

# EDITORIAL / OPINION

## Guest Editorial

### KBMS In Chaos

By Anthony Martin

The problems of Portland's first and only 24-hour African American radio station can be easily traced to one source, station owner Christopher H. Bennett. Mr. Bennett, from day one has steadfastly refused to allow KBMS (1480 AM) to obtain the success it was destined for in May, 1988, and despite his bungling efforts can still obtain in the near future-but only with new direction.

Mr. Bennett's constant and direct interference with the performance of every employee at KBMS created an atmosphere of total confusion, suspicion, disappointment, and eventually, as we witnessed last Saturday, total chaos.

The rebellion at KBMS by key personnel was justified as far back as July, 1988. For it had become apparent after only two months, that this was an entrepreneur dead set on a mission of self destruction.

Mr. Bennett made it perfectly clear to all of his employees that KBMS had but one super star - Chris Bennett!

He also made it perfectly clear that he must have total control - and he did.

Mr. Bennett made a lot of promises to this community when he asked for acceptance and support upon opening the station. Mr. Bennett got what he asked for. This community welcomed KBMS and Mr. Bennett, and rightfully so because Mr. Bennett gave this community something that it longed for - good music and another African American media outlet.

So for Mr. Bennett to say that he never had the support of the NE community is wrong. But to say that he doesn't have it now is correct.

Some African American Businesses can not pay cash in advance for advertising.

Some employees are worth more than \$5.00 per Hour for a six hour shift. This is especially true if they are discouraged from working a second job.

And also, some employees would like to work for more than straight sales commission. This is especially true also if there is client infringement by management.

This community needs KBMS. This community will support KBMS. But only if the station owner honors his promise to be reciprocal.

This community extends to Mr. Bennett both hands. One holds an olive branch, the other a pink slip.

Which hand shall he choose?

## Talk Is Cheap At KBMS

by Warren C. Johnson

I am writing to support those many black brothers and sisters who have been victimized employees of KBMS radio. As a listener, I have enjoyed some of the music and other programming, however I do not believe that anyone should be treated as bad as what was finally disclosed on the air last Saturday, when an employee "told all" then shut the station off the air.

I would hope that owner, Chris Bennett will immediately realize that he cannot use or abuse Portlanders, especially Blacks, for financial gain.

Unlike the old KQIV of the 70's KBMS has not received the status, recognition and ratings in overall greater Portland area, but at least the disc jockeys are trying to make a positive message and impact in the black community.

While most local black owned businesses are starting to join forces with each other, I am curious to know why Mr. Bennett feels that he is above everybody else and does not want to effectively work with the black community, other than getting money out of them.

The lack of community and business support for Mr. Bennett is apparent since his self professed "Soul Festival" scheduled for Labor Day was canceled.

Unfortunately, the community suffers and the employees, past present and future suffer because of the "do it my way or hit the highway" attitude that appears to be exhibited by KBMS owners.

I had no idea that KBMS only paid their announcers a bit more than minimum wage, with no benefits. This is definitely not an encouragement for our young people who may be looking for a career in broadcasting.

If KBMS expects my support and that of the community, I suggest that Mr. Bennett and any of the other decision makers show us that they are worthy of our respect by them respecting the black community and their own employees and showing a positive image in the area. Until then, I and my friends do not plan to patronize any of the KBMS advertisers and encourage others to do the same.

## CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

### Civil Disobedience In South Africa

By Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

We are all well aware of how Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. used the tactic of civil disobedience as an effective means of challenging the racism of American society. Dr. King taught that it was immoral to be obedient to racial discrimination and other forms of racial injustice. Thus, African Americans as well as others were encouraged to participate in non-violent civil disobedience. Now in South Africa, there appears to be a growing use of the tactic of civil disobedience to challenge openly the apartheid regime.

There are some historians who make a comparison between the civil rights movement of the 1960's in the United States and the anti-apartheid movement of the 1980's in South Africa. There are some similarities, but there are vastly more dissimilarities. Dr. King and the civil rights movement leaders were able to appeal to the Congress of the United States for legislative social change.

This is not the case in South Africa today. Apartheid, that is racism, is the law of the land in South Africa. Apartheid is the judicial and legislative framework for the present government of South Africa. African Americans were and remain a quantitative minority in the United States, while black South Africans are a quantitative majority in South Africa.

The point here is that if a quantitative minority of persons can work and struggle to change the United States past policies of racial segregation, then there is a great likelihood that a quantitative majority of persons can work and struggle to change the present policies of racial segregation in South Africa.

But, a word of caution is appropriate in this analogy. Apartheid in South Africa is unprecedented in human history because of its totality of brutality, inhumanity and wanton disregard of all standards of morality. It is a mistake for Americans to translate as a carbon copy the experiences of the 1960's in the USA onto the dreadful drama continuing to unfold in racist South Africa.

