

# perspectives

by Professor McKinley Burt

## No Spare Parts III (Save this series)

Now, that's the kind of response from readers I love; it was last week that we began to really focus on this issue of Minority Business, albeit, from a viewpoint somewhat different from the conventional. And therein lies another key issue for a good 90 percent of the response was from whites--not an altogether new phenomenon. We are all at risk these days, but certainly some a lot more than others.

These are critical times and there shouldn't be a problem in our communicating. If you misplace this article, I am in the phone book (The last name is Burt), and the first of the two numbers in my Fax, 284-0484, and the second 284-7080, is a regular telephone, answering service and Voice Mail. The office address is 1635 NE Alberta, Portland, OR 97211. All are 24 hour lines.

Several years ago readers began sending photocopies of my articles to friends, relatives and relevant organizations around the country, to Europe and Africa. My series on "The True Source of Aids" brought letters, Voice Mail and FAX from 12 states and five foreign countries--all of which I acknowledged. This brings us to another area of concern voiced. A critical failure in COMMUNICATIONS on the part of so many of our African American organizations, both business and social delivery services (Including the ones who are supposed to be developing Minority Business).

Neither a correct analysis of our economics situation or the excellent proposals for implementing the needed economic development structure will bear any fruit if our organizations cannot communicate with their constituency--or even with each other in any coherent, disciplined manner. It is not only difficult to secure new markets or a grant under these circumstances, but it is almost impossible to get a renewal of a current grant after the demonstration period if you cannot competently cite and delineate your accomplishments and projections in a polished technical report. The old days are gone--the competition for money is savage. But management classes are open.

When I wrote about this failure last year (furnishing sources for manuals, library materials and seminars) one reader really went off. "I work for a

downtown outfit that doesn't have half the financial resource of several of our black organizations, but they don't have these kind of problems. It is incomprehensible: I see all these leaders, prime movers and activists on television and in the press, most with more degrees than a thermometer and a resume longer than your arm--but it must be the case that nobody can read or write." That's not really the problem. Too many naively believe "the man" educated them.

"Ever try to get a timely and coherent financial report or a well-structured account of current activities and prospects (not a media release)?" This lady was just getting started, but you get the picture. Readers note an increasing presence of COMFUTERS on the premises. But apparently, there are no "spread sheets" programs or other matrices for gathering, analyzing and delivering critical community information to Northeast residents--and to a newspaper like the "Portland Observer." Now, that would be both politically and economically astute, wouldn't it?

I had intended to conclude this series today with a description of some very viable Minority Business modes available, but that will be done next week. Today's comments indicate that, first, we need to make some critical adjustments to our operating systems such that we can function effectively in this modern world. So many of the black organizations are hungrily anticipating a possible windfall of social and urban development money under a new administration. I wouldn't bet on it, nor would I anticipate that national corporations, laying off by the million will continue their contributions at anywhere near current levels.

I just got off a letter to the Black Caucus of the American Library Association, trying to get them interested in a national program to address a situation for which Portland is a prime example. For over twenty years I've been going down to the Multnomah County Library to retrieve critical information and the scenarios is always the same. About the only blacks you see in the business, technical and periodical sections are Africans; West Indians and a few students.

It is inexcusable, for may of the jokers drawing down our tax money

every month know that their "skill is nihil" (Evidently they feel, "well, I'm dealing with black people like me.") The few that stop by my office look around incredulously at the books, manuals and guides without which you cannot hope to deal with the urban infrastructure in a technological world. The same guides and references are now EQUALLY APPLICABLE whether one is about developing business or delivering social services. Ever hired a carpenter without tools?

All of my material is relevant, "Dictionary of Occupational Titles, Standard Industrial Classification Manual, For Profit and Nonprofit Corporation Guides, Directory of Human Services, Lovejoy College Guides, Oregon Education Structure, Direct Marketing, Telecommunication Services, AT&T Phone Services and Equipment Manuals, Gale's Encyclopedia of Organizations, Military Occupation Manuals (to match with civilian jobs), None Volumes of "Books In Print and Paperbound Books in Print," Proposal writing and Secretary's Handbooks, (science, legal and medical), Computer Applications, Foundations Guides." Partial!

In the 1970's when I had a business contracting with Model Cities, County and State agencies to furnish accounting and administrative services for business development and social delivery systems, I of course had ten times this amount of relevant "tools." But even then, more than adequately funded black programmers were coming down to my office wanting to BORROW my expensive materials. If you've got money for meetings, retreats and an incredible amount of TRAVEL, then you have money for the tools to do your job properly.

