

EDITORIAL/OPINION



Tribalism and Racism rife in Britain

by N. Fungai Kumbula

Bigger and better jails

This week the Oregon Legislature is meeting in Salem to slice \$204 million or more from the State budget -- most of it out of education and human services.

At the same time, the same Legislature is voting to put a \$84 million bond issue on the November ballot for construction and renovation of prison facilities -- to make more room for prisoners.

The prison fund is a result of the recent decision by U.S. District Court Judge James Burns that prison overcrowding is a denial of the prisoners' constitutional rights.

Rather than find alternates to prison for non-violent offenders -- such as persons who drive with suspended drivers licenses -- or establish drug and alcohol program for those who are confined because of those problems, Governor Victor Atiyeh recommend spending \$120 million for new prisons.

The state is losing an opportunity to deal with the causes of crime and to demonstrate new methods of rehabilitation in favor of warehousing more prisoners then releasing them back to the same environment unprepared to survive without returning to crime.

The accompanying cuts in human services and education will hurry the cycle along and insure that the new prisons will be kept full.

Try skilled trades, too

A shortage of skilled workers has plagued the U.S. for a long time and this shortage is aggravated by the myth that the U.S. has become the world's first "white collar society" where work will be done by machines and only those in service careers will prosper.

Parents, teachers and counsellors have steered at least a generation of young people away from potentially satisfying and lucrative skilled craft occupations.

Since 1945, the U.S. has had six full cycles of economic contraction and recovery. The 1973-1975 recession was seriously aggravated by inflation and high interest rates, along with real shortages of basic resources. Unemployment reached 10 per cent and inflation was over 10 per cent. The result was a more extreme depression than the U.S. had experienced since the 1930s.

During this period unemployment fell most heavily on the unskilled, the uneducated, Blacks, older workers and youth. Factory workers, miners, and transportation workers had unemployment rates higher than the national average. Workers least vulnerable to unemployment were those who possessed the highest skills and training.

There are a number of vocational training courses in the area's schools and community colleges that lead to apprenticeships or journeyman standing in skilled trades, but there is little effort on the part of the public schools to expose young people to these trades or to give them equal status with the more glamorous academic careers. Many young people who will never complete the many years of college to become doctors, lawyers or psychologists are being steered away from the skilled and lucrative trades that would provide security. There are many young people who would benefit from an opportunity to learn trades -- machinists, mechanics, electronics technicians, instrument makers, tool and die makers, etc.

One item the School Board should consider in the design of the new middle school is an exploration of careers that would expose young people to the wide range of skilled trades as well as academic careers.

The ME - decade

By Gregory L. Guder

Although Thara Memory is generally recognized in Portland as an accomplished musician, composer, arranger and teacher, folks in the Black community have often sampled -- voluntarily or no -- the wit and wisdom of his grass-roots, and somewhat earthy, philosophy.

Once, after having experienced a high spirited rap/repartee between Thara and Charles Tatum -- a culturally proselytic talent in his own right -- I was made a gift of a memorian witticism.

At the risk of losing some of Thara's spirit, consider: "Hollywood is a big mind-trip. What you have to understand is that you can't believe what you see. What's presented to you on TV for example, is really not supposed to be believed, but is presented to you as capsulized reality. But if you accept it as being far from the truth, you've really been psyched out because there's a lot more truth to it than you think."

Okay, Thara.

I've held on to that memorian tidbit for two years, and the significance of it has emerged several times since.

Several weeks ago, for example, a made for T.V. movie featured a rather famous actor portraying an ex-football player-turned private investigator. On top of being a fairly decent gumshoe, our hero came

across as a generally likeable fellow -- more humorously diligent like Columbo than intrepidly relentless like Sam Spade. Though he maintained the seemingly-universal small-and-dingy office, our guy lived in a two-story, ranch-style home in the Bay area with a wife who zipped around in her late model Ford wagon while he drove a modest Chevy on the job. He apparently gets along well with his wife, although her fetish for artsy films seems as esoteric to him as does his penchant for watching pigskin slugfests on Sunday afternoon seems to her.

We soon find out, as does our hero one evening by unfortunate happenstance, that Mrs. P.I. gets very serious about a Fellini or Bergmann theme, and takes in a lover in addition to the show. From a distance, he sadly watched her dump her station wagon on a dark side street in favor of a 450 SL.

"Gee-zus!" he exclaims at the great confrontation, "We seemed to get along fine...lovin, listenin, laughin and all that. I don't stay away from home too much! I may not always agree with you, but I still support you, and your celluloid jones, too!"

"And I appreciate you for that and all that you have done for me," she responds, but I need to find myself...I need to justify being with you."

BULL.....!"

A fictitious domestic crisis, but a malady reflective of the very real

"ME-Decade," the 70s. However, it is realistic local implications, particularly for Portland Public School's new wave of Black administrators.

Portland's Black community has had its share of those who, upon reaching vocational milestone, desert their commitment, culture, their very beings like a selfishly adulterous "Chippie" violates a mate's love in the night.

