

perspectives

by Professor McKinley Burt

The Thrill Is Gone: Conclusion

Now, that is the type of response I like, the many readers who said they remember so well those early African American pioneers in northeast Portland, "who built large scale business and real estate complexes with funds accumulated by assessments on salaries from their jobs."

And, yes, I remember so well my mentors among that committed group, like Wilbur Marshall and Clifford Jackson of the "Acme business Club" as well as the dedicated group who structured "Fraternal Hall" and its many enterprises. There is no intent to neglect "The Elks", still around, and at least a half-dozen other groups dedicated so early on to black economic development.

One elder cited my placement of these pioneers in comparison with the black middle class of today; repeating the evaluation of that educator who compiled statistics on the incredible investment in their education and nurturing. "Don't they feel any shame?" he asked, "these Talking Heads and T.V. prima donnas as you describe them? Where are the role models for our Gang Youth--the pragmatic and visible models that would redirect their economic activities?" Perhaps it is well those pioneers cannot see the results. To close out last week's description of the economic scene in Los Angeles and its classic delineation of a repetitive failure of African Americans to respect

their history, their pioneers and early cooperative efforts, I add the following comments. The capital inputs we expected from the giant black insurance company that had built its fortunes on African American policy holders was not forthcoming. They were too busy financing new stores for white supermarket chains like "Boys Market". Our incredible experience gained this early was worth nothing to these latter day middle class "toms" who preferred to be seen in the press (and Ebony Magazine) with their white masters from the liquor and tobacco companies (not much has changed, has it?).

An interesting aside here is that a decade later when I was teaching Black History at Portland State University, the largest source of information on the black past both in Africa and America was the publications and posters provided by Anheuser Busch Brewery, Schenley Distilleries and the Phillip Morris Tobacco Company. Naturally, the same was true for the current demographics and consumer patterns of the African American population centers. The black middle class had performed its assigned task all too well. The forecasts of The Honorable Elijah Muhammed and Malcolm X were completely ignored--except when the rascals needed monies for "minority" business or for Black History, suddenly discovered.

Given the Clinton victory, I expect a lot of local stirring, shuffling and rhetoric--and, hopefully, some new faces, institutions and realistic economic goals. Above all, I hope that the hundreds of dedicated grass roots people who have been toiling at the base of the Portland pyramid in support of the "talking heads" are going to rise up and demand a better performance--this applies to both whites and blacks of our community. How can you tolerate institutions with computers and "educated" staff who cannot get our timely financial reports. Do they in fact want to?

And don't forget that loss of a quarter-million dollars in real estate by our largest predominately black, urban institution. The Board of directors was filled with a number of community activists who either couldn't or wouldn't perform their duties of oversight which involved reading, counting and making inquiry. I pointed out this organizational disability when I analyzed the demise of Portland's "Albina Corporation". If your organization can spend all those dollars for travel and seminars and dinners for "talking heads" and can't find monies for necessary training for the board of directors, then the enterprise can easily become quite shaky. If it isn't already.

Next week: Resuming the struggle in the all-so-important educational process.

Statement By Dr. Lenora Fulani

The big winner in the 1992 presidential election is the American people, 20 million of whom put the two major parties on notice that the days of corrupt bi-partisanship are over. My thanks to the nearly 50,000 who voted for Dr. John Hagelin of the Natural Law Party, the quarter of a million people who voted for Andre Marrou of the Libertarian Party and the 19 million who voted for Ross Perot.

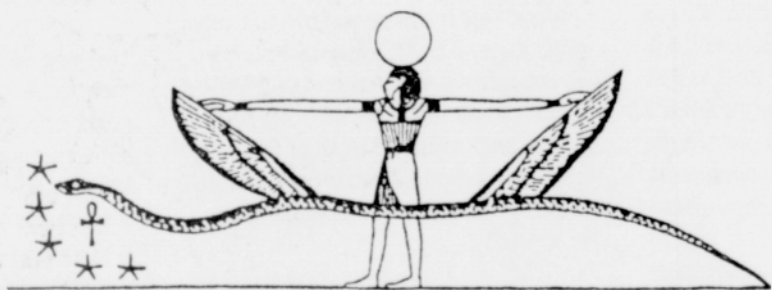
My thanks as well to those who voted for me, though I am uncertain of my vote totals since the Associated Press reported them as both 80,000 and 211,000. (AP claims to have miscounted

my votes in New York. My lawyers are in touch with AP to get an explanation.) But what is significant is not my vote count, but the 20 million people who rejected the Democrats and Republicans, including the 7% of Black voters who went independent. Now it's time to build off of those votes.

