

# What Is Acting Black? Part II

BY NYEWUSI ASKARI

Thank you Readers! Your response to last week's article, "What is acting Black?" was right on the money! I received a number of calls 'n' questions which prompted me to compose Part II. Most of the calls came from parents of bi-racial teenagers. So, I will attempt to address some of their concerns and come back next week with some followups to some other questions that were asked. Also, I will continue to ease in some popular Black speech, since many of you seem to think that's one of my trademarks.

## BLACK IS TO DA BONE

Let it be understood that African Americans have their own spiritual, scientific, and cultural understanding of genetics. Most understand where our ancestral gene pool originated, as well as why and how it got to America.

In black ancestral language, the terms "We are of the same blood" "Black to da bone" "Blood is thicker than water" "Black is forever" and "You may know how I feel but you can never know what it means to be black" are all references to the liquid Melanin - the dark pigment found in our skin, retina and hair. Melanin is transmitted by our genes, from parents to children and is responsible for the different degrees of darkness/blackness in our skin.

Take note. The language is not talking about behavior or a way of acting. Nor is it talking about the red blood that flows thru our bodies. It is talking about Meaning - known down home as "Black blood." As true as

that is, Europeans who saw dark-skinned Africans, centuries ago, couldn't figure out why their skin was black. In the end, they manufactured reasons which became the cornerstones of the institution of slavery in America. The most popular? That the African's dark skin represented a curse from God. A curse which regulated him and his people to the will of Caucasians.

Now lets back up for a minute. The implication is that God, by putting Melanin in the genes of Africans, cursed them all, and thus, created inferior human beings. Said another way, "If you have any amount of Melanin in your genes, you are inferior!"

Did American Caucasians take the European explanations to heart? You bet they did. Many States wrote and implemented laws that defined and segregated persons with Melanin from persons with no Melanin. Lets look at a few State laws on race and color.

### FLORIDA: (SEC. 1.0 DEFINITION)

"The words Negro, colored, colored persons, mulatto or persons of color, when applied to persons, include every person having one-eighth or more of African or Negro blood.

### KENTUCKY:

Colored children, within the meaning of Section 187 or Kentucky Constitution, include all children wholly or in part of Negro blood or having any appreciable admixture thereof; and a child

having one-sixteenth negro blood may not attend a school for white children.

### GEORGIA: SEC. 79 - 103.

(2177)

Persons of color who are: All Negroes, mulattoes, mestizos and their descendants, having any ascertainable trace of either negro or African, West Indian or Asiatic Indian blood in their veins, and all descendants of any person having either Negro or African, West Indian or Asiatic Indian blood in his or her veins shall be known in this State as persons of color. (Acts 1865-6 P) 239; 1927, P. 272).

### SEC. 53-312 "WHITE PERSON DEFINED":

The term white person shall include only persons of the white or Caucasian race who have no ascertainable trace of either Negro, African, West Indian, Asiatic, Indian, Mongolian, Japanese or Chinese blood in their veins. No person, any one of whose ancestors had been duly registered with the State Bureau of Vital Statistics as a colored person or person of color shall be deemed to be a white person. (Acts 1927, P. 277).

### OKLAHOMA: ART. XXIII, SEC. II, COLORED RACE - NEGRO RACE - WHITE RACE.

Wherever in this Constitution and laws of this State, the word or words "colored" or "colored race," "Negro" or "Negro race," are used, the same shall be construed to mean or apply to all persons of African descent. The term "white race" shall include all other persons. (Const. 1907 as amended Stat. 1931, sec. 13724)

### MISSISSIPPI:

Art. 14, Section 263 of the Constitution of Mississippi which

prohibits marriage of a white person with a Negro or mulatto, or a person having one-eighth or more Negro blood, does not determine the status of a person as to whether he is white or colored under Art. 8 Section 207 of the constitution, which provides for separate schools for children of the white and colored races. The word "white" under Section 207 means a member of caucasian race and the word "colored" includes not only Negroes but persons of mixed blood having any appreciable amount of Negro blood.

### ABOUT DA TERM "PEOPLE OF COLOR":

Being from the deep south, I advise people in social services, the workplace and schools to refrain from using the term "People of color." "Why? Because it is racist. It was created for no other reason than genetic segregation. When used, it sets up a "We" vs. "Them" situation.

