

EDITORIAL/OPINION

Set history straight

As Britain spearheads Western Europe's condemnation of Libya, tears refuse to flow from many non-white countries. Historically, Britain is in no position to cry "foul".

The crown jewels of her majesty are covered bloody red with three hundred years of colonialism and imperialism. The sun did not set on the British empire because the earth revolved on its axis. It was the uprising of the masses of non-whites who had enough of her majesty's exploitation.

By putting Britain in this historical light, we do not condone the shooting of the policewoman. However, a brief look at the last three centuries makes us wonder why Britain, all of a sudden, wants to play by the rules.

Since the 16th century, the British, along with their Western European counterparts, allocated to Africa the role of supplier of human captives which were used as slaves in various parts of the world.

The seed money they received from the blood and sweat of non-whites contributed to the growth and influence of Britain as a major power.

When slave trading became less profitable, the British started exploiting the labor and raw materials of Africa inside Africa. They introduced Africans to forced labor and modern slavery.

In 1884, the British were part of the Berlin Conference, a conference where Western Europe partitioned the continent of Africa. They raped and plundered Africa—leaving her for dead.

Also, in the 19th century, Britain got together again with her Western European friends and waged the "Opium War" against China to ensure profits were made while the Chinese were turned into dope addicts.

These examples of man's inhumanity to man only scratch the surface. The British are still among the major players in the under-development, technical stagnation and distortion of the African economy.

As they try to orchestrate world opinion against Libya for violating the sanctity of an embassy, we wonder why protocol did not apply when Britain violated the sanctity of an entire continent.

"Congress" political show

The first Multnomah County Citizens Congress met Saturday, April 28th, at Cleveland High School and continues May 19th there.

The Congress presents citizens with an excellent opportunity but, unfortunately, began as a battlefield for vested interests rather than as the culmination of a citizen's movement for participatory democracy. Organizers hoped for 600 delegates, but just over 400 people registered and only 232 attended. It appeared that up to a quarter of those present were county employees.

Several observers noted Commissioner Caroline Miller's prominent place at center stage during the opening session; an opening conspicuously close to her May 15th election contest with Frank Shields. Sensitive to lingering suspicions about this, temporary chair, Robert Nelson, took great pains to note it is a citizen's congress. The information packet for participants (they were called delegates even though anybody could attend) tells a different story: it notes that Miller introduced the ordinance establishing the Congress. Miller also takes credit for creating it in her Voter's Pamphlet

statement.

A much greater force than political loading alone accounted for poor attendance at the Congress. As Reverend John Garlington noted, "There is a fundamental distrust in how the system works." Garlington continued, "We've got to get the people to take it (the system) back," and "instead of watching how the world turns, let's turn the world around."

Observer endorsements

Endorsements of candidates and ballot measures will appear in next week's edition of the *Portland Observer*. The entire *Observer* staff is participating in the endorsement process and the opinions expressed will reflect our collective judgment on these matters, not just that of the editorial writers. Several candidates have visited with the staff here at the *Observer* and we want to thank them all for doing so.

Letters to the Editor

Quality coverage

To the Editor:

On behalf of Portlanders Organized for Southern African Freedom, I would like to thank you for the quality coverage of South Africa Week Activities. You have been very consistent about seeking out facts on Southern Africa and getting these facts into print and on radio. Your work is greatly valued by this committee and the community.

Again, your support is appreciated and please let us know when and how we can be of assistance to you.

Avel L. Mayfield
Co-Director
Southern Africa Program

Herndon replies

To the Editor:

Harold Williams' comments were pitiful because he was involved in every meeting leading up to the Forum where he lost to Margaret Carter. He knew the Forum was designed to maximize our community's possibility of electing a Black person to represent District 18. At no time did Harold Williams say he thought the process was unfair; at no time did Harold Williams say he would not abide by the Forum's decision. He was not honest enough to simply say, "I disagree with the process and I will run whether I win or lose the Forum's endorsement." Had Harold Williams done this, it might now be possible to hold some degree of respect for his candidacy. And possibly, we could have been mercifully spared his current pitiful rendition of two old songs ungraceful losers always sing, "The Woe Is Me Blues" and "The Sour

Grapes Dirge." These old ditties are generally accompanied by break dancing's antiquated cousin, the "They Are Out to Get Me Hucklebuck."

Unfortunately we now read Harold's pathetic claims of being set up and outsiders pulling strings. Are we to believe these statements would have been made if Harold Williams had been elected by the Forum?

Harold, if a Black person does not represent District 18 after November, it will be primarily because of the division you have sown in our community.

Ron Herndon

Forum illegal

To the Editor:

This letter is in response to the letter of Mr. Kenneth Adair on April 25th. I would like to commend Mr. Adair for finally admitting that they engineered the results of the forum that was held on November 5, 1983.

Their attempt was to discredit Mr. Harold Williams who is a candidate for State Representative for District 18.

Mr. Williams said before and after the forum that he was being set up and that the forum was illegal.

After talking with the Black attorney Association, I'm positive that he is telling the truth. I ask all of the people in District 18 to help Harold Williams become the next State Representative of District 18 by voting for him on May 15th.

Matthew K. Barnett
Rev. Chester Staples
Bishop H.B. Daniels
Gov. Straub

We need jobs

To the Editor:

The 1983 Multnomah County

Survey on Homelessness documented a 90% unemployment rate in the Burnside neighborhood. As a neighborhood association, the Burnside Community Council (BCC) is pursuing activities to reduce this grim statistic.

