

EDITORIAL/OPINION

Mandela symbol of Black resistance to apartheid

Nelson Mandela is a living example of Black South African resistance to the racist and barbaric system of Apartheid. Mandela, President of the banned African National Congress (ANC), has been in prison since 1962.

Mandela has been resisting Apartheid for the majority of his life. In 1952 he led a massive non-violent protest. His skills as a political organizer were recognized by the repressive South African government which resulted in Mandela being banned and prohibited from engaging in political activities.

In 1956, the government tried once again to silence Mandela, he was charged with treason. The trial lasted five years and he was acquitted. After his acquittal, Mandela was once again banned.

Pretoria thought they finally had rid itself of Mandela in 1962 by charging him with sabotage. On September 11, 1962, Mandela was sentenced to life plus five years in prison.

The government's efforts have failed. Mandela is the symbol of hope for the majority of Black South Africans. "Free Mandela" is scrawled on city walls throughout South Africa. For Mandela has shown Black South Africans that freedom is

the right of all people regardless of their color, and Blacks should be willing to die for this freedom. Mandela has refused to negotiate his own release from prison.

Mandela's wife Winnie says "When the South African government offered my husband conditional release, they were suggesting that men can go to prison for 23 years and be prepared to come to exactly the same conditions they fought against those many years ago."

South Africa forced the ANC into an armed struggle after the Sharpeville massacre of 1960. Sixty-nine Blacks were shot to death (52 were shot in the back) by police during a march protesting the killing of four Blacks. This can be seen today on our local TV as government troops and police shoot Blacks like they were hunting ducks.

This action has only made Blacks in South Africa more hungry for freedom. Nelson Mandela deserves credit for this. This statement was made by Mandela in 1962, "What sort of justice is this... a judiciary controlled entirely by Whites and enforcing laws enacted by a White Parliament in which Africans have no representation?"

Letters to the Editor

The Observer welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be typed or neatly printed and signed with the author's name and address (addresses are not usually published).

We reserve the right to edit for length. Mail to: Portland Observer, P.O. Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208.

Police power goes unchecked

To the Editor:

Perhaps a Symposium on the Portland Police Department is long overdue. This is not meant as an indictment against the police. I'm inclined to believe, unchecked police "discretion" is a matter of serious concern to poor people, especially Blacks, given the high rates of racial prejudice amongst caucasian police officers. Black and Reiss in their study of Boston, Chicago, and Washington police point out that the great majority of caucasian officers hold anti-Black attitudes. Caucasian officers, thinking the very worst of blacks they encounter, are in a position to use their discretionary powers to the disadvantage of Blacks.

The American Friends Service Committee in its report on crime and punishment in Amerika makes the following observation: "The justice system functions to maintain a racist relationship between the caucasian majority and the black, brown, red and yellow minorities in Amerika. The command-obedience structure of racism has existed in the criminal justice system since the settlement of the country."

Administratively the police departments of Amerika are run by caucasian males. With few exceptions (Atlanta is one) the chief administrative officer of the police force is caucasian. It is small wonder that many Blacks conclude that the police are a caucasian occupation force in Black communities.

The police have been able to resist change rather successfully because of the enormous political gains they have been able to amass out of the increasing bureaucratization of cities.

In Portland, the police are not under the operational control of the Mayor. Under the guise of keeping police safe from political pressure, the

civil service system and the unionization process have given the police amazing political power.

Since the police have a virtual monopoly on the use of legal force in our society, who should control them, and how should they be controlled? In short, who watches and commands the police? Through society's somewhat mistaken belief that police could stop or reduce crime, we have allowed them to amass power over our lives second in scope only to the potential of the military forces. Even though Sir Robert Peel, England's Home Secretary, back in 1822 recognized that the police could not eliminate crime, we have nonetheless been deluded into believing that more policemen, with more gadgets and increased powers could somehow reduce crime.

The police have become such a political power that most attempts at reducing their discretionary authority are met with intense resistance. Through civil service protection and the unionization effort among police departments, police have become very powerful. The sight of armed San Francisco policemen on the picketlines in 1975 signaled the potential power of the police over government. While there was a court order prohibiting such activity, many policemen chose to ignore it. In fact, the Mayor reportedly replied in effect, "who is going to uphold this order?" It was indeed a coercive and disruptive show of force. In fact, it gives us a glimpse of the ability of the police to exercise contact and authority even above that of the courts and elected officials.

