

# EDITORIAL

**I**t is bad that Newt Gingrich's "Contract With America" and the Republicans have an agenda to set the country back. It is even worse that their agenda is going largely uncontested. The Rainbow is going to fight back.

This JaxFax will explore and clarify some of what the Republican agenda is really all about, and who it is intended to benefit. Despite its rhetorical flourishes, skillfully framed to identify its major "enemies" as the undeserving poor or some ill-defined political class, any serious review of the GOP Contract discloses that it conceals an array of special benefits for the rich and irresponsible corporate interests which will impact negatively on millions of ordinary American families.

New "anti-regulation" provisions outlined in the Contract will make it easier for corporate outlaws to pollute the water and air that millions of Americans drink and breathe. New "tort reform" will make it more difficult and costly for consumers to protect themselves, and make it more cost-efficient for irresponsible corporations to take risks with the safety and health of ordinary Americans. Massive new tax breaks in the area of capital gains will inordinately favor those earning over \$200,000 per year—and result in a further shift in the tax burden from the rich onto the backs

## NATIONAL RAINBOW COALITION

### Nuked By Newt

of working and middle-income American families.

This is what the big corporate lobbyists, who poured millions of dollars into Newt Gingrich's political action committee, are really interested in. Newt Gingrich wants to shield these wealthy contributors and corporations. Without campaign finance reform, which opens the books on the money of lobbyists, Mr. Gingrich cannot earn the public trust.

The GOP contract is also an assault on every working person, every senior citizen every consumer, every parent, every middle-income person, every family farmer, and any American concerned about a decent future for themselves and their families.

The Rainbow's commitment to justice will resist the mean-spirited

approach of scapegoating the poorest, weakest, least powerful, most vulnerable and defenseless groups in our society. We reject the unAmerican, immoral targeting of immigrants as exemplified by Proposition 187 in California. To use children as pawns in a political game is beneath the character and dignity of the American promise. Gov. Pete Wilson and the California Republican Party have joined the initiative in California to make affirmative action illegal. That initiative will be aggressively challenged and resisted by progressives.

The Contract focuses on AFDC, Aid to Families Dependent Children, which costs \$17 billion a year to serve 14 million people, including 9 million children, but it is not the cause of a two-decade long decline in

our standard of living. The Rainbow will focus on the real AFDC (i.e., aid for dependent corporations), which costs \$224 billion.

The Contract is focusing on the size of government. The issue is not size, but need. Government should be whatever size it takes to meet the need. The biggest and most centralized government program, social security, is the most popular. And the largest federal bureaucracy of them all, the Pentagon, consumes 1 of every 5 federal dollars, makes 2/3rds of all government purchases of goods and services, and issues 7 out of 10 government paychecks. The current downsizing of government is not primarily to make it more efficient, but to reduce government's enforcement of laws resisted by business -- i.e., environmental laws, worker health and safety laws, affirmative action, etc.

We are neither fooled nor misled by the elections of 1994. Two-thirds of 54 seats Republicans picked up in the November 8 election were won with fewer votes than the losing GOP candidates got in those same districts two years ago.

Unfortunately, the GOP Contract, by scapegoating unpopular groups in our society, displaces attention from many of the real concerns that affect million of Americans. The Rainbow must and will address them!

## Vantage Point

### Facing A New Year Determined To Make History

**A**t the third meeting of the National African American Leadership Summit (NAALS) which was held in Chicago recently, Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Convener of the Summit, proclaimed that 1995 should be Make Black History Year.

Against the backdrop of the rise to power of the radical right with its reactionary "Contract with America," Dr. Chavis challenged Black America to go on the offensive with renewed vigor to fight with its reactionary "Contract with America." Dr. Chavis challenged Black America to go on the offensive with renewed vigor to fight for social justice and social change. Toward that end the NAALS adopted an ambitious Action Agenda as a part of its Make Black History Year offensive.

The Action Agenda includes a national Day of Action on February 1, the beginning of Black History Month, to stop the defamation of Black people; a campaign to defeat the crime bill and an all out effort to stop the criminalization and demonization of Black people; an African America Youth Leadership Summit and a youth and student Liberation Summer Project; the creation of an African American Development Fund; launching a boycott against a major U.S. corporation that is not reinvesting Black dollars in the

Black community; and, assisting Minister Louis Farrakhan and the Naiton of Islam to mobilize a March of One Million Black Men in Washington D.C. By adopting this ambitious Action Agenda the NAALS is boldly asserting that the way for Black people to make history is to rekindle the Black freedom struggle. There must be a renewed will to resist racism and oppression and a renewed commitment to fight for fundamental change.

