

EDITORIAL

The Portland Observer

NATIONAL RAINBOW COALITION

Predicament Of The Young Black Male

BY FRANK E. WATKINS

On Sunday, Jan. 23 the SF Examiner ran a frontpage headline: "Jesse's Son Named In Drug Case" with a sub-headline, "Jonathan Jackson Suspected In Alleged International Heroin Smuggling Ring, court Documents Say." The Examiner also ran a picture of Rev. & Mrs. Jackson and Yusef (the Jackson's 3rd son), wrongly identifying him as Jonathan. On Tuesday, Jan. 25, the SF Chronicle ran a story headlined: "Another Son Of Jesse Jackson Named In Federal Heroin Probe", referring to Jesse Jackson, Jr., the National Field Director of the Rainbow and editor of the JaxFax. Thus, the press "involved" all three sons.

The stories report that a Nigerian national, Pius Ailemen, the son of a former Minister of Transportation of Nigeria, along with 14 others were indicted on January 3, 1994 on charges of smuggling China white heroin into the United States via a network of globetrotting couriers. Mr Ailemen is named as the alleged head of the drug trafficking network. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) described Mr. Ailemen's alleged heroin organization as "the largest volume heroin dealer in the Oakland area," selling their drugs in Chicago, Miami and elsewhere. The DEA had sought and received permission to wire-tap Mr. Ailemen's phone. Mr. Ailemen had represented himself to the Jackson brothers as the owner of the Ailemen Trading Company, doing legitimate business.

With Mr. Ailemen's phone tapped, the DEA recorded separate conversations with Jonathan and Jesse Jr., and Mr. Ailemen, which the DEA identifies as possibly involving "drug-related matters." The eavesdropped conversations were made public last Friday in a U.S. District Court in SF. One affidavit regarding Jonathan states: "There is probable cause to believe that Pius Ailemen...Jonathan [misspelled] Jackson (and others) have

committed, are committing, and will continue to commit heroin smuggling, conspiracy and money laundering." The affidavit records a conversation about "a Lagos price of 9" and "a London price of 11", "cash and carry", with Jonathan at one point advising Mr. Ailemen to call "Killer Mitch", who the DEA infers to be a possible assassin. Jesse Jr.'s recorded conversations reveal discussions about the "cloth", payment of "the thing" to "the tailor" with "the card."

All of these words - oil, 9, 11, cash and carry, Killer Mitch, cloth, the thing, the tailor, and the card - are interpreted by the DEA as possible code words for drugs and drug related activity. They are, in fact, discussions about the price and availability of oil (petroleum), Killer Mitch is a nickname for the family barber of 30 years, and Jesse Jr.'s discussion is about tailoring a suit of clothes.

Jonathan and Jesse Jr. issued statements which read in essence: "We know Mr. Pius Ailemen socially. The family met him during the 1988 campaign and, thus, we have known him for about 6 years. But we know nothing of Mr. Ailemen and any involvement with drugs. In all of our years of knowing Mr. Ailemen, we have never had a conversation about drugs, we have never overheard a conversation by Mr. Ailemen about drugs, we have never seen him use drugs nor have drugs in his presence. We do not use drugs, we have never used drugs, and we are not involved in any way, including any business activity, directly or, to the best of our knowledge, indirectly, involving drugs. We have no business relationship, and have never had any business relationship, and have never had any business relationship, with Mr. Ailemen. As every one knows, we come from a very public family and, therefore, we know many people in this country and around the world, of which Mr. Ailemen is one. We are surprised and devastated to

hear of Mr. Ailemen's alleged involvement in narcotics."

Jonathan and Jesse Jr. are graduates of North Carolina A & T State University with business administration majors. Jonathan is also an MBA graduate of the Northwestern University Kellogg Graduate School of Business, regarded by many as the finest business school in the country. He interned on Wall Street, interned with the biggest brokerage house in Beverly Hills, has his own business, has traveled extensively doing business in Africa and is a clerk at the Chicago Board of Trade. After A & T, Jesse Jr. graduated from the Chicago Theological Seminary (1990), graduated from the University of Illinois School of Law (1993) in Champaign-Urbana, is one of the youngest members of the Democratic National Committee, and currently works for the Rainbow Coalition.

