



The Editor's Desk

ALFRED LEE HENDERSON

WE SEE THE WORLD THROUGH BLACK EYES.



Elected leaders: The time is now

As we look back at 1972 and forward to 1973, we see few real changes and advancements, and a few losses. We can judge our chances in 1973 only on the actions and the promises of the past.

As a new Democrat controlled State Legislature goes into session, a legislature that for the first time includes a Black; as a new county government is formed; as a new Mayor and City Council begin a new city administration; we hope a new era in Oregon politics has begun. We look to you our leaders and say to you, Our cause is just.

We have a governor who expounds belief in equality. A long time supporter of the Urban League, Tom McCall, exudes the liberal image. We have a Secretary of State who, although with his reapportionment made the election of a Black in Albina virtually impossible for the next decade, has reiterated his interest in the Black cause. Clay Myers is a rising star in the Republican heavens, a little left of its center. We have a State Treasurer who is a Democrat, Jim Redden, who comes from Oregon; most racist area, says he has a good civil rights record and has pronounced his concern for equal employment in state service. And then we have an Attorney General, Lee Johnson, ...

So we have our three top state officials dedicated to our cause! Gentlemen: Now is the time for action!

This is what you must do:

In appointments to all state commissions and boards, to legislative employment, to the top echelon of state agencies and departments - appoint "qualified Blacks."

In appointments to all city and county commissions and committees, to administrative positions in city and county government, to appointive positions in government - appoint "qualified" Blacks.

Revise and update the regulations, policies and application of the civil service systems at all levels. Eliminate biased tests designed to eliminate minorities and the poor. Write new qualifications that will include all those who have the desire and ability to become competent workers. Make an honest effort to hire Blacks.

Change the state apprenticeship rules that require an apprentice to have high academic standing and a clean record. Include those who might not have done well in high school but who can become skilled employees.

Bring all the influence of the state, the county and the city to bear to influence the private sector to hire minorities and to include minority people in the economic life of the community.

Alot the necessary funds to provide needed services to the people of the state: make Welfare payments adequate for a decent family life; increase opportunities for education, training, rehabilitation; increase funds for child care, medical care, special education, the aging, the handicapped. Provide adequate housing, transportation, freedom from pollution; and provide loans to black businesses so Black People can have a share in the fruits of the capitalist system.

Use the influence of government to create a new atmosphere toward minorities in the State of Oregon. Educate the people of Oregon to the fact that this is a new day - that their stereotypes and their superiority are no longer in vogue. Tell them that their reputation among the Blacks of the nation is worse than that of Mississippi. We know and experience the conservation, the racism, the conscious exclusion and repression of Blacks in Oregon's past and in Oregon's present. Now let the people of Oregon, led by their elected officials, polish up their tarnished image and begin anew.

1973 can be the year that we will remember as the beginning of a new mood in Oregon - of a movement to let all of Oregon's children sing, "Hail to Thee, Land of Heros, My Oregon".

ALFRED LEE HENDERSON, Publisher/Editor

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**A FREE STATE
IS FORMED AND IS MAINTAINED
BY THE VOLUNTARY UNION
OF THE WHOLE PEOPLE
JOINED TOGETHER
UNDER THE SAME BODY OF LAWS
FOR THE COMMON WELFARE
AND THE SHARING OF BENEFITS
JUSTLY APPORTIONED**

Inscription carved in marble at the front entrance of the Capitol Building.

Nixon's action leaves sour taste

By Bayard Rustin

Will a second Nixon term devote the same type of creative leadership to Watts and Harlem as some feel the first term brought to relations with Peking and Moscow?

I would very much like the answer to that question to be yes.

But the dismissal of the Rev. Theodore Hesburgh as chairman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, a move taken while the ink on the ballots had scarcely dried, leaves me deeply pessimistic about the President's intentions for the next four years.

That Father Hesburgh's dismissal comes as no surprise does not make it any less distressing.

Father Hesburgh's differences with the President were profound and basic.

He believed it was the most essential duty of government to assert a vigorous and humane role to ensure that oppressed minorities enjoy the social and political rights that laws and a humanitarian moral order dictate.

NON-PARTISAN

But Father Hesburgh was non-partisan; he helped pre-

pare studies critical of the past four Presidents and he never shied from pointing out when presidential rhetoric fell short of performance.

And while he was a liberal, his liberalism was a special kind: principled, visionary, yet with a firm conception of how to translate ideals into programs.

In this sense he embodied the spirit of conviction and pragmatism which has made the Civil Rights Commission one of our most powerful voices for minority rights.

Since its inception in 1957, the commission has been an influential force in securing the passage of every significant civil rights bill.

Its research documented the devastating effects - on both black and white children - of racial isolation in the public schools.

POLITICAL POWER

The imposing growth of black political power, so forcefully demonstrated in the past election, would not have been possible without the commission's study of voting discrimination and political exclusion in the South, a study

which ultimately led to the adoption of the Voting Rights Act.

Nor would we have won the passage of the Open Housing law without the work of the commission.

It is precisely because the commission has made such an invaluable contribution to social progress that the President's action carries with it such ominous overtones.

Some are convinced he plans to "gut" the commission, replacing Father Hesburgh and other like-minded members with political appointees with no particular feelings for and even less commitment to racial justice.

TELLING IMPACT

Considering the commission's telling impact on civil rights policy and its heretofore independent-mindedness, a politicizing move would have intolerable consequences for all minorities, particularly since the commission is currently probing the special problems of Indians, Spanish-speaking people and other groups who experience discrimination.

