

# p e r s p e c t i v e s

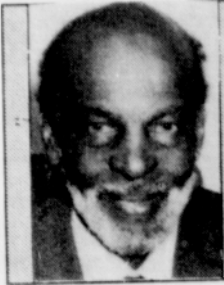
## Traveling Around The Education Circuit: Local And National

While we wait for the curtain to rise on the final version of a new scenario for Portland Public Schools, let us take a look at some of the peripheral issues that are engaging our attention. This is probably in the manner of the condemned complaining about the lighting in his cell.

There would seem to be some consternation and surprise over the remarks of school board member Forrest Rieke. "And exactly how many kids are not in jail because they're on the Jefferson basketball team...about 35 of them, about half Bloods, half Crips. That's Jeff." A transcript of his remarks, made

during a 'casual conversation with other board members, has been circulated at Jefferson High School, and made available to key people in the black community.

by  
**Professor  
McKinley  
Burt**



From Mr. Rieke, we have two key, albeit revealing, statements: "Nothing like that would be said for 'public' consumption" and "It is embarrassing to have that sort of thing published." Well, we are accustomed to having lawyers 'beg the question', but we are not quite prepared to have this particular one either reveal or exercise a racist contempt for facts or for the teachers, coach and student body. Principal

Alcena Boozer expressed concern about the attitudes that underlie much observations. A student observed; "he looks at us as worthless adults." The community and parents have observed again, "vigilance is the price we pay for survival."

Many of those parents and community organizations are well aware that a considerable and lucrative segment of the practice at Mr. Rieke's law firm is that of high school students accused of being associated with Bloods or Crips in criminal activities. Further unease is provoked by the realization that he is president of a national organization which has considerable influence on minority affairs at the federal level; "Council of Great City Schools", a strong lobby for urban schools and disadvantaged students (may be translated as a 'grant machine').

What's going on here? What 'has' been going on? Money, Honey?

Adding more confusion to the educational mess around the state, many poverty-stricken schools districts are turning to "bond levies" as a source of funds to shore up financial structures whose problems are ascribed to Measure 5--which voters passed to severely reduce the General Fund monies available for school districts and others to reach into for their "needs", real or imaginary. This latter procedure for obtaining funds does not, of course, generally require a 'payback', so it is the preferred method for bailing out a ship in distress.

On the other hand, school bond levies, like sewer and similar obligations, become debts which must be paid by tax assessments against the property of the same taxpayers who, in

general, voted for Measure 5 in order to reduce their burdens. The thinking of educators appears to be that under the pressure of dire threats of further deterioration of schools, a younger element of frightened parents will surely vote in favor of such "Operation Rescues". Once again, we are left without a permanent and structured resolution of the crisis in the state's educational process. Left to their own devices by a sorry state legislature and inept politicians, school districts and committed educators are not in an enviable position. Concerned parents and a threatened industry sector are no better off.

On the national scene we see a resurgence of interest in an old controversy that concerns disparity in financial resources between school districts within the same state. I am sure Texas immediately occurs to most, the place

where the most famous, if not the first, lawsuit was filed which questioned the constitutionality of such inequities. Here the state's ten highest spending districts spend more than two-and-a-half times as much per pupil than on its ten lowest-spending districts (equipment, curriculum, tutors, teacher literacy/experience/education, building maintenance.)

Though a recent chart shows Oregon not to be the slabbiest in demonstrating a pattern of fairly equitable modes of support (16th in a list of best-performing states), there are some significant "sore spots"; especially in rural communities and areas dependent upon logging. Given our already precarious financial situation, what happens if a court finds Oregon to be engaging in an "unconstitutional" practice?

### Oregon Liquor Control Commission Requests Dates Of Proms, Graduations

The Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC) is asking state high school officials for dates of proms, graduations, and unofficial skip days and celebrations coming up this spring.

"These special occasions that occur in every high school in the state can prompt alcohol-related parties and alcohol-related accidents," said Richard Evans, OLCC Field Services director. Evans explained that the dates are shared with local law enforcement

agencies and major hotels. School officials are also encouraged to contact the Liquor Commission when they learn of plans for parties that will involve minors and alcohol. "We'll try to stop the party before it starts by contacting the sponsor or property owner to explain the law," Evans said. "If a party occurs where alcohol is provided for minors, local police authorities will be notified."

Anyone with information about party plans involving minors and alcohol is encouraged to call the OLCC toll free, 1-800-452-6522.

The Liquor Commission has also enlisted the cooperation of Oregon beer wholesalers to help prevent sales of kegs of beer to minors. The commission asked wholesalers to tell customers about penalties for furnishing alcohol to minors, which means a minimum \$350 fine.