The good news is that our sisters and brothers in South Africa are waging a struggle against apartheid on many fronts utilizing many different strategies. The recent news from Johannesburg that black South Africans are now routinely confronting the all white health and hospital care systems of South Africa with forms of civil disobedience is another indication of the expansion of the anti-apartheid campaign within South Africa.

Jay Naidoo, general secretary of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, "This is just another beginning of our defiance campaign. This campaign will be taken to every corner and every section of society until apartheid is unworkable." Of course, we are aware of the courage and determination of South Africans struggling to dismantle apartheid and this should serve to encourage those of us in the United States to do whatever we can to assist.

Thus, we believe that in particular one additional act of solidarity herewith the struggle in South Africa, should be the medical community here to openly support this latest strategy against racist health care in South Africa. We recall that the first successful heart transplant surgery took place in South Africa. We also recall the recipient of the black South African heart was a white South African. Today, black South Africans still systematically are denied access to full health care. We all should be outraged and in particular the medical community and health care industry in the United States needs to be confronted about its general silence to the genocide of apartheid.

## THE BLACK CORRESPONDENTS, PRODUCERS AND RESEARCHERS OF ABC NEWS WILL DEVELOP AND LAUNCH DOCUMENTAL EXAMINING THE WORLD OF BLACK AMERICA

The Unique, One-Hour Program Will Be Presented in the Fall

What is it like to grow up and live as a black in America? The black correspondents, producers and researchers of ABC News will undertake to answer this question in a unique, one-hour documentary on the world of Black America, to be presented this fall, it was announced by Boone Arledge, President of ABC News.

"We at ABC News are proud to have a wealth of talented black correspondents and producers to develop and launch this project. It is important for all of us to understand the racial diversity of our country, and this program, unique in network news, will give viewers the opportunity to see that there is not one voice today in Black America, but that there are many," said Mr. Arledge.

ABC News Senior Correspondent and "World Next Saturday" anchor Carole Simpson, ABC News Medical Correspondent George Strait and ABC News Correspondent Charles Thomas will be the principal reporters. In the broadcast, through video portraits, they will take a searching look at blacks at all stages of their lives-form birth through adulthood and old age. With their producers, they will illuminate the diversity, both social and economic, within each age group.

Rather than a history lesson the documentary will offer what for many will be a rare glimpse of what everyday living is like as a black person in a white-dominate society. The continuing struggle for civil rights will be discussed only as it relates to the struggle for everyday existence.

Ray Nunn is the Executive Producer of the documentary. Claudia Pryor is the Senior Broadcast Producer. Callie Crossley and Paul Mason are the Senior Producers.

## NOW IS THE TIME TO DIVORCE THE DEMOCRATS!

By Dr. Lenora Fulani

Delegates to the National Organization for Women's national convention in Cincinnati, Ohio last month unanimously approved a resolution calling for NOW's leaders to explore the formation of a new, pro-woman, independent third party. "They don't want to fool around with the [major] parties anymore. They're fed up," explained the president of NOW, Molly Yard.

I say RIGHT ON! Like the African American community and other oppressed peoples of color, like rank and file labor, the lesbian and gay community, and the elderly, women have been abused and abandoned by a party that only pretends to be concerned with our issues in order to get our votes. But when the time comes to stand up and fight for us and our families the Democrats--who are no better than their Republican friends--have no time for us.

The leadership of the mostly white and middle class women's movement has for many years been locked in a bad marriage with the Democratic Party, taking care of the party's business, doing its dirty work, and making Democrats look good on election day. In return a handful of women have gotten good jobs with good pay, and they've been allowed to travel in the same circles as the political wheelers and dealers. But the masses of women--particularly poor women of color--and our children never get included in the deals. We have nothing to show for our loyalty to a party that, like a selfish husband, refuses to keep its promises or live up to its responsibilities; it just takes, takes, takes all the time and expects us to be grateful for it. YES, WOMEN ARE FED UP! And many of us are smart enough and strong enough to say that it is high time to divorce the Democrats.

But NOW's leaders were much less enthusiastic. They even went so far as to prevent that resolution from coming to the floor of the convention Ms Yard and her predecessor, Eleanor Smeal, were forced to move with the grassroots, who are tired of being told once more that women have to give the Republicans and Democrats "one more chance." These sisters know that the recent Supreme Court decision which struck a deadly blow to the right of women to choose a safe abortion can't be blamed just on Ronald Reagan's right wing appointees, but is the responsibility of "liberal" Democrats who didn't have the gumption to stand up for women's rights when the time came to approve those appointments. And now the chickens are coming home to roost.

As soon as the news of NOW's pro-independent resolution hit the news, all the friends of the Democratic Party family came crawling out of the woodwork to call the women of NOW dumb, crazy, evil "extremists" for even thinking about forming an independent party! Even the executive director of the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) charged that the resolution threatened to alienate the friends of the abortion rights movement.

You see, independent, pro-woman politics, which challenges the system created by and for wealthy white men to keep women, poor and working people and people of color "in our place" (in the background and at the bottom) is far from dumb, crazy or evil. It is the wave of the future! And the Black community is in the forefront of that movement.

