

OBSERVATIONS

FROM THE SIDELINES
BY Kathryn Hall Bogle

ALMA HILL and a committee supporting the candidacy of Barbara Roberts for this year's race for Secretary of State put on the "jazziest" event of the 1984 political season last Tuesday evening. Staged at the Alameda home of John and Johnnie Bell, the party drew a heap of tax-deductible contributions from crowds of people munching on finger foods and sipping fine wine.

Guests were 'revved' up by the jazz piano music played by Janice Scroggins, high priestess of local jazz artistry. Moe's Pianos put in one of their Korean instruments for Scroggins to test out. It passed.

Assisting Hill in making the party a success were Gail Washington, Ernest Hartzog, Tom Kennedy and Al Goldsby.

AT MATT DISHMAN Center on Rodney and Knott Streets, The Black Educational Center entertained with a mammoth African-American Cultural Festival last Sunday afternoon. Supported by the Metropolitan Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts, the program was open to the public, from noon until 6:00 p.m., for only a small donation at the entrance.

The BEC had arranged their booths for a display of artifacts from African countries: showing handicrafts in design and ornamentation; some of it African imports and some of it made locally. Tie-and-dye work abounded in fabulous intricacy. Guests strolled from booth to booth; chatted and learned about African history; and saw a beautiful collection of African stamps, paintings, slides, photographs and small brown dolls dressed in handmade African garments.

A stage presentation was fairly



At Barbara Roberts campaign party: Front row-Gail Washington, Alma Hill, Rep. Barbara Roberts, Ernest Hartzog, Tom Kennedy. Back row-Margaret Carter, Al Goldsby, Senator Frank Roberts, Dr. Ernest Hartzog, Thomas Kennedy. (Photo: Rudie H. Reeves)

continuous. The Herero Danze Company entertained, as did the Ebony Strutters and the children of Talking Drum Dancers. Theatrical companies, including Black Arts Unlimited and the Passion Arts Theatre Company, presented sketches.

The Sojourner Truth Theatre, directed by Nyewusi Askari, introduced its Readers' Theatre; a poetry group of four women. Music, electronic and live, had its part in the day.

Joyce Harris, director of the BEC, was Festival Coordinator. Harris summed up the marathon presentation by saying, "We salute them(our artists)for showing us the depth, continuity and life of our community." Many said, "Thank you, Black artists, for reinforcing our sense of identity, pride and confidence."



Julia Fletcher(Mama Omotogole)shows collection of African artifacts at African-American Art Festival. (Photo: Rudie H. Reeves)

Zimbabwe seeks economic independence

by Chuck Goodmacker

Zimbabwe is a country on the move, according to a slide show and talk presented by John Peck last week at Reed College. Peck, an International Studies student at Reed, visited Zimbabwe last summer at the invitation of Liberty Mhlanga. Mhlanga is now manager of Zimbabwe's agricultural agency, the Agricultural and Rural Development Agency (ARDA) and is an old friend of Peck's father.

Under Black rule since 1980, Zimbabwe is still troubled by great economic disparities between the rich and poor as well as deep-seated political divisions which are closely related to language and cultural differences between the country's two major tribes. Occasional outbreaks of violence still punctuate these conflicts. Shona is spoken by 80 percent of the people and Ndebele by 15 percent. Approximately five percent of the California-size nation is non-Black.

Robert Mugabe is currently prime minister of Zimbabwe—one of the few democratic nations in Africa, Peck said. Mugabe's organization,

known as ZANU, is accused of trying to create a one-party state, according to many Western journalists. Peck, however, offered slides taken during his visit as proof that open political opposition is tolerated. One slide showed a group of roughly 500 protesters demonstrating at the ceremonies opening Parliament.

Both Mugabe and his main opponent, Joshua Nkomo, are socialists, although Nkomo is said to be more moderate and his party has allied, on occasion, with the white party of former Prime Minister Ian Smith. In the struggle for black majority rule, Nkomo received arms and other assistance from the Soviet Union, and Mugabe from China.

Many of Zimbabwe's current troubles stem from its economic reliance on South Africa. Peck said 80 percent of the nation's imports still come from racist South Africa, and this is a source of great bitterness for the people of Zimbabwe, he added.

ARDA was formed with the primary purpose of helping Zimbabwe become more self-sufficient as well

as to earn more money from the products it exports (such as coffee and tea). The majority of the land and facilities ARDA now runs were once owned by international corporations. Exports and the sale of government-produced goods are the sole source of government funds for Zimbabwe, which has yet to institute a tax system, Peck explained.

