

Leadership, Tabasco Sauce And Jobs II

By Prof. McKinley Burt
So what was it I wanted to say about "Tabasco Sauce" last week before running out of room? Well, among other things, the product is a more than century-old monopoly and the manufacturing process has been the exclusive property of a "genteel old southern family" for the same period. The ingredients are grown on an "Avery Island" in the middle of a bayou and about as inaccessible as was "Devils Island" in French History.

A half-hour T.V. 'docudrama' really got my attention as the camera panned the operation from the Gone-With-The-Wind type 'Big House' and black servants to the scores upon scores of black field hands busy harvesting the herbs -- and to the giant black warehousemen moving barrels of the stuff (The Dallas Cowboys could recruit a lot of line backers here). There seemed to be more black laborers employed here than at former President Carter's tobacco plantation.

About halfway through this ante bellum saga, I finally saw some white

folks; measuring, verifying standards, typing -- the sort of things the "cognitive elite" do.

The point of all this is, not only did the African American not escape the plantation by fleeing North -- viz a viz my description of controlled economic progress by financial institutions in urban areas -- but that there are more than a few vestiges of the old system very much intact through-out Dixie. The new version of "Marse John" plays by politically-correct rules, donating generously to the Negro College Fund and "mid-night basketball" -- and seldom makes the 'slips' his grandfather was good at, "boy", "darkies" "cullud folks" etc. Don't hear that from Jimmy Carter, Ted Turner.

I was immediately reminded of an issue that surfaced in the 1970s while I was teaching an Urban Economics class at Portland State University. A class project (investigation) provided by a National Geographic article: "Hilton head Island" off the coast of South Carolina, once

occupied exclusively by blacks (once the Reconstruction process turned over much land to former slaves), was now a land of fabulous hotels and beach properties selling for One Thousand Dollars A Front Inch (and that was 20 years ago).

After months of inquiry directed to Black Universities, Social organizations, lawyers and historians, we got one significant, detailed reply. As you might have guessed, the only difference between the scenario for Hilton Head and the Tabasco plantation was time. As with so much of the land granted to the former slaves, it quickly returned to the master" when the federal troops were with drawn. So it is that the Tabasco Family has "owned" the Avery Island Plantation for over a hundred years. Much of this real estate 'recidivism' was accomplished with the aid of the Ku-Klux-Klan, crooked sheriffs and assessors, and county commissioners (always with the threat of deadly force to back them up).

And in the case of that "Hilton Head" billion dollar development of

hotels, golf courses, yacht basins, and airports, the land was acquired from blacks by more "genteel" methods -- as with continuing acquisitions along the coast of the Carolinas (see "Sea Islands", books, articles). A lone African American professor has become an endangered species at his "Traditional Black College" because he is exposing the methodology of how the lands are gotten away from blacks today -- a process that parallels the conversions in the cities under "Urban Renewal".

The man has become a thorn in the side of 'traditional' black leadership as he describes the games: Lost and delayed tax notices, illegal foreclosures and worst of all -- the purchase of invaluable lands for a pittance per acre from semi-literate oldsters left alone when the next generation departed for the mainland to get a college education. The new owners of black lands include the big corporations who donate to the Black College Fund. How kind and gracious; pass the Tabasco Sauce! Continued next week

Busy Freeway Warning System

Portland State University and local transportation agencies are embarking on a year-long freeway traffic management study aimed at creating a computerized system to provide motorists with early warnings about traffic congestion.

The study makes use of an on-site camera that monitors westbound traffic on the Sunset Highway (U.S. Highway 26) just west of downtown Portland and feeds images of the scene back to a lab at PSU.

Specially designed computer software at the college then collects data that can be used to interpret traffic patterns and vehicle speed, density and flow rates, based on the transmitted images.

Principal participants of the study are the PSU Department of Civil Engineering, the Oregon Department of Transportation, and the City of Portland's Office of Transportation.

"We hope to be able to analyze the data and identify patterns of congestion at the site before congestion occurs," said B. Kent Lall,

PSU professor of civil engineering and the study's overall coordinator.

Lall said project participants hope to set up a system in which information about impending congestion problems could be fed automatically to other monitoring sites. That information could trigger the use of message signs at freeway entry points, warning motorists of delays and/or suggesting alternative routes.

"The overall aim is safe travel to reduce congestion and accidents," said Lall.

PSU civil engineering graduate Tim Simons is interpreting the traffic data, which during the year-long study will concentrate on the Sunset Highway site just east of the tunnels that take the heavily used highway under Portland's West Hills. A side benefit of the study will be analysis of the impact that west-side light rail construction has on Sunset Highway traffic, Lall added. PSU expects to apply for a year-long extension of the project so that additional sites can be monitored.

Tri-Met Approves New Labor Contract

A new labor contract has been approved between Tri-Met employees and the Tri-Met board of directors.

The agreement affects 1,700 employees of the public mass transit agency, including bus and light rail operators, mechanics, supervisors and office employees.

Tri-Met and the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 757 have been negotiating for the past four months.

The new pact provides about \$4.5 million in cost savings and effi-

ciencies and increases wages from 3 to 5 percent annually. It boosts total operating costs about three percent for each year of the four-year agreement, officials for the two sides said.

"The new collective bargaining agreement has significant gains for both the ATU and Tri-Met and sets in motion the commitment and the process for a true interest-based partnership," said Karl Hunrick, Tri-Met labor relations director.

"We are very pleased with this fair and equitable agreement," said

Ron Heintzman, ATU 757 representative. "We look at this as a continuation in building a cooperative relationship to do one thing, provide the best public transit service possible."

