



We see the world
through Black eyes

Get out of Africa

The United States is becoming more actively involved in the civil war in Zaire, a move that is both unwise and unjustified.

It is easy to use the rationalization that the Cubans and the Soviet Union are assisting or encouraging the rebels who are attempting to regain Shaba province. But to understand the conflict we must look back and see the CIA involvement not only in the formation of Zaire from the Belgian Congo, but in Zaire's involvement in Angola's war of liberation.

When the Belgians left the Congo, Zaire was set up as a puppet government still under the economical control of the Europeans. It also formed a convenient base of operations for the CIA in its involvements in Africa. During Angola's war of liberation, the CIA used Zaire as a staging area for U.S. provided supplies and for troops who fought against the Neto forces who first attempted to gain freedom from Belgian control and then to set up a new government. Only recently it was revealed that the millions of dollars given to Mobutu by the CIA to pass on to South African and mercenary troops were stolen by him and used for his personal gain.

If there is evidence of Soviet involvement, we must ask if U.S. actions on behalf of the colonial powers and of African's that were willing to be controlled has alienated the African liberators and caused them to turn to the Soviet Union for help.

In this endeavor the U.S. joined with South Africa and the Peoples Republic of China. Direct U.S. involvement in this internal struggle brought in the Cubans on behalf of Neto, who finally won and now is the leader of Angola.

According to U.S. news reports it is Neto, with possible assistance from Cuba and the Soviet Union, who is sending troops into Zaire (the nation that assisted his opponents) to liberate Shaba Province from Zairian control.

Now the American government still finds itself supporting Zairian leader Mobutu Sese Seko who came to power following the murder of Patrice Lumumba. Mobutu has been a notoriously evil leader, practicing terror against his political opposition as well as using the nation's mineral resources to fatten his own pockets while the people suffer in poverty.

Yet the U.S. continues to support Mobutu. The European troops sent to Zaire in response to the highly publicized murder of European residents of Zaire were really there to protect the Mobutu

government -- for two reasons. First the U.S. government still has great paranoia about socialism or communism and sees the efforts of Africans to be free of tyranny as Soviet intrusion.

Second, there are many mineral resources that are needed by this country and by Europe and the U.S. cannot believe that an African nation that is free -- that is not completely dominated economically and politically by Europe or the U.S. -- would deal fairly and effectively in the world market.

Perhaps it is best that the U.S. is becoming more openly involved in the African civil war. CIA activity can be hidden but when Americans begin to die in Africa the president and the people will see our long involvement in the internal affairs of African natives for what it is -- a racist effort to dominate the continent of Africa in our own economic interests -- and withdraw before another immoral and illegal war tears this nation apart.

Think before you sign

The people of California have overwhelmingly passed the Jarvis-Gann bill which restricts the property tax, cutting the funds available to local governments by about 60 percent -- or 87 percent of budgets other than police and fire services.

This restriction will devastate local governments but those most effected will be those who need city and county service -- the poor, the elderly, school children, youth, etc. The massive lay-offs will include large numbers of minorities who lack seniority.

Since many services such as education, emergency health care, sanitary services are required and their absence can lead only to havoc -- the only answer will be to eventually find funding for these and other services through other taxes -- income and sales taxes.

Then, instead of the corporations with large landholdings -- utilities, timber interests, agribusiness, etc. -- the tax burden will lie directly on the back of the low and middle income worker.

Currently a petition that would place a similar measure on the Oregon ballot is being circulated. Think beyond your own property tax bill before you sign that petition!



On Africa: We must stand together

by Herb L. Cawthorne

I believe this, that if we migrated back to Africa culturally, philosophically and psychologically, while remaining here physically, the spiritual bond that would develop between us and Africa through this cultural, philosophical and psychological migration, so-called migration, would enhance our position here, because we would have our contacts with them acting as roots or foundations behind us . . .

