

# EDITORIAL

The Portland Observer

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

## Minority Business In A Minority Economy

"A place where everybody takes in everybody else's laundry", that's the way Oregon's economy was described twenty years ago. Has there been a meaningful change or is it 'business-as-usual'? Of course, it is not really a time for humor and we will try to avoid more catch-phrases than necessary. Hardtimes are upon us.

It would seem that through the years the media has diverted much of our attention away from survival and meat-and-potato issues to peripheral and "ain't-our-state-cute" excursions into bottle bills, salmon derbys, balloon races, architectural awards, 'shut-down-the-forests' sorties and baby-boomer fantasizing. With the help of that 24-hour-a-day public rela-

tions program to drug our financial senses, our ability to perceive the clearly obvious was severely curtailed.

While Oregon's minorities can truly say, "I wasn't in it-I didn't do it-I had no power (even Bill Naito)", the fact of the matter is their economic pain is just as excruciating. And they are in dire need of a 'risk management' program to ensure an economic future on a par with the rest of the population. What we are about in this issue of the Observer Newspaper is to develop a perspective that will provide guidelines for both analysis and action.

However, that African American business person represents only 3% of the nation's entrepreneurs and less than 1% of the gross receipts.

Whatever specific ethnic considerations we develop in the expanded study, nevertheless the minority is compelled to operate within the same parameters and constraints as the majority. The business climate, like the weather, will enhance or defeat the purposes of us all. And the most carefully crafted economic plans of either black individuals or organizations can break up on the rocks of Oregon's "Laundry Business". This reality must be thoroughly understood.

The original reference made by that perceptive economist was to the fact Oregon, land of tall timber, was basically an agricultural economy and, quite naturally, the financial welfare of the inhabitants would be tied to the principal crop(s). All the while the hundreds

of the timber industry and their employers and bankers seemed oblivious to such gathering storm clouds as eastern environmentalists and congressmen, all raised on "Smokey The Bear", cowboys and indians and documentaries extolling a pristine "Gods's Country".

Now, the lumber industry was the only real "manufacturing" base the state had--unlike many states there is no great wealth of mineral resources like iron, coal or copper to be developed into huge processing plants, manufacturing and shipping goods all over the country or world. And, consequently, there aren't the secondary industries that supply and service the conglomerates.

Given this commercial desert

and with successive generations springing up and needing/demanding to be nurtured, fed and housed, the crunch was on. It has been for several generations but the realities of diminishing returns (like dwindling old growth timber or salmon runs) were ignored by magnetic leaders and politicians with whom that "cutey-cute media" had such a long love affair, so it is the stage was set for a consultant to derisively term Oregon's economy as "a place where everybody takes in everybody else's laundry."

Specifically, what that means is despite all the ostentatious (and misleading) display from showy condominiums to flashy regional shipping centers (they're not owned by Oregonians), and herds of att-

che case-toting sales persons at the city centers. Nothing Is Happening! Every one dollar earned by a member of the fast declining timber workforce must pass through a score of hands in order to support an ever-poorer circle of dependency. Unlike many states there is no big flow of dollars 'into' Oregon to pay for goods shipped out--not very much.

With so little owned by Oregonians, and with our lottery, pension funds and banks enthusiastically financing more eastern hustlers all the time - and with thousands of spotted owls peeping out each passing day (give us the logs back) -- what does the future hold for any of us, black, white, gray or grizzle!  
See my second article.

## Marine Flyers Ready In Bosnia



There's a new warbird protecting safe havens in war-torn Bosnia-Herzegovina: The Marine Corps F/A-18D.

Eight "Hornets" from Marine Fighter-Attack Squadron (All Weather)-533 based at Beaufort, S.C., arrived at Aviano Air Base, Italy, July 22. The squadron joined the 5th Allied Tactical Air Force conducting Operation Deny Flight, a mission to enforce the no-fly zones over Bosnia

and protect United Nations ground forces guarding safe havens for Muslim civilians.

But while capable of air-to-air combat, the primary function of the F/A-18D is to attack and destroy surface targets, day or night, under all weather conditions.

One Navy official in Europe said the unique Marine aircraft were brought over to provide close air support for United Nations ground troops, not to guard the skies over Bosnia.

