

# EDITORIAL/OPINION

## Non-protesters

by Nathaniel Scott

Every Saturday when George Page signs off radio station KBOO, he emphatically states: "Back what you believe in." In observation of that graphic statement, it is becoming increasingly clear that many of the Black students in Portland believe in white supremacy.

Without a doubt, the majority of Portland's Black students, particularly those at Portland State University, believe themselves inferior to whites.

If I am wrong, I'll be the first to apologize. But from my vantage (or disadvantage) point, I find Blacks' participation in the South African movement are becoming less and less.

Wednesday, August 7, at the demonstration at Columbia Coin, 514 SW 6th Avenue, less than ten Blacks showed up. And of that pitiful few, I was the only PSU Afro-American black there and not one African showed his or her Black face.

When it's time to Raggae or swill beer, most Africans congregate wherever the happenings are. And neither love, money, nor a team of wild horses can keep Afro-Americans from a blues or jazz festival. But just mention a demonstration for the 500 plus Black men, women and children slain in South Africa this year, and all the revolution disappears like wind-blown smoke.

The halls at Portland State University are filled with political garbage; one Black shouting another Black down, but when it comes time to put his or her *Black Ass* on the picket line, very few Blacks can be found.

It wasn't too long ago, during the 13th and 14th centuries, when Dutch slave ships began raiding the coast of Africa; today we have

African Afro-American, African Afro-Caribbeans, African Afro-Cubans, and any number of African people suffering the lack of being white. Or if you please, for being Black. But the intriguing thing is, this new breed of Blacks have accepted a tarnished image as their deserved fate.

Commercial TV has very few Blacks in meaningful roles. For hours on end one can view that monster in their living room (and some even have the nerve to have one in their bedroom) without seeing Black face. And when you do, it's either some toilet bowl commercial or a comedy. The message being: "Jungle Bunnies" will be jungle bunnies.

It has been said that when Black students at PSU want something they run to the Black community. This does not exclude the University of Portland (which has not been represented at any of the demonstrations) nor Lewis and Clark or Reed Colleges, either, because they too call on the Black community when in need. But time is running out. The hour is at hand and all those who wish to be counted need to line up with Blacks or start carrying white ID cards.

It is beyond being shameful that we Blacks who think we are free care so little about our fellow sisters and brothers in Africa that we can't forego one hour of pleasure to demonstrate for them.

Rev. Colin Jones, a Black South African minister said, Blacks in South Africa are dying for your chance to be free. And I say, if you are not a part of the solution, you are a part of the problem.

P.S. The Black community's participation in demonstrations is not all that hot, either. . . I just chose to write about PSU.



## Clarence Pendleton: A "great" Uncle Tom

Along the Color Line by Dr. Manning Marable

The great pleasure in watching Clarence Pendleton, Chairman of the United States Commission on Civil Rights, is that you can never tell what he's likely to say next.

Sometime ago Pendleton made headlines by denouncing the idea of "comparable worth," paying women and men the same for jobs of equal value. It's "probably the looniest idea since Looney Tunes came on the screen," Pendleton declared. Consequently, the Reagan-controlled Commission voted down the doctrine of comparable worth last April 11.

Speaking in Albany, New York, and at Cornell University in late July, Pendleton exhibited his rhetorical grace again. The Black republican was asked whether there was a need for a Civil Rights Commission, which was established in 1957 to monitor civil rights. Couldn't Congress block future appropriations to the Commission? Pendleton replied: "Sure they can. Not a bad idea, either." When pressed by one reporter later, Pendleton explained that the Commission might not be necessary after November, 1989, when it is scheduled to expire by law. "If there's nothing more to study, if our mandate has been satisfied, then why leave the commission around?" Pendleton said.

But surely, with the national problems of racism, women's inequality, anti-Semitism and other forms of social intolerance still existing, certainly some sort of public agency must serve as a conscience on civil rights? Pendleton is not a man who minces words: "I don't happen to believe that the government owes me

anything just because my ancestors were slaves. I think it's paid that debt. All it owes to me is to keep the doors open."