### In Memory Of Gladys McCoy

By Commissioner Tanya Collier  
The death of Gladys McCoy on Easter Sunday left the board of County Commissioners with more than just an empty seat. Gladys will be missed by her colleagues as well as her family and friends.

Because Gladys has been involved in public service for over a quarter of a century I want to take a little time--and space, to talk about the contributions she has made over the years. And, quite a contribution it was.

Most women raised in the 1930's and '40's had limited opportunities outside the home. These limited opportunities had even greater barriers for women of color. Yet, Gladys achieved prominence in the tough world of political public service that was best difficult for women and in that time, almost devoid of African Americans. She exemplified the American possibility.

Gladys was reared in the segregated South and instead of those experience making her hard, they instilled a level of care and compassion for others that became the driving force of her public service career.

Gladys pioneered "super" woman before most of us even had a name for such a person. She was a working

Mom before it was common place, she had seven children and was Oregon's mother of the Year in 1980. All the while she was working to translate her commitment for those less fortunate into tangible public policy.

Gladys was a social worker and got her Master's degree at Portland State University in 1970. She ran successfully for the Portland School Board and was the first African American to serve on the Portland School Board.

I met Gladys in 1975 when she was ombudsman for Governor Bob Straub. We all know that she went on to become the first African American County Commissioner and, in 1986, she was elected as Chair of the Multnomah County Commission.

Her public service represents countless hours put in over the years and equals a big commitment towards making our world a better place to live.

Gladys has left a legacy to our "Community; we are more culturally diverse because she lived and worked here. Before it was vogue (or the law) Gladys advocated for full integration of our schools. She carried that commitment to the state where she advised Governor Straub on affirmative action issues. And, since 1978 she has worked towards making the 3000+

employees at Multnomah County reflect and celebrate the cultural differences of our community.

Gladys has received many awards over the years--too many to mention here, unfortunately. Suffice it to say, her achievements are varied and include everything from being honored as a woman of achievement to the first African American at almost everything she did.

We forget that women have not always enjoyed many of the freedoms we now have. Gladys McCoy was a path breaker that opened doors for the rest of us to go through.

As I've known and worked with Gladys over the last 18 years we have not always agreed, and our styles were certainly different. No matter. Her commitment was never doubted, her advocacy was always apparent and her energy for service, unflagging. All who have known and worked with Gladys over the years will forever remember her commitment and care for children, families and the less fortunate.

In accordance with the Home Rule Charter there will be an election on June 29th to fill Gladys' unexpired term. I am very sorry that Gladys will not be able to finish her term as she wished.

### Oregon Historical Society Recipients Sited For Jeffersonian Approach To Statewide Issues

Oregon Historical Society Executive Director Chet Orloff has announced the Society's establishment of an annual award, and the selection of six recipients for 1993. Called the Thomas Jefferson Award, recipients have personified, through their life's work in Oregon, the attributes and values of Jeffersonian citizenship. The 1993 awards were presented in an informal ceremony at the Oregon History Center on Tuesday, April 13th. It marked the 250th anniversary of Jefferson's birthday.

The 1993 Thomas Jefferson Awards recipients are: Doris Swayze Bounds, Boardman; the late Dr. Eldon Chuinard, Portland; J.W. "Bud" Forrester, Astoria; Stafford Hansell, Hermiston; the late E. Shelton Hill, Portland; Elizabeth Hill Johnson, Redmond.

E. Shelton Hill  
Rare is the person who can be credited directly for important changes in the face of a community. E. Shelton Hill, better known to all who worked with him and were influenced by him as "Shelly," was one of those persons.

From 1947 until his retirement in 1973 Shelly Hill worked with the Urban League of Portland, an organization that he headed as executive director for seventeen years. For his pioneering labors, Hill received in 1991 the Whitney M. Young, Jr. medallion for outstanding service to the National Urban League.

Born on the Choctaw Indian Reservation of Oklahoma, and a graduate of Western University in Kansas (earning degrees in physics and chemistry), Hill did graduate work at Ohio State University. Hill went on to teach science and was a school principal in Texas before he moved to Portland (as race relations advisor on the Portland Army Air Base during World War II--for which he received the highest military honor given to a civilian employee). At that time, Portland was a city where nearly ninety-nine percent of employed African-Americans were limited to working with the railroads.

Using his skills, his life-long commitment to fairness in housing and employment, and to true equality, solidly based on additional train-

ing in social work from both Ohio State and the University of Oregon, Hill began to emerge as a leader of Portland's Black community in the 1940s.