The official also said many of the pilots involved in the operation are becoming increasingly frustrated over their role as airborne peacekeepers. Serving aircraft have violated the established no-fly zones about 52 times since April, according to a Pentagon spokesman. But U.N. pilots are under such strict rules of engagement, and cannot fire on violators unless they fire first.

On the ground, the Marine pilots would face similar restriction, the official said. For instance, if one artil-

lery battery fired upon a U.N. ground force, but there were nine other identifiable artillery batteries in the area, pilots would only have the authority to take out the battery that actually did the firing. Similar rules were enforced during the Vietnam War, the official said.

This is the first operational commitment for the "Checkerboard Hawks" and the two-seater aircraft. The squadron began receiving the upgraded Hornet in April. Along with VMFA(AW) 224, also stationed at Beaufort, they are the Corps' only all weather fighter/attack units based on the East Coast.

"We're a little unsure of the lineup over there, but it's a good opportunity to work with NATO forces and be involved in a real operations," said Lt. Col. John Graham, operations officer for Marine Air Group 31, the squadron's parent command. More than 260 pilots, crewmen, cooks, carpenters and military policemen left Beaufort for the deploy-

ment. The squadron is essentially a self-contained unit working out of a "tent city" adjacent to the air base.

Since Aviano is normally a maintenance base, Graham said it lacked many creature comforts.

"We've had to fall in on a semi-bare base, but we've already got eight cooks serving three hot meals a day," Graham said in a phone interview from Beaufort. "It's better than field."

The Marine are living in "hard back" tents that have concrete floors. The tents also have air conditioning and electricity.

Support people from Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-31, Marine Wing Support Squadron-273 and Marine Wing Control Group 28 are keeping the camp and jets running smoothly, Graham said. While the length of the mission is indefinite, the squadron isn't expected home before October.

"Their mood was one of excitement, anticipation and curiosity," Graham said.

## Portland Federal Executive Board 1993 Minority Vendor Of The Year Award

Joseph Pai, President, Business Computer Management, Inc., of Portland, Oregon has been selected to receive the Portland Federal Executive Board's 1993 Minority Vendor of the Year Award, according to Carl R. Culham, Chair, Minority Business Opportunity Committee.

This year the Portland Federal Executive Board is honoring an outstanding minority-owned business whose selection is based on its superior performance and customer service on Federal government procurements under \$25,000 each.

Business Computer Management, Inc. is a nine year old company that provides personal computers, components, and accessories to Federal, state, and local government agencies as well as to major private com-

panies. The firm was nominated for this award by the Bureau of Land Management Oregon State Office for being a reliable and compliant source of technical expertise, providing fair pricing, and for being a valuable team worker in providing service and assistance to the Bureau of Land Management.

Mr. Pai will be honored at the annual Minority Enterprises Development Week luncheon to be held in Portland on October 6, 1993 at the Oregon Convention Center. This event is held to recognize the outstanding achievements and contributions of our nation's minority-owned businesses. Tickets for the luncheon can be obtained by contacting Impact Business Consultants, Inc. at (503) 245-9253.

## Celebrate Diversity

## This Way For Black Empowerment My Letter To Yasir Arafat

By Dr. Lenora Fulani

Last week as Yasir Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and Yitzhak Rabin, the prime minister of Israel, agreed to a peace accord under the approving eyes of President Bill Clinton, I sat down and wrote a letter to Brother Arafat.

On behalf of the independent New Alliance Party which I chair, and of the millions of people in the United States who support the Black-led, multi-racial independent political movement, I extended our congratulations to him and the Palestinian nation at this turning point in their history.

Although the accord signed on September 13 is just a first step, it marks the first time that Israel and its patron, the United States government,

has recognized the legitimacy of Palestinian national aspirations and the PLO as the leadership of the Palestinian people. While the accord doesn't address the status of the refugees, the precise character that self-rule will take, and a host of other life-and-death issues, it is something to build on.

But even as I congratulated Brother Arafat, I also made a demand.

I called upon him, as the leader of the Palestinian people, to publicly acknowledge all of us who have supported the Palestinian struggle for so many decades. All over the world, and especially here in the United States, those who have supported the PLO have been vilified in the press, investigated by the FBI and the ADL, beaten, jailed, even killed. The very

powerful Zionist lobby headquartered in the U.S. saw to it that Arafat, his people, and by association all of us who supported them, were made into demons -- ugly, filthy, vile caricatures of civilized beings.