Independent politics is no longer the future of America. It is the present. An independent participated in the nationally televised presidential debates, something I have been fighting for since 1988. There will never be another debate without one. Governor Lowell Weicker of Connecticut, himself an

independent, said on CNN last night that 1996 will be the year that an independent takes the White House, and I think he is right. It is clear from the election results that the numbers are out there.

That's why I'm asking Ross Perot to put \$100 million dollars on the table to finance a drive to register 15 million Americans as independent. These new registrants, combined with the 20 million who voted independent this year, would make up a new one third voting block that could take the presidency from the Democrats and the Republicans in four years.



CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

By Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

President-Elect Clinton And African Americans

In the wake of the victory of Bill Clinton over George Bush, there exists within the African American community a rather wide range of hopes, aspirations, anxieties, and fears. On November 3, 1992, in many African American communities, both rural and urban, the mood in the long lines of voters was "This is not just election day, this is a day of reckoning!" And so it was, because the vast majority of the millions of voters in the African American community voted against President Bush and in favor of Bill Clinton.

Already there is an unlimited amount of analysis about the election of 1992. We are sure that professional political scientists and other experts will be debating the critical factors that led to Clinton's victory and Bush's defeat. Someone, however, needs to state in the clearest of terms what this election will or should mean to all Americans and especially to the millions of persons of color who voted for the Democratic slate of candidates.

But before listing some of our recommendations to President-elect

Clinton, we do have something to say to President Bush. It is our hope that Bush and Quayle will take the time to ascertain why they lost the election. We believe it had little to do with how much money was spent on the campaign or whether the most effective ads were put on the radio or television. There is an old saying in the African American community that, "What you hide from others you eventually will hide from yourself or delusion soon becomes self-delusion."

In other words, Bush and Quayle attempted to hide the truth from the people of the nation on so many different things from the state of the economy to the racist and divisive motives of appointments to the judiciary that they began to believe their own misstatements and misdeeds.

On domestic policy, we recommend that President-elect Clinton take the necessary steps to identify and to dismantle what amounts to an "American apartheid" system in regard to racially discriminatory policies and practices in employment, education, hous-

ing, delivery of health care, environment, criminal justice and economic development. As the nation moves towards the 21st Century, the rapidly changing racial demographics demand Presidential leadership in helping to rid this nation of institutionalized racism.

On foreign policy, we recommend that President-elect Clinton act with dispatch to revamp American policy interests in particular in the Caribbean, Africa, Latin America, Asia and the Pacific. Specifically the United States should stop being the world's largest arms exporter. We should be sending grain, bread and food to other nations rather than bullets, missile and bombs. The global economy and ecology will be dependent upon the implementation of long term policies which commit the United States as a global partner with the rest of the international community than as a dominating "superpower."

In conclusion, African Americans, like other Americans, are looking to President-elect Clinton for real leadership that will lead the nation as a whole forward and not backwards.

Do Portland Blacks Suffer From the "Only One" Syndrome?

BY JAMES L. POSEY

This question and subject is closely related to the last article, "Are Portland Blacks different?" Portland Blacks are different and some of their characteristics make them their own worst enemy. The "Only One" syndrome is a carry over from the slavery system in which certain Blacks were chosen above others to be "house niggers." Needless to say, the privilege of being closer to white folks often went to their heads. "House niggers" began to think of themselves as better than the "field niggers." And, you know the rest of the story. This syndrome is just the modern-day version of the same situation.

Portland is one of the few metropolitan cities where Blacks can easily operate in the "Only One" syndrome. It works something like this: "I'm the 'Only One' white folks listen to and respect. So, if you want to get something from the white folks, you gotta go through me." It occurs at all levels and includes organizations and groups as well as individuals. Often, Blacks are selectively screened and employed in token positions. They are then tested to prove their loyalty and conformity to organizational values. Finally, they are promoted to key positions in the organization and cultivated as the "Only One." Anytime the organization is questioned as to its commitment to equal or civil rights, they bring out the "Only One."

