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# Valdosta Project Change

February 2000

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THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES  
www.sgaonline.com

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Tuesday, Feb. 1, 2000

## MLB suspends Rocker until May 1, fines him \$20,000

NEW YORK (AP) -- John Rocker was suspended until May 1 by baseball commissioner Bud Selig on Monday for racial and ethnic remarks that "offended practically every element of society."

The Atlanta Braves reliever also was fined \$20,000 and ordered to undergo sensitivity training for disparaging foreigners, homosexuals and minorities in a magazine interview.

The players' union said it intends to fight the ruling.

"Major league baseball takes seriously its role as an American institution and the important social responsibility that goes with it," Selig said.

"We will not dodge our responsibility.

Mr. Rocker should understand that his remarks offended practically every element of society and brought dishonor to himself, the Atlanta Braves and major league baseball. The terrible example set by Mr. Rocker is not what our great game is about and, in fact, is a profound breach of the social compact we hold in such high regard."

The players' association said it ex-



John Rocker

pects to file a grievance over the penalty, believed to be the longest against a baseball player for an action not related to drug use since Lenny Randle of Texas got 30 days in March 1977 for punching his manager, Frank Lucchesi.

"I do not believe it is appropriate that I should be harshly disciplined for my misguided speech unaccompanied by any conduct on my part," Rocker said in a statement released by his agents. "I have previously apologized for my unfortunate remarks and stand by my apology."

A grievance would force the matter before Shaym Das, the sport's new independent arbitrator.

"We have been in consultation with Mr. Rocker and it is our present intention to appeal," said Gene Orza, the union's No. 2 official. "It is literally unprecedented to impose a penalty on a player for pure speech, offensive though the speech may be. That, coupled with the magnitude of the penalty, just as unprecedented, makes us optimistic about the outcome of the appeal."

With the season to start April 3, the suspension technically is to last 28 days. A suspension will not affect his salary, expected to be between \$200,000 and \$300,000. Rocker may go to extended spring training starting April 3 and will be allowed to pitch in the minor leagues.

# RANT & RAVE

*Here's your chance to let South Georgia and North Florida know how you feel, with just a single phone call. RANT: to let loose with the steam that's been building up inside. RAVE: to give recognition for things well done. Call 244-3400, ext. 418, and take up to 30 seconds to express yourself.*

## True definition

“ We know the true history, but do you know the true meaning of ‘rebel’? If you would define ‘rebel’ in your dictionary, it means rebellious and we as blacks are for peace.”

## Enough is enough

“ What would people have Berrien County Rebels change the name to, the Berrien County King Jr.? Enough is enough.”

## ► OUR STATE

### New marker takes note of black cemetery's significance

SAVANNAH (AP) — A 147-year-old cemetery where some of Savannah's best known black residents are buried finally has its own historical marker.

The black-and-silver marker at Laurel Grove South Cemetery was erected by the Georgia Historical Society and Friends of Laurel Grove South, a group of cemetery supporters. It is part of the society's new marker program, which has placed 21 markers at historical sites around the state since last April.

Among those buried at Laurel Grove South are Andrew Bryan, founder of one of the oldest black churches in the country; Jane DeVeaux, who secretly taught slave children; Raymond Snype, a jazz pioneer; and several black Civil War veterans.

“It is probably the most significant African-American cemetery in the state of Georgia,” said Charles J. Elmore, a Savannah resident who worked to make the marker a reality. “There are no other cemeteries where you have the founder of the African-American Baptist church movement.”



Associated Press

The Georgia Historical Society and the Friends of Laurel Grove South Cemetery dedicated an historical marker commemorating some of Savannah's prominent black leaders who are buried in the cemetery, including the Rev.'s Andrew Bryan, Henry Cunningham and Andrew Marshall.

# State of denial won't change history

Finally, the folks who take care of Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's estate in Virginia, have relented to the urgent call of DNA and have all but acknowledged that the nation's third president probably fathered at least one — perhaps all six — of the children of Sally Hemings, one of Jefferson's slaves.

