

# Vantage Point

By Ron Daniels

## Activist to Convene Emergency Conference on Black Independent Politics

Deeply concerned about the direction of Black politics in the wake of the emergence of "race neutral" politics and the rise of the Black conservative apologists, a group of Black political activists is preparing to convene an emergency conference on Black independent politics. Headed by nationally syndicated talk show host Bob Law of New York, the initial list of organizers includes Ron Walters, political activist and Chair. of the Political Science Dept. at Howard University in Washington, D.C., Janice Graham of the Our Common Ground organization from West Palm Beach Florida, Bob Starks, Chairman of the Black Political Task Force in Chicago, William Nelson, President of the African Heritage Studies Association from Columbus, Ohio, Jitu Weusi, Chairman of African Americans United for Political Power of New York, Dennis Serrette, long time labor activist from Oxon Hill Maryland, Damu Smith, Co-Facilitator of the National African American Network Against Intervention in the Gulf from Washington D.C. and Jemadari Kamara, Dean of the Center for Community and Public Service Univ. of Mass. in Boston. The sponsoring committee is being expanded to include key political activists and organizers from every region of the country.

The conference will be held November 22-24, 1991 in Washington, D.C. at the Howard Inn. Among the goals and objectives of the conference are the following:

- \*to assess the current state of Black politics against the backdrop of the

crises in the African American community.

- \*to review the Black agenda and develop a progressive Black independent agenda for the '92 elections.

- \*to discuss the various third party initiatives under discussion in various quarters including the prospects for a Black led independent presidential campaign in '92.

- \*to discuss the need for the consolidation of an ongoing Black independent political voice within the African American community.

In a conversation with Bob Law he indicated that this emergency conference is "crucial because of the depths of the crisis in the Black community and the failure of the Democratic and Republican parties and traditional Black leadership to respond in an effective manner. No one seems to be taking the plight of the Black masses seriously." He also said, "The two major parties must know without a doubt that our votes are not for sale in '92. It's time for a new Black Leadership to emerge which will not sell out to the Democrats or tell us that adopting conservative Republicanism is the path to freedom." Ron Walters, a vociferous critic of race neutral politics, said that "it is clear that Black people must develop a powerful Black agenda for the '92 election and devise a Black independent strategy that "this just may be the season to consider a Black led independent presidential campaign to ignite a mass based, grassroots movement for fundamental change in this country. The leaders may be reluctant, but I think

that the Black masses are ready to break loose from the National Democratic Party."

I certainly want to add my voice to those calling for this important conference on Black independent politics. My sense is that large numbers of African Americans are fed up with the sterility of the two establishment parties and disaffected with a good many traditional Black leaders and elected officials. As I have said in previous articles, too many of our traditional Black leaders and politicians have forgotten the vision and values of the movement in the 60's and 70's. They rode into elected and appointed offices and into the corporate board rooms on the backs of the Black masses. But now far too many of these leaders are representative of a small relatively well off elite in the Black community; a Black elite that has abandoned the Black masses in favor of a junior partnership or subservient role within the very system which oppresses the masses of Black people.

As Malcolm X might put it, it's time for a message from the grassroots. This much needed conference on Black independent politics must let the world know that there is a new Black leadership coming on and a new Black movement rising from the grassroots and from among those who identify with the grassroots. This conference should set the stage for a massive human rights crusade in 1992. Indeed, 1992 just might be the year of the "ballot or the bullet."

For further information: call 407-845-2670.

### Katz Education Plan Examined for Impact on Girls and Minorities

The Portland-Area Women's Political Caucus 9PAWPC) is hosting a forum discussion on "Education Reform in Oregon" on Wednesday, September 4, 6:00 p.m. at the Crossroads Building (123 N.E. 3rd) in Portland.

