



Please, no tears

by Herb L. Cawthorne

It was a sad scene. In the midst of the gathering for the 12th Annual Congressional Black Caucus' Legislative Weekend prayer breakfast, Andrew Young asked the leaders to cry. He asked them to cry in "confessing a sense of hopelessness and helplessness," according to the *Washington Post*. Twenty years of progress down the drain! and the answer: Tears!

Speak in on this "sad scene," Tony Brown of *Black Journal* said, "tears" do not produce an agenda nor a solution. Tears, while soothing for a short time, do not make a platform, or a movement, or lead to action.

Here in our community, there is no sense in shedding tears over the loss of our chance to gain representation in the Oregon House of Representatives. And, frankly, that's about all I'm hearing. Crying about too many candidates. Crying about who ran and who didn't. Crying about "Johnny-come-latelies." But tears will never make a program or a movement. Tears will not produce action. What leads to action is an honest analysis and a firm resolve never to repeat the same mistakes again.

The inexperience and lack of vision among blacks in Portland showed its narrow-minded head early in the reapportionment process in the 1980 Legislature. Some wanted the black community split

into multiple districts, with smaller percentages spread across three or four districts. Others wanted a single district including all of the black community. The positions hardened immediately—no room for compromise, no room for discussion, no room for cohesion.

The multiple district folks were Uncle Toms; the single district supporters were, to the other side, phony and unrealistic nationalist; and, to both sides, the undecided were merely marking time to take care of their own personal political fortunes. The seeds of division which characterized the campaigns were foretold by the divisions during the reapportionment process.

The reapportionment process was complete. We had our district—44 percent black. All we had to do was organize to win.

The problem was that there was no collective thinking, involving a broad base of the community, on what criteria were needed to ensure victory. One group thought "blackness" was the only criterion. This superceded campaign organization, financing, political skill, knowledge and energy. Another group thought "friendship" was the criterion, even if that "friend" was destined to lose. Still others thought "desire" was the best measure. This meant that anybody who wanted to run should run. After all, it's a free

country! Still other probably didn't even try to make any judgements, but simply said, "I'm voting for the one who goes to my church."

In other words, the leadership of the black community failed to protect and expand the interests of the people in the community. For ultimately very costly reasons, we would not think big enough to focus on the long-range improvement of black political power in Oregon. Instead, we thought small.

When a host of candidates came forward, black leadership should have gotten together, developed criteria, analyzed the relative strengths of candidates and potential candidates, and then chosen sides. The choice would have then been based on an understanding of the Legislature, projections on where the state is going, and what skills and knowledge could best protect our interests and advance State government in these times.

It would have been difficult. It may have caused some bad feelings for a temporary period of time. But the black press, blacks in key positions, community-minded individuals, and candidates themselves could have argued and argued behind closed doors. There could have been proposals, counterproposals and bartering, until the slate was limited to a manageable number. But, no, we had to take rigid stances. We wanted, in our own

separate perceptions, the "perfect" black. There was no such candidate. But almost every one of those running was better than Ed Leek, who ultimately won. When it comes to keeping the black community in place, who needs a better mouse trap? Divide and conquer works so well!

No tears! We blew the opportunity. But all is not lost. Beginning shortly after the new session of the Legislature is called to order, we should start planning for the next election in 1984. A committee of people, representing a broad base of the community—Republicans, Democrats, activists, social organizations, office holders, and so on—should pull together both a set of criteria and a process. The criteria can be endorsed by the community after a series of discussions and forums. The process can indicate to prospective candidates what is the baseline of expectation for gaining support. The candidate who gains this support will have the full weight and commitment of the community behind him or her. And that candidate will not lose!

We've shed enough tears. It's behind us now. If we act in the next two years, keeping the big picture in mind, arguing together but staying together, we will enjoy the taste of victory in November, 1984.

What is done is done. Our advantage is the future.



Washington Hot Line

by Congressman Ron Wyden

With the beginning of the lame-duck session only weeks away—and the 98th Congress just slightly further off—the Social Security reform debate has once again assumed headline proportions.

New statistics and new proposals grace the front pages of major newspapers nearly every day. Economists and politicians take advantage of talk and news shows to discuss the issue.

Despite the heightened debate, little if anything is likely to happen during the lame-duck session. The time is simply too short.

But Social Security reform will definitely be a major issue—perhaps the major issue—of the 98th Congress.

That's why I'd like to devote this column to bringing readers up to date on some of the latest proposals:

Social Security Commission: The National Commission on Social Security Reform is expected to vote la-

ter this week on recommendations for resolving the short-range problems of the Social Security System. The recommendations, which were put together by commission staff, are said to call for the government to pursue a combination of the following alternatives: 1) speeding up scheduled increases in Social Security taxes; 2) axing future cost-of-living increases; 3) adding federal and other government employees to the system; and 4) turning to income taxes for financing.

