

contrast between two tellers of truth and one teller of lies; instead, Mr Baldwin and Ms Morrison will in their eyes be stained by the alleged lies of Mr Smollett, not Mr Smollett shamed by their truths.

We are gratified that you have recognized your error, retracted the cartoon and apologized for it. Gratified, but not mollified.

We have seen this cycle of outrage and apology countless times before. It does not take very many repetitions of slaps in the face followed by apologies to lead one to the conclusion that the slaps are far more real than the apologies.

We see that Mr Breen is going to talk to the “black friends” he is so careful to point out that he has, and that Matthew Hall is going to “take more time to think.” We want more real responses than those.

If Mr Hall is sincere about his intention to share cartoons with people in the African-American community *before* publication, *that* is a concrete step in the right direction.

Here are some other concrete steps you as Publisher could take:

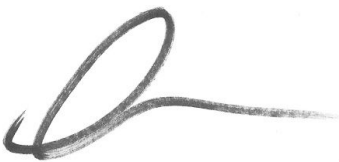
- Hold training for all your Editorial staff in cultural sensitivity
- Hold training for all your Editorial staff in implicit bias
- Give more voice to African-American cartoonists and writers

We would be more than willing to assist you in these things.

Above and beyond these, the most important step of all would be to see an African-American on your Editorial Board. The current Board consists of four white men and one Latina woman. (Meaning no disrespect to Ms Gonzalez, we note in passing how you managed to check two “diversity boxes” with just one voice.) Perhaps, given how the foundations of this country were, literally and figuratively, built with the unrequited blood and sweat of African-Americans, and given that racial issues continue to divide and rule our Nation today, it is time that you took a real step toward reflecting the African-American experience in your newspaper, by giving African-Americans a share in running it.

We are disappointed that you have yet to find time in your schedule to meet with us. Perhaps, had we met, we could have set in motion steps that would have avoided this incident. We look forward to meeting with you personally soon, and on a continuing basis, to help your newspaper to become a force for the uplift of African-Americans, and never again collaborate with those who would demean and degrade them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clovis Honoré', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Clovis Honoré
President
NAACP San Diego Branch