But how are these proverbial doors to be kept "open" unless a strong civil rights movement continues to fight against social inequality? How can minorities and women acquire economic and political justice without collective demands for greater democracy? Pendleton has a snappy rebuttal: "With this whole process we continue to divide society. It causes more disharmony than it causes harmony." In other words, don't talk about racial and sexual discrimination, and it will quietly go away.

Why are so "fortunate" to have Clarence Pendleton as head of the Civil Rights Commission? The entire retreat from human rights and social justice typified by most of Reagan's appointees is a manifestation of larger currents of race hatred which still exist across the country. According to the Atlanta-based National Anti-Klan Network, over 1,000 acts of Klan and Klan-style violence have been committed during the past five years. Klan leaders endorsed Reagan for President in 1980 and 1984. And ex-Klansman C. P. Ellis recently stated in a congressional hearing: "All Klansmen don't wear robes. I see the Klan philosophy in the courtroom, in Congress, and I think I see it in the White House." Since January 1981, several hundred thousand Blacks have lost their jobs in the public sector; Blacks' access to higher education has been sharply curtailed; Black infant mortality rates are up,

due to the cutbacks in childcare and family assistance programs; and Black unemployment is still above 14 percent two years after an "economic recovery." In short, institutional racism, vigilante violence and economic discrimination are thriving under Reagan's aegis. But, of course, to discuss these issues publicly may provoke "disharmony."

Nearly a century ago, Black America's leading "Uncle Tom" was William H. Council, the president of the all-Black state college in Orangeburg, South Carolina. Council was a notorious toady who gave "oily flattery" to racists. He praised Jim Crow laws, political disfranchisement of Negroes, and was silent about lynchings. He cautioned against civil rights agitation, and opposed "radicals" like Frederick Douglass and W. E. B. DuBois. Council believed that accommodation to racism was the only means to promote "harmony." Booker T. Washington, the major Black politician of the era, detested Council so much that he refused to sit beside him on public platforms.

In the great tradition of Council, we now have Clarence Pendleton: a man whose social theories are well adapted to Black inferiority, political disfranchisement, and women's oppression. With every pathetic speech and public statement, he takes another dramatic leap into the past.

Dr. Manning Marable teaches political sociology at Colgate University, Hamilton, New York.

## EDITORIAL/COMMENTARY

### Nicaraguans gumble but Sandinista support still strong:

by Millie Thayer

In the last two months, the U.S. has declared a trade embargo against Nicaragua, approved more than \$14 million in "humanitarian aid" to the contra forces seeking to topple the elected government there, and Congress has given President a virtual blank check to invade this small Central American country if any of a number of vaguely defined conditions is fulfilled.

The cost of the economic war has been high. Prices of goods have doubled and tripled in the last few months; there are shortages of everything from car batteries to toilet paper, and waiting in line has become a way of life.

Counter-revolutionary violence has taken a different toll. Some 8,000 Nicaraguans — including peasants, teachers, doctors and other civilians — have lost their lives in contra attacks while others have been kidnapped. Hundreds of millions of dollars of damage have been done to crops, farm machinery, vehicles, schools, clinics, warehouses, cooperatives, ports, roads, bridges and homes.

It's a war of attrition by the contras and their U.S. backers. Unable — for lack of popular support — to pull off a dramatic overthrow of the Sandinista government, they are attempting to slowly sap the spirit of the Nicaraguan people, feeding a cancer of discontent that they hope will paralyze the populace in the face of a future invasion.

But will it work? In my nine months in Nicaragua, I've heard grumbling, criticism and complaints on almost any subject you'd care to name. Freedom of speech is amply practiced. Opposition parties and the right-wing sectors of the church have their followers and the pages of the anti-Sandinista newspaper are full of their pronouncements.

