

Inspired Black Youth Our Best Hope



BY JAMES L. POSEY

The African American community needs a lot more Sister (Brother) Souljah's. Whatever one might think about her rhetoric, it is clear she is a young person who is passionately in love with Black people and clearly

understands the Black struggle. Violence has never been Black people's choice, but the very prospect raises the ante. Black people over 40 know it was the likes of a youthful H. Rap Brown, Stokely Carmichael, Elridge Clever, Huey P. Newton, Malcolm X, Angela Davis and more who stoked the fires of Black rage and pride in the sixties and seventies. These were courageous heroes and sheros of that era who simply said "we're fed up and ain't taking it no more." They made the very moderate rhetoric of other leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Whitney Young and Andy Young very attractive. In fact, history has yet to give these young Black warriors their due. Black youth today ought to use their examples as object lessons as to how they can make a difference. Generally white people don't take Blacks seriously unless there is some radical consequence to ignoring Black community needs.

But Black people are pretty good at ignoring their own needs. That is why it is so important that Black youth recognize their true value. Youthful energy together with older people's wisdom can be a powerful force in the struggle to improve the quality of life for African Americans in Portland. When you're young you never think about getting old, doing old folks things. But Black youth already know they're up against tremendous odds. Watching their life short circuited, some parents don't have the capacity to deal physically and psychologically with their teenage children. Often today's teenagers are left to fend for themselves. Because many young parents are barely out of adolescence themselves, it at times creates

interesting dynamics and sometimes conflicts between today's youth and their parents. For example, its not uncommon to watch young parents (35 and late 40s) avoid former clubs and socializing places where they use to jam. They know these same places are where their children of age are beginning to hang out. One of the most troubling things to watch is relatively young Black people becoming grandparents before their time. It's a tragic plight--young Black grandparents and great grandparents. It's so hard to deal with the phrase young grandparents. The terms should almost never come together. But the point is that these people should be enjoying the freedom of their senior years, but instead find themselves saddled with the responsibility of raising their grand and great grandchildren. They gotta do it because neither their children nor their children's children have shown enough responsibility to do the right parent thing. It's a shame!

So what am I saying? Its simple, today's African American young people must shoulder more, not less than their share of responsibility. Youth will have to do more than their parents did at the same age. They must forfeit a great deal of youthful freedom, frivolousness, and irresponsibility to help rescue the rest of the Black community. Instead of youth looking to older folks for leadership and guidance, more youth must step up to the plate despite their age and supply the leadership and guidance to make things work in the Black community. Black youth because of their energy, openmindedness, strength, vision and a host of other things, cannot just be in the mix, they must help make the mix.

Statement of State Representative Avel Gordly

I am joining in this effort to reinstate sanctions against South Africa because I am ashamed that Oregon -- through the rapid and ill-timed actions of Tony Meeker--is the only state or government entity in the nation that has seen fit to lift economic sanctions imposed on the government of South Africa.

As I look around the world, I see numerous examples of factional fighting. This month, the visible issue is the raging war between Serbians and Croations. The attention of the world community is now focused on this conflict. Daily we see reports of human rights violations. Nightly we see the horrible pictures of destruction, murder and starvation wreaked upon this war torn region. As a world community we respond, and respond forcefully. I support those efforts at humanitarian aid and attempts by the United Nations to forge a resolution to the fighting.

Yet, I can't help but think that we allowed these same type of human rights

violations to go unchecked in South Africa for decades; indeed for much of my lifetime. Short of the economic sanctions we no longer follow in Oregon, little has been done to end the apartheid still thriving in South Africa today. No troops were sent. No peace-keeping missions were established. Humanitarian aid continues to be a myth.

When Nelson Mandela spoke before our United States Congress, the very body Tony Meeker now seeks to enter, Mandela spoke with hope for tomorrow. Tomorrow has come and the apartheid is still begin practiced. Mandela said then, and I believe he would say again today, that the economic sanctions we in Oregon have now lifted are what forced the South African government to begin to respond to his call for human rights and a new constitution.

