

Vantage Point

By Ron Daniels

Its Time To Stop The Violence In The Black Community

Week after week the casualty count continues to mount in depressed African American communities across the country. Hundreds of African Americans are dying in a killing frenzy precipitated by turf wars over the illicit drug economy. Black communities, particularly urban inner ghettos, have become war zones where drive by shootings and random gunfire have become commonplace. Innocent men, women and children are being victimized by a new breed of outlaws in a lawless society. The greatest cause of death for Black males between the ages of 18 - 24 is homicide.

Though the drug traffic is a major source for much of the violence, it is not the only source of the violence in Black communities. The anger and frustration engendered by the oppressive conditions that large numbers of Black people are forced to endure is producing an internal implosion of self-destruction. The oppressed often direct their anger, hostility and violence towards each other and not towards the system and people who are their oppressors.

A white dominated racist and exploitive political and economic system is the real source of the violence in the Black community. The masses of Black people are increasingly viewed as expendable within U.S. society. There is no national will to end hunger, poverty, disease, homelessness or inadequate education within Black communities. Nor is there any genuine commitment/will to stop the violence in Black communities.

Poverty and drugs and the violence which they spawn are major des-

tabilizing influences in the Black community. Chronic violence, conflict, tension and the anxiety which violence produces undermines a people prospects for resistance, revolt and empowerment. A people pre-occupied with issues of safety, security and peace have little time or energy to focus on the criminal behavior of the system which is oppressing them. Indeed the frightful terror of crime and violence has reached such proportions in some communities that Black people are pleading for the authorities to restore order by any means - even at the expense of surrendering civil liberties. Hence we face the prospect of Black communities becoming little police states firmly under "stable" control of an oppressive system.

This is a monumental crisis which the black community must respond to as a matter of grave urgency. The violence in the Black community must stop and African Americans must develop the strategies and programs required to achieve JUSTICE with PEACE in our communities. Our response must be a wholistic, political and economic strategy for change.

We do not need more prisons or more police or tougher law enforcement. We need jobs, education, housing, health care, drug education and drug treatment, a clean environment and an end to cultural poison and pollution - RACISM. We cannot give the police a blank check or license to unleash reign of terror in our communities under the guise of restoring peace, tranquility and order.

In large measure the police are a part of the problem. Police officials are

often in complicity with the drug traffic and allow it to continue both out of disregard for Black people and because they are often on the take. So Black people must control and direct the police. The police must not be allowed to control and direct the Black community.

Inside the Black community we must place a priority on political education. It is crucial that we struggle to spark a movement for change that will give our people a new sense of purpose and re-install the value that we place on human life. We must educate our people about the nature of racism, militarism and political and economic exploitation in this society and challenge our people to direct our attack towards our real enemies. A radical transformation of the present system and the establishment of a new society with humane priorities will produce a more wholesome climate for human beings to flourish. We must fight for fundamental change.

In the meantime, our movement for change should incorporate community based units with the objective of using our own resources to stop the violence in our communities. We cannot allow those who have been criminalized by a criminal society to terrorize the majority of Black people into inaction. It is crucial that Black people develop a political movement with the vision and values for change and the capacity to control violence and disruption within our community. We will not be instruments of our own oppression. Lets stop the violence in the Black community and focus our energies on creating a just and human society.

Employment In Oregon April 1991

Oregon's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained at 5.8% in April, the third straight month at that level. The national rate fell from 6.8% to 6.6% between March and April. The stability and level of Oregon's unemployment rate continue to suggest that the state is definitely suffering from an economic slowdown but is not following the nation into recession.

News from the Employment Division's monthly survey of Oregon employers was decidedly more gloomy. The increase of 5,000 payroll jobs fell far short of a normal April increase. In fact, after adjusting for normal seasonal trends, payroll employment dropped by 5,300, the largest decrease since July 1983.

Looking at specific industries, lumber and wood products added 300 jobs, mostly as a result of a couple of veneer and plywood mills which rehired workers after a layoff. However,

the 300 increase looks paltry compared with the loss of almost 9,000 in the last twelve months.

Elsewhere in manufacturing, most industries registered either no change in employment or a small loss. The major exception, transportation equipment, lost 500 jobs as ship repair contracts neared completion. Even so, the 3,300 workers left in the ship and boat repair industry still represent the highest April employment level since 1972, when comparable records started.

Construction employment grew by 1,200 in April, supped on by large increases in heavy construction and special trade contractors. However, the rapid construction growth of the past two years appears to have stopped. April's employment level, 50,600, was 500 lower than that of April 1990, the first such year-to-year decrease since April 1987.