Taking on the task slowly, quietly educate the full community of this city, Shelly Hill over time worked to integrate public housing and was able to introduce African-Americans into numerous fields of employment that had been off limits until his arrival. A man of gentle persuasion, Hill found places of employment for Blacks in banks, schools (as teachers and principals), and labor unions, among many other fields.

Hill worked also with the NAACP, Portland Council of Churches, the National Association of Social Workers, the United Way, Oregon Cancer Society, The Early Childhood Education Committee, the Portland Metropolitan Steering Committee, along with numerous other citizen-oriented groups. The Nike Company has established in Hill's name two scholarships for Black Portland students to attend Oregon colleges.

## VANTAGE POINT

by Ron Daniels

### It's Nation 'Time Again: Towards' A National State Of The Race Conference

BY RON DANIELS

At critical moments in the life and times of African in the U.S., great gatherings have been convened to discuss the status and future of the race in this hostile land. The realities of racism, cultural aggression and economic exploitation in this society have always compelled the sons and daughters of Africa to meet periodically to plot and plan for the survival and development of the race. At the height of the civil right revolt and the rise of Black Nationalism in the 60's and 70's, the Black Nation was called into session on several occasions. With the fires of rebellion still smoldering, the Black Nation convened in Newark in 1967 for the first Black Power Conference was held in Philadelphia. In 1970, the Congress of African People was convened in Atlanta, paving the way for the historic National Black Political Convention held in Gary, Indiana in 1972.

In every instance the impetus for these great gatherings of the 60's and 70's came from grassroots activist, nationals, local, regional, and national levels. And so it must be now as we strive to meet the challenge of building a new movement for Black liberation. The State of Emergency which exist for the masses of Black poor and working people and the failure of established Black political leadership to forcefully and effectively fight with and for the Black masses dictates that it is time, past time, for a message and movement from the grassroots. The current crop of accommodationist "Black leaders" must be replaced by a new visionary and fighting leadership emerging from grassroots movements, and organizations. It's time to get busy networking,

linking up and connecting up the range of movements and organizations waging struggle in local communities across the country.

In the 60's and 70's this kind of networking, community-building, nation-building activity/work was captured by the phrase, the tradition of the Colored People's Conventions which 'Africans in America convened in the 19th century; in the tradition of the massive conventions convened by Marcus Garvey and the UNIA in the 1920's; in the tradition of the Black Power Conferences, the Congress of African People and the Gary Convention of the 60's and 70's it's nation time again; time to convene the Black Nation to discuss the state of the race and lay the groundwork for a new movement for Black liberation.

Everything that I have written lately has been driving towards the point/conclusion that it is absolutely imperative that we forge a grassroots movement to fight for a fundamental change in the conditions of the Black masses in this country. For the last several years I have been suggesting the need for a National State for the Race Conference as a means of linking up various grassroots movements and organizations. The response to the suggestion has always been positive, but other projects always seemed to intervene to interrupt the implementation of the idea. It is said that all things happen in season. The desperate plight of the Black masses and the growing mood of defiance, resistance and outright rebellion at the grass roots level is a sign that the season for a National State of the Race Conference is upon us. It's nation time again.

And so, after a hiatus on this project occasioned by my 1992 inde-

pendent presidential campaign, I am pressing the call anew. It is my hope that one year from now, May 19-22, 1994 a National State of the Race Conference will be convened dedicated to the memory and legacy of Malcolm X. It's nation time again. It's time for a great gathering of grassroots activists, youth and students, parents, teachers, preachers, activist lawyers, doctors, social workers, artists, entertainers, rappers, labor activists, welfare mothers, homeless people, workers and all those within the Black Nation who care about the plight of the Black masses and the destiny of the race.

It's nation time again. It's time to gather to assess what the last 25 years of struggle has meant for the Black masses, to lay out an analysis of where we went wrong and what we did right. It's time to move beyond just talk, rhetoric and the paralysis of analysis to an examination of the concrete models for projects, movements and organization that are doing successful work in

Black communities everywhere. It's nation time. It's time to network, connect up, link up and build up the institutions that can inform, inspire, educate/train, and enable us to fight for a new future. It's nation time again. It's time to make our memories and love for Malcolm manifest in community-building, nation-building acts and deeds. It's nation time again. It's time for a great gathering of the Black Nation to revitalize the movement for Black liberation. May 19, 1994, it's nation time again!

Persons interested in this project should write to: NSORC, P.O. Box 27798, Washington, D.C. 20038-7798 or call 202-736-1741.

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