The Self-Employed: Meanwhile, former Social Security Commissioner Robert Ball, a member of the commission, is rumored to be advancing his own reform proposal that would force self-employed individuals to pay the full cost of Social Security coverage (instead of only three-quarters), but with an income-tax offset. Ball's proposal would also require government and nonprofit workers to participate in the

Social Security system, and move the scheduled 1990 Social Security tax increase up to 1984, allowing workers to deduct their Social Security tax from federal income taxes.

IRAs: Also this week, the Heritage Foundation, a conservative research group, suggested that moving to an alternative retirement system may be the best way out. Under the Heritage plan, workers would be allowed to put all or part of their Social Security contributions into expanded Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) offered through banks and other private lending institutions. The Social Security system as we know it would be phased out over time, but benefits of current retirees or workers on the verge of retirement would be guaranteed.

Taxing Benefits: Still another set of Social Security reform proposals has come from the business-backed Employee Benefit Research Insti-

tute. This group suggests that one way to get Social Security back on track would be to tax half the benefits as regular income, then return the resulting revenue to the trust fund. The institute would also speed up scheduled Social Security tax increases, and require participation in the system by federal employees and other groups which do not currently contribute.

Help From Other Funds: House Majority Leader Jim Wright also decided to speak out on Social Security this week, suggesting that the Social Security system be bolstered with revenue from other federal sources. Wright mentioned offshore oil drilling revenues and excise taxes on alcohol as possible sources.

Tax Credits: Rep. Wright also raised the possibility of giving tax credits to people who choose to continue working after age 65. Wright said such a move could save \$25 billion over the next three years.

'Hidden' racism sinks Bradley hopes



THOMAS BRADLEY

Hidden racism and low turnout of minority voters are considered to be the deciding factors in Thomas Bradley's narrow defeat by George Deukmejian. With all precincts counted, Deukmejian led by 51,000 votes out of the 7.5 million cast, the closest gubernatorial race in California this century.

Bradley refused to blame his loss entirely on racism. "I said from the beginning I did not believe race would be a significant factor; I never said it would be no factor," Bradley said. Bradley blamed the high turnout of voters opposing gun control for his defeat.

The "hidden" racist vote was mentioned during the campaign by Deukmejian's campaign manager, Bill Roberts, who predicted race would be an underlying and possibly decisive factor. The remark led to

Roberts being fired.

Pollsters indicate race was a significant factor. Hugh Schwartz, president of Public Response Associates, said his company found the racial factor in the questions it asked. Ten percent of those surveyed said they thought Bradley would do too much for blacks. Another 10 to 15 percent said they did not know. Schwartz assumed that part of the second group declined to answer because they did not want to admit racism—thus the "hidden racism" factor.

The depth of the anti-black feeling confused pollsters because the respondents would not tell the truth. "Essentially the exit poll technology didn't work. The polls, including ours, were based on presumptions which were obviously off."

The exit poll (question of voters leaving the polls) by California Poll

found 4 percent who admitted they voted for Deukmejian because they would not vote for a black. The Field Poll also found 4 percent who did not vote for Bradley because he is black and 1 percent who would not vote for Deukmejian because of his Armenian heritage. Also 9 percent of those who described themselves as liberals but voted for Deukmejian said they did so because of "personal dislike" for Bradley.

Another factor that contributed to Bradley's defeat was the low turnout of black voters, especially in Los Angeles. A San Francisco *Examiner*/KPIX TV sample of 2500 voters found that when blacks did vote they gave 93 percent of their vote to Bradley. Bradley's campaign strategists have been unable to explain why blacks failed to vote in greater numbers to support Bradley.

NAACP begins election processes

The Portland Branch of the NAACP has elected its nominating committee for 1982. They are Clyde White, Gertrude Crowe, Harry Ward, Warren Marple and Sherrian Warren. The Branch Executive Committee is represented by Ward and Sherrian Warren.

Lucious Hicks, two-term President of the Branch, said the biennial election is the time for the membership to express itself. Many

members never attend a meeting, Hicks said, but are quick to criticize that the Branch "never does anything." Anyone who is a member 30 days before the election of the Nominating Committee (October 17) is eligible to serve. Get in touch with one of the members of the Nominating Committee or call the Branch Office from 3 to 5 P.M. in the afternoon to obtain further information or to leave the name of a candidate. The number is 284-7722. If you

cannot get an answer telephone 659-2524.

The Nominating Committee will bring its report to the NAACP regular meeting Sunday, November 21, at 4:00 p.m. at Hughes Memorial Church, 111 N.E. Failing. At that time other nominations by petition will be received. The elections will be held December 12th. Forms for the written petition are available at the NAACP Credit Union Office, 1-5 p.m., 2752 N. Williams Ave.

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Built in the 15th century, the Kremlin in Moscow has walls 12 feet thick and 65 feet in height.

The first indoor ice skating rink was built by Thomas L. Rankin at Madison Square Garden, New York City in 1879. It had 6,000 square feet of surface.

Tris Speaker, the great American baseball player, was known as the "Gray Eagle" because of his gray hair and his speed in playing the outfield.

The first two books printed in Puerto Rico, in the year 1806, were two volumes of verse by the Spanish poet Juan Rodriguez Calderon.

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