

## Perspectives

by Professor McKinley Burt

### Education: Bridge Over Troubled Waters

At this point, I hope to have made the case for identity and motivation as prerequisites for a successful learning process. Without these, you are simply "trained" — trained to carry out whatever or whoever's purposes, dependent upon any current political or economic climate of race or social engineering.

In no such case will one have an EDUCATION or cultural literacy. May I cite the 'welfare state' philosophy, or the 'crime and Black unemployment' themes. Education is about being prepared to function in your culture and to function well. It is about being taught to define, list and relate; to locate, identify and report; to demonstrate, interpret and schedule; to analyze, appraise and assess.

#### EDUCATION

Surely it cannot be that difficult for either a teacher or an administrator to relate their own perceived success in their professional or economic sphere, thus having themselves developed within a favorable mode of motivation, identity and as role models. Or, in contrast, surely they cannot fail to see that the severe learning disabilities in the

minority population may, in great part, result from the absence of such a nurturing environment. What is it, we may ask, that makes it so difficult for even a committed educator or a 'liberal' body politic to structure into curriculum those elements of Black contribution, motivation and identity-role models that are documented, historical fact.

I can answer that question from years of experience in conducting related workshops for teachers, administrators and other personnel in education, industry and the public sector. The feedback reveals that there is a monumental barrier, a terrible chasm, which must be crossed before a change can be brought about in the perception of Black capacity to achieve.

There is 'a Bridge Over These Troubled Waters', but the answer is found to be a long way from simply second-guessing Terman and Binet and their technocracy of mass-marketing I.Q.'s. In fact Terman recanted (as a must, see Gould, "The Mismeasure of Man", 1981).

This barrier — the chasm — is a dark-waters composite of the standard media presentation of race, and the prejudices, omissions and the deliberate misstatements of fact found in American texts, histories

and literature.

Remember Marshall McLuhan's "The Medium Is The Message"? The first thing this 'message' does is to separate Blacks from their glorious heritage: The great cultural and scientific contributions that saw civilization founded in AFRICA are, through a deliberate manipulation of geography, posited to have occurred on some ephemeral MIDDLE EAST.

Also, the great contributions of the Moors (quite black in Shakespeare's dramas) in creating the Renaissance to bring Europe out of its barbaric 'Dark' Ages is presented by American media and texts as the accomplishments of a people resembling, and undifferentiated from, today's Iranians and Iraqis.

It is only recently that our television and magazines show that, even today, so much of the populace — Black and woolly-headed, including oil ministers — could be replicated on the streets of Harlem or any other American ghetto. I say

only culinary utensils, those who made only agricultural implements, and those who made only weapons. Many have seen the beautiful iron work in New Orleans, crafted by the Black slaves.

Elsewhere on those shores, we find during slavery, and described by the National Geographic Magazine, over 200 IRON PLANTATIONS! — not COTTON, but IRON — ranging from Saugus, Massachusetts, to the Chesapeake Bay area.

Professor Arthur Bining, in his book, "British Regulation of the Colonial Iron Industry", has given not only the names of each slave craftsman and their individual production of iron ingots, but has suggested that the reason England forbade the processing of iron into finished goods was that the American colonists, with the help of their slaves, would not only destroy England's monopoly, but also that the colonists would gain the capacity to build a formidable military

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There are other elements of this "Bridge" wherein we answer the classic canard — that of a shuffling, bumbling slave, fit only to pick cotton or serve mint juleps. I have written and lectured elsewhere of the West Africans who, by the time of slavery, had refined 6000 year-old iron working techniques to a level of sophistication such that the blacksmith craft was divided into singular groups — those who made

machine and REVOLT.

As we know, they did just that, and separated the mother country from tens-of-millions of acres of real estate. And when the southern section of this country revolted in an effort to retain ownership of this super-valuable technological property — the Black slave — they managed to hang on as long as they did in the Civil War, because the slaves manufactured munitions and uniforms, ran trains, navigated boats, operated factories, and repaired machinery — darn 'cotton-pickers'.

### "Opinions": Continued from Page 1

In the Inner Northeast area, many citizens see the problem as a case of simple neglect. Clarence J., a long-time Northeast resident, said he is angry that the Portland Police Bureau is just now focusing on the problem. "For many years, the communities of North/Northeast Portland have been engaged in trying to find ways to reduce crime. In many ways, we sort of got the feeling that as long as crime was being committed in our neighborhood, not too much was ever going to be done about it. Now that Black and White citizens have joined together to fight the problem, we are getting a little attention and a whole lotta promises. But, you see, under these conditions, talk is useless. I feel bad about the death of Joe Holcomb. I feel bad that Joe Holcomb was murdered by a Black man. I feel bad anytime a human being loses his or her life to senseless violence. But, I am afraid that it's going to continue until all of the citizens of this whole area stand up and take immediate action," he said.



