

First World Anti-Apartheid Newsletter

Volume One, Number Six

P.O. Box 5208
Atlanta, Ga. 30307

December/January 1991

Coping Strategies for the Africentric in a Eurocentric Society

by Harold Braithwaite, Ph. D. and Oscar L. Beard, B.A.

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The Black person who propagates the fact of the African origin of human civilization, science and the belief in one god itself, i.e. the Africentric, is pressed (oppressed) between the White Power Structure and his/her own brainwashed de-educated Black People. Most so-called "negroes" suffer from a partial or total denial of their African identity, science and culture. This is not intended as a put-down on Black People, but as a simple statement of fact.

To have become Africentric in an Eurocentric 99.99% White dominated society, one is likely to have already mastered the art and science of swimming upstream against the current, and with at least one hand tied behind the back. It also implies that one had been seriously seeking an alternative path to various roles, under whatever neo-guise, prescribed for Blacks in America by the ruling Whites.

Unfortunately, when we make the decision to tell the truth of World History and Civilization, its African origin, we find that our friends, families, co-workers et al who do not share this vision, often actively or passively discourage our efforts to be/become our true African selves. This exerts excess stress upon us, because we find few, if any havens to nurture, reinforce and develop our true being. The traditional helping community of psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, counselors and clergy are, for the large part not trained, nor are they desirous of assisting. In fact, given that obtaining degrees in these fields requires mastery of Eurocentric White thought AND the corresponding behaviors, these professionals are basically of little or no value to the Africentric. It is, therefore, necessary that we develop our own support systems to nurture and reinforce our Africanity, and to help us cope with the high, often insidious levels of cultural, personal and psychic rejection.

A classic case is the story told by Dr Yosef ben-Jochannan about the Black minister in Ohio (see Jochannan's Our Black Seminarians and Black Clergy without a Black Theology, Alkebu-lan Books Associates, 1978, out of print). The Reverend James Holloman (1930-1975) had presented to his Black congregation, the indisputable proof of The Black Messiah, that Jesus was/is African. The classic blond blue-eyed "Jesus" is actually Michelangelo's uncle, who sat as the model for that portrait. But, in the face of overwhelming proof, Ohio's thoroughly "negrosized" Christians could not accept the Truth, clinging to their worship of Micheangelo's uncle. The Reverend James Holloman was forced out of Dayton, Ohio, negrosized clergymen and clergywomen even attempting to force him out of his new congregation in Middletown, Ohio. If it is not important for us to know that Jesus is African, why then has it been so very important for us NOT TO KNOW IT?

The Reverend James Holloman is free at last! He succumbed to a massive brain hemorrhage in 1975. Holloman was not able to cope with the stress of being caught-up between white supremacy ideology, i.e. the White Power Structure, and his own de-educated, brainwashed Black People. How can any of us cope?

Firstly, it is important to understand that even amongst Africentrics, there are varying levels of commitment to our African identity. There are also varying levels of comprehen-

(see Coping, page 2)

Hitler Goes Yuppie:

Notes on Tightening the Reigns of White
Domination Through "White Liberalism"

by Oscar L. Beard
Consultant in African Studies

The spectacle of Southern White businessmen, even Bull Connor's Birmingham, coming out in "support" of the integration of public facilities in the 60's demonstrated the effectiveness of Black boycotts on the one hand. Yet, to others, it somehow signaled a spiritual transformation in the hearts of white racists.

A more realistic assessment is that White businessmen realized an economic advantage to what appeared to be imminent integration anyway. That is, the Black dollar would be displaced from the Black business to White, as Blacks would patronize previously taboo white establishments in order to exercise their human rights. This need to demonstrate our equality to White People has all but completely destroyed the local Black business community. Today, the African-American buying dollar is valued at \$350 billion annually, and is still making White People richer. This is more than the Gross National Product of some major European nations!

What had happened was that Blacks had brought the issue of Civil Rights to international attention. America's reputation was at stake. On the other hand, White businessmen realized the opportunity to totally control the Black dollar, while also improving their public and international relations by appearing to support integration on humanitarian grounds. The concerted actions of White businessmen had nothing at all to do with the welfare of Black People, at least, not in their minds. Indeed, they would never have gotten to such a point of reassessment, if it had not been for the fact of Black protest itself. Only the gullible could believe otherwise.

During the Fall of 1989, the oppressed
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sion of the massive amounts of information, activities, behaviors and experiences that represent the Africentric worldview. It is critical that we embrace all Africentric people regardless of their level of knowledge or commitment. We must accept them for where they are at that given place and time. This is quite focal, in that the Africentric may quickly become frustrated and impatient with the ignorance and complacency of others, which becomes a primary source of stress. Such a person, in the absence of help, may become "blacker than thou" in a great void of social ineptitude where no one can listen to him/her because he or she is too mad about the topic. What is needed is Africentrics who can recognize and work through their anger so that the grand task of re-educating our people and any other open-minded person can continue.

We should understand that in any war there will be casualties and victories. When people do not listen, we need to march on to the next opportunity. You have done your part. No need to waddle in your puddle of rejection. You are depriving that person who may be ready to listen. A luta continua!

