

Collapse of Black schools reflect policies

by Dr. Manning Marable
"From The Grassroots"



Predictably, the Reagan administration's response to the outcry of Black educators and administrators has been contemptuous. For example, last year the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights ordered a study of eight colleges for the "effects of student-aid cuts on institutions with large numbers of Black and Hispanic students."

President Reagan succeeded in restructuring the Commission in the effort to obtain a clear voting majority for his rightwing views on desegregation and affirmative action. As a direct consequence, this January, the Commission voted 5 to 3 to cancel its study on Black and Latino higher education. Hispanic Reaganite Linda Chavez, director of the commission, informed the press, "Unless the commission wishes to establish that federal student financial aid is a civil right guaranteed to members of minority groups, this project would appear clearly beyond our jurisdiction." Since the results of the study clearly confirmed the human destruction created by the budget cuts of 1981-83, the administration callously chose to bury the truth.

Chavez's role in the attacks against minority educational opportunity is more than a little ironic.

Growing up in a poor Chicano neighborhood in Albuquerque, New Mexico, she attended the University of Colorado, and earned a degree in English literature while on a federal education grant. Now Chavez claims that "the government policy to provide student aid on the basis of need...is not a civil right." Her political backwardness extends into primary education as well, since her vocal opposition to public school desegregation and affirmative action hiring policies for school teachers and administrators elevated her into her current position.

If indeed the decline of Black colleges was the product of accelerated desegregation of formerly all-white institutions, one might be less concerned. Ironically, however, the collapse of Black schools and cutbacks in tenure-stream positions for young Black faculty are occurring precisely at a time when white colleges are reducing their overall numbers of Black professors and administrators. At Princeton University, for instance, officials asserted recently that they have made "a vigorous effort to recruit Black faculty members." In 1974, however, the number of Black Princeton professors was 10, and today the figure has dropped to 9. By way

of contrast, the number of women faculty at Princeton in the past decade has increased from 54 to 101.

Similar statistics can be cited across the country. At Harvard University in 1980, there were 34 Black professors out of 1,746 faculty; in spring of 1984, the number of Black professors had declined to 24, about 1.4 percent of the total faculty. At the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Black faculty total only 2 percent; Cornell University, 1.7 percent; Stanford University, 1.6 percent. White administrators are quick to justify these small numbers of Afro-American faculty as a product of the relatively small pool of Blacks who earn advanced degrees. But since 1974, the overall proportion of Blacks receiving doctorates has risen from 3.7 to 4.4 percent. In 1982, the proportion of all minorities receiving doctorates in the field of psychology was 8 percent; mathematics, 9 percent; education, 14.5 percent; economics, 13.4 percent; political science, 12 percent; and sociology, 10.7 percent. Even after factoring out Hispanics, Asians and other people of color, these figures indicate that the majority of white universities are

making few sincere efforts to hire Black graduates. Consequently, the survival of traditional Black colleges is of paramount importance to thousands of young Black teachers and administrators, who have few avenues of employment outside these institutions.

The proverbial bottom line of the Reaganites' educational policies is simply this: higher education is not a democratic right for the poor, Blacks, Latinos and other historically oppressed groups. This political message is translated by many white universities into a silent repudiation of affirmative action hiring policies. Both the current administration and many white college presidents might do well to reconsider the observations of Black scholar W.E.B. Du Bois: "Human culture in its broadest and finest sense can never be wholly the product of a few. There is no natural aristocracy of man. A system, therefore, of national education which tries to confine its benefits to preparing the few for the life of the few, dies of starvation."

Correction

Candidate for State Representative of District 19, Robert J. Castagna, is a former legislative advocate for the Oregon Environmental Council and Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, and is not currently employed as such.

Also, the second sentence of Castagna's response to a question about the criminal justice should have read:

"I would prefer to deal with societal problems in a preventative fashion. Accordingly, I have advocated increased assistance for the medically needy and for dependent children of two-parent unemployed families."

