

Perspectives

by Professor McKinley Burt

Technology: Old MacDonald Had A Farm

"Old MacDonald had a farm and on this farm he had some ducks . . ." And old Jefferson Davis, 'Father of the Confederacy', had a plantation and on this plantation he had some slaves. One was quite an inventor, designing a boat propeller which increased the speed by many miles an hour. Now, what we cannot learn from that old folk song is about the many Black contributors to the Industrial Revolution — or about hamburgers. However, from an Arno Press monograph (New York Times Publishing Co.), and from Commager's "Documents of American History" (public library), we can learn of this invention and its consequences for the legal structure of the Confederate States.

TECHNOLOGY

When Jefferson Davis tried to patent this invention of a slave, the Attorney General of the United States made the final ruling that Davis could not acquire rights in this invention, because a slave had no rights which might be acquired. This setback caused the first president of the Confederacy to initiate an interesting chain of events. Examining the Constitution of the Confederate States of America, we find in Article I, Section 8, that "The Congress shall have the power . . . (8) To promote the progress of science and useful arts by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive rights to their respective writings and discoveries."

Davis followed on most immediately with another pet piece of legislation by having passed a law specifying that "all inventions of slaves shall become the property of the master". Shocking (and revealing), but there is an even more startling analysis to be made. If we evaluate the economic benefit to Black people created by their thousands of inventions (patented) — from emancipation to the space age — for all practical purposes they might just as well have been innovated during slavery.

Given the basic importance of many of these inventions to the Industrial Revolution, we might have expected a corresponding increase of some magnitude in Black wealth other than wages — and certainly we would expect to see a significant involvement in the manufacture and distribution of goods. Social and economic data for the period reveal nothing of the kind.

To make my point, I cite these two major inventions: Frederick McKinley Jones patented the refrigerated truck, July 12, 1949 (no. 2,475,841), and the refrigerated box car, December 7, 1954 (No. 2,696,086). The marketing and food consumption habits of an entire nation were changed as the inexpensive transportation of fresh or frozen foods developed around the innovation of a Black sixth-grade dropout. Jones' invention created tens-of-billions of wealth in citrus and other crops, in transportation industries, in meatpacking, and in California and Florida real estate. World-wide, over these forty years, we may be

speaking of a trillion dollars.

Now, let us look at the automatic lubricator patented by Elijah McCoy, July 18, 1882 (no. 261,166). Before this invention, by a son of slaves, all moving machinery had to be frequently stopped for lubrication. In authentic western movies, you see train passengers walking around while the crew oils the locomotive parts. In the early Charlie Chaplin movie, "Modern Times", you see him prancing around with an oversized oil can, lubricating the machinery (Obviously, the airplane would have been impossible since it could not be stopped to lubricate the engines.). Within a few years after introduction of this device, most factories and railroads specified that all their machinery be equipped with a Real McCoy Lubricator. A Black man's name had become part of colloquial English.

What is suggested here is that there has been a gross failure on the part of Blacks and leaders alike to (1) appreciate their own genius and capacity to create wealth, whether formally educated or not, and to (2) reach a level of cooperative effort which would permit the building of financial institutions for the support of business and industrial spin-offs.

More on this in later articles.

In any case, the next time you shut the sliding door on your van, remember that this locking mechanism was invented by a Benson High School Black graduate, Don Ruth-erford, June 8, 1954, Patent No. 2,680,268.

Nipping Prejudice in the Bud

Imagine a school classroom where children are divided into groups according to the color of their eyes or hair. They are told that those with blue eyes may not speak to children from the other groups, may not play with them or assist anyone except from their own group.

In another classroom, a child is asked to describe his feelings about a good friend . . . why they are friends, what the person is like, positive characteristics and so forth. Then the child is asked to look at his friend through a large magnifying glass covered with colored cellophane and describe how the friend has changed. The obvious answer is that the friend has changed color. But does this change the child's feeling about the friend or what his friend is really like?

These are just two of the exercises for fighting prejudice in a new manual for use in elementary schools, being distributed by the Anti-Defamation League.

