

LISTEN, PEOPLE TALKING

By Charles Coe

--I guess Martin Luther King must have realized that he was living on borrowed time, but Black People will never forget April 5, will they?

--No, and there will be even more white people who will mourn his passing. I've heard that when you ask one of the Negro boys in Vietnam who their hero was most of them will answer, "Martin Luther King."

--It's these parades. They used to be peaceful processions, at least in northern cities. Remember that first march on Washington and how well organized it was?

--Yes, that was a time when Black Americans were hopeful of peaceful change. Then came this cut-back on antipoverty appropriations.

--And the delay on open housing, and the continued defacto school segregation. James Baldwin is right, it's just as though we were living in another country.

--The trouble with parades is that although they must impress white people with the fact that black people have a grievance they do not give much opportunity for the marchers to talk to the watchers and tell them their story.

--Yes, I can't believe that white people are really as indifferent as they sometimes seem to be. It's just that communications have broken down. Why, it's getting so they even talk a different language.

--Yes, you read about primitive tribes in distant lands. People that live in one valley can't understand the dialect of people on the other side of a mountain range that lies between them.

--How many Black People who live in the Central Area ever go into the white neighborhoods, except, perhaps to drive through, but they never stop, much less talk with anyone. They would feel strange going up to a white person and just saying "Hello."

--But I've heard that more and more white people are realizing that they have been missing something by not knowing any Black Americans. They know more and more that their children are growing up to live in a world that is mostly not white and that if the next generation is to function successfully on a rapidly shrinking planet that their children should have among their friends some children that are of a different race and color.

--But they are not ready yet to bus their kids down to a Central Area school, and there has been no reason for white people to visit the Black Community.

--Of course the Christian Friends, as they call themselves, started this New Years intervisitation program several years ago and the Council of Churches has been keeping up a program of visitation for dialogue between black and white, but they never bring the kids.

--Have you heard about a new program that the East Madison YMCA is starting? They are asking white families to take memberships in the Y, come down here with the whole family, and while the kids swim in the new pool that they are building this summer, the parents can sit in the foyer or at poolside and watch them, drink coffee and get acquainted.

--That will be fine for the Black American families that can afford a membership in the YMCA. But some Black American families can't. Some of them are on relief and their budget won't cover a membership card.

--Richard Carter the executive secretary of the East Madison YMCA says, "No kid is going to be turned away from the pool whether he can pay or not. And the parents of these children are welcome guest at any time."

--Sounds like a good idea. Maybe this will be a break in the clouds. The sun may be shining all the time whether we can see it or not.

Letters To The Editor

day on learning of his death:

"The American Jewish Committee applauds the appeal of President Johnson that the nation, as it mourns the passing of its great Nobel laureate, Martin Luther King Jr., end the violence that so threatens to engulf our land. If the untimely and tragic death of Dr. King can signal such an end to violence in the U.S., then it shall not be in vain."

Dr. King received the American Liberties Medallion, highest award of the AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE, at its annual meeting in 1965.

Mr. Abram, it was recalled, was the go-between in arranging the famous telephone call in 1960 from John F. Kennedy to Dr. King, expressing his support of Dr. King, who was in an Atlanta jail for his civil rights activity. Mr. Abram also persuaded Atlanta officials to release Dr. King. The phone call is regarded by many Democrats as having had a powerful effect in bringing Negro voters into the Kennedy camp.

Founded in 1906, the AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE is the pioneer human relations agency in this country. It combats bigotry, protects the civil and religious rights of Jews here and abroad and advances the cause of human rights for all.

Dear Sir:

Pittsburgh, Pa., April 5---President I. W. Abel of the United Steelworkers of America today issued the following statement: We, of the United Steelworkers of America, deplore the senseless slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the hate and bigotry behind it. It represents a national tragedy comparable to the martyrdom that befell Presidents Lincoln and Kennedy. It shows the world an ugly side of our society and emphasizes the critical need for us to overcome the kind of thinking and emotions that are costing this nation both leadership and stature.

Dr. King was a friend of all people, and a particular friend of the labor movement. In fact, his fateful mission in Memphis was to help achieve the right of free collective bargaining.

Inasmuch as he gave his life for the cause of freedom, all Americans now must do no less than draw closer together, as a people, to carry on this great crusade for justice in the tradition of non-violence which Dr. King so rightly and devoutly espoused.

The profound sorrow of this Union has been conveyed to the family of Dr. King and our officers and members are rededicating our efforts to achieve, in the way he would want, the goals which Dr. King sought for a better and greater America.

