

# EDITORIAL/OPINION

## Justice Department Right in Retrying Ebens

The decision by the U.S. Justice Department to retry convicted killer Ronald Ebens on civil rights violation charges was a proper decision.

Ebens was convicted in federal court of violating the civil rights of Vincent Chin, a Chinese-American, by beating him to death with a baseball bat in Highland Park, Michigan in 1982.

During his first trial, Ebens was convicted in Wayne County Michigan Circuit Court of manslaughter, and was given three years probation and fined \$3,000. Civil rights groups and oriental communities throughout the nation protested the decision. As a result of this, the U.S. Justice Department retried Ebens in federal court for civil rights violations and he was sentenced to 25 years in prison.

Two weeks ago, a three-judge appeals court

panel in Cincinnati overturned Ebens' conviction of violating Chin's civil rights. Resulting in the justice department's decision to retry Ebens.

Incidents of racial violence have been on the rise across the nation for several years. Equally frightening is the fact that groups which practice both racial hatred and violence are also on the increase.

Ebens, an unemployed auto worker, killed Chin after they were involved in an argument. Witnesses testified during the trial that Ebens was blaming Japan for his unemployment problems. He thought Chin was Japanese and shouted racial slurs at him.

By retrying Ebens, the Justice Department is sending a strong message to individuals and groups that those who violate the civil rights of people because of their race, will be prosecuted by the U.S. Government.



## Healthwatch

by Steven Bailey, N.D.

The national campaigns against drug abuse come at a time which many writers consider to be motivated by the upcoming elections. While the majority of individuals and communities involved in these campaigns are working from their hearts, there is still a hollowness surrounding the whole of this issue.

I sympathize with those who grieve for the victims of drug abuse; both the users and those whose personal safety is jeopardized by the violence associated with addiction/abuse. Yet I'm saddened equally with the lack of compassion that our society is showing towards the victims of use. I hear much more in the press about the need for additional jail space than for the need of employment in the minority sections of our cities and for educational and treatment programs for the users and potential users in our society.

I believe that the predominant factor in the use/abuse of drugs is of a psycho-social nature and has nothing to do with inadequate punishment for those who are using drugs. There is already an abundance of negative reinforcers existing for the drug abuser. There is the ever-present financial hardships for the user, the frequent family break ups, the frequent negative impact on employment, the legal problems, as well as the negative self-esteem associated with addiction, and, finally, there is an abundance of health concerns which are present to the user. The threat of greater legal sanctions to the user can not be expected to change the problem significantly.

We need to heal the entire problem rather than concentrating in the bandage approach that these recent campaigns seem to focus upon.

Negative self-esteem and escape seem to be major factors in the development of abusive activities by drug users. The fact that most cocaine users are inner-city minorities strongly supports the social-economic theories of drug abuse, and the ever-increasing unemployment in teen minority populations should be challenged in our anti-drug campaigns as a major causative agent. We have to provide adequate education and employment for our youth if we expect them to become constructive members of our society.

With the ever diminishing federal support for educa-

tion, social reform, drug treatment programs and employment in the inner-city, we must look to prevention as the strongest suit in our war against drug use in our youth. With most drug treatment programs costing much more than most poor families can afford, the only affordable approach is to stop the abuse before it begins. Community out-reach, grade school and high school lectures and peer support groups are probably the easiest place to start in preventing drug abuse.

One social arena that needs to change is our double standard relating to drug use in America. While we are firm in our denial of such substances as marijuana, cocaine, heroin, etc., we are tolerant, if not supportive, of the abundant use of acceptable drugs within our society. You cannot watch T.V. without being told to use drugs for pain, constipation, allergies, headaches, etc., etc. I have encountered many individuals who have begun their drug use on prescription pain-killers, etc. Eight years ago I gave a seminar for the AFL-CIO on rehabilitation of the adult injured and heard almost unanimous agreement among rehabilitation counselors that one of their single biggest problem was drug abuse by workers, who, upon injuring their back, were prescribed pain medications, and, after 4-6 months of being off work, became dependent upon these medicines. We cannot be prescription-using parents and expect our outright condemnation of drugs to carry much weight with our youth. Likewise, we cannot treat our stress with cigarettes and alcohol and expect our youth to respect our puritanical denial of the recreational substances of their peers. Truly more people die as a result of alcohol abuse on the highways than all street drug abuse combined. The cost of tobacco abuse in relationship with lung cancer and cardiovascular disease is equally alarming. Let us begin as a nation to "practice what we preach".

While I agree that the tragedy of addiction is great and warrants a strong national effort to combat this problem, I hope that the zealotry of the ongoing campaigns does not let the underlying causes fester and worsen for lack of social change. It may well be that the social abandonment of the Reagan administration has added more fuel to the country's drug problem than any anti-drug campaign can counter.