The affair does not bother me. My concern is the matter of denial. For more than 200 years, Jefferson's white relatives and others have tried to bury strong evidence that the president had carnal knowledge of a black concubine. The very idea was so repugnant that the keepers of Jefferson's legacy went into deep denial. And many have remained there and may never emerge.

In psychology, this phenomenon is called a defense mechanism, the process of repression by which an unacceptable idea is made unconscious. Again, in this case, Jefferson's defenders denied an obvious reality that was too painful.

Such denials — and the American psyche suffers from many — contribute to many of the nation's enduring social and race problems.

In a now-infamous editorial, the Florida Times-Union of Jacksonville, in an attempt to support Gov. Jeb Bush's initiative to end affirmative action in the state, blithely commented

that slavery "existed briefly in America" and that "slavery is not unique and its effects are not permanent."

Denying the profound, residual effects of slavery may seem fitting for the Times-Union, which has an unfortunate reputation for being insensitive to African-Americans. But such denial prevents the editors and writers from seeing the truth, guaranteeing that the paper will continue to have poor relations with an entire segment of Jacksonville's population.

Another symbol of gross denial flies atop South Carolina's Statehouse. Many South Carolinians still refuse to acknowledge that the Confederate flag stands for all that was wrong in the South, that the banner was raised to protest federal civil rights legislation of the 1960s that gave blacks rights that white Americans took for granted.

Many South Carolinians, moreover, cannot bring themselves to acknowledge that Dixie fought the North to preserve

the evil institution of slavery. As long as the Rebel banner flies in Columbia and people continue to deny the crippling effects of slavery, South Carolina will never begin to heal its racial wounds.

In a recent column, Miami Herald editorial board member Kathleen Krog wrote about the worldwide propensity for inhumanity as we enter the 21st century. Drawing parallels between the Holocaust, U.S. slavery and other international atrocities, she urged people to acknowledge the wrongs and not to forget them.

"In a sense, the Holocaust is like American slavery," she wrote. "It's the ugliness in our past that just won't go away. Slavery's after-effects still inflict such profound damage — as fresh as the latest class-action discrimination lawsuit — that it's obvious why this example of man's inhumanity to man won't fade from our cultural consciousness. It remains a deep lode — as much as an unhealed wound — for historians, sociologists, educators, civil-rights activists, clerics, writers, filmmakers, journalists and others with truth and revelations on their minds."

*Bill Maxwell is a columnist and editorial writer for the St. Petersburg Times. His e-mail address is maxwell@sptimes.com.*



**Bill Maxwell**

Columnist

Sunday, Feb. 6, 2000 — 11A

# Cook County

The Valdosta Daily Times

## NAACP continues hiring protests in Adel

### City agrees it needs to hire more African-Americans

#### Staff Reports

VALDOSTA — The NAACP plans to protest the hiring practices of the Adel City Police Department Monday night at the next council meeting.

Bob Jones, newly elected chapter president, says the city isn't doing enough to hire more African-Americans. And the city agrees.

"We will hire more, but we just need to find a place for

them," said Dick Barr, mayor of Adel.

Barr said the city was all for hiring more blacks, but needed time as positions open up.

He noted the academy begins in April and the city can't afford to keep them on the staff without powers of arrest.

Shortly after Jones voiced his concerns at the December council meeting, the city hired an African-American applicant in January, and he is waiting to go

to the academy. Since then, the city has gotten a new mayor and two new councilmen, including Greg Paige, an African-American deputy in Brooks County.

Barr said he agrees with Jones, and that proportionally the city needs more black police officers to come into balance with the racial makeup of the city.

But, Barr also said there was a process of attrition that had to occur before the city could con-

sider hiring for the force.

But Jones contends the department needs to make amends for not hiring blacks in the past and said the police department needed to hire more than just one African-American on the force.