Malcolm X
December 12, 1964

I can remember when the American educational system had ingrained deeply into my thought the idea that Africa was a terrible place, full of wild and vicious human animals, cannibals, and savages. I learned, as a young child, and in the most subtle of ways, that the Motherland from which my ancestors came was primitive in the worse sense of the word.

But that was back in those days. The thinking is different today.

Thanks to Malcolm X and others, the image today of Africa is not one of shame, but of pride and hope and strength. And from the imprisonment of self-hatred, Black people have emerged. We are proud of ourselves and of Africa. We have learned her achievements. We have studied her wealth. And we know our roots.

Today, perhaps more than at any other time in American history, the darker race in this land must maintain an uncompromising interest in Africa. The battleground of the next century is on her soil. The American Black man is automatically thrust into the forefront of that battle; and it is leadership we should welcome.

Otherwise, white Americans will define the struggle in Africa for us. They have no hesitation in doing so. One need

only read, almost daily, the narrow-minded editorials in the Oregonian. One need only take note of President Carter's near hysterical pronouncements on Africa; after centuries of colonialism, robbery and plunder -- now the President of the United States worries about the future of Africa!

In the struggle for Africa, Black America must stand together as one voice. W.E.B. DuBois noted that, if Western influence brought any advantage of African society, it was the advantage of modern education. The meaning of modern education as it might be applied to Africa can be best understood by Black Americans. We have lived with a Western shell and an African soul. We can help the African learn the benefits of modern technology, while the African teaches us the century-old tradition of living in harmony with our brothers and sisters.

Here and now, we can act positively to support Africa in the long journey out of exploitation and imperialistic influence. Like the powerful influence of the Jewish community on Israeli affairs, the Black community in America can provide much to assist in the transformation of Africa.

African History. Insist that children in school learn their African history; and where schools are not capable of teaching it, look for other ways for them to learn it. It is sad to hear Black Americans say, "My child is American, I want him to do well in the American system; I don't want to teach him about Africa, I want to teach him about America." Our history has shown our remarkable ability to do both. Insist on it.

African Liberation. True, we are struggling for better jobs, better housing, better education, better health, and better opportunity here. But that should not make us uninterested in joining

forces to express our support, and devote our energies to the liberation of Africa. The reluctance to do so is an attitude held over from the divisive slave system and its divisive aftermath. African liberation is spelled the same as the liberation of Black Americans.

Self-Development. Every chance you get, buy a book or a map or a sculpture from Africa. Take time to attend lectures on African issues. There are frequent discussions held from time to time throughout the city. If none fit your schedule, coordinate your civic club or social group or church organization and schedule your own session. Take your children to movies, plays, and dances which depict the African spirit and culture.

Letters and Lobbying. Remember when Charles Jordan introduced a resolution discouraging the sale of the notorious South African Krugerrand? Remember the reaction (or shall I say, overreaction) in the local press? During the entire controversy, few Black people took time to send letters to the paper or to Mr. Jordan. We can have a direct influence on who thinks what in this society, if we will exert pressure through our letters, through our discussions, and through our personal contacts.

Again the words of Malcolm X: "And this is what I mean by a migration or going back to Africa -- going back in the sense that we reach out to them and they reach out to us. Our mutual understanding and our mutual effort toward a mutual objective will bring mutual benefits to the African as well as to the Afro-American."

(Herb Cawthorne is director of the Educational Opportunity Program at Portland State University.)

Through the Eyes of Mr. W. . . .

by Harold C. Williams

What is the reason for the small population of Blacks in the State of Oregon?

Calvin Henry gave his views as to the reasons he thought the population of Blacks was small in a position paper in April, 1973.

In search for better understanding of Black history in the State of Oregon, I think it is important that Calvin Henry's views be stated again for 1978 -- for your information.