Retail trade and services added

substantial numbers of jobs in April, 2,800 and 1,500 respectively, but both fell short of a typical April increase. Most of the new retail jobs came in eating and drinking places. In services, the number of jobs in employment services (made up largely of temporary help agencies) fell by 1,300 to 14,900. Over the past year, employment in this volatile industry has increased five times, decreased seven times, and averaged a massive 700 change each month. Elsewhere in services, hotels and lodging places added 800 employees to reach 20,000, a record level for the time of year.

Overall, Oregon's economy continues to be stronger than the nation's, but the state is likely to face several more months of slow or nonexistent growth before the pace picks up in late summer.

Commissioner Kafoury to Attend Sabin's Neighborhood Meeting

The Sabin Community Association will be hosting an evening with Commissioner Gretchen Kafoury on Monday, May 20th, at Sabin School, 4013 NE 18th from 7:30 to 9:00 pm. The Commissioner will be speaking about her housing agenda for Portland with Inner Northeast as the focus for this meeting. This meeting had been originally scheduled for May 27th but due to the Memorial Day holiday it was rescheduled for May 20th.

If you have questions and/or concerns about affordable housing, the Dominion Capital property, the Portland Housing center or other related issues, plan to attend. Your input is valuable! For more information contact: Marina Antilla, 288-8970 or Kathleen Todd, 823-4575

If you are a graduating student, it's time to shine. You can be what you want to be. Don't forget the ones who have carried you thus far. Let them know that you appreciate them in what ever capacity they have fulfilled for you. Remember to be good to each other!



Perspectives

By Professor McKinley Burt

How To Polish Your Diamond(s) In The Rough

As promised, this article is especially directed to those parents who realize that they cannot depend upon the 'system' alone for the effective education of their children. But, first, the information for obtaining that very motivational book on the black medical genius, Vivien T. Thomas.

"Pioneering research in Surgical Shock and Cardiovascular Surgery: Vivien Thomas and his work with Alfred Blalock". Now on sale by University of Pennsylvania Press, \$9.95 (\$4.00 shipping). P.O. Box 4836, Hampden, Baltimore, MD. 21211. Also ask for catalog. (215)898-6261.

That "home nurturing" I often speak about derives from my own childhood experiences frequently written about here - and which have proven to be of such great advantage in dealing with a technological world throughout the years (very successfully, and WITH-OUT DEGREES IN THE SCIENCES). It is not that "papers" are not needed today, but a HEADSTART is a must. Further, it is becoming increasingly apparent that a tragic number of inner city youths, for whatever reason, will not get to a university - or even finish high school. We have got to deal with that! They nevertheless must be kept competitive at their level of the job market if they are to survive, and this can only be done if we provide a science and technical orientation beyond the conventional structures - which do not serve them very well.

We would keep in mind, too, that many youth (as in my case) can be encouraged to resume their education at a later date if, early on, they have

been given an understanding and orientation of what science and technology are all about. As I cite these personal examples, remember that the experiences are typical of the backgrounds of the models in my book, "Black Inventors Of America". The availability of related reading materials in the HOME are essential. I was raised in a single-parent home, but my mother, at whatever sacrifice, saw that there was science literature and books at hand - including subscriptions to Popular Science, Popular Mechanics, National Geographic and the like. And, of course, there was that encouragement to use the public library.

These resources are readily available today. Dalton's Bookstores have a tremendous display for your selection as does the huge Powell's Book Store at 10th and West Burnside. Also, OMSI (Oregon Museum of Science and Industry) has both reading materials and SCIENCE KITS. The latter are especially helpful for youngsters who are motivated by hands-on experiments. From the age of six on, I had a series of Gilbert 'Erector' sets and chemistry sets, ant farms and the like. These are still around and quite useful - And 'LEGGO' building units are wonderful. Try both OMSI and "Toys 'R US", as well as shopping centers.

Another thing was that in my youth, we were encouraged by both parents and older siblings to form SCIENCE CLUBS where we devised experiments and assigned offices like "Chief Scientist-Lab Manager-etc". We made soap, polishes, built 'crystal radios', grew plants without soil, made weather instruments,

model airplanes and many other devices. Occasionally a teacher or member of the community would arrange for competition among neighborhood clubs.

Parental encouragement and support should be forthcoming at all times. However, children should also be pushed to achieve and inquire. I still remember a sermon my mother preached about 'initiative', and what happens to people who are surrounded by knowledge and opportunity-but still can't function. I was 12 years old at the time and had spent a week moping around the house, "acting evil" and bemoaning the fact that I couldn't build a model German Fokker Airplane because I didn't have the plans.

