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Members of the "Black Leadership Conference '86" discuss areas of concern they wish candidates for governor to address.

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Speaker Says Blacks Must Solve Their Own Problems

by Jerry Garner

"Based on where we are today, where do we go from here?" This question was asked to Black citizens who attended a community forum last Thursday at the North Branch Library. The forum's topic was: The State of Black America 1986. The panel of speakers included Kat Toran, David L. Little, John Olive, Robert Phillips and Calvin Henry.

During the forum, each of the speakers told the audience that Blacks must not expect to have things done for them — they must do for themselves.

The keynote address was given by Ms. Toran. Toran is the Director of the State of Oregon Affirmative Action Office. She told those who gathered that in order for Blacks to face the challenge in the future, they must look back into history to explain the failure of Black America to develop itself economically.

Toran emphasized to the audience that economic equality and stability is the key to political power. She then quoted several Blacks such as Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. DuBois, and Marcus Garvey. Explaining to them that each of these leaders focused on Black self-sufficiency and economic self-development. "Self-sufficiency, economic stability, and political power should be a top priority of Black America," said Toran.

The Black community must first focus on themselves, before these priorities can be met said Toran. "The Black community must be held accountable for the education of our youth." "Blacks leaders must chastise the pimps and the drug pushers; they must condemn Black on Black crime." "The concept of family must be emphasized, along with moral and sexual responsibility," said Toran.

During the two and a half hour forum, national and local data was given on the social barometer of Black America. Those in attendance listened closely as Little and Olive read out data showing that Blacks are at the very bottom of the economic and social ladder both national and locally.

This low social status among many Blacks was reflected in the report given by Robert Phillips on vital statistics. Phillips, who is Director of Multnomah County Affirmative Action office, blames poor health among Blacks in Portland on bad behavior patterns, life styles and environmental factors. "Despite the advances in medical technology, and the availability of health care facilities, Blacks health overall is the worst in 15 years," said Phillips. Local data indicated that a disproportional number of Blacks are suffering from chronic illnesses, such as kidney dis-



The State of Black America 1986 panel (L-R) David L. Little, John Olive, Kay Toran, Robert Phillips and Calvin Henry.

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

cases, strokes, diabetes, cancer and nutrition deficiencies.

Phillips said that between 1979 and 1981 an average of 227,000 Blacks died each year. Of this number, 139,000 were under the age of seventy. He also stated that homicide was the main cause of death among Black males between the ages of 25 and 44. Homicide accounted for 38 percent of excessive death among Black males and 14 percent among Black females.

Calvin Henry told the crowd that Black community leaders should be held accountable to the community when they fail to act in the best interest of Blacks. "One of the saddest things that has occurred in the Black community is people such as Clarence Pendleton III, Chairman of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, hasn't been held accountable for his actions," said Henry. Henry said for too long Blacks' destiny has been determined by Whites and Black gatekeepers. He said there must be a total commitment from the entire Black community to address the problems facing Black America.

This view was shared by those in the audience. A man in the audience stated Black churches should be more involved in the problems facing Blacks in America and asked the panel why there wasn't more Blacks in attendance at this forum. A woman responded by saying that it is hard to get them (the

churches) involved. She said, "we need less talk from the churches, and more action."

Despite the gloomy picture facing Black America, the crowd was told there are a few Blacks who are doing

well in society. "We do have our individual Black success stories; we do have Black people who are making it here in Portland and around the nation," replied Toran.

NBUF Condemns Savimbi Visit

The National Black United Front has joined the ranks of organizations and individuals nationwide condemning the visit of Dr. Jonas Savimbi, head of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA).

Dr. Savimbi is in the United States to lobby for support of covert aid to UNITA in its attempts to topple the government of Angola.

Savimbi's UNITA is supported by the South African government, which provides logistical and financial aid to UNITA forces.

The National Black United Front views Savimbi and UNITA as part of a network of right wing supported movements, which include Contra forces in Nicaragua, that are hoping to receive covert aid from the Reagan Administration, with Congressional approval.

These forces are attempting to topple governments who fought valiantly for many years to oust U.S. supported dictatorships and colonial powers.

Black Leadership Conference '86

by Bob Lothian

Continuing the process begun two years ago to unify the black vote, about 50 residents of Portland's black community met Saturday for the "Black Leadership Conference '86."

Meeting at Vancouver Ave. Baptist Church, conference participants put together a platform of issues important to the black community. Conference organizers said they will use the platform in discussions with candidates for governor, to find out where they stand on the issues. The community will then be able to make an informed endorsement, they said.

Conference co-chair Ron Herndon said the black community forum was "the most democratic way I know" for the community to decide on who to back for governor. "We want to come up with an agenda that speaks to the needs of our folks," Herndon said.