Next week we will look at some "reality" business development we should be doing--service manufacturing and real estate, just like those Africans in Ghana are doing in their "No Spare Parts" economy. I'm still acquainted with some of the white students who took my business classes at P.S.U. of those who remain in business, several did not have nearly the start up capital as minorities under federal programs. I know because I was their first accountant and advisory (try "life styles").

## CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL By Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. Strike For Freedom In South Africa

The leadership of the African National Congress once again has successfully demonstrated the ability to mobilize effectively the masses of the people of south Africa against the apartheid regime.

In the wake of one of the largest and most effective protest strikes in history, Nelson Mandela and the ANC have served the final notice that racist apartheid must be dismantled completely with dispatch and urgency.

Over five million workers participated in the "Strike for Freedom." The August 3-4, 1992 labor strike and subsequent massive "March on Pretoria" was a living testimony to the fact that the organized and mobilized will of the people does have the power to make a difference.

Although there were numerous violent acts of intimidation that attempted to subvert the ANC call for the strike, millions of South Africans responded in unity and action. The Secretary General of the ANC, Cyril Ramaphosa, declared, "The disenfranchised have unmistakably voted with their feet for democracy now through participation in this mass action." Mandela, Ramaphosa and other leaders of the African National Congress have come under heavy verbal attack from both De Klerk and Mongosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi, the leader of Inkatha.

It is a tragic shame that even in the final hours of apartheid, Buthelezi continues to play the role of the government's apologist. The negative

rhetoric from Inkatha against the ANC has helped to fuel fratricide in South Africa. For example, just before the beginning of the strike, Buthelezi encouraged his followers to act to prevent the strike by actually saying that the ANC "should be shipped back to the bargaining table and beaten into political negotiation." Pronouncements like that will only serve the interests of the oppressive forces of apartheid.

When truth is spoken through demonstrative action by the oppressed to those who oppress, it sets the stage for change to occur. This is the reason that despite the diversionary actions of persons like Buthelezi, the struggle against racism and economic exploitation in south Africa will continue to accelerate. Truth and history are on the side of the African national Congress and nothing short of a total dismantling of apartheid will do.

Here in the United States, it is important for the antiapartheid movement to keep the pressure on during this advent to the final moment of victory. Vigilance and strong acts of solidarity are still necessary. We must not let our sisters and brothers in south Africa strike alone. We must act in concert with them and do our part here to demand freedom and justice in South Africa and in America.

We have heard that De Klerk has changed his previous opposition to the establishment of an "interim coalition government" toward a free and democratic South Africa. The success of the

strike and recent demonstrations, at least now, have caused a political situation where De Klerk is willing to entertain the idea of negotiating the issue of the interim government before the end of this year. The interests of freedom and justice should not be delayed. There is no justification for waiting until the end of the year to negotiate an interim governmental structure.

The time to act is now. Every day sees more and more political murders and violence in south Africa. The time to establish and negotiate an interim solution is now, not later. The people of south Africa have already endured a holocaust of genocide and unprecedented exploitations. The time to end this madness is now.

The strike for freedom in south Africa is a strike for freedom throughout the world. As the world "re-orders," let us make sure the suffering of the people of South Africa is not forgotten. It is interesting that during the 1992 presidential campaign thus far, Africans in general and South Africa in particular have not been issues of debate and concern.

Racism will not end itself. It has to be struggled against in every place all of the time. We are thankful that our sisters and brothers in South Africa have not lost hope and are fighting on with renewed determination. Apartheid in South Africa will be broken down finally by the might of the people who cry out for freedom and who will not rest until victory is won.

## "ALONG THE COLOR LINE" Blaming Victims In Los Angeles

BY DR. MANNING MARABLE

One hundred days have passed since the Los Angeles racial uprising, the most devastating and economically destructive urban revolt in U.S. history. Unfortunately, some Americans have learned nothing new about the pervasive character of racism in contemporary society, or the factors which caused this recent social explosion. In the weeks since America's second-largest city burned, a motley crew of conservatives and reactionaries have advanced a "blame the victims" thesis to explain the recent "riot."

The initial response by conservatives was the predictable outcry for tougher law enforcement and cracking down on urban "criminals." Frustrated former presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan declared that local officials didn't move quickly enough to arrest the rioters, and called upon law enforcement officers to use "whatever force is needed to save innocent people and private property." Vice President Dan Quayle was quick to praise the Los Angeles Police Department, and condemned the "lawbreakers." This position implies that by building more prisons, imposing longer prison sentences and by restoring the death penalty, the urban street unrest will disappear.

