

We see the world
through Black eyes

Not the whole story

The nation has just seen "Roots", the story of Alex Haley's family from capture in Africa to "Freedom" in the post Civil War US. The show, seen by the largest television audience in the history of the industry, is being hailed by Blacks and whites alike as a great educational experience.

It probably was an education -- but it is difficult to believe as we talk to Black and white viewers, that so little is known about the ravages of slavery. It certainly is a graphic example of the rewriting of history to suit the political needs of a nation -- when that nation's overriding social, economic and religious problem for half of its existence is all but forgotten.

Even harder to accept is the discussion we hear among whites on the radio talk shows -- reminding us that Blacks participated in the slave stealing and comparing the slavery imposed on Blacks in this country with slavery the world over -- including the current working class "wage slaves".

It is true that slavery has existed throughout the ages, but the slavery practiced by the Arabs and Africans, and even by the British, French and Spanish in the New World, did not strip humanity from the slave. Slaves were still human beings with a right to live their lives, to have families, homes, ideas and souls. Only their labor was owned by the master.

Only in the US was the slave not a human being but an animal to be bought, sold and bred like cattle -- to be denied family, religion or education. The show "Roots" did touch on some of the inhumanities with references to slave breeding, to the rape by the master, to the sale of Kizzie for her misdeeds. But the horrors of the children on the auction block, the whip, the hard, cruel work of the field hands was absent. There was some brutality in response to misbehavior of the slaves, but overall the Haley family's owners were "good masters". There was little in the show to demonstrate the extreme brutality and oppression of the slave system and its continuing influence on this nation and its citizens.

We can assume that Haley's book is factual and that it accurately traces his family history -- an accomplishment that was previously thought impossible. The Haley family was extraordinarily fortunate in that the family was allowed to remain together, that they found freedom early and were able to acquire property and education. Their good fortune and Haley's tenacity in giving his talents, time and effort to find his roots cannot erase the fact

that African slaves were brutalized and oppressed to the degree that few aspects of their culture survive.

The writing of "Roots" can be regarded as a major accomplishment; it can be pointed to with the pride of heritage. But it was never intended to erase the horrors of slavery.

Keep the money

The State of Oregon has discovered a \$160 million surplus, the result of collecting more income tax than necessary last year. Now the problem is what to do with the money -- give it back or spend it.

The hue and cry is being raised that the taxpayers were "overcharged" and the money must be returned to its rightful owners.

The state is facing a drought; who knows how long the water shortage will effect the economy? In spite of predictions of improvements in the employment picture, many Oregonians will remain out of work for many months to come.

We were recently informed that services to the elderly in their own homes would have to be discontinued, forcing these people into homes for the aged -- because of no money. Every day we hear about children and adults who are denied medical and mental health care -- because of no money. We hear about children sent to MacLaren and Hillcrest because there was no money to help them before their problems became so severe.

Continuously the same answer to all our problems -- no money!

Surely this \$160 million would be better spent trying to meet some of the people's needs rather than sending a few pennies to each of us.

His peers?

A jury of his peers. This phrase has strange connotations when we realize that in Multnomah County a Black defendant is rarely judged by a jury of his peers. The Multnomah County District Attorney's office still routinely bars Black jurors from the juries hearing cases involving Black defendants.

Arrests of Blacks in Oregon make up 3.5 per cent of the total, while Blacks are 18.5 per cent of the population of Oregon State Penitentiary. There must be a reason for this discrepancy -- white jurors, incompetent attorneys, overzealous DAs? Still no justice here.

Natural gas crisis

by Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
Copley News Service

"Go to bed," the public was advised by the mayor of Blountville, La. The temperature was 25 below at Cincinnati, Ohio; 7 below in Worcester, Mass.; 3 below in Philadelphia, Pa. Schools were closed in Ohio, Oklahoma and Florida. The winter of 1976-77 is a very cold winter indeed.

Fuel has run short. General Motors, Ford, Chrysler and American Motors closed plants in Ohio, Michigan and New York for lack of power. U.S. Steel Corp. and Jones & Laughlin Steel Co. were ordered to cease production.

Pennsylvania's Lt. Gov. Ernest Kline reported mass care centers are being set up in case natural gas supplies run so low that residential users are cut off. Without a doubt, the energy crisis is with us again.