### ABOUT DA TERM "RACE":

In a racist society, the term "Race" is used as a way of letting others know how much Melanin you are carrying and where you fit in the overall scheme of things. Examine papers for employment and/or other services and bam! The fill-in boxes are there. Are you (Black), (Hispanic), (Native American), (Asian) or (other) It's important to understand that, on its basic level, Black skin blackness is about genetics. It's not an act or some far-out, invented behavior or attitude. Nor is it a curse.

Talk to ya next time.

## Portland NAACP Elects New Officers

Continued from Front

the press, the petition, the ballot, and the courts, and is persistent in the use of legal and moral persuasion even in the face of overt and violent racial hostility.

The Bedrock strength of the NAACP lies in its more than 500,000 members who belong to the Association's 2,200 branches, youth councils and college chapters. There is hardly an area within the United States in which African Americans reside in any numbers where there is not a NAACP.

It may be difficult in today's climate

for some to realize that at one point in its history, membership in the NAACP in some areas of the country was a courageous act. The rolls of the Association are marked with the names of individuals such as Harry Moore, Medgar Evers and others who, because of their involvement with the NAACP, paid with their lives.

We recognize that "dive-by" shootings equal or surpass the murders generated by KKK lynchings. We still have racism and discrimination in education; landlords still denying decent housing to minority tenants; well-trained

corporate executives who experience the frustration of a "glass ceiling" in employment and banking institution that continues to subtly practice redlining.

Over the past 80 years our branch at times has flourished with members, volunteers and supporters. At times we have survived with only a few that understood that the struggle continues... Many of our branch's greatest leaders were not Presidents but volunteers who keep the branch together.

Our challenges are just as great today as there were in the past of battles fought

and won. The NAACP membership has, and continues to be, the most powerful voice speaking out on behalf of African-Americans. Membership in the NAACP provides a wealth of opportunities to contribute to the welfare of the African-American community through a wide variety of activities, programs and projects.

Membership is open to everyone who subscribes to the basic philosophy and purposes of the NAACP. Please join us as the struggle continues.....

For membership information call 503-284-7722 or write

and won. The NAACP membership has, and continues to be, the most powerful voice speaking out on behalf of African-Americans. Membership in the NAACP provides a wealth of opportunities to contribute to the welfare of the African-American community through a wide variety of activities, programs and projects.

Membership is open to everyone who subscribes to the basic philosophy and purposes of the NAACP. Please join us as the struggle continues..... For membership information call 503-284-7722 or write

## Bea Anderson: A Legacy to Her Community

Continued from Metro

from all over the world. To visit her home was to visit a "community museum" with her collection of artifacts from Hawaii, Japan, and her home state of North Carolina. She regularly entertained visitors from Japan and Hawaii, and periodically from all over the globe. Not surprisingly,

her friendliness and gentle humanity would melt any language barriers. "She was always having international dinners. You could never turn down one of these invitations," said friend and educator Joseph Thomas. She was as sure as she was friendly, and as serious as she was gentle.

It may be that Bea Anderson's greatest achievement was in raising two sons to

manhood in a modern world. Both sons, the elder Marty the Younger Tony Anderson achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. Both are college grads and now work as professionals. Marty is a sound engineer in California, and Tony, who gave "Bea" her first grandchild just a few weeks before her death, is a graduate of Oregon State University and works as a pharma-

and won. The NAACP membership has, and continues to be, the most powerful voice speaking out on behalf of African-Americans. Membership in the NAACP provides a wealth of opportunities to contribute to the welfare of the African-American community through a wide variety of activities, programs and projects.

Membership is open to everyone who subscribes to the basic philosophy and purposes of the NAACP. Please join us as the struggle continues..... For membership information call 503-284-7722 or write

# Leadership; Tabasco Sauce And Jobs

BY PROF. MCKINLEY BURT

"We (blacks) are in the same position as Bosnia, not getting help and not allowed to help ourselves," So stated a well-known African American last week in his 150th (at least) speech. The last part of that complaint rings especially true, considering what I have been recently saying about the constraints on economic opportunity specifically imposed by banks and real estate interests, and, in general, by other elements of the urban infrastructure.

