

what happened when the music began.

"Yes!" She was thrilled.

We talked for some time. She thought we Americans had never been a tribe; I told her I thought that once we had. Whether or not I was right, she made the wisest remark of the night. She was joking when she answered me, but spoke with utter sincerity. Up on her toes, nearly hopping with excitement, she said, "I want to be in a tribe!"

So do we all.

*Brian Kirkpatrick is a physician who lives in Baltimore, Maryland.*

## Letter From Green Bay

by Michael Kuehl

### Packing the "All-America City"



Perhaps one can forgive Vernon Taylor for indulging in a bit of self-aggrandizement. After all, as the *Green Bay Press-Gazette's* newest "diversity" columnist, he's now a recognizable face, a household name, a minor celebrity in a fabled National Football League city. His opinions on race, culture, and politics are read by tens of thousands of people. A portly middle-aged black man with a short Afro and scraggy mustache, Taylor debuted in May 1999 with a column entitled (predictably) "Green Bay Enriched by Growing Diversity." As one of the first blacks, Packers excepted, to live and work in Green Bay, he portrayed himself as an historic figure, a harbinger of demographic transformation, a symbol of progress and diversity and multiculturalism.

Not surprisingly, his coming to Titletown was a result of affirmative action.

I came to Green Bay, as so many of us as people of color do, for opportunity . . . There was a position open, resulting from the transfer of a friend, at GMAC. Affirmative action was alive and well in the early 1970's, so it was recommended that I be hired.

He arrived from Texas on October 27, 1974, with a trunk, suitcase, and \$28, and, as he puts it, "the rest is history." But, alas, the Green Bay of old was as "white" as Oslo or Dublin or Helsinki and, moreover, benighted and philistine; apart from the Packers—the legends of Curly Lambeau, Don Hutson, Vince Lombardi, Bart Starr, the "Ice Bowl," the first Super Bowl champions—a place indistinguishable, racially and culturally, from such "cowtowns" as Fargo, Sioux Falls, Duluth, and Cedar Rapids. "To my surprise," he repines:

I discovered that Green Bay was a rural-blue collar community that was 99.75 percent white. Not knowing, most people would assume that a professional sports city like Green Bay would be more urban, cosmopolitan and racially diverse. There was very little that I could identify with. The Oneida Tribe of Indians was the only ethnic group of major proportion.

Twenty-five years later, Green Bay is not dramatically more "cosmopolitan." In some ways, it is more "urban"—more crime, gangs, drugs, poverty, overcrowded jails, and traffic congestion. And it is far more "racially diverse." "As we enter into the year 2000," writes Taylor, "thousands have followed since my arrival in 1974." How many thousands? How much "diversity"?

On Christmas Eve 1996, in a paean to immigration, the *Press-Gazette* reported:

In this area, 2,112 legal immigrants—most Asians—have come to Brown, Door, Kewaunee, Oconto and Shawano counties the past 10 years. In addition, 3,000 to 4,000 Hispanics—including an estimated 1,000 illegal immigrants—have moved into the region.

The editorial did not mention the source or year of such estimates. Unless dated by two or three years, however, the numbers were a gross underestimation. For by this date, a week from 1997, the population of Hmong and Lao in Brown County alone far exceeded 2,112.

According to a pamphlet distributed by the United Way of Brown County, "Brown County's total Southeast Asian population is estimated around 4,200. Of this total, approximately 86% are Hmong, 13% are Laotian, and 1% are

Vietnamese." And less than three years later, the Hispanic population may have reached 15,000, including thousands of illegal immigrants. "At the moment," writes Tom Perry in a pro-immigration editorial for the *Gazette*:

no one knows for certain just how many people with ties to Central and South America live in Green Bay . . . Estimates range from 6,000 to 10,000 people. The 2000 census should bring the number in sharper focus.

Last year, a TV anchorwoman said that there were 10,000 Hispanics in Green Bay, and that their numbers are expected to double in four to five years. But this assessment might have been an underestimation. "Because census data is old and many new Hispanic residents are difficult to track," writes Jim Kneiszel in the *Press-Gazette*:

the ethnic populations in Green Bay are an official mystery. But anecdotal evidence points to dynamic Hispanic growth and smaller gains in Asian growth . . . [T]he department of refugee migration and Hispanic services for the Archdiocese of Green Bay estimates there are 10,000 Hispanics in the city and 15,000 in greater Green Bay. According to Barbara Biebel of the Archdiocese, there are about 5,000 Asian residents in the area.

The most illuminating and portentous statistic is the number of nonwhite students in Green Bay's public schools. "In Green Bay," write the editors of the *Press-Gazette*, "white enrollment in the public schools was 82.8 percent last year compared to 92.3 percent in 1985. Hispanic, black, Asian and American Indian student populations all increased." Put inversely, minority enrollment in Green Bay's public schools more than doubled in ten years, from 7.7 percent in 1985 to 17.2 percent in 1995.

