

The Mourning Of Men In Blue Fails To Stir Public Sympathy For Gates

L.A.'s Police Chief Awakens to a New And Colder Morning

Conclusion of a three part series by A. Lee Henderson



Dr. A. Lee Henderson
I r a Glasser, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union has warned us to be wary of police controls exacted in the name of drug search. Often used as a cover-up for allowing drug Enforcement an invasion of privacy, Glasser released some startling statistics. He noted, "The Drug Enforcement Administration was caught not long ago maintaining computer files on more than 1.5 million persons, including congressmen, entertainers, clergy, industry leaders and foreign dignitaries. By the DEA's own admission, many of these files were created on the basis of 'unsubstantiated allegations,' with only five percent of those people actually under investigation as suspected narcotics traffickers."

I am not fearful...except for the unseen, the future that lurks in the shadows of the abrogation of civil rights.

I am determined, fearlessly, to transform the unseen to the seen future on the basis of what we do, and we will do it now.

I would not like to dwell on the haunting memories of the past, but it is appropriate to turn for reference to the slaughter of Attica... a prison mass assault in 1971 in response to the uprising at the Attica Correctional Facility...which will go to retrial this summer, 1991.

The federal courts have, at long last, allowed the class-action suit "brought on behalf of some one thousand two hundred inmates involved in the 1971 uprising...to go to trial."

The three defendants were not successful in their struggle to avoid trial. William M. Kunstler, vice president and volunteer staff attorney at the Center for Constitutional Rights reports:

"I was one of the observers requested by the inmates who watched state troopers, correctional officers, and sheriff's deputies stream into the prison that morning, some shouting, "Save me a nigger!" and who heard the crackle of gunfire over the noise of the rotors of the hovering helicopters, which had already dropped their load of Mace-like gas. I will never forget the anguish and bitterness that I, and my colleagues, felt. For four days, our hastily assembled and disparate group had tried to prevent just such a denouncement. Our failure was horribly illustrated by the corpses of twenty-nine prisoners and ten hostages, all killed by state-issued double-O buckshot and dum-dum bullets.

"We had no way of knowing that the authorities who planned the assault had failed to provide adequate medical resources for the inevitable wounded after the shooting stopped. ...Now for the first time it will be possible to lift the curtain drawn over Attica for too many years and expose how easy it was for men to shed the veneer of civilization and step back into the primordial..."

Kunstler says he wants these lessons to "extend far beyond Attica's walls and watchtowers."

The pages of history are already charred with its American version of a police-tolerable Black Holocaust.

The crime against Rodney King has reminded us that unless we stop "It" now, it absolutely can, from the horror pages of Sinclair Lewis' novel translate to a police state reality... "IT CAN HAPPEN HERE."

Heed the writing on the wall before it's too bloody late.

We deserve the finest men and women in blue...trained even as they were trained during the Persian Gulf War...to survive against a hostile adversary, together, color notwithstanding.

If we can do it in wartime we should be able to do it in peacetime.

Let history repeat itself as we create a homefront worthy of ourselves.

Clinic Offers Free Health Check-Ups For Kids

Western States Chiropractic College is sponsoring a free health check-up for children from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, May 4, 1991 at its Outpatient Clinic, 2900 NE 132nd Avenue in Portland. The screening will include a spinal examination and scoliosis evaluation for children to the age of 16.

The comprehensive exam also includes screening of the eyes, ears, and throat by interns at the clinic. Participants will receive a written report and referrals to other health care specialists if necessary. Appointments are required and may be made by calling 255-6771.

African Americans Treated Unfairly By Kuwaiti Government

The Kuwaiti Government offers African Americans an equal opportunity to fight and die but not to participate in the economic development dollars being spent to rebuild their country.

With the Liberation of Kuwait achieved, Big Business and Japanese Corporations are letting minority firms know that now its back to business as usual. While a disproportionate number of African American and other minority Americans risked their lives to win freedom for Kuwait, major american corporations positioned themselves to swallow whole the development dollars that are presently being spent to reconstruct Kuwait's infrastructure and economy. The reconstruction effort does not involve any African American companies. So its back to business as usual or "no business as usual" for minority owned companies.

