

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

For the past two months I have been working with the Pierce County Committee of TAXPAYERS FOR CHOICE. This committee is working for "No" on Initiative 471.

As you know I have been an advocate for poor people's equal rights since the early 1970's when we organized a local welfare rights organization. "No" on Initiative 471 is a vote for equal rights for poor women.

If passed, 471 would immediately eliminate public funding of abortions for low-income women. **Even when** a pregnant woman's health is endangered. **Even when** a pregnant woman's life is threatened. **Even when** a pregnancy is caused by rape. **Even when** severe genetic defects are present. **And yes, even when** a young woman's pregnancy is caused by incest.

I am a strong believer that each person should have a right to decide personally whether they believe in abortion. The real point is whether we have a right to decide for another person. Why do some people feel they can dictate what services are available to poor people? Particularly when we know that when abortion was illegal, rich women could have an abortion by their doctor or leave the state or even the country to have one. It again comes down to who has the money.

I personally do not want to see 1 woman who is poor decide to kill herself or inflict a self-induced abortion which may probably lead to sterility or death because we voted to limit the civil rights of poor women.

Judie Fortier

Tony Brown is Vicious

An Open Letter to Tony Brown:

It is most interesting that while ads for your television show claim "No White Lies. No Black Lies. Only the Truth," you found it necessary to stoop to distortion, innuendo and vicious character assassination in your recent columns condemning Vanessa Williams and the support shown her by Essence editor-in-chief Susan Taylor and the staff of Essence magazine.

Neither Susan Taylor nor the hundreds of other Black women and men who wrote to Essence offering words of support for Vanessa Williams would dispute that she made a very serious and costly mistake. But it was a mistake, not a crime--and certainly not the kind of transgression that merits an obsessive, two-part diatribe proclaiming, "We don't owe Vanessa Williams anything, she has disgraced Black people, denied us, worked with racism when it suited her ambitions and now seeks to exploit our moral high ground."

It's curious that not even Ronald Reagan came under such virulent criticism by you when you had an opportunity to interview him a few years ago, so I can't help but wonder what your real motives are in publicly maligning this young Black woman.

You are quite right, though: You don't owe Vanessa Williams anything. As a journalist, however, you do owe your readers truth and integrity and a perspective that is not clouded by personal bitterness and animosity. And we at Essence felt we owed Vanessa our compassion and our understanding, as well as our support. It is unfortunate that you find such sentiments inappropriate.

Audrey Edwards
Essence Magazine Editor

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COMMENTARY

BELIEVE IT!

NAACP REMINDS YOU THAT
ONE VOTE CAN
MAKE A DIFFERENCE

BY MORRIS

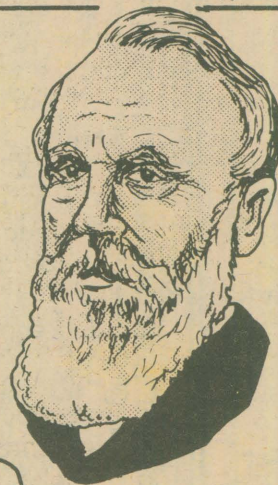
RUTHERFORD B. HAYES

BECAME PRESIDENT OVER SAMUEL
TILDEN BY ONE VOTE IN 1876.



JOHN F. KENNEDY

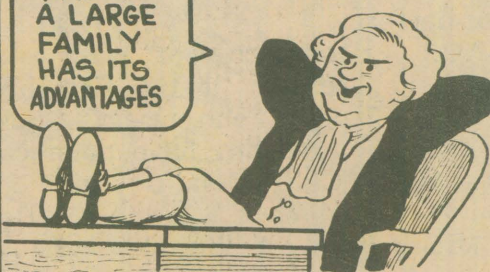
IF ONE MORE PERSON IN TEN
COOK COUNTY (ILLINOIS)
PRECINCTS HAD VOTED FOR
RICHARD M. NIXON IN 1960,
JOHN F. KENNEDY WOULD NOT
HAVE BEEN ELECTED
PRESIDENT.



MARCUS MORTON

BECAME GOVERNOR
OF MASSACHUSETTS
IN 1839 BY ONE VOTE.

HAVING
A LARGE
FAMILY
HAS ITS
ADVANTAGES



STUDY- THINK - AND VOTE



Tony Brown's Comments

•NATIONALLY SYNDICATED COLUMN•

Dick Gregory: Health Prophet

Every time a new report is published on the health of Black people, I brace myself. Sure enough, the last one was no exception. A group of doctors and health experts presented a report at the recent Congressional Black Caucus Health Brain Trust.

The life expectancy for a Black person is 68. It is 78 for whites. Black women are two and a half times more likely to die from diabetes than white women. It goes on and on.

Unhealthy diets and fat in the diet, and subsequently fat on the body, are prime suspects of these horrifying statistics. One expert also singled out medical care which focuses on "CURING ILLNESS, NOT PREVENTING IT."

But thanks to the Health Prophet there is a focus that makes sense. Everyone can't understand it and everyone won't agree on it, but everyone can afford "Dick Gregory's Slim Safe Bahamian Diet."

Gregory, the author of books on health, is now Gregory the entrepreneur of health. And his best example of health is Dick Gregory who has transformed a 300 pound overweight, whiskey drinking, heavy-cigarette smoking comedian into a medically-certified phenomenon of health.

Now Gregory wants the rest of us to live as long as he will, but he has, he says, found a way for us mortals to benefit as he has from good health without his rigid fasts (the last one lasted 167 days).

"I am not telling you not to eat," Gregory explains as he rejects self-starvation. "You can lose weight without losing nutrition. On this diet you can lose evenly."

Over the last 15 years, Dick has been mixing up formulas for friends. "I've been working for 15 years on this diet. I turned down \$900 million years ago because I didn't trust the company," he said.

He, however, found his mate in Cernatin, an Ohio company, from which he received a mind-boggling \$100 million for just the United States marketing rights. Gregory retained the mail-order rights to the slimming diet (Dick Gregory, P.O. Box 73002, Chicago, Illinois 60678-3002 or call 1-800-543-1300) which he estimates will make another \$162 million a year.

What in the world is in this good-tasting powdered diet? It contains carob, alfalfa, chia, date, rice, pumpkin, wheat and various other fibers. There are no additives or dairy products, which Gregory feels are not beneficial. "I went to the Bahamas and discovered the power of fresh fruit firsthand. The taste just explodes in your mouth."

"It's safe," he assures us as he wonders why no one ever questioned his old diet. "When I was smoking and drinking a fifth of scotch a day and weighing 300 pounds a day, nobody questioned by health. Now its cool to be healthy."

According to Gregory, \$12 million go to 12 organizations and 10 percent of the \$100 million will go to the education of the elderly. Benefitting from the sale of Dick Gregory's diet powder will be the NAACP, PUSH, SCLC, Urban League and the Martin Luther King Center, among other civil rights groups.

Already 500 million in orders have been placed for this "7-day rapid weight loss" powder which also consists of (among other things) cucurbita pepo seed, agropyron triticeum powder and malpighia glabra, all vegetable substances.

"I use the Latin names like cucurbita pepo seed and agropyron triticeum powder just in case the big boys try to break it down," Gregory teases. "You can lose weight without fasting," he adds.

You can also help the Black civil rights movement improve the health of the Black community by listening to the Health Prophet.

Tony Brown's Journal television series can be seen on public television Saturday on channel 9