After a prayer and a moment of silence in memory of the late Rev. John Garlington, the audience listened to introductions from Herndon, conference co-chair Herb Cawthorne and state representative Margaret Carter. The group then broke into workshops to discuss issues in economic development, health and human services, housing, education, and law and justice.

The workshop on economic development drew the most people and also drew some heated discussion.

"We're talking about the viability of a community, we're a depressed area," said Northeast Portland resident George Hendrix. "What is the governor's office going to do for economic development in North-Northeast Portland?" Hendrix asked.

"Will the governor's office insure that the black community will get a share of the jobs when new companies come in?" asked Sam Brooks, president of the Northeast Business Boosters.

"We have to come up with a list of questions that will get at where these people are coming from," said Jeana Wooley, referring to the candidates.

Each workshop identified several issues and then reported back to the large group. Conference participants generally agreed on the need for more black representation in government, government agencies, in school and prison administration, and on economic development boards. They also agreed that the candidates should support divestiture of state funds in companies that do business in South Africa.

The Saturday meeting continued in the spirit of the community forum two years ago that unified in endorsing Margaret Carter as the candidate for representative from District 18, Herndon said.

Herndon cited Carter's resistance to political pressure to withdraw from the community political process and make an early endorsement of a gubernatorial candidate.

"Margaret has probably represented a community better than anyone I've seen," Herndon said. "She really deserves our undying support for staying with the process."

Herndon announced that the Wall Street Journal on Jan. 9th listed Carter as one of the outstanding black legislators in the country.

"I am exhibit A of such a process that we are here for," said Carter, after her introduction by conference co-chair Herb Cawthorne. She went right to the point in criticizing the record of Oregon's current governor.

"Right now in Salem I feel we have tired blood," Carter said. She described Vic Atiyeh as a governor who does not understand oppression in the black community, who vetoed bills on restricting police use of force, South Africa divestment, comparable worth, and who resisted legislation allowing state assistance to two-parent households.

She encouraged the audience to write an agenda for the next legislature, to "sow the seeds for a better state government in the next eight years than we've had in the last eight years."

Black Leadership Conference '86 Proposed Action Agenda:

Economic Development

- target economic development funds in economically depressed low income communities
- earmark a percentage of funds spent on large development projects, such as the Columbia South Shore Corridor, for job training
- target money from the Oregon Employees Retirement System for investment in black community enterprises
- direct a greater portion of lottery funds for job training

Health and Human Services

- state health plan insuring full medical care for all Oregonians
- more in-school health and family planning clinics for teen-agers
- maintain Medicaid funds for abortions
- a transfer program in which some welfare money is transferred to job-training programs

Youth

- encourage linkage program where corporations hire minority students with good grades and attendance
- launch an aggressive anti-drug campaign
- community service scholarship for young people who participate in community improvement projects

Housing

- survey to determine number of subsidized housing units to be converted to market rate and counter the conversion with an incentive plan for owners
- new subsidized housing units made possible by requiring housing authorities to refinance existing projects in a manner that will generate capital for development of new units
- create housing renewal districts
- support recently proposed Oregon Housing Trust Fund

Education

- increase funding to economically-depressed school districts
- improve ethnic curricula
- rigorous recruitment of black teachers and administrators
- improve transfer policy between two and four year institutions
- more financial aid
- assist literacy programs in community organizations

Law and Justice

- increase number of black professionals in state justice system
- comprehensive review of sentencing, probation and parole procedures with the object of reducing disproportionate number of blacks in prison
- initiate multi-cultural training programs for all public employees involved in the state justice system

Awareness Conference

Portland Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. will present a "Political Awareness Conference", March 8, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Portland Holiday Inn-Airport, N.E. 82nd and Columbia Blvd.

The one-day conference is designed to increase awareness of the political process. Conference workshop topics will include "Running for Public Office", "How to Lobby for and Impact Legislation", "Financing a Campaign", "Problems Blacks Face in the Political Arena", "Accessing Political Boards and Commissions" and "Getting Funds from your Local Government".

Speakers will include elected and appointed city and state officials and other professionals. Registration cost is \$10 if registered by March 5 and \$15 on site. Registration fee includes a luncheon with keynote speaker Margaret Carter, District 18 Representative, and a reception to follow the conference beginning at 3:00 p.m.

For more information on registration and conference speakers contact Jeanne Hartzog, 4300 N.E. Fremont, Room 230, 249-2855.

Calorie counting? When a recipe calls for cream, sweet or sour, substitute plain unflavored yogurt. It adds protein, calcium and B vitamins instead of excess fat.