To date only large major corporations have been announced as awardees of these contracts to rebuild Kuwait.

To add insult to injury, Japanese corporations are also placing themselves to carve out a large hole in rebuilding a country they did not spill one drop of blood or sweat to liberate. In addition, we have learned that there is some hesitation on the part of the Japanese Government to honor their financial commitment made to the Kuwait effort. To the contrary, during the seven month period that the war was raging, we believe the Japanese were preparing the next generation of computers and automobiles for the Kuwaitis to purchase. How long must we pay?

Concerned Americans need to write to the Embassy of Kuwait 2940 Tilden St.N.W. Washington, D.C. 20008 or call 202-966-0702

Kuwait has announced plans to award contracts for reconstruction in proportion to each country's effort in the war. The United States will therefore receive the lion's share. We believe that same standard should be carried over to ensure that minority Americans, who proportionally served in greater numbers among military service personnel, will receive the same consideration.

Thank you for taking time to support our efforts

Black Law Firm Wins One Of The Largest Medical Malpractice Settlements In The Nation: \$22.8 Million For Botched Circumcision

One of the nation's largest black law firms celebrated its 20th anniversary recently by settling a \$20 million plus medical malpractice suit. Thomas, Kennedy, Sampson Edwards & Patterson has just settled a \$22.8 million lawsuit against Atlanta's foremost obstetric facility, Northside Hospital on behalf of a black 5 year old boy whose penis was severely and permanently damaged during a routine circumcision procedure on the day of his birth. Thomas G. Sampson, co-counsel for the boy and his parents alleged that the hospital used improper equipment to perform the circumcision. The child will require extensive surgery over the next ten years as well as psychological counseling. Sampson says the boy lost a significant portion of his penis due to the hospital's negligence and that he will never be able to function sexually as a normal male.

Sampson, in conjunction with Willie F. Gary of Stuart, Florida engineered the massive structured settlement against the hospital, one of the largest medical

malpractice settlements in Georgia's history.

Sampson and his 20 year old firm are familiar with large settlements. They orchestrated a \$2 million settlement against the State of Georgia in 1988 on behalf of two black deaf girls who were allegedly molested on a school bus trip. The firm set a record at the time for the highest settlement against the State.

The firm handles cases involving most areas of the law, running the gamut from products liability, to sports and entertainment, to domestic relations. The firm has also been involved in civil rights litigation, particularly throughout the 1960's and 1970's. Sampson and the firm have a strong background in defense litigation, representing such clients as General Motors, Coca Cola, Ford Motor Co., State Farm Insurance, Monsanto, K-Mart and Atlanta's mass transit authority (MARTA). With five partners and thirteen attorneys, it is one of the three largest minority-owned firms in the southeast United States.

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The Black Press believes that America can best lead the world away from social and national antagonisms when it accords to every person, regardless of race, color, or creed, full human and legal rights. Having no person, fearing no person, the Black Press strives to help every person in the firm belief that all are hurt as long as anyone is held back.

PORTLAND OBSERVER

(USPS 959-680)
OREGON'S OLDEST AFRICAN AMERICAN PUBLICATION
Established in 1970

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Publisher

Joyce Washington
Operations Manager

Gary Ann Garnett
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The PORTLAND OBSERVER is published weekly by Exle Publishing Company, Inc. 4747 N.E. M.L.K., Jr. Blvd. Portland, Oregon 97211 P.O. Box 3137 Portland, Oregon 97208 (503) 288-0033 (Office) FAX#: (503) 288-0015



Deadlines for all submitted materials:

Articles: Monday, 5 p.m. -- Ads: Tuesday, 5 p.m.

POSTMASTER: Send Address Changes to: Portland Observer, P.O. Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208. Second-class postage paid at Portland, Oregon.

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Subscriptions: \$20.00 per year in the Tri-County area; \$25.00 all other areas.

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PERSPECTIVES

by Professor McKinley Burt



Will A Dropout Lose Out?