The first in a series of "Focal Point" forums, the September 4th program will examine the new education plan spearheaded by Representative Vera Katz and recently adopted by the Oregon State Legislature. Caucus member Donna Tyner will moderate the program. Panel members include Representative Vera Katz; Commissioner Mary Wendy Roberts, Bureau of Labor and Industries; Gary Sackley, Counselor for Milwaukie High School; and a representative from Roosevelt High School's "Renaissance 2000" program.

The panel discussion will focus on how aspect of the plan competency exams, students choosing a college or vocational tract at 10th grade-will impact girls and minorities, an issue of particular interest to the caucus membership.

The Portland Caucus will hold "Focal Point" forums on the first Wednesday of each month at the Crossroads Building from 6-7 p.m. The public and the media are welcome at 5:30 p.m. for a half-hour of social exchange with PAWPC members. The PAWPC membership meeting will convene following the program. Future month topics TBA.

### 2nd Annual Basketball Tournament and Benefit Held

Entertainment & All and Urban Entertainment presented the 2nd Annual Unity Day Basketball Tournament as well as an awards banquet and dance. This year's proceeds will be donated to the Urban Entertainment Scholarship Fund and the Mrs. Collins Child Service Center.

This presentation is a non-profit function for the community put on by the community. By participating in Unity Day, citizens contribute to some of the worthwhile programs which exist in our community.

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# Perspectives

By Professor McKinley Burt

## Add Preaching to Reading, Writing and Rapping

"I Got The Word In Me And I Can Sing It, You Know: A Study of the Performed African-American Sermon." Citing this book by Gerald L. Davis is a good way to pick up from where I left off week before last (Language, Ideas and Roget's Thesaurus: Fourth Edition).

Quite correctly the volume is recommended as "A rousing, long-overdue critical treatment and analysis of the BLACK SERMON as a verbal folk genre." A reviewer says, "This is the great opus of African-American verbal tradition." If you think you would like a copy, it can be obtained from the University of Pennsylvania Press, Blockley Hall, 418 Service Drive, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6097; (No.22,1259-2, \$11.37).

When I stated in respect to that "Fourth Edition" of the thesaurus, "Here we find the pursuit of a word or concept leads to a wondrous journey and learning experience," I could just as well have been referring to the Black preachers, prophets, visionaries, saints, emancipators or freedom fighters. Even those with whom you emphatically disagree seem to have the ability to evoke passions and emotions you had rather not deal with. And where there is empathy with their concepts or dreams, their artful language can convert the most cynical of us into enthusiastic shouters, marchers or even dreamers. And note that the Russians are honoring anew their revolutionary African poet, Alexander Pushkin. The coup is over.

Now, I have pretty well documented over the years in my articles that those moving and inspiring passages and proverbs from both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible were written in times and regions where there was an indisputable African presence in the arts and letters and in the hierarchy of the religions. Even the most conservative of respected European historians acknowl-

edge the physiogomy of many of the most celebrated of the contributors-- "dusky, woolly-headed, son of Ham, Shebas Daughters" and other begrudging attribution to a race that was the progenitor (just as Plato said).

It is no wonder, then, that through the ages and even today--from the scribes of the Pharaohs by the Pyramids, to the sermons of Moses several thousand years later and the pronouncements of the three black Popes of North Africa another two thousand years later, and to the great oratory of the southern black bishops and to Malcolm X, Reverend King and Jesse Jackson--the world has paid rapt attention and imitated the African tradition (while denying or ignoring the ethnicity).

So, it is incomprehensible to many of us that we still have "educators" who cannot develop curriculum and lesson plans (at all levels) capable of inspiring and motivating African American children. We would note in passing that the first dozen or so of American presidents acknowledged developing their readin' and writin' and grammar from the ancient material; and also many of their moral, conceptual and administrative ideas. We refer here to not only that of obvious Ethiopian, Egyptian and Biblical origin but to all that allegedly-Greek philosophy and science which was learned from the Temple Priests of Ethiopia and Egypt and brought back to that barbaric peninsula on the Aegean Sea.