## Letters to the Editor

### Facts Are a Remedy For Healing Forgetfulness

Intentional or unintentional offensive remarks impact in intensive ill will. The recent slip of pompous misunderstanding from Prime Minister Nakasone's lips requires more than apologies concerning minorities. There is a need to roll out facts and remind all of the status of Japan in the 1950's and how diverse Americans contributed to Japan's rehabilitation in new directions. Let us forget; let us forget.

Part of today's accumulated prosperity in Japan is due to U.S.A. dollars, skills and markets which were rapidly made available. Given that kind of equity in opportunity, minorities too can equally achieve.

It will take more than the blessings of celebrities to redeem the unnecessary commentary of Prime Minister Nakasone; he needs a reading list of pluralistic contributions, a people-to-people agenda and a financial summary of the kinds of cameras and automobiles average minorities have sustained through the years in

Japanese purchases.

If Nakasone has so little respect for humanity and the purchasing power of whatever intellect, then that in itself should establish a 1987 list of New Year's Resolutions for rethinking (even persons in the same family from the same parents do not have the same intelligence or potential).

The disservice of the prime minister's remarks is compounded in the chronic viewing of minorities as problems instead of as a contributing citizenry. Let us roll out facts and reiterate how the blood, sweat and tears of

multiracial

of multiracial/multiethnic people have made the United States great and a number of other beneficiaries (including Japan), also.

(Mrs.) J.M. Gates

4215 S.E. Bybee Boulevard Portland, OR 97206

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## 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.

### "Divestment Movement Grows"

Divestment is no longer the political demand of the antiracist, progressive minority in this country. It has sparked a widespread response which reflects the overwhelming sentiments of the American people, both liberal and conservative alike.

For seven years, California legislator Maxine Waters had pushed the state to accept anti-apartheid legislation. Last year, a very modest divestment bill finally passed by the legislature, only to be vetoed by Republican Governor George Deukmejian. But in the academic year 1985-86, dozens of mass protests occurred at California university campuses. Students and faculty became involved and knowledgeable about the issues at stake. And it became apparent that tough divestment legislation was not only morally correct, but a fiscally responsible and politically necessary step. Americans finally recognized the brutality of the apartheid regime—that since late 1984, more than 2,200 people have been murdered and about 40,000 have been placed under arrest.

In August, the trustees of the University of California approved a \$3.1 billion divestment decision, which must be implemented fully over the next four years. In the California state legislature, another tougher divestment bill was passed, and Gov. Deukmejian signed the measure into law. The new law will affect California state pensions totalling \$11 billion. Most political observers state that Deukmejian's reversal was a classic case of electoral opportunism. Running for reelection against a popular Democrat, Los Angeles mayor Tom Bradley, Deukmejian was pushed to take a progressive stance. Despite his motives, the law undoubtedly will have a tremendous impact on other state legislatures, as well as on corporations which are still clinging to their profits from apartheid.

The California case is only one of several recent divestment victories. The University of Washington's board of trustees recently reversed itself to approve divestment. Nine of the ten largest U.S. cities have approved divestment legislation. Washington, D.C.'s city council approved divestments totalling \$35 million.



## ON SOUTH AFRICA

Portlanders will be observing National Anti-Apartheid Protest Day on Saturday, October 11th. A march, sponsored by Portlanders organized for Southern African Freedom (POSAF) and American Friends Service Committee, will begin at noon after assembling at Terry Shunk Plaza at S.W. 3rd and Jefferson. At 1:30 p.m. a rally will begin at Terry Shunk Plaza. Speakers will include a representative from the African National Congress (ANC).

The march and rally are being held in support of the release of all political prisoners in South Africa and Namibia, total divestment from and comprehensive sanctions against South Africa, and solidarity with the people of Namibia, currently illegally occupied by 100,000 South African troops.

The apartheid system has generated one of the highest per capita prison populations in the world, some brought to trial and sentenced and others detained without charge or trial. Since the June 12th State of Emergency, there has been a new detainee every seven minutes and an estimated 13,000 victims. The Portland march and rally are part of a growing effort in the U.S. to assure that these thousands of men, women and children, each "guilty" of fighting for freedom and justice, do not disappear.

Total divestment is sought by POSAF and other U.S. support groups despite the most recent Congressional action in support of greater sanctions in an override of Reagan's veto. There are strengths to the just-passed bill which has been detailed elsewhere. However, the bill has weaknesses, as well.

Among weaknesses are that short-term trade financing is still permitted and South Africa is still permitted to reschedule outstanding loan payments, U.S. corporations will still be allowed to reinvest their profits made in South Africa in their own corporation or any other entity in South Africa. Further, brokerage accounts are still allowed so investments in South African stocks and securities can continue. In addition, "Black-owned businesses" which could be used as fronts for white interests are exempt from sanctions. Also allowed are loans to the South African government to subsidize purchase of U.S. agricultural products.