Dear Sir:

I want to express my personal sorrow as well as the sense of profound tragedy that pervades our entire congregation and community on the senseless shooting of Dr. Martin Luther King. His death is an inestimable loss to all America regardless of race, religion or color. It behooves all of us to rededicate ourselves to the ideals for which he lived and for which he died. Not by words alone but by creative and constructive deeds, in our very community as well as throughout the country, can we give meaning to this senseless act, where the noble advocate of non-violence was cut down by violence.

Dear Sir:

To retaliate for the death of Dr. King it is almost unreasonable to say "Don't Riot or Loot or Burn." We have been deeply hurt, and we want to hurt those "The Society" that has hurt us. Understanding this, Dr. King would have been the first to say no. Don't waste your time or energies gathering worthless material symbols of this society. Don't stoop that low. If we can't get what we want or need in this country like free men and women, we don't really need it. Lust for the leavings of this society is worse than the bondage of our Fore-Fathers. If we must dirty our hands, do it in the pursuit of Truth, Justice, Freedom, and Equality. Our rights will last far longer than any loot. Our freedom will endure long after the fires have been extinguished. Our equality will still be good when it is business as usual. So, this observer simply states, don't surrender our dignity for a few crumbs. Don't sell out so cheap.

Louise H. Carpenter

STATEMENT OF BERKELEY G. BURRELL,

PRESIDENT, NATIONAL BUSINESS LEAGUE

ON THE ASSASSINATION OF DR. KING

The death of Dr. Martin Luther King is indicative of the depths to which America has sunk. His life, which was dedicated to removing ignorance, bigotry and poverty from this nation, was and will forever be a reminder that this is a racist nation white against black and black against white.

Every American, black and white, needs to reflect upon his or her contribution to the climate of mental apartheid that took the life of this vibrant, young, dedicated, articulate, selfless Negro American. It was a senseless death cut from the same cloth and using the same pattern as was used in the deaths of John Kennedy, Medgar Evers and all the others.

Equally tragic, is the mood of the black community that even now is beginning to retaliate by looting and smashing windows of hundreds of businesses owned and operated by their own black people in their midst, in an attempt to show their hatred for the "System". This show of emotions is senseless when perpetrated against millions of whites who were devoted followers of Dr. King and even more stupid when struggling black employers of black people are being victimized by their own people.

We call upon the President of our troubled nation to do the following things:

1. To immediately amend the administrative interpretation of the Federal Disaster Act of 1950 in order that the SBA and other Federal agencies can financially assist the businesses affected, and

STATEMENT BY JOE DAVIS, PRESIDENT OF THE WASHINGTON STATE LABOR COUNCIL, AFL - CIO,

The death of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King in Memphis yesterday is a grievous sorrow for all America.

We, in organized labor in the Pacific Northwest and throughout the nation, will never forget that his mission in Memphis was a non-violent protest in support of striking members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO. Throughout his memorable life the Rev. Dr. King worked with members and leaders of organized labor to bring his vision of a truly free and just America into a living reality.

His death will not be in vain. Union and non-union workers know in their hearts that his doctrine of peaceful reconciliation must not, can not, be stopped by an assassin's bullet.

2. To immediately ask Congress to enact legislation creating a National Insurance Corporation or similar corporation to assist ghetto businessmen in securing casualty insurance.

As president of the National Business League, with chapters in more than fifty cities, whose ten thousand member businesses stand to lose their meager holdings, I ask that all businessmen affected by these uprisings do the following:

1. Close up during the entire day of Dr. King's funeral in deference to his memory.

2. Report to local NBL officers your needs resulting from uprisings.

3. Exercise restraint, repeat restraint and understanding with the looters to avoid any senseless confrontations and needless violence and death.

Dr. King's life was wasted if it does not change the mood of America.

STATEMENT

by

DR. FORBES BOTTOMLY

SUPERINTENDENT

SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ABOUT FRANKLIN HIGH

SCHOOL STUDENTS

I am convinced that the parents of the students at Franklin High School want order and good discipline to be maintained at that school. I am also convinced that the vast majority of the students of Franklin want to continue their studies and pursue their programs free from the turmoil inflicted by outsiders.

Therefore, disciplinary action is being taken with Franklin students who have been identified as having taken part in the disturbance last Friday. Also, charges are being filed against those outsiders who unlawfully entered the building and participated in the demonstration.

Nine Franklin Students, eight boys and one girl, have suspended. They have the opportunity to seek reinstatement by appealing to the superintendent, and school authorities will be happy to discuss the suspensions, and possible reinstatement with the students parents. The Prosecutor's Office has informed me that it has charged five young men in Justice Court with unlawful assembly and that two juveniles have been charged in Juvenile Court with coercion, unlawful assembly and vagrancy in connection with last Friday's disturbance.

I would like to emphasize that the District stands ready at all times to discuss grievances with students and parents, but it will also, with the support of City and County authorities, use whatever means are required to maintain order and a good learning environment.

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