Kirk Gordon, the police chief, said he would also be in favor of hiring more African-Americans for the force.

Jones is on the agenda for the council meeting Monday night.

## Arkansas race riot revisited

### Community will meet after 80 years

ELAINE, Ark. (AP) — Decades later, there are two versions of the Elaine race riot of 1919 that left as many as 200 blacks dead: the “white version” and the “black version.”

Partly out of fear, the stark differences rarely have been aired in public in this Mississippi Delta community.

That is likely to change this week with a two-day conference marking the latest attempt around the country to re-examine some of the nation’s bloodiest racial clashes.

Organizers in Elaine say they want to revisit that day — Sept. 30, 1919 — when a white sheriff’s deputy was killed and white mobs from Arkansas and Mississippi apparently took revenge on blacks.

Similar attempts to come to terms with some of 20th century America’s largely forgotten racial episodes have led to efforts to pay reparations to the victims.

No one at this point is leading an effort for reparations in Elaine.

Even so, there is good reason to revisit a town’s troubled history, said William Gatewood, a former University of Arkansas history professor.

“We think one of the ways to solve contemporary problems is try to ascertain what the roots of these problems are,” he said. “Certainly you don’t solve the problem by pretending all of this didn’t happen.”

As it stands, there are two conflicting accounts of the Elaine race riot, said Little Rock lawyer Grif Stockley, who is writing a book about the bloodshed.

According to the “white version,” a black man, Robert L. Hill, planned an insurrection against whites, organized a union among black sharecroppers and incited them to grab land and kill whites. In an unprovoked attack, the account

goes, a white deputy was shot by blacks meeting at a church near Elaine, and chaos ensued.

More than 500 federal troops were sent in, accompanied by the governor, to restore order. When it was over, five whites and an undetermined number of blacks were dead and hundreds of blacks were arrested.

The version told by blacks portrays whites as the aggressors: The blacks were trying to get their fair share of the money from cotton sales and formed the union to get an accurate account of how much they were owed by landowners.

Even the number of dead remains up for debate: anywhere from 20 to 200 blacks died in the clash.

**RANT  
&  
RAVE**

### Not racism

“As a student of Berrien High School, the Rebel is not a symbol of racism or hatred. It is a 45-year-old representation of pride both black and white share in their school. Lets stop looking for symbols of racism. Go mighty Rebels.”

## OUR NATION

2A — Tuesday, Feb. 8, 2000

### Man dies after defending black friend

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) — A white truck driver was run over and killed while defending a black friend from racial slurs, police said.

James Thompson, 56, of Showlow, Ariz., died Sunday at the hospital where he had been since Jan. 30, when he was struck by a car in the parking lot of a Fort Worth restaurant.

Thompson and his friend were on their way to the diner when a man and a woman in a car started yelling racial slurs, police said. Thompson’s friend ignored the remarks and kept walking, but Thompson began arguing with the couple, police said.

A short time later, the couple drove to the far end of the parking lot, turned around, accelerated and struck Thompson, according to police.

Wednesday, Feb. 9, 2000

# Black leaders repeat appeals to Adel council

By Taylor Bright

THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

ADEL — Bob Jones and other members of Adel's black community again made their case Monday in front of the mayor and city council for hiring more blacks in the Adel Police Department.

"Something has got to be done," said Jones. "Not next month, not next year, but right now."

Jones, a member of the local National Association for the Advancement of Colored Persons, said he was concerned over the effect of having no black patrol officers in the black community.

At the December meeting, after Jones brought up the subject, the council said it was taking applications. In fact they hired an African-American, who is now waiting to go the police academy. But, Jones said that wasn't good enough to have only one.

Mayor Dick Barr said they couldn't hire anymore people because they don't have anymore positions available.

"We cannot arbitrarily hire people who we do not have openings for," said Barr.

Further, Jones said, a black candidate had applied for a job but was turned down.