Roughly half of the Asian and Latino students cannot speak English. According to the *Press-Gazette*:

This year, about 1,800 of Green Bay's 19,500 public school students can't speak English well enough to succeed in the classroom. Most are part of an influx of Asian and Hispanic immigration and migration

that has increased the percentage of nonwhite students to 21 percent this year from 8 percent in 1986. Last year, 1,711 students speaking 24 non-English languages were enrolled.

Currently, the metropolitan area of Brown County (Green Bay, De Pere, the suburbs) has a population of approximately 200,000. The city of Green Bay has roughly 97,000 residents—a figure that has remained more or less constant for years since, without annexation, the city cannot expand in area or increase dramatically in population. Thus, 30 or 40 years into the next millennium, Green Bay, only yesterday “99.75 percent white,” may be a minority-majority city. And not because of the migration of Vernon Taylor and his fellow blacks or because of large increases in the Native American population, but because of immigration and the invasion of thousands of Asians (overwhelmingly Hmong/Lao-tians) and Hispanics (overwhelmingly Mexican).

“Green Bay, a three-time winner of the Super Bowl, is now a two-time winner of the All-America City Award,” crowed the editors of the *Green Bay Press-Gazette*. “Green Bay first won the All-America city designation in 1964 because of its community-based attack on air and water pollution.” But 35 years later, the criteria are different. As Stephen Bruss wrote in the *Press-Gazette*:

The All-America City Award is presented by the Civic League and Allstate Insurance Co. It recognizes grass-roots efforts to solve community problems, *and is especially focused on youth and diversity* [emphasis added] . . . Green Bay highlighted three programs in its application and presentation. They were Coalition to Promote Respect, Partners in Education and Urban Partnership.

Programs all relating, one should note, to problems of race and immigration. Thus Green Bay won the award for its efforts to solve problems that just a decade or so ago didn't even exist. Ironically, Green Bay had to experience the problems that accompany high levels of third-world immigration—serious crime, gangs, increased poverty, deteriorating neighborhoods, racial animosity—before it could be named an “All-America City.”

In many ways, the vitiation of the “quality of life” was a prerequisite for victory. And now, for two years, it can use the award to promote the city, encourage tourism, attract more businesses, and welcome more immigrants.

According to Clinton Smith, an African-American businessman, “Diversity was the key to winning the award. The delegation was led to the podium for its presentation Saturday by the Oneida Tribe of Indians singers and dancers, *and more than half of the delegation members were minorities* [emphasis added].”

Interesting, isn't it? For once, insufficient racial diversity is not “un-American.”

*Michael Kuehl writes from northeastern Wisconsin.*

## Letter From the Argentario

by Andrei Navrozov

### The Man From Uncle



Now that I think of it, I realize it was my own poor mother who told me that there is much too much food in these letters. Listen my only begotten, she complained by telephone from New York, what with all your extravagant food descriptions, delightful food tropes, and revealing food analogies, you probably don't even have half a minute to wolf down a ham sandwich leaning over the kitchen sink. She does not understand Italy, my mother. Here the sociology of food *is* sociology, and the New York equivalent of instructing the cook or choosing the restaurant is meeting with your banker or broker. After all, just because all those Americans talk about money incessantly does not mean they don't make it hand over fist.

Consider Martin Frankel, the cybernetic master of disguise who seems to have disappeared from the face of the earth, to say nothing of Greenwich, Connecticut, with two billion dollars. Does anyone suppose *he* used to talk about money as if he didn't have any? Well, I'm the Martin Frankel of *spaghetti con astice alla catalana*, nay, its Willi

Münzenberg, its Kim Philby, and every half-decent cook within the 50-mile radius of Porto Ercole has come to beware my dangerous attentions. That's just the way it is over here, in the hard, ruthless, man-eat-lobster world that is the Tuscan coast in summertime.

Even the Central Intelligence Agency, by far the world's dimmest bunch of ruffians, is beginning to catch on to the fact that eating is more than the traditional Italian form of thinking: Increasingly, it is the fashionable European alternative to spying. Perhaps they are now even using James Jesus Angleton's recipe archive from the time he was stationed here—not that they'd give him any credit, mind you—and then P2, of course, must have supplied them with some useful little menus, especially of Sicilian dishes. Whatever the reason, spook activity around Harry's Bar in Venice, as well as around its Mark Birley namesake in London, is said to be at its highest in years, with types like Peter Jacobs and Thomas Corbally invariably getting the best tables. Chic restaurants, for the American spook community, are now what bookshops used to be for agents of the Comintern. Who can ever forget the Zeitgeist in Shanghai, where Richard Sorge used to buy his beach thrillers?

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