

EDITORIAL / OPINION

Guest EDITORIAL

Apology Due!

It could have been the case that we here at **The Portland Observer** were the only ones who were greatly offended by last week's media comment on the City of Portland's Affirmative Action policy. The fact of the matter is that we received a good score of calls from both public officials and individuals concerning a disturbing racist commentary which appeared as an 'editorial note' in the 'other' Northeast community newspaper.

It is hard to believe that the writer was knowingly allowed to make such racist statements as "... the city's idea of placing wishy-washy Black folks in key positions" ... "Hiring a Black face to sit by the door doesn't cut it" ... or the Mayor "needs to insure that his bureau chiefs hire 'competent' employees". It is even harder to believe that a Black wrote this piece, but, regardless, both a reprimand and a public apology are in order. As far as we know, there has been no intimation in either the public or private sector which would indicate that there is some problem of incompetence among Black city employees. Then, why this piece, and why now?

We would hate to think that these vicious canards were POLITICALLY MOTIVATED, and that some employee of the newspaper was permitted to slyly insert a bit of poison (dirty tricks) JUST BEFORE ELECTION DAY (We note the less-than-oblique reference — there is much more at stake in terms of CREDIBILITY and EFFICIENT city government.). What an affront this is to the affirmative action process, and to all those Blacks who have worked so hard to become OVER-QUALIFIED just to 'break even' in securing Equal Employment Opportunity.

We cannot be certain as to how much damage has been done to the image of the Black workforce, before the community, and importantly, before our aspiring youth. The community should reinforce the self-esteem of these dedicated Black employees by letting them know of our confidence in their COMPETENCE AND COMMITMENT. Again, we say that an apology is in order!

Prof. McKinley Burt

PORTLAND OBSERVER

"The Eyes and Ears of the Community"
288-0033

PORTLAND OBSERVER

OREGON'S OLDEST AFRICAN-AMERICAN PUBLICATION
Established in 1970

Alfred L. Henderson/Publisher Leon Harris/Gen. Mgr.

PORTLAND OBSERVER

is published weekly by Exie Publishing Company, Inc.

5011 N.E. 26th Ave.
Portland, Oregon 97211
P.O. Box 3137
Portland, Oregon 97208
Phone Number: (503) 288-0033

Nyewusi Askari
News Editor/Staff Writer

Gary Ann Garnett
Business Manager

Danny Bell
Entertainment Writer/Sales

Mattie Ann Callier-Spears
Religion Editor

Fred Hemby
Sports

Joyce Washington
Sales Director

Lonnie Wells
Distribution

Steve Adams
Art Director

Arnold Pitre
Sales Representative

Rebecca Robinson
Typesetter/Production

Deadlines for all submitted materials:
Articles: Monday, 5 p.m.; Ads: Tuesday, 5 p.m.

The Portland Observer welcomes freelance submissions. Manuscripts and photographs should be clearly labeled and will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed envelope.

Subscriptions: \$15.00 per year in the Tri-County area.

The PORTLAND OBSERVER — Oregon's oldest African-American Publication — is a member of The National Newspaper Association — Founded in 1885, The Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association, and The National Advertising Representative Amalgamated Publishers, Inc., New York.



To start the Portland Observer coming every week.

☐ \$15.00 for one year ☐ \$25.00 for two years

PORTLAND OBSERVER

Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

Perspectives

by Professor McKinley Burt

This week, I want to shift from a commentary on "gangs" to another area of community crisis. We need to pay attention to a process of 'attrition-without-replacement' that occurs in Minority Business Enterprise. This type of business loss completely offsets the meagre gains created by the 'incubation' of new enterprises.

Let me suggest that the Black community is subjected to this trauma not only by the condition of its youth, but by a parallel failure to make significant economic gains — if any. There is the saying that "those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it". Interestingly, an ancient Black dynasty (community) suffered the same type of massive alienation — Egypt from 2181 B.C. to 2050 B.C. This was called the "Second Intermediate Period," "when one age is dying and the new one is not yet born." It was in this age of insecurity and lawlessness that a Black scribe composed a prayer and lamentation that has been handed down to present time on original papyrus. Incorporated into the Bible by the Hebrews, then in Egypt, it is now known as the 'Twenty-third Psalm' (See note at the end of the article).

In respect to attrition of minority business, let me remark that a common theme in commerce is 'family succession', and that as a race it is not a process we have pursued to a full advantage. Holding fast to economic skills and traditions ... and transferring these institutions from generation to generation has been a hallmark of the cultures of Americans of European or Asian descent.