Photo by Richard J. Brown

Harvey Lockett, challenger for the post currently held by Commissioner Dick Bogle, expressed similar feelings. "It is time to bring about creative, strong measures to rid the community of crime. If a person is caught in the act of a crime, he or she should be arrested, convicted and imprisoned. If they are a drug abuser, and remain on drugs while they are in jail, they should remain in jail," he explained.

Lockett believes that many citizens are fast losing faith. "People who live in this community are frustrated. There is now an absence of trust, an absence of faith. The Police Bureau and the community must engage in some serious dialogue and work together to develop programs which will address the problems. Drug dealers and other criminals work twenty-four hours a day. So must we. But most of all, we must be about educating people to what's going on," he said.

Debbie Butzen, a 15-year resident of Inner Northeast, says the problem must be addressed on many fronts. "There isn't enough police protection, not enough positive activities for our children and not enough treatment programs for drug and alcohol abusers."

Whatever the solutions, most residents agree that the time to act is now. And, if the recent crime statistics are correct, and if law enforcement agencies and Commissions continue to talk rather than act, then most neighborhoods in this city will experience a long wait before any relief is forthcoming.

By that time, it may indeed be "too little, too late."

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They'll Tell You All About It

### Reggie Blake - Continued from Page 1

tine care to make them feel comfortable and at ease. Patients sometimes come back to show her their progress in getting well.

"You don't realize what you do for people until later sometimes. It's really great when patients come back to visit," she says.

When Blake isn't caring for patients, she tries to do some things that are fun for her — and she sees them as ways to relieve the stress that nursing can sometimes bring. She's taken ballet classes for two years at Mt. Hood Community College, and she co-chairs the Gresham

Auxiliary of the Oregon Symphony Association and attend the symphony when she can.

She would encourage anyone interested in working with people to consider nursing as a career.

"If they really think they want to work with people, and do the physical labor of taking care of patients, they will like nursing," she says.

She suggests young people work first in a nursing home or as a nurse's aide to get an idea of what nursing can be like.

"If you choose nursing, the rewards are wonderful."

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### How Not To Get Sued for Christmas

Candles, Christmas trees, visiting friends and family, giving gifts and toys, entertaining loved ones . . . these are the stuff of happy holidays. . . But the merriest of holidays can be ruined by an accident or a lawsuit that follows. Portland attorney, Charles Holloway, points out that these risks can be minimized with some careful planning. As a lawyer who works with insurance companies and as a father of three, he is especially concerned about safety during the Christmas season.

First, protect the children. Small children should be kept away from candles, and should be supervised when near Christmas trees. There are usually a lot of electrical outlets and plugs, so make sure the little ones don't play with the wires.

Also, pay attention to the toys you give children. Make sure they are age-appropriate by reading the labels. Age limits are very important because if you give a child a toy that she's too young to play with and an injury follows, you may be liable.

Also helpful in preventing injuries are the dangerous toy lists published in newspapers and publicized by television and radio. When in doubt, choose another toy.

Smaller children should not be given any toys they can swallow. And softer toys may make better gifts: toys that won't injure a child if thrown by another child. Parents can be held liable up to \$5000 for property damage done by their child, more if their child intentionally harms another child by hitting him with a toy.

Home entertaining is another area to plan.

First, you can serve alcohol, but stop before your guests become visibly intoxicated. If you continue pouring after your guests appear impaired by the alcohol, you could be facing a serious legal problem, not to mention putting them, your other guests and innocent drivers at risk. Your party could be ruined

if a single guest is arrested for drunk driving while returning from your home.

Secondly, don't keep your food out too long. Turkey poses a special problem. It often carries the food poison, salmonella, so keep foodstuffs in the refrigerator as much as possible. And all foods should be properly cooked, especially chicken and pork. It's your responsibility to know how to cook, prepare and present food that is safe for your guests.

