

PORTLAND OBSERVER

MUST WORK TOGETHER FOR FULL AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT.

Portland/Observer Thursday February 17, 1972

**The Northwest's Best Weekly
A Black Owned Publication**

Published every Thursday by Exie Publishing Company, 2201 N. Killingsworth, Portland, Oregon 97217
Subscription \$5.25 per year in Tri-County area by mail. Outside the Tri-County area - \$6.00 per year by mail.
Phone 283-2486.

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INPA

Any erroneous reflection upon the character, standing or reputation of person, firm or corporation, which may appear in the Portland Observer will be cheerfully corrected upon being brought to the attention of the editor.

The Editor's Desk



Racism still prevails

The history of black people in the United States is a struggle for freedom. The struggle in Oregon has been difficult and full freedom has not yet been obtained.

Black people have always been restricted and prevented from taking their proper place in the political, economic, educational and social life of the community. In the early days blacks were prohibited from residing in Oregon and those who defied the law and remained could not vote, own property, take part in legal proceedings and were without the protection of the law.

Although laws prohibiting residence were not strictly enforced, they created an atmosphere. Whites could practice racism with the full support of government, degrading and dehumanizing practices were encouraged. The attitude of white settlers, already opposed to contact with blacks and other non-whites, were solidified. Without contact with blacks, these racist attitudes grew and became a part of the educational and governmental system.

This atmosphere still prevails. Blacks are still isolated from the mainstream of community life through segregated housing, education and discrimination in employment. Blacks still do not have representation in government and political affairs and do not have an input into the decision making processes that effect our lives.

Involvement with the question of slavery and the free black man at a crucial time in its history and settlement by families from the Midwest and upper South gave Oregon a more conservative viewpoint than its neighbors on the question of slavery and equality of the black man. This conservatism remains. California and Washington have a larger number of blacks and blacks have found greater achievement there. Many of those black persons living in our neighboring states were raised in Oregon, but had to leave to find opportunities.

Restriction of opportunity will continue in Oregon until government officials take action. It will continue until the boards of major corporations meet their obligations. Although no longer legally restricted, blacks are ignored. We are not consulted until after decisions have been made. Small in number, we are considered without power and of no consequence.

Governor McCall, Commissioner Gleason, Mayor Schunk and others in positions of leadership must take immediate steps to bring black people into the political structure. Hundreds of persons serve on state boards and commissions, less than ten are black. The county and city appoint innumerable committees and study commissions, few have black members. There are a microscopic number of blacks employed in state, county and city government in positions other than common labor. In most areas of the country it is in civil service that blacks have found opportunities, but not in Oregon. Every agency of state and local government should seek out and hire black people until we have a fair representation in all positions (as is required by federal law.) Oregon is behind most of the country, including much of the South, and will be until the political leaders decide to take action.

Yardsticks of measurement

How do you measure a person's character? By the heights of their aspirations, the breadth of their heart, the depth of their soul, the slanting of their eyes, or the texture of their skin? Which yardsticks of measurement do you use?

In its editorial of February 12, 1972, the Oregon Journal states that Angela Davis has become a "cause celebre" since her arrest in October of 1970. The Journal advises that the best way to determine Angela's guilt or innocence is to "let justice take its course".

Angela became a "cause celebre" through the manipulations of the government. When has the government spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to capture and prosecute a person as remotely connected with a crime as this? Why is the conviction of this person of such value to the government? Is it because she is a well known and respected black woman? Or is it because she is a Communist?

The best insurance that justice will take its course is a fair and open trial - open to the scrutiny of the public. Yet Angela's trial will be held in a room which holds only 50 spectators, 30 of these reserved for the press. So only 20 seats will be available to her family, friends, well wishers and the concerned public. The trial is being held in a county that has such a small percentage of blacks that it is unlikely that any black people will serve on her jury, and as is customary, there will probably be no young people - yet we say she will be judged by a jury of her "peers".

Angela has been held in virtual isolation for over a year. She has been denied proper medical care. She has not been allowed release on bail, although this is contradictory to state law. She has not been provided legal counsel by the state, even though she has declared that she is without funds and therefore is entitled to legal assistance. There is now being built, a special cell atop the men's prison in San Jose, where she will be held during the trial. This is not the usual treatment afforded the usual defendant.

The Journal refers to Miss Davis as a "self-styled Communist" as is the custom of the white press. Seldom is it mentioned that Angela is a brilliant and accomplished young woman who received a scholarship to Brandeis University, studied at Sorbonne in Paris, studied on a German State Scholarship at Goethe University in Frankfurt, and earned her doctorate in philosophy at the University of California in San

"DESPITE THE LACK OF DIRECTION OF SOME BLACK STUDENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE, WE NEED THESE YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THEIR IMAGINATION AND INVENTIVENESS, THEIR NEW IDEAS AND APPROACHES"

ROY WILKINS



THE NEW AGE

A. D. GRIPPIN, Manager.

Office 44 1/2 Second St., 2nd. Ast. Bldg. 1 and 2 Portland, Oregon.