Sometimes one must dig down deeper for strength. Seize it! Take strength in the rightness of our struggle. We are historically correct! Someone must do what we are doing. Indeed, it is the very us who are to do it. Our work is the source of our greatest ecstasies and the seat of our most troubling psychic despairs. Oh! What a great work! Certainly it is divinely inspired and propelled. Indeed, the first and most potent source of our inspirations is, and must always be The Supreme Being or Deity, who has created all that is.

But, in our depression and withdrawal, we often do not utilize some basic and quite practical coping strategies. The following are recommended:

A) Nurture an environment of acceptance at home, with those who don't necessarily share your view. Communicate the message, "If you can't be with me, at least do not be against me." This will most likely require that you yourself accept the other person(s) for where they are. When you are free of condemnation, so can they have that possibility.

B) Scale down! Nubia wasn't built in a day. Especially is the neophyte Africentric so full with joy and enthusiasm, but with few audiences with which to share the information. Do a little each day. In fact, just get through each day, if your spiritual burden becomes too heavy. Don't try to save the world, nor worry of the future. We WILL do the job, but through persistence and even-mindedness. Convert the sense of urgency into common-sense action and application. Study the African Mysteries System, the laws and planes of The Unity of The Opposites, and learn to utilize the left and the right in human relations and in teaching.

C) Start small, low overhead if necessary. Funding is O.K. if it does not compromise your values. In the long run, what good will the watered-down truth do?

D) Attend African cultural events on a more consistent basis, rather than to be controlled by the opinions of significant others. It is at these events that the Africentric can gather the much needed food for thought to keep focused. A Reggae club might be preferred to the classic straight-tie setting, for leisure upliftment.

E) Utilize the peer group. Stay in contact with other Africentric thinkers. Have weekly, bi-weekly or montly gatherings in small groups at homes or community centers, where there may be discussion of issues, concerns and for the sharing of Africentric thought, music and other vibrations.

F) GET REAL! Open up in a personal sense to at least one Africentric. Don't set your standard of trust so high that no one qualifies to be your sounding board. Talk about your frustrations, confusion and aspirations. Much of our interaction is at the level of intellectuality which is, of course, quite essential. But now that we know that we are good at that kind of stuff, let's talk feelings. Don't be afraid. The likelihood is that we are all experiencing the same bizarre sensations. The person who isn't feeling it, is probably already insane.

(Liberalism, cont'd from page 1)

people of South Africa, i.e. the Mass Democratic Movement, marched onto South Africa's white's only beaches and other facilities, taking advantage of South Africa's presidential election to put the plight of the oppressed into the international eye. The MDM announced the unbanning of the African National Congress, the United Democratic Front and other groups, calling for the release of all political prisoners, the ending of The State of Emergency and the eradication of all Apartheid racial "laws".

As early as The Sharpeville Massacre of 1961, South Africa had noted a kind of inverse proportionality to its international relations. It took note of the international response to the brutal crackdown on Black protest, beginning with Sharpeville which had issued forth the first big wave of international investment in South Africa, transforming it into the powerful military-police state that it is today. South Africa's crackdown on the Blacks had created international business confidence (see Kris W. Kobach's Political Capital, The Motives, Tactics and Goals of Politicized Businesses in South Africa, Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1990).

South Africa's present sensitivity to international opinion is based upon the fact that its economy is now 60% dependent upon its international trade. 50% of South Africa's income is generated by gold, South Africa having produced 35% of all the gold ever produced on earth (at least according to The World Gold Commission). South Africa presently produces over 650 tons of gold annually.

With such a gold dependency and such political instabilities, South Africa has figured out ways even to turn social protest into a profit. The founding force behind the so-called World Gold Council, South Africa's propaganda machinery has been able to maximize international fears of a forthcoming "scarcity" of South African gold during periods of relatively greater political unrest. The international buyer will purchase gold now at a lower price,

FIRST WORLD ANTI-APARTHEID NEWSLETTER

Volume 1 Number Six
December '90/January '91
Published 6 times a year

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Virgestine Lockett Business Manager

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rather than wait for the price to go up due to political unrest, scarcity, or the looming Black takeover. According to Ian Lepper and Peter Robbins, in "Gold and International Sanctions Against South Africa", World Gold Commission publications, London, 1987, South Africa was able to increase its foreign income by 25% between 1985 and 1987, a period of great political unrest, by the manipulation of these product dynamics. The price of gold, which is determined internationally, had risen from a low of \$284.00 per ounce in February of 1985, to an all time high of \$482.00 per ounce by 1987.

Former South Africa President P.W. Botha had further tested the international waters during the Summer of 1985, by announcing simply that he was thinking about making certain changes in The Apartheid System. The world sat on pins and needles at the edge of their seats.

Having noted an improvement in the international business climate with his vague allusions, Botha went on to say by Fall of 1985, that he was planning to dismantle The Apartheid System. You probably recall one of several newscasts that Fall, stating that apartheid had been eradicated.