Less publicized in the U.S. has been sweltering oppression in Namibia, bordering South Africa on the northwest. Namibia is a land of wealth and poverty. It is perhaps the richest country in the world in relation to the size of its population, estimated at 1.5 million. It is also among the most exploited in the world through the gathering of that wealth into foreign hands. Its Gross Domestic Product averages over \$1,000 per capita annually, one of the highest in Africa. Yet over 80% of its population lives below the Poverty Datum Line, the income estimated by South African authorities to be necessary for a Black family of four to meet its minimal needs.

In Namibia a non-white child has only a 50-50 chance of surviving disease and malnutrition to reach the age of five. The occupying government spends on Black children's education one-tenth the annual amount spent to educate white children. Annual personal income for

A total of 19 states and 68 cities nationwide have also divested, including Massachusetts, \$110 million; Connecticut, \$79 million; and Nebraska, \$28 million. At least 70 universities and colleges have either fully or partially divested from South African-related firms.

Two weeks ago, Georgetown University's board of trustees approved a divestment proposal which would remove \$28.6 million from such companies as IBM, CBS, and General Motors corporation. Georgetown's decision resulted from a series of anti-apartheid campus demonstrations last spring, including a week-long sit-in.

The struggle for apartheid divestment has even moved to historically Black colleges. In September, the Reverend Motilepula Chabaku, a South African civil rights spokesperson, and Jesse Jackson urged North Carolina A & T University to end its fiscal relationship with North Carolina National Bank, a financial institution which has previously invested almost \$100 million in apartheid related firms or loans. Students constructed a South African-style shanty near the student union building, and staged a candlelight peace and freedom vigil.

The next stage of anti-apartheid activism is set for October 10, the "National Protest Day for Divestment and Sanctions." Separate demonstrations are being planned in several key cities—Miami, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, and other cities. The rallies on October 10 will call for political solidarity with the South African anti-apartheid movement, for the immediate release of all political prisoners, and tough US sanctions against the Pretoria regime.

Ronald Reagan's veto of the anti-apartheid legislation last month only illustrates the contempt he exhibits towards the legitimate struggles of Black people. Only through a continuation of mass protests and continued political agitation can we move toward more effective and stronger legislation against the apartheid. Only by going to the polls next month and voting against all Democrats and republicans who embrace Reagan's "Constructive Engagement policy" of support for apartheid can we move toward freedom for our sisters and brothers.

whites averages approximately \$3,500 for every man, woman and child; for Blacks it is less than \$150.

Armed uprisings of Namibian people at the beginning of the 20th century was crushed by German troops; only one-third of the population survived and their land and cattle were taken. After the 1915 defeat of Germany in WW I, South Africa was granted authority over "South West Africa" as a mandated territory. In the 1940s and 1950s Namibia leaders repeatedly peacefully petitioned for independence to the United Nations. In 1960 the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) was organized as a national liberation movement.

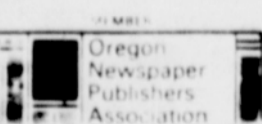
By 1966, after failure to resolve the Namibia question through diplomatic and legal efforts, SWAPO launched armed struggle. Its central objective, state by its 1976 constitution, continues to be "liberation from colonial oppression, the achievement of independence and the transformation of Namibia into a democratic, non-racial, egalitarian society." Indeed, by 1973 SWAPO was accepted as the authentic representative of the Namibia people by the UN General Assembly.

Though pushed to a negotiating table previously, South Africa continues to occupy Namibia illegally and to implement apartheid through administrative control, military occupation and repression, including widespread documented systematic torture of detainees. Much of the country is a military zone, dominated by an estimated 100,000 soldiers and police at 85-90 military bases in 1981.

There is a continuing flow of refugees, forced, due to army programs of population removal, defoliation and fortification of "white towns," into "protected villages" close to military bases or into huge squatter camps. Brutalities have resulted in fleeing of Namibians to Angola where 80,000 refugees now live in SWAPO-run refugee centers.

Other Black residents who remain, live in "homelands," and desert or marginal agricultural areas where they were forced in 1964. Whites, less than 10 percent of the population, claim 60 percent of the land and an even higher percentage of fertile land. In 1964 whites owned or controlled 34,500 out of 35,000 wells used. Is the U.S. on the right side of this issue? By now it may come as no surprise that the U.S. has collaborated with South Africa in Namibia by insisting that Namibian independence be linked to the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola (another southern African nation the U.S. has chosen to back the oppressors in). Angola is also occupied by South African troops and is frequently attacked by them under the pretext of "hot pursuit" of SWAPO soldiers and to bomb SWAPO bases. These actions, which the U.S. has not yet washed its hand of, are part of a policy of military and economic destabilization of countries that support liberation movements in South Africa and Namibia.

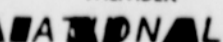
Portlanders, Observer readers, have the opportunity this Saturday to demonstrate moral outrage at this U.S. complicity and to join with a growing number of Americans whose voices are being heard and are now impacting our foreign policy in southern Africa.



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