

COMMUNITY FORUM

"Business As Usual(?)"

Continued from page 1

many years in industry, business and accounting. The experience was illuminating to say the least. Over the past months my column has dealt rather exhaustively with many key elements of that experience and the following matter simply highlights several key parameters.

For instance, during a brief stint in the administrative hierarchy at Model Cities, I came up with what I thought was a neat idea for a program. Why not use all of these millions of dollars spent in the procurement of goods and services to 'seed' new Black businesses in the community? I listed a spectrum ranging from a printer, vehicle leasing, hardware and building supply firm to typewriter and office equipment repair, stationary store, painter and decorator, catering and banquet firm, and so on. Where local Black expertise was not available, I had even developed files from inquiries to California and the South for experienced Black professionals or 'on-loan people' from industry.

Taking a cue from television's Maxwell Smart, I should have known that "Control" (at City Hall) had already written the scenario, and that most goodies and largesse would be directed to the vested establishment. But one does have to try, you know. Equally distressing was one element of a later experience as consultant to the Minority Business component of the program. Here, there were never sufficient funds to do the nitty gritty training required for neophyte Black business persons—large contracts were given to 'experts' from academia to teach "Critical Path Logistics" to one-pickup operators who had yet to learn how to inventory their few picks and shovels or drywall supplies and mop buckets.

Now, I have presented what might be taken as a less-than-adequate description of both what was and what is. Some will wish that I had taken space to detail the differential treatment of Blacks in obtaining commercial bank loans—or wish that I had developed 'Illustrative Displays of Impact Measure Data' to document the probable failure of much new Black enterprise unless there is radical change. That would require several pages.

What I hope to have done here is to have given the type of overview necessary to the development of specific countermeasures corresponding to particular problems. Pay attention! Today the state of Oregon informed us that there are 92 Certified Black businesses in the state of Oregon. Forty years ago there were more than that on Williams and Union Avenues alone!

Don't Miss "Simply Heavenly"

by Kathryn Hall Bogle

If you hurry to get tickets for Saturday and Sunday afternoon performances, you may get seats and a lot of laughs at "Simply Heavenly" running at the Portland State University's Lincoln Hall auditorium. The play, directed by Garland Lee Thompson, was written some 30 years ago by Langston Hughes. A seasoned di-



rector, Thompson is also an actor and playwright with the stamp of New York City on the skillful casting and sensitive coaching of his personnel.

Stellar roles played by Neal Thomas and Denise Williams and by Michael Holiday and Brenda Phillips were backed with strong supportive roles played by Steve Lee and Jeanette Russel Brown. Undoubtedly they were audience favorites.

Paulette Davis and Kenneth Dembo had cameo roles but played their parts to the hilt.

Costuming by Wanda Walden was fresh and attractive. Acoustic balance kept many from clearly hearing some of the fast paced patter. Music, under direction of popular Janice Scroggins was nostalgic of the period and the audience again responded with affectionate memories of the melodies.

The play was simply a bundle of joyful situations with a "boy gets girl" ending that was pleasing to everyone.

African-American Exhibit: Black Pioneers

Despite the original 1841 codes which initially excluded Black people from the Oregon Territory, Black people always have played a significant role in the development of the Northwest. A brief history of the "Northwest Black Heritage" can be viewed at the Oregon Historical Society until December 10th. The museum is located at 1230 S.W. Park Avenue at the corner of Jefferson in Portland. The displays can be viewed daily and admission is by voluntary contribution. This exhibit is an important adjunct to the recently concluded "Out of Africa" chronicle. It is a very enlightening compendium of old photographs, lithographs, anecdotes and memorabilia about Black pioneers who continued the well established tradition initiated by their forebears in carving this nation out of the wilderness. Among such pioneers was George Washington who like his white namesake was a great leader. Washington led a wagon train across the prairies and mountains to establish a homestead in this virgin new land. He was hindered by racism. It is interesting to note that even though the original constitution of Oregon forbade involuntary servitude, it also proscribed citizenship to Black people and Chinese.

Another early pioneer with a similar name, George Washington Bush, circumvented the inane deterrent of race by settling in the Puget Sound area. He established the community of Bush Prairie which ironically gave precedence to the American claim for that part of the country in a dispute with England over the common border with Canada.

These pioneers introduced names into the new territory that still can be found in the current telephone books of Oregon.

