

# Malcolm X revisited

by Tom Strunk

As of last Friday it has been twenty-seven years since the assassination of Malcolm X.

Today X still has many followers among blacks. And he still has his opponents from the right.

However, Malcolm X remains a greatly misunderstood man, as was often the case when he was alive. He is overshadowed by the achievements of Dr. King and is stigmatized as a militant and racist.

Setting aside all comparisons and accusations it is important that we study and understand his ideas and messages, for many of them are relevant to us today. We should respect Malcolm X, for he saw the need for brotherhood among our people and honesty among our leaders.

At a time when integration seemed to be the solution to racism, Malcolm X noticed a distinction between desegregation and integration. Black and white kids do not need to study next to each other to learn. However, black and white students must not be prevented from studying next to each other.

Malcolm X understood

that although laws may influence us they do not bring about an immediate change in our attitude. When blacks were integrated into schools with white kids it was done only because whites felt morally obligated. Most whites probably did not desire to be around blacks and most blacks probably did not desire to be around whites.

Little brotherhood existed between the races, but much token integration. X saw the future when he said, "I am in agreement one hundred percent with those racists who say that no government laws ever can force brotherhood."

Today we see the lack of brotherhood and the failure of the laws to create brotherhood. Inner city kids are becoming drug addicts rather than scholars. We seem to think that a multicultural education and affirmative action practices will help these people.

However, the problem will only be solved when we are willing to take the time to do the hard work necessary to solve the problem. If we had adequate schools in the inner city we would not need affirmative action. If people are willing to give our cities the attention they need we

could actually get to the bottom of the problem.

We never seem to do this because we lack brotherhood. Few give a damn what happens to the inner city. A handful of liberals (black and white) say, "Give them affirmative action so that it will appear that more blacks are qualified for college." But



this handful of liberals never addresses the problem that many are not qualified to enter college. (One only needs to look at the drop out rate among black college students.)

Nobody cares about that. There is no brotherhood, only people trying to look good by creating a false solution. Malcolm X realized the need

for brotherhood rather than laws that manipulate emotions. Our leaders and politicians could ameliorate the situation greatly by studying him instead of ridiculing him.

Most importantly, Malcolm X valued honesty and the need for it in our leaders. Malcolm X was a rare individual who spoke his mind, "I'm telling it like it is! You never have to worry about me biting my tongue if something I know as truth is on my mind. Raw, naked truth exchanged between the black man and the white man is what a whole lot more of is needed in this country."

By doing so he often scared both blacks and whites. He uncovered our deepest fears and hatreds. If we could speak what we feel and rise above the desire to look favorable in the public's eye we would find that the issues become much clearer. Our leaders have a poor record in this aspect.

It is nearly impossible to get a straight answer on a controversial question from anyone in authority. They are so busy trying to please all the people that they lack strong convictions. We need to state our beliefs and stand by them. Too often when we

come together we shy away from the real issues. We fear what we may be labeled. Only when we can express our true feelings will we know what has to be done.

Malcolm X was willing to take the responsibility of his actions. He spoke the truth (or what he thought was the truth) and never backed down. He is a good example of a man willing to die for his convictions, which came from the heart not a news poll.

Some conservatives will question my admiration for Malcolm X. Well, I do not fully agree with Malcolm X. I disagree with his international view of racism. I do not think that the white race should be solely responsible for ending the problem of racism in this country. And obviously I feel that Malcolm X's Afrocentric viewpoint on history is flawed.

But Malcolm X transcends these disagreements, for above everything he was a man, and that is worth admiring.

*Tom Strunk is a fourth semester history major. His column appears other week in The Collegian.*

# Buchanan may be selling us short

by Mike Royko

There was a jaunty bounce in the step of my friend Grump the conservative.

"We have sent the message," he said, "and it has been received."

What message is that?

"What? Have you been sleeping all week? Not that there would be any difference. The message from Patrick the Bold."

