

# CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

By Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

## More Truth Revealed in South Africa

Everyday inside the racist regime of South Africa, more and more evidence emerges about the systematic death-choke that apartheid maintains against the people of South Africa. Now, F.W. de Klerk has been forced to admit and confirm that South Africa's military has an ongoing "covert third force" that has engaged in political assassination and terrorism against the African National Congress and other anti-apartheid supporters.

In fact, both black and white South Africans have been murdered by this "government apparatus" of apartheid. We believe that President de Klerk knew about these illegal and barbaric actions of the "third force" long before the public disclosures of the past few days. The old saying, "The truth buried always eventually comes to light," is quite applicable to this last difficult stage of the historic struggle to dismantle the brutal institutionalized system of racism known as apartheid.

As we have previously argued, much of the dramatic increase in the fratricidal warfare between the African national Congress and Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha group has been orchestrated by forces within the military and government. These latest revelations of the extent to which repressive forces in South Africa have gone to destabilize the situation inside the nation, are also indicative of how the military-intelligence sector of the government sought to "destabilize" other nations in southern Africa.

Angola, Namibia, Mozambique and Zambia in particular, have all felt the terror of South Africa's efforts to stay in power by acts of "low intensity military

strikes" as part of an overall strategy of regional destabilization. We note, as we have in the past, that U.S. foreign policy toward South Africa during the last twelve years actually served to prolong South Africa's viability as a strong "strategic ally" both in political and military terms. The sad result is that millions of Africans have been killed with not even a hint from Washington, that the lives of the people who live in the region of southern Africa should have been protected a long time ago from this atrocity against humanity.

Without naming the accused officers, Mr. de Klerk announced that 23 military officers are being "suspended or dismissed" because of their involvement with covert terrorist military operations in South Africa. Six of the 23 were ranked as full generals. Although President de Klerk asserted that he was "shocked and disappointed," it is not exactly clear whether his disappointment was because of what the accused had done or the fact that what they had done has now become public.

For the first time the President of South Africa was forced to admit, "The findings will lead to the conclusion that some of the activities have led to the death of people.... Collaborators of the South African Defense Forces have been involved, and in some cases are still involved, in illegal and/or unauthorized activities, and malpractice." Will those guilty of these crimes be prosecuted? Or better, the question is will the government of South Africa prosecute itself for violently violating the human rights of the peoples of southern Africa?

During the remaining rounds of

negotiations to establish a transitional government, we believe the current command structure of the south African Defense Forces needs to be completely reorganized by placing representatives of the ANC and other civilians in charge of the armed forces during this critical transitional stage. A failure to dislodge and purge the right-wing elements from the military will result in the escalation of political violence in South Africa.

The African national Congress issued a statement in response to the disclosures by de Klerk. The ANC stated, "The steps announced by president de Klerk are a step in the right direction, but are not nearly enough. The current revelations are clearly only the tip of the iceberg." We agree with the ANC and we further call for a full disclosure of all joint intelligence operations conducted by the South Africa Defense Intelligence with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) during the last twelve years.

The people of South Africa and the people of the United States have a right to know what were the joint agreements on intelligence gathering between the United States and South Africa.

Constructive engagement" strategies of the Reagan-Bush era have been very destructive to southern Africa.

The issue of changing U.S. foreign policy initiatives toward Africa in general and southern Africa in particular will present a significant challenge to the incoming Clinton Administration. The time for a progressive policy change is long overdue. As more of the truth creeps out of South Africa, the end of apartheid is at least in sight.

# perspectives

by Professor McKinley Burt

## "Everybody Talkn' About Heaven Aint Goin' There"

How many of the readers remember that warning from an old African American spiritual? For many of us, the stern, no-nonsense advisories incorporated in those rousing, foot-stomping, choir-shouting, congregation-responding choruses ranked right up there with the ten Commandments as acceptable guides for entering the Kingdom of Heaven. Times are changing folks.

Though today's article is one of those lighter, somewhat humorous pieces I usually write at the end of the year, it does provide an opportunity to develop some new perspectives on both black history and our contemporary culture. Now, some of my friends are aware that on Sunday morning I monitor the inspired exhortations of several television ministries. And in particular, they know that I watch the 7 a.m. "Show" of the African-American minister, Dr. Frederick K. Price (cable channel 5, out of Los Angeles).

The man is great! Make no mistake about it--he not only knows his Bible, but history, ancient geography and cultures of the Holy land, comparative religion (not only branches and sects of christianity but the doctrines of Judaism and Islam). To the unknowing, much of this erudition may be masked by a mostly easy-going presentation that is a work of art as the good Reverend intersperses parables, homilies, vignettes and quotations from the greats (without boastful attribution). However,

if you evaluate that superbly dressed black middle class audience--here and there a white couple--you would be aware from the expressions and the body language that everyone knows what is happening on the way to Abraham's bosom.

The Sunday morning drama in this theater--pardon me, "church"--is presented in a "Theater-in-the-round" format, which, of course, places Dr. Price in the center of things. You realize that the man knows exactly what he is doing as he effortlessly moves (floats) around the ring, interacting with selected individuals, hammering home a doctrinal point, eliciting a smile or sometimes a constrained guffaw, avoiding dogma but extracting vigorous nods of assent. You begin to wonder if it was thus in the Shakespearean theaters of Stratford-upon-Avon where the "Theater-in-the-round" format originated or in the Greek Amphitheatre where the format is also said to have begun.

However, what this past Sunday shall remain notable for in the annals of television ministries was a shocking addition to a marvelous element of the presentations. No, not to the interior architecture or the appurtenances of what has got to be one of the most beautiful churches in America--and, no, there was no modification of the tone and tenor of the sermon. No, what happened was much more basic than that--and I tell you it was a low down,

dirty shame, and you know how B.B. King can mouth that phrase.