Although we have yet to see how Adair, Cawthorne, Chavis, Grice and Gerald will wear their new hats, the community has every right to ask: shall they drape their responsibilities loosely and flippantly about their shoulders as if uncertain about the purpose that they serve? Or worse still, shall they forget altogether and stroll, bare-bottomed and unconcerned, like the fabled emperor whose "new clothes" were envied in his own mind, and ridiculed by those who control it?

Several of the new Black administrators have shown more positive signs but I dare not assume that they will fully embrace their responsibilities to the District as a whole and, most importantly, to the 8,000 or so Black students who have yet to get a fair shake from this system. I am however optimistic that they will not forget who they are, who they are to serve and to whom they owe the often forgotten privilege: the Black community.

I'm sure Thara will have something to say about you -- one way or the other.



Notes from City Hall

By Charles Jordan
Commissioner of Public Safety

Earlier, we discussed seizure and storage of your property after an arrest by an officer as well as domestic violence and the use of restraining orders in maintaining peace in family affairs.

However, we did not discuss those domestic disturbances that result from heated arguments where a weapon is present on the premises and how that situation can be handled by an officer.

"You and your spouse or child

are having a disagreement that ends in a violent confrontation and the police are called in to help."

"With tempers flaring, one of you mentions that a gun or other weapon is on the premises and that you are afraid."

The police officer can seize the weapon for safekeeping, if the officer feels it is in the best interest of all involved that the weapon is not within reach of anyone until anger subsides. You will be given a receipt

for that property.

The officer will take the weapon to the police station's property room and hold it for a period not to exceed 30 days. At any time, you may claim the weapon by presenting your receipt and your property will be returned to you. Such property is subject to a storage charge of 50¢ per day.

At the end of 90 days, weapons taken for safekeeping which are not claimed will be destroyed.

OSPIRG opposes Northwest Power Bill

To the Editor:

A few years ago, Oregon's utilities used the slogan, "It puts you in debt without your consent," to defeat a ballot measure to simplify the P.U.D. procedures.

Under the Northwest Power Bill, the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), a federal agency, would be authorized to commit Oregon's ratepayers to pay for new power plants whether needed or not. This would include cost overruns, such as the quadrupling

costs in Washington; or "dry holes," plants, such as Three-Mile-Island, that are not operating.

This guaranteed purchase authority removes from private utilities the initiative for prudent planning and careful management. BPA is not capable of assuming this initiative. According to the General Accounting Office: "Bonneville is not adequately prepared to construct or oversee the construction of large generating facilities," and BPA administrator Sterling Munro

has admitted this agency's inability in this area.

OSPIRG believes passage of the Northwest Power Bill will strip Oregon consumers of local control over the rates they pay for electricity. We need more local control, not less, if we are going to control the ever escalating price of energy.

Yours truly,

Wendy Lou Manley

Rena Taylor

OSPIRG Vice-Chairpersons

Who controls the police?

Often immorality struts around masked as morality, especially the poor and large segments of the minority communities around this nation, the police are viewed as oppressive and disruptive forces of control to be avoided at all costs. Since one of the most visible forms of control is exhibited through the police, we could expect those gaining privileges from the results of police activity to respond favorably toward such an institution.

Many of us have been treated as outsiders or intruders in our own land. To many of us the police function to maintain the status quo and this translates to Caucasoid privilege.

Sooner or later we get around to asking the key question of "Who controls the police who are charged with controlling the dangerous classes?" In Amerika this has been an elusive question to answer. We have continually found ways to compromise the need for popular control of the police with the need for an operation that functions "independent" of political conflict

over control, we continually hear or read of police payoff, bought policemen, and other forms of corruption. The police departments of cities like New York, Chicago and San Francisco have been notorious for the corruption within them. The Knapp Commission is just one example of the story of police corruption.

In both, the order maintenance and the legalistic approach police find themselves in the position of using a great deal of "discretion," especially when dealing with Blacks, other minorities, and the poor.

I'm inclined to believe, unchecked police "discretion" is a matter of serious concern to Blacks given the high rates of racial prejudice amongst Caucasoid police officers. Black and Reiss in their study of Boston, Chicago, and Washington police, point out that the great majority of Caucasoid officers hold anti-Black attitudes. Caucasoid officers, thinking the very worst of Blacks they encounter, are in a position to use their discretionary powers to the disadvan-

tage of Blacks.

The Amerikan Friends Service Committee, in its report on crime and punishment in Amerika makes the following observation: "The justice system functions to maintain a racist relationship between the Caucasoid majority and the Black, Brown, Red, and Yellow minorities in Amerika." The command-obedience structure of racism has existed in the criminal justice system since the settlement of the country.

Under the guise of keeping police safe from political pressure, the civil service system and the unionization process have given the police amazing political power. This, along with a belief that the police can prevent crime, has elevated them to a favorable position in the eyes of the general public.

Until major institutions become people-oriented instead of profit-oriented, inclusion of Blacks in police work, can at best only be considered tokenism.

Respectfully,
Dr. Jamil Cherovee
Field Director, (CORE)



ALFRED L. HENDERSON
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