Entitled "Teacher, they called me a _____!" the book gives teachers more than 60 classroom activities and down-to-earth approaches for counteracting prejudice and discrimination against children.

The work, originally prepared for the Utah State Office of Education and published as a book by ADL was written by Dr. Deborah A. Byrnes of the Department of Elementary Education of Utah State University. Dr. Byrnes interviewed both teachers and students to determine the issues to be addressed.

The book's introduction notes that, although adults in America society like to believe children are

immune to prejudice, the seeds for prejudice are sown at an early age, prior even to children starting school.

The handbook emphasizes the important role teachers can play in reducing the formation and growth of prejudicial attitudes by challenging many of the stereotypes to which children are exposed.

The aims of the book are to help children:

- Understand such concepts as prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping;
- Examine their own and other people's treatment of people who are different;
- Be better able to analyze and reflect on their own feelings, thereby differentiating between reasonable dislikes or caution and prejudice;
- Gain an awareness and enjoyment of diversity in our society;
- Act in ways that are non-discriminatory.

Some activities are appropriate for kindergarten and primary grade children while others are for more cognitively sophisticated elementary school children.

In preparing the book, 101 elementary school children were selected to be interviewed, half from a rural area and the other from a suburban Salt Lake City community. Third and fifth graders were asked individually to respond to questions about what it means to be an American, about their views of different ethnic, racial and religious groups, how they learned about each specific group and whether they knew anyone who belonged to such minority groups. They were also questioned about reasons that children tease each other and why some children are excluded from group play.

First graders were shown 10 pictures of boys and girls from five different racial or ethnic groups — Black American, Mexican American, Native American, Asian American and Anglo American. They were asked with which child they would most like to play, using an elimination process so that all but one was selected. They were also questioned about the teasing of different ethnic and racial groups and about their knowledge of religious groups and about what in general children tease each other.

Eighty-five percent of the first graders interviewed said children are teased about the way they look — the most frequent examples related to weight, clothes, hair and skin color. Seventy-one percent said children are teased about what church they attend — such as calling a particular church "dumb" or "bad" or claiming to be better than someone who attends a different church.

Seventy-six percent of third and

fifth graders said children are teased about the color of their skin; 31 percent said children are teased about their religion.

Although the teachers interviewed were usually aware of problems, many did not know how to initiate discussion about them. All were interested in activities that would help children understand the differences among them and show more tolerance for others. The majority also agreed they would like to spend more time on citizenship issues.

The manual deals with such topics as learning about prejudice, discrimination against the disabled, race and ethnicity, religion, differences in life-style and the influence of gender on how children are treated.

In the section on learning about prejudice, tests are suggested to help youngsters make value judgments regarding things they know little about. They are made aware of the difference between disliking someone or being prejudiced against them. For example, it is natural to dislike someone who is mean to you. On the other hand, a prejudiced person may decide that everyone who looks like the mean person must also be mean. The manual also points out that some kinds of prejudice — such as being skeptical of strangers who offer presents or favors — may be acceptable.

To effectively fight racial and ethnic prejudice, the book explains the reasons for differences in the color of hair, skin and eyes.

In the "discrimination simulation," where a class is divided into

See "Prejudice", Page 10

Scholarships For Minorities Available

Two scholarships for Black nurses are available through the Nurses' Educational Funds, Inc. (NEF) for the 1988-89 academic year. The awards, for registered nurses enrolled in masters or doctoral degree programs, recognize outstanding scholastic achievement and potential for leadership in the nursing profession.

EDUCATION

The Estelle Massey Osborne Memorial Scholarship is awarded to a Black registered nurse who is pursuing a masters degree in nursing at a National League for Nursing accredited school. The award is made in honor of Ms. Osborne, the first Black nurse in the United States to receive a masters degree. The award is made in memory of her contribution as a teacher, as an educational administrator, as a nursing service administrator, as a public health nurse, as a writer, and as a leader and role model to Black nurses.