Historically, Oregon has been a state that has had a low population with respect to ethnic minority groups, because it was legal to keep the population low. This dates back to the early statehood of Oregon, whereby Oregon

Constitution limited the number of Blacks in Oregon. "No free Negro or mulatto, not residing in this state at the time of the adoption of this constitution, shall come, reside, or be within this State, or hold any real estate, or make any contracts, or maintain any suit therein; and the Legislative Assembly shall provide by penal laws, for the removal, by public officers, of all such Negroes, and mulattoes, and for their effectual exclusion from the State, and for the punishment of persons who shall bring them into the State, or employ, or harbor them." Although this was repealed by the people November 2, 1926, a legal footing had been thoroughly ingrained in the white people of Oregon to accept economic and political discrimination against Black people. Sundown laws and

city codes which barred Blacks from living within the corporate limit became quite prevalent, some even exist today. Within our area of concern, it's apparent that many businesses or industries failed to hire Blacks based upon these legal deprivations of the past.

The influx of Blacks into Oregon during World War II was limited to Portland where they were able to find work. Not being successful in finding employment and suitable accommodations in other parts of Oregon, that Blacks remained lived in Portland, leaving sprinkles or pockets of Blacks elsewhere. It is true here in the Willamette Valley that there are very few Blacks and other minorities but conditions of the past have made this so. Reviewing the 1970 U.S. Census, we can see how true this has been and still is.

Letters to the Editor

Equal, not better

To the Editor:

In reading your non-endorsement of my candidacy for the U.S. Senate I was reminded of Ibsen's play "The Enemy of the People." The main character was a public health physician who devoted his life to improving the quality of life for his fellow men and women. He was highly honored in his community until he committed the unforgivable sin. He discovered and publicized the fact that the local health springs, the principal industry of his town, were polluted by a mill upstream. For this service he was ostracized and declared to be "the enemy of the people."

Since childhood I have believed in and espoused equal rights and equal opportunity for all, without respect to race, color, creed, sex or national origin. I sat at the knee of my grandmother and father and heard proudly the stories of my great grandfathers, Cook and Giles serving in the Union Army which freed the slaves. I remember spirited discussions on the subject in high school and college in which I defended equal rights. I practiced my beliefs in my personal life.

In the legislature, while one or two civil rights measures had been passed, before my election in 1956, most of Oregon's civil rights legislation was passed after my election and with my strong support. As a result of this activity I was labeled as an ultra liberal or radical.

Since that time I have supported legislation to allow the eighteen year old vote, ERA, and legislation to prohibit discrimination based upon age. I do now and I always have opposed discrimination against the poor and the unfortunate. I support equal opportunity for all regardless of a person's race, color, creed, sex, parents or national origin.

So where does that leave us? I support affirmative action as it affects individuals who have been unfairly discriminated against. If a person has been denied employment, promotion, schooling or business opportunities because of his or her sex, age or inherited physical characteris-

tics then I believe that wrong should be immediately and effectively remedied by all available means.

On the other hand I believe it is wrong to favor a person because of race, color, sex, age, creed or national origin, even if that person is a 65 year old, Black Jewish woman from Mexico. It is wrong to favor the admission of a Black woman to medical school while denying admission to a more qualified white man and just as wrong as it would be to prefer a white man over a more qualified Black woman.