On a personal level, I found that Father Hesburgh would not capitulate on a matter of moral principle even when to do so might have eased the situation for him.

Upon my appointment to the board of trustees of Notre Dame University, where Father Hesburgh is president, I became subject to an outpouring of shrill, McCarthy-like attacks because I was supposed to be a "radical."

Yet the publicity and pressure did not move Father Hesburgh: he stood by his judgment and what he knew of me and refused to concede to hysteria and rumor.

It was this trait which ultimately led to the dismissal.

WOULDN'T BUCKLE

Father Hesburgh simply would not buckle under on the busing issue, and as the President's rhetoric grew louder and more misleading, Father Hesburgh's criticism rose in intensity.

At the height of the busing furor, when even many liberals were giving in, he said something about race relations which bears repeating in an era when progress is measured in slow, tortured inches.

"One can argue about the costs of equality in America today. God knows we have known the costs of inequality - wasted talents, frustration, poverty piled on poverty, generation after generation.

"Laws have been grudgingly passed and more grudgingly obeyed, with every possible legal evasion tested.

"If we are ever to emerge from our present state of inequality, it will not be by insisting on minimum compliance with minimum laws.

"Generosity, magnanimity and human understanding will alone allow us to transcend, in our days, our dismal history of racial inequality."

President Nixon's selection of New York labor leader, Peter J. Brennan for the post of Secretary of Labor brought sharp reaction from the NAACP which called the nomination "appalling - the nature of a disaster". Executive Director Roy Wilkins, said Brennan "had done nothing to get black persons into the building trades unions before his nomination and can hardly be expected to do anything once he gets in office."

As I See It MLK's birthday and the Black Community

By Lenwood G. Davis

Last year I wrote the following Editor of the PORTLAND OBSERVER, lambasting the Black community in Portland for not having a mass rally commemorating Martin Luther King's Birthday. I sincerely hope that it will not be necessary for this writer or any other individual to write a similar letter after Dr. King's Birthday this year.

There is a movement underway all over the United States to have congress pass an act to make Dr. King's Birthday a national holiday. We as individuals can and should write our Senators and Congressmen and support such a bill.

The letter that I sent to the Editor last year stated:

This letter was written as a letter to the Editor. However, it is really an "Open Letter to the Black Community of Portland." I was sadly disappointed to observe that no major civic organization such as the NAACP, Urban League, Albina Ministers Alliance, or any other public institution or agency sponsored a Martin Luther King Day in Commem-

oration of his birthday. Last year it was sponsored by the Albina Citizens Together Committee.

Even though a limited number of high schools and churches did observe Dr. King's birthday, the majority of the Black people of Portland did not participate. Once again it appears as if the Black Community and leaders are not keeping in tune with what is going on in other cities in the United States. It seems to me that some organization or group should have had a mass rally in observance of Dr. King's birthday.

After studying the Black leadership and Black community of Portland, I can only conclude that both are out of touch with reality and what is happening all over the United States. There seems to be a tremendous amount of apathy and complacency in the Black community. I am not unimpressed that the Black community in Portland is relatively small, however, that does not negate the fact that it can't be actively involved in making its voice heard in the community at large.

It appears to me that the alleged leaders and self-ap-



Lenwood Davis

pointed leaders are insensitive and unsympathetic to the needs, demands and aspirations of the masses of people that they are supposed to represent. It is beyond my comprehension how anyone can be a public servant to the people and yet are not available to them. There are too many Black "leaders" who only have 9 to 5 office hours and only care about projecting their own self-image.

The lack of observance of Dr. King's birthday is just one of a long list of events that the leaders and community have not been involved in. Perhaps one day, hopefully in the near future, some individual or individuals will emerge to lead the people out of bondage.



With Ron Hendren

A YOUNG VIEW OF WASHINGTON

THE PETERSON PRINCIPLE

WASHINGTON - Among the casualties in the President's much ballyhooed cabinet and staff shuffle, Peter G. Peterson, deposed as Secretary of Commerce, stands out as particularly significant.

Rumors have been hopping about for months that Peterson's friendship with left-of-center Republicans (like his old friend Senator Charles Percy of Illinois) and liberal newspaper people like Tom Braden had cast him distinctly out of favor with the administration.

Peterson, interviewed in his home recently by Washington Post reporter Sally Quinn, seemed as much amused as disturbed by his ouster. In referring to his friendships with members of the press however, the soon-to-be ex-Secretary sounded a note of mild alarm about the administration's attitude toward a free press. "... I was in the Soviet Union recently and I have seen first hand that only what the government wants printed is printed," he said. "I find the concept of a free and critical press, while undoubtedly irritating at times, absolutely indispensable. If there are those who have criticized me because I have open relations with the press I would not conclude that I am wrong."

Apparently, however, the only man who really counts in such matters, President Nixon, did conclude Peterson was wrong, and the decision to replace him at Commerce is only one of a series of disturbing clues about what the White House attitude toward the press will be during the President's second term.

BLAMING THE POLICE FOR THE ILL-TREATMENT OF BLACK JUVENILES DOESN'T STOP THEM FROM KILLING OLD MEN AND WOMEN. SITTING AROUND DOING NOTHING WON'T HELP EITHER.

FACTS THAT ARE NOT FRANKLY FACED HAVE A NASTY HABIT OF STABBING US IN THE BACK.

SIR HAROLD BOWDEN



Do something...prevent crime from becoming a way of life in the Black Community

