

points of view

Join in railing against system

ON THE SOUTH side of Chicago in the year 1969, there was a radio station commentator on WVOX who always railed against the system. Some called him an agitator.

Also on the south side of Chicago, circa 1969, there was a young black man freshly graduated from the university who thought he knew life's answers, always challenging the status quo. Some said he had a chip on his shoulder.

The young man listened to the radio while the old man railed: "Taxes too high; the war in Nam must stop; busing is the answer. Black Panthers hounded by Hoover; Richard Nixon can't be trusted."

This was interspersed with Marvin Gaye, the O'Jays, the Isley Brothers and Marvin. Sometimes, when the commentator spoke of Martin Luther King, Lyndon Johnson, and Viet Nam, racism, poverty and the ghetto, the young man tuned out figuratively and literally. Stopped listening. Closed off. Pushed the button to WLS for Janis or Mick Jagger or maybe some Sly and the Family Stone.

THE WIZENED veteran, up the hard way from an all-black, southern blues station, now talking on an all-black Chicago urban station with white owners, took a helluva chance back in 1969. If you wanted to keep your job, you didn't talk about the system — you joined. Then if you were lucky, you milked it. If you



Jeffrey Miller

wanted longevity, you went along to get along.

The young man, brazenly upstart, dared to climb the corporate ladder. Or so he thought. Trainee positions led to account positions which led to management positions. Those led to the suburban upwardly mobile lifestyle, the wife, the kid, the traveling job, the high five-figure income. The young man on the fast track forgot what he'd been when the old commentator spoke.

It was during the heady, anything goes '80s that this brass, some thought arrogant, man began to be humbled. The Reagan years: tax reductions, junk bonds, leveraged buy outs, greenmail, T. Boone Pickens and H. Ross Perot. The '80s — those 10-15 years when as Choko said greed was good, as Bush said voodoo economies reigned and our future was sold to tomorrow.

This upstart, a black man who sought to defy the odds, proceeded, missing all the cues and crashed upon the glass ceiling.

THE CHICAGO Radio Seer, a man

named Roy Wood, retired to the south after years of battling the system. He lost more battles than he won. The thing is that he fought them. Who will fight them now?

Many thought the cocky, now aging man had not only crashed but burned against the glass ceiling. Corporate America with its clubs and politics, was not compatible with this rebel who had early on been influenced by the fire of Roy Wood who always ended his controversial commentary with the verbal challenge:

"This is just one black man's opinion! What's yours?"

The man, now pushing the four decade mark, was through the years forged. Life had taught some of the hard knocks a black man in this country will take. Affirmative action, discrimination, fear and misperception were common occurrences which ultimately brought him again to the point of the fiery commentary of Roy Wood.

The point. The only way to fix the system is to challenge it. How? By providing balance, perspective and provocative new ideas.

I'M JEFFREY MILLER, that once brass man, a Detroit area transplant since the mid-'80s, who is fed up to the eyebrows with the way things are. Racial fear, production cutbacks, layoffs, the New World Or-

der, AIDS, car jackings, Detroit bashing, minority scapegoating and the litany goes on.

I'm tired of dealing with the same old mindset that has the President in Japan, hat-in-hand, whining for a fair U.S. trade deal. In tow, like puppies on a leash, 20 of this country's most powerful businessmen expose the plea for fairness as the sham it is. Their monstrous salaries point up the very management/worker practices that have encouraged the deficit.

I happen to think that we can fix what ails us and so does the managing editor of this paper, Steve Barnaby, who watches a TV show called Transition that I produce. Since the show talks to these issues, Steve thought it would be a good idea to express some of those ideas in your paper.

So here I am: not quite so young anymore, still with a chip on my shoulder, committed to shaking things up. Committed to change.

In this column, every other week I'll be railing against the system like Roy Wood, the old Chicago commentator. From him I'll take the words: "This is just one black man's opinion! What's yours?"

I hope you read this space and get involved.

