

# EDITORIAL/OPINION

## African-American Organizations Should Support Programs that Benefit Community

Every African-American should be aware of the serious economic and social problems facing a substantial proportion of African-Americans.

One of the most serious social problems facing the African-American is the high rate of drug and alcohol abuse within their community.

Indeed, residents through Northeast Portland have voiced their position to drug trafficking and abuse in the area in which they live. However, the persons to whom they are directing their anger are African-Americans who operate drug houses and sell illicit drugs openly on the streets in the community.

Drug abuse, drug trafficking and alcohol abuse are serious problems in Northeast Portland. The price the community is paying as a result of these ills are enormous in terms of crime rates in the community, lack of community development, prostitution, families breaking up, and destruction of lives.

With so much at stake due to drug and alcohol abuse, one would think that the entire community would support programs which address the problem of drug and alcohol abuse among African-Americans. Sadly, this is not the case.

Two programs, "Project for Community Recovery," which is operated by the DePaul Center, and the "Community Mental Health Center" are not being utilized by the African-American community.

Project for Community Recovery provides help to co-dependents and treatment services to alcohol and drug abusers. The Community Mental Health Center provides assessment and outpatient services.

Despite the valuable services the two programs offer African-Americans, few have taken advantage of this service. Equally disturbing is the fact that institutions in the Black community haven't been as cooperative as they should be with the managers of these programs in an effort to inform the community about their value.

Furthermore, both programs are in jeopardy of facing cutbacks due to lack of utilization. African-American institutional and organizational leaders should work together with organizations which attempt to improve the conditions of both African-Americans and the entire community. Failure to do so would be a tragedy.



## Along the Color Line

by Dr. Manning Marable

Dr. Manning Marable is professor of sociology and political science at Purdue University. "Along the Color Line" appears in over 140 newspapers internationally.

### "The Political Poverty of Black Conservatives"

A recent newspaper column by Black conservative economist Walter E. Williams criticized what he termed the use of "racial quotas for the purposes of redressing historical grievances." Williams also urged unemployed Blacks to accept "dead-end" jobs as a means of upward mobility. His rightwing arguments symbolized the political poverty of Black Reaganism, the NeoUncle Tomism of the 1980s.

In the May issue of "Christian Century" magazine, Harvard Professor Glenn Loury, another prominent Black conservative, argued: "It is time for the Negro middle class to rise up from its stool of indifference, to retreat from its flight into unreality and to bring its full resources—its heart, its mind and its checkbook—to the aid of the less fortunate brother . . . Our work today is not to change the minds of white people, but to involve ourselves in the lives of Black people."

One must admit that Loury is partially correct. The paradox of desegregation since the 1960s has been that the integration of white universities, businesses and suburbs has frequently meant the loss of thousands of Black professionals from organizations which promote Black interests. The Black middle class as a whole has failed to establish strong, national institutions which rest upon its own fiscal resources which deal effectively or seriously with the problems of Black unemployment, hunger and Black-on-Black crime. There are of course exceptions to this rule, but all too often, individual success has meant the abandonment of our collective problems.

But the essential common sense of Loury's appeal comes from the fact that we have also heard this kind of appeal before. Loury's recent popularity among some Blacks comes from his rhetoric—Black self-help, racial pride, self-sufficiency. A small part of this political legacy can be traced to the ideas of Black nationalism, as expressed historically by Martin Delany, Marcus Garvey, and Malcolm X. However, when this language of self-assertion is combined with a political alliance with conservative Republicans, and a blind faith in the power of American capitalism, it becomes essentially the anachronistic program of Booker T. Washington.

Washington's political and educational achievements, including the establishment of Tuskegee Institute and the National Negro Business League, cannot be minimized. Yet Washington's political strategy of alliances with conservative white capitalists and Republicans was fundamentally flawed. He retreated from the political arena, tacitly accepted political disfranchisement of Black folk, and acknowledged the unequal status quo. Black families would simply have to learn to survive on their own, without government support. Washington never understood that the road of accommodation and Black self-help, without a concomitant movement for equal rights and a struggle for social justice, led to a dead end.

When Loury and other Black conservatives today declare that "our work is not to change the minds of whites", they contribute directly to the destruction of civil rights, affirmative action programs, and ultimately, they accelerate the economic and social crisis which affects Black people as a whole. Black self-help, by itself, is not substitute for an aggressive continuation of the civil rights agenda, which seeks ultimately to uproot racism, and not accommodate it. The oppression of Black communities deepens everytime housing, health-care, and jobs programs are reduced or eliminated by the Reaganites of both political parties. When Black women and men are forced into jobs at subminimum wage rates, how can they sustain healthy families?

When welfare and education benefits are reduced to provide more funds for the Pentagon budget, how are the basic interests of the Black community served? How can a poor Black family pull itself up by its own proverbial bootstraps, according to the Black conservatives' prescriptions, when it has no boots at all?

By the false juxtaposition of Black self-initiative vs. progressive social and political protest, the Lourys and others repeat the mistake of Booker T. Washington, and reinforce the chains of racism and economic oppression. Loury and Williams have forgotten the warning of Frederick Douglass: "Power concedes nothing without Demand."

# Letters to the Editor

## The Need for Focus in Oregon Black Community

Recent incidents in Portland reflect that there is a great need for focus in the Black Community. There are some Black individuals purporting to speak for the Portland Black Community, yet they do not feel that they have to be accountable to it. The actions of these individuals seem to sell out or undermine the aspirations of the Black Community. Also these individuals are unwilling to cooperate, coordinate and communicate with other individuals and organizations who are working to better the conditions for Blacks in Oregon. These individuals want to be the Black gatekeepers for the Black Community.

