

CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL *perspectives*

By Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

C o m m e n t a r y

Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia) declared its independence from Britain in 1980. One of the conditions that led to the negotiated independence was a ten year promise that the best land of the nation, almost 50 million acres held by about 4,000 white farmers prior to independence, would not be nationalized. Well, President Mugabe kept his promise although it was very difficult for most of the 10 million Zimbabweans to agree with given the fact that the majority of the population has been forced for ten years to subsist on very small plots of land.

A recent poll taken in Zimbabwe showed massive support for the land reform legislation that will be acted upon this year by the legislature. The present plan is to first acquire about 20 million of the 50 million acres now held by affluent white farmers in Zimbabwe. Great Britain and the United States both have cautioned President Mugabe not to proceed with the implementation of this type of land reform. We wonder, why the United States and other nations do not want to see the native people of

Africa acquire a right to their land?

If President Mugabe had broken the ten year promise, we are sure Zimbabwe would have received the wrath of the western world. But, it seems even though Zimbabwe has kept its commitment made at the time of independence the western world is threatening to pull the international economic "rug" from under Zimbabwe in response. At a meeting of the World Bank, Zimbabwe's representatives were told that western investors might not continue to invest in the nation if the land redistribution began. Zimbabwe should not be "white-mailed" by the west to ensure Anglo economic injustice and privilege.

From our perspective, this is an issue of international racial justice. The centuries-long struggle against colonialism, imperialism and racism have exposed the degree to which these repressive forces will try to disguise under neo-colonialism. The international community should take greater notice of the good things that have happened in a nation like Zimbabwe in only 12

years of independence. While there have been some problems, overall Zimbabwe, even in the face of substantial interference from South Africa, has made steady progress. But this progress would be put in serious jeopardy if the issue of land reform and redistribution is not confronted at this crucial stage of Zimbabwe's national development.

President Mugabe stated to the *New York Times*, "You cannot run a society of haves and have-nots...and hope that society will continue to accept the situation...We have to do justice and give the communal people and other people who want to go into agriculture, land to do so." We know that Mugabe is correct in his assessment of the situation in Zimbabwe.

We further hope that the day will come when American society will stop accepting the irreversibility of the "haves and have-nots." Maybe rather than criticize our sisters and brothers in Zimbabwe concerning land reform, the United States could possibly learn something from them about social transformation.

The Big Guy Hits a Big One

Packy, the Metro Washington Park Zoo's world-famous Asian elephant, turns 30 years old April 14, and a celebration to match the big guy's size and age is planned. The entire month of April will be dedicated to programming and events about Packy, the elephant herd at the zoo and their cousins in the wild. Major sponsor for the birthday bash is TCI Cable, Packy's Zoo Parent of three years.

Packy was the first Asian elephant to be born in the western hemisphere in 44 years. Only seven elephants had been born before him--all in circuses--from 1880 to 1918, but no zoo had ever seen a baby elephant. Thirty years later, Packy truly is a "big guy"--at 13,500 pounds and over ten feet in height, he is the largest known Asian elephant in the world.

Beginning the month-long elephantine festivities to celebrate Packy's birthday is an appearance by the Zoo Outpost at Jantzen Beach Center on April 4 and 5 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. The Outpost, which features animals from the children's zoo, insects and several elephant activities, welcomes sponsor KISN radio for a live remote broadcast on Saturday, April 4, from 2 to 4 p.m. On Sunday, the zoo's show staff will exhibit reptiles in presentations at 2 and 3 p.m. Visitors can also sign Packy's birthday card and compare the size of their foot to the buy guy's.

At the zoo, visitors can join a scav-

enger hunt every day in April, and search the zoo grounds for elephant and Packy information. Over 100 prizes, including a portable phone, will be awarded throughout the month. Prizes are provided by TV Host Magazine, HBO and KISN radio.

Beginning Saturday, April 4 and continuing on weekends throughout April will be animal talks by zoo volunteers, who will display elephant artifacts and specimens, as well as Packy memorabilia. Also presented on weekends will be a shadow puppet show which will take place in the Elephant Museum. Visitors can also sign Packy's birthday card in the decorated Elephant Barn.

The second annual Packy Auction takes place Friday, April 10, The Auction is a fund-raising event for the Center for Species Survival (CSS), an off-exhibit breeding facility designed to provide highly endangered animals a private place to live and produce young. A primary goal of the zoo and the CSS is to contribute to the conservation of animals in the wild and in zoos by continuing to research and improve husbandry techniques, exhibit environments, animal management concepts and captive propagation. Auction organizers hope to raise \$25,000; last year's event raised \$16,000. Tickets for the event, which begins at 6 p.m. are (of course) \$30.

