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THE NEW

PORTLAND OBSERVER

USPS 959-680-855 © Exie Publishing Co., 1983

Volume XIII, Number 30
May 11, 1983
25¢ Per Copy

Two Sections



JESSE JACKSON

(Photo: Richard Brown)

I Am Somebody

Grassroot News, N.W. — Rev. Jesse Jackson, founder and president of PUSH (People United to Save Humanity), addressed the 17th Annual National Migrant Education Conference. The possibility of Jackson running as a presidential candidate clung to every interpretation.

With the fiery oratory and call and response of a Southern Baptist minister, Jackson indicted the Reagan administration for diluting democracy. "The great sin in democracy is detachment. Democracy does not guarantee domination but it does guarantee access. It guarantees opportunity. Whenever opportunity is threatened, democracy is threatened. . . . Democracy does not guarantee a perfect choice. It guarantees a personal choice. When you try you may fail; if you don't try you are guaranteed to fail. That is why we must run for every office democracy makes available. In running, you may lose the numbers but you always gain your self-respect. Nothing is more fundamental to learning than having a healthy sense of, I Am Somebody!"

Rev. Jesse Jackson remains a folk hero to the dispossessed. In an exclusive interview his message to the grassroots was this, "Life is difficult with reduced options. There appears to be a lot of indifference towards poor people. And yet, where there is life, there is hope. We must use these two factors to their maximum in order to bring about change. No matter how far down you are, you cannot justify doing less than your best. We must use our

minds, money and vote. This is why we must stay sober and sustain our spirit. You can expand your economic options with money, but you can be a solid person by staying clean and helping people other than yourself."

Jackson believes the grassroots populace has the power to beat the national political machine the same way that Harold Washington beat the political machine in Chicago. "Harold Washington didn't beat the machine all by himself. It took seven hundred thousand people who offered him their shoulders to stand on. Way out here in Portland there is some sense of alienation. But you still are a part of the national life and there are eighteen million eligible voters and only ten million registered. If some people are reading this and they are in that eight million, they are letting the rest of us down. Every vote counts. Less than three million votes elected three presidents in twenty years. So, we must not allow people to break our spirit and convince us that we don't count."

He urged an alliance with whites in the Pacific Northwest who are interested in a new public policy and morality. "We did not overcome by ourselves. In this area you have whites with a profound interest in the nuclear freeze movement. All human beings ought to be interested in that. Black people ought to assume leadership in it. There are people out here who know what it means to re-industrialize, given the heavy dependence on the lumber industry. We should not create such

a sense of psychological isolation that we cannot relate to other people with similar interests."

In his address, Jackson said white male superiority is a threat to America's business status. "While we massaged our national ego and got someone to go to the moon to carry rocks into space, Japan and Germany were following the laws of supply and demand, making products for the real world. We have inferior and greedy management at the highest level — an over-dependence on foreign sources of energy. We are unable to compete in a free world market. Today, there is a collapse in auto, steel, electronics, lumber, rubber and textiles. And there were no migrants running any of those industries. White male superiority is a threat to the ability of this nation to survive in the world market."

Within the ideology of black political thought of the 1980s is Pan-Africanism. Does Jesse Jackson believe we can relate this philosophy to our urban setting? "The basic point is to heighten our national consciousness. We just didn't happen to be here. We are the original boat people. We are international people by definition. Just as the Irish people relate to Ireland and the Jewish people relate to Israel, then black people likewise ought to relate to Africa. It is significant for the esteem of black Americans and the geopolitical interest in America. When you consider the strategic value, size and resources of Africa, it is significant. The most (Please turn to Sect. II Page 5)

MX one step closer

The House Appropriations Committee voted Wednesday to release \$560 million for research, development and testing of the MX. The money was appropriated in December but the Administration was barred from using it until a basing plan was approved.

The Reagan Administration says the new multi-warhead, long-range weapon is needed to survive a Soviet attack, but the controversy over siting the missile has extended over several years. Currently, the plan is to use Minuteman silos.

