

Voting key to political clout

by Margot E. Butler

The "Rainbow Coalition" is a colorful new term coined by the Jesse Jackson campaign to describe his jumble of supporters—black, brown, yellow, red and white, women, the poor and other disenfranchised groups.

A pot of gold exists at the end of mythical rainbows, but will members of the "Rainbow Coalition" find their pot of gold at the end of the campaign? They will if all the voter registration campaigns succeed in mobilizing the most disenfranchised of all minorities—the non-voter.

The pot of gold in democratic elections is political power. Some nations disperse political power through military might, others reserve it solely for the ruling party. In the United States, anyone can engage in the electoral struggle for power, and yet so few participate.

the older one gets, the more likely one is to vote. The young vote less. So do the unemployed, the poor, minorities, and people who have moved recently. Women and students are also less likely to vote than are white, well-educated, well-to-do, middle-aged, residentially stable, Northern males.

The impact of these voting patterns is to exaggerate the interests of some groups and minimize those of others. The result, in the day-to-day affairs of local, state and federal politics, can be expressed in terms of power and influence. Citizens who are under-represented at the polls are less able to command the attention of elected officials and to affect decisions on public policy. Voting, then, has a doubly powerful effect: first, in the election of politicians and passage of ballot measures; second, in the response of elected officials to local concerns.

It is no surprise that Norm Win-

ningstad, a high-tech industrialist and proponent of a sales tax, gets so much attention from political leaders. Winningstad and his friends vote, give money, and publicize their pro-business ideas. If they had remained silent or grumbled amongst themselves, the sales tax would not be up for voter consideration in March.

Political power in this country is up for grabs among those who exercise their right to participate. In the greater Portland area, the number of people who pass on political power is astounding. Non-voters in Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties are estimated at 179,000; and for the entire state at 378,000.

For those who would excuse their

Ed Leek	1,155
Harold Williams	1,095
Rose Gangle	952
Charles Stoudamire	718
Walter Backstrom	390
Vesia Loving	371
Roger Smith Troen	121

Sixty votes gave the District 18 House seat to Ed Leek. Even more to the point, Republican state representative Liz Van Leeuwen beat the incumbent Bud Byer by one vote in 1980 in a mid-Willamette Valley district.

Nationally, President Reagan's margins of victory in New York, Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina, Arkansas, Massachusetts, Kentucky and Virginia were less than the number of unregistered Blacks in each state.

Voter registration campaigns, however, do work. In the spring of 1982, the Human SERVE Campaign (SERVE stands for: Service Employees Registration, Voting and Education campaign) registered some 40,000 social service recipients in New York City in a two-month period. Subsequently, voter turnout increased sharply among Blacks and the unemployed in the 1982 primary election.

The Oregon Human SERVE Voter Registration Campaign is one of several such efforts being conducted in Oregon in 1983. The Human SERVE campaign will be working through social service agencies to register voters, while other campaigns will be working in minority and lower income neighborhoods.

With 378,000 unregistered people in Oregon, the potential for a significant shift in electoral participation is great. The electoral outcome of such an infusion of new voters is highly debatable, but it will certainly be interesting to see what changes occur when the electorate contains those who have been discriminated

against in housing and employment, trimmed from the welfare rolls, relegated to unemployment lines, and forced to eat on \$78 a month in food stamps.

It might be safe to speculate that the interests of the formerly disenfranchised are not those of the traditional voter. If members of the "Rainbow Coalition" do vote in 1984, that pot of gold can be ours.

Margot E. Butler is director of the Oregon Human SERVE Voter Registration Campaign, a project housed in the downtown Urban League office.

Voter registration dance planned

Portland Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., remembers Martin Luther King by sponsoring a Voter Registration Dance to get young adults registered as voters.

Music will be provided by The Electric Whiz, Friday, January 13, 8 p.m. to midnight at Matt Dishman Center, 77 N.E. Knott.

Donation is \$2 with a voter registration card; \$2.50 without a card. Voter registration will be held at the dance.

Proceeds will be used for Delta Sigma Theta's public service programs.

KBOO airs Grenada report

Amidst all the controversy surrounding the U.S. invasion of Grenada, the American public did not have access to some important information, including what actually happened when supporters of the late Prime Minister Maurice Bishop released him from house arrest. The Reagan Administration has asserted that Bishop's overthrow and execution, and the confusing aftermath, are what led to the "rescue mission" by the U.S. military.

KBOO-FM (90.7) will try to fill in these "information gaps" when it broadcasts two half-hour documentaries, "Grenada: The Rise and the Fall," on Thursday, January 19th and Thursday, January 26th, at 9:30 a.m. (with repeats on March 6th and 13th at 10:00 p.m.). The documen-

taries were recorded by a team of U.S. producers who have been based in Grenada with the Caribbean Education Project since 1982.

The programs include dramatic "on-the-spot" recordings of Maurice Bishop's release from house arrest and the attack on Fort Rupert prison by his supporters; sounds of Grenadian tanks firing on demonstrators and U.S. artillery shelling; and interviews with members of Bishop's former cabinet, Caribbean leaders; members of Congress who visited Grenada, and U.S. citizens returning from the island.

The programs also present an historical documentation of Grenada's rise and a probe into how U.S. intervention in Grenada affects the Caribbean Basin.

Blacks oppose CIA aggression

(Continued from page 1 column 3) is for peace and self-determination."

Asked whether the United States' undeclared war against Nicaragua can be stopped, she said, "Absolutely. But first the people have to understand the truth, because that is the essential weapon in this war."

Concerning U.S. military assistance to Honduras, which is used for military action against Nicaragua,

she said, "Aid to Honduras should be to combat unemployment and poverty. The aid should not be for arms." Her message of peace and hope, she said, was a message that she carried from Jesse Jackson to the people of Nicaragua.

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County	% Registered	# Unregistered
Clackamas	83%	28,862
Multnomah	75%	106,480
Washington	76%	44,024
TOTAL		179,366

In the 1982 general election—the major contest in a non-presidential year—70 percent of registered voters voiced their opinions at the polls. But only 80 percent of Oregonians are registered. In effect, state and national political questions and players were determined by a little over one-half of those eligible to be voters. Nearly half of all Oregonians chose to disenfranchise themselves. In the 1982 primary election, non-participants comprised nearly 75 percent.

Dismal as this seems, voter turnout is only part of the picture. Who votes is of greater significance. A recent study of national voting patterns indicates that education and age are prime indicators of voting. The greater one's education and/or

age, the more likely one is to vote. The young vote less. So do the unemployed, the poor, minorities, and people who have moved recently. Women and students are also less likely to vote than are white, well-educated, well-to-do, middle-aged, residentially stable, Northern males.

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Street Beat

by Lanita Duke and Richard Brown

Our question this week is, "How do you feel about Rev. Jesse Jackson's trip to Syria, which secured the release of Lt. Robert O. Goodman?"



Pamela Harris
Housewife

It is wonderful. The idea is that he did go and he did bring him back.



Danny Hill
Welder

I think his trip was political. He went right after he declared his candidacy for the presidency.



Deloris Cowser
Cook

Jackson did a good job. I don't think politics had anything to do with his trip. He should be applauded.



James Davis
Retired

I think it was great. We should all be proud.



Alex Tomez
Diesel Mechanic

I think it was great. The fact that he is a presidential candidate was circumstantial.



Kathy Costa
Housewife

I was glad he went. I don't think President Reagan was fully aware of his trip, which could have been why he didn't return his calls at first.