On Saturday, April 11, all of

Packy's best friends are invited to his 30th birthday party at the zoo. Festivities, including face painting, signing his birthday card, walking through the Elephant Machine and getting an elephant ears hat run from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. At 2 p.m. Packy will get his 40-pound-whole-wheat-peanut-butter-frosting-with-carrot-candles-cake while well-wishers sing happy birthday. Birthday cake for 5,000 of Packy's closest friends, baked, decorated and donated by Albertsons, follows.

April 11 is also the grand opening of the Elephant Museum Gift Shop, which will carry a large variety of elephant merchandise, including a specially designed weather vane depicting Packy and his mother, Belle. The shop will also carry exclusive 30th Birthday items.

The Metro Washington Park Zoo has made Portland the elephant capital of the western world because of its success in breeding Asian elephants. The zoo operates the world's most successful breeding program for these endangered animals, and it all began with the birth of Packy, who made international headlines for months before his arrival. Since that day, 25 baby elephants have been born here. Born of parents from the wild, Packy's genetic lineage is important to the survival of the species. He has sired seven offspring, two of which--Rama and Sung-Surin--are still living at the zoo.

This Is Where I Came In

by Professor McKinley Burt

I took one look at the cover section for last Thursday's Portland Oregonian newspaper and thought, "Ho Hum!" With a byline, Dean Baker, we were led once again into that *Alice In Wonderland* of Portland Public School politics; "Shirrmishes End In An Uneasy Peace: The leader of the walkout say no, but school people and board members say gains have been made"

We are given protagonists, antagonists and detourists, no less -- from "relentless critic," Ron Herndon, to Stephen Griffith, board chairman and board member, Marty Howard. Among those who have been served up years of a diet of controversy, rhetoric, polemics, tirades, hypocrisy, racism, oxymorons and refinements in the art of slander, we hear cries of "enough, already." Amidst it all the present superintendent is walking away, relatively unscathed, while waiting in the wings are three hopefuls chafing at the bit for an opportunity to gain new responsibilities (and increased salary). As happens ever so often, I am sufficiently jolted by one of these essays to think, "Hey, I know quite a bit about this process myself -- a little over 20 years worth. Now, how was it I first got involved?" As that baseball pater said, "It's deja vu all over again". It was around 1971 when, having discovered how ill-prepared for the work force were both high school and many college graduates, I persuaded the Business Department and the Black Studies Program at Portland State University to allow me to teach several courses of my own design.

This part-time sortie into the field of education (I still worked full time as an accountant and administrator in industry) evolved into an eleven-year, full time career at the institution with my curriculum designs accredited in Business, Black Studies, Urban Studies, Sociology and Affirmative Action. I still recall the initial discussions with Dean Parker of the Business Department where he emphasized that while he had the HARVARD AND STANFORD GRADUATES on his faculty, what he really needed was someone with REAL TIME EXPERIENCE in the everyday operations of small and medium-sized business and public agencies; the "ONLY WAY" to get an

adequate curriculum designed. Keep in mind that, unbelievably, the very same things about the failure of our educational system were being said then, twenty years ago, as now. Not only had that Catholic priest written "Why Johnny Can't Read" (his latest, "Why Johnny Still Can't Read") but those of us in industry were teaching people basic math and language skills -- new employees whom, naively, we had supposed to have gotten this level of education just as we once had before being turned loose upon the world. Sound familiar?

I was aware of this problem long before beginning the teaching stint at P. S. U. In 1966 I won a National Science Foundation Award for The Dalles, Oregon School District while employed in the accounting department of the Martin Marietta Aluminum Company. A conversation with the chairman of the district's mathematics department (Moonlighting as a guard at the plant) inspired me to design a remedial demonstration program that would combine mathematics, language and communications skills. Soliciting the aid of fellow members of the "Toasters Club" -- NW Bell Telephone, Bonneville Power, Tektronix, etc. -- and the financial contribution of a local rancher, I was able for the first time in the nation to put an elementary school in a ON-LINE, INTERACTIVE MODE with computers and teletypes around the state and California, simulating in the classroom a hands-on demonstration of precisely what was done in industry each day.

That is, TWENTY-SIX YEARS AGO these pupils were painlessly and enthusiastically acquiring the very skills that today's industry says the new workforce is "ill-prepared" to offer. From their base in a little Oregon town, these children were putting labor time into a computer in Torrance, California and pulling the totals back out to print the payroll checks, right in the classroom. Other operations and techniques involving math, language and communications involved in shipping, manufacturing and report writing were structured into the new type CURRICULUM.

This is why I was able to make the following relevant statement in my column here on March 18; "Of course, I came to this teaching position from industry where I had gained many years of experience in technical crafts and trades before gaining academic and administrative skills -- from punch press operator to electrical instrument technician. It is for this reason that I am able to understand and advance the realistic propositions that are now being placed before us in an effort to get our national priorities on track."

