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Ron Daniels (l) and Lewis Carter (r) met in Portland last week to meet with the steering committee of the Oregon Rainbow Coalition.

They are working on plans for the August 21st Portland visit of Rev. Jesse Jackson. photo by Richard J. Brown

Rainbow National Leadership Visits Portland

by Jamie Partridge

As part of a whirlwind national tour to inspire and strengthen local chapter, Ron Daniels, National Director of the Rainbow Coalition and Lewis Carter, Rainbow Legislative Analyst, met last week with the steering committee of the Oregon Rainbow. Lending their expertise of decades in the national civil rights movement, Daniels and Carter helped set the stage for the coming August 21st Portland visit of Rev. Jesse Jackson, president of the Rainbow Coalition and unannounced candidate for U.S. President.

The Rainbow is much more than Jackson's run for President, asserted Daniels. The Rainbow is "about fulfilling the unfulfilled American Revolution." In the midst of current 200-year celebrations of the U.S. Constitution, the Rainbow remembers that the U.S. started out as a democracy only for white, male property-owners, excluding Blacks, Indians, women and non-propertied white males. "The continuing struggle for democracy, which has seen great victories in the emancipation of slaves, women's suffrage, and the unionization of workers, is the heart of the Rainbow pro-



Rev. Jesse Jackson will be Portland Oregon August 21, 1987 photo by Richard J. Brown

gram," said the National Director. The fundamental contradiction between the "little people" and the "overwhelming concentration of wealth and

power in the hands of a ruthless few" demands that we "little people" move beyond the "radical battleground" to our "economic common ground".

"Jesse Jackson has embarked on a dangerous journey", warned Daniels, alluding to the assassination of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King soon after they broadened their anti-racist fight to the struggle against the "economic system itself which breeds and manipulates racism." Rev. Jackson leads in the tradition of these internationalist visionaries, who drew attention to the worldwide racism of U.S. intervention against Third World peoples.

Jackson's candidacy provides an educational vehicle for the Rainbow vision, which sees the fight against plant closures and farm closures as part of the international fight against transnational corporations. The Rainbow vision is a threat to this "greedy, avaricious minority at the top" because we support organizing "little people" all over the world, from Central America to South Africa, said the National Director. Jackson gets out the Rainbow message that "unorganized workers anywhere are a threat to the gains of organized workers everywhere."

BUILDING THE RAINBOW ORGANIZATION

Daniels and Carter noted that Rev. Jackson had been criticized for being long on rhetoric and short on organization. They countered that Jackson is one of the great organizers of our time, for example, bringing together white and Black farmers, farmers with urban mayors, the Free South Africa with the U.S. Out of Central America movements. But, said Daniels, it's up to us to pull together the nuts and bolts, to institutionalize the Rainbow as a permanent, progressive political organization.

The National Rainbow Coalition is formally only one and one-half years old, but it represents a historical current in U.S. politics that existed before the Jackson candidacy and will live well beyond it. Ron Daniels himself was a leading member of organizations in the 70's and 80's which pre-dated the Rainbow but were built on the same vision. As president, in 1974, of the National Black Political Assembly, Daniels participated in an attempt to draft a Black presidential candidate, who would run on a Rainbow-type program organized by a multi-racial National Committee for People's Politics. As chair of the National Black Independent Political Party, Daniels helped launch African Liberation Day in 1981, an early effort to tie the struggle of Afro-Americans with the liberation of Southern Africa.

Now the new National Director brings his vast experience in national and grass-roots progressive organizing to the task of strengthening the Rainbow Coalition. Daniels laid out plans for a strong national board and for greatly expanded information exchange between the national and local organizations. A National Rainbow newsletter will be published regularly as well as a quarterly journal of analysis. Weekly news releases of nation-wide Rainbow activities will reach progressive media such as the Observer and KBOO radio. Major National Rainbow campaigns may be initiated, for example against aid to the contras or for sanctions on South Africa. Multi-cultural musical or theatrical tours will raise money and build Rainbow membership. Networking among Rainbow chapters will grow, as evidenced by the presence at the meeting of Lou Gosset and Ron Wilsen of the Washington State Rainbow.

Rainbow activists should expect to be very involved in empowering local Rainbow democrat and independent candidates, to ride the Jackson candidacy "coat tails", said Daniels. And although the Rainbow Coalition as a non-profit organization cannot publicly "endorse" political candidates, which is why a separate Exploratory Jackson-for-President committee exists, Daniels expects that "the political campaigns will shake the tree, then the Rainbow will pick up the apples."

HERB'S FAREWELL

Saying good-bye is always hard for me to do. The wonderful friends I have made here in Portland will always be dear to my heart. Even though I am excited about my new role in San Diego, I leave Portland with the mixed emotions always involved when parting with dear people.

You can look forward to some fantastic changes which will take place at the Portland Urban League within the next year. Negotiations are taking place now to renovate a building one block from our present headquarters to house our administrative, employment, and youth programs. Once the renovation



Herb Cawthorne

is complete, the current Urban League headquarters building will be converted into a full senior citizens center. All programs and activities in this building will then be focused on the needs of the senior citizen population in our community. This will allow our Senior & Adult Services staff to expand and enhance the programs and activities they so ably provide.

Farewell, my friends. Thank you for all that you have given to me. I leave with many, many fond memories. I will always remember Portland as a beautiful city filled with wonderful people. I am going to San Diego dedicated to creating an Urban League that is filled with as much spirit and vision and worthwhile work as the one here in Portland. Again, thank you.

Cascade Campus Hosts

Visiting High School Seniors

Thirty-five high school seniors representing nine difference schools from the Portland District visited Portland Community College, Cascade Campus recently. The students are participants in the Careers Pathways Program, which is a joint project between Portland State University, Portland Private Industry Council, and Portland Public Schools. "The aim of the program is to help disadvantaged high school seniors successfully graduate from high school and gain entrance into college or obtain a full time job," said Nick Barnett, PCC Admissions Coordinator.

The students toured Cascade Campus and were given briefings on several PCC programs, including Electronic Service Technology, Media Assistant, Library Assistant, Computer Field Service. They met the PCC students and staff and heard presentations on "The High School Transition", "What It Is Like To Be A College Student" and other topics.

"It is very encouraging to see these young people taking their education and future careers so seriously. Both the students and staff involved in the Careers Pathway Project have a great deal of which to be proud," said Barnett.

For more information, contact Nick Barnett, 283-2541, ext. 5291.