In closing, let me cite a similarity in support of that thesis. In the middle 1930's I would spend a lot of time in my grandfather's library and of special fascination to me was a 30 volume set of books, "Delphian Text," a cultural history of the world (copyright, 1925 by The Delphian Society, Chicago). Chronicling "The Foundations of Pres-

ent Day Culture," it was prepared by leading scholars from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Stanford, Princeton, University of California, etc. On the very first page of volume I it is stated, "FOR THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF ITS MEMBERS IN THEIR CHAPTER PROGRAMS."

And I can very well understand that, for the book breaks every rule of a racist education and history structure. The first chapter, "The Beginnings of Culture," begins with Egypt and the Sudan and proceeds to detail without qualification all of the seminal contributions of Africans to the world's culture and technology. And contrary to the presentations of many contemporary texts, the photographs of statues in the field or museums have African features that could be found in the innercities of New York, Chicago, L.A., or Portland. There is even described the invention of the "Nilometer" for registering the rise of the Nile River, still used today by the U.S. Corp of Engineers (and in my school demonstrations).

Now, we understand the meaning of that phrase, "For The Exclusive Use of"-- The "Delphian Society" was a select group of upper middle class scholars and other professionals (white) who distributed this "dangerous" information only among themselves. It was not for the peons, the working class, the media, and certainly not for the schools. Not that many whites have heard of the set and not any African Americans that I have met. It goes without saying that there have been other organizations of a similar nature who have furthered racism and prejudice by withholding truth from the world--while masquerading as "scholars." I keep my copy right next to my 38.

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## Reinvestments in the Community

### North Precinct Community Policing Project Holds Second Annual Iris Court Community Fair



The Iris Court North Precinct Community Policing Demonstration Project and the Iris court Residence Council held its Second Annual Iris Court Community Fair from 12 noon to 4:00 p.m. Saturday, August 24, at North Summer Street and Vancouver Avenue.

Mayor J.E. "Bud" Clark gave a kickoff address at high noon from the top of an Oregon Air National Guard flat bed truck. He was joined in opening remarks by Darryl Tukufu, CEO/Director, Urban League of Portland and Housing Authority of Portland Director, Denny West.

The event featured a job/health fair, entertainment, citizen information and food in a block party atmosphere.

The fair featured several local groups including Sista's N' Motion, Unison, "Bam Bam" and OMSI "Robots."

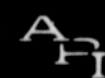
Arrangements were made to provide ribs, chicken and hamburgers for 400 people. These items were donated by Food Service of America, R.M. Pamplin, Inc., PPB Sunshine Division, Life Center, Reser's Fine Foods, West-

ern Paper Products, Portland Bottle (7-JP), T.J. Sentry Market, Franklin's Ready Ribs, Blue Bell Chips, Inc., Oregon Chief, and Emanuel Health Services

The food was prepared by the Deacon's of Morning Star Church.

The following agencies staffed an informational booth during the fair: Sickle Cell Foundation, Red Cross, Oregon Outreach Youth Resource, AMA Head Start, AMA Family Day Care, Self Enhancement, Northeast Community Health, Project Independence, Northeast Workforce Center/PCC, Oregon National Guard Army-Air, Navy Recruiting, Oregon Employment Services Division, Poison Control, Private Industry Council, Portland Police Bureau Recruiting, Northeast Neighborhoods (Crime Prevention), Youth Gang Outreach, Peninsular Children Center, Neighborhood Connection, Boys and Girls Club, Together Great Start, Urban League, Project Imani, Project Linkage, MADD, Northwest Regional Educational Lab, (P.O.I.C.) Portland Occupation Industry Council, Multi-nomah Co. Community Health Division, Regional Drug Initiative, St. Vincent's Hospital, OSU Extension Service, Children's Services Div., OMSI, and the YWCA.

"Reinvestments in the Community" is a weekly column appearing in API publications through out the USA



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