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In Memoriam: William Ware, Jr.

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IN MEMORIAM: WILLIAM WARE, JR.

By

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Life is short. No day is guaranteed to any of us. Each day must be a day of atonement and reconciliation. Each day must be to glorify God.

Today, we rejoice in the life of William Ware, Jr., affectionately referred to as Bill because though his life was short, he did not live his life as if he was immortal. Bill worked hard each day to accomplish some goal, something that he could measure as an accomplishment.

I met Bill at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in 1978. I observed Bill as an information gatherer. He wanted to know what was going on around him, but he never gave you the impression that knowing was a big deal. His manner in dealing with you was always on an even level. Bill's eyes, those large white marbles, sunk into just as round eye sockets, landscaped by those seemingly intruding black eyebrows, a very round face, complimented by a perfectly trimmed mustached and hair line -- told you something about what was inside this man. Bill was even headed and level hearted.

*/William Ware died on May 23, 1985. These remarks were made in Washington, D.C. at the Church Of The Reformation. Other persons giving remarks are Leonard Birdsong, John Shattuck, Congressman Donald Edwards, and Congressman Charles Hayes.

Bill's energy was basically intellectual. It was impossible to know Bill Ware, if you did not know his mind. I never saw him angry, though I'm sure that I provoked him to anger. I never heard him use expletives, though I'm sure that he should have. You could beat on Bill Ware, but when you were finished, you were the one exhausted because Bill's visage and the slow and deliberative puffs of his pipe manifested no external signs of objection. He was a gentleman and it was his status as a gentleman that disarmed you. It was his evenness of mind and his cognitive appreciation of the appropriate that may have confused his foes in Chicago that he was a bottleneck. What a laugh Bill must have had observing and understanding his foes.

There are two other bits of information I wish to share with you about Bill. The first deals with a brief discussion that I had with him about taking a vacation. I can't remember the exact dates, but prior to leaving EEOC, he came to tell me that he was going to take a vacation. He told me that he was going to several African countries. In fact, I believe that Bill had previously travelled to Africa on a holiday. He told me that he needed a vacation and that he was leaving all of his frustrations and duties behind him to enjoy his holiday. When he returned, he talked excessively about what a great time he had. Bill did enjoy moments of happiness in his life.

Secondly, in 1981, Bill came to inform me that he was leaving EEOC. The Democrats had lost the White House, but they had not lost Bill Ware's zeal to aid them, and the nation in other ways. He came to me and said, I'm going with then Congressman Harold Washington. He said, I'm taking a substantial pay cut,

but I want to help Harold. He left EEOC quietly and without fanfare. He left to serve his nation in a different way.

The rest is history. This 37 year old black University of Chicago law graduate made his history with Harold Washington, later elected as the first Black mayor of Chicago. His mind ever in locomotion raced from Jesse L. Jackson to Senator Hollins of South Carolina in the 1984 Democratic primaries.

We never fully knew Bill Ware. He knew us, however, and that was Bill's power and that is what made Bill such a strong ally to the people he served.

Mr. (William, Sr.) and Mrs. (Florida) Ware, Bill will be missed.*/
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*/Sources: Lentz and Galvan, Mayoral Aide William Ware, 37, Chicago Tribune, May 25, 1985; Spielman, Talbott and Wolinsky, Mayor's Deputy Dies, Chicago Sun, May 25, 1985, at 1, col. 1, Chicago Mayor Eulogizes Top Aide A 'Role Model,' Jet, June 17, 1985; Bill Ware, A Man of Principle and Vision, Vol. 131, No. 81, Cong. Rec., 99th Cong., 1st Sess. June 18, 1985 (Statement by Congressman Charles A. Hayes, Ill.).