know the second theory of thermo-dynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love. And you can be a servant. And recognize that he who is the greatest among you shall be your servant."

This new year, commit to resolutions at anytime and throughout the year. That's the best resolution that we can all make. Commit to resolve conflict, and injustice, negativity.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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