A contemporary situation is that of an apparently prosperous convenience store located in the center of this community, conceived and founded by a dedicated Black couple, it has been put up for sale. I have been given the impression by several of their friends that the reason for the sale is that these parents retained their full-time jobs (as well you might in a new venture) — but, then, the youngsters in the family did not follow through with the commitment and support one would expect. If true, this would not be a new phenomenon in Black culture. It occurs, of course, in all groups, but not with the same impact it has upon the fragile economy of a Black community.

In contrast, let me cite the example of the two white-owned stores at 16th and N.E. Killingsworth, and N.E. Fremont and 24th respectively. Owned and opera-

ted by a single family, they represent a situation with which I am very familiar — my years of public accounting. These type of operations are referred to as a "dynasty" where the young family members grow up in the business and then STAY WITH IT. The institution, the tradition, and the know-how is transferred from generation to generation. And I am quite sure that all of us are familiar with the term "good will", where the name and the community respect for the enterprise is valued almost as highly as the physical assets. We notice daily this type of 'generation-to-generation' continuity in the television advertising or our area's car dealers and furniture stores.

I have noticed that the sons and daughters of the 'other' groups often DELAY their university education until the foundation of the family business is firmly in place. Frequently, they take specific and relevant technical courses at a nearby community college in the evenings. This process brings back to the enterprise new ideas, new technologies, and sometimes new 'blood'. On the other hand, I had in my classes at Portland State University, some students who were by no means ready for that level of academics. And of these who were Black, many had parents who were skilled artisans and crafts people, independent contractors with successful businesses. Is it a fact that we have parents who may or may not have finished high school who place too much emphasis on an 'early-on' college degree? "He/She is going to be the first in our family to get a 'Degree' (sic)." I will be writing about alternate routes in **The Portland Observer's** "Career Special" of June 2.

One thing that is desperately needed in this community is an INVESTMENT GROUP which would purchase for operation, or hold for resale to Black families, those viable businesses which for whatever reason are about to be lost forever to the community. Strangely enough, there was such an organization forty-five years ago, formed by Black railroad employees: The 'Acme Business Club, Inc.'

NOTE: Any reader who desires a copy of the original of the Twenty-Third Psalm as written by an African scribe should send a stamped, self-addressed business size envelope to **The Portland Observer**, 5011 N.E. 26th Ave., Portland, OR 97211.



Civil Rights Journal

Benjamin F. Chavis Jr.

Support the A N C

As millions of voices around the world continue to cry out against racist apartheid in South Africa, there appears to be a crucial turning point on the horizon. With the exception of the United States and Israel, most of the nations of the world have sought to cut all substantial ties with Pretoria. In addition, it has become clear which liberation movement has won the popular support of the people of South Africa. No longer is it a question of whom we stand against, but, rather, whom we stand with.

After my recent tour of southern Africa as part of a leadership delegation from the United Church of Christ, I have come to one firm conclusion: the most effective means of supporting the people of South Africa in the struggle to dismantle apartheid is to give all possible, direct support to the African National Congress (ANC).

On April 16, 1988 in Lusaka, Zambia I had the pleasure of taking part in an historic meeting between the leadership of the African National Congress and national leaders of my church. The ANC delegation was composed of members of their National Executive Committee, including Pallo Jordan, Thabo Mbeki, Ruth Mompoti and Jacob Zuma. The ANC's Religious Affairs Department was also there, including Chaplain Gqiba. The atmosphere was permeated by a sense of mutual respect and solidarity. What became clear to our delegation was the profound love which the ANC continues to have for the people of South Africa.

We met for an entire day in candid and in-depth discussions concerning the present crisis in South Africa and South Africa's attempts to destabilize all of southern Africa. We also discussed the history and program of the ANC and its vision for the future of South Africa.

Dr. Avery Post, President of the United Church of Christ, stated at the meeting, "The racist apartheid regime in South Africa is perpetrating one of the greatest crimes against humanity that has been witnessed in history. These crimes are not dissimilar or unrelated to the holocaust during World War II, and both of these crimes against humanity were borne out of similar racist/fascist ideologies ... We are called by God to promote God's justice."

In response, ANC's Pallo Jordan stated, "We have had reason, especially since 1980, to be extremely disappointed with the sorts of responses we have been able to get from the Administration in the United States on issues related to southern Africa. And we are

pleased to have this opportunity to meet with people like yourselves who have been with us in the trenches, fighting for the same end."