The contract makes work rules more flexible, offering an estimated \$1.25 million in savings by improving apprenticeship and training programs and reducing training periods by 25 percent or more. Part-time operators are now able to work an hour longer per day, up to a 30-hour week maximum.

The contract renews the pension agreement for a 10 year period. Retirement age is reduced from 62 to 58 years over the 10 year contract period.

Tri-Met is not a member of the Public Employees Retirement System. The PERS costs are significantly more than Tri-Met retirement plans. Unlike PERS, Tri-Met retirement plans have never guaranteed a rate of return on investments and unused sick or vacation leave is not factored into a person's retirement benefit.

"Local Author To Speak"

December 1, 1994--Dr. O. Virginia Phillips, author of "Ashes To Life", will read from her first published work, Saturday, December 17th, 6:00 PM at the Lutheran Inner City Community Center, Lower Level Room C, 4219 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Ashes To Life is a series of thirteen stories presented in poetry form, each story represents a person known by the author--a person changed by caring intervention.

The reading is open to the public. There is no charge for admission.

Phone Company Files To Serve Oregon

A Nebraska phone company has applied to the Public Utility Commission of Oregon to provide basic telephone services in the Portland area.

MFS Communications Co., Inc. has asked the commission to immediately provide it three digits in the first part of a telephone number series so it can begin competing with U.S. West and GTE Northwest, the companies which currently serve the Portland area.

Doing business as MFS Intelenet, the applicant said it intends to provide local and long distance services to medium and small businesses.

Company officials said MFS currently serves New York, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts and Washington State, with applications pending in Pennsylvania, Texas and Michigan.

"Medium and small businesses play a very significant role in the Oregon economy, but to date have not been the major beneficiaries of the development of competition in the telecommunications industry," said Kirby Pickle, president and chief executive officer of MFS Intelenet. "The granting of this license to MFS Intelenet would result in enhanced benefits to these businesses in terms of carrier choice, price, increased reliability, responsiveness and the introduction of new services."

The company plans to utilize the 100 percent fiber network of its sister company, MFS Telecom, Inc., currently under development. The network is expected to be completed in the fall of 1995 and connect 20 buildings in Portland's downtown central business district.

YWCA Announces Plans As Executive Director Resigns

Cathy Jones, Executive Director of the YWCA of Portland has resigned her position effective December 28, 1994. Ms Jones is leaving the YWCA to pursue other professional interests in North Carolina. Shortly after receiving her resignation, the YWCA Board of Directors announced its plans to hire an Interim Director while conducting a broad search for a long-term replacement and is now pleased to announce it has hired Jewel Lansing, Interim Executive Director of the William Temple House and former Auditor for the City of Portland and Multnomah County, as Interim Director of the YWCA of Portland.

Cathy Jones has been Executive Director of the Portland YWCA since April of 1991 and many credit her for

bringing to the YWCA a stable base for growth. "Cathy undauntingly had the vision to pull together a team and move forward to accomplish our Mission," said Gale Swanson, President of the YWCA from 1992-1994. "She has strengthened our connection to the National Association and has always been clear and strong on where the YWCA is going."

Cathy lists among her major achievements the fostering of a work environment where people are treated as equals, and where it is safe to communicate difficult issues. With her leadership, the YWCA worked closely with the community to determine areas where YWCA programs needed improvement to better meet the community's needs and then made those changes. While Executive Di-

rector, Cathy saw the expansion of Senior Services to the East Multnomah County District through the opening of the YWCA's East County Center and realized a growth in the annual operating budget from \$2.2 million to \$3 million. Additionally, Cathy prioritized increased staff training and skill requirements, ensuring that the YWCA's staff are top professionals in their fields. Along with the Board of Directors, Cathy helped bring key advisors from the community to special Task Forces looking at long term difficulties faced by the YWCA. "This is a new way to approach our problems and one that has helped bring us out of the traditional non-profit poverty mentality," said Jones. "It's brought renewed vision and focus on our Mission and better

service to the community." Cathy is quick to point out that all her accomplishments were team efforts. "It wasn't me. It was a partnership between the staff, volunteers and the Board. If anything, I was just the catalyst."

"Cathy has really strengthened the internal organization," said Janice B. Hall, current President of the YWCA and a Portland attorney. "She has helped empower our employees by adding to their understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses and helping them see their contributions in light of the entire organization, which really furthers the team process. We will miss working with her," added Hall.

The YWCA Board of Directors sees this transition as another

opportunity for growth and hails the hiring of Jewel Lansing as just one example. "Jewel has tremendous strength garnered from her rich experience and her ties with the community," said Janice Hall. "She is a bright, capable and experienced leader with great honesty and integrity who has already caught our vision and is ready to help us maintain momentum as we implement our Strategic Plan." Ms. Lansing is a Certified Public Accountant and brings a long history in organizational leadership, fiscal responsibility and social advocacy. Ms. Lansing officially begins as Interim Executive Director on January 16, 1995 and is expected to hold the position for three to six months.



"Scratch-it For Charity"

Weldon Greig of KSHO Radio of Lebanon uses an ice scraper for speed in a "Scratch-it For Charity" fundraiser by the Oregon Lottery.

Season's Savings

Prices effective December 21 through December 27, 1994 at your nearby Safeway store.



Safeway Will Close At 7PM On December 24 And All Day Christmas Day

...to allow our store employees to spend time with their families

All stores will be OPEN REGULAR HOURS Monday, December 26



"Prime" Rib Beef Roast

• or Boneless Beef New York Strip Roast
• SAVE UP TO 1.31 PER LB

2.98 lb

Large Holiday Yams

29¢ lb

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

This Week MAGAZINE

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