Keep in mind that this example applies not only to traditional organizations but also to the community at large, including some of our politicians. From an employment perspective, the purpose for developing the "Only One" is to stall a perceived flood of African-Americans and other minorities from

infiltrating the organization. One might best describe this as managed exclusion. The "Only One" individual or organization is established and maintained as a control agent. Its primary function is to keep the natives from becoming too restless by promoting the "Only One" individual or group as an example of Black progress and how Blacks ought to act if they want to get something from "The Man." Of course, all other people or groups are subordinate and must be blessed by the "Only One" before there is any degree of acceptance.

We understand the purpose and motives of the white power structure. But what about the "Only Ones" themselves? They operate under the belief that the only way to make it in this town is to sell your soul. It's sad to say, but many Blacks are so starved for attention, recognition, affirmation, acceptance, and most of all, power and control, that they are willing and eager vehicles. Every one knows at least one "Only One." They are constantly gloating about their "Only One" status and erecting barriers to other African-Americans or minorities to protect it. They are threaten by the slightest intrusion of a competing minority and go out of their way to block, bad mouth, and sabotage the efforts of others attempting to gain inclusion.

On an organizational level, most of us are aware of groups or organizations which openly profess that they are the "Only One." They try to control as many issues affecting African-Americans as they can, going far beyond their resources and skills. Typically, these organizations are headed by individuals whose egos are as big as an elephant and must be constantly fed. The organi-

zation is fairly reflective of their leader's style, attitude and approach to dealing with the white power structure. And, there is constant jockeying and positioning to maintain the duel role of gatekeeper and the "Only One" status.

There is a real sick irony to all this. Many of these very individuals and organizations spend a lot of time spouting out rhetoric about inclusion and diversity. But it is obvious that they have never practiced what they preach. There is no way white folks are going to subscribe to diversity and inclusion when they continue to witness in the Black community acts of exclusion and fragmentation based not on race but on class, status, ideas, selfishness and greed. That is why the African-American community, which is in fact just as diverse in attitudes and opinions as any other group, must go out of its way to practice tolerance, trust and acceptance.

While I'm convinced that the "Only One" syndrome continues to be a strong factor in the make-up of this town, I am encouraged to see numerous efforts afoot to break this cycle and get Blacks to work together at different levels. A good example is the effort promoted by the Black United Front called the Unity Breakfast. Representatives of various groups come together on the first Wednesday of each month at the Black United Fund office. The purpose is to provide a forum for addressing Black community issues in an open and frank environment and to foster community-based solutions. The real challenge of the group will be to make sure that every voice is heard and to abstain from setting itself up as another "Only One."

James Posey is a local, small business owner with a background in social work and community activism.

liberty and the pursuit of happiness. By 1960, the prayers of the masses were answered.

Brother El-Shabazz became a legacy. Among other things: he challenged the African American, Africa, The World Of Al Islam and all humanity to rise and unite.

He publicly exposed the false appointed leaders of the black community and demonstrated the real traits and reason of leadership. I.E. honesty, intelligence, a respect for logic, total submission to Islam, self sacrifice, brotherhood and uncompromising morality.

He insisted that we must return to real educational, economic, spiritual and social essence of Al Islam. He said reading, learning, and reason were indispensable qualities for the economic and social development of the masses.

El-Hajji Malik El-Shabazz had seen in practice how Islam had removed discrimination and differences; it had

wiped out bias and established a brotherhood between Blacks and Whites, rich and poor. His message was clear and accompanied by firmness. He had no doubts about the cause of truth. He taught and defended his message with conviction. His analysis of the socio economic situation in America is still relevant. It should be kept in mind that brother Malik Shabazz's analysis was inspired by his life of struggle. Those who aspire to walk in his footsteps should always remember that he always said, "I am a Muslim, and my religion is Al Islam" which molded his character in such a way that he gave up addiction to liquor, narcotics, gambling and sexual promiscuity and all other social illnesses which exist where there is despair and deprivation.

He no longer sought to escape reality and live in a world of illusion, rather he seized the time by seeking to change things. Fareeda S. Muhammad

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