

# EDITORIAL

Jean Bertrand Aristide's face is not a face to forget: Hollow-cheeked, goggle-eyed, wide-mouthed. The foreign journalists call him diminutive, bespectacled. It is hard to believe that this small person who takes up virtually no room at all, can bring thousands of people to their feet and lead Port-au-Prince's slums with a wave of his hand.

As one of the few prominent people in Port-au-Prince who had stuck their necks out in Jean-Claude's waning days, publicly expressing the growing discontent and disgust with Duvalierism, Aristide helped to create in the capital the same climate of unrest and protest that already existed in the countryside, and that made the dictator's departure necessary. By the end of Jean-Claude's days, Aristide was the most visible of many young progressive priests and nuns who had been organizing peasants and slum-dwellers since the late 1970s.

Aristide preached a brand of liberation theology that pleased no one except his extended congregation: the poor in the slums, the peasants who heard him on Radio Haiti-Inter and Radio Soleil, a scattering of young jobless lower middle class youths with no future in the country, a few liberals among the Haitian bourgeoisie, and the exile community.

He had all the right enemies. The army hated him, because he mentioned colonels and sergeants and lieutenants by name in his sermons

## NATIONAL RAINBOW COALITION

### Our Current Concerns

and excoriated them for the abuses they committed against the people in their regions. The American Embassy hated him because he held the United States and its economic system responsible for much of Haiti's economic woe, and thus for the misery of her people, his congregation. The church hierarchy feared him because he did not often miss a chance to include them on his list of enemies of the people, and they were jealous of him too, for the loyal following he had attracted and for the attention he received from foreign journalists. The very wealthy few in Haiti despised him also, because he accused them of betraying their countrymen and stated boldly that the system by which they enriched themselves was corrupt and criminal and an offense against their fellow Haitians. He frightened them all with the violent honesty of his sermons. And the worst part was that he had a reputation for being Haiti's foremost biblical scholar, and was always ready with a quote from the gospels to support his message. His targets did not like to hear

Christ quoted against them.

Aristide's message was doubly frightening, because try as they might, his enemies could not properly accuse him of preaching communism. He gave sermons in which he lauded the sanctity of private property. "The peasant's land," he said, "the land that he and his family have worked for generations, that is his private property, no one else has the right to take it. The shopkeeper's little store, that he bought fair and square with his little savings, and from which he makes a decent income, that is his private property. But the class of landowners and the bourgeoisie who live off the corrupt system we have in Haiti, who do nothing, who give nothing back to the country, who steal what little wealth we have to put it into banks in foreign countries, their private property is the property of the peasants. Their private property is Haitian property, it does not belong to them."

Like other liberation theologians in Latin America, who use Jesus' teachings to raise the political con-

sciousness of the poor, Aristide tried to make connections between the struggle of the Haitian people for freedom and what liberation theologians see as the struggle of Jesus for the liberation of Jerusalem.

"What weds the movement within the church to the movement within Haitian society as a whole," he said, "is liberation theology, which has filtered into the youth of our country, which invigorates them, which purifies their blood, which teaches these youths that either you are a Christian or you are not. And if you are a Christian, you cannot allow what you are seeing to happen without saying something, because if you say nothing, you will be sinning by your silence. You will be sinning by your complicity. So in order to avoid that sin, which is a mortal sin, we refuse to accept what is happening. We cast off corruption."

"If you're a Christian, you cannot accept to continue the Macoute corruption in this country. Well, then, you are obliged to take historic risks. You are obliged to participate in this historic movement of liberation theology. In other words, the resurrection of an entire people is occurring right now. It is liberation theology that is lifting our children up against a corrupt generation, against a mentality of the Church and the society which see corruption as the comfortable norm, and which one cannot stomach if one is truly a Christian. It is the history of the Jews and Jesus Christ that we ourselves as Christians are living through now. We have become the subjects of our own history."

## THIS WAY FOR BLACK EMPOWERMENT Let's Develop!

BY DR. LENORA FULANI

As human beings, all of us have the opportunity millions of times a day to decide how we want to live, to choose who we want to be, to create our lives rather than to act out the limited and limiting roles that we've been taught to play. In fact, it's our unique capacity to do this - to grow, "to go beyond ourselves," to develop - which makes us human.