Barr said the man had a criminal case pending against him, which would make it virtu-

ally impossible for him to get into the academy. The man would be free to apply again after his case was heard, said Barr.

After the meaning, Jones said he was not happy with the council or the mayor.

"They did what they did, now we're going to do what we gotta do," said Jones.

"Mayor Barr is reversing on us. We are the ones that put him there."

He said, if need be, they would file a discrimination lawsuit against the city.

For now, Jones said he feels like talking to the council is going nowhere.

Several other members of the black community were also on hand for the meeting.

"All we are asking for is fair treatment in the city of Adel," said Ben Pickett.

Several of the people thought the hiring practices were unfair to blacks not only in the police department, but throughout the entire city.

They said since the police department has more interaction and power within the black community, they are worried about the effect on the young members of the black community.

"They harass the young men for nothing," said Pickett.

To contact reporter Taylor Bright, please call 244-3400, ext. 245.



# THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIME

Thursday, Feb. 24, 2000

www.sgaonline.com

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## Exiled professor returns to Georgia

### King fled Albany after conviction for draft evasion

ATLANTA (AP) — A black man who refused induction into the Army in the 1960s because the all-white draft board wouldn't address him as "Mr." returned to the United States for the first time in 39 years Wednesday after receiving a presidential pardon.

Preston King cried as he greeted 20 members of his family — some of whom he had never met and others he had not seen in decades — at Atlanta's Hartsfield International Airport.

King, 63, fled his hometown of Albany in 1961 after being sentenced to 18 months in prison.

Over the years, he made a life for himself as a professor in England, where his daughter is a member of Parliament.

On Monday, President Clinton granted King a pardon so he could return to Albany for the funeral Thursday of his oldest brother, Clennon W. King Jr.

"This is a wonderful homecoming," King said. "This is my turf. These are my folks. I feel a great sense of love for this terrain."

King's daughter Oona, a member of Britain's House of Commons, who flew with her father from London, said King's homecoming was bittersweet.

"He doesn't get those 39 years back," she said. "He thought he would die without ever seeing his home again."

King thanked Clinton for hav-

ing the courage to pardon what he called "a simple issue of common decency and mutual respect."

In 1958, King, who had been granted time by his draft board to pursue a master's degree at the London School of Economics and Political Science, was told to report for induction.

King noted that the draft board addressed him as "Mr. Preston King" before learning he was black and "Preston" after that. He refused to report for an Army physical until the board addressed him as "Mr.," as they did white draftees.

He was eventually convicted of draft evasion.

King, now a professor of political science at Lancaster University, said he felt no bitterness about the time he spent away from the United States.



Associated Press

Preston King, professor of political science at Lancaster University, England, hugs his daughter Oona King, a member of Parliament, Wednesday at London's Gatwick airport prior to their departure for Atlanta to attend his brother Clennon's funeral. President Clinton granted Preston a full pardon Monday for a draft evasion conviction, ending 39 years of exile from the U.S.

Friday, Feb. 25, 2000

THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

## Learn from the past



Mike Tanner/The Valdosta Daily Times

Teachers from Lomax-Pinevale Elementary perform traditional dances Thursday at West Gordon Elementary during the school's fifth-grade production of "Learn from the Past, Celebrate the Present, Plan for the Future," a Black History Month program. Students, parents and staff were treated to the historical program that featured students portraying famous African Americans from yesterday and today.

The Valdosta Daily Times

2A — Friday, Feb. 25, 2000

## Former exile attends family funeral

ALBANY (AP) — As the choir sang freedom songs and mourners shouted amens, pardoned draft evader Preston King dabbed his eyes Thursday during an emotional funeral service for a stubborn brother who once ran for president.

King, a political science professor at Lancaster University in England, fled from his Albany home in 1961 to avoid an 18-month prison sentence for draft evasion. He said he left the country to protest a racist draft board that addressed him as "Mr. Preston King" before learning he was black and "Preston" after that.

He lived in exile in England until last Monday when President Clinton granted him a pardon.

