



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

Delegate Magazine 1978

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Since we last met... the world recognized the Chinese Year of the Horse (1978), and the International Year for Women while our side was dealt some definite setbacks.

In New York there was hell to pay over the loss of representation on the Board of Estimate, the ruling body of the city. Percy Sutton, the Manhattan Borough President, and the only Black in that body, lost his seat trying to become Mayor of the city. In Massachusetts, our only Black United States Senator found himself in political difficulty which might make his re-election a real horserace. In Nevada, the Establishment came back into boxing, the richest sport in the world, when Leon Spinks of Missouri won the heavyweight title from Muhammed Ali in a Las Vegas ring. It was also a year where the conservatives pressed the Bakke Case. If the decision goes with Bakke, we can kiss off any further affirmative action programs. It was also a year, also in New York, where Bob Grant, a radio talk show commentator, was adjudged the top night-time talk show person, all because he exemplified all those qualities Father Coughlin, the Royal Oaks Ministry of Michigan did in a decade gone by. Grant used the air ways to attack affirmative action, busing, all help programs for Blacks.

It was the year where ten years after the issuance of the Kerner report, Blacks still find themselves living in two societies, and the gap between them have not been bridged. It was a year in which Blacks elected a President from Plains, Georgia, Mr. Jimmy Carter - promised everything but after one year in office he found it was more practical to pay attention to Panama, Africa, and the Middle East and less to solving home-grown problems like unemployment among Black youths, rehabilitation of the urban communities, rebuilding the South Bronx, Bedford-Stuyvesant or Harlem.

It was a year in which Barbara Jordan of Texas, Yvonne Burke of California said they would not seek reelection to the United States Congress. It was a year in which Shirley Chisholm another Congressperson, quietly divorced and quickly remarried. She now has the political pundits speculating on whether or not she will remain in Congress as well. It was the year in which Julian Bond the Georgia legislator, also said he would rather do something else for a living.

It was a year in which the City of Detroit began its resurgence as a viable urban community with signs of a vast rebuilding program named Renaissance City emerging on the Riverfront in Downtown Detroit.

It was the year in which Dr. Cleon Powell, editor Emeritus and former owner of the Amsterdam News died. It was the year George Schuyler, the great reporter and conservative died. It was the year Altonell Matthews of the Urban League Guild passed. It was the year Daniel "Chappie" James, our only four-star General died.

But on the other hand, it was a year in which Aubrey Lewis, the former Notre Dame All-American, was elevated to the Vice Presidency at F.W. Woolworth, and Bill Davis was named Vice President at Norton Simon; a year in which Otis Smith was named General Counsel for General Motors; Ersa Poston appointed a National Civil Service Commissioner; a year in which a host of Black Women achieved - to name a few: Candace Carruthers promoted Editorial Head at ABC-TV; Sylvia



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(Continued on page 353)

Hueston, appointed Community Relations Director at the same station; Carol Martin became the darling of CBS; Melba Moore joined NBC in New York; Dorothy Brunson, cited for excellent achievement at WBLB; Jewell S Lafontane was the given the Catalyst Award for Excellence in Law and Government.
(continued on page 382)

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