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EDITOR'S NOTE

"[We] pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." Yet, the call for liberty and justice for all resounds only for an insular and privileged few.

America is in peril and at a crossroads.

In facing what appears to be an insurmountable question of how to strengthen our nation's delivery and quality of public services to minority communities, it is of paramount importance to examine the ultimate role of the African-American community in resolving these critical issues. These queries are crucial in assessing the function and role of the government and the judicial system and their oft recognized relationship to the majoritarian democratic process as well as their impact on the African-American community.

Dr. Lillian Gelberg examines federal solutions to homelessness, in "Federal Aid to the Homeless." Her study indicates that homelessness has reached epidemic proportions in the minority population. Moreover, Dr. Gelberg comments that federal aid programs provide merely short-term solutions and financing. She suggests, alternatively, that federal policies address long-term solutions and financing, as well as the underlying factors, such as loss of employment, that have precipitated the rise in homelessness.

Carolyn Mitchell, in an article entitled "Environmental Racism," discusses the role of race and socio-economic status as factors in selecting hazardous waste sites. The remedies to environmental racism, Ms. Mitchell proposes, are akin to the grass-roots community participation of the civil rights movement of the 1960s and the judicial activism of the Warren Court.

Professor Dawn Bennett-Alexander, in "The Use of Disparate Impact Analysis in Subjective Criteria Employment Discrimination Cases," addresses judicial interpretation of Title VII and disparate impact analysis in employment discrimination cases. Professor Alexander notes that shifts in the evidentiary standards have placed tremendous burdens on employees, thereby abrogating the original intent of Title VII. Consequently, she notes that legislative action may be necessary to remedy the change in evidentiary standards.

Meanwhile, in "Reverse Discrimination: The Political Use of Language," Professor Philip Fetzer reviews from a linguistic and historical vantage point the connotation and impact of the term "discrimination" in a social and political context. Professor Fetzer argues that the term "reverse discrimination" is used by the political majority as a weapon to maintain the status quo and reverse some of the gains made as a result of affirmative action programs.

In "Just-Injustice," Mimi Steward considers the nature of the attorney-client relationship as it applies to minority and gender groups. Ms. Steward concludes that the societal problems of classism, sexism and racism are pervasive in our legal system and must be acknowledged not only in the legal community, but also in a larger societal context. Moreover, this article is of extraordinary significance in the aftermath of the recent civil insurgence throughout the United States.

The dialogue between race and the law is of critical importance in creating alternative avenues for future advancement. This issue of the *National Black Law Journal* attempts to delineate some of the complex and diverse variables that have coalesced into the moral, political and social crises which plague our nation.

Kimberly Toney Williams
Staff Managing Editor
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