

EDITORIAL/OPINION

It must be racism

Is it possible that the five members of the School Board who voted to place Tubman Middle School in the Boise building are right? Is it possible that the Black community, its organizations, and two members of the School Board are wrong?

Could it be that the majority of the School Board are justified in totally ignoring the hopes and desires of Black parents and students? Is there some overriding concern, some important new evidence, that makes the personal desires or vendettas of five School Board members more important than the children they are elected to serve?

It is hard to believe that only two School Board members—Herb Cawthorne and Steve Buel—really care about Black children. And yet it seems to be true.

It is obvious that racism prevailed during the Board's decision-making—that the concern of five Board members was not for the children

who attend Tubman or the children who attend Boise. The overriding concern was for the students of Eliot—46 per cent of whom are white.

The proof of the pudding will be when the Board decides where to send the Boise students. Will they displace other neighborhood children, causing a series of moves and disruptions? Or will they be scattered to the four winds?

The obvious best decision—if Boise is to be used—is to send the Boise students to Beach and Eliot, where many can walk to school.

Then comes question number two. Who will be displaced from Eliot? Not the 46 per cent. The neighborhood children from King, Sabin, etc. who have been recruited in the past to meet the Headstart Followthrough income requirements will be sent back to their neighborhood schools and the interests of the middle class white children will be protected.

Yes. Racism still prevails in the Portland Public Schools.

Why fear citizens' review?

We have long favored a police review board—a board of citizens that would investigate and evaluate complaints against police officers or the Police Bureau. Considering the "esprit de corps" of police officers we consider it unreasonable to expect them to police each other.

The Task Force recommendation to establish a monitoring commission that will be presented to the City Council does not meet the need for citizen oversight and citizen involvement. It has little power or authority. Its appeals would fall on the deaf ears of the Police Commissioner—currently the Mayor. Its only real power would be the ability to publicize adverse decisions and procedures.

What do Mayor Ivancie and Chief Ron Still have to fear from this commission? Their violent opposition is difficult to understand. Perhaps even the smallest insight into the inner workings of the Portland Police Bureau would risk too much exposure.

In light of the continued complaints of racial harassment, brutality, corruption and illegal activities by police officers one must wonder what else there is to hide.

If these problems have really been alleviated—as we are constantly told—the Mayor and the Chief of Police should welcome the prying eyes of a citizen monitoring committee. If not, then they are right to try to keep the doors shut tight.

Stop attack on Nicaragua

CIA operations ordinarily take place in the dark night of secrecy and although suspicions are rampant the truth is hidden from the American people for many years.

The US denied implication in the Bay of Pigs Fiasco and only in recent years has the depth of US involvement been revealed. Only through the writings of former CIA agents have we learned about CIA operations in Angola and in various South American countries. Congressional hearings brought out some of the facts about the murder of Allende and the overthrow of his government in Chili. The Iranians were lucky enough to find the evidence in the embassy they occupied, and Mozambique recently expelled CIA agents plotting against that government.

The list of covert activities against nations and their leaders is long and frightening.

But until now "covert" activities were secret activities.

Now the US is brazen enough to announce its current actions against and within the nation of Nicaragua. The CIA plans to train thousands of mercenaries to invade Nicaragua. It also plans destruction of roads, bridges and other vital sites to destroy the economy and the government.

Nicaragua is a small, poor country that was in the hands of a US selected dictator for many years. Only 2½ years ago the people were able to gain their freedom after a long and devastating struggle. These two years have been spent in rebuilding the country, educating the people, providing previously unknown health care, etc.

But for the last year — since Reagan took office — Nicaragua has been under constant threat of attack and economic boycott from the US. It has had to defer its own social and economic needs to arm its people against the very real threat of a US invasion.

Now that invasion, either by US troops, or by US supported and trained troops, is imminent.

For many years the American people have sit back and allowed our government to do what it wishes to the people of the world. Will the American people again sit back and allow this bold attack to continue?

We are, after all, responsible for the actions of OUR government. It is time for the people of this country to take a stand against murder and terror perpetrated by OUR government.