Peck showed the 35 people in attendance slides of ARDA's many successful projects, including a 250,000-acre farm near the border with Mozambique. Among the products grown by ARDA are wheat, rice, tea, coffee, and dairy cows. In many instances ARDA owns processing facilities, but purchases products grown by small farmers on their own land.

ARDA is establishing cooperatives throughout Zimbabwe wherever these are feasible. Villagers are encouraged to own their cows and chickens to increase self-sufficiency and to sell any excess products through the cooperatives.

ARDA is also bringing other immediate changes to the quality of life for the people of rural Zimbabwe by providing services such as health clinics and recreation areas. Zimbabwe also now has the second highest minimum wage in Africa—\$30 a month.

As a consequence of this minimum wage, there are now economic refugees coming to Zimbabwe, and this puts an even greater strain on the young nation's economy. Peck showed slides of row houses built for the thousands displaced during the revolution.

Zimbabwe's educational system remains in great need of improvement. There are now only eight high schools in the country, and three of them are private schools which are 80 percent white, said Peck.

Besides the lack of facilities, there is also an acute shortage of teachers in Zimbabwe since many of the educated Blacks are now in government positions. "If you have a teaching credential and want to help out, I'm sure you'll be more than welcome."

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Notice From U.S. District Court of SETTLEMENT

TO: ALL BLACK APPLICANTS FOR EMPLOYMENT AND ALL PRESENT AND FORMER BLACK EMPLOYEES OF THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN RAILROAD

This notice is to inform you that a settlement between the Burlington Northern Railroad Company (BN), and the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and counsel in a class action has been reached in a race discrimination employment practices case (1) on behalf of black applicants for employment who were not hired by BN, and (2) on behalf of black present and former employees of BN. Thirteen international unions representing BN employees are also involved in the case and the settlement. The Court has preliminarily approved the settlement consent decree, and will reach a final decision as to its fairness and adequacy after class members have had an opportunity, if they wish, to comment on or object to its terms.

Black persons who applied for employment to BN or were employed by BN at any time between March 1, 1970 and November 21, 1983, are members of the class and may be entitled to cash awards or other relief as part of the settlement.

Cash awards will be made to class members who file claims out of settlement funds provided by BN amounting to \$10 million which will be used solely to pay those claims. Any excess remaining after those claims are paid will be used to promote the interests of black people. In addition, you may be eligible to be considered for future vacancies at the Company on a priority basis, to transfer into certain vacancies or to otherwise benefit from agreed upon changes.

To be eligible to share in this \$10 million fund, you must obtain and file a claim form. Claim forms, with filing instructions, and a summary of the settlement, may be obtained by supplying in writing your name and current address by mail to:

Lead Counsel for the Plaintiff Class

Paul C. Sprenger, Esquire or Charles H. Barnhill, Esquire
Sprenger, Olson & Shutes, P.A. Davis, Miner, Barnhill & Galland, P.C.
325 Ridgewood Avenue 14 West Erie Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403 Chicago, Illinois 60610

You may also contact: Bruce B. Elfvin, Esquire
government counsel: Assistant General Counsel
U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission,
#1 Playhouse Square, Suite 600,
Cleveland, Ohio 44115.

Or, if you call toll free 1-800-223-9001 or in New York state only (1-212-245-3151), and supply your name and address, a claim form will be sent to you. All completed claim forms must be postmarked on or before May 15, 1984.

You may view a copy of the settlement consent decree itself and the full record in the case at any office of the EEOC or at the office of the Clerk of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, 219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604, file reference In Re Burlington Northern Employment Practices Litigation, MDL 374, 78 C 289.

The Court will hold a hearing at 9:30 a.m. on April 2, 1984, at the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, 219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois. At that time, the Court will hear comments and objections, if any, from class members regarding the consent decree. You need not be present in court to file a claim or receive money from the \$10 million fund or otherwise benefit from the settlement. You will be represented there, as you have been throughout this litigation, at no cost to you by class counsel. If, however, you want to comment on or object to the settlement, you must file your comments in writing with the Clerk of the Court by March 16, 1984, and you may then appear at the hearing with an attorney of your own choice, at your own cost. You will, however, be bound by the judgment of the Court, whether or not it is favorable.

George N. Leighton
United States District Judge