Jeffrey Miller is a Southfield resident. Transition can be seen on WXON-TV 20, Continental Cable and United Cable.

No end in sight to tax spending

HOW DID we get this way? How did Michigan and America get to the point where one person in five draws some kind of welfare and one baby in four is born to a single mother who likely will join the welfare rolls?

Agnes Mansour, once director of the state Department of Social Services, had her answer: "the media. Stories on movie stars showed girls it was OK to have babies without a husband."

Coretta Scott King, widow of the civil rights leader, in a 1988 Oakland University talk, had her scapegoat: "conservative economists" of the '80s. She was blissfully ignorant that the trend started under John Kennedy in the '60s. (Happily, Gov. John Engler vetoed the program that paid for King's misinformation.)

A BETTER answer to why welfare dependency is growing came in a 1987 report by U.S. Senate Republicans. They blamed a series of U.S. Supreme Court decisions, saying:

• Loving v. Virginia (1967) "strikes down law against interracial marriage. This approach limits the ability of the state to regulate any aspect of marriage, remarriage after divorce, cohabitation, or legitimacy — central matters in welfare debates over the following two decades."

• King v. Smith (1968) "strikes down Alabama law denying AFDC eligibility to households which include 'substitute fathers,' i.e., adult males unrelated to the mother by blood or marriage. Decision makes cohabitation more profitable than marriage in most states."

• Weber v. Aetna Casualty and Surety Co. (1972) says "workmen's compensation benefits cannot be limited to legitimate children, sets stage for barring any government preference for legitimacy."

• New Jersey Welfare Rights Organization v. Cahill (1974) "forbids state preference for marriage over cohabitation in welfare programs."

• USDA v. Moreno (1973) "invalidates a provision of the food stamp program basing household eligibility upon ties of blood, marriage or adoption — the traditional definition of family."

By 1983 the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights was reporting that increases in marital dissolution and illegitimacy "are responsible for essentially all of the growth in poverty since 1970... and that they show no signs of abating as the unwed birth and divorce rates continue to climb rapidly."

So today we have 52 million people soaking up hundreds of billions of tax dollars in 59 major programs — with no end in sight.

OK, some states overdid it by outlawing contraceptives and interracial marriage. But do the justices make fiscal impact studies of what their narrow legal decisions cost taxpayers, businesses and other social needs like education? We don't know. The justices meet in secret.

Tim Richard reports regularly on the local implications of state and regional events.



Tim Richard

Society must nurture children

QUESTION: Is adolescent suicide becoming an increasing problem? What are the most prevalent factors?

QUESTION: A study I remember from several years ago when I taught a psychology class in college jolts my memory. While suicide represented the ninth leading cause of death for persons of all ages, it represented the third leading cause of death for 15 to 24 year olds.

Principals and counselors who have been around a long time say violence, including self destruction, is more than they could ever have imagined 20 years ago. Factors causing these young ones to end it all suggest great family disorganization, poor family relation-

Sexual liberation has led to a 50 percent divorce rate resulting in struggling, sad, single mothers trying to work, raise a family and concurrently maintain some mental stability.

I see the dehumanizing of a healthy male and female sexuality where one is a total person to a philosophy where genital sexuality for immediate gratification with no consequence nor responsibilities is the answer.

We need children nurtured in a society where the family has a mother and father, where rules are fair, clear and to be obeyed. Our children are confused, disillusioned and many are on a self-destructive course.

But what do I know! I've been married to the same woman for 32 years, with four beautiful children whom we love and who love us. I go to work, play some golf, and go home. How old fashioned, how corny or is it?

Jeffrey Miller is a Southfield resident. Transition can be seen on WXON-TV 20, Continental Cable and United Cable.



Doc Doyle

ships, emotional and health problems, parent disciplinary or lack of disciplinary techniques.

I see a generation of children nurtured on a bombardment of TV and live-action with Saturday morning cartoons having robots killing robots — the quick solution to any problem.

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