The second thesis by the Far Right was that Black liberal politicians were largely responsible for the "riot." This interpretation was advanced by the conservative journalists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak. They criticized Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley for his condemnation of the jury's decision in the brutal beating case of Rodney King. Evans and Novak attacked Rep. Maxine

Waters for her accurate description of the recent unrest as an urban "insurrection." African-American politicians and civil rights leaders were wrong to give "rioters revolutionary status," Evans and Novak whined. "They wandered from one television channel to another deploring what the King verdict had brought, but they were not seen on the streets imploring the mob to go home."

The third conservative reaction to the Los Angeles uprising was the effort to place blame on the so-called absence of "morality" and "family values" among innercity African-Americans. The chief architect of this pseudosociological thesis was conservative intellectual William Bennett, who has presidential aspirations. Bennett claimed that the "riotous behavior and murder" in Los Angeles were caused by "a shattered moral order" among Blacks. "The road to disaster has been paved by a corrosive popular culture, educational failure, moral and spiritual depletion and the breakdown of our most critical institution--the family." Bennett opposed any increases in federal spending to create jobs for the unemployed, and rejected out of hand suggestions that poverty contributed to our urban crisis. "Cultural problems," Bennett insisted, "demand cultural solutions."

American conservatives love simplistic slogans, rather than facing hard truths. Republican social policy "experts", journalists and politicians aren't willing or able to acknowledge the basic realities behind the massive socioeconomic destruction of this nation's innercities. The "American Dream" for millions of Hispanics, African-Americans, the unemployed and homeless is a

nightmare of substandard housing, inferior schools, drugs, hunger, and random violence.

The key reason for today's urban unrest is the loss of jobs and economic opportunity. Sociologist William Julius Wilson observes in his research that back in 1950, in Chicago's poorest Black neighborhoods, there were 70 working males for every 100 women. By 1980, even before the neglect of Reagan's urban policies, the figure in Chicago's poorest Black communities fell to 23 employed males per 100 women. Few families can survive without steady income. Truly desperate, undereducated and unemployed people will often resort to crime to survive.

In South-Central Los Angeles and neighboring areas, 70,000 higher-paying manufacturing jobs were lost between 1978 and 1982 alone. Black adult unemployment climbed to 9 percent, with Black teenagers having jobless rates 44 percent. According to the Los Angeles Times, between 1973 and 1986, the average yearly income of African-American high school graduates in the city fell 44 percent. Among Latinos in the same years, average income declined 35 percent. This is part of the reason that more Latinos were arrested during the social chaos in Los Angeles than Blacks. People of color were protesting not just the Rodney King verdict, but the conditions of poverty, violence and frequent police harassment which are at the center of ghetto life. If we were truly serious about ending urban violence, we would do more to address the fundamental social and economic problems of these communities, rather than "blaming the victims."

## Office Of International Programs At Pacific University Accepting Applications For Oregon-Japan Fellowships For Educators

The Office of International Programs at Pacific University is accepting applications for 1993 Oregon-Japan Fellowships for Educators. The Fellowships cover all expenses for a 15-day summer study program in Japan. Fellows will travel extensively throughout Japan. The Fellowship program, in its fourth year, is sponsored by Matsushita Electric Industrial Company of Japan.

The purpose of the Fellowship is to encourage and enhance teaching units on Japan. Classroom teachers and administrators at elementary schools in Oregon, and Japanese language teachers in Oregon and SW Washington at all levels are encouraged to apply. The Fellowships are open to both the public and private schools.

Applications will be accepted from educators who have not been in Japan

during the last two years. Participants will be chosen from two categories:

Oregon elementary teachers and administrators from the same school, who apply as a team. The classroom teacher presents a teaching unit proposal for his or her classroom and the administrator presents a complementary project proposal for involving the building/school. Four teams will be chosen.

Japanese language teachers in Oregon and Southwest Washington. Teachers present a proposal for language unit. Four teachers will be chosen.

Application deadline is November 2, 1992. Finalists will be chosen and interviewed in January and the selection of Fellows will be announced February 1. Fellows will attend preparatory

seminars at Pacific University in March, April and June and will leave for Japan on June 18 and return on July 3. After they return, fellows will prepare curriculum units on Japan which will become part of the education curriculum library at Pacific University, where they will be available for use by teachers throughout the area.

Additional details and applications may be obtained from:

Pacific University  
Office Of International Programs  
2043 College Way  
Forest Grove, OR 97116

or by calling Joy Hills, administrative assistant or Louis Payne, program director, at 357-6151, ext. 2620, between the hours of 8 am & 10 am Monday through Thursday, or leave a message on the answering machine.

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