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"The Eyes and Ears of the Community"

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BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Introducing



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National Urban League Calls On President Bush To Adopt The Parity 2000 Theme During Release Of "The State Of Black America 1989"

WASHINGTON, D.C.—"Today, I am calling on President George Bush to adopt the Parity 2000 theme as a goal for his administration," stated John E. Jacob, President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Urban League, during the release of THE STATE OF BLACK AMERICA 1989, Tuesday, January 24, 1989 at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

THE STATE OF BLACK AMERICA, a publication of the National Urban League, is the most authoritative annual document examining the current status and conditions of Blacks in America. In calling for the president to adopt Parity 2000, Jacob said, "Parity 2000 is a theme that can allow him to claim the higher ground—to give his administration a unifying objective—tap into the idealism of an America fed up with greed and glitter—and help reshape the map of American politics for generations to come."

Explaining Parity 2000, Jacob said that the National Urban League's priority goal is to secure black-white parity by the year 2000. "Our Parity 2000 theme aims at black-white parity in the key indicators of individual and family well-being—such as life expectancy, educational achievement, employment and income."

Jacob added that, "A national Parity 2000 goal would include the private sector and the black community, as well as government. Corporate and neighborhood based initiatives to radically improve education, training, hiring, health and housing will be essential."

Jacob said that he was encouraged by Bush's handling of "the difficult period between Election Day and Inauguration Day. His Cabinet appointments have been wise. His statements encouraging selection of African-Americans and other minorities for key sub-Cabinet positions are welcome. His meetings with Black leaders demonstrated sensitivity and concern."

Referring to THE STATE OF BLACK AMERICA 1989, Jacob said that, "In 1988, Blacks were three

times as likely as whites to be poor. Two-and-a-half times as likely to be jobless. Housing segregation increased and for the second straight year, Black life expectancy declined.

"The gap has been made wider by government cuts in programs that help poor people survive, that create opportunities, that enable families to make it," Jacob further noted that, "The tragic disturbances in Miami last week reflect the results of that gap, and the growing anger and bitterness it encourages. Miami's Black people were the only major ethnic group in the city whose unemployment rate rose during the 1980s. As in other cities, Blacks did not share the prosperity and got more than their share of misery."

"Our task in 1989 is to focus national attention on the growing Black-white gap, and to begin the process of closing the gap," said Jacob.

THE STATE OF BLACK AMERICA 1989 presents nine papers prepared by experts in the fields of housing, education, politics, religion, economics and social welfare.

SUMMARY THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF BLACK-AMERICANS DR. DAVID H. SWINTON DEAN—SCHOOL OF BUSINESS JACKSON STATE UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION

This report on the current economic status of Black-Americans comes at the end of the Reagan administration and the beginning of the Bush administration. The new administration will follow an administration which presided over eight years of stagnation and retrogression in the economic status of Black-Americans. As reported in all of the last few volumes of The State of Black America, no progress has been made in reducing the longstanding economic disparities faced by Blacks during the Reagan administration. In fact racial inequality in American economic life actually increased by many of the standard indicators.

(Continued to Page 7)

Minority Business Enterprise In Oregon:

Part II: Redden Decision Seriously Flawed

by Stephen E. McPherson,
Special Correspondent

Last April Multnomah County advertised for bids to construct a 220-bed minimum security facility in Northeast Portland. The L. D. Mattson Construction Company submitted the lowest bid of about \$4.4 million but that bid was set aside because it contained less than one per cent participation for women. That amount was more than fifty per cent below the county mandated set aside for women.

The prime contract was awarded to the third lowest bidder, Marion Construction which came in at about \$4.7 million. Their set aside for women was estimated at four per cent. The same amount was allotted to minorities.

The Mattson Company sued in Federal Court claiming that they had made a good faith effort to satisfy the minority mandate. They also took the legal position that their constitutional rights guaranteeing equal protection under the law had been abrogated.

