

CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL *perspectives*

By Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

by Professor McKinley Burt

Mojeska Simkins: She Kept The Faith

The history of the freedom struggle in this world will record the life and contributions of Mary Mojeska Monteith Simkins. Until her last breath at the age of 92, this strong and courageous African American woman from South Carolina was a leader and a freedom fighter. She was considered by many to have been one of the most effective "matriarchs" of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States.

Mojeska Simkins died in South Carolina in April 1992. For decades Simkins was a leader in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). She raised her voice forcefully in the South as well as in all other sections of the nation.

She also was a leader of the Southern Organizing Committee for Economic and Social Justice.

Even during the repressive McCarthyism of the 1950's Simkins refused to submit to the tactics of political intimidation that was targeted at her and others who were demanding justice and freedom. Mojeska was a proud leader who did not bow to the powerful forces of racial injustice. She attended elementary school on the site of Benedict College from the first grade as a child, seeking an education at a time when racial segregation in local schools in south Carolina attempted to prevent her from getting an education. She later

graduated from Benedict College in 1921.

Her leadership and reputation as forceful advocate for the rights of the oppressed quickly became nationally known. Simkins worked with W.E.B. DuBois, Martin Luther King, Ella Baker, Paul Robeson, and many other leaders. At meetings of the Civil Rights Movement in south Carolina and in other southern states, friends remembered how much people in local communities would welcome Mojeska's "tell the truth" oratory and grassroots leadership style.

When she was sixty years old, she once said, "Don't call me a senior citizen because I have just begun to fight for freedom and the struggle is life-long!" At a local radio station near Columbia, WOIC radio, Mojeska would always begin her radio program with the saying, "I woke up this morning with my mind set on freedom." It is important that we keep alive the memory of heroines like Mojeska Simkins. She gave her entire life for the struggle to ensure that all children get an education and to ensure that the challenges of racial injustice be met by a greater force of social change movement that moved and inspired people to demand justice.

Appropriately, the funeral for Mojeska Simkins was held on the cam-

pus of the school and college that she loved, Benedict College in Columbia, South Carolina.

Inside of Antisdel Chapel, Rev. Dr. Marshall Grigsby, President of Benedict College, stated, "We have come to say farewell to one of our greatest leaders, a woman who kept the faith in the struggle for a mighty long time." Other tributes were given by Dr. William F. Gibson, Chairman, National Board of Directors of the NAACP, and from Attorney Laughlin McDonald, Director, American Civil Liberties Union, southern Region.

As a school teacher, civil rights leader and human rights advocate, Mojeska Simkins leaves a legacy of courage and steadfastness of heart and soul. She had the determination to speak out when it was not popular but as she used to say, "I am sorry!"

Long live the memory of Mojeska Simkins. May we also keep the faith and stay in the struggle. We are thankful that for 92 years this great-grandmother of the freedom movement lived, struggled, won victories and set a living example of the necessity to be responsive and responsible in the ongoing fight for equal justice. The best way to give a tribute to the memory of sister Simkins is to renew and revive the freedom movement here in the United States.

Letter To The Editor: Open Letter to Mayor J.E. Bud Clark

Dear Mayor Clark:

I am writing you this letter because of concern relating with the Generalized Anti-Black movement taking place in Portland. The riots following the Rodney King verdict are currently being used as an excuse that all Blacks are bad. No thought is given regarding how peoples attitudes change to a degree, when constantly treated unfairly. The tapes showing Rodney King being beaten have been shown to the entire world, but the decision by the jury, let all Nationalities know how racist, America is. To make matters worse, a tape was used as the means to arrest individuals because of the beating of Reginald Denny. I am not saying that no one should have been arrested regard-

ing Denny being beaten, but I am saying that Justice should not be such a farce.