Molly Yard told reporters that NOW will not back down.

I support her 100%. I hope she will continue to follow the leadership of her members, and step out in an independent direction. That is the road I am taking, and I welcome her to join us. But whether she comes along or not, the Black-led, multi-racial and militantly pro-woman independent political movement that I am proud to lead is on its way! I invite you to come with us.

Dr. Fulani is chairperson of the New Alliance Party. Her comments do not reflect the views of the Portland Observer

## BAN APARTHEID!

## PERSPECTIVES

by McKinley Burt

Today, we continue as promised with an emphasis on economic development in the community. First, however, let me request of an angry reader, don't shoot the messenger. If Mr. Crosthwait, the Black inventor from Detroit, felt that he had been let down by the Black elected officials who voiced so much more rhetoric than concrete assistance, then I was comfortable with the detailed assessments he made in support of his position.

Readers of my column the past two years are aware that I have presented several analyses of local minority-owned business failures and successes. For brevity, and to make a point, I will simply say that several failures were Program Monsters--too big, too many chiefs, as well as including such usual deficiencies as an untrained work force, inadequate accounting and a grass roots community board of directors without the vaguest notion of duties or corporate responsibilities. It is to be noted that after the fact--billions down the drain--the federal office of Economic Opportunity ran around the country attempting to train community people to function as corporate directors.

One local minority enterprise stands out in particular, The Albina Corporation, a multi million dollar metal manufacturing plant. It was based upon the Kelso Two-Factor Plan a concept conceived by a white attorney as a vehicle to place Blacks, Hispanics and displaced white plant workers in the main-stream of American enterprise; the two "factors" were federal seed money and worker earned corporate shares, respectively. Big, unwieldy, and to be primarily understood by lawyers--Yes!, and this brings me closer to the point I wish to make.

I would define this firm as an economic social program, not as a business--with its federal and private largesse, grants, gifts, non-negotiated contracts and other non com-

petitive structures. This was true, of course, with these type enterprises around the country, several of which I visited during 1969 and 1970, and even later. Successful and unsuccessful instances included the Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corp. in Brooklyn, N.Y. (founded 1966), Operation Bootstrap in Watts, California (Shindana Dolls), and others. The most successful was the Progress Enterprises of Philadelphia, founded by the Rev. Leon Sullivan in 1962. And here is my point, I will never be disabused of the notion that without an investment by the participant, no enterprise is going to succeed.

Let us look at the Sullivan Operation, which can be modeled to scale for any size church or city. The organization was based on a 10-36 plan. Under this plan, an individual contributed \$10 a month for 36 months toward a program of community economic development. The first 16 payments went to the Zion Non-profit Charitable Trust where the funds were used for social services, health and education. The remaining 20 payments were used to purchase shares in Zion Investment Associates, a profit-making holding corporation. Readers, please note the separation of welfare from business.

The program began in 1962 with 227 members, expanding to 400 churches in the Philadelphia area. By 1972 there were 7000 members apartment buildings, Progress Plaza, a modern shopping plaza (How about a Fred Meyer or Martin Luther King Plaza, up there on Union?). Also there was a chain of convenience stores called our Markets, and a garment manufacturing, and an electronics plant, where experienced local talent was not available. Black expertise was brought in from the South. Now, there is a real Christian commitment to the brethren, I would say! Mr. Sullivan said it "went right along with the singing, and praying and the collection plate." Real missionary work.

Now, we do have churches here, don't we? I've seen them. I became pointedly aware of Portland's Black

churches in the early 1970's, when I was awarded a contract to furnish financial management services for four of the major multi-million dollar Model Cities programs. Included was a Transportation Program and the principal Day Care Center at the Multi-Services Building on Vancouver Ave. The "Transportation Program" involved the transport of the elderly in the community to expedite such activities as shopping, visits to clinics and so forth. Also, a great amount of vehicular operation centered around the transport of small children to and from the Day Care Centers operated by the churches.

Initially, the liability premiums charged per van by the local insurance agencies was ridiculous. By going directly to the insurance underwriter in Chicago, I was able to get monthly rates reduced from as high as four figures per month to three. Because of my background in industry, I was able to perceive and implement other substantive charges. When Model Cities was phased out by the government, I took copies of all the books and operating procedures to the offices of the Albina Ministerial Association on Union office. Never being able to get to see the headman, I left information pointing out that this was the information they needed to maintain their contracts and salaries in a new ball game.

I also pointed out as I had to Model Cities Administration (to no avail), that the Van-leasing component was a natural for a new Black business enterprise, with a built in market of customers. There were other economically significant suggestions, but I am yet to hear from them and that was fifteen years ago. However, a downtown church pastored by one of my former white students wants me to design a comprehensive economic program for them. Perhaps I can embarrass some group into action in the Northeast section. Next week we will look at some promising enterprises.

You can ruin a life in one stroke.

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