U. S. District Court James Redden agreed with the Mattson Company and

ruled late last November that the Multnomah County set aside for women and minorities was unconstitutional because there was not adequate findings of discrimination. He also ruled that the existing program was not tailored with adequate restrictions to address past problems. Those two statements are a contradiction of themselves and lend a callous absurdity to the legal process.

If anything at all is questionable it is the manner in which the jurisprudence system functions in U.S. District Courts. The Bork confirmation hearing demonstrated quite clearly that appointments federal judges enjoy often are a result of their political prowess rather than for their demonstrated excellence at the bar. While life time appointments might have eliminated one caveat attendant to the position they have aggravated another area. The latter case makes such judges entities unto them selves who rarely answer to anyone but themselves. Some are known to have presided

(Continued to Page 3)

Business Community Questions Salzman Defection

Businessman, Oregonian Owe Community An Apology

The January 30, 1989, front page edition of the Oregonian headlined a story written by Holley Gilbert of the Oregonian staff, claiming Peter Salzman, owner of Salzman Motors on Union Ave. in Northeast Portland was moving out of the area due to the high crime rate.

Mr. Salzman cited drug paraphernalia, persons peddling hot goods and the decline in his business as major factors for his decision to move.

However, the Observer has learned from former employees, former business associates and neighborhood business that most of the information released to the Oregonian was distorted, misleading and unfortunate.

The drug activity surrounding the BMW operation while not being mute, has most certainly diminished with the closure of the drug house two blocks east. The peddling of "hot" goods is apparently an accurate statement but, according to some former employees, Salzman Motors was doing as much buying and selling as the "buyers and the sellers." Asking to remain anonymous, at least two former employees of Salzman's stated in a taped interview with the Observer that they witnessed many transactions of property being brought and sold at the BMW repair shop.

These employees also claim a deteriorating relationship between father, son, and another business also housed in the building have contributed as much to the decision to move, as the decline in auto repair business along a street already saturated with auto repair shops.

The publication of this story by the Oregonian once again fuels speculation about the media's commitment to a community that is asking for economic support. It also points out the extent a disgruntled businessman will go to—"publicize" a move and falsely blame local elements for his problems.

Hopefully, remaining businesses will serve as leverage for the continuing exodus, and also hopefully the local media will resort to more responsible journalism. In any event, someone owes this community an apology.

by Stephen E. McPherson
Special Correspondent

A host of tradespeople has owned businesses for many years along Union Avenue and in the immediate vicinity. Many are in an uproar over the decision of Peter Salzman to relocate his auto shop to the suburbs. With a voice of unanimity they say that his stated reasons for leaving are invalid. Even Werner Salzman, Peter's father agrees with that contention. The elder Salzman joined together with Franz Wirkner, a compatriot from Germany, to establish their auto shop at the corner of Union and Northeast Shaver some thirty years ago. Wirkner, part owner of the building, abhors Salzman's move. He will continue to operate Franz Auto Haus in the same building.

No one is going to deny that there have been problems. During the civil disturbances of 1968 the place was firebombed and looted, but it was not burned down. This problem did not interfere with their booming business. The customers kept coming and they had more work than they could accomplish. The BMW dealership they started in 1969 lasted only two years.

From the very outset, the more serious problem has not been their neighbors, but the contentious relationship that developed between the two partners. Persons who worked for them at that time describe the constant bickering and rancor expressed in the presence of clientele that eroded the original partnership. The differences must have been very serious. What once was a large garage facility with a common repair bay is now separated by a solid brick wall. Their own version of a "Berlin Wall." Even today a stifling animosity between the partners continues to persist. The future of their Union Avenue property will depend largely upon how the elder Mr. Salzman and Franz Wirkner can resolve their own perennial cold war.

The Salzman's occupy one portion of the building where the expensive toys of the rich such as BMW's and other foreign luxury cars are main-

tained. Franz Wirkner is on the other side where he attends to the more commonplace vintage Volkswagens and the less expensive foreign makes. At first glance it would appear that the Salzman's got the better of the deal even though it still exists on paper as an equal partnership.

