



Norman Hill, national executive director of the A. Phillip Randolph Institute, spoke to the local chapter's first banquet. Hill discusses unionism with Gloria Johnson, national intern for APRI and member of the Communication Workers of America local; Red Byers of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers; and Bob Boyer, president of the Portland chapter APRI.

(Photos: Richard J. Brown)



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## Education American style

By Tafadzwa Chibanguza

I arrived in Portland on the 5th of September in the year of our Lord 1977. It was a hot day, in actual fact, it had been a hot summer. When I left Africa in August it was freezing.

I was met by the Reverend of the Church that had generously sponsored me the last three years of my college education. With him were four other young people from the church. They were such a cute group.

The minister and I left for his house in his VW station wagon. We did not talk for a while. I was just admiring Portland's countryside. Then he said, "Have you ever tried marijuana?" I just looked up at him and didn't say anything.

Then he said, "anyway, when you get to college you will find out what it's all about. I don't think it's a bad drug at all. People are just making a fuss about it." I listened as he talked and when he had finished I said, "that's interesting." It was the first time I ever heard a priest express his love for a drug.

We arrived at his blue painted ranch-style home in Troutdale. His wife came running to meet us as soon as she heard the car pull into the driveway. "Hi Tafadzwa, it's nice to meet you," she said. "Thank you, it's nice to meet you too," I responded.

She grabbed me by the hand and dragged me into the kitchen. "I want to show you something." She opened the refrigerator door and said, "this is an automatic icemaker, have you ever seen one before?"

School began exactly on the 14th of September. I was going to be a freshman in College. Big Deal. The name of my school is Lewis and Clark College.

I was showed to my room which was nice but I had to share it with three other people. I was the first

one to get into the room, so I made myself comfortable after I had unpacked my earthly belongings.

After a few hours somebody really big entered the room. This person was to be one of my roommates. We greeted each other like normal people do. Then he asked me if I wanted to go to a party and meet people, especially the "chicks." I remember the expression on his face when he said, "chicks." I agreed to go.

The party was being held in one of the dorms and it was packed. It amazed me how so many people can get thirsty at the same time. A beautiful blonde walked up to me and introduced herself (I don't blame her). I introduced myself too.

Then she gasped in amazement, "My God! I have never met anybody from Africa before. Far out. Tell me do you meet lions very often?" "All the time," I said. "I even got one for a pet."

"Where did you get these clothes?" she persisted in wanting to improve her knowledge. This time I wasn't so crazy about her. So I said, "I was given these clothes at JFK airport in New York. I flew all the way from Africa naked!"

The Foreign Student Office at Lewis and Clark likes to have foreign students go out and speak to churches, schools and clubs. They wanted me to speak about my country. At one high school some kid asked me, "Do you really jump from tree to tree as a means of transport?" Another difficult question I was asked at the same school was, "What is Tarzan like?"

I thought if I got out of town maybe I would escape these questions so I visited my sister in Atlanta, Georgia. One day I was sitting with a friend in a bar when somebody came up to us and said, "you guys from Africa?" He heard us speaking in our language called Shona. He grabbed himself a chair and sat down.

Then he said, "you guys eat breakfast down there?" And he was serious when he asked that question but we started to laugh and so did he. "That was kind of silly, huh?" He noticed.

He still wanted to know more about us and so popped this question to me, "What does your father do?" I said, "my father is the head of a school." Then he directed the same question to my friend who told him that his father had died a few years ago. "I am terribly sorry man," he sympathized. "Did he die of natural causes or was he eaten by a lion?"

These were incredible questions I faced in this country. It shows how much uninformed some people are about Africa. Anyway, if you would excuse me, I have to go buy my mother an automatic ice-maker.