Entered at the postoffice at Portland, Oregon, as second-class matter.

SUBSCRIPTION: One Year, periodic in advance \$2.00 Established 1961. Printed at 34 1/2 Black Street, Third Floor.

EDITORIAL

A NEGRO PROFESSOR'S BOOK

A book entitled "The Souls of the Black Folk," written by a colored man, Prof. W. E. B. DuBois, is attracting a good deal of attention. He takes a somewhat pessimistic view of the black race's condition. He says, to mention only two or three sample thoughts or ideas, that the American Negro is "two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings;" he is ever the subject of a "double consciousness;" dominated by a "sense of always looking at oneself through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity." To Professor DuBois the Negro is a problem, and the question is ever present in his consciousness, and from it he confesses himself unable to escape. "How does it feel to be a problem?" Professor DuBois is half ashamed of being a Negro, and he gives expression to his own bitterness of soul in the cry which he puts into the mouth of his race: "Why did God make me an outcast and a stranger in mine own home?" (September 10, 1903)

Black History project

Professor DuBois formulates a contrasting philosophy to that of Booker T. Washington. One of these parties is ashamed of the race, the other is proud of it; one makes the white man the standard, the other seeks the standard in its own race ideals; one demands social equality, or at least resents social inequality, the other is too self-respecting to do either; one seeks to push the Negro into a higher place, the other to make him a larger man; one demands for him the right to ride in the white man's car, the other seeks to make the black man's car clean and respectable; one demands the ballot for ignorant black men because ignorant white men have the ballot, the other asks opportunity to make the black man competent for the duties of citizenship, and wishes no man to vote, white or colored, who is not competent; one would build the educational system of the race on the university, the other would build it on the common school and the industrial school; one wishes to teach the Negro to read the Ten Commandments in Hebrew, the other wishes first to teach him to obey them in English; to one labor is barely more honorable than idleness and the education which "makes laborers and nothing more" is regarded with ill concealed contempt, to the other industry is the basic virtue, and the education which makes industry intelligent is the foundation of civilization.

While Professor DuBois has written a notable book, with a deal of truth and nature in it, the brighter and more practical philosophy of Dr. Washington is rather to be commended.

(September 10, 1903)

Diego. Neither is it mentioned that the courts recently found that her termination as a professor at the University of California because of her Communist ideology was illegal.

We are tired of speculations about the treatment Angela would have at the hands of a "communist" government if she were protesting in the U.S.S.R. We want to be told what is being done to a young black woman by the "democratic" government in the United States.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

No Blacks to China

Dear Sir:

I find it difficult to understand why Afro-American journalists are not included in the persons who will accompany President Nixon on his visit to China. Afro-Americans have certainly earned the right to be included as professional journalists on historic occasions.

How is it possible to ignore Mr. Hal Walker (White House Correspondent), Mr. Mal Goode (the 1972 President of the United Nations Correspondents Association), or some of our other able Negro journalists? I feel President Nixon is being insensitive to the concerns of minority people who are interested, concerned and knowledgeable about international matters.

I find it particularly difficult to understand the exclusion of individual black journalists or a representative of the Associated Negro Press in Chicago or other Afro-American media. I seriously question President Nixon's naming Mrs. John Johnson (Ebony Fashion Director) to accompany Mrs. Nixon on her recent trip to Africa while excluding Mr. John Johnson (Publisher of Ebony and other Johnson publications) from the China trip. There are many Afro-American journalists who merit consideration.

I hope our President, who is suppose to represent all of the people, will revise the list of journalists before his departure.

Sincerely,
Mrs. O. J. Gates

(Editor's Note: Journalists travel with the President and other government officials on state visits at the expense of their own publications. The publication also chooses who will represent it. The Los Angeles Sentinel sent its sports writer on the African trip.

The cost of the China trip is \$6,000. This editor would be happy to be the "black journalist" on the trip if someone would donate the necessary funds.)

Black Women tool

Dear Rev. Henderson:

Your editorial "Political Power Beginning at Home" was correctly in point in showing the critical need for Blacks to register to vote and to vote. But there was one glaring omission which I certainly hope was inadvertent and not intentional.

Portland, Oregon and Multnomah County have several highly qualified Black men and women. I am sure you will agree that our community must be encouraged to give full and vociferous support to Black women as well as to Black men who will be running for office.

Sincerely yours,
Mercedes F. Diaz
Judge

The Observer's official position is expressed only in its Publisher's Column (The Observation Post) and the Editor's Desk. Any other material throughout the paper is the opinion of the individual writer or submitter and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Observer.

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