

EDITORIAL

perspectives

Immigration: Race, Money And Power, I

Occasionally, I have written her about the impact of American immigration policy on both the economic and social welfare of African Americans.

But, now, this issue has become a rather consistent theme in discussions held by black people at many levels. The concern has been



By
Professor
Mckinley
Burt

intensified by the great amount of media attention paid to "asylum requests" from countries whose inhabitants for the most part were not in the original (European) masses that fled to America.

ASYLUM APPLICANTS

The top 25 nationalities of asylum applicants accounted for 88 percent of the 150,386 claims filed in fiscal 1993. The countries and the number of applicants:

1. Guatemala... 34,681
2. El Salvador... 15,362
3. China... 14,354
4. Haiti... 11,377
5. Mexico... 6,192
6. India... 5,902
7. Pakistan... 4,653
8. Nicaragua... 4,286
9. Philippines... 4,107
10. Bangladesh... 3,759
11. Russia... 3,427
12. Peru... 3,244
13. Cuba... 3,010
14. Honduras... 2,836
15. Yugoslavia... 2,425
16. Nigeria... 1,993
17. Romania... 1,591
18. Ghana... 1,572
19. Ethiopia... 1,383
20. Colombia... 1,315
21. Liberia... 1,192
22. Poland... 1,059
23. Ukraine... 1,027
24. Armenia... 938
25. Syria... 872

Many blacks feel that their concern is well taken, insisting that they have discerned a definite pattern to American immigration policy since a formal bureau was set up almost 200 years ago. Whereas heretofore, African American with varying degrees of success, have prepared themselves to deal with the inequities that flow from relationships with the descendants of those original European masses, they do not know about these new onslaughts.

It is seen that these "Asylum People" will—as in the case of past immigrant minorities—be placed in an economic hegemony over blacks, as has happened most recently with a number of Asian ethnics. This is in respect to housing and commercial real estate availability (location! location! location!), business opportunities and franchises which are

not limited to the 'Negro variety' of minor scale food service, janitorial enterprises and car washes. Blacks have developed skills, technology and experiences that have also equipped them to operate at higher levels—but it seems impossible to convince either banks or prospective landlords of that fact (Government Agencies?).

So it is not just Governor Chiles of Florida who feels that he has legitimate concerns, but millions of blacks under the economic pressures of massive layoffs we've described the past few weeks. They are suspicious and filled with trepidation when they become aware of the following activity by the federal government (Minority Business Enterprise Magazine).

The U.S. Office Of Management and budget (OMB) is reviewing the racial and ethnic categories used by federal agencies for government-wide record keeping and statistical data collection. The review is the result of increasing criticism that the standards no longer truly reflect the U.S. population's diversity since they were first issued 17 years ago.

While the most commonly known use of racial and ethnic categories is census reporting, the categories are also used for evaluating public and private sector affirmative action plans, monitoring minorities' access to home mortgage loans, enforcing the Equal Credit Opportunity Act and assisting firms under minority business development programs.

Proposed changes include:

- Adding a "multi-racial" category so that respondents would not be forced to deny part of their heritage by having to choose a single category;
- Adding an "other" category for those individuals with multiracial backgrounds and those who want the option of specifically stating a unique identification;
- Providing an open-ended question to solicit information on race and ethnicity, or combining concepts of race, ethnicity and ancestry;
- Changing the category for Black to African American;
- Including Native Hawaiians as a separate category or as part of Native American rather than as part of the Asian or Pacific Islander categories;
- Including Hispanic as a racial designation rather than as a separate ethnic category; and Adding a "Middle Easterner" category to the list of ethnic designations.

Continued next week.

It was great to see the news coverage on the demonstration by the Black Monday Committee, originally conceived by Drummer and Dreamers, a human rights group opposed to the death penalty.

Hundreds of neighborhood folks on the corner of Northeast Killingsworth and Martin Luther King Blvd. leaped at the chance to

I am writing to express my concern about capital punishment, to let you know what the Black Monday Committee is doing to break the death penalty myth and to ask for your help.

Capital punishment does not deter crime. In fact, the death penalty adds to the cycle of violence many communities face. The death penalty discriminates against people of color and the poor. The state has taken many innocent lives in the name of its citizens and continues to spend over three times the cost of a life sentence seeking a death sentence. However, many abolitionists believe the stron-

The list is long. Amy Fisher, Tonya Harding, Jim Bakker, Joey Buttufo, Phil Keating, The Menendez brothers, Jeffery Dahmer, (and many more that at present escape my mind) -

- could it be that these are all innocent white people, castigated publicly by the media and paraded on television and in the newspapers with one purpose in mind: so people can "continue to witness the humiliation of another successful member of the" caucasian community?