Black Capitalism: Profile in Poverty

by Manning Marable

Disillusionment with Reaganomics has inspired a revival of a variety of Black strategies for economic survival in the 1980s. Many Black commentators, including Tony Brown, argue that Reagan is actually helping Black people by pulling the federal government's social service "security blanket" out from under their feet. Blacks have sufficient resources to develop and sustain their own viable Black Capitalist economic program. Unfortunately, the neoconservative Black polyannas are long on rhetoric but short on facts. A detailed analysis of the data on Black-owned businesses in the U.S. illustrates the affluence of some, and a profile of poverty for the many.

Census research on Black-owned businesses also indicates a profound pattern of concentrated wealth and power in the hands of a relatively small number of Black businessmen. Only 164,177 workers (mostly Blacks) found employment in the 39,968 Black firms which hired personnel in 1977. Within this figure, however, 32,581 businesses (81.5 per cent of firms hiring workers) employed between one to four persons during the year. These firms hired an average workforce of 1.45 employees, paid average annual gross payrolls of \$9,695, and recorded average gross receipts totaling \$68,831. Moving up the employment scale, a different picture emerges. Only 230 Black firms in the U.S. in 1977 hired between 50 to 99 employees. This group retained an average workforce of 67.6 employees, had average annual gross payrolls of \$540,035, and average yearly gross profits of \$2,357,909.

At the pinnacle of Black Capitalism were the 113 U.S. Black firms which employed 100 or more workers in 1977. This tiny elite is part of the dominant U.S. corporate estab-

lishment. With an average workforce of 247.5 employees, these firms met average annual payrolls of \$1,960,221.

Average annual gross receipts for the elite in 1977 were \$8,952,469. Throughout the U.S., there were 1,060 Black-owned corporations and partnerships that hired 20 or more employees. This small fraction of all Black entrepreneurs was only one-half of one per cent (00.46) of all Blacks engaged in private enterprise. These 1060 affluent Black firms had gross receipts which totalled \$2,467,958,000, 38.6 per cent of all gross receipts acquired by Black firms with employees, and 28.5 per cent of the gross receipts received by all Black-owned businesses.

Only a few enterprises earn the vast majority of profits. 103 manufacturing firms out of a total of 4243 received 67.3 per cent of all gross receipts in that sector, and employed 52.8 per cent of all employees. In wholesale trade, 5 per cent of the firms had 75.3 per cent of all receipts and 58.3 per cent of all paid workers. In finance, real estate and insurance, 90 firms (0.9 per cent of the total number) earned 69.2 per cent of all gross receipts and had 77.1 per cent of all employees.

Black Capitalism in the 1980s, must be subdivided into three distinct constituencies—the "proletarian periphery"; the intermediate Black small entrepreneurs; and the Black corporate core. Over four-fifths of all U.S. firms, 82.7 per cent, belong to the proletarian periphery. These 191,235 enterprises have several common characteristics: 1) almost all are sole proprietorships, unincorporated firms owned by a single Black individual; 2) most are started by Black blue collar or marginally white collar employees; 3) the firms are undercapitalized from the outset, and owners

are forced to subsidize business activities by drawing upon personal savings, loans from friends and relatives, and by allocating a portion of their salaries at their other place of employment; 4) all of these firms have no paid employees; 5) the vast majority are concentrated in two traditional sectors of the segregated Black economy, human services and retail trade; 6) at least 75 per cent become bankrupt within three years; and 7) their average annual gross receipts vary between \$3,000 to \$15,000. Economically and politically, these Blacks are essentially workers who are attempting to become successful businesspersons.

These small entrepreneurs uniformly pay higher rates for insurance, since majority-Black communities are defined as "high risk" areas. They are exploited by banks which "redline" Black districts, making entire communities ineligible to receive loans at reasonable rates. Smaller retailers with low sales volumes and a small number of items for sale must charge higher retail prices for goods or services than larger white-owned companies. McDonalds and Kentucky Fried Chicken, for instance, can sell their fast foods at nominally lower prices than the Black "mom-and-pop" chicken establishment, because of higher sales volume. Human service-oriented firms started by Blacks who possess personal skills (hairdressers, cooks, barbers, caterers, etc.) can be established with little capital, but they are also very vulnerable to recessions. Black workers and the unemployed have precious little discretionary income.