We had better get ready to answer this question, and in a hurry. It is not just from our state legislature (Vera Katz) and newly-energized regional task forces that we have cries for sweeping educational reform; but from the white House, Congress and industry-both liberal and conservative establishments. There seems to be one pervasive concept integral to all their projections and it could prove devastating for the future of minorities in this country.

For the first time in this century (since America became primarily urban), very important and influential elements of our society are renouncing the hallowed, egalitarian principle underlying American education and economics. And this is the belief that all have been endowed with intrinsic abilities to achieve-as well as with "certain inalienable rights." But now, the aforementioned establishment has built into its European and Japanese-inspired projections the most rigid and structured TRACKING system ever contemplated.

Our specific concern is that all of these "Year 2000" programs mandate that there will be convenient DROP-OUT STATIONS at the 10th and 12th grades. In light of the existing situation in respect to the education of African American children it is not difficult to project who will be put off the learning

train at what station. The 'defacto' drop-out has been with us all the time so why should we suppose that the establishment will suddenly move from rhetoric to structured 'upscale basics'.

Today's 'front page' article addresses other issuers raised by this "Year 2000" bandwagon. But, here, I would have you note that in the last month or so I have consistently cited modes of 'parental involvement' that have been proven to equip them to enhance their children's performance in school. The last two weeks in particular I have returned to my 'motivational' theme, emphasizing the early African contributions to the world's culture and technology; "Issac Newton: Black History Student & The ancient African Public Library."

This technique and the "Role Model" approach are going to be ever so critical as a driving force to establish the 'IDENTITY' mindset that will allow black youth to engage in the learning process. It is strange that we have so many blacks (among others) who cannot understand this, and bewail the fact that their programs are being overwhelmed by escalating losses-dropouts, gang activities. They don't seem to comprehend that if the schools are not doing it-and if there is not a coherent family structure present to build self-esteem-then their programs must incorporate this thrust as an essential feature. You can't must 'say' this is family.

I note that when I was moved from the building which became the site of the UMOJA Gang rehabilitation program, eight or nine black and white

teenagers were assigned to pack up an carry the many scores of crates containing my library. Carrying on the usual conversation and exchange I always inspire with kids, it did not take long to identify their interests (or lack of them). While their motivational

profile was typical for 'dropouts', I was able to get three interested in the role models in my book, Black Inventors of America. They had not the vaguest idea that men and women of color had invented so many of the technical wonders around them or that many of them were "DROPOUTS".

One, who abandoned school because he just couldn't understand math", as amazed at the revelation that "Africans developed the binary math used by todays' computer" I showed him in twenty minutes and he is back in school. Another of that trio will be a freshman at the University of Oregon this fall. I told this incredulous young man that I had entered law school after passing the entrance exam as a "high school dropout".

This was followed up by showing him the black history models of early African American educational system in the books on my shelves. He soon realized that he had no excuses.

Next week I will cite several exemplary models of African American Scientists who never saw the inside of a university but who became world-renown in their field. Perhaps you can use them to motivate some black youth who has not learned who he is or to dream. Or who has been "tracked" by the "Year 2000" enthusiasts

Commission Approves \$36 Million Reduction In US West Rates

The Oregon Public Utility Commission decided today that US WEST Communications should reduce its Oregon rates by about \$36 million annually, with an additional \$8 million one-year temporary reduction. The commission is expected to issue and order on the PUC staff-recommended reduction within a week, even though there will be no immediate changes in customer rates.

The new rates will be effective within 15 days after the commission decides one way or another on a US WEST request for an alternative form of regulation, which is expected later

this year.

The Alternative Form of Regulation (AFOR) plan, proposed by US WEST to the commission in 1988, would change the way many of the company's telephone services are regulated. Among the changes the company proposed are the price listing of non-essential services, such as call forwarding, call waiting and various line connections used mainly by business customers.

These changes, which US WEST says it needs to provide these services competitively, would allow the company to vary prices within a range with a maximum limit set by the PUC.

Legislation approved in 1987 allows the PUC to be more flexible in regulating telecommunications services if it determines that customers will benefit.