Dr. Montgomery, your anger and frustration was quite evident in your recent column, "The Saga of O.J. Simpson" which appeared in The Portland Observer. As I read it I thought, this man is hurting but his thinking is way off base. It's obvious that the tragedy of O.J. Simpson finds himself involved in is a shock and a disappointment to you, and that you are frustrated and hurt - but what you don't understand is - millions of caucasians are feeling the same way. Don't you understand that the reason O.J. is getting all of this incredible attention from the average person is not that he is black for God's sake,

demonstrate their opposition to the crime bill, with its increased death penalties, mandatory minimums and "3 strikes, you're out" measures aimed directly at African Americans, other people of color, the poor, immigrants and the disenfranchised.

Radical Women was surprised that an Oregonian article stated the demonstration was only against the death penalty. As one of the endorsers of the demonstration, we want to clarify any

misconceptions. This demonstration was against the entire crime bill. The charade that Congress thinks has fooled the country, has fooled no one. Republicans and Democrats pretend to fight while uniting to pass a true porker of a bill. Pork for construction companies to build prisons and for cities to hire more police. The Republicans claim that social service programs are pork. They are not. This billion dollar

extravaganza of a bill, that fleeces the public, is. It will not make our city streets one bit safer, but more dangerous, because it wastes our money that is needed for social programs.

We say terminate the crime bill and the death penalty. Revive hope through a just distribution of wealth and opportunity.

Jordana Sardo; Radical Women

The Death Penalty Myth

gest argument is a moral one: to kill is wrong. Whether it be by the state or a citizen, to kill is wrong.

"Black August" is acknowledged as a month when great strides and sacrifices were made by the African American community. Appropriately, we have decided to kick off our project the last Monday of every month until Black Monday 1995. Abolitionists from all walks of life and various peace and justice organizations are invited to gather, walk the streets and share the facts of the death penalty with our neighbors.

We will meet at 10 a.m. at the Wings of Love, 101 N. Killingsworth. From there we will be heading into the inner city (North and Northeast)

armed with cellular phones, literature and energy. We will be offering people the opportunity to call congress and legislative representatives expressing concern about the obvious trend in leadership not to deal with the true roots of crime, the crime bill is but one example.

Oregon is surrounded by active death penalty states: California, Washington and Idaho. Oregon currently has 18 men on death row. We must not wait for another death sentence or an execution. Those opposed to capital punishment must unite in a solid coalition with a commitment to fight against the death penalty until its abolition. The Black Monday project is a wonderful way

to become involved. Please join us.

We need endorsements from organizations communities and groups you are involved in. We need contributions of money, time and spirit. The smallest donation would be very much appreciated. We are a grassroots project inspired by frustration, hope and energy. For more information contact Sheldah Holmes at 232-8895. Donations should be sent to 2126 S.E. Brooklyn St., Portland, OR 97202. Sincerely, Sheldah Holmes, student area coordinator, Amnesty International, Northern Oregon Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, steering committee of Portland Peaceworks.

In Response To Dr. Ernesto Montgomery

but that he is one of the most loved and adored Americans in the land? When he was taking the long drive and it was reported that he had a gun to his head, I cried and silently begged him not to do it. "Please OJ, don't do that, no matter what."

I am not a sports follower at all, but even I, a caucasian female knows who O.J. Simpson is. And by the way, this may come as a surprise to you, but my society was not successful if it's goal was to teach me that because I am white, I am therefore inherently superior to this incredible man or any black man and I don't think you can honestly state that you know Nicole Simpson felt that way either. That is just something your culture has taught you to assume about us. But I am not inferior either because I am female and of course would feel "the greatest humiliation of being powerless under" any man, regardless of his race or origins.

Because of your convictions it may be hard for you to accept this too: it is because everyone has always had respect for him, because he is a beautiful man and a caring human being whose closest friends had never seen a negative side to him, because he was so well known and

loved all over America, that OJ Simpson's case drew our attention like a magnet, not because he is black!

I hope the courts find him innocent, both for his sake and his children's sake.

You can certainly be angry at the mass media who daily ruin peoples lives with their rumor-mongering and biased reporting. I am filled with rage everyday at the Rush Limbaughs and the Jerry Falwells and Pat Buchanans and the George Willis who slander and lie and make President Clinton's life pure hell, but who can I put the blame on besides those individuals who are doing the bashing? All America? And was Tonya Harding innocent and simply persecuted by the media? Was all that attention to her case simply jealous men trying to bring down another successful white woman?