Moreover, development can be reinitiated at any age and any stage in life. This is the extraordinary discovery made by Dr. Fred Newman, my political mentor and very dear friend, who has been a practicing therapist for the last 25 years. In helping thousands of people from all walks of life to transform their lives, Dr. Newman has discovered that human beings

(unlike any other creature) can go on developing up until the moment that we're no longer alive. He has recently written a book called Let's Develop! A Guide to Continuous Personal Growth, which shows you to live your life as an ongoing exercise in development.

Now to say that all human beings have an unlimited capacity for development is a direct challenge to traditional psychology, which teaches us that development is something which takes place only in the first few years of childhood. Supposedly, we're born with something called an "I.Q." which limits how much we can learn. Supposedly, we quickly acquire a "personality" (based on some combination of heredity and early childhood experience), which limits what we can do socially and emotionally.

Just think of the dozens of labels that get thrown around in ordinary conversation: This child is "a troublemaker." That one is "a Mama's boy." That one is "just like his Daddy." And just think of all those pseudo-scientific labels that children get stuck with: borderline I.Q.; hyperactive; underachiever; learning disabled; developmentally delayed. Even positive labels are used to put kids in boxes: a little lady; smart as a whip; good as gold; a flirt; a tease; a brain.

The labeling business continues, of course, into adult life: "This person is an alcoholic." That one is a "compulsive eater." Someone else a "co-dependent" or "addicted to." Not only do these labels have no scientific validity, they often do profound harm by blaming and punishing people and at the same time denying that,

as human beings, they are responsible for the life choices they've made. They keep us all in boxes, in categories, convinced that we can't change.

Are psychological labels good for anything? Well, they help to make enormous profits for the addictions industry, the dieting business, and big-time dealers of drugs (legal and illegal). But they are anti-developmental through and through; they serve to perpetuate the myths that keep millions of people in their places, feeling that they're stuck in their lives, going through the motions, doomed to go on acting out their hand-me-down roles in what seems like a bad play.

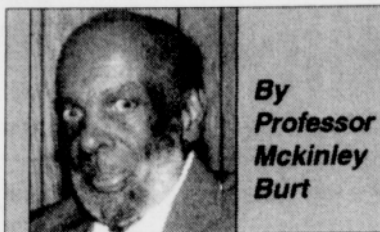
Let's Develop! is a practical guide to transforming your life. You can open this book and learn how to live your life as an ongoing exercise in development.

## perspectives What Happened To South Africa?

BY PROF. MCKINLEY BURT

We would have thought that the daily media would be still wringing every drop of acclaim and solicitude which could be enacted from the 'Second Emancipation'. And we've yet to hear from the high-profile blacks from America who danced the night away there in the 'old country', promising massive economic imports of finance and knowhow. Perhaps they were part of the massive entertainment.

Now, we are accustomed to the gigantic media circuses that seize upon emotional and topical issues,



By  
Professor  
McKinley  
Burt

'riding the white horse' until it is felt that advertisers would sooner place their money on fresh steeds. There will always be new plays and actors waiting in the wings: A Somalia, Haiti or O.J. Simpson--or even a re-run of Kuwait. The public is forever saturated, manipulated or exploited; often just bored.

It was only a few months ago that I provided a deeper background study of the South African tragedy.

I drew heavily upon the massive book on this bloody land written by Robert I. Rotberg, Academic Vice-President for Arts, Sciences and Technology; The Founder: Cecil Rhodes And The Pursuit of Power" (Oxford U. Press, 1988, 800p.p.). I quoted from text by this officer of Tufts University because it has proven to be factual and unemotional and, as indicated, the author is of a scientific background.

We learned of the centuries-old struggle between the European imperialist powers to control the mineral and agricultural riches of "Greater South Africa--and the fact that such an entrenched financial infrastructure with tentacles reaching into the commercial capitals of all the world could not be dismantled by either words or civil laws. For example we see that the United States early on forced the United Nations to exempt ten key minerals from their al-

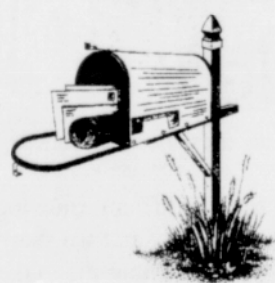
leged sanctions against South Africa. These materials, of course, were those essential to the manufacture of the special alloys for supersonic aircraft, nuclear bombs and space vehicles.

In fact, that 'Wah Chang' exotic metals plant at Albany Oregon has always been a frequent receiver and shipper of minerals on the Dept. of Commerce and State Department forbidden lists. But as with their environmental violations they are always left off the hook with a nominal fine, if any.