The National Security Council Tuesday indicated that it might emphasize warheads rather than missiles in talks with the U.S.S.R.

The President's move toward a new negotiating position is reportedly a response to Congressmen who want the change in exchange for their support of the MX. The current emphasis on numbers of launchers has led to the production of missiles with multiple

warheads.

The Soviet Union has offered to reduce its nuclear medium-range forces in Europe to NATO levels and to include the numbers of warheads as well as missiles and airplanes.

The U.S.S.R. had previously offered to reduce its missiles to 162, the number maintained by France and Britain. This offer would also reduce the number of warheads. The French and British have about 300 warheads aimed at the U.S.S.R. The U.S. plans to deploy 572 new U.S. missiles in Western Europe by the end of the year. The U.S. has refused to count French and British missiles and wants the U.S.S.R. to remove all of its missiles in exchange for a U.S. agreement not to deploy its new missiles — the "zero option."

Yuri Andropov said on May 3rd, "The Soviet Union has stated readiness not to have in Europe a single missile and a single plane more than possessed today by NATO countries. We are told that in this

event the Soviet Union would have more nuclear warheads. All right, we are prepared to reach agreement on the equality of nuclear potentials in Europe both as regards delivery vehicles and warheads with due account, of course, for the corresponding armaments of Britain and France.

"In other words, we stand for the U.S.S.R. to have no more missiles and warheads mounted on them than on the side of NATO in each mutually agreed period."

The count of warheads, rather than missiles, is considered crucial because it would remove first strike potential. Theoretically, the nation making the first strike would need at least twice as many warheads as its opponent in order to prevent a retaliation strike.

The House move is an attempt to tie funding for the MX to the desired change in negotiations over medium range missiles based in Europe.

Coup in Iran?

by Ed Mason

(Second in a series)

With a speed that has bewildered most observers Iran has quickly moved to the political right.

The show-down between the two main factions of Iranian clergy, as reported last week, has come sooner than expected. It has come in the form of a full-fledged *coup d'etat*. Although the government has done its best to keep a semblance of unity and cohesion there is little doubt that a coup has occurred in Iran, albeit a "palace coup".

There have been reports of major defections, large-scale arrests and a

pervasive military presence everywhere. Below are some of the main events that came in the wake of last week's crisis:

- While insuring the compliance of many leaders of the Revolutionary Guard, the more recalcitrant ones, numbering in the hundreds, were detained.

- Iran's number two man, Ayatollah Rafsanjani, who is the speaker of the Parliament, was detained for a few days until he came out condemning the "world-devouring" Communists.

- The left-leaning *Etellaat*, Iran's most widely read daily, was closed. Its chief editor, the influential Ayatollah Doa'i, was put under

arrest.

- Over 60,000 Communists were brought into custody.

Analysis

- Many reforms instituted after the revolution were reversed. Already there are reports that thousands of the urban poor have been evicted from the luxurious hotels and mansions they had occupied for the last four years. There also are widespread rumors that the government is getting ready (Please turn to page 4 col. 1)

Minority set-aside under attack

The minority set-aside in the law providing a raise in the federal gas tax is already under fire across the nation. The gas tax provision, expected to raise \$71 billion in the next four years for highway construction, road repair and mass transit, carries a 10 percent requirement for small businesses owned and controlled by "socially and economically disadvantaged individuals." Most of the qualifying companies are minority owned.

Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Dole will decide in May whether to ask for modifications in the rule.

Complaints are coming from states that have low numbers of minorities, rural states such as Idaho and Utah, but also from states with high minority populations. Several southern states claim they do not

have sufficient numbers of black-owned companies to meet the provision.

Many large contractors, who, as prime contractors will be required to use minority subs, say there are just not enough minority sub-contractors available. These contractors, many of whom have fought every effort to assist the development of minority contractors, now say they fear the development of many dummy companies that will operate as fronts and that law suits and investigations will delay work.