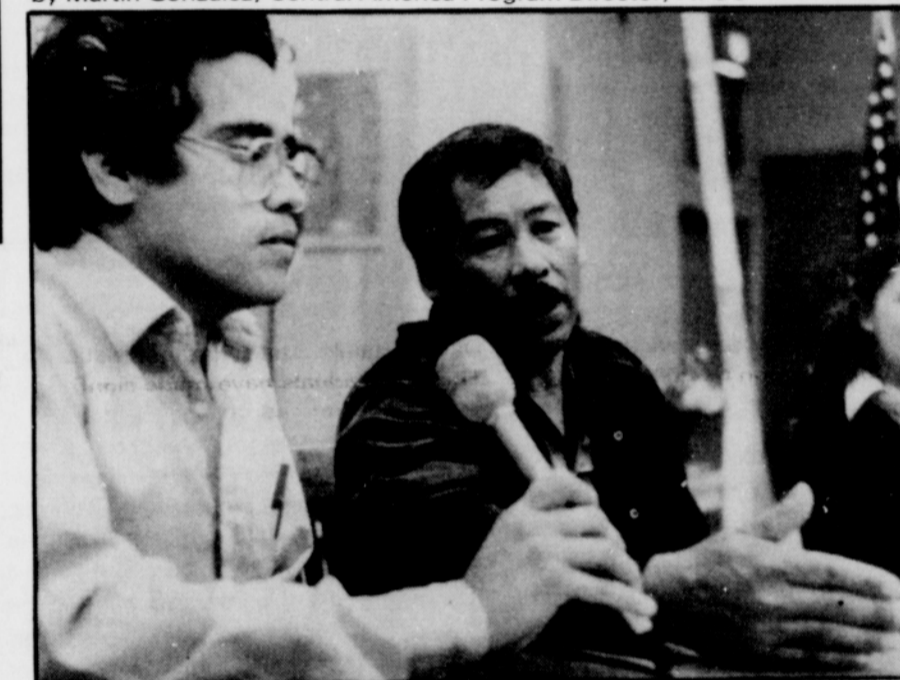
You are expected to take all steps that a reasonable, prudent person would take, says Mr. Holloway, noting that this is the standard for assessing liability in most cases.

There's a difference between legal liability, and an accident, but either can ruin a perfectly wonderful holiday. The solution, in avoiding both accidents and lawsuits are the same: take time, think and plan with the best health of your family and guests in mind this holiday season.

A little extra thought and care can go a long way in making sure the holiday season is a joy for everyone, especially your loved ones, says Holloway.

### Nicaraguan Farmers Talk to Portlanders

by Martin Gonzalez, Central America Program Director, AFSC



Martin Gonzalez (L) interprets for Luis Kuan Altamirano (R).

Photo by Richard J. Brown

On December 11th Portlanders had the opportunity to hear and meet Luis Kuan Altamirano, Cua-Bocay zone representative for the Nicaraguan Union of Peasants and Cattlemen (UNAG in Spanish), at the Oregon Grange Hall. UNAG is a national organization of small and medium independent farmers and ranchers in Nicaragua.

Kuan Altamirano was accompanied by Mira Brown, who studied appropriate technology at Evergreen State College and is currently working for the Cua-Bocay Integrated Rural Development Project in Northern Nicaragua, and Donald McLeay, a journeyman machinist and supervisor of the machine shop and training center at El Cua.

The Cua-Bocay Project includes plans for several small hydroelectric power plants, the first of which was built by Portland engineer Ben Linder, who was killed by the contras while taking stream measurements for a second plant. The project also envisions reforestation, a sawmill, a machine shop, housing, health clinics, additional school rooms and improved agriculture. The goal is to raise the standard of living and to make the isolated region as economically self-dependent

as possible. This is an area that has been hard-hit by the U.S. sponsored Contra War.

Brown and McLeay opened the presentation by showing slides of their work and the region in which they work. Kuan Altamirano provided a more personal message based on his experiences of having lived in that area for more than 20 years. In sharing his experiences he brought a message from the people of Nicaragua to the people in Portland. He stated that the people of Nicaragua are tired of war and want more than anything else peace to be able to raise their children. He considers being able to raise children in time of peace the most wonderful thing in the world. His hope is that Portlanders as well as other people in the United States lend a hand in this task by calling on the U.S. government to end Contra aid and the aggression against Nicaragua.

If the standing ovations that Kuan Altamirano, Brown and McLeay received is any indication of the response, the people of Nicaragua can expect Portlanders to oppose further aggression against Nicaragua.

### Haiti Elections

From Congressman Mervyn M. Dymally 31st District, CA Chairman, Congressional Black Caucus

Recently people interested in democracy from all over the world witnessed, with great disappointment, violence which brought an end to the presidential elections in Haiti.

It is obvious from every conceivable source that the army did not want free and open elections. In fact, it is reasonable to say that they

closed their eyes to the violence which was executed by the Tontons Macoute, the remnants of the deposed dictator Duvalier.

The prospects for free elections in Haiti do not look promising. This is regrettable because the people of Haiti, through a constitutional amendment, had set a course of action which would have resulted in fair and open elections.

It is possible, with pressure from the United States and freedom-loving people from all over the world, that freedom will be restored in Haiti.