The commitment to develop competent, committed and accountable leadership is one of the biggest tasks facing the Black Community. Identification with the Black Community is still a major problem. Many people in the power structure have expressed that outspoken Blacks in Portland are satisfied if they can hold a press conference or a march.

The recent endorsement of a White candidate for Portland City Council and the castigation of a Black candidate for Chairman of Multnomah County Board of Commissioners reflect that these individuals are not truly working for the interest of the Black Community. They appear to be only interested in self-interests at the expense of the Black Community. Also it is equally

saddening when we find that members of the Black Community can only express something positive about the community by holding a march.

These events, incidents and conditions need be put into perspective for the Black Community. They need to be focused so that the Black Community can see how they help or hurt the aspirations and goals of the Black Community. The intentions of those individuals who purport to speak on behalf of the Black Community should be examined.

These recent incidents make it imperative that greater focus must come to the Oregon Black Community. If this focus does not come soon, it appears that our community is heading toward self-destruction.

You are the representatives of the Black Press in Oregon. Your newspapers can serve the Black Community by helping to bring and build this focus which is so urgently needed. Will you use your newspapers to help the Black Community to build a future through a better understanding of the events, people, and activities that shape their lives?

Calvin O.L. Henry  
President  
Oregon Assembly  
for Black Affairs

## Letter to Head of Corrections

Mr. Toombs,

On August 18, 1986, I had to go over a Sergeant Hatley's head to get a sheet that was not torn, and since that incident 2 or 3 inmates have come up to me and told me that I better watch out and everytime that I go back to my cell I better search it real good cause the guard that you did that to is a dog and he will plant something in your cell and have you set up.

I want it to be known that I have no need for a shank,

and I do not use drugs. I have not been in so much as a fight since my 4 years in this place, so I do not have any enemies in here that I would need a shank for, and I do not use drugs.

So please be on notice.

Leonard L. Patrick  
2605 State St.  
P.O. Box 45230  
Salem, Oregon 97310

## Cheap Shots and Back Stabbing

Paul McCoy should take his own advice regarding cheap shots and back stabbing in the press. His trashy comments, ill-advised use of innuendo and his downright disrespectful treatment of Pastor Jackson is an affront to this community.

McCoy described Pastor Jackson as running amuck and being a large liability to the Black community. This certainly doesn't seem to be a perception shared by anyone we can identify. This year the City Council awarded the Spirit of Portland Award to Pastor Jackson and the Black United Front (BUF) for outstanding service. Portland Community College named Jackson Hall at the Cascade Campus after Pastor. Albina Ministerial Alliance found him to be an asset and elected him president of A.M.A.

Regarding the B.U.F.'s credibility as an organization, McCoy suggests that the Front should be on the line in combating prostitution, drugs and other crime problems. Had McCoy himself been involved personally in addressing these issues, he would know that the B.U.F. has been involved in community organizing activities to fight crime. A few examples bear out this point.

For the big prostitution protest march held in 1982,

the security for citizens was provided by the B.U.F. along with the American Muslim Mission. The Master of Ceremonies at the rally was Ron Herndon. The B.U.F. co-sponsored the march and recruited participants. Pastor Jackson was one of the lead marchers and speakers who urged church people and citizens to get involved.

The keynote speaker for the anti-drug march on Alberta and Grand in 1985 was Ron Herndon, who spoke strongly on the need for all parents and community groups to work together with our youth in building positive and drug free lives.

Among the key organizers and speakers at a Columbia Villa rally to encourage residents to fight back against crime were Ron Herndon and Herb Cawthorne.

This is no time for division and name-calling in the community. Rather than try to discredit leaders who have been on the line, why not help work on the issues facing the community. As the saying goes—Now is the Time!

Sharon McCormack  
Edna M. Robertson  
Gail L. Diggs

## A.C. Green Family Gives Thanks to Community

The A.C. Green family wishes to thank everyone on behalf of our son, Steve F. Green, who was critically injured in an automobile accident on August 1st at the intersection of 15th and Dekum Streets, for your prayers, beautiful cards, phone calls, lovely flowers, financial help and best wishes that you expressed in so many other ways, all of which helped to bring Steve and our family through this very difficult time.

Steve is now in rehabilitation and is making tremendous progress. I am so grateful to God for allowing him more days in this world. Once again, please accept our, and my, thanks to everyone for your concern and well wishes for Steve.

God bless you all,  
Mrs. Leola Green

## O.B.L. Hosts 1st Annual Development Dinner

The Oregon Chapter of the National Business League will host its 1st Annual African-American Economic Development Dinner September 16, 1986, Shenanigan's at Ports of Call, 4575 N. Channel, Willamette East Room.

There will be a no-host cocktail at 6:00 p.m. and dinner at 7:00 p.m. Arthur Teele, Jr., President of the National Business League, will give the keynote address entitled "African-American Prospect for Progress, Free Enterprise or Dependency."

Mr. Teele is a partner in Sparber, Shevin, Shapo, and Heilbronner, P.A., a Miami-based law firm. Teele is a recognized public policy expert in tax regulatory and labor management relations matters. Formerly, he served as Administrator of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Urban Mass Transportation Administration. This agency provided funding for Tri-Met Light Rail System. Currently, he is one of the principal shareholders and officers of Silver Star Communications of Florida which owns WJAX-AM/FM of Jacksonville.

The National Business League was founded in 1900 by Booker T. Washington. The purpose of the League is to provide new initiatives



Arthur Teele, Jr., President of the National Business League.

that might help eliminate the isolation of the minority business community from the nation's aggregate business community.

The League's objective is to build a stronger economic infrastructure in the minority community, through business development. For more information, contact Chad Debnam at 249-0711.

### Portland Observer

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