Today, the talks are stalled. The cornerstone of Oregon's passage of legislation to life the sanctions called for

real change, not the possibility of change. It called for substantial progress toward dismantling apartheid and establishing a true democracy. It called for good faith negotiations with the Black Majority living under the thumb of dictatorship.

These conditions have clearly not been met. We must now respond to the lack of action by the South African government by re-instituting these economic sanctions. We must hold firm with the rest of the nation in refusing to do business with the South African government until change is truly accomplished.

Oregon has long prided itself on leading the nation with new and innovative solutions to problems. But this is one time when the leadership mantle was taken by our State Treasurer. Now, Oregon must again join the rest of the nation in holding firm against the hatred and discrimination still being practiced in South Africa today.

perspectives

by Professor McKinley Burt

REAL MINORITY BUSINESS; NOW OR NEVER II



Prof. McKinley Burt

It looks like the response to this Minority Business Series might be as great as the interest in my "AIDS" series. Until I can get a manual published, please feel free to address any questions to me here at the Portland Observer, 4747 N.E. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd, Portland, Oregon 97211. Enclose a self-addressed envelope.

I left off last week with a suggestion that patents and copyrights (also "Trademarks") could be a way for even the everyday individual to convert his ideas into economic assets. You will find this information in a separate article this week, "Patents, Copyrights and Trademarks: Converting Ideas or Knowledge To Money." This is only an overview of the process and its advantages, and provides directions to expertise and resources.

Interestingly, I have made presentations about two Portland African American inventors on television and at schools and public events. The first, Mr. Warren C. Kimbrough, was brought to my attention by his granddaughter, a student in my Black Economics Class at PSU. Though not having finished high school, he invented and patented the "GAS LEAK DETECTOR AND TRAP" which for many years was used all over the country (filed February 27, 1937 in Omaha Nebraska). In Portland, at age 70, he invented an "environmentally friendly" trash burner.

A second local black inventor, this one a graduate engineering Donald Rutherford, attended Jefferson High School, University of Oregon and Fisk University, then graduated from U.S.C. with a degree in Aeronautical engineering. He holds patents (and collects royalties) from his inventions of the "touch latch" that holds your kitchen cabinet doors closed--and the sliding door design in the Volkswagen" busses. At the Howard Hughes Company in Califor-

nia he designed the engine controls for "The Spruce Goose, Flying Boat", THE LARGEST PLANE EVER MADE (It was recently bought by a local company to be displayed in an air museum here).

Before I leave this business of patents let me mention that there is a class called "DESIGN PATENTS" which grant you a right in a new and innovative style of a device already invented. This could be anything from a shoe to a chair or a keyboard to a refrigerator or fish hooks. We are reminded that we DO NOT HAVE TO MANUFACTURE DEVICES OURSELVES to make money off them. We can "license" the invention to a company and receive a "royalty" payment for each one they sell. Sort of like the copyright royalty you would receive from a publisher of a book you wrote.

Several years ago I wrote here of home-based businesses which sold huge quantities of merchandise which they never touched. People, with or without formal business training--but with a good sense of what will appeal to the public--locate manufacturers of the goods or equipment in directories which can be found at the public library. They arrange with these firms to "DROPSHIP" the merchandise directly to the customers whom they have solicited from their "kitchen table" office with direct mail catalogues or with T.V. commercials ("Have your credit card ready"). All payments are in advance, so the "home-operator" has only to deduct his profit from the receipts and mail the manufacturer the price for the merchandise he is going to ship. The customer never knows that he is not dealing with a firm as big as Meier & Frank. Hundreds of Oregonians operate similar businesses, ranging in "size" from sales of a thousand a month to a few who gross \$100,000.

The fast-growing "Bend, Oregon" area is proving home to many scores of small entrepreneurs, people from all walks of life, from all over the country who spend half their time skiing or horseback riding--and the other half delivering merchandise or information to their nationwide customers by mail. UPS, telephone, computer, fax, or voice mail. Last year I wrote a series here on telecommunication services from your home. If you'd like repeat let us know. I included such information as lists of AT&T Toll-Free Numbers Directory as well as their other services (get your own 800 number). All of these activities are also among the things I notice in

Bend when I am over there for a Forest Service Workshop presentation.