Dr. Montgomery, you can be guilty of biased reporting yourself when you write, "as American moves to destroy a former African American Football star," a statement which includes all white Americans in this plot, poisoning the minds of your readers against all of us who do not share your skin color, accusing us all of taking joy in this beloved man's

downfall. Your statements paint a picture for those who read them of a reality that is far from the truth. Please do not use the emotion of this tragedy to create more anger and hate. As an individual who lives in a mixed community, I do not want to see a race war because history shows that, just as there is no such thing as an absolutely "innocent righteous people," there is no winner in a civil war, only more pain and loss. Think of Ireland and of course, Rwanda.

Another newspaper article recently quoted Hugh Price, new president of the National Urban League who said: "We must not let ourselves fall into the paranoid trap of thinking that racism accounts for all that plagues us. ...Let's not wallow forever in real or perceived grievances lest we become Bosnia some day." Mr. Price suggested we encouraged racial harmony and I, for one, heard my own hopes expressed through him and I am eager for any opportunity to help that cause, regardless of what injustices occurred before I even arrived on the planet.

P. Allison, Neighbor of Northeast Portland

Oregon's Judicial System, Direct Cause Of Homelessness

BY R. PITTS

If everything is black and white and no in between (no gray areas) there would be no need for intelligent reasoning from the courts.

It is obvious Oregon has judges which exercise no ethics, morals, or intelligent reasoning in their decision making.

Everything written on a piece of paper in black and white is not law because it is on a sheet of paper, submitted by a judge or an attorney. Rulings made in court can justifiably be reversed. Legal decisions when made under inappropriate circumstances should not be considered etched in stone, cause hardship, nor contribute to the fall of individuals. Court rulings cannot justifiably be made and should not be based on parts or bits and pieces of the truth. Issues on appeal should not be ruled on in other courts based on issues and facts to be determined.

If the law of the land is as cut and dry as two or more of the judges sitting on the bench have ruled, there is absolutely no need for judges, consequently, all the state does is pay judges an astronomical salary to read a piece of paper handed down from another judge and apply law based

on that same paper whether right or wrong. As a result of such actions, no discretion or reasoning is applied based on circumstances, verbal exchange of information or necessary documentation needed to make a fair, just and equitable decision.

Oregon presently has judges on the bench making crucial rulings concerning the lives of people rendering them helpless and homeless. They blatantly disregard important facts, and fail to ask for opposing parties documentation of statements and rule on cases without verification of important facts and all pertinent data. Judges should request, collect, and review all information; apply wisdom, discretion, and be knowledgeable of law to settle disputes according to the law. How can judges make rulings without having reviewed and heard case law from each side before ruling on a case? Oregon even has judges applying inappropriate case law as sample cases for ruling.

Current statistics show an alarming percentage of domestic violence increase with focus on a tremendous number of women and children in facilities for battered women or homeless shelters. These people's lives have literally been at the mercy of the court to no apparent avail.

Judges must possess wisdom and

exercise such insight from an objective perspective of both sides, not just one side. The law should not be applied according to which attorney the judge admires the most, befriend, play tennis, racquetball, golf, chess, sip coffee with, or any conceivable form of association which can cloud a judge's opinion.

In addition the law must not be interpreted according to which party files first, nor which attorney the judge has no personality conflict; which is a quality a particular Oregon judges lack. This lack of quality is an important factor in being a judge as well as the selection of judges and warrants state investigation.

Invariable there is a perpetrator of all desirable and undesirable behavior. In every conflict there is always a person, group, city, nation, or country which act seemingly and unseemingly. The unseemingly behavior is usually to the point of abnormality; causing havoc in the home or designated area of conflict creating an undesirable atmosphere. Oregon judges are exemplifying unseemingly behavior in court. Unseemingly behavior may be viewed on a serious note as corrupt government.

Just as a criminal (taking the livelihood of others) commits a crime of robbery, murder, rape, etc. and receive statutory punishment; so does

a man or woman who commit an unforgivable act of destroying a home and family based on vows made between man and woman in the eyesight of God, not the state of Oregon.

Divorce and domestic violence being among the greatest contributing factor to inducing homelessness and the breakdown of family structure, certainly warrants the selection of qualified judges.

Decisions governing individual's lives must undoubtedly be decisions that protect the people. A government established by the people and for the people should be structured to benefit the people. I am currently aware of at least two judges making rulings threatening the well being of women and children in particular, calling them personal problems.

Persons encountering and witnessing obvious displays of irresponsible actions on the part of Oregon's judiciary representatives, please contact the Christian Homeless Corporation of America at (503) 249-0649. Correspondence should be directed to: 1552 N. Killingsworth, Portland, OR 97217. All persons responding to this request please be prepared to provide documentation to verify your complaint upon request.

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