Maybe it is an alarmist position to suggest that the police are out of control of the people in Portland; however, it is not too farfetched to suggest that they are out of the con-

trol of the people in Northeast Portland. If the people of Oregon do not soon develop an understanding that the police are building, or have built, an enormously strong power base that may ultimately be uncontrollable, then Oregon, as a whole is heading for serious trouble. The biggest policy issue of our day may be one of not how to control crime, but how to control the police.

Dr. Jamil Cherovec

Save Antelope

To the Editor:

The startling turn of events in the Antelope area these past few weeks seems to have fostered a belief that further efforts by the Save Antelope Committee are unnecessary—a dangerous assumption.

The changes in Antelope are primarily cosmetic. While the police force may be removed, the RIC "security" patrol continues to keep us under surveillance. The city council remains 100% Rajneesh and can rescind any changes they have made at any time.

We hope these recent conciliatory actions are made in good faith but prior experience with this group makes us skeptical. The only way we can make sure abuses do not re-occur is to disincorporate.

It is imperative that the petition drive continue. We urge every Oregonian to sign it at the earliest opportunity.

Sincerely,
Jim and Jean Opray
Antelope, OR



Black capitalism: economic safety valve

Along the Color Line by Dr. Manning Marable

In the past year, there have been several attempts to promote strategies of Black petty capitalist development as a means to resolve some of Black America's pressing economic dilemmas. One notable example is led by Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan. His economic network is termed POWER— "People Organized and Working for Economic Rebirth."

Power proposes a system of cooperation between Black-owned firms which would sell personal services and household items to Black consumers. The capital accumulated from sales would be used to start small manufacturing companies. POWER received an interest-free loan of \$5 million from Libyan leader Muammar Kaddafi last May, and hundreds of Black would-be entrepreneurs have applauded the concept. Even Coretta Scott King, who has characterized Farrakhan's statements on Jews as "extremely harmful," supports the POWER approach to Black economic development. The POWER strategy received a setback recently, however, when the Johnson Products Company of Chicago dropped its plans to make household and beauty products with the network. One spokesperson for Johnson Products justified their decision by blaming Farrakhan's "anti-Semitism" and other "controversial statements."

The heated debate about Farrakhan's positions on Israel and American Jews has unfortunately obscured the key element of his program, which is Black economic development. Why has POWER attracted significant interest among Black Americans? And what are the limitations of any "Black capitalist" strategy?

The reasons for its appeal to Blacks are based, in part, on the harsh realities of economic inequity. The material status of virtually all sectors

of the Black community have continued to stagnate during the "Reagan recovery" of 1983-1985. Overall Black unemployment remains over 15 percent, and roughly 50 percent for teenagers; Black median family incomes are only 55 percent of comparable white family incomes, the most significant income gap in two decades. Black professional and white collar workers have also experienced severe hardship. Economist Richard McGahey has estimated that federal agencies have dismissed minorities at rates significantly greater than whites since 1981. The cutbacks in federal government social programs and affirmative action have checked Black professional upward mobility in the public sector.

Similarly in the private sector, the economic conditions of most Black-owned firms have also deteriorated. According to a recent report by the Washington, DC-based Joint Center for Political Studies, the average annual receipts for Black businesses dropped from \$37,000 in 1977 to \$23,000 by 1982, in constant 1977 dollars. Of 108,000 Black-owned firms created since 1977, 63,000 have annual gross receipts of under \$5,000; 85 percent have receipts of less than \$25,000. The percentage of Black-owned firms with paid employees has dropped from 17.1 percent of all Black firms in 1977 to 11.4 percent by 1982. The callous neglect and budget-cutting of the Reaganites, plus the simmering material hardships of Black working class and even middle-income people, has culminated into a desperate demand for some sort of self-motivated attempt to resolve the crisis.

What is most striking about POWER is its close kinship to earlier Black "self-help" programs. Nearly a century ago, conservative Black educator Booker T. Washington launched the National Negro Business League, a coalition of Black en-

trepreneurs, which promoted the development of all-Black insurance firms, funeral homes, groceries and retail establishments. A generation later, in the 1920s, Jamaican Black nationalist Marcus Garvey created the Negro Factories Corporation, a group of Black businessmen who attempted to seize control of the Black consumer market. Garvey's Black Star steamship line projected the marketing of Black products to Caribbean and African markets.