But movements are comprised of people and hence the challenge to make history must be met at the level of individual people. It is people who make history. There can be no serious movement for fundamental change without active and committed people. Black people (you) cannot simply be passive spectators in a society, nation and world where African interests and African people are being decimated by racism, economic exploitation and political repression. Black people (you) must be a part of the process of saving and reconstructing the Black community. Each individual Black person, family, and neighborhood/community must take up the challenge to make history by acting to restore the race. The movement to restore the race is not somewhere else. It must begin in your household, in your family, and it must extend to encompass your block and your neighbor-

hood. Making history need not be some grand project or massive movement to begin with. What is required to advance the race at this crucial moment in our history is a multitude of small gestures, small projects and small contributions that you can make right where you live. Ultimately a mass movement is made up of the small contributions, both human and material of thousands, even million of individual people like you. So be resolved and have the confidence that you can make history.

You can begin the process by simply reaffirming who we are as an African people, learning about our history and culture and making a decision that our history and culture will be a guide as we struggle to reclaim our destiny. Pass on the knowledge of self and kind to your children. That knowledge and affirmation may be the most important ingredient in saving our youth. Make history by heeding Malcolm's call to control the education, economics, politics and social life in our communities. We must save ourselves household by household, block by block and neighborhood by neighborhood.

We need to organize or be involved in associations to improve the quality of education in the public schools. We need to organize after school programs, Saturday schools

and independent learning academies. We need to be involved in or organize economic development projects like buying clubs, credit unions and cooperatives, community development corporations and encourage righteous Black entrepreneurship. We need to be involved in or organize independent political associations that can maximize Black political participation and empowerment.

We need to get in the habit of joining with family, neighbors and friends to initiate projects and participate in and/or create relevant associations and organizations. We need to become conscious of and confident that the power to make history, the possibility of building a new movement for social justice and fundamental change is in our hands - is in your hands. With that consciousness and confidence all things are possible. Stopping the defamation of Black people is possible. Defeating/repealing the Crime Bill is possible. Saving African American youth is possible. Bringing a major U.S. corporation to its knees is possible. Mobilizing a March of One Million Black Men in Washington D.C. is possible.

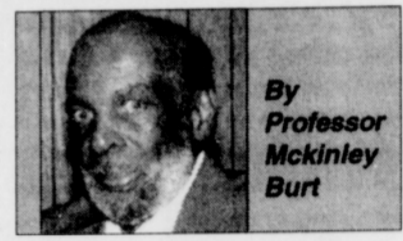
"All things are possible if we only believe." If we believe it, we can achieve it. As we prepare to face the new year, let us resolve to meet the challenge that 1995 can and will be Make Black History Year.

## perspectives

### Blacks Reported On Way Out In Los Angeles; Could It Happen Here?

**I**n the hauntingly desolate, volcano-created Rift Valley of eastern Africa, we find the gloriously beautiful "fire bird", the flaming red-flecked 'Lesser Flamingo'. When millions of the huge graceful birds take flight, seemingly at once from bubbling volcano lakes, it is easily seen how the indigenous people were to create a new -- a metaphor that has endured throughout the languages of the world.

Those who have read and paid attention to my 'early warning' signals in this newspaper should not have been surprised at



By Professor McKinley Burt

relevant articles appearing in Sunday's Oregonian Newspaper, and in the New York Times and news magazines: "But in the past decade, fed up with high housing costs, drugs and crime, blacks have been fleeing Los Angeles, not only to outlying areas but also to other states, particularly in the south." (And that even if they don't have roots in the area).

Dr. James H. Johnson, a geographer at the University of North Carolina who has written extensively on scope of black migration says, "We are seeing a total restructuring of southern Californians black community. In a community where you have other ethnic groups growing rapidly, these changes have enormous political and electoral significance". Tell me about it! But equally important is the economic impact of literally abandoned real estate equities, relocation costs and interrupted career and education paths.

Not only in Los Angeles but in a number of other cities, those establishment admonitions to "get that education, training and experience" seem not to have their previous value -- at least not for the particular metropolitan areas (S.M.S.A.). A 45-year-old telephone company manager who moved to Atlanta last year said, "the doors of opportunity seemed open for Hispanic and Asian residents but shut for blacks in California". Others say, "Central Avenue, once the center of black life in Los Angeles, now is the home to Hispanic-run appliance and furniture stores." Remember "Williams Ave." You might well have reason to.

