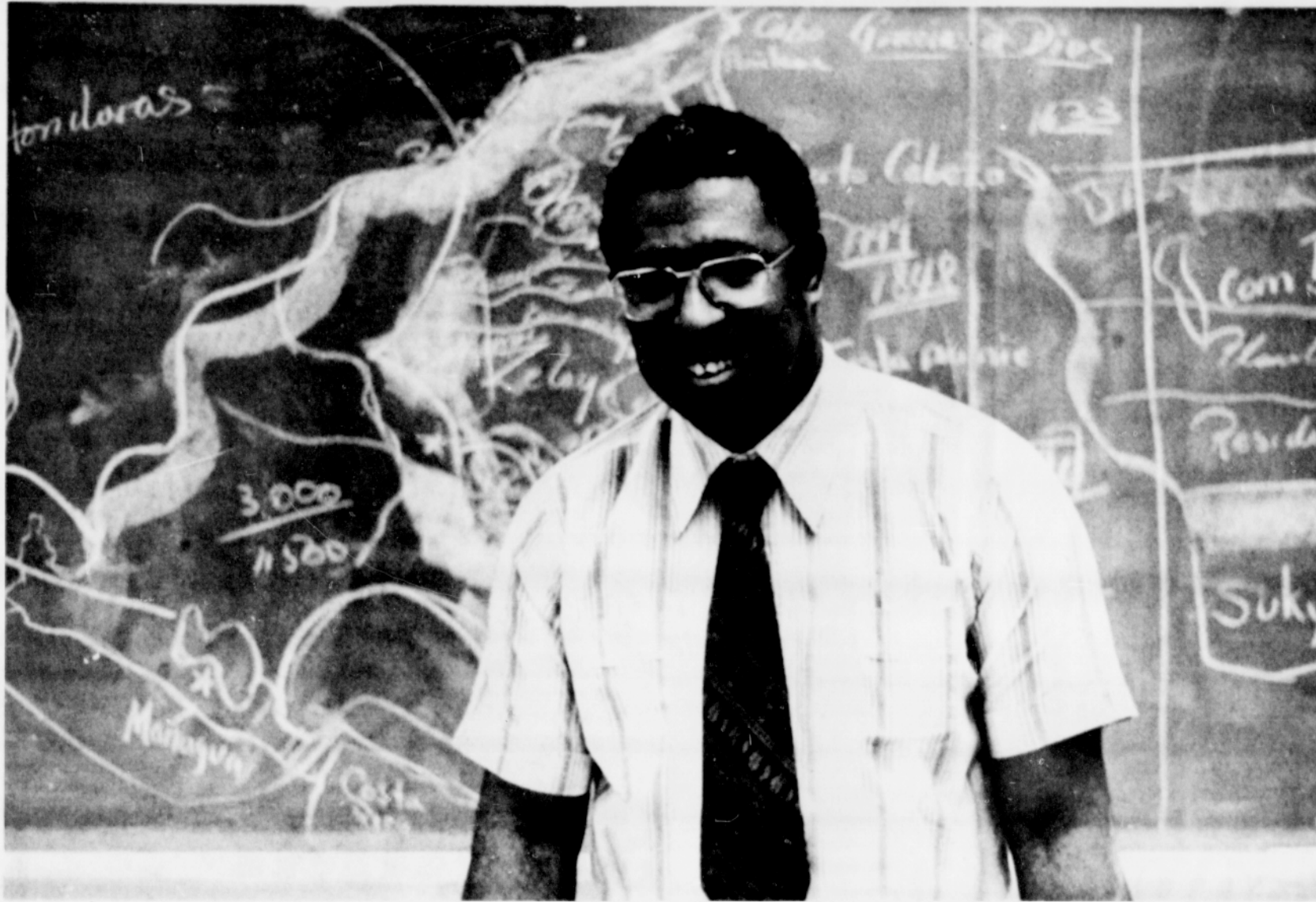


METROPOLITAN



ERNAN SAVERY

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Black Nicaraguan leader speaks at Church

by Jerry Garner

"Blacks have been struggling for their independence in the Caribbeans and on the east coast of Nicaragua since the days of slavery," said Ernan Savery.

Savery made this statement Sunday at Maranatha Church to an audience of about 60 people. Mr. Savery is on a national tour of the United States, the title of his speech was "The Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua: Cultural and Political Perspectives." Savery's visit to Portland was sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee and the Oregon Rainbow Coalition.

Savery told the audience if one is to understand the present issues in Nicaragua, one must know and understand the past history of that country. According to Savery, Blacks living in Nicaragua have always had one common struggle, that being the political struggle. "Slavery was a political system, it was a system that led to capitalism and imperialism."

Savery said Blacks came to Nicaragua around the 1620s when cotton and sugar cane were planted by the Puritans. Slave ships from Cuba, Haiti, and Jamaica were sailing near Nicaragua. One slave ship stopped on the middle coast of Nicaragua and slaves came ashore. This, said Savery, was the first encounter between Blacks and Miskitu Indians. Savery said there is an ethnic relation between Blacks and the Miskitu Indians. During this time, some Black slaves fled from Jamaica and settled in the bluffs of Bluefield.

Later pirates captured some of them and took them back to the island. The Blacks who weren't captured were helped by a Dutch pirate named Levitt. In turn the slaves guarded Levitt's treasures which he stole from the Spanish. "Blacks were between two swords: they were threatened by slavery from the east, and the Spanish from the west," said Savery.

Under the Samozza regime, Blacks and other Nicaraguans were still fighting for political rights.