But talk is cheap. The organized opposition is not broad-based and has little capacity for mobilization. Their main presidential candidate in the November elections, Arturo Cruz, drew a crowd of only 1,000 in his one Managua appearance. Despite the concerted effort of the right wing to organize a boycott of the elections, voter turnout was over 80 percent and the FSLN won handily.

Though some reports say contra ranks are growing, documentation by international observers has shown that many of the "recruits" are terrorized peasants from the border regions, kidnapped and forced to com-

mit crimes which make them fear a return to their communities.

And Sandinista support? The initial euphoria has certainly diminished, activism in popular organizations is down and recent austerity measures have been met with less than enthusiasm. But when it comes right down to choosing sides, there is no question about where the vast majority of Nicaraguans case their lot.

A June 28th commemorative event made this quite clear. On that day, 70,000 Nicaraguans from the capital city walked all night long to Masaya, a town 20 miles to the south, re-enacting the historic *replique* or Tactical Retreat by Sandinista forces which preceded their victory over dictator Somoza on July 19, 1979.

Participants this year were people from all walks of life, 80 percent of them under 30. The march began in a field in the midst of the poor eastern barrios of Managua. Six years ago, this area was in insurrection. Though Somoza's forces controlled the city, the hated *Guardia* did not dare to enter these neighborhoods which were solidly in support of the *Frente Sandinista* (FSLN). Residents had built barricades and organized watch duty, food preparation and communications systems in support of the guerrillas they views as "their" army. But for 11 straight days, Somoza's planes had bombed the area, leaving hundreds of casualties. Rebel munitions were running low and demoralization was beginning to set in.

Meanwhile the FSLN had taken Masaya; however, they lacked the forces to secure the surrounding towns. A bold but difficult decision was made: to retreat from Managua to Masaya on foot under cover of night through Somoza-held territory to prevent a massacre in the poor barrios of the capital and to give reinforcement to the Sandinistas in the neighboring city.

So it was that 7,000 people — fighters, wounded and civilians of all ages — gathered together with little advance preparation and set off across the flat, open terrain to the south. Miraculously, their departure was not noticed until the next morning when planes began to bomb the line of march. By 10:00 p.m. that night, they had reached their destination with a loss of only six lives. As one man said at the time, "If we can do that, we can do anything."

The *Replique* was a psychological victory and a major turning point in the war. The FSLN went on to take the towns around Masaya and ar-

19. What must have been a terrifying experience at the time, has now become a joyful, festive occasion which symbolizes a renewal of commitment to defend the revolution's gains. The mounting danger from abroad this year found its response in the greatly increased numbers of participants — more than double last year's total of 30,000.

Setting off around 8:30 at night, this year's crowd became a human river flowing through the streets decorated by residents with palm boughs and flowers, posters and flags. Neighborhood bonfires lit the faces of the thousands who came out to watch, and the banging of pots recalled the days of protest against the Guardia. As the weary marchers passed through little pueblos all through the night, people came out to offer food, water and encouragement. Somewhere along the way a candle flickered in front of a cross: Edyth Alvarez, June 28, 1979. One of the victims.

In Nindirí, the traditional resting place near Masaya, there was jubilation, embracing, dancing in the plaza and sleeping in the streets. Sore limbs and exhaustion were the badges of pride worn by every hobbling participant.

Why would so many people put themselves through such an ordeal? Simply because, for all their faults and despite the difficulties thrust upon them, Sandinista policies have meant concrete positive changes in people's lives. You could hear it in the words of a landless peasant, one of the beneficiaries of a recent distribution of land: "Finally justice is being done to us poor people." You could see it in the faces of the mothers bringing their children in for free polio and measles shots during one of many vaccination campaigns, or in the pride with which people who have learned to write in the country's adult education programs signed their names on election day.

From the ranks of these people came the 70,000 marchers of this June 28th, and there are many more like them. The *Replique* is more than an all-night hike; it's an extraordinary statement of support for the Nicaraguan revolution and of willingness to defend it, a statement that the Reagan Administration ought to listen to.