Of course, all of this was just propaganda, yet a series of lies that had improved international business confidence in South Africa and hence, made money for the South African regime. Botha's pseudo-reformist epithets of the Summer 1985 had been given more "clout" based upon his reputation as a reformist. Botha, the previous ruthless Minister of Defense of then colonial Namibia, had replaced the old British-styled parliamentary government, giving all decisions from guns to butter, to the South African Military-Police State. Yet, Botha's reputation as a reformist had nothing whatsoever to do with the welfare of the oppressed people of South Africa. With Botha, we had gotten our first glimpse at South Africa's new "White Liberal" facade.

So that by the Fall of 1989, newly elect South African President F.W. de Klerk did not have to "walk on" untested international waters. F.W. de Klerk was able to utilize a combination of two historically validated profit-making tactics. Firstly, mass protest by the MDM provided a new setting of political instability, a state-of-affairs South Africa had become expert at turning into a profit. Secondly, de Klerk utilized Botha "future projections" tactics, by stating that he would soon be releasing certain political prisoners. Soon, he stated that the release of Nelson Mandela himself was imminent, but that it would take some time yet to work out the details of the release. By this time Mbeki had actually been released, then Walter Sisulu. de Klerk appeared to be putting his money where his mouth was. But, is this a correct assessment? The Wall Street Journal (1/26/90) stated that South Africa's international gold shares had increased 60% since de Klerk had been alluding to the release of Nelson Mandela.

The central problem here is one of perception, or rather of misperception. Since Whites are in power, the "standard" of behavior is White male behavior. Most of the world appears to be looking at de Klerk's behavior as primary, as the mover, as the change initiator. On the other hand, one serious question must be asked. If the South African "government" has not released Mandela and other key political prisoners in 27 years, for what reason would they be releasing them now, if it were not for some advantage South Africa is realizing?

The fact is that it was the Mass Democratic Movement that took the initiative and brought the plight of the oppressed people of South Africa to the international eye at the opportune time. de Klerk had been forced into this arena by mass protest. It has also been the long decades of social protest by anti-apartheid activists around the world, and indeed the protracted struggle of the African armed wing (SWAPO, ANC, PAC, FRELIMO, MPLA, Mugabe's ZANU, etc.), i.e. the particular combinations of international, domestic and regional pressures that had finally sufficiently strained the South African economy. The last straw was a successful gold embargo against South Africa in the Spring of 1989. This had come about due to international lobbying by The World Gold Commission, which consisted of Southwest African People's Organization, the African National Congress and The London Anti-Apartheid Committee.

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de Klerk's so-called "White Liberalism" was none other than survival tactics for the South African economy, which has been reporting negative growth rates in recent years, Whites now doing work (such as real work) previously reserved for Blacks only. The release of Nelson Mandela, in particular, was intended as a means to diffuse the international sanctions campaign, which has slowly, but surely taken a toll on South Africa's dependent economy. Yet, dependency is a negative label intended to refer to Black African nations only.

Indeed, the MDM had announced the unbanning of political organizations in the Fall of 1989. If it is true that de Klerk is the only one who could have made the unbannings legal, it appears that most of us want to give even the spirit of the idea of the unbannings to the White male. These bannings were never legal anyway. And they certainly weren't humane. They were part of the political repression of the South African Nazi machinery.

In the midst of all of this "White Liberalism", the South African Army and Police have stepped up their murder and brutality against the oppressed people of South Africa. The South African Human Rights Commission recently stated that nearly "half of the incidents of political violence recorded throughout South Africa" this past August were "caused directly by the army and the police" (from *Southern Africa Perspectives: Apartheid's Hidden Hand - The Power Behind "Black on Black" Violence, The Africa Fund, New York, 1990*).

So effective has been South Africa's "White Liberalism" campaign that even the words of ANC President Oliver Tambo, are being distorted in the international White media. Tambo merely stated that he was going to reassess sanctions. Most of us took this to mean, as intended, that Tambo was thinking about calling off sanctions. Practically the next day, the largest gathering of the ANC in South Africa since its banning in 1961, met to renew its commitment to continued sanctions. Margaret Thatcher had led this movement to pay de Klerk for his human rights "initiatives" by lifting British sanctions. Bush wants to lift sanctions that were never enforced to begin with. This had put the U.S. Presidency in a pro-sanctions light, a definite illusion.

At some point, we need to internalize a structured analysis of the unfolding events of Southern Africa, so that we can stop being duped by the international media. We need to stop viewing African political phenomenology through Eurocentric eyes, whether it be Communism vs. Democracy, Marxism, Socialism or the latest, "White Liberalism". It is not easy, but it takes, number one, getting involved.

Publisher's Note:

The staff of The First World Anti-Apartheid Newsletter would like to take this opportunity to wish you a Happy Kwanzaa and a productive New Year, and most of all, to thank you for your readership and increasing support of the newsletter. We should like also to thank Minister Farakan for the reprinting of our article dealing with Japan's involvement with South Africa, in the May 3, 1990 issue of *The Final Call*. Thanks also to the SCLC for reprinting our article dealing with the international diamond and gold markets, in the June/July 1990 issue of the SCLC magazine, a fine journal. You have all been so very gracious. We look forward to serving you even more in the New Year.

Sincerely,
Oscar L. Beard, Publisher

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