

I am what I am

Jeremy simmons

I am what I am
Afro American
A native head of hair black as night
As black as my African side
I am east west south north
A child of Oregon raised by Portland
Sailed over by boat tied together with chains and hung by ropes
Slayed for land given for any man
Two survivors deceived by one liar
I am a survivor walking along streets filled with secrets beneath
Ripped from my culture my siblings the jungle in the heat
Lost . . . stolen . . . languages and traditions that wasn't up for the keep
Don't know my real name but I am what I am
The sun in the sky to depths of the moon at night
The triangle trade is where I was made
Those were the days that everything changed
Those were the days that seem like they'll never go away
I am here and my bloodline was once there and somewhere near.

The Drone and the Tour Bus

By Mike Hastie

While Americans take a tour bus to see the nation's capital,
a U.S. Government drone heads to Afghanistan to kill enemies
of the American Empire.

The pilot of the drone is somewhere in Arizona,
believing that drones save American lives.

A man about to receive a lethal dose for committing
mass murder 10 years ago says a prayer for his country.

Mike Hastie was a U.S. Army medic in Vietnam

Seattle eases rules for church homeless camps

BY ROSETTE ROYALE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Religious organizations in Seattle that want to host a homeless encampment no longer have to seek a permit, thanks to a new law that some homeless people oppose.

The Seattle City Council gave its blessing Oct. 3 to an ordinance that allows Seattle religious organizations to provide shelter to an encampment or tent city without obtaining a permit. The legislation, originally proposed by Councilmember Nick Licata, passed with a unanimous vote.

The new legislation eases the burden on churches, synagogues and mosques seeking to use their property to fulfill a mission to support homeless people. Churches are also no longer required to notify neighbors of plans to host an encampment. Secular entities that wish to create space for encampments are still required to obtain a permit.

While all churches can now forego permits to host camps, only encampments deemed as "transitional" can put down stakes on religious property. The legislation defines a transitional encampment as one with tents or similar shelter that provides "temporary quarters for sleeping and shelter." Even though the encampment may only provide temporary quarters, there is no limit on how long an encampment can stay on church grounds.

An encampment must meet a number of requirements: it can house no more than 100 people; the site must provide toilets, running water and garbage collection; and it must observe all health requirements issued by the city, county and public health department. Cooking facilities, if provided,

must also provide space to keep perishable food cold and products to keep the area clean.

In a statement released after the vote, Mayor Mike McGinn said, "I want to thank the City Council for recognizing the fundamental right of religious institutions to care for people in need."

But not everyone agrees with the legislation.

Jarvis Capucion, a resident of Tent City 3, says that while the law makes it easier for religious organizations, the requirement for private or public groups to obtain a permit to house an encampment creates a burden. Capucion, who is also a board member of SHARE/WHEEL, a grassroots organization of homeless and formerly homeless people, says there aren't enough churches in Seattle that have the space to host a camp.

Earlier this month, SHARE had to close 15 shelters when the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, cut its funding. The funding has since been restored to reopen the shelters, but has yet to arrive.

Capucion has seen space issues play out at Tent City 3, where he's lived for the past 18 months. The encampment — which signed a consent decree with the city in 2002 that allows it to be hosted by either religious or private groups without a permit until March 2012 — has shuffled from churches in Seattle to those in Shoreline and Tukwila. At the end of this month, Tent City 3 will move to Shoreline once again, to a church that has room for its 100 residents.

The new law goes into effect Nov. 2.

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Genevieve Nelson Nonviolence
and Economic Human Rights
Award are now open!



Candidates for this award will have demonstrated a capacity for creative, compassionate nonviolence and demonstrated action towards creating a world where resources are shared based on need, not greed and violence.

All are invited to submit nominations for leaders in our community who have made an impact in the areas of Nonviolence and Economic Human Rights. Go to sistersoftheroad.org/programs/nvebr-award/ for our nonviolence and economic human rights statement, and to print a nomination form. Nominations due Friday, Nov. 18, 2011.

Nomination forms can be emailed to: award@sistersoftheroad.org;
mailed or dropped off at 133 NW 6th Ave., Portland, OR 97209

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