Remember that this is a "Theater-in-the-round" and of course the television cameras are usually focusing on that first circular row of parishioners--mostly long-legged, beautiful, fashion plate ladies whose skirts would be six inches above the knee (if they were standing up; only if). Good Lord! I couldn't wait for Sunday morning, lay back and check out that big strong line as the cameraman did his thing. But not this last Sunday--and along with my friends who called in shocked indignation, I felt that somehow the ministers wife had gotten into the act (or the network censor).

All of a sudden there were no gleaming thighs, no inadvertently and carelessly crossed legs just as the camera panned by a beauty--no "indignant" frowns when nether parts could have been "accidentally" exposed to a leering audience of millions. No Sir! Every woman in the long circular front row had been provided with a blue panel of the same cloth of the choir robes. These 4x3 "modesty drapes" lay across each lap and extended to the floor. Any other woman wore a granny skirt that barely exposed an ankle. Obviously, there had been ushers at the door to direct or equip the women as their fashions dictated. Dear Lord, is there nothing sacred anymore?

## Cellular Phone Users Watching For Drinking Drivers

An estimated 40,000 cellular phone users throughout Oregon are being asked to watch for and report drinking drivers this holiday season.

"GTE and the Oregon Department of Transportation have joined forces to ask cellular phone customers to report suspected drinking drivers," said June Ross, an ODOT Traffic Safety official.

"Anyone in Oregon can report a drunk driver by dialing either 1-800-24-DRUNK, or 911. We're asking cellular phone users to be especially watchful during the holidays." In cooperation with ODOT, GTE recently mailed a guide for spotting and reporting suspected drunk drivers to its 40,000 cel-

lular phone customers statewide. "Since a cellular phone is a popular car accessory, using it to report a suspected drunk driver at the time and place you see one is a great way to make our highways safer for all," Ross said.

The ODOT-GTE brochure says guidelines developed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration can help identify someone too drunk to drive. Drunk drivers may:

- Turn abruptly, illegally or use a wide radius.
- Drive out of their own lane.
- Almost hit another object or vehicle.

- Weave, swerve or drift.
- Drive too slow.
- Stop or start erratically, or without cause.
- Follow too closely.

"If you spot someone driving erratically, get an accurate description of the car, license plate number, location and direction of travel. Then call 1-800-24-DRUNK or 911 to make your report," Ross said.

"With the popularity of cellular phones, the addition of thousands of eyes watching for and reporting drunk drivers really can help make our holiday driving safer this year," Ross said.

## Non-Paying Parents Featured On Posters

Some of the state's worst child support offenders will find their pictures on "most wanted" posters beginning next month.

The Child Support Program of Adult and Family Services is distributing sets of 14 posters, each showing a parent who owes a large amount of back child support and cannot be located by state officials.

"We are hoping the public will recognize these parents and provide us with information so we can find them and take further legal action," stated

Phil Yarnell, manager of the program. "This approach has been very successful in other areas and we are hoping for similar success in our first year of issuing the posters."

The 14 parents owe a total of \$208,427 to their children in Oregon. The largest amount owed is over \$37,000. None of the parents has made a payment in the past six months and all have resisted past enforcement actions such as wage withholding and liens filed against their property.

The posters are being sent to dis-

trict attorneys and Support Enforcement Division offices across the state, which provide child support enforcement services to Oregon families under contracts with AFS. The services include establishing paternity through genetic testing, locating absent parents and taking necessary legal actions to set up child support obligations.

In the 1991-93 biennium, Recovery Services will collect and distribute \$240 million in child support payments. The Oregon Child Support Program provides services to 201,000 families.

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

To The Editor,

We the undersigned read with interest an Oregonian (12/27/92) article that described Oregon Health Sciences University (OHSU) medical students training in rural areas to encourage them to settle in areas that lack doctors. It is puzzling that the apparent concern of OHSU management doesn't extend to the staff that makes possible the healthcare and training discussed in your article.

Presently AFSCME 328, the union for all clerical, patient support services, maintenance and tradeworkers on "the Hill" are in a battle for a decent contract, and for the existence of our union.

OHSU management, backed by Governor Roberts, is trying to shove a contract on us with almost no raises, with healthcare that does not cover families, and that breaks the union. The state can afford to provide full paid healthcare for managers, apparently, but not for lower paid unionized staff.

Paying 1000's of Oregonians poorly and reducing medical coverage so family members are not covered hurts all Oregonians.

This is part of a move to privatize OHSU. OHSU will thus have no requirement to serve those who can't pay for care. This hurts many Oregonians who have no coverage. As part of this plan OHSU is also introducing a practice plan for faculty, which will pay them on the basis of how many paying "consumers" they treat. This pressures clinicians to turn away those in need and treat only those who can pay.

The OHSU is cutting the School of nursing from 100 to 24 slots for undergraduates. They are decimating the chance for many women and men to choose this career and undermining nursing care.

OHSU has money for perpetual construction, an "eternal flame," a sports center with an indoor swimming pool, and an gazebo but is a skinflint when it

comes to the women and men who do the work. The state can pay Governor Roberts \$80,000.00, but pays a single mother office worker so poorly that she has to work 2 to 3 jobs, and then pay for medical care.

This is bad management and inhumane, unhealthy treatment. Barbara Roberts plays both ends against the middle. She plays on the popular misconception that stateworkers are overpaid by pretending to cut the fat in government. In reality she hurts poor and working people with her unfair policies, and the fat remains.

We want decent raises, fully paid medical benefits for all employees, a guarantee of our union's continuation and no privatization of OHSU. All Oregonians need paid healthcare. Stop shutting the door on the poor and the working poor, and on those who provide social services and healthcare.

Sincerely  
AFSCME 328

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