The PUC staff has been analyzing US WEST rates in this case for the past three months. The staff concluded that rates should be reduced because existing rates are based on earlier years, when the company's Oregon revenues and expenses were different. A more appropriate rate schedule is possible by using 1990 data as a base to set future rates.

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Reinvestments in the Community

Spike Lee's Mo' Better Than Ever With Latest Film and Book

By Angelique Sanders

Slumped on the front porch, gentle jazz--entertainingly, not distractingly, loud-spilling from the house, ignored burning cigarette in the ashtray...that is the way to approach Spike Lee's latest book, *Mo' Better Blues*.

Though the book is not solely written by Spike--it is co-authored by Lisa Jones, and contains many personal accounts as perceived by co-workers--every page breathes "Spike Lee", from movie clip photos, to actors' recounts of on-set relations. The pictures--all 150 of them--similarly are of the Spike mood: self-contained, coolly reflective, symbolic. Each conveys an intense human emotion, and in the Spike tradition, that mood is generally not oblivious happiness. For example, a photograph of Denzel Washington and Cynda Williams (two members of a four-way love relationship: Washington, Williams, Joie Lee, and Washington's trumpet) embracing, shows Washington holding his trumpet symbolically between them. Another, of Washington--"Bleek Gilliam"--onstage, is not taken from the traditional vantage of directly in front of the band, but from among audience members, to heighten mood.

Do not confuse the book as an attempt to re-cap the movie and put it into perspective; rather it enhances your understanding of how the actors tried to personify the script, their relations with one another, and how and why the crew went about effects in the ways that they did. It also, and most importantly, gives

you a feel of who Spike really is. The book is no substitute for the movie (a viewer understands Spike two minutes into his first scene); it is simply a good supplement. If you have the opportunity to read it, wait until after you've seen the movie so the outcome is a surprise; otherwise, it's as frustrating as sitting next to a vocal person who's seen it. The book will be released August 12.

The movie will be a flashback to Spike's past three successes only in the sense of characters and the crew: everything else about this innovative film breaks the Spike mold of films about racial injustice. This film is not as powerful in plot as it is in characterization: it's moving in that Spike has captured a true slice of Black life, something so rare to find. He is unafraid to use non-Blacks, but he realizes the need for a film that African Americans can relate to.

The movie was slow to "get going" but this time was needed to build the emotion. Characterization was practically automatic, due to the skill of Spike and his understanding of Black life. With help of flawless costuming and Spike's trademark, liberal ad libbing, the actors had no problems illustrating the characters. Everyone could laugh at and relate to the stereotypical manager/best friend/crook Giant (Spike Lee); the crooked owners of the club (which was symbolically named "Beneath the Underdog") which were human echos, neither ever saying anything of substance. Shadow (Wesley Snipes)

was the saxophonist trying to steal the show, hogging anything from solo time to money to female attention. The pianist, Left-Hand Lacey (Giancarlo Esposito, whom you might remember from *Do the Right Thing*) was a whiney homeslice with a ditzzy French girlfriend.

A lot of "free time" was splashed into the flick, scenes that didn't build the plot or characterization, but let the audience sit back and laugh; unnecessary subplots such as a quick listen to Butterbean's comedy or Spike Lee telling a ridiculous story about childhood loosened the overly taught mood. The photography was extremely experimental, but amazing: an argument scene found the camera whizzing between the arguers, rather than being shut off and on; a bicycle-riding scene found the camera bumping along as if on a bike; the confusion of a fight scene was captured by a staggering cameraman. The sound effects were similarly effective: Clarke's voice in one scene fades out to nothing in relation to music, as if representative from within Bleek's mind; chaotic, tense jazz enhanced a fight scene.

The movie might not have measured up to 1989's *Do the Right Thing* in intensity or in its effect upon society, but the methodology and quality still was terrific. It is a powerful Black film in a white market, but it will succeed because of its strength. The mostly white audience that made up my fellow viewers were all moved, demonstrating once again that quality is quality, regardless of race.

"Reinvestments in the Community" is a weekly column appearing in API publications throughout the USA.