Letters to the Editor

No endorsement

To the Editor:

It has come to my attention that Ed Leek, State Representative, District 18, has been distributing campaign literature that contains a photograph of him and me that was taken sometime during the 1983 legislative session.

I wish to make it clear that Representative Leek used this photograph without my permission and that the appearance of that photograph in his campaign literature should in no way be taken as an endorsement by me of his candidacy.

I am a member of the House Democratic Caucus Campaign Committee that's purpose is to impartially assist all Democratic candidates in their campaign efforts. For this reason, it would be improper for me to take sides with any Democratic candidate against another.

It is unfortunate that this letter has to be written, but I hope it serves to clarify my impartial position in Democratic primary legislative races.

Jim Hill
State Representative
District 31
Marion & Polk Counties

Applauds editorial

To the Editor:

In recent weeks your editorials have been excellent. Issues that are not often given frank and unbiased coverage in other news sources have been analyzed with much depth and clarity. I applaud you for having the courage to put Britains sanctimonious behavior into historical

perspective (May 2) and for saying what needed to be said about Milton D. Coleman (April 11). Your coverage of Jesse Jackson has been superior to any other local news media.

Continue to educate us with the facts and analysis. You are following in the tradition of Frederick Douglass, John Russswurm, Ida B. Wells and a host of other Black journalists who have exposed those who have interfered with our progress as a people and praised those who have functioned in our best interests.

Joyce B. Harris
Director
Black Educational Center

Back to square one

To the Editor:

The letter in the May 2nd Observer, again by some of Harold Williams' minister friends who are all ill-informed about their candidate, stated that no one person or group should have a monopoly on District 18. Williams cry of foul play and that he was set up is as far from the truth as saying that Satan is God's son.

Actually, the odds were greatly in Harold's favor: 1)The setting was Vancouver Ave. Baptist Church; my church in fact. Harold has a lot of relatives who are members of Vancouver. 2)The Christian Brothers, who are chaired by one of Harold's best friends, James Loving, is also a member of Vancouver. 3)The Mason Lodge which consists of conservative Black men (who believe women are only made to have children, stay at home and keep their mouths shut). With all this and the fact that Harold has relatives in all of the churches in the Black

community who pressure their minister to support Harold (what a set up), somehow, those members didn't come out to the forum, so Harold lost.

I know of nothing spectacular that Williams has done to upgrade the lives of people living in Albina. I asked Harold to speak out on the education issue before I even knew Herb Cawthorne or Ron Herndon. Harold has not publicly said one word, nor has he spoken out against police brutality, which affects us all.

So, lets go back to square one, Margaret Carter. Harold Williams hasn't done anything decisive in solving any of the community's needs.

I am willing to accept a candidate, not for what he/she hasn't done, but for their concern, their ability to stand up when it counts and to speak out: not be a "spook who sat by the door." We can't afford that anymore.

So vote correctly this time, please.

Vesia Deweese Loving

Libraries for kids

To the Editor:

All who are devoted to providing a positive environment for the education of children in our county must share concern about the future of the Multnomah County Library.

The County has placed two measures on the ballot for the May 15th primary election—Ballot Measure #3 asks the voters of Multnomah County to endorse a \$9 million, 3-year special levy for future funding of the library; and Ballot Measure #4 would create a public library commission which would have as its first charge, the development of a long-range plan for fiscal stability.

The success of these measures is critical to the future of education in this area.

I ask all concerned citizens to join with me in support of these measures.

Dr. James Jenkins
Superintendent
Gresham School District


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.

Free rides to vote

Rides are available on election day for those in need. Please call 227-2426 between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. at Bud Clark for Mayor headquarters or the Committee to Elect Margaret Carter at 288-8338 or 284-0653.

JUDITH C.

BAUMAN



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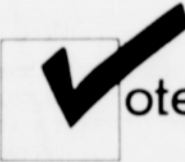
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Margaret Carter

"JUDITH BAUMAN is committed to justice and fairness. Her background is one of legal excellence and community activism. Her experience as a teacher, prosecutor and defense attorney makes her my choice. Make her your choice for District Court Judge on May 15th."
Alma Hill

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