It is very important for all Black people, especially our children, to avail ourselves of every thread of history that is emerging from the past. Let there be no doubt about it, Black people exerted a very vital role in building every niche within this nation. If others cling to the false notion that nothing of

importance ever came out of Africa, then let us demonstrate what we have done in blood, sweat and tears to create a foundation in the absence of which this great nation never could have succeeded. Let fools try to deny that irrefutable evidence. This is our birth right. It is our proud heritage.

Even though this writer is not a native Oregonian, he discovered a small rhizoid of his own roots anchored to a corner of the exhibit. An article from the venerable Advocate of May 1929 announced a week long celebration in the Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church which featured my father, the Rev. Dr. James Gordon McPherson. I was only six months old at the time, but I still have the colored postcard he mailed back to me. I suppose that was the impetus which caused my sister, Mrs. Jeannette Gates and her husband Oslly to relocate here over 30 years ago.

Katherine Shaver, co-ordinator of volunteers for the museum did a lot of leg work in finding certain printed materials for this report. She also introduced me to two key officials responsible for this display.

Gary Brecken, deputy assistant director of the museum ferreted



Beatrice Cannady-Franklin out several key pieces of information that were not otherwise available to me. He also emphasized that the museum is committed to mounting exhibits that give unique insights into the great diversity of our multi-racial

and pluralistic society.

Marguerite Wright, public information officer, stated that it is the desire of the museum to collect and to display artifacts of antiquity along with pictures that private individuals might have in their possession. For example, the Jesse Jackson campaign generated a number of memorabilia such as campaign buttons, bumper stickers and printed material that is going to become very important to future researchers who will want to know something about this very exciting period in our history. Persons who would like to share such information or material with the Oregon Historical Society should write to Miss Wright at the museum or telephone here a 222-1741.

In the meantime this writer urges everybody to get down to the museum as soon as possible to recapture some of the glory in the very important moments of the history and culture of our great Black pioneers in the Northwest.

PDC PORTLAND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Commission Meeting

Date: September 14, 1988
Place: The Portland Bldg., 11th Floor
1120 SW Fifth Avenue
Portland, OR
Time: 9:30 a.m.

Commission meetings are open to the public. Complete agendas are available at PDC. Call 796-5300.

PDC is the City of Portland's urban renewal and economic development agency.

Saluting



Mrs. Gayle Jackson,
Comptroller
The Portland Observer
Newspaper

... Gayle, we love you very much!!
Observer's Staff

Cleo's Cafe

3041 N. Williams
284-7150

Ethnic Cuisine
Southern Style

HOUSE SPECIALTIES
Chitterlings • Meatloaf
Mix Greens • Beef Stew
Catfish • And Many
Other Southern Dishes

Including:
Cleo's
Zesty Ribs In Sauce

— HOME-COOKED DESERTS —

Come See 'Luberta'
For Down Home Cookin'!
MEMBERS & GUESTS

RAGIN' CAJUN MARKET

2428 N.E. BROADWAY • PORTLAND, OR 97232
MON. - FRI. 10-6 P.M. SAT. 9-7 P.M.



OUR SELECTION OF PACKAGED MIXES, MEATS, AND SPICES. LET YOU PREPARE DELICIOUS MEALS FROM GUMBO AND JAMBALAYA TO HOT AND SPICY CHICKEN—WHY SHOP ANYWHERE ELSE.

15% OFF
ANY PURCHASE
WITH THIS COUPON

Register Here To Win A
FREE \$5.00 Gift Certificate

HUD is coming back soon. And coming back better.

A temporary nationwide restraining order prevents us from selling HUD homes at this time. However, we'll be back.

Your Portland HUD Office will be using the next few weeks to your best advantage. Preparing more homes to be available for sale. Looking at new financing options. And planning ways to offer buyers do-it-yourself fix-up rebates.

So watch The Oregonian for details. We'll be back in the home-selling business just as soon as we can. And even better than before.

HUD
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

For more information call HUD at (503)221-2671.

Portland State University Presents
A Musical by Langston Hughes

"Simply Heavenly"

Book and Lyrics by
Langston Hughes Music by
David Martin



Directed by Garland Lee Thompson

August 25 through September 11
Thursday - Friday - Saturday - 8 pm
Sunday - 3 pm

Lincoln Hall Auditorium • S.W. Broadway at Market Street
All Seats Reserved • Admission \$12: General - \$5: Seniors-Students
Special rates for groups available: 464-4440 • PSU Box Office

Presented by The Summer Program of Educational Activities