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The Editor's Desk

ALFRED LEE HENDERSON

Blacks hold power of vote

A recent study by the Joint Center for Political Studies analyzing the black vote, recognizes that black voters could be the difference between victory and defeat in November. As Jesse Jackson says, "The hands that once picked cotton can now pick the president."

This voting power has been growing for a long time and almost every president elected since 1936 has done so with the help of the black vote in the Northern cities. In at least nine major states the black vote influences large blocks of electoral votes.

Since the Voting Rights Act of 1965 the black vote makes up an even larger percentage in the Southern states. Blacks can provide the margin of victory in the South.

Harry Truman could not have defeated Tom Dewey without narrow margins in California, Illinois and Ohio, and blacks in those states voted overwhelmingly for Truman.

John Kennedy received 77.7 per cent of the black vote in Chicago, 89.9 per cent in Detroit, 86.6 per cent in Los Angeles, 76.3 per cent in New York and 7.1 per cent in Philadelphia. A small shift in the black vote could have cost him the election.

The leaders of the Democratic Party are aware that they must offer more than tokenism in order to secure that vote. We saw more black delegates at the National Convention and we saw them taking major rolls at the convention.

The black population of Oregon is small but we can develop black voting power by uniting behind a political program and by selecting and supporting black candidates for office. Candidates for state, county and city office must be made to understand that the black vote is a growing force that can decide their political futures. Only through unity and effort can this goal be achieved.

Chief Comcomly goes home

The skull of Chief Comcomly will be returned to his Indian descendants by the Clatsop County Historical Society, which has had possession of the skull since 1952, displaying it in the county museum.

Comcomly was a Chinook Chief who ruled over 11 tribes. He greeted Captain Robert Gray at the mouth of the Columbia in 1791 and later was friendly with Dr. John McLoughlin, chief factor for the Hudson's Bay Company and with members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. He died of smallpox in 1830 and was buried on the Oregon side of the Columbia River. Three years later, Dr. Meredith Gairner, a Hudson's Bay Company doctor, removed the skull from the grave and sent it to England as a medical curiosity since it was the practice of the Chinooks to flatten the front of the skull. The skull was kept in a museum in England until it was returned to Astoria in 1952.

Now the Historical Society, in a gesture of goodwill, has voted to return the skull to the Chinooks. But what about the land of the Chinook that has been taken by whites? A few days ago Mt. Adams, which has been stolen by the United States government, was returned to the Yakimas. But what about the fishing boats and gear seized and still held by the state of Washington? What about the fishing traps thrown by dams still being raised? What about fishing rights suspended to save the few salmon that escape the white fishermen and pollution? What about the holy places in Arizona being dredged up to produce coal for electric plants that leak smoke hundreds of miles across the desert? What about the forests of the Klamaths that are to be sacrificed because the government has "higher priorities"? It was a noble gesture to return the skull of Chief Comcomly and his people will be happy to lay it to rest, but a much more significant gesture would be to return the right to self-determination, the means of making a living, respect for the Indian religion and traditions, and to restore the promises made in the treaties with the Indian nations.

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.

Rise of McGovern little less than miraculous

By Benjamin Mays

The rise of McGovern from almost zero to the top place for the Democratic nomination in Miami is little less than miraculous. McGovern makes a tremendous appeal to the young across the nation. Not only to the young, but to adults.

He represents something new in politics. He is not quite as fluent as Humphrey. He has no more sincerity than Muskie. A large number of people must believe McGovern will bring something new to the nation. At almost every point he differs from Nixon.

McGovern's followers believe that he will not only bring the ground crew home, but that he will end the war and get the U.S. out of Vietnam. It is clear that despite the soldiers being brought home and those already home, we are engaged in a war, the end of which we do not see.

The plan must be to beat Hanoi down so that they will be willing to make a political settlement of the war. As long as our feet is in Vietnam, and our planes are bombing North Vietnam, we are in a full blown war.

McGovern's followers believe that McGovern will cut drastically our defense spending. They believe that defense spending is too high and that it is now the top priority and takes precedence over all other issues. McGovern promises to do something about this. He promises welfare reform guaranteeing a minimum adequate income for every family. He promises

tax reform and equal enforcement of Civil Rights laws in every state in the nation. The Republicans will support Nixon's busing plan and will agree with him that busing should be the last resort only temporary if used.