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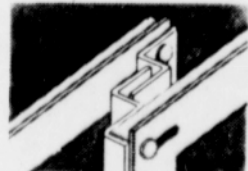
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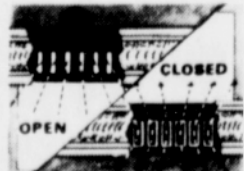
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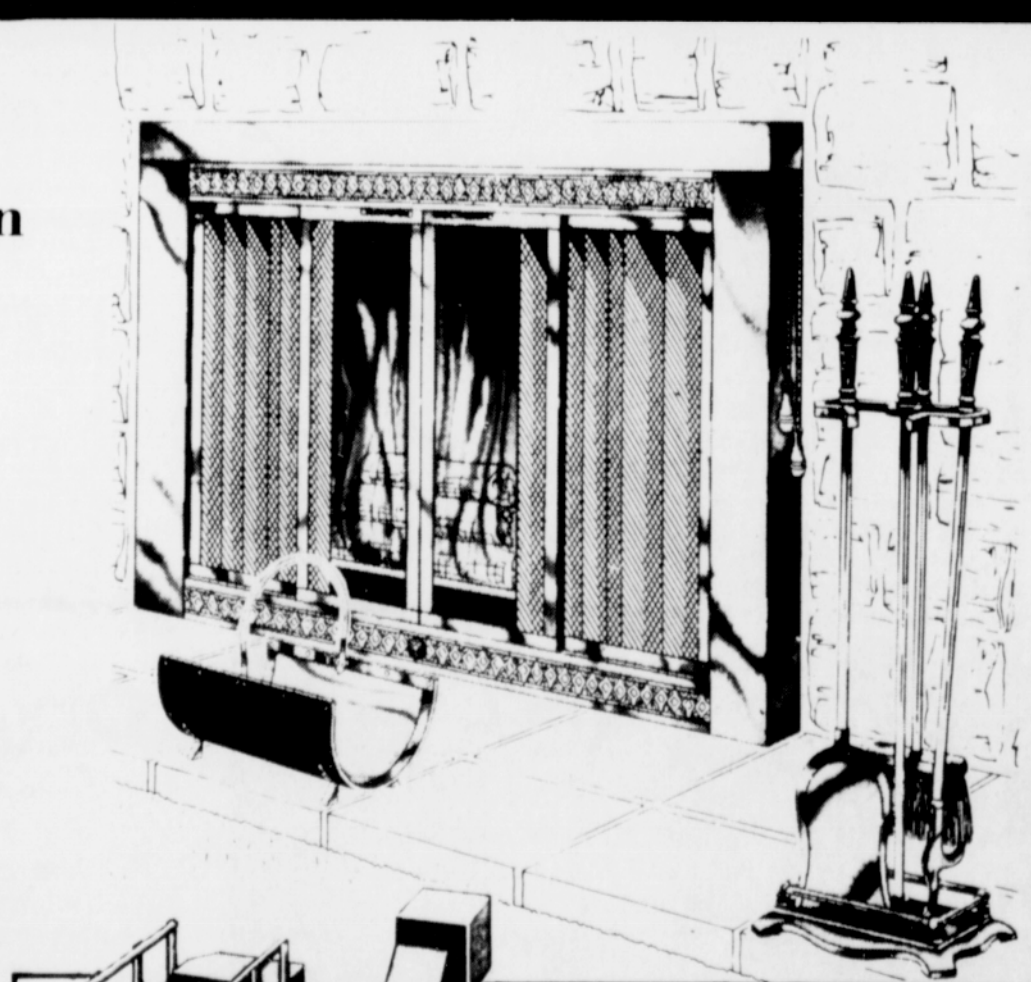


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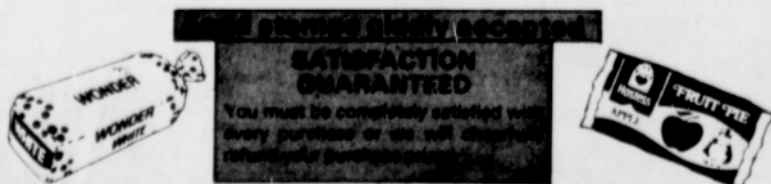
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