Ah, you mean Pat Buchanan's showing in New Hampshire, where he received all but 63 percent of the Republican vote.

"Don't play games with numbers. You know very well what I mean. He scored a stunning victory, and it has been hailed as such on the front page of every newspaper in the nation, even those dominated by the liberal pinkos, which most of them are."

I suppose he did, although you should stay out of poker games if you think that 37 percent, which is what he got, is better than 53 percent, which is what President Bush received.

"Don't play dumb, although you give so convincing a performance. You know very well that in political terms Patrick the Bold was triumphant."

Yes, in the strange math of primaries, less can be more, more can be less, winners can be

losers, losers can be winners, and may the best spin masters win. So your man claimed a victory of sorts.

"Of sorts? Boob. He has shaken the White House to its foundations. He has rocked Bush on his heels for his traitorous behavior to our cause. The bold message has gone forth."

So you said. But what message is that?

"Have you no ears? We are going to take our nation back."

Ah, yes, I did hear Patrick the Bold say that. But I'm not sure what that means. Who took it? And as long as they were taking it, why didn't they take the part on my block that has the big potholes?

"You know very well who has taken it."

No, tell me. The very least I can do is send them a bill demanding payment of my part. Maybe I can turn a profit on the deal. Who are they?

"The short people."

The who?

"You heard me. This country has been invaded by the short people. And Patrick has recognized the short menace and is the only candidate who will do something about it."

I haven't heard him say anything about a threat from the short.

"No, but we know what he means."

Then tell me because I don't. "Think. Who has been swarming across our border in vast numbers, making a mockery of our immigration laws?"

Ah, you mean Mexicans.

"That's right. And have you ever seen a tall Mexican?"

I don't go around with a ruler measuring the height of every Mexican I meet.



"Well, if you did, you would find that the majority of Mexicans are short. And what has been the largest group of foreign refugees we have let pour into our country in recent years?"

I give up.

"Asians of all sorts, that's who. More short people. And who has been buying up American businesses, real estate and trying to destroy our

automobile industry?"

You mean the Japanese?

"Yes, another notoriously short bunch. That's why they were so difficult to subdue in the war -- two handfuls of dirt and they had a foxhole. Even a footprint would do."

I still don't understand what height has to do with this.

"Because we are a tall nation. Tall in the saddle. Walking tall. Standing tall. Able to leap tall buildings in a single bound. Pour me a tall one. Tallness is our tradition. Our nation was built by great men who were tall. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abe Lincoln, Ronald Reagan, John Wayne. Not a shortie in the bunch."

Teddy Roosevelt was short.

"But he carried a tall stick. And now our tallness is being threatened, and Patrick is the only candidate who has recognized it, which is why he is going to take our nation back from the short before it is too late."

Before it is too late for what?

"Before we are overrun by the short people. Our highways filled with cars that look empty because they can barely peep over the dashboard; tiny people giving orders to the tall, who they resent; tall people unable to buy a suit of clothes that fit. Do you want your children growing up short?"

They've already grown up tall.

"Your grandchildren then."

We'd have fewer Peeping Toms.

"You can scoff, but Patrick has seen the menace, swarming about his feet, skittering between his legs, talking strange gibberish that only they understand. Do you want your descendants talking strange gibberish?"

It was good enough for me. Besides, George Bush is kind of tall. I believe he is even taller than Patrick.

"Yes, but he stands short and he walks short and he has betrayed us to the short. I suspect that he wears elevator shoes."

But what is Patrick going to do about this short problem?

"I would think he will begin by digging a deep ditch along our borders. Let the little buggers try to hop out of that."

Well, I'm glad you clarified the issue.

"Wait, there are many other issues."

Then tell me.

"Later. I don't want to be overheard by that fellow sitting over there."

Which one is that?

"The one who looks like an Israeli."

*Mike Royko is a Chicago-based, nationally syndicated columnist. His column appears each week in The Collegian.*