One step ahead of a resounding blow, I was reminded of the innumerable sacrifices the woman had made to provide me with every bit of knowledge and resources possible to give a child. (What are you going to do when I'm gone?) Within minutes I got my wits about me-off to the main library to get the address of the plane manufacturer in Germany-over to the post office to find out the postage-then back home to compose a letter. In six weeks I had the plans and our club was working on a model.

I have never forgotten that lesson and have never since failed to exploit every resource available for support of a task. Next week I will detail from personal experience how such a background can enable even a high school dropout to enter a technical workforce (The Martin Marietta Aluminum Company: Electronic Instrumentation, Power House Operator, Etc.)

REP. CARTER HOSTS TOWN HALL MEETING

Ballot Measure 5, State Budget To Be Discussed

Rep. Margaret Carter, D-Portland, will host a Town Hall Meeting featuring a discussion on effects of Ballot Measure 5 and the State Budget. Two state officials, with a great deal of knowledge on state money matters, will lead the discussion. Rep. Carl Hosticka, of the House Committee on

Revenue and School Finance, and Rep. Eldon Johnson, of the Joint Ways & Means Committee, will answer questions about school finance, higher education budgets and human resource services.

Rep. Carter expects a lively and informative Town Hall Meeting. The

Meeting will be held at 7 pm, Thursday, May 23rd, in King Neighborhood Facility, at 4815 NE 7th. Everyone is invited.

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Reinvestments in the Community

Mental Health & Developmental Disability

The Mental Health and Developmental Disability Services Division has presented five Awards of Excellence in recognition of Oregonians who have made outstanding contributions in the mental health field.

The awards are presented annually during May, Mental Health Month. The nominations are submitted from throughout the state.

The Oregon Alliance for the Mentally Ill and the Division also presented awards and saving bonds to two Oregon high school students. The students are the award winners of a statewide essay contest.

Research & Training Center Family Support Services. It is one of only three national technical assistance centers in the country funded by the National Institute of Mental Health to provide research and technical assistance to the children's mental health system.

The Center located at Portland State University was selected especially for its work in parent/professional collaboration, family involvement in treatment, national advocacy work for children's mental health, and the development of the multi-cultural model. The Division also recognized the Center's assistance in the Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP) and the Office of Children's Mental Health Services.

Oregon Alliance for the Mentally ILL. OAMI was selected for a variety of contributions made throughout the

state. Most noteworthy are the BRIDGES manual and training program, the annual meetings, anti-stigma campaign, iris distribution, educational efforts and family support focus to mention a few. The contributions of OAMI families throughout the state are moving the organization into a mature position as an advocacy organization.

Irv Smith, Executive Director of the Mid-Columbia Center for Living, Irv Smith is a mental health professional who has served the system with integrity for many years and promoted a county mental health program model. He served as a positive liaison between the Division and the County Mental Health Program Directors. Smith's membership on the Mental Health Advisory Board and other committees has provided valuable leadership.

Garrett Smith, Executive Director of Mind Empowered, Inc., Garrett Smith received numerous nominations for this award. His commitment as a volunteer, consumer advocate, activist and service provider has had far-reaching effects. Mental health planning committees in Multnomah County and throughout the state have all benefited from his input. Under the leadership of Garrett Smith, Mind Empowered, Inc. has become a major organization in the mental health delivery system in Multnomah County with a staff of 13, all who are consumers of mental health services.

Wenda Lloyd. She was selected for this award due to her consistent outstanding efforts directed at program development, enhancement of expanded work opportunities and transitional vocational services for patients returning to the community. Patients at Dammasch State Hospital are provided with new work opportunities through the hospital's sheltered workshop, patient pay program and pre-work training program through these services. She developed a collaborative tie between Dammasch State Hospital and the Vocational Rehabilitation Division, thus allowing evaluation of patient workers for supported services in transitioning from the hospital to community work sites.

Essay Winners. The students were asked to write essays on famous people or people they have known who have been mentally ill. The essays were to describe how these people enriched the lives of others and how the students' lives were affected. First place winner of a \$500 savings bond was Suzanna Bess from Central Linn High School, who submitted "Who Can Put A Limit?" She submitted an essay on Winston Churchill. Second place winner of a \$250 savings bond was Pam Bush from Corvallis High School for "My Life with a Depression." Her essay described a personal acquaintance. The students were awarded saving bonds financed by Upjohn Company

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