A reader was deeply disturbed by my description of huge concentrations of highly skilled black workers in central city manufacturing plants who, unlike whites in similar situations, could not get financing for businesses to which they were most suited; it being a given that the most successful among the ranks of new entrepreneurs are those experienced in the particular enterprise through either employment or family. The owners of these firms, native born or immigrants from Europe, Israel, South African or Latin American, enjoyed two huge benefits: an artificially stable labor force, and freedom from the competition that most frequently comes from former employees who have spun off (Viola! We have the modern colony).

This reader, an African American from Chicago, sent me a clipping from a November edition of the Portland Oregonian. Under the headline, "Toy Company Really Under the Gun" (cute huh?) was the story of "Strombecker Corp.," accompanied by a picture of a black female worker. My correspondent had worked for this company and was very familiar with its recurring problems; but more importantly, he would recite the family history, European beginnings and sources of financing. "Mr. Burt, the dynamics of the situation are just as you described in Los Angeles - or anywhere for that matter."

The tragedy of this and similar situations across the country where there is an "unreal" concentration

of minority workers is that if there is an economic disruption - layoffs, cutbacks, sale of the company, etc. - then there is a disproportionate economic and cultural injury to the African American community which is ghettoized and immobile relative to other members of the work force. I have protested and railed against some of our leadership for years, like the Urban League in both Los Angeles and Portland.

Because of my experience and associations in both industry and public agencies, I have always been able to become aware of or anticipate workforce opportunities before anyone outside of the system, no matter how many degrees they might have in sociology, administration, labor statistics, whatever. Even if the accountant or comptroller didn't sit in management's planning conferences where new lines, models, production machines and even space have lead times of six months to a year, he would only have to look at the ensuing purchase orders to know that a major change in the work force was coming. Somebody is going to be hired to use the additional nuts, bolts, punch presses, shears, ovens, janitorial supplies, whatever.

For years, I've called black organizations only to find the leaders of the flock "at lunch, in a meeting, in a seminar, at a retreat, convention or other buffalo wing gala. Since they don't return calls (I ain't "heavy" enough), I just round up people and use my inside contacts to place them on the hiring track. I was looking over two decades of placements, U.S. Forest Service, Corps of Engineers, Bonneville, State of Oregon, City of Portland, United Parcel, Freightliner, plus foundries and innumerable small companies. But our social organizations are right on time with solicitations and membership drives. Send me some of that money!

I didn't have room for that "Tabasco Sauce" model of Southern failures in African American economic planning. See you next week. Perhaps our leaders and "we the people" can get together someday."

## PDX Set Records In October

Portland International airport (PDX) achieved a monthly record for passengers and its best ever month for cargo in October 1994.

October's passenger count through PDX was 850,452, a 15.5 percent increase over October 1993's 736,631, which was the airport's previous record for October. This marked the 30th consecutive month of record growth for PDX.

For 1994, PDX has totaled 8,183,446 passengers, putting it 16 percent above 1993's record pace. PDX is operated by the Port of Portland.

Air cargo through PDX scored an even greater achievement as the airport handled 19,240 tons--the highest monthly tonnage total in the airport's history and the first time it has surpassed the 19,000-ton level.

October's air cargo record for 40 consecutive months. International cargo fueled the record month as it climbed 60 percent over October 1993.

For 1994, the airport's cargo tonnage is 163,261, a 12.6 percent jump over 1993.

Operations (take-offs and landings) at the Port's general aviation airports had mixed results in October. Operations increased by 2.7 percent at Hillsboro Airport from 16,484 in October 1993 to 16,937 in October 1994, while they declined slightly (0.6 percent at Troutdale Airport from 9,832 to 9,774.

# Happy Holidays

Prices effective December 14 through December 20, 1994 at your nearby Safeway store.



## Tender Bone-In Smoked Ham

- Cook's Shank Portion
- SAVE UP TO 91¢ PER LB

98¢ lb

## Sunkist, Seedless Navel Oranges

18¢ lb

Look In Your This Week Magazine for our weekly Safeway Savings Guide!

This Week MAGAZINE

Enjoy Extra Savings With The EXTRA In-Store Safeway Savings Guide Available at your Safeway store.