It was on August 31 of last year

that I began my series, "Urban Renewal: People, Politics and Planning", just one of many revealing studies of a pervasive trend toward further economic attrition of the African American position in America. I described in detail my personal experiences both as a taxpayer and as a professional in dealing with a racist and circumscribing infrastructure. In particular, I call your attention to a subsequent series on the "Los Angeles Experience" where it was seen just how frail and vulnerable is black leadership and economic structure.

Several paragraphs earlier I cited "Central Avenue" as formerly the center

of black life in Los Angeles but now home to "Hispanic-run appliance and furniture stores" -- the latter enterprises replacing black movie theatres, dance halls clubs, barber shops and restaurants. The vanishing blacks are being replaced at a rate that prompts the demographers to predict that Hispanic people will outnumber blacks in both that neighborhood and the county. You will note that the blacks didn't have appliance and furniture stores. As I have said in these pages a number of times, the banks don't play it that way. Remember that network show where "Famous Amos" detailed how the banks turned him down for a loan, but the finance company let him have it at 20% interest?

And in Portland, there were no black-owned appliance or furniture stores (or any other except for one record store and a haberdashery with about \$500 worth of stock). And there was no African American leadership in an effort to secure the outlets, franchises and financing for the most basic goods and merchandise with which a community is serviced. After "Model Cities" and other "Urban Renewal" programs devastated Portland's black community decades later, the Portland ghetto seems every bit as venerable as Los Angeles. Under intense federal pressure the banks are feverishly offering home loans -- if you 'qualify'. How far are we from becoming a Los Angeles? do we have a leadership that is about "owning" basic and viable economic units? Or should we head south? continued next week

## Civil Rights Journal

### A Call To Honor Martin Luther King Day

By Bernice Powell Jackson

It was one of my worst nightmares. When I received an envelope with a Las Vegas casino return address I thought it strange since I've never been there and have desire to go. It was an invitation to a special Martin Luther King Jr. weekend. What a way to trivialize the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. - by gambling in Las Vegas.

This time last year I was in South Africa, where a whole nation was focused on rebirth and rebuilding a just and peaceful society despite a terrible history of war and brutality, racism and a governmental system of separation, incredible poverty and unbridled greed. And despite all that, South Africans of all races and classes were proclaiming a year of jubilee and calling for "Peace in our Land."

As we pause this year to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, why can't we do like our South African brothers and sisters and call for Peace in our Land, Peace in our

Communities, Peace in our Homes? On that one day, why can't the brothers and sisters put down the guns to honor one of the greatest African Americans, one of the greatest spiritual and moral leaders of all time? Why can't the drug dealers, the bullies, the neighborhood terrorists drop the AK-47's and uzis for just 24 hours?

And on that one day, as we honor the life of Martin Luther King Jr. in our churches and mosques, why can't we open their doors and go get these young people and bring them in and really talk with them about their lives and about Dr. King and non-violence? Why can't we listen to their pleas for help and caring in a world that too often is deaf to their needs? Why can't we start recreational and tutoring and after-school programs for our children? Why can't we make the world Dr. King dreamed of for his children a reality for all our children? Why can't we adopt parents who need help in learning how

to be parents?

And on that day, as we honor the life of Martin Luther King Jr. in our schools across the country, why can't we do more than the minimum, but do the maximum for each child? Why can't educators and administrators recommit themselves to save every child, not just a precious few? Why can't parents become involved in their children's education? Why can't the rest of us do something to make our schools centers of learning and excellence?

Young black men were almost 14 times more likely than any other group in this nation to be murdered during 1992. Martin Luther King spent his entire career and ultimately lost his life so that our children might be free to reach their God-given potential. He could not have imagined a world where an 11 year old would kill a 14 year old and then be killed by two other teenagers. He could not have imagined a world where a 5 year old gets pushed out of a window

by two teens when he refused to steal. He could not have imagined a world where children plan their own funerals because they do not expect even to live.

Martin Luther King Jr. did not die for us to celebrate his birthday gambling in Las Vegas. He legacy calls for us all - children, teenagers, "yuppies," baby boomers, senior citizens, Christians, Muslims, Jews, sisters and brothers, rich and middle class and poor, and African Americans, white Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans - to make his dream more than a beautiful speech, but a beautiful reality.

Gambling on our future by not getting involved personally is no better than gambling in Las Vegas on Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. We know that old African proverb about it taking an entire village to raise a child. Let's start living it on Martin Luther King's birthday.

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