Neither of the Jackson's nor anyone in their family has ever been contacted by any government agency with respect to this matter. The Jackson's have had to respond to press reports only! Rev. Jackson said that he "loves and believes in his children. These boys have played by the rules. They have operated in the arena with the best and the rest. And they have prevailed. I stand with them. I can say with no fear of contradiction that my sons are innocent, and I have absolute confidence and no doubt whatsoever regarding the character and integrity of my sons."

End Note: While the NRC considers the character assassination in the media to be irresponsible, and the Accusations of alleged drug-related activity with regard to Jonathan and Jesse Jr. in a SFDEA affidavit to be totally untrue and absurd - and the part about "Killer Mitch" is even laughable - such defamation of character and smearing of names is certainly no laughing matter and has grave legal and political implications.

Wishing You A Happy, Healthy And Independent New Year!

As 1994 gets underway, I have been thinking very intently about the scene at the Jacob Javits Convention Center in Manhattan on December 18, when I was one of three guest speakers invited to address the audience of 25,000 African Americans who had come to hear Minister Louis Farrakhan deliver an urgent appeal to "Stop the Killing."

That scene - 25,000 Black people in the audience, an independent Black woman on the stage with Minister Farrakhan and the Reverend Al Sharpton (who had also been invited to address the crowd beforehand), and not even one Black elected official in sight - said everything there is to say about why the African American electorate must go independent...or continue to face the consequences of being dependent on professional politicians whose allegiance is not to us.

Look back to 1993 and you will see what some of those consequences are: the continuing escalation of the violence crisis in the Black community, despite the fact that there are solutions to the crisis; the ongoing political crisis in Haiti, despite the promise of the Clinton administration to ensure that the democratically elected president of Haiti, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, would be restored to power; and the replacement of Black mayors with white reactionaries in several large cities, including Los Angeles, Philadelphia and New York, where the incumbent, David Dinkins, was defeated despite the fact that reg-

istered Democrats outnumber registered Republicans in the city by five to one.

Black Democrats won't stand up for our people if they believe that to do so would get them in trouble with the corporate powers-that-be and thereby jeopardize their political careers.

A case in point is the behavior of New York's Black Democrats on December 18. How could it be that not one of these Black elected officials thought it necessary, or possible, to attend a major address on the subject of violence by one of this country's leading Black religious figures? The shocking answer is that the city's Black Democrats - elected by thousands, in some cases tens of thousands, of people - aren't allowed to go where they need to go on behalf of the people who elected them. Because while Black elected officials have power, that power is given to them by the permanent government (the right-wing Republicans and "liberal" Democrats who, in tandem, rule New York on behalf of the Zionist-influenced corporate elite which owns the city's economy). And Louis Farrakhan is not on the Zionists' official list of "legitimate," "responsible" Black leaders. (That's because he doesn't kowtow to them.) So no Black Democrat can go to him, despite the fact that the Minister knows a good deal about how to stop the killing. If you violate the rules which define who is a "good" Black, you get called an "anti-Semite" - this is the pseudo-religious stick with which the

Zionists beat up on the competition. New York's Black elected officials are terrified of this weapon, and act accordingly.

It is their "the people be damned" attitude that explains why the Black community doesn't trust Black elected officials, despite the fact that they vote for them. When Black people want real help, they turn to other leaders - the ones who aren't in the back pockets of the corporate powers-that-be. The ones who don't kowtow to the Zionists. The ones who are outspoken enough to have gotten ourselves in trouble with the permanent government. We're not part of the existing power arrangements - which is why Black people do trust us.

I am one of the Black leaders the community trusts. I'm also one of the Zionist corporatists regard as dangerous, because of my practical commitment to a political solution to the problems the community confronts; that political solution is the break-up of Democratic and Republican Party control and the creation of a new national independent political party which stands first and foremost for democracy and genuine (not politically expedient and repressive) solutions to the social and economic ill affecting all Americans - Black, Latino and white.