These are some of the issues that McGovern will have to face in the campaign. Although I am not willing to say that Nixon is unbeatable I do know that a divided Democratic party will never beat Nixon in November. I predict that the war will not be over by November and that Nixon's hard line on busing will stand him in good stead. The man in power has the edge on the man trying to get in. So Nixon will be hard to beat. McGovern will need party unity and can he get it?

Hubert Humphrey has done much for his country. He has done much for civil rights. No man in Congress has done more. He has a right to feel that he deserves the nomination despite the fact he has had his chance.

McGovern will need Humphrey, Muskie, as able as any Democrat we have, will be needed by McGovern. McGovern will have a hard time winning the presidency without the south. Does this mean that peace must be made with George Wallace and his supporters?

I would have no fear of McGovern in the White House. And with a united party he has a chance of winning in November.

As I See It Portland's Young Black middle class aspirants Part I

by Lenwood G. Davis

When I wrote my article, "Portland's Black Middle Class: A Disappointment," several months ago, many young Blacks applauded and said that such an analysis was long overdue. Some young Blacks made the laconic observation that it was timeliness of me to write such a castigating article. Now, however, I deem it appropriate to write about these young Blacks that were and are critical of the established Black middle class in Portland.

Many of Portland's young Black middle class aspirants are, in my opinion, very hypocritical and are suffering from delusions of grandeur. On the one hand, they criticize the established Black middle class and on the other hand they try to imitate them. This is an obvious contradiction.

These young Black men and women are in a position to bring about changes. Yet, we observe that they are not. Most of these young Blacks are sitting on the sidelines talking fine rhetoric and that is about all. They are not supporting the NAACP, Urban League, Black Caucus, Black Panther Party etc.

Some may argue (and I for one agree) because they must continue to fight racism that the older Black middle class have paid their dues and deserve to let younger Blacks carry the banners. Others

may argue that since most young Blacks are not established and are not deeply in debt, they can afford to take a stand and speak out on issues affecting Blacks. However, these young Blacks are not participating in the Black organizations that are fighting to eradicate racism in Portland, in Oregon and in the United States.

I am talking about the young Blacks that are in the \$9,000 to \$12,000 income bracket and work at, Albina Multi-Service Center, Model Cities, Portland Metropolitan Steering Committee, Concentration Employment, 4-Cs and Media. I am also referring to the federal, state, and local government employees, as well as the Social Workers, Nurses, and technicians. I am including WORKERS as well as men who work as assistant directors of programs and as administrative assistants. Most (not all) of the above employees would do well to follow their directors and get involved in community affairs. Some of the directors of those programs have supported community and civic organizations.

Many young Blacks sur-

mise that the older Blacks are running the show and will not listen to them. Perhaps, that was a truism in the past. However, a new day is at hand. Moreover, if these young Blacks continue to sit on the outside looking in, the older Blacks will continue to be in control of things. One only has to look at the recent Democratic Convention to observe that young people's impact was felt. Young Blacks all over America are challenging the old order. Can young Blacks in Portland do less?

If young Blacks want a say in things they must stop talking loud and superficial rhetoric and get involved in the democratic process. And if they are not bringing changes within the existing structure, then it may be necessary for us to bring it of our own. However, these young Blacks MUST first get involved and stop running off at the mouth and criticizing the so-called established Black Middle Class.

The purpose of this article, in case it escaped some people, is that Portland's young Black Middle Class aspirants should NOT criticize older



Lenwood Davis

Black Middle Class unless they are doing their part to bring about changes. Which, in my opinion, they ARE NOT. Furthermore, the young Black Middle Class aspirants may not be like the established Black Middle Class with their value system, dress, habits, taste, cars, apartments, but they are a damn good imitation of them.

Part II of "Portland's Young Black Middle Class Aspirants" will appear next week.

With Ron Hendren
A YOUNG VIEW OF WASHINGTON



Washington - Not too many months ago there were veiled warnings that this year's Democratic National Convention in Miami might make the 1968 Chicago holocaust look like a family picnic.

Indeed, the detailed preparations of state and federal police, supplemented by armed forces on stand-by, together with the haunting but familiar specter of high steel fences surrounding the convention center itself, all added up to a possibility of the worst.

But the worst never happened. In fact, the convention, barely a week old, has already been called one of the most open national political gatherings of this century.

What happened to prevent a replay of 1968? The incredible rise of George McGovern, from the time when he was an also-ran in the Florida primary to the almost anticlimactic moment of his nomination for the Presidency, reveals some of the answers to that question and also points the way to the Democrats' only hope of regaining the White House in November.