Savery was a teacher at the time Samozza was president. He and other teachers were labeled communists and revolutionists. Savery said, "When Samozza was president, Blacks in Nicaragua went up only to the sixth grade." With help from a Catholic priest, they started a high school for Blacks.

In 1978, Savery and two priests who were anthropologists founded the Culture of History Institute of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua in Bluefield, Nicaragua. Savery said that in spite of the Black's struggle in Nicaragua, they have kept some of their African and indigenous culture. "The Samozza government didn't

do anything for Blacks, they took land away from Blacks, and became very brutal to them. Kids were beaten by his troops so Blacks on the east coast decided to fight against the Samozza government."

Savery said under the Samozza dictatorship, over half of Nicaragua's children were undernourished. "The Sandinistas have cut infant mortality by over one-third," according to Savery.

No amount of U.S. funding of the Contras is going to topple the Nicaraguan government or make it nonrevolutionary," says Savery. "the

funding only increases the human toll on both sides." Savery said that the Contras, not the Sandinistas, are killing the Miskitu Indians.

Presently, Blacks are working with the Sandinista government in autonomy, said Savery. Autonomy is the center of ethnic development. "Groups should have the rights to govern themselves. All we want is our natural laws to be respected; we have natural laws. Usually people explain culture, and exclude the natural law of a group," said Savery.

Savery was asked by someone in the audience if the Sandinistas or the

Reagan-backed Contras were more of a threat to Black Nicaraguans. He replied by saying the Contras were more of a threat than the Sandinistas. "At least we can talk to the Sandinistas," said Savery.

Savery is also a noted musician and ethnomusicologist. He has authored several articles about traditional African customs and home economics on the Atlantic Coast and is currently writing a book on ethnics of the Atlantic Coast.

Intrastate telephone rates go down local rates will rise

Public Utilities Commissioner Gene Maudlin has approved a plan which will reduce long-distance telephone rates within Oregon and increase local rates for most telephone companies in the state. The changes will take place Jan. 1.

Under the plan proposed by Pacific Northwest Bell Telephone Co. (PNB) and the Oregon Independent Telephone Association, intrastate toll rates will drop between 3 and 11 percent, depending on the calling distance.

Most local phone companies will increase local rates between 25 cents and \$2 a month to make up for revenue losses that will occur because of the lower toll rates.

The local rate increase will allow PNB to reduce rates on long-distance calls it handles within the state beginning Jan. 1. PNB carries long-distance traffic for the independent companies as well, so their rates also will fall.

Maudlin said public hearings on the rate changes will be conducted early in 1986. The PNB increase will be subject to refund. The independent phone company rates could be adjusted, but the companies' revenues will equal their additional costs.

Maudlin also has asked the PUC staff to conduct an investigation and public hearings into the possibility of providing rate relief for low-income elderly residential customers who cannot afford to pay the rising telephone service costs.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has approved a lifeline-type plan which could eliminate charges ordered by the FCC for certain single-line residential customers, such as low-income persons. The FCC ordered a \$1 charge on residential customers last June; an additional \$1 will take effect next June.

Maudlin said he has asked his staff

to identify the needs of low-income elderly, and to determine how much rate relief might be made available through the FCC plan and possibly through other means within the intrastate rate structure.

Free day at Forestry Center

Are your kids going stir-crazy after nearly two weeks of Christmas vacation? Or maybe you need a break from the tedium at work or at home.

Come join us at the Forestry Center on Friday, Jan. 3 for an entertaining and educational day at no cost to you! That's right; it's Free Admission Day at the Forestry Center on Jan. 3, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Arrive by 10 a.m. and we will offer you warm refreshments and pastries in conjunction with the unveiling of the Forestry Center's new name.

The Forestry Center features exhibits unlike any other on earth, from the 70-foot talking tree to the priceless Jessup Wood Collection with its more than 500 species of wood. Of special interest is a spectacular presentation, *Forests of the World*, an 18-minute, multi-media show which recently won an international award for its script.

The Forestry Center is located at 4033 S.W. Canyon Road in Portland, near the Zoo and OMSI. For more information, call (503) 228-1367.

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PIIAC will reissue subpoenas

by Jerry Garner

Last Thursday the Police Internal Investigations Auditing Committee (PIIAC) stated that it will reissue subpoenas for three Portland policemen. The audit committee has been attempting since October to get the officers to testify before the committee regarding two cases of alleged police misconduct.

The City Council committee which oversees the PIIAC, voted last week to ratify the subpoenas. City Commissioners Mike Lindberg, Margaret Strachen, and Commissioner Dick Bogle voted against requiring the officers to testify before the committee. If the policemen refuse to testify, the Portland City Council may ask the city attorney's office to enforce the subpoenas.

The officers were first subpoenaed during audit committee hearings Oct. 28 and 29. Neither of the policemen

attended the hearings. Instead, Portland Police Association attorney, Sam Imperati, represented the officers during the hearings. Imperati contended that the PIIAC subpoenas were invalid.

In other police-related news, the estate of Roberta "Bert" Tate filed a notice of wrongful death claim against the City of Portland. Tate, an 86-year-old Black woman, was shot and bled to death at her home. Tate was shot by Portland police when they mistook her for Thomas L. Graves, 37, who was mentally deranged, was also killed during a standoff with the police.

Last month the city paid \$18,000 to Tate's son for property damage and living expenses as a result of the shooting. Tate's estate is represented by the law firm of James and Jeffers of San Francisco, CA.

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