

Julian Bord
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July 20, 1993

Dear Bootsie:

Thanks for sharing your correspondence with me. We are big Clinton fans fighting off disappointment over broken promises and failed initiatives - especially Lani Guinier.

By coincidence, we saw Harry Belafonte perform just last week and met with him briefly afterward to invite him to join an anti-gun effort my wife is involved in.

I think you are right in your letter to him, with one exception - as much as I admire him and other leadership figures like Dr. Chavis, my memories of yesterday's civil rights movement is that it was made by the faceless, not the famous, the nameless women and men who did the dirty work of organizing before the triumphal march. You say as much in your description of your father's activities with the NAACP. He wasn't Martin Luther King, but he did have the drive and ability to organize successfully so that this organization could become stronger.

That is what we badly lack today - initiators at the grass roots level who can begin a project, however small, to attack a problem, and whose success can be duplicated over and over again.

Here in DC, about 6500 people of all races, professions and ages are engaged in nightly neighborhood anti-drug marches. They've closed down half of the city's open-air drug markets and 200 crack houses - a remarkable achievement by any standard.

Think how successful the war on drugs might have been if their numbers were duplicated across Washington and in every city in America.

Perhaps what we need is a domestic Peace Corps, whose members help residents of low-income neighborhoods to organize themselves against exploitation by shoddy merchants, terror from gangs, lack of city services - the whole long list of problems which plague the urban poor. (And we ought not forget the rural poor either.) I wish we could find some way to get college-age young people to take two years away from pursuing school and career to devote time to rebuilding the organizational strengths of our communities so they can act in their own behalf. That is the lesson yesterday's civil rights movement has to teach us today.

Excuse me for running on. Thanks for writing.

Best wishes,



July 29, 1993

Dear Julian (BOND)

It was great receiving your letter today and I am happy for the additional points made about how we can work towards our goal.

The very point you took exception to, was the very point I was trying to make to Mr. Belafonte. I don't know if you saw the Charlie Rose show, but Belafonte stated that King and Mandela were the only ones who brought clarity to our struggle. I was trying to point out, without being offensive, that not only could we not depend only on a few leaders, but he acknowledged them because of the "clarity" it expressed in himself.

My goal is to motivate all the "230^{million} points of light" to understand their greatness and begin acting upon it. I know I can't do it alone, so that is why I sent copies not only to you, Maya Angel, Spike Lee, Maulana Karenga, NAACP office here in Pasadena, my sister brother and brother-in-law, my minister at my store-front church, the black muslim who runs the video store (who asked if he could make copies and distribute), the man who stands outside the liquor and who washes my car windows regularly, etc., etc., etc.

Adrienne's husband, Bobby Smith, who works at UCLA Alumni Off took it upon himself to make copies and send to many of the people we went to school with, and ^{now} who, up to now, have "made it" and lost their memories of where they came from. (Why should we have to wait a year or two to get Big Brothers for our communities' children, when we have so many who could be bringing boys out to all those golf courses, if that's where they choose to do "their" thing?)

I called Mary Henry here in LA and was waiting for copies and sta from Adrienne and Bobby, which, incidentally, is "robbing me blind to make an appointment to see her next week. She has worked for c people in LA, for as long as I can remember, is a feisty lady, who has been losing spirit somewhat, because of the lack of cooperatio Before my copies arrived, I went and made more and sent them to her and asked if I could meet with her later this month, since I'm in the process of moving.

I am a "city girl," not spending over one summer in the country setting in my life, and who has never even gone camping. The domestic Peace Corps idea sounds great for both urban and rural areas. But one thing I know, a lot of us have been blessed by dedicated parents, who were also fighters and provided models for us. I don't deny that grass roots efforts are necessary to address the goals, both working toward, but it is going to require more of our effort to bring faith back into the folks that we have not let go of our responsibilities to pitch-in, too.

We are far more than the "talented tenth" in numbers that WEB DuBois cited way back in 1903. I'm not including you, but many of us have not shown the consistency in addressing the problems of black and everybody else, too.

I'm including copies of letters I wrote to Maya Angelou and Spik Lee. I'm simply not placing all of my eggs in Mr. Belafonte's basket, or anyone else's, either. We have too much work to do for that

I never know exactly when your program comes on TV, but I did see it this past week. The Denny's case was so well presented. And incidentally, you are looking better than ever. I am so happy that your marriage has proved to be a God-send.

Please forgive the fact that I am not a typist and feel much more comfortable with my long yellow pads. I took a course about three summers ago, but still have not gotten to the place where typing is natural. I do not have a computer, either; Adrienne retyped my letter to Belafonte on hers, but other than that, I'm doing my best to send type-written letters out.

I'm sorry, I don't know your wife's name; please include it in your next correspondence. ~~Please give my love to her, and please drop a line to Aunt Marguerite when you can.~~

Love always,

"Bootsie"

"Bootsie"

P.S. A couple of poems, a photo, and my resume are included. I'm not looking for a job, unless in doing writing, photography or art; I'm happy here in Pasadena and will be moving soon to Altadena. The weather is nice and the trees and serenity offer me peace.

P.P.S My friend, Loyce in New Orleans, is going to be sending me information on two early black photographers, Jules Lion, famous from the 1840's, and Arthur Bedou, whom my Aunt Thais says was an elderly man, when he took her wedding pictures in 1936. Did you know that the largest collection of black photographers, truly pioneers, since photography did not come into being until the late 1820's, is in the Schomburg Room at the NYC Public Library? James Presley Ball was the photographer, the one written up most often in the Cincinnati Enquirer, where he had two large studios since 1854.

As per our telephone conversation, get Gordon Parks' Voices in the Mirror, Marian Wright Edelman's The Measure of Our Success and Mari-
anne Williamson's A Return to Love, also out on cassette.

I typed the hand-written letter, with addenda, to make copies to be circulated, too.

SOUTH CENTRAL

PEACE!

*MASTER HAROLD AND
THE BOYS*

... "Master Harold and the Boys"