Thabo Mbeki focused on the long history and deep affection of the South African people for the African National Congress, reminding us that, "The ANC was founded in 1912 as an organization committed to the democratic, non-racial transformation of South Africa. Naturally, we have deep roots within our communities. Generations of Black South Africans have grown up in the ANC. So even if they arrested all the leaders and the activists, the community would carry on in the spirit and the name of the ANC."

Mbeki also reported on the latest murderous acts of terrorism committed by the government of South Africa against the ANC: the assassination of Dulcie September, the ANC's Paris representative; the car-bombing of Albie Sachs, an ANC lawyer in Mozambique; the attempted bombing of ANC's chief representative in Brussels; and the scores of other persons who have been murdered by South Africa's "Z-death squads" in raids on the neighboring front-line nations. While I was in Botswana I saw the terrible devastation at the site of a recent raid where South Africa's death squad had murdered and burned the bodies of 4 people, 3 of them young women. One of the victims was a church member of the U.C.C. of Southern Africa.

Also at the meeting Ruth Mompoti spoke of the millions of children who are being physically and psychologically tortured at the hands of the South African government. She talked about the ANC youth program that established schools to care for and prepare the youth who escape from South Africa for future leadership. The beauty of the ANC is that it is preparing future leaders while still respecting the wisdom of the senior leaders of the struggle.

The President of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, is 70 years old. He was once the law partner of Nelson Mandela, the noted ANC leader. Mandela has been a political prisoner in South Africa for 26 years. Those at the meeting reminded us that on July 18th of this year there will be an international celebration of Nelson Mandela's 70th birthday.

As our meeting ended, a member of the ANC delegation requested prayer. Suddenly another member of the ANC began to sing "We Shall Overcome" and, as our voices joined in song, we formed a circle and held hands. As the South Africans say, "Amandla!" — "Power to the people!"

OPINION

by Dr. Jamil Cherovee

Will The Black Male Escape Extinction?

Black men and boys around this nation are under attack because they pose a threat to the system of caucasoid supremacy which has dominated the planet for the last 4,000 years. Prominent Black thinkers probed this crisis during a two-day conference at Compton Community College last month entitled "The Black Male: An Endangered Species?"

When we say the Black male is endangered, that means he is exposed to harm or loss, he is in great peril, he is threatened with extinction. "That's serious," declared Minister Farrakhan Muhammad Ali, opening the conference before a standing-room only crowd of nearly 2,000.

Regarding the theme, the Minister cautioned, however, that the Black man "... is not a kind of something else ... the Black male and female is the original form

which species come," an idea which all the presenters echoed at some point in their presentations.

The two-day conference featured, in addition to the Friday lecture by Minister Farrakhan, presentations on Saturday by Dr. George J. McKenna III, principal of the George Washington Preparatory High School; Lee Rogers, former gang member turned youth counselor; Drs. Nathan and Julia Hare, noted sociologists and psychologists; Dr. Robert Staples, professor of sociology at the University of California; and Judge Daisy G. Collins and Sherman W. Smith, Sr.

Dr. Frances Cress Welsing, psychiatrist and author of the famous Cress Theory of Color Confrontation and Racism, concluded the conference with her piercing analysis of caucasoid

supremacy and its base in the caucasoid man's fear of caucasoid "genetic annihilation."

This Afrikan Peoples Conference, the seventh of its kind, was the result of the vision of conference chairperson Billie Jo Moore. Ms. Moore told me other Black students could improve academically if they knew the greatness of their history, because she had "become stronger and more self directed" as a result of her own experience.

Ms. More, feeling a need to "wake up" other students, organized symposia which flowed into the Afrikan Peoples Conference, and have attracted well-known Black scholars like Drs. Yusef Ben-Jochanan and Ivan Sertima.

The conference coincidentally started on the same night that the Los Angeles Police Department sent a wave of 1,000 police of-

ficers into the streets allegedly to curb gang crime and violence.

The presenters left no doubt that the drug crisis, skyrocketing unemployment, single parent families and Black-on-Black crime, and even the AIDS epidemic, are not accidental side effects of Amerika's rejection of Blacks, but calculated devices aimed at controlling and eventually exterminating Blacks, particularly Black males.

There is a cloud of death that hangs over our community," warned Minister Farrakhan Muhammad Ali, stressing that Black people have lost the love of themselves and the purpose for which God created them, therefore, Black people kill each other and set the tone for caucasoids to kill Blacks."

■ Continued next week