Over this time period of several decades of the indicated traumas and confrontation in Portland's educational system, there were others of us who also possessed real-time, experienced-based understanding of the problems. For instance, my successful "The Dalles, Oregon Math Project" played well "Off Broadway", the was brought to Portland and made available to the local district in 1969 and 1970. But, there were no takers among the confused and recalcitrant and school administrators and board members who, even then, were denying that racism and incompetence were involved in their failure to deliver a quality educational product.

So you see, the reason for my choice of titles for this week's column, "This Is Where I Came In" (on this bad movie). When I spoke of twenty years of involvement, I could further cite an early contribution to the "Base Line Essays" -- as a local consultant in the math and science phase, and whose cogent advice on structure of the process was rejected or ignored with disastrous results (You though I had forgotten, Huh?; folks in some major cities are now paying strict attention to what I have to say about the process several will be here this summer for my redesign workshop).

In the further development of this series, I will discuss the classes in the "New Math" I taught for Portland teachers, my stint as chairperson of the "Minority Teachers Organization", my "Lake Oswego Montessori School Curriculum" that I wished to introduce to Portland's early grades and the innovations. These projects are all "Go" again now, so follow along.

Your vote counts! Register to Vote

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

Today we have an economy with many Oregonians out of work. Why? It is not entirely because of factors beyond our control; to a large degree we have forced this recession on ourselves. Under the pretense of saving the spotted owl, the preservationists have emasculated the timber industry and their good paying jobs, they are holding up the westside bypass around Portland and the thousands of jobs which this would create, and they have stopped the Mt. Hood recreational project and dozens more around the state.

One factor most depressing our economy is the restrictive and oppressive Oregon land use regulatory system. This prevents thousands of landowners from building homes on their own land. It prevents many small businesses from getting started because of unreasonable zoning regulation. The high land costs resulting from present land use laws has raised housing costs out of the reach of many low and middle income Oregonians.

The cumulative effect of the system is to shut down jobs of construction

workers, mill workers and loggers; however, it filters down to all business, including the corner grocery store.

In the 1930 era we went through a real depression which was the result of circumstances beyond our control. Today we are forcing a recession upon ourselves largely because of our own choosing.

When will we ever learn?
Herbert & Shirley Carnahan
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Gately Child and Adolescent Day Treatment...A New Beginning

Small children being gunned down...teachers being stabbed...parents being murdered by their own children.

Every day our attention is captured through a barrage of horrific headlines about today's troubled youth.

But according to Fran Salkin, L.C.S.W., Director of Gately Child and Adolescent Day Treatment, a program of the Emilie Gamelin Institute, Providence Medical Center, there is a growing number of children and adolescents who are not only overlooked in the media--but by their families, teachers, peers and counselors. They are the quiet, withdrawn, "high risk" youth who are severely emotionally disturbed--those that are at the brink of suicide or severe personality disorders. They wage their emotional battles internally instead of at society or at their peers.

Salkin confirms that these children are usually of average or above average intelligence, most of whom have been emotionally, physically or sexually abused. Their emotional problems prevent them from being a part of mainstream classrooms or special educational programs. They may be overlooked because they are not delinquent. These children are known as the "geeks" and "dorks" at school. Lonely and quiet,

they are often unconcerned about their physical appearance and are frequently shunned by their peers and become the brunt of practical jokes and pranks.

"Untreated, they may become victims of those who use them for sex or criminal activities, because they lack the self esteem to refuse," she says. "Without help, may will be unable to complete school and wind up homeless because they are unable to get or hold on to a job, form relationships or function on their own in society. Their isolation and withdrawal can become so severe that suicide may be their only answer."

Gately Child and Adolescent Day Treatment, a program of the Emilie Gamelin Institute, Providence Medical Center, was opened in May 1986 to further the Institute's goal of providing complete mental health services to the community.

Gately serves emotionally disturbed youngsters ages nine through 17. Most students referred to Gately have difficulty learning in public school settings. Gately's high staff to student ratio (one staff member for three students) allows individualized treatment and educational programs that these students require.

Gately's interdisciplinary team includes the clinical director, individual and family therapists, handicapped learner endorsed teachers, therapeutic activities therapists and a consulting psychiatrist. Gately students are provided with intensive therapy, an extensive therapeutic activities program and individualized academic classes.

In the therapy program, families are crucial to successful work with students. During weekly sessions, family members explore interactions, increase communication and resolve conflicts. Students also receive weekly individual therapy sessions and participate in two therapy groups each week.

Unique to Gately's approach is the extensive therapeutic activities program. These enriching group experiences include skiing, backpacking, hiking, rock climbing, community outings and, for adolescent students, job training experiences to help students build self confidence and problems solving skills.

Once accepted into the program, students typically stay for one year, some two or more. Upon completion of the Gately program, students make the transition back to public school settings or into GED classes or are placed in jobs.

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