Mayor Clark, you will be in charge of Portland until January 1993, and the hate crime attitude is leaping into action. Neither of the Mayoral candidates appear to have any interest in trying to halt the current hate epidemic. We are now beginning festivities in the celebration of Rosaria, please do not just sit there and allow problems to erupt during our Rose Festival activities. Some people are even trying to instigate trouble by saying Trail Blazer Clyde Drexler intentionally stuck Utah Jazz player, John Stockton in the eye at Memorial Coliseum on May 26, while Drexler is Portlands USA Olympic representative to Barcelona '92. Something is wrong

when people think that way, because that's why so many basketball players already wear eye guards to prevent that from happening in advance. The citizens of Portland want to have days of enjoyment with excellent weather forecasts, don't let them down. All cultures in Portland respect you, hopefully, you will also respect other cultures. I love Portland very much and that is the reason for my continued volunteerism in community activism.

Thank you for your time and consideration, since I have made it a point to let the City know, that I had written you a very important letter.

Sincerely,
Charles C. Flake
concerned Northeast Resident

To The Editor:

Rodney King's beating and the jury's decision was injustice of the highest order, and America is left in shock.

And the outcry, and unfortunately the riots that have swept throughout America, has again focused our attention to black bias in our society.

One man, one beating, one jury's decision, has turned this country on it's ear.

But about another, more far reaching black injustice, the murder by white

fascist Planned parenthood and the abortion industry of over 16,000,000 (53% of all abortions) are black Americans since Re v. Wade.

That is the ultimate injustice, the wanton destruction of an entire race's generation, yet black America sleeps! It should be up in arms, angry and disgusted, and involved big time in saving it's future.

Small groups have been struggling for years to stop the holocaust, but an army is needed to really tell America of

the injustice being done to an entire generation, that will never be able to come to our rescue in our time of need because it has been murdered, one person at a time; by greedy, selfish, racist, fascist, Godless infidels who hide behind "convenience", "rights", "Choice", and only deal in death, lies, torture, and injustice.

Stop Injustice! Stop Abortion!
M. Kennedy
P.S., "I have a dream" too!

Lets Read This Summer

It is that time of year again when I provide a number of very economical sources for all kinds of rewarding reading; general, research material, ethnic, multicultural, science, mathematics, sociology, history biology, psychology, languages, literature, politics, business, medicine and many other categories.

The sources I list are not, in most cases, the original publishers of the books cited in their catalogs, but are specialty wholesalers who buy the original publishers overruns. Hence, the discount prices. I have dealt with these companies for years and many of the gems of knowledge I've been able to favor the readers with have from these texts. I recommend these Free Catalogs to the general reader, students, teachers and researchers.

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I would also suggest a subscription to these excellent magazines; for yourself or your child, the student:

.National Geographic, P.O. Box 2895, Washington, D.C. 20077-9960, 12 months subscription, \$21.00

.Smithsonian Associates, 900 Jefferson Drive, Washington, D.C. 20560, 12 months subscription, \$20.00

.Scientific American, P.O. Box 3186, Harlan, IA 51593-2377, 12 month's subscription, \$29.95

.Popular Science, P.O. Box 51824, Boulder, Colorado 80321-1824, 12 month's subscription, \$13.94

In respect to magazines of general readership like those above, you'll find a broad selection on the racks at your nearest "Daltons Book Store", and at "Richs" on S.W. Alder, just above S.W. Broadway. And most of us are familiar

with "Powell's Books Store" at 10th and W. Burnside.

For back issues, one of the best sources is "Cameron's book store" at S.W. 3rd and Stark (they also have a good selection of used books).

The magazines I have cited are well worth the subscription price, given their excellent readability, broad coverage of subject matter, and their coherent, systematic layout. More over, for the student they represent universally accepted citation and documentation for school papers and presentations--especially for elementary and high school. Also, you will find excellent bibliographies for each article.

Now, next week I will furnish a similar list of African American Publishing Companies--though you would keep in mind that the publisher I've cited will offer a wealth of books on the black experience. I would also make the case for a much more selective choice in viewing television. All four of the magazines I listed also produce informative and interesting documentaries, ones that are frequently seen on channels 6,8,9,10 and 24, but not exclusively, watch for them on network or cable television.

Measure 5 Collision Course

BY MYLES BRAND

A couple of months ago, while lunching at a Chinese restaurant in Eugene, I couldn't help overhearing two University of Oregon students, both somewhat older, talking about Measure 5 and the cuts the University faces.