At every periodic downturn in the economy, Black lower and middle income families cut back on their spending for services and goods. As a result, in both 1973-75 and 1980, tens of thousands of Black businesses failed. Unfortunately, thousands more will fail this year.

Oregon's next Governor

From page 1

Social programs are a high priority to Clark and during extreme budget cuts he has attempted to keep the county closely involved in health and social programs. He conceived and implemented Project Health, a program that has become a national model. The County pays all or a portion of the fee for private health insurance, enabling low-income persons to receive "mainstream" health care.

One of his goals for the state is a state health-care program. "It will be years before there is a national health insurance program and Oregon cannot afford to wait." Many persons do not seek needed health care because of their lack of money.

With the community-based public health center, quadrant offices, juvenile diversion programs, etc., he has tried to make social programs available and convenient.

Affirmative action also is a top priority. "I believe government should take the lead and set the example. Governor Atiyeh has said it can't be done through force, but I believe it can. I have made my managers responsible for affirmative action and have made it clear what I expect." Clark said the County's

workforce has a better representation of minorities than any government in the state. "The employees are representative of minorities, women and socio-economic group." This concern carries over to appointments to committees and boards: "I ensure that committees include minorities, women, and geographic areas of the county."

When it became necessary for the County to lay off employees Clark established Project SAVE, which found other county jobs for all who wanted them. "The saying—last hired, first fired—is unfortunately true, so this program was especially important for minorities." It should be used on the state level, Clark added.

Regarding the recent special legislative session to deal with the state's budget deficit, Clark said although the legislature came out looking bad much of the problem stemmed from lack of leadership by the Governor. "I believe he knew the legislature could not accept his proposal with its deep cuts in agency budgets and in higher education. In my opinion he was attempting to regain his conservative base of support—proposing cuts in social programs even though he knew it wasn't realistic." As for the gover-

nor's style of leadership: "If I were governor I would have met with the Senate and House leadership from both parties, laid out the problem and said, 'Let's work out a program together.' Then that program would have had broad support. Instead, he kept his plan secret and it had no support."

Clark also faulted the governor for his efforts to cut social programs and education. "You do not cut programs for the poor and unemployed during a time of high unemployment, when they are needed most. And making cuts in higher education and the community colleges will just force more people out of school and onto the job market where there are no jobs."

Clark believes the people of Oregon must pause and look at the future—the type of lifestyle that will be in vogue ten or twenty years from now. Many jobs will be done by computer or robot; the type of work needed will be different. What type of education and training is needed for life in that kind of world? What will happen to people in the nation—whose entire self-image and self-esteem are based on their work—when many will be without jobs? What can the state do now to prepare for that time?

Letters to the Editor

Praises to Dr. Williams

To the editor:

Rev. and Sister O.B. Williams, pastor and wife of Vancouver Ave. 1st Baptist Church will be celebrating their Thirty-seventh Anniversary in this role.

I am writing this as a tribute for a job well done.

I have been a member of Van-

couver for over thirty-one years.

I have learned a lot from these God-sent people; and have been able to build a moral and a religious foundation, that I am proud of.

From my parents and Rev. O.B.'s teaching, God has been made real, and a deep love for Christ has been instilled.

The Reverend still exemplifies the

same meekness, humility, and obedient to God that he did over thirty-four years ago when I first heard him preach.

Reverend, the quality that God gave you is a rare one, and by your possessing this you have been able to pass it on to some of us, not only in our church, but in the whole city and the nation.

I am proud to be a member of Vancouver.

Matthew Chapter 5 says it all about you, especially verses 5 and 12: "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. Rejoice and be exceeding glad for great is your reward in heaven."

Vesia Loving

Correction

Our apologies to Dr. Webster Brown for misspelling his alma mater, Meharry Medical School. And to Mark Davis and Mark Gardner for confusing the two.

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