

CAUCUS TIME

by Jettie B. Wilds, Jr.
Chairman, Oregon Black Caucus

It is the creed of the Caucus to serve as a catalyst for change. The Caucus must do this through the following means:

- (1) seeking and identifying the relevant issues that affect Black folks.
- (2) seeking and identifying those persons interested in one or more of the relevant issues.
- (3) providing leadership and/or fellowship in working out strategies with those persons who are interested in resolving those issues.
- (4) resisting the noise

created by those persons interested in talking but not working.

- (5) putting the freedom of Black folks before friendship and partisanship.
- (6) continuing to ask this question of ourselves and others: "What have you done for the cause lately?"

OPEN LETTER

We wish to make an open appeal to Bob Oliver, Oregon State Ombudsman. On July 1, 1969, Governor Tom McCall

created the post of Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is required to report regularly to the Governor and the legislature, noting problems of general application that indicate a need for revision of existing law, regulations or policies.

Dear Mr. Oliver: We, the members of the Oregon Black Caucus, would like to solicit your assistance in remedying once and for all the practices and policies of the Oregon Public Utilities Commission which leave every Black applicant for a dump truck license in the position of fighting for the privilege. There is enough evidence now to indicate a pattern of denial to Black applicants.

The authority of your office, as we understand it, covers the investigation of administrative actions of state agencies. Either on your own initiative or upon complaint of any person(s), Otis Smith, Williams Jones and David Dawson, all Black, have had difficulties in obtaining truck licensing. Hopefully, the spirit of the Governor's Executive Order of April, 1972, decreeing an Affirmative Action Program applicable to state agencies, recognizes direct and indirect relationships. It is not good enough to approach affirmative action in a "business as usual" manner if unusual things are expected.

We are certain that your attention to this matter will help to pave the way for one more step in making Oregon a place where all of its citizens have an equal opportunity to pursue an honest living.

Respectfully,
Oregon Black Caucus
P.O. Box 12262

Anniversary of DuBois death remembered

by James H. Rogers

William Edward Burghardt DuBois died in Accra, Ghana on August 27, 1963 (only ten years ago) at the age of 95. It was the eve of the Great March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, March 28, 1973, in which more than 250,000 persons of every race, nationality and religious creed participated. Ironically enough, the Great March seems to stand as testimony to the life work of W.E.B. DuBois, humanitarian and freedom fighter renowned throughout the world.

W.E.B. DuBois was born in the New England town of Great Barrington, Massachusetts in 1868, only three years after the close of the Civil War, in a period in American history when the overwhelming majority of Americans believed that the world belonged to the white man and that Blacks and other racial minorities were not entitled to the rights and privileges enjoyed by the dominant caste.

William Edward Burghardt DuBois accepted as his life-long mission the responsibility of the extraordinary individual of moral and intellectual gifts to challenge those oppressive forces in society that serve to dehumanize the poor and the

powerless. At this death he was recognized throughout the globe as the most eminent Black American intellectual and political organizer produced in our history. He had written 19 books; literally thousands of articles; pamphlets and editorials; sociological texts; novels; short stories; poetry; autobiographies; and position papers. His published writings on behalf of social and racial justice spanned some 60 years - longer than most of us shall live. And at his death, at age 95, DuBois was the chief compiler and contributor to the *Encyclopedia of Africa*, a massive work still in progress at the University of Ghana.

Yet, DuBois (contrary to popular opinion) was born into a poor, but proud and hard-working Black family whose traditions taught him personal dignity and the value of discipline and self-reliance in a society that denied the majority of Black people any modicum of those attributes so highly prized by whites.

DuBois' self-confidence and intellect was so highly developed at age 15 that he wrote in one of the columns of the *Boston Globe*, that "if Black people in the state of Massachusetts desire any advice on political organizing or books of value to them, they only need write W.E.B. DuBois, and he would be glad to respond..." At the time he was, of course, a teenager.

Later he went South to Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, where he had his first encounter with "large numbers of Blacks". He later wrote that he was overwhelmed by the "beauty of his people" and wholly unable to understand why white Americans were so reluctant to "admit to the worth and dignity of peoples of African heritage."

While working for a Harvard Ph.D. DuBois studied at the University of Berlin

and it was during his travels through Europe that he later wrote: "I ceased to hate or suspect people simply because they belonged to one race or color..."

But white America did not cease to hate or suspect DuBois. In 1896, DuBois received the Ph.D. on History from Harvard and his doctoral dissertation, *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade*, became volume No. 1 in the Harvard Historical Series, yet all colleges and universities closed their doors to the brilliant young Black scholar (a practice shared in common by most Oregon schools today in 1973. I have the evidence to prove this point).

