

EDITORIAL

NATIONAL RAINBOW COALITION

Clergy Training To Act

BY REVEREND JESSE L. JACKSON

Tn January 30-31, several hundred leading African American clergy will attend the first meeting of the newly formed Rainbow Public Policy Institute. Monday (30th) at 6:30 PM, HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros will talk about the federal government's new empowerment zones and other community projects in which churches and clergy can get involved.

The Republican "Contract With America" is really a Contract On Black America, workers, the poor, women and other minorities. In other words, the Rainbow constituency is under attack and we must train an army to fight back! As in the past, African American clergy will be in the forefront of the struggle.

Unfunded Mandates, the Balanced Budget Amendment, the demise of the Hispanic and Congressional Black Caucuses, attempts to take away congressional seats, to undercut minority scholarships, to

make affirmative action illegal and more are all serious challenges to the progressive movement.

We must study and analyze these policy and political attacks—but study and analysis are not enough. We must not become constipated through a paralysis of analysis. We need a movement. We must fight back! We must be trained in the tired and true techniques of old, as well as in the newer modes of fighting in a modern technological age. The Rainbow Public Policy Institute will help with both.

The challenge is to go on the moral offensive. The most authentic independent voices, often clergy, must speak, educate and act to protect the interests of common people. The real interests of real people are becoming marginalized as corporate interests increasingly dominate both parties and their leaders. Clergy must be trained to penetrate to the moral center, not just go with the flow of the political center—or worse, to naively go along with the religious right or the extreme left because, in some instances, they use familiar sounding religious rhetoric. Clergy must learn to navigate toward justice along the

thin line of the "oughtness" of religion and the "isness" of politics.

Some of the program objectives of the Rainbow Public Policy Institute are: (1) reduce unnecessary jailing of our youth through the Reclaim Our Youth (ROY) program -- prevention, not incarceration; (2) leverage consumer power to create jobs and assure fairness -- jobs not jails; (3) register one million new voters -- the ballot not the bullet (4) urban policy -- economic and job development, end redlining and begin greenlining; (5) fight homelessness -- particularly among children and families; (6) affirmative action -- threatened by Republican actions in California and lack of defense in the White House; (7) college athletics -- fairness for coaches and sports administrators; and (8) media fairness -- jobs and portrayals.

The plan is to leave the Rainbow Public Policy Institute and return to the various cities structured with 50 clergy in each of 50 cities for the purpose of educating, communicating and coordinating for action.

The January 30-31 meeting will take place in Washington, DC at the

Metropolitan Baptist Church, 1225 R Street, NW where the Rev. H. Beecher Hicks will be the host pastor. Rev. Wyatt Tee Walker, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's former chief of staff and Chairman of the NRC's Minister's Division, the Rev. Al Sharpton, its Director, are among the hundreds who will be attending. Others attending include: Bishop, Rev. Paul Morton, Presiding Bishop, Full Gospel Baptist Churches of America; Bishop Huie Rogers, Presiding Bishop, Bible Way Churches of Jesus Christ, World-Wide; Rev. B.W. Smith, President, Progressive Baptist Convention; Rev. Henry Lyons, President, National Baptist Convention; Rev. Frank Higgins, President, Los Angeles Baptist Minister's Conference; Reverends Clay Evans, Stephen Thurston, Willie Barrow & James Meeks (Chicago), Otis Moss (Cleveland), John Scott (New York), Carol Aranjó (Springfield, MA) Joseph Foxworth (San Diego), Amos Brown (San Francisco), Janet Renee Habersham (WDC), Joe Hardwick (Los Angeles), Harold Carter (Baltimore), E.K. Bailey (Dallas) and Bishop Eddie Long & Dr. Barbara King (Atlanta).

Civil Rights Journal

Get Angry And Get Organized!

BY BERNICE POWELL JACKSON

This time they have gone too far. It's one thing to talk about fiscal responsibility, budget cuts and reform of welfare. It's another thing to dismantle 50 years of federal child and family protection policies. It's another thing to talk about cutting \$1,300,000,000,000. - that's one trillion, three hundred billion dollars - from the federal budget in seven years.

This time they have gone too far and now they've made African American women angry. We're angry because we know that the Balanced Budget Amendment means that seven and a half million children will lose school lunches. We know it means that 6 and a half million children will lose health care. We know it means that 2 million pregnant women and infant children will lose their food and milk. We know that it means that 200,000 children would no longer be eligible for Head Start and another 200,000 children would not receive child care. We're

angry because it means that our children will be hungrier, sicker and less educated.

But African American women are not just getting angry - we're also getting organized. At the behest of Dorothy Height, president of the National Council of Negro Women and Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund, thousands of African American women are mobilizing across this country as I write these words and you read them. We're getting organized to stop the Contract with America and the Balanced Budget Amendment - and you can help.

You can help on Wednesday, without even leaving your living room or your office. You can help on Wednesday by picking up your telephone and calling your senators (202) 224-3121 and telling them that you do not support the Balanced Budget Amendment and that you want them to vote No. African American women are organizing and each Wednesday during the 100 days of the legislative activity we will flood the Capitol Hill switchboard with calls. Ev-

ery Wednesday we will let our elected officials know that we do vote and that we do take names and we will vote out those who are sacrificing the future of our children.

You can help during the rest of the week as well. Organize your church or your mosque. Organize your bowling league or block association or professional association. You can bring post cards addressed to your senator that simply say, "Vote No on the Balanced Budget Amendment" and have people sign them and then mail them right then. And, when the next section of the Contract with America comes up, (which will probably be the Personal Responsibility Act, which deals with welfare reform) send post cards about that.