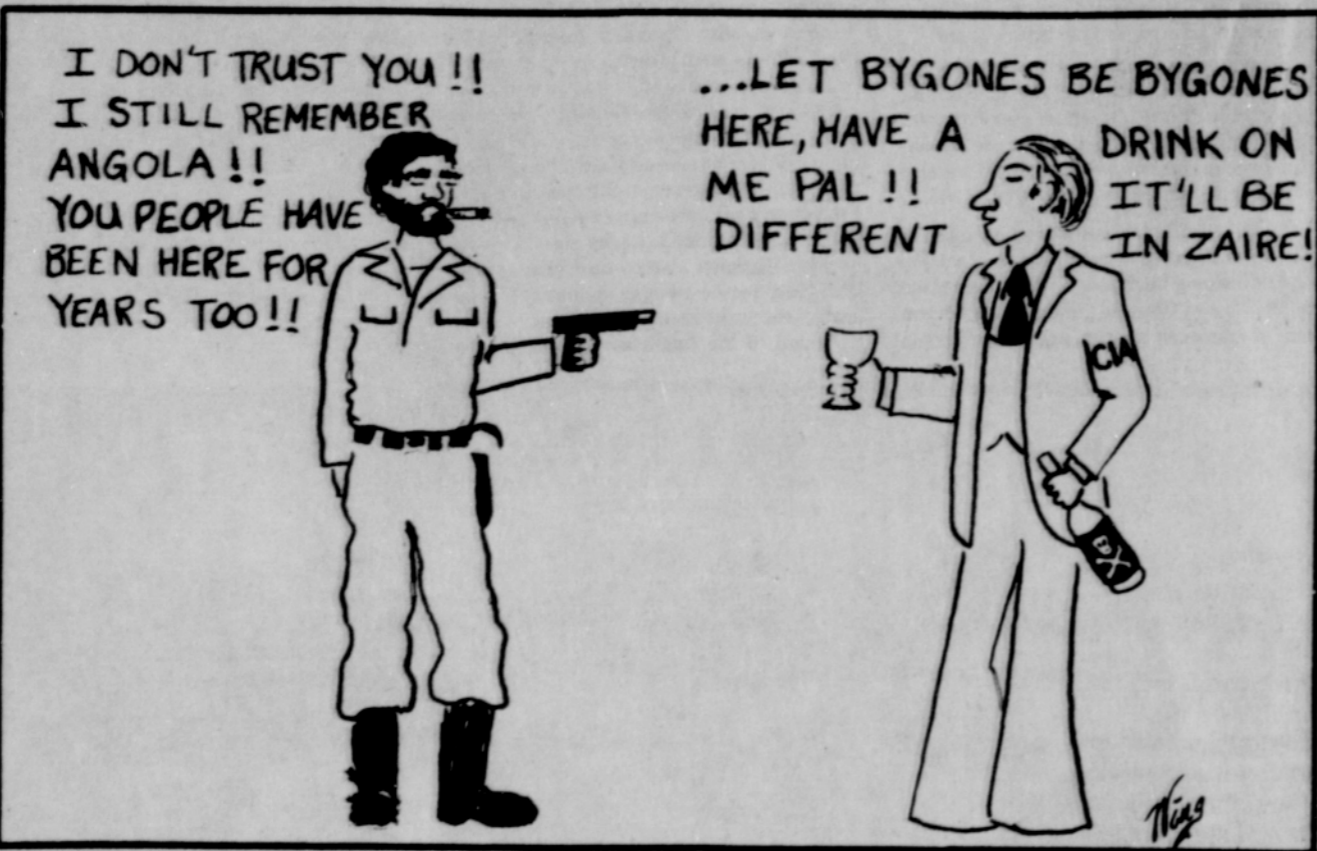
While some religious sects adhere to the doctrine of original sin, in America we rejected the doctrine that "the sins of our fathers should be visited upon their children." The "taint of blood" was specifically rejected in the U.S. Constitution. No person should be favored because of the physical or sexual category he or she was born to, even though in years gone by, persons of that category may have been disfavored because of being members of that category. Such discrimination is wrong both logically and morally. The fact that I am a white protestant male anglo saxon does not mean that any of my ancestors had anything to do with the degradation of

Blacks, women or Indians in the past. Even if I had such ancestors, to punish me for their sins would be both un-Christian and immoral.

I believe that programs described as "Affirmative Action" programs which favor persons of one category over another are wrong -- even if the one favored is a member of a minority. To believe otherwise is a contradiction to both our democratic heritage and our equalitarian ideals.

So, like the physician in Ibsen's play, I am criticized because I refuse to favor a group or an individual because of race. So, is discrimination O.K. if it favors Blacks and Indians but immoral if it favors whites and non-Indians? Lets stop discrimination based upon accidents of birth. One's success or failure should be the result of one's individual qualities. If one is disfavored because of economic circumstances, lets help all who are similarly circumstanced, regardless of birth category. We should have one nation with one standard for freedom and opportunity.

Sincerely,
Vern Cook
State Senator



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