1994 will, in my opinion, bring new breakthroughs and growth in our fight for democracy, development and justice. I wish all my sisters and brothers a very happy, healthy and independent new year.

perspectives

The Education Establishment, II

BY PROFESSOR MCKINLEY BURT

At the close of last week's article, I made reference to very pertinent comments by two teachers at Humboldt Elementary School in North Portland: "These two professionals get at an important element of the problem which is a need for a special nurturing of children economically and demographically handicapped."

Fifth-grade teacher Malaika Askan Tamu, whose dedication to the profession I've admired for twenty years, had the following comment to highlight her frustrations, "I set the highest of expectations for all students, promptly calling their parents whenever they do not do their homework". Some have been brought to the point of successful remediation of academic or economic handicaps only to be lost to a family tragedy, "eviction".

Annie Westfall, a fourth-grade teacher at the same school, observes, "many poor and minority children have difficulty in school because they are expected to compete with children the same age who have boarder 'experiences'. They are behind from the start and 'pushed ahead' before they are ready...if we keep moving them up they are going to get even more lost."

A long-time friend of mine whose daughter has two children enrolled at Humboldt thinks that different teachers see the same problems and the very same remedies from a different vantage point or experiential context. Westfall believes (hopefully) the School Reform Act of 1991 will solve the problem because "The act not only sets high standards for all children, but also advocates flexible, individualized schools that will allow students to meet those standards at their own paces... Give them a fair chance."

Surely, "hope doth spring eternal from the hearts of the naive", to paraphrase somebody. I hope that appraisal is not applicable to Bill Graves of the Oregonian staff who wrote the Jan. 23 article from which I quote. I cannot tell whether the latter half of the following opinion is attributed to Westfall, "I believe the states 1991 school reform act will solve this problem, as do most school officials and minority leaders". Certainly, most of the minorities I know, leaders or not, do not have such grand expectations. Joyce Harris, a member of the Black United Fronts' Education Committee, says, "We keep hearing what we can't do!"

Both Harris and Malaika, the teacher at Humboldt, have had extensive and successful experience at teaching minority children in an alternative school setting, and it has been my good fortune over the years to have been invited by both to make special presentations to their students on minority contributions in mathematics and inventions. I get very few calls these days (none from 'black' schools) as the school district pleads its case of increasing poverty. Which makes me wonder how teacher Westfall supposes the system is going to fund all those marvelous promises of the 1991 School Reform, Act.

Fortunately, for the continued implementation of the Science and mathematics lesson plans and curriculums I've been designing for the past 30 years, I was able to fall back on my industry background and resources. For instance, in rejoining the "Association of Oregon Industries" last year, I "rediscovered" scores of contacts or their business successors who were quite willing to lend a hand in order to demonstrate a commitment to a vested interest in improving Oregon's education system in a 'real-time' context. Some of these families I've known for forty years.

Next Week: Resources and what to do with them. Don't let the inept and the hustler block out your contributions.

Civil Rights Journal Celebrating Black History

BY BERNICE POWELL JACKSON

February is a very important time of the year for African Americans. It is Black History Month, a time set aside for lifting up and celebrating the contributions of African Americans to this country's rich and varied history.

Began as Negro History Week nearly 70 years ago by Dr. Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in Washington, D.C., it has evolved into a month-long period of study and focus. But for too many Americans, Black History Month and the many contributions of African Americans are still unknown.

Often we concentrate on those familiar names in African American history - names like W.E.B. DuBois, Booker T. Washington, Harriet Tubman and Mary McLeod Bethune. But there are thousands of others who have made history as well, often overcoming nearly insurmountable odds created by racism and sexism.