Despite the fact that the Salzman Automotive works sets in the middle of what once was a high crime area, the direct effect upon them has been minimal. Outside competition has had a greater influence on their business operation. Franz Wirkner has been burglarized only twice in ten years. Most calls from police are to answer false alarms. Peter Salzman denies his personal involvement in receiving stolen items. However, there are employees who admit that they have purchased questionable merchandise from street people on the premises.

American General Contractors, a minority owned business across the street from Salzman Motors was burglarized shortly after moving in approximately one year ago. A business acquaintance of the owner was able to secure the names of the burglars, who surrendered most of the stolen items, but informed the victim that they had sold the computer to the Salzman BMW Shop for one hundred dollars. The victim confronted Salzman who denied any knowledge of the incident.

According to Portland Police, they have no knowledge of any illegal activity at the Salzman establishment.

Peter Salzman did not mention any burglaries or robberies. One customer was hassled by the local criminal element and at times certain local characters got into a parked car and played the stereo equipment too loud. This reporter has had the Salzman establishment under surveillance ever since a sensational article about the problems in the area appeared in the local daily newspaper. There always were more than one half dozen expensive vehicles parked on the streets, unvandalized and with all hub caps intact. We were led to understand that a secure, fenced in parking lot

adjacent to the building is owned by the Salzman-Wirkner partnership. Peter Salzman does not use it.

The irony of this controversy is that even though Peter Salzman's business associates question his motivation to abandon his Union Avenue shop, they all agree that he is a warm and sensitive individual.

Just across the street on N.E. Shaver is John's European Body and Paint Co. Peter Salzman recently seceded his partnership in that enterprise to John Wecker without recompense. The problem here is that along a 10 block stretch on Union Avenue there are at least six auto body shops.

The Ray Fleming Auto Parts supply company is located within walking distance of the Salzman's. They maintain a huge inventory and have never been burglarized. Both Art Dienstel and Don Waters laugh about the time one of the unarmed locals attempted to hit their cash register. They subdued the culprit and held him until he was arrested by the police.

The crack house that bothered Peter Salzman's customers last summer is now closed and boarded up. The prostitutes, pushers and users that annoyed the Salzman clientele have vanished from the scene. The corner of Union and Northeast Shaver is tranquil so why does he still choose to leave?

Paul Rohrback, the owner of Eastside Foreign Car Service, sums it up quite succinctly. He worked for the Salzman's for many years and frequently found himself embroiled between their disputes. Mr. Rohrback contends that the Salzman's have made millions out of the Northeast community. They are insensitive to the internal problems because they reside outside of the area that gave them their wealth. Mr. Rohrback further contends that the younger Salzman was taking advantage of the tremendous amount of free publicity the story would give him. Peter Salzman agrees with that latter perception.

Persons who inhabit the lower Northeast sector of Portland long have contended that the media create the extra problems that often plague that enclave. Here again is an instance that lends support to that contention. Joel Davis, the owner of a BMW who is a customer of the Salzman's suggested this story to Holley Gilbert who pursued it with great vigor. Even Peter Salzman is dismayed by the fact that it received front page attention and admits that it was exaggerated out of proportion. One cannot measure how much the initial story will affect the Mayor's revitalization program in that area.

If Portland is the most livable city in the United States, it might take a bit of serious image building to re-establish that fact. If the developing convention center is to succeed, the local daily media will have to become serious boosters of that effort rather than display an overt and reckless propensity for sensationalism and detraction.

When Peter abandons the Salzman consignment of the building jointly owned with Franz Wirkner, it will be his father who will be left holding the bag. Wirkner certainly is not going to agree to any arrangement which would be deleterious to the survival of his own business effort. Peter claims that he does not have any problems with his father pointing out that the elder Salzman is helping to finance his new venture. None of this makes sense.

(Continued to Page 3)