These earlier efforts were unable to reverse the basic trends of institutional economic oppression, partially because Blacks are denied access to investment capital, and more importantly, because of the inability of small enterprises to compete effectively against large, multinational firms. Such strategies also assume incorrectly that the receipts from Black-owned firms can become a potential capital-base for the promotion and development of other Black-oriented social projects.

In the long run, the only realistic means to reduce and ultimately eliminate unemployment and poverty in the Black community is a strategy which directly targets the government, not the private sector. Only through massive federal jobs programs, the strict enforcement of affirmative action, housing and human service programs, can the vast majority of Black people actually obtain some measure of economic equality. Although collective private-sector oriented networks such as POWER should be supported critically, they cannot resolve the massive problems of the Black poor. Black capitalism, as such, remains more a safety valve for economic discontent, than a long-term strategy of group advancement.

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



Healthwatch

by Steven Bailey N.D.

As the year of nutrition against cancer comes to an end, and our television screens are inundated with commercials expounding the benefit of high fiber in helping prevent colon cancer, I felt a need to comment on these "new" discoveries.

One of the aspects of current medicine that frustrates me to no end is the tendency for scientific proofs to lag decades-to-centuries behind the obvious empirical findings of clinical associations. Colon cancer is one of these areas in which the need to work within scientific proofs has resulted in thousands of deaths and a blind acceptance of totally inappropriate dietary habits. The need for fiber and avoidance of highly refined foods has been written about and discussed by doctors in the field for over a hundred years.

In Kellogg's book *Colon Hygiene* (copyright 1916), the index lists among other subjects: "Cancer, of colon, resulting from constipation... p. 349." He writes throughout this book that the combination of high red meat and white flour are responsible for many of the cancers, and colitis conditions found throughout America. Recommendations of increased dietary fiber, reduction of white sugar, and exercise are discussed throughout this book, which leads us to wonder why it took the American Cancer Society until 1985 before they could risk endorsing a high fiber diet.

Another book, *The Diseases of Woman, Their Causes and Treatment*, by Hollich, M.D. (copyright 1858) states: "White bread is neither so wholesome, nor yet so nourishing

as that with the bran in it, though a mistaken notion prevails to the contrary. Bran bread contains more of the elements required for the support of the body than pure flour bread; it also relaxes the bowels in an easy and natural manner, while white bread almost always constipates them." (p. 241) This book goes on about the need for fiber and exercise in many conditions.

These are by no means the only books to assault white flour, white sugar, and processed foods as contributors to many degenerative conditions, nor were they the earliest. They do show that observations of common factors in diseased patients often lead to truths that can evade current "scientific design" for decades. What is sad about all of this is that we, the public, suffer because the politics and self-interest of the food, drug and medical industries often stifle the works of brilliant individuals, and result in mis-direction and inappropriate policies.

As Albert Einstein wrote: "The greatest of spirits often encounter violent opposition from mediocre minds." So has gone the general pattern of funding support for such brilliant individuals as Linus Pauling, Max Gerson and others, whose research monies disappear as they began leading to truths that ran contrary to accepted beliefs of our times.

It would be one thing if our avoidance of the truth was due to a conservative public safety issue or just a misunderstanding of the issues, but it appears that much of this blindness is a chosen path of self-interest and power which actually jeopardizes

public health and obstructs the freedom of choice that should be a guarantee to all Americans.

I have to admit that I have learned about much of this "self-interest" through my recent years as a Naturopathic Doctor in Oregon. While in Salem in 1983, I heard an Oregon Medical Association member privately state to a group (shortly after having testified to the legislature on the need to remove our profession's prescriptive privileges), that he hoped for a time in the "not-too-distant-future" in which no Naturopaths would practice within the state of Oregon. We have seen M.D.s deliberately misrepresent our profession to legislators, and laws which, like this year's, require us to "prove cost-effectiveness" prior to insurance coverage (not demanded of or provided by M.D.s) and certification criteria for providing home births (all Oregon citizens can deliver a baby at home, only Naturopaths have to be certified).

It is clear to me that the American Medical Association continues its role of harassment of alternative medicines and that its ancillary groups are not only violating my constitutional rights, but are also violating the rights of all American citizens. There is a need for legal redress of this condition, but unlike the limitless coffers of mainstream medicine, we who offer less expensive, non-insured alternatives cannot afford the cost of these legal fights. Hopefully our judicial system will at some point protect our constitutional rights from the corrupt actions of special interest groups.

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