Millie Thayer works with CRIES, Coordinadora Regional de Investigaciones Economicas y Sociales, an independent research institute based in Managua, Nicaragua.

## EDITORIAL/COMMENTARY

### Reagan most anti-civil rights president since Rutherford Hayes

by Jerry Garner

President Reagan's endorsement by the Ku Klux Klan in the last two presidential elections is not surprising. The President has done more to impede the progress of minorities since the administration of Rutherford Hayes.

In 1877 Hayes withdrew federal troops from South Carolina, Louisiana and Florida, thus officially ending the Radical Reconstruction. Radical Reconstruction was a period in which the Republican party was trying to reconstruct the South by giving former slaves the right to vote and also to provide legislation that would allow Blacks to have the same social and economic opportunities as Whites.

Radical Reconstruction began with the end of the Civil War and lasted until 1877 with the removal of federal troops. This removal was part of an agreement between the Republicans and the Democrats after the disputed presidential election in 1876 between Hayes and Samuel J. Tilden. Neither Hayes or Tilden had a clear majority of electoral college votes, due to election fraud and irregularities in some states. Hayes was given the election in return for a pledge that all federal support for Radical Reconstruction in the South be removed. After the removal, not only did Blacks become disfranchised, they also became victims of a terror campaign waged by the White League and the Ku Klux Klan.

The Reagan Administration's policies, like the policies of Hayes, has impeded the social and economic process made by Blacks during the Civil Rights Era. Below are just a few examples of the Reagan Administra-

tion's anti-Civil Rights policies:

- Reagan replaced three of his critics on the U.S. Civil Rights commission who disagreed with the Administration's positions on school busing and the use of racial quotas. It was the first time in the 26-year history of the commission that members were replaced by the President because of differences in Civil Rights policies.

- The Administration supported the Supreme Court's 6-to-3 decision on June 12, 1984, which rules that seniority prevails when layoffs are ordered. Even if recently-hired minorities end up losing jobs.

- On June 15, 1984, three days after the Supreme Court decision, the Reagan Justice Department moved to void a Cincinnati court order that bars the Police Department from laying off minority offices with less seniority.

- The Reagan Justice Department urged all 50 states and local agencies to seek to remove racial preferences from court-approved programs designed to remedy past job discrimination against minorities and women. In May of this year the NAACP filed a suit against Attorney General Edwin Meese III in Washington to stop the Justice Department.

The above decisions by Reagan have not only slowed the social and economic progress of Blacks and other minorities, his policies have also influenced the rise of racial tension in this country.

Economists, politicians and the media say the nation's economy is growing at a rate that is creating new jobs in both the public and private sector. However, these jobs haven't reached many communities, especially Black communities where the Black

adult unemployment rate is anywhere from 15 to 30 percent. Black teenage unemployment nationwide is a shameful 50 percent or more.

This country is slowly becoming a consuming country (more and more products are imported each year), resulting in more factories and plants closing which in turn reduces the labor force. Since the Supreme Court ruled seniority over Affirmative Action, Blacks, women and other minorities will be the first laid off due to past discriminatory hiring and promotion practices of many employers. This competition for jobs creates racial disharmony, resulting in racial tension. This is now the case in the Fire Departments of Memphis, Washington, D.C., and Boston, and in the Police Departments of Cincinnati and Indianapolis.

A similar climate existed when Rutherford Hayes was President. Southern Whites resented the enfranchisement of Blacks in the South and the power of the federal government to protect their rights. But, as stated earlier, after Hayes withdrew the last of the Federal Army from the South, the government was turned over to native-born White Southern Democrats, or Conservatives, thus began the disenfranchisement of Blacks in the South.

If states across the nation followed the advice of Attorney General Edwin Meese III and removed racial preference from court-approved programs designed to remedy past job discrimination against minorities and women, racial tension will increase. Blacks along with other minorities will once again become disenfranchised in the United States.

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