Now that the power brokers in Washington have decided that it's no longer in their interests to demonize Yasir Arafat, it's very important that he acknowledge and defend those whose friendship has been tested again and again. It is fine for the Palestinian people to be told that they now have "a friend in the White House," but, as I pointed out in my letter, it's just as necessary for the Palestinian people to know that they have had friends in this country all along. Not the fair weather friends who showed up at the White House on September 13

to see and be seen, but their true friends -- American progressives and in particular African Americans -- who have refused to be shamed or bullied into abandoning the Palestinian people.

As I point out in my letter, it's not in the interests of the Palestinian people to forget their friends, nor is it in the interests of the broad masses of the world's people who have not yet overcome (including the millions of under-enfranchised and dispossessed in this country). Our struggles continue.

What I am calling for from Brother Arafat is public recognition of the very high price that we paid and continue to pay for doing the right thing. Even more importantly, I am calling for an immediate end to our demonization. Only Arafat can give

such recognition, and only he can make the demand that the punishment of those of us who have been his friends must stop.

Clearly, we cannot expect Bill Clinton or Yitzhak Rabin to do either. They will not speak out on this issue; they are among the chief spokesmen of the philosophy of "forgive and forget": those who have borne the burden of suffering must forgive those who imposed it, and those who caused it must be allowed to forget what they did. That is the attitude of Washington and Tel Aviv toward the Palestinian dead. That is their attitude toward the millions of Palestinian people who have been forced to live in exile in their own land, to bring up their children as refugees, accustomed to terror and brutality.

In my letter to Arafat I made it clear that I was not, of course, complaining. That the wrath of the powers-that-be in this country has been turned upon me for the 'crime' of supporting the Palestinian cause was to be expected. Nor was I asking for thanks for myself, for my colleagues in the New Alliance Party -- many of whom are Jews -- or for any of those on the American left who have been similarly attacked. Given our principles as internationalists, and as progressives, we have only done what we had to do.

As Yasir Arafat and the PLO set forth on the path of hope, I have simply asked that they not forget the friends who have been with them all along. We still have a long, long way to go.

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## Local Students Complete IPM Assistant Program

A local high school student has recently completed a unique vocational education program through his FFA chapter call IPM Assistants, sponsored jointly by Trece, Inc., Salinas, California, and St. Paul Feed Supply, St. Paul, Oregon.

The program is designed to give FFA members practical farm experience about Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques, while providing farmers with scouting and field monitoring information, according to Bill Lingren, president of Trece. IPM is a comprehensive approach to dealing with pests that use methods that are ecologically and economically effective, Lingren says.

James Benninger, a sophomore at Newberg High School, Newberg, Oregon, completed the summer-long work experience, according to FFA leader Bob Beckner. As an IPM Assistant, Benninger was required to scout fruit trees for destructive insect pests and report his findings to growers and their pest management advisor on a regular basis.

Scouting is done with special insect monitoring systems developed by Trece, Inc., which attract to traps using a synthetic lure call a pheromone. Students count the number of insects and plot the results to show key periods of pest activity.

The scout worked closely with Jim Bernards, with St. Paul Feed Supply, who coordinated the field work for the program and was the lead pest management advisor. "The information helps growers make decisions regarding control programs," Bernards says. "In some cases, growers who normally spray on a regular schedule might skip a spray if scout reports show little pest activity. When control measures are required, the pest data can be used to time sprays more precisely. In either case, the grower benefits from higher effectiveness and lower costs."

"Insect pest monitoring is an essential component of a grower's IPM program," says Bill Lingren with Trece, "and insect pheromone trapping systems are probably the most important tool for detecting and monitoring hidden insect invaders before they reach levels of economic importance. Scouting reports allow growers to make informed decisions based on science, not guesswork. The result is a more effective, environmentally sound pest management program."

In addition to twice-weekly scouting of orchards and groves, IPM Assistants attend a seminar conducted by Trece, Inc. and St. Paul Feed Supply to learn about Integrated Pest Management practices and pest monitoring techniques. They are also provided with study materials, including pest identification guides, field charts and background information on IPM.

Trece Inc. is a manufacturer and international marketer of pheromone-based insect monitoring systems and components for agriculture. The company has initiated IPM Assistant programs in California, Oregon and Washington, with new FFA chapters joining each year. For more information about IPM Assistant, contact Trece, Inc. at 408-758-0204.