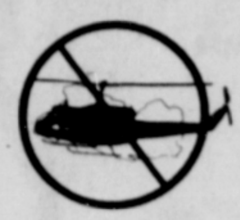
Black History Special

Non-violence no option?

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Brame publishes black records

Herman L. Brame is preparing to publish the fourth edition of his book, *World Records of Black People* this fall. The book lists accomplishments of black people—those of African background—in many areas including science, technology, literature, sports, politics, government.

Brame began collecting data about black people as a hobby, and finding that no book of "lists" existed, he "finally got the nerve to put it on paper." The first edition was published in 1929—a mimeographed and stapled edition. Public interest spurred Brame on and he produced two more editions—each larger and of high quality printing and binding.

The book provides a void left by history books, Brame explained. It gives an overview and inspires the reader to delve more deeply into the history and heritage of black people. The book contains facts about ancient and modern Africans, American blacks, and a smattering of facts about the black residents of the Caribbean.

Most of Brame's early research was done in the Portland State University and Multnomah County Libraries and many facts were provided by friends. Some facts come from magazines and newspapers.

This year Brame has gone about his research in earnest. He recently returned from a trip to Sierra Leone in West Africa where he visited Fourah Bay College. This college is the oldest in West Africa, and has been a center of learning for decades. Sierra Leone was a destination of American blacks who chose to return to Africa, former residents of the U.S., Canada, and the Caribbean. Freetown also has a large population of Europeans, Arabs, and Hindus, and is a commercial center.


HERMAN L. BRAME

It has been a center of education, sending out doctors and missionaries to Ghana, Nigeria and Liberia?

Because of its ties to the New World, Freetown offers a unique environment for the study of the history and culture of Africa people.

While in Freetown, Brame contacted person at the university who will help him gather facts. One bit of information he received was on the doctors also found the difference between malaria and black water fever and the preventative measures that allowed settlement of the area.

Brame is a native of Oregon. He attended Jefferson High School, earned a B.S. in Sociology at the University of Oregon and an MBA at the University of Portland. He was employed by Model Cities in 1969 and 1970 as a financial specialist; was co-director of the Union Avenue Redevelopment Project, and was employed by Multnomah County.

The current edition of *World Records of Black People* can be obtained at the Talking Drum Bookstore and Daltons. Of course Brame is always happy to receive new facts and records.

Sue Dickson, nationally recognized expert in the teaching of reading, talks with students and parents at Reading Tree workshop.
(Photo: Richard Brown)


Three-year-old Jamila Harris learns African dance with the Talking Drum Dancers.
(Photo: Richard Brown)

U.S. policy threatens Belize

The small black nation of Belize, located on the eastern coast of Central America, is feeling the threat of U.S. foreign policy in the region.

Neighboring Guatemala claims possession of all of Belize, resulting from historic Spanish land claims that predate the English occupation of Belize. However, it now says it will settle for 7,000 square kilometers that would give it access to the Atlantic and rights to considerable resources of oil and other natural resources.

The Reagan Administration, together with Congress, has lifted restrictions on military aid to Guatemala saying that the military regime of General Rios Montt is doing "very well" in the area of human rights—only 10,000 citizens have been killed since Montt took over in a military coup last year.

Guatemala will receive $6.3 million worth of armaments. There is no guarantee that their weapons will not be used against Belize.

While the U.S. is strengthening Guatemala, it has been reported that Israel will provide Guatemala with an arms factory. Britain, which left troops behind when Belize achieved independence a year ago, would like to be relieved of this financial burden.

Becaue of the constant threat to its existence Belize has been forced to establish a defense force of regular and voluntary troops and earmark a considerable share of its limited resources for defense.

Third world nation debt threatens U.S. economic crisis

The world's economists, bankers, and finance ministers have been warning for at least two years of a coming international crisis that could bring an end to the U.S.' current economic system. The entire world—with the exception of Japan and some Southeast Asian countries—has been plunged into a depression comparable to that of the 1930s.

Threatening the world banking system is the $550 billion foreign debt of the Third World nations. These debts have their roots in the rising inflation of the 1960s and 1970s and the increase in oil costs. Inflation slowed economic growth, increased balance of payment deficits and necessitated borrowing. The bulk of the external financing came from private commercial banks in the U.S. and western Europe.

Rising U.S. interest rates drove up interest rates in the international money markets, and according to the World Bank each percentage point of increase in interest rates costs the developing countries $1.8 billion a year in additional interest payments.

Added to the increase in interest cost and the high cost of oil and imported manufactured goods due to inflation, is the drop in price of the raw materials on which the Third World nations depend for their income. Since 1980 the world price of cotton—on which Egypt and Sudan depend—has dropped from 92 cents a pound to 57 cents. The price of copper, important to Zambia and Chile, has dropped about half. Cocoa, the main export of many African countries, has dropped in price from $1.18 to 75 cents a pound. Sugar, the major crop of the Caribbean and the Philippines, had decreased from 43 cents a pound to 6 cents a pound. In addition to low prices the developed nations, also caught in the depression, are buying less of the products. The high cost of imports and the low payment for exports keeps these nations in a vicious cycle that cannot be broken.

The developing countries cannot pay their debts so they postpone paying the principal, and get new loans, paying higher and higher interest rates and slashing their budgets to spend higher percentages of their income on interest payments. However, they still cannot pay even the interest on the loans.

The Third World nations owe $550 billion to foreign banks and governments in debts that have nearly doubled in four years.

The U.S. banks

The international debt situation brings two threats to the U.S.

The U.S. banks are in the most serious period since the 1930s. The U.S. banks have been expanding their loans and deposits too rapidly, taking on risks out of proportion to their financial strength. During the past 20 years the banks' equity-to-total assets ratios have dropped seriously. Equity is the stockholder's stake in the bank. Losses are subtracted from equity and if losses exceed equity the bank is insolvent.

In normal times the banks would have about 10 percent equity-to-total-asset ratios and could easily absorb losses from the usual bad debts. Now many major banks are down to 3.5 percent and a loss of 1.5 percent would eliminate half its assets and it could be in serious trouble and to increase capital would have to curtail loans.

If nations with a major debt, like Mexico of Brazil, were to be unable to refuse to pay their debt, this could force major U.S. banks like Chase Manhattan and Citibank into insolvency. For this reason, these banks continue to provide "bail-out" loans to these countries.

Less drastic than insolvency would be a curtailment of lending—for working capital and equipment loans to U.S. corporations at home and car loans to citizens. Not only U.S. banks would be affected, but Japanese and Western European banks as well. The effect would be reduction in production and employment and a deepening of the depression.

The other major effect a default would cause is a discontinuation of trade. The U.S. economy is dependent on export of goods, about 12 percent of the gross national product. Currently 20 percent of the goods produced in the U.S. and 40 percent of the agricultural products are exported. If debtor nations defaulted and loans to them were discontinued, they could not purchase U.S. exports. About $12 billion would be lost, causing a loss of jobs.

For this reason, the U.S. government and banking circles are discussing possible solutions.

The U.S.' answer to the problem is to somewhat increase the ability of the International Monetary Fund to make emergency short-term loans to nations unable to make their interest payments. To obtain the loans the nations must accept internal economic measures imposed by the IMF, which include drastic reductions in social, educational and health programs and targetting a large percentage of the nation's funds for debt reduction.

The IMF is only only a temporary solution and its ultimate result is to increase the Third World debt.

The International Monetary Fund

The IMF was created at the end of World War II to manage the international system. It collects funds

(Please turn to page 4 column 1)