In his final book nearly 30 years ago, Martin Luther King Jr. wrote, "This is not time for romantic illusions and empty philosophical debates about freedom. This is a time for action. What is needed is a strategy for change, a tactical program that will bring the Negro into the mainstream of American life as quickly as possible... without recognizing

that we will end up with solutions that don't solve, answers that don't answer and explanations that don't explain..."

The Contract with America is a solution that doesn't solve the real problems of America - problems of not enough jobs for Americans and no vision of what to do about that other than build more prisons. The Contract with America and talk of orphanages for children of poor, teen-aged mothers is an answer that doesn't answer the real questions of America - questions of how to deal with millions of neglected, abused, alienated, uneducated, unemployed and violent children struggling to survive in a world which has turned its back on them. The Contract with America and a mean-spirited, callous blaming of the poor for this country's ills is an explanation that doesn't explain the real causes of our nation's dilemma.

This is a time for action. Call your senator on Wednesday. Take responsibility for getting 10 others to call. Organize your own community. Let's get angry and get organized. NOW.

perspectives

Could It Happen Here? History May Hold The Answer (conclusion)

T few readers, only a few, took umbrage ("resented" I love that old word) to implications that black Portlanders of 50 years ago (and of a comparable age and economic group) had a far superior talent, ability and commitment to community than the current stratum. You can argue with history and fact if you like; not me.

In the same vein, another reader took me to task for "disparaging the practitioners of the 'social sciences', a noble profession indeed!" I believe that it was Mark Twain who so ably described the three principal modes of prevarications: "Lies, damn lies and statistics!" It is the latter technique of collecting and collating information which is the forte of the profession -- but which, in the case of flawed or prejudiced observations, produces distorted and dangerous conclusions about the human race and its condition (how about "The Bell Curve"?)

It is in this Black History Month of February that we are privileged to the more intimate than usual (and better organized) narratives that recount and detail the victories and trials of a race.

Though I proudly submit that I consistently present the more accurate and factual reports on the past and present circumstances of African American -- as in the case of this series -- I, never the less, must grudgingly admit that here and there is a social scientist who surmounts the culturally imposed limitations of his profession.

It is in this context that I cite a section of a recent book by Dr. Quintard Taylor, black professor of history at the University of Oregon; "The Forging Of A Black Community: Seattle's Central District from 1870 to through the Civil Rights Era". Though obviously not about the history of Portland, I would nevertheless direct you to that section of Part Two (pp.74 & 75) which parallels "the palpable failure of African American businessmen and women" with the Japanese (sub-

"Korean" for local analysis).

It is a given that most particularly it is the financial and commercial factors which will decide if a race or culture is "On the way out!" as I have intimated. On page 74 Professor Taylor speaks of black neighborhood stores "in a contest that pitted ethnic loyalty against perceptions of superior service" [from other races]. In Portland

there was some of that -- in respect to several Japanese-owned markets -- but primarily, after an older generation of ambitious and corporate-minded blacks passed on, so did the drive and aspiration.

Readers are well aware that, for purposes of comparison, I frequently refer to an accounting clientele over the years that was principally composed of other races -- and involved the full spectrum of American enterprise, financial industrial, retail, wholesale, service and manufacturing. It is from this purview or range that I reach experience-based conclusions about the non-viability of a community whose makeup is skewed toward programs, entitlements, quasi-mercantile ventures of a social or artistic nature -- and which completely lacks the capital accretion and financially cooperative organizations found among the majority population or other ethnics.

I am well aware that throughout the period of these histories and recitations of the economic travails of African Americans, we were (as now) denied the most basic modes of access to realistic economic development -- even when against the odds we managed to accumulate the necessary capital or gained the necessary expertise in the most obvious place, on-the-job: brand name retail franchises in clothing, jewellery, furniture, etc., or hardware and leasing/service outlets -- not to mention the denial of prime retail sites from downtown locations to the malls.

So during this month of prognostications by erudite scholars and expounding social scientists, listen also to the people -- know what really happened!



By Professor McKinley Burt

Letter To The Editor

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

Blacks May Be On Way Out In Portland Neighborhood Group

TO THE EDITOR:

This letter is being written in agreement with the Portland Observer's "Perspectives" column by Prof. McKinley Burt, entitled "Blacks On The Way Out? Could It Happen Here?"

However, my comments are from a community standpoint with the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, being a good example. My activism with the coalition and neighborhood associations has continued since 1981, but changes that have taken place could have a monumental

impact on black participation.

Recently, the executive director of the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, Edna Robertson, retired after 24 years of service to the community. Unfortunately, Ms. Robertson's retirement which took place in December, was not announced early enough for her to be a part of the selection process for her replacement. This in turn gave the commissioner-in-charge the opportunity to create a personally-appointed neighborhood task force, that would do a study and

create changes giving him more authority over the Office of Neighborhood Associations.

What I'm saying is that the commissioner-in-charge is making sure that decision-making controls are left up to him. Which creates the question as to whether or not the next executive director for the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods will be black.

Currently, I am personally going through a slow process of elimination within the coalition. If these actions continue to hap-

pen, Professor Burt's question and comments will include the our community and Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, since most of our leaders have become a part of the system making money.

Blacks should therefore remember on election day next year when the commissioner-in-charge is running for re-election, what decisions and changes were made in the Northeast community.

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N.E. PORTLAND COMMUNITY ACTIVIST

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