King, 63, arrived in Atlanta Wednesday and joined his family in Albany for the funeral of Clennon King at the Mount Zion Baptist Church. Clennon King died in Miami on Feb. 12 after a three-year battle with prostate cancer. He was 79.

The Rev. Daniel Simmons titled his eulogy

"Free at Last." "Clennon has achieved freedom and his brother has achieved the freedom he has deserved for a long time," Simmons said in an interview before the service.

"In all oppressed people, in all marginalized people who have had a taste of freedom there is a desire to experience total equality," Simmons told the 120 mourners at the church.

# Segregation still popular

Hamilton College in upstate New York commissioned a survey last year — “The Racial Attitudes of Young Americans” — from John Zogby. Since he is the only national pollster to whom I pay serious attention, I find the results illuminating and important, but also disturbing.

The questions were asked of 1,001 randomly selected 18- to 20-year-olds around the country. Among the somewhat more heartening results was that 56 percent said that government should ensure fair treatment of blacks in the workplace.

The majority also accepted interracial dating and marriage. And 61 percent agreed that “the government in Washington should see to it that white and black children go to the same schools.”

However, neither the current president — nor any prospective president — has indicated that school integration is a priority. And more public schools are segregated now than when the Supreme Court, in 1954, declared segregated public schools unconstitutional in *Brown vs. Board of Education*.

Professor Phillip Klinker of Hamilton College, who directed the survey, said that it is “troubling that only some 60 percent of these young Americans felt strongly that the schools must be integrated as a constitutional mandate. Thurgood Marshall, while on the Supreme Court, used to say that ‘people who don’t learn together are not going to know how to live together.’”

What I found most disturbing were the answers to the question that read: “It’s okay if the races are basically separate

from one another as long as everyone has equal opportunities. That used to be called ‘separate but equal.’”

Slightly more than half agreed that separate but equal was all right. “This indicates,” Professor Klinker told me, “that many young Americans are comfortable with the notion of a segregated society.”

This is not entirely surprising when so many elementary, middle and high schools remain segregated, and when some champions of black pride determinedly emphasize separatism.

On college campuses, meanwhile, well-meaning but patronizing administrators have narrowed the meaning of “diversity” and “multiculturalism.” When “diversity” results in one group focusing primarily on its own special moral and cultural virtues, the outcome is hardly a concern with the value of diversity in the larger society.

This kind of separatism is encouraged by colleges that create separate orientation programs for blacks and other minority newcomers so that they’ll be “comfortable” on campus. Then administrators encourage them to live in “theme” buildings apart from the rest of the residences, isolating them further. To learn how this thought control works, see Alan Kors’ “Thought Control 101” in the March issue of



**Nat Hentoff**  
Columnist

Reason magazine.

Vinnie Tong, a student at the University of California in Berkeley, told the New York Times: “When you first get here, they give you this talk about diversity — what kind of place did you come from? What kind of people did you live with? They really shove that down your throat. I come from a predominantly white, Republican town in Northern California, and all of a sudden, I’m an Asian girl, whether I like it or not. I really resented it.”

Not surprisingly, in a report on affirmative action at the University of Michigan, the widely respected *Chronicle of Higher Education* noted, “Most students’ close friendships tend to be with people of their own race.” Teaching at Princeton University two years ago, I was given similar responses by black and white students.

Malcolm X was a friend of mine, from the time he was in the Nation of Islam to his assassination. In one of his last speeches, he said: “We don’t judge a man because of the color of his skin. We don’t judge you because you’re white; we don’t judge you because you’re black or brown. We judge you because of what you do and what you practice.”

But there is still a long way to go before we see each other, as individuals, beyond the color line. And Thurgood Marshall was right. That day will come sooner if our children learn together from kindergarten on, and are not separated later by college administrators with limited vision.

*Nat Hentoff is a nationally renowned authority on the First Amendment and the rest of the Bill of Rights.*