The weather feels all the more bitter because it follows three or four winters that have been unusually mild. Many of us closed our eyes or crossed our fingers and expected the weather to stay mild and the energy crisis never to command our attention again. Not so. The new year has greeted us with workers off work, students out of school and loss of Florida's citrus crop. Utility companies throughout the Eastern and Midwestern states have had to curtail natural gas distribution as the demand soared.

Different from our problems with oil, the supply of natural gas is primarily a domestic problem.

Canada, which currently furnishes the United States with 4 percent of its gas supplies, is no longer willing to continue doing so. Other imports would, of necessity, be in liquid form. Liquefied natural gas is costly, difficult to ship and dangerous to handle. Under these circumstances, the choices available to us in the face of increased demand are natural gas reserves within the United States or conversion to other fuels, generally oil.

The icy rivers which have caused oil barges to be stranded short of their destinations, do not affect natural gas. Fortunately, natural gas is distributed by a pipeline system largely unaffected by adverse weather conditions. In addition, natural gas is regulated by the Federal Power Commission.

Camp Fire

(Continued from p.1 col.3)

Namanu. We filled a bus full with kids, some of whom had never had a chance to explore the woods. It was great fun, but we couldn't have done it without the help of many parents and several community groups.

"There are a lot of girls who want to belong to Camp Fire, but before they can join, more adults are needed to help. We need people who want to see their children grow... and grow well, in Camp Fire."

Part of the reason Camp Fire has been growing in our community is the support it has received from institutional sponsors, like the *Portland Observer* and several private individuals, who help pay for the membership dues of those girls who can't afford them.

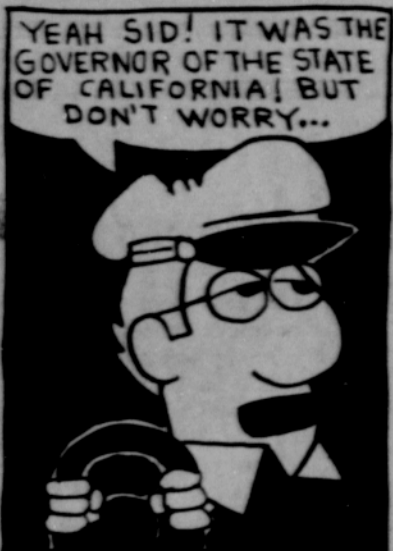
"Many resources are available to the girls", explained Ms. White. The girls selling candy can earn campships (paid fees) to our camps, as well as earning money for their own group. There are also many other sources to help a girl go to summer camp. A lack of money should not keep a girl from joining Camp Fire.

"I really want to talk with people about Camp Fire. If an adult wants to volunteer to help these kids; if a parent or a girl just wants to find out more about Camp Fire, they should call me at 224-7800."

"Meanwhile," urges Ms. White, "when a Camp Fire girl comes to your door, buy a box of candy. It really tastes good... and it's helping a lot of kids."

Notice

Sportsman Little League will begin its fund drive selling dinners Saturday from noon until 10 p.m. The dinners, including Gumbo for \$2.50, will be available at Immaculate Heart Church on Williams and Stanton.



Job outlook

(Continued from page 1 col. 2)

other job seekers. Over half the employers said they would give preference to college trained applicants and that they would hire them for jobs previously held by workers with less education.

Bill Stevenson, Commissioner of Labor, cautioned against assuming that a college degree would ensure employment. "People with vocational and technical training will continue to find employment opportunities. Our study revealed that work attitude and motivation was considered the most important job qualification."

Peyton Award

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a Prince Hall Mason; a member of Phi Beta Sigma fraternity. He is a former board member of the North Branch YMCA and the Albina Ministerial Alliance.

Awards include those from the U. S. Naval Recruiting Command (district and national), Albina Women's League, Al-

bina Lion's Club, Black Cultural Affairs Board of PSU, Portland Metropolitan Steering Committee. He was Alumni of the Year, 1974, of Paul Quinn College.

Henderson is currently pastor of St. Paul African Methodist Church in Berkeley, California. He is the father of two daughters, Cheri and Roslyn.

Babe Wilson

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as he walked toward the interviewing room he was attacked by McDade and after he was forced to the floor McDade held the balloon of heroin in front of his face. Another officer said to him, "We knew we would find a way to get you. You can fool the social workers but not us."

In his opening statement Wilson's attorney, Des Connell, pointed out that anyone entering the jail is liable to be searched at any time and that Wilson's familiarity with the police system and the drug traffic would have prevented his taking such a risk.

Persons wishing to contribute time or money to the Babe Wilson Defense Fund can call 283-2487.



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