Speaking to that, have you noticed the great success our enterprising black businessman, "Roy Jay," has had providing a 99 percent white business community with innovative "convention marketing" services for tour operators, hotels, motels and trade and professional associations (within and without Oregon) Using those computer and telefax networks I've been advocating here for several years, plus the innovation of new type limousine services and similar "inventions," with no government intervention he has kept control and out competed the best the establishment has to offer. We can't all overcome the racism of the establishment alone, that for sure, but we need more "prepared" people to try.

Certain opportunities are always there to be exploited in Oregon or Mississippi, if you're ambitious and willing to ignore your friends, peer group, and relatives (smiles). I've written here before about successful black businessmen and women who "hide" from all such people and live "way out." The black lumber broker downtown who buys and sells railway cars of redwood all over the nation; the Beaverton contractor and investor who puts together syndicates to build downtown buildings; the black women entrepreneurs, one who handles telecommunications including satellite for tricity business and another who has a chain of "white" beauty shops. None has ever had a "minority loan." They got out and mixed it up with the "opposition"--got multicultural in a multicultural society.

I found this out forty years ago right here on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. when I set up "Pacific Business Service" to provide accounting for many of the car dealers on the street. Then, later I set up a "Union Avenue Finance Company" at their request to allow them to pool their money to finance used car sales at cheaper rates than the banks and other commercial lenders. It went quite well until "Union Avenue" was abandoned for Beaverton, Hillsboro, Gresham and the like.

Similar opportunities are wherever you look today but no one is going to drag you to it. Next week, more opportunities, and "since we spend so much money on it why aren't we doing it ourselves; photo reproduction and photocopying?"

CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL A "Coming Together" In Los Angeles

By Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

Just a few days ago, we had another opportunity to sit with some of the "youth leaders" of South Central Los Angeles. It was most encouraging to see former "gang members" take serious the challenges of community development in the wake of this nation's largest and most explosive "uprising" in this century. There have been numerous press accounts concerning the "cease-fire" or "truce" between the "gangs" in South Central and in other sections of Los Angeles. Yet, the real atmosphere in some of the areas known in the past for violent confrontations between rival gang is something more than a climate of "cease-fire" or "truce."

The "word in the hood" is that what is taking place in the African American community Los Angeles is a "coming together" in unity and peace in order to struggle against the evils of racism, economic exploitation and genocide. That is why the police and many others cannot understand this unexpected and in some quarters undesired unity among the tens of thousands of youth in Los Angeles who have taken their own initiative to stop the killing.

What if this spirit of "coming together" would spread to other cities in the United States? What if the laying down of guns by the Bloods and the Crips in Los Angeles is a prelude to taking serious the prevention of drugs in the community? We believe that the young men and women who are involved in this welcomed "coming together" should be supported and applauded. The eventual outcome of the situation in South Central Los Angeles will have national implications.

We are, therefore, categorically in opposition to the White House program known as "Weed and Seed." The U.S. Department of Justice along with other

federal agencies are now attempting to make Los Angeles a national model for "weeding out" gang members and "seeding in" questionable social projects. Why does the recent decline in fratricide in South Central make the government nervous? Why have some police officers in Los Angeles expressed "astonishment" because the "coming together" in L.A. is working and improving?

The urban crisis throughout the nation will not be solved by the implementation of programs like "Weed and Seed" because as presently designed these programs will actually cause more violence and death. Youth who wind up in gangs should not be "mowed down" like cutting undesired weeds and grass. Why has President Bush not commented on the positive initiative of the youth in L.A. not to riot, not to kill but to bring peace and unity to the community?