"What do you think will happen?," one of them asked, with curiosity. "Look, I'm graduating this year," the other replied. "I don't care what happens to the university: I got mine, and I don't care."

Fortunately, most Oregonians including most University of Oregon students would reject this sentiment. At least, that is my hope: this kind of thinking signals an unsettling shift away from the shared community values that helped build this state and country to those that are more self-interested.

Still, individual anger toward state government did have much to do with the passage of Measure 5 in November 1990. I have heard some of this anger myself as I have gone around the state in recent months talking about higher education and the University of Oregon. Generally, it is not directed at education, but rather at state government in general and all government everywhere. But clearly, this anger has a lot to do with our inability, so far, to solve this problem that we created for ourselves in a way that serves our collective long-term interests.

As Oregonians, we have an urgent, shared need to do something about the dire effects of Measure 5. Higher education and other essential state services are on a collision course with the future. Measure 5 is in the driver's seat.

Let's look at this more closely, starting with Measure 5 itself, through which Oregonians, understandably frustrated by too-high property taxes, sent a loud message to state government: they wanted tax relief, and they wanted it now.

Measure 5 was structured to provide such relief by reducing the state General Fund, which supports a host of essential state services ranging from

corrections and human services to higher education. Ironically, many middle-class Oregonians who voted for Measure 5 have yet to see resulting property tax relief. But Measure 5 is having a significant impact elsewhere. It is forcing draconian reductions and budget cuts statewide--and not just in higher education. Many people in rural areas of the state also are being hard hit by cutbacks in state-funded services.

In higher education, the first round of Measure 5 cuts, in 1990, were painful enough. Now, the Oregon State System of Higher Education (OSSHE), including the University of Oregon, is planning for a 20-percent reduction in 1993-95 budgets due to Measure 5 shortfalls. Additionally, earlier this year, in keeping with Gov. Barbara Roberts' goal to eliminate an additional 4,000 state government jobs by the end of June 1993, OSSHE announced that it would cut 791 positions.

What do such cuts mean? On the positive side, under Gov. Roberts' leadership, they are forcing those of us in state government to reexamine everything we do, to ensure that we are as efficient and productive as possible. The University of Oregon, for example, is working with local schools and Lane Community College to identify ways in which we can save money by cooperating in the delivery and purchase of as many day-to-day functions and services as possible.

But unless Oregonians solve the state finance problem in an equitable, timely and bipartisan fashion--such cost-saving measures will not be enough. Measure 5 goes beyond efficiency: it means reducing services that people value and will miss. Recall that this is the second reduction caused by Measure 5. The University of Oregon already cut 10 percent of its base budget in the current biennium. Though we eliminated several major programs, we have been able to maintain our basic commitment to providing quality undergraduate and graduate education for today's students. We continue

to plan for a strong future in which the University helps point the way for other American public Universities.

We still have much to offer; we aren't going out of business. But we are being forced to limit opportunities for the next generation of Oregonians at exactly the wrong time in the state's history. With further steep increases in tuition, the next round of Measure 5 cuts could mean up to 10,000 fewer university students

statewide--not because of enrollment limits, but simply because this many additional young Oregonians won't be able to afford to go to college.

In contrast, we know that there will be at least 35 percent more 18-year-old Oregonians by the end of the decade. This is not some soft projection: the students already are there in the state's classrooms, moving up through the grades toward graduation. We also know that as a state, we are moving away from a resource-based economy to one that emphasizes information and service. For every job lost in the timber industry, 10 are being created that require a college education.

No one can deny that this economic transition is painful, in some parts of the state pinching families and whole communities. But seeing this, young Oregonians realize that Oregon's future will be very different from its past, and that a college degree will be essential if they--and the state--are to have the future that we all deserve.

Overall, Oregon and the Pacific Northwest are doing well. Our economy has been growing faster than the national average, and the long-term economic outlook remains good.

...If we play our cards right, that is. We need to ensure the continued availability of affordable, high-quality, public higher education. If not, we could be looking at the last generation of Oregonians for a long time to come who even will be able to say, "I got mine."

Myles Brand became the 14th president of the University of Oregon in July 1989.

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CALL NOW
233-5000



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