The M. Elizabeth Carnegie Scholarship is awarded to a Black registered nurse who is pursuing a doctoral degree in nursing or in a related field. The award was initiated by Dr. Carnegie, a member of NEF's Board of Directors, in 1981 to recognize Black nurses who were pursuing advanced degrees. Dr. Carnegie is currently serving as the first visiting professor of the Vera E. Bender Endowed Chair in Nursing at Adelphi University, Garden City, NY. She is the author of "The Path We Tread: Blacks in Nursing 1854-1984," as well as other articles on nursing education and Blacks in nursing.

Those applying for either the Osborne or Carnegie scholarships must also be: a U.S. citizen or have declared their official intention of becoming one, and a member of a national professional nursing association.

The next time monies are available from the Nurses' Educational Funds, Inc., is for the 1988-89 academic year, beginning September 1988. Qualified applicants should send a \$3.00 check to NEF to cover postage and handling of the application kit. Deadline for filing the completed application is March 1, 1988. Write: Nurses' Educational Funds, Inc., 555 West 57 Street, New York, NY 10019.

The Nurses' Educational Funds, Inc., is the only non-government, independent source of funds for graduate education in nursing. Originally established in 1911 as the Isabel Hampton Robb Memorial Scholarship, NEF has given away more than \$1 million over the years to hundreds of nurses who have gone on to become leaders in research, education, administration and outstanding practitioners, as well.

Pre-schoolers Visit Multnomah County Court



Kelvin Little, 4 years old (L), and Etrece Brazzle (R) were among 23 children from the Woodlawn Center of AMA Headstart that visited Commissioner Pauline Anderson. The children presented Anderson with a poster and a plaque in appreciation of her visit to their center. Photo by Richard J. Brown

Golden Age Program Offers Senior Privileges

Residents of the Mt. Hood Community College District who are at least 62 years of age are eligible for special privileges, including free tuition, through the college's Golden Age program. Husband and wife may both apply if one is at least 62 years of age.

Close to 3,000 residents now take advantage of what the program offers. In addition to free tuition, members also are entitled to reduced admission to the MHCC

Aquatic Center for use of swimming and hydrotherapy pools, free use of the library and student admission to all college events and activities. If a class requires service or material fees, such as supplies for an art class, they must be paid by the student.

Residents may apply for the Golden Age program by contacting the MHCC community services offices at 667-7449.

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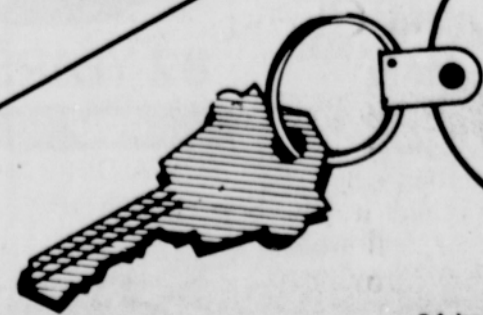
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PCC Registration Continues Through January 8

Except for short breaks over Christmas and on New Year's Day, winter term registration at Portland Community College will continue through January 8, college officials have announced.

Prospective students can sign up at all campuses and centers during open registration December 21-23, December 29-31, January 2 and during late registration period January 4-8.

Registration will be from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. except December 30 and January 4-7 when hours will be extended to 8 p.m., and January 8, when offices will be open until 5 p.m.

PCC is offering nearly 5000 winter classes during the term that begins the week of January 4.

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Wholesale Pricing On Groceries Gone Public

Did you know that for almost 30 years you could have bought some of your groceries at wholesale prices? The Bee Company, for over 30 years, has offered the public weekly shipments of name-brand groceries at genuine wholesale prices. You'll find canned and packaged goods, pet foods, as well as frozen and close-dated deli products on the shelves. The best feature is that you do not have to buy by the case. You buy just what you want to buy, just the amount you need. Located at 800 N. Killingsworth, just east of I-5, they are open Monday through Saturday 9:30 am to 6:00 pm. Isn't it about time you save on your grocery bill?

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