While in South Central L.A. we also witnessed the efforts of community leader and activist, Fred Williams. "Mr. Fred," as he is affectionately called by the youth in the housing projects in Watts, is President of the Cross Colours Common Ground Foundation. For a three day period, Williams and the foundation sponsored a back-to-school free haircut marathon. Thousands of youngsters from Jordan Downs, Imperial Courts, and Nikerson Gardens housing projects received free haircuts, book bags, school supplies and Cross Colours clothing. "Mr. Fred" is an ex-gang member and at the age of 33 he has gained the respect of all ages in the community for his 16 years of working to "retrieve high school dropouts." In addition, Williams has been working hard to help ensure that the "coming together" continues to hold.

One theme of the Cross Colours Common Ground Foundation is "Edu-

cation is the Key." The foundation has placed an emphasis on the importance of getting an education and had motivated thousands of youth to stay in school until graduation. One of the great challenges of our time is to provide quality public school education on an equal, non-discriminatory basis for all of the children in every state in the nation.

Community development goes beyond the construction of buildings and streets. All of the people who live in South Central L.A. as well as the millions of persons who reside in the inner cities across the country, must be given a chance to participate in the economy meaningfully through employment and ownership of businesses. But a key component of any effective community development should be the focus on youth involvement and training.

It appears that thousands of young people in Los Angeles and in other cities know what time it is and they are rightfully demanding a voice and presence in all efforts to "reclaim urban America." As the 1992 Presidential Campaign moves into the final leg, it will be of interest to note how these issues of community empowerment will be viewed by the candidates. One thing is for certain, the problems of Los Angeles before and after the "uprising" are the problems of the nation as a whole.

In the meantime, we will be highlighting the good and constructive efforts of persons like Fred Williams and the Cross Colours Common Ground Foundation, 2164 E 25th Street, Los Angeles, California, 90058. The emergence of positive, nonviolent, brotherhood and sisterhood is Los Angeles signals the possibility that this "coming together" can and should emerge in every village and city.

Portland Observer encourages our readers to write letters to the editor in response to any articles we publish.

The Portland Observer

(USPS 959-680)
OREGON'S OLDEST AFRICAN AMERICAN PUBLICATION
Established in 1970

Contributing Writers
McKinley Burt
Dan Bell
Mattie Ann Callier-Spears
Bill Council
John Phillips

Publisher
Alfred Henderson
Operations Manager
Joyce Washington
Accounting Manager
Gary Ann Garnett
Public Relations
Chuck Washington
Sales & Promotions
Tony Washington

Production Staff
Dean Babb
Gary Ann Garnett
Rea Washington

The PORTLAND OBSERVER is published weekly by Exie Publishing Company, Inc. 4747 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. Portland, Oregon 97211 503-288-0033 • Fax 288-0015



Deadline for all submitted materials:

Articles: Monday, 5:00 pm--Ads: Tuesday, noon

POSTMASTER: Send Address Changes to: Portland Observer, P.O. Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208. Second class postage paid at Portland Oregon.

The Portland Observer welcomes freelance submissions. Manuscripts and photographs should be clearly labeled and will be returned if accompanied by a self addressed envelope. All created design display ads become the sole property of the newspaper and can not be used in other publications or personal usage, without the written consent of the general manager, unless the client has purchased the composition of such ad. © 1991 THE PORTLAND OBSERVER. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. REPRODUCTION IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT PERMISSION IS PROHIBITED.

Subscriptions: \$25.00 per year.

The Portland Observer--Oregon's Oldest African-American Publication--is a member of the National Newspaper Association--Founded in 1885, and The National Advertising Representative Amalgamated Publishers, Inc., New York, NY.

SUBSCRIBE

The Portland Observer

THE PORTLAND OBSERVER CAN BE SENT DIRECTLY TO YOUR HOME ONLY \$25.00 PER YEAR.

PLEASE FILL OUT, ENCLOSE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER, AND MAIL TO:

SUBSCRIPTIONS

THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
PO Box 3137
PORTLAND, OREGON 97208

Name

Address

City, State

zip code

THANK YOU FOR READING THE PORTLAND OBSERVER