There are hundreds of African American inventors who have made our lives better and easier to live. Garrett Morgan invented the gas mask and the traffic light in the early decades of this century. In 1881, Lewis Latimer invented the first incandescent electric light bulb with a carbon filament and later supervised the installation of electric lights in the cities of Philadelphia, New York, Montreal and London. African American women were inventors also -- Sarah Goode invented the ironing board and Sarah Goode invented the folding cabinet bed, both in the late 1800's

There are African American physicians who have made enormous contributions to the life of our country. Charles Drew invented a technique which separated blood plasma and saved thousands of lives in World War II. James Derham, the first African American physician, was born a slave in 1862 and, after purchasing his own freedom, became one of the outstanding doctors in New Orleans. Susan McKinney became the first African American woman physician in the late 1800's and served the Brooklyn, New York community for 20 years before moving to Ohio.

Despite the myth that African Americans have never owned businesses, there are African Americans who built significant businesses. Maggie Walker built the Consolidated Bank and Trust Company in Virginia and West Virginia. Barney Ford became a prosperous hotel owner in Denver and Cheyenne during the 1860's, while at the same time George T. Downing was a Rhode island caterer and hotel owner who ultimately managed the House of Representatives restaurant in Washington, D.C. Paul Cuffee was a wealthy ship builder in the late 1700's. There is a rich legacy left by these business owners and thousands of others like them.

Indeed, African Americans have made enormous contributions to the fields of science, the arts, sports, religion, education ever since we first arrived on these shores. But, in the words of Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr., executive director of the NAACP, "the best way to celebrate black history is to make some history yourself." And

today there are thousands of African Americans across this country doing just that.

There is Rachel Robinson, chairperson of the Jackie Robinson Foundation and widow of the famous history-making baseball player. She is working to provide college scholarships and mentoring programs for young people all over the country, and thereby furthering her own and her husband's vision for a better tomorrow for our youth.

There is Rahim Jenkins, executive director of the Righteous Men's Commission, a people's organization in Washington, D.C. which is working with gang members and planning a gang summit as their way of celebrating Black History Month.

There is Rev. Margaret Hairston of Black Community Solutions in Columbus, Ohio, a program she founded and designed to reduce African American youth and families from the court system and assist them through counseling, tutoring, mentoring and a generous dose of love.

There is Raymond Reid in Cleveland, Ohio who on his own initiative, during his own time, using his own money, began a community basketball team which works with young African American men and teaches them not only the rules of the game, but the rules of life.

These are my heroes and as we celebrate African American History Month I not only give thanks for those who have given so much in the past, but to those who make their own African American history today.



By
Professor
McKinley
Burt

Letter To The Editor

Send your letters to the Editor to:
Editor, PO Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208

Dear Editor,

To all taxpayers who are tired of supporting an ever growing bureaucracy with higher and higher taxes, we are in the final months of getting the 125,000 signatures needed to put the 2% Equal Tax Measure on the ballot next fall.

If the 2% Equal Tax passes in November, you would pay 2 cents out of every dollar you spend but never again would you pay state income taxes, property taxes, license fees, registration fees or any other state tax. YOU would be in control of your money. Never again would you file a state tax form, or have state taxes deducted from your paycheck. The assessors offices and

tax courts would be closed, saving taxpayers 45 million dollars a year.

Businesses would move to Oregon when they discover they would have only on state tax to deal with - The 3% Equal Tax. Also, tourist, foreigners, drug dealers and tax cheaters would pay their fair share along with the rest of us.

Figure out how much you paid last year in state income taxes, property taxes, gasoline taxes (approx. 23 cents on every gallon purchased), license fees, vehicle registrations, then compare it with what you would pay at 20-cents on every dollar spent. Send \$20,000 in one year - your taxes would be \$800.

This tax works because every-

one pays a little, - no one is overburdened because it is fair, and you are in control of your money. As it stands now, if you don't come up with your property taxes every year... you could lose your home... You have no control over escalating property taxes - you pay or else!

If you need more information and would like to help get this on the ballot write to: Direct Legislation League, P.O. Box 15023, Portland, Oregon 97215 or call 503-239-5949. In Roseburg area call Nora LeBeau at 679-4427.

Sincerely,
Janette Kirkland
Glendale, Oregon 97442