Representative Parren Mitchell, sponsor of the 10 percent requirement, ridiculed the notion that sufficient minority businesses do not exist. Many minority construction companies are dying due to lack of work, he said. Minority firms do not have to be in roadbuilding to

qualify, he said. They can be law firms, food concessionaires, suppliers, architects, accountants, etc.

Rep. Mitchell said a similar provision in the 1977 Public Works Bill was highly successful.

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency lists 27,000 minority businesses in 95 metropolitan areas.

Minority firms have been getting a larger piece of the U.S. Department of Transportation funds than in past years, but minority business contracts in the fiscal year ended September 30, 1982, totaled about \$415 million, or approximately 5 percent of the \$8 billion in highway contracts awarded. For the 1980-1981 fiscal year, the figure was about half that. (Please turn to Sect. II page 5)

While U.S. makes war, Latin American economies crumble

*by Nelson Valdes
Pacific News Service

The Reagan Administration clearly believes that the fate of all Latin America hinges on who governs Central America, as was evident in the President's decision to state his policy case before an unusual joint session of Congress. The battle lines between capitalism and communism, he argues, have been drawn in the jungles of El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Honduras.

Yet the series of food riots which rocked Sao Paulo, Brazil, and La Paz, Bolivia, in early April may be much more accurate indicators of what the future holds in store for Latin America. From Mexico to

Argentina, the entire region is confronted today by its most profound and widespread social and economic crisis since the Depression. It poses far more dangers than the political conflict in Central America.

In 1982, the overall gross national product of Latin America registered negative growth, something which had not occurred in more than 40 years. Every country was affected, regardless of its social or political structure.

Military dictatorships fared worst; Chile's economy declined by 13 percent, Uruguay's by 9.5 percent, Bolivia's by 7.5 percent and Argentina's by 5 percent. But civilian democracies did little better. Costa Rica, in fact, rivaled the dictator-

ships with a negative growth rate of 6 percent. While some others enjoyed small economic advances — Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and the Dominican Republic — population growth rates mitigated net improvements. The highest growth rate in Latin America during the last two years occurred in Cuba, where the explanation lies less in the social system than it does in Havana's isolation from the troubled global market.

Most troubling is the fact that the economic giants of the region — Brazil, Mexico and Argentina — are in especially serious trouble, and show few prospects of shaking it.

Each of these nations must overcome a similar set of difficulties in

the present crisis: The international recession has led to lower commodity prices, and a reduction in the demand for Latin American products. But in the meantime, the cost of imported goods has risen. The results are serious trade deficits.

Last year, the cumulative value of Latin American exports declined by 10 percent, while the price of products from developed countries climbed seven percent. Countries depending on one product, as the Dominican Republic does on sugar, for instance, experienced a trade decline of nearly 53 percent.

As income from exports drops, purchasing power necessarily suffers. Latin Americans are forced to buy less and pay higher prices: Argentina

has cut its imports in half, Chile by 39 percent, Mexico by 38 percent and Bolivia by 31 percent.

Nevertheless, in 1982 Latin America marked up a total deficit of \$14 billion in its balance of payments. To meet these debts its countries have sought more and more loans from international financial institutions, both private and public. Currently, the entire region must pay \$34 billion yearly for interest and principal on outstanding loans. The accumulated debt has reached \$274 billion, and is growing by about 10 percent annually.

In 1976, 48 cents of every dollar Latin America borrowed went to pay old debts; today it is more than 85 cents. In effect, the region now

borrowed only to pay the interest on previous loans.

Costa Rica has defaulted on the payment of some loans. Mexico, Argentina, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Cuba had to renegotiate with lending agencies when they lost their capacity to pay. Brazil, Chile and Peru have been forced to request special contingency funds, and Bolivia has been unable to reschedule its debt. In any case, rescheduling merely delays the breaking point.

On April 8, the Fifth Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77, which represents the underdeveloped countries at the United Nations, issued a document describing this situation as a "time bomb." The (Please turn to page 4 column 1)