The young DuBois was not to be easily discouraged. He finally landed ill-paying jobs at time Wilburforce College, and later Atlanta University. It is in this time that the classical work, *The Souls of Black Folks* (1903) and *The Philadelphia Negro* (a massive sociological study) began to appear. DuBois became one of the founders of the Niagra Movement (1906); the NAACP; and various Pan-African conferences of the twenties and thirties. DuBois was editor of three singularly important periodicals: *The Crisis*; *Horizon*; and *Phylon*; and thus for thirty years he was undoubtedly the most articulate, fearless and widely read advocate of Black liberation and racial justice in America.

It is suggested by many prominent historians of the Black Experience that DuBois was "the bridge" between the militant Frederick Douglass, who died in 1895, and Martin Luther King and Malcolm X.

In 1903, in *The Souls of Black Folk*, DuBois wrote: "Herein lie buried many things which, if read with patience, may show the strange meaning of being Black here at the dawning of the Twentieth Century. This

meaning is not without interest to you, gentle reader; for the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line."

Seventy years later most Americans have not understood the full implications of DuBois' admonition. DuBois himself later became disaffected with the robber barons of American capitalism and the inability of social-political institutions to effect meaningful change for Black and poor people, and thus DuBois began turning more and more to socialist theorists. He was, of course, charged by a racist and reactionary government as being Communist - the charges of which he successfully refuted; yet it led to his decision to live in Ghana, first of the newly independent African nations, at the invitation of Kwame Nkrumah and other African leaders. He died on August 27, 1963, on the eve of the historic March on Washington, while compiling the *Encyclopedia Africana*.

It is of more than passing interest that Nobel Laureate Martin Luther King's last speech before his assassination was in tribute to W.E.B. DuBois in February of 1968 in New York City. Reverend King said in part: "DuBois was one of the most remarkable men of our time. It was never possible to know where the scholar DuBois ended and the organizer DuBois began. The two qualities in him were a single unified force. White America, drenched with lies about Negroes, has lived too long in a fog of ignorance. Dr. DuBois gave them a gift of touch. If he lived today he would be in the front ranks of the peace movement. DuBois' greatest virtue was his committed empathy with all the oppressed and his divine dissatisfaction with all forms of injustice." That is what Martin Luther King thought of W.E.B. DuBois. Amen.

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Bancorp elects Elorriaga

Directors of U.S. Bancorp elected John A. Elorriaga to the position of president and chief administrative officer of that corporation, effective September 1. Elorriaga will also retain his title as president and chief administrative officer of the United States National Bank of Oregon, principal subsidiary of U.S. Bancorp.

LeRoy B. Staver, who has held the dual titles of chairman and president of Bancorp, continues as chairman and chief executive officer of that corporation and also of the bank.

In making the announcement, Staver said that the change is an important move in the complete integration of the financial services extended by Bancorp, the bank and other subsidiaries in the group, and that it will assure effective coordination of the planning and marketing functions of all segments of the corporate structure.

THE FAMILY LAWYER

Doctor's Fee

Harold's wife died shortly after undergoing an operation. When a bill arrived from the surgeon, Harold decided not to pay. In due course, the matter wound up in court.

"Obviously, the operation was a failure," Harold pointed out to the judge. "Why should I have to pay for services that were useless?"



However, the court ordered him to pay up. The court said a doctor's services are to be measured by the quality of his work, not merely by the results—and this doctor had performed the operation in a proper manner.

"The marvelous skill of the greatest surgeons in the world," added the judge, "is sometimes futile."

This case states the general rule of law about medical fees. Furthermore, unless a specific sum has been agreed upon in advance, the doctor generally has considerable leeway—within reason—in deciding how high the fee will be.

May he take into account the patient's ability to pay? That is, may he charge a higher fee to a rich patient than to a poor one? Most courts say yes, sometimes on the theory that high-paying work will allow him to take on more low-paying work.

Nevertheless, the basic standard of due care remains constant, whether the fee is large or small—or even nonexistent. In one early case, a doctor was accused of neglecting a charity patient. In his defense, he insisted that he had less responsibility to be careful when he was working for nothing.

But the court disagreed, and held him liable on grounds of malpractice.

The judge commented: "Whether the patient be a pauper or a millionaire, whether he be treated gratuitously or for reward, the physician owes him precisely the same measure of duty and the same degree of skill and care."

A public service feature of the American Bar Association and the Oregon State Bar Association. Written by Will Bernard.

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