BCC's jobs program, called the Burnside Job Corps, was launched a year ago in an effort to break the cycle of poverty and unemployment. Many temporary jobs led to full-time employment.

As the Burnside Job Corps gears up for spring, we would appreciate your support. Please consider the following:

- (1) Our jobs program specializes in housecleaning, landscaping, yard work, auto maintenance and salvage. Call 235-WORK. We request \$4 an hour and no payment is made until you're satisfied with the quality of the work.
- (2) The Burnside Job Corps sponsors a neighborhood pay-back recycling program. For many Burnside unemployed, this is their only income. If we can increase our recycling volume, we can pay better prices. Our recycling depot is now located at our new Job Corps Center located at 2 N.E. 3rd (under the Burnside bridge).
- (3) As Always, monetary contributions help. All contributions are tax deductible.

Our goal is to broaden the options available to the homeless. Your support will increase the success of this endeavor.

Larry Daugherty
Job Corps Coordinator

Michael Stoops
BCC Board Chairperson

The *Observer* welcomes Letters to the Editor. Letters should be short, and must contain the writer's name and address (addresses are not printed). The *Observer* reserves the right to edit for length.



Reagan-God in '84

Black higher education vs. Reaganism

by Dr. Manning Marable
"From The Grassroots"

For three years, the Reagan Administration has waged war against Black America. The relentless budget cuts in human services, the tax policies which provide welfare for the rich, and the suppression of civil rights and civil liberties, all amount to an unprecedented assault on people of color and the unemployed. One decisive aspect of this class warfare can be observed within higher education. Slashes in government spending for education have created a serious fiscal crisis for traditionally Black colleges.

Under Reagan's tenure, Black college administrators have been forced to scramble in a desperate bid to retain students, and to maintain their schools. Clariborne C. Davis, director of financial aid at Mississippi Valley State University, stated in a recent interview in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* that his school had lost approximately \$100,000 in federal student aid since the beginning of 1983. "If we had the money, we might have had 200 to 300 students," Davis notes. The students who could afford to attend Mississippi Valley "either are not going to college at all, or are attending less expensive community colleges. Careers could be sabotaged by a student's inability to attend a desired college because of a lack of money." At nearby Tougaloo College, Melvin Phillips, director of student financial aid, states that the lack of federal aid has affected the

school's enrollment, or has forced prospective students into the "military service as a way to get college money. With 550 students, we can't afford to lose that many bodies."

At North Carolina Central University, the situation is even worse. According to Vice Chancellor Roland L. Buchanan, Jr., ninety percent of his university's 5,000 students rely on some form of financial aid. When North Carolina Central informed students that they could not postpone the payment of short-term debts this fall, "at least 20 students were forced to drop out when they could not meet the payments because their financial aid had been cut." Buchanan notes that a number of prospective students "have not been able to come to the university because they could not get adequate funds to sustain them while they are here...I feel there is a responsibility on the government to provide opportunities for students who are poor, but who are capable of doing university work." Even at those traditionally Black institutions where the tuition is extremely low, the impact of Reagan's budget cuts has been felt. At the Baton Rouge campus of Southern University, roughly 85 percent of the 9,500 students receive aid. Southern's vice president for student affairs, Clarence M. Collier, states that more undergraduates have had "to use the Guaranteed Student Loan

program" just to remain enrolled.

The problems of Black institutions transcend mere dollars and cents. Surveys by the National Center for Educational Statistics, a research division of the U.S. Department of Education, indicate a general erosion in the numbers of Blacks being trained in high education fields. For example, between the academic years 1976-77 to 1980-81, Black college enrollment increased by 3.3 percent, while the numbers of Black high school graduates jumped by 20 percent during the same period. The number of full-time Black graduate students in masters and doctoral programs remained the same during these years. The National Center notes that "the number of degrees at the bachelor's level or above awarded to Black students slipped 1.6 percent from 1976 to 1981, to 82,000 from 83,400. At the masters level, the number of degrees awarded fell 16 percent for Blacks and only 4 percent for whites." Only ten years ago, about one-third of all Black students enrolled in junior colleges. Today, over 51 percent of all Black high school students, and only 36 percent of whites, attend two-year schools. The vast majority of these Black students never advance to four-year colleges. Between 1976 and 1981, the only major gain in Black college enrollment was in vocational and occupational programs.

Jackson victorious in Wash. DC

Jesse Jackson won his first clear primary victory Tuesday with 67.4 percent of the vote in his favor compared to 25.5 percent for Mondale and only 7.1 percent for Hart. The victory adds 11 delegates to Jackson's total and four to Mondale's.

Jackson also surprised experts

with his 24 percent of the vote in Tennessee which earned him 14 additional delegates. Hart claimed 21 there and Mondale 30.

In Tennessee, with 98 percent of the precincts reporting, the results were:

Mondale, 128,853 votes or 42 percent; Hart 92,083, 30 percent;

Jackson, 72,504, 24 percent; and uncommitted and dropout candidates claimed the rest.

In the District of Columbia, with complete, unofficial returns, it was: Jackson 67,091 votes, 67.4 percent; Mondale, 25,345, 25.5 percent; and Hart, 7,053, 7.1 percent.

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