At the outset, it is fair to say that McGovern more than any other candidate offered an opportunity for the involvement in his campaign of large numbers of persons who had little prior political experience.

The freshness and vigor these enthusiastic workers lent to his cause enabled the South Dakota Senator to whip the old line rank and file politicians at their own games, something many thought could never happen in 1972.

As a result, the vast majority of delegates to this year's Democratic convention had never before represented their party at its national nominating session. Two of every ten delegates were young persons. Many more than ever before were women. A higher percentage than in recent years were poor or were members of minority groups.

Letters to the Editor Oregonian wrong on Caucus

The Editor
The Oregonian

Dear Editor:

You began your editorial (July 5, 1972), "If the Oregon Black Caucus really wants, as it claims, to be a strong and responsible voice for Black people, it is off to a poor start." You apparently have decided that you, a white newspaper, are the proper authority to render judgement of what is to count for a "strong and responsible voice for Black people." Your claim to this authoritative role is all too common to be a surprise. However, it might well be questioned upon what conceivable credentials you possess or what special insight that you have which would justify your assumption of the role to tell Black people when they are or are not being "responsible."

Your charge of irresponsibility is based on the fact that newsmen and whites were not admitted to the Convention. One cannot assume that admitting newsmen and whites to a Black Convention is in and of itself a sign of irresponsibility. One would have to examine further reasons set forth to justify such a claim.

You mentioned, in your account, some "complicated sensitivities" in Black politics among which a distrust of media run predominantly by whites and traditionally inclined to favor the established order." You make it sound as though the source of the distrust of the white press emanates without cause from us.

You go further to say: "Moreover, the Caucus's organizers were understandably

afraid that the press accounts would highlight the difference of opinion among participants, rather than the united front they seek to organize."

I would say that it would be more accurate to say that we are aware of the fact that white controlled press traditionally has attempted to create differences of opinion where there has been unity. You have very commonly played up differences of opinion about procedural matters attempting to hide a very real unity of goals.

Your very editorial substantiates our awareness. In the editorial you say: "Members of the Caucus decided last weekend that no newsmen, white or Black, and no whites, newsmen or not, would be admitted to their first statewide convention held in Portland." You go on later in the article to say: "Most important, the variety of Black views expressed such a significant event should be reported accurately and impartially, not second hand, to the many citizens, Black and white, who could not attend the Convention."

The latter passage contains a very common logical fallacy. Your statement implies that the Convention would not be reported "accurately and impartially," unless you, the white controlled press were to be admitted -- an implication which is completely unsubstantiated.

Further, you are implying, in these two passages, that some Black people were denied admittance to the convention. The truth of the matter is that NO Black whatsoever was denied admittance to the convention. Even a person who was Black and happened to be a newsman

would be (and was) admitted. The only thing that was denied was the official press coverage which we felt, with ample justification, could not be depended upon to objectively report the occurrences of an event. Your fears that "insensitive voices" might have been "stifled" in the process of compromise is ill founded. Any of us attending the Convention could easily make our views known if we felt that the releases given by our representatives were in any way inaccurate.

I would prefer the way the press releases were handled to the press coverage given by your "unbiased newsmen" in the past. I have personally been a witness to our so-called "accurate and impartial" reporting at conventions and speaking engagements, both Black and white. I have seen your press come in, take some pictures, listen to a few choice quotes to suit your needs, and then, after having been in attendance for about ten or fifteen (15) minutes, go back to write your preconceived "accurate and impartial" accounts.

In conclusion, I agree with the Oregon Black Caucus officials to meet without any press. As a member of the Caucus, I feel it is time that any group when meeting, particularly Black people, the press should be carefully screened, or as was for our convention, left out!

Ramisi L. Darby
Member of the Oregon Black Caucus
1508 N.E. Beech Street
Portland, Oregon

Ellsberg defense seeks funds

Dear Editor:

For the tremendous service Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony Russo have performed for their country, they now face a total of 150 years in prison.

Their defense is, clearly the responsibility of all of us. But also at stake in this trial--indeed to be raised in the courtroom--will be the ability of Washington administrators to deceive and mislead the American people into war by means of gross misause of secrecy and the

classification system.

These, too, are issues that are our responsibility. Please contribute as much as you can for the LEGAL DEFENSE of Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony Russo. "Pentagon Papers Fund", P.O. Box 1630, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10017. A contribution of \$25.00 or more will bring you a copy of the New York Times clothbound library edition of THE PENTAGON PAPERS, with 60 pages of photographs.

Sincerely,
A.T. Spencer

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