Beginning on page 81 of "Africa: an International Business, Economic & Political Magazine", is a revealing article, "Africa's Mineral Potential" (March, 1978. There is not only a general essay approach in a special section ("The Economics of Mineral Exploitation"), but an exhaustive country-by-country inventory of trillions and trillions of dollars in "non-renewable resources" of the African people--and details of which American and European combines control this wealth.

Perhaps those naive African Americans who danced the night away at Nelson Mandela's presidential inauguration actually believed they would be allowed to own corporations that would sit astride control strategic pipelines of wealth and material flowing between nations--the African monies and materials that supported two great World Wars, and which will finance the infrastructure of the next century and beyond. Or perhaps the blacks were not so naive after all; perhaps they just wanted to 'be on stage'.

In any case, we haven't seen the development of a commercial culture here at home in America, let alone the cooperation and commitment it would take to launch viable overseas ventures. Who was it that said "charity begins at home?" There are other ramifications to this exploitative situation. 'Old Massa' always looks ahead, next week, "Exporting Apartheid Across The Atlantic (to South Africa).



## Letter To The Editor

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

### Post Office Indifference To Minorities

I am an employee for the U.S. Postal Service in Portland and a member of the American Postal Workers Union.

From the start of my employment, I couldn't help notice the small number of blacks that employed at the Main Office at 715 N.W. Hoyt. Why was and is there such a small number of minorities (blacks)? The reply to this question has yet to be answered. Does this low number result in any difficulties in the areas of promotions, training and treatment of minority postal workers?

I cannot answer the second question objectively, because I work there, but if asked I would respond with a resounding yes! I'll let you try.

An incident happened at the main office on Sept. 30. I was approached by a black person who asked if I was the Equal Employment and Opportunity Representative for the union and said he had something to show me.

"There is a Confederate flag put up in the area where I work and I feel intimidated by it," he said.

I immediately informed two supervisors of the situation and they quickly removed the crossed stars

and bars from the area.

I also informed them, that I would appreciate it if they would post on the bulletin board that this type of activity will not be tolerated in the work place and also mention it during the weekly stand up talks. I was assured that this would happen.

The following week I checked the bulletin boards to see if there were any such notices, there wasn't. During the stand up talk, I waited for management to respond. There was no mention of the flag incident.

As usual, at the end of the stand up talk, the supervisor asked if there was anything else someone wanted to say? I stepped forward and said, "yes." Immediately there were growls and moans from my co-workers. I asked to see those that made such sounds after the meeting. I started by speech by saying, "As an American Negro, myself and another, were offended by the presence of a Confederate flag being displayed in the post office, but what's more disturbing is the nonobservance attitude of management or respond to the requests, and I wonder what would be their response if it was a swastika or an Oregon Citizens Alliance poster put up in the work place?"

I went on to say, "I have defended individuals rights to free speech before and will continue, but this type of act should not be allowed in the work place."

As the talk broke up I was asked, "What do you have against the ---?" Somewhat shocked by the question, my reply was "nothing!" I asked myself what did I say that would give anyone the indication that I harbored ill feeling towards the opinions of ---ackers?

In my address, my intent in referring to the swastika and OCA was to show that in the hot headline issues in this area, I bet management's response would be more sensitive to requests in announcing a condemnation of such acts.

Observing the way others reacted to what was said, introduces another question. Do my co-workers hold this backlash effect that management has displayed?

To find the answer we need only to look at the post office management's response to the Confederate flag incident. Which seems to say, since it only affects the minorities (definition: small and insufficient number) there is no need to address it. Or maybe my co-workers misun-

derstood my intentions, after all I too am only human. But the fact that management's attitude regarding the incident can't be overlooked and the message that this oversight sends to my fellow workers does have some effect on their perception of others in the workforce.

This brings us back to the questions I posed regarding opportunities for minorities at the main post office. Let's take note or management's attitude to the flag incident. It says a lot about the management culture at the main office and provides a grim but true picture of barriers that remain so deeply rooted in our thoughts and perceptions of others. In order to overcome these archaic social attitudes, a more congregated effort by all is needed to ensure the eradication of them.

I hope there are other postal employees at the main office that share in the beliefs that the rights to be respected and afforded equal opportunities in the post office are for all, regardless of management's ostrich approach taken on the flag incident.

-Otis Burchfield

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