EDITORIAL

NATIONAL RAINBOW COALITION

Full Employment

"Jobs For All is a comprehensive program to ensure suitable jobs and good wages for everyone who wants to work. Full employment is both an ethical imperative and the key to economic justice and prosperity... We reject the idea that unemployment is ever desirable and we reject the use of unemployment to fight inflation. Real full employment is feasible and achievable in the modern global economy. The key barriers are political and ideological, not just technical or economic.

"In itself, full employment will not deal completely with the problems facing different groups, but we believe it is the necessary precondition for reducing the barriers to their resolution... There is no reason inherent in the real resources available to us why we cannot move - and rapidly - within two or three years to a situation of genuine full employment, estimated... to be about 1.5 percent unemployment.

"We have developed a plan and policies which are oriented around 11 principles. In brief, these are the principles: jobs for all; adequate income for all; rights for workers; community investment, preservation and support; military conversion; environmental preservation and sustainability; fair trade and economically viable local production for local consumption; democratical planning and industrial policy; rebuilding the nation's cities; sound government finance; and lifelong learning.

"The start of a 'silent depression' began in 1973, when the rate of growth of two key indicators of economic well-being, the real income of the average worker and the real median family income, began to decline. By 1990, the real income of the average worker was 19.1 percent below the level of 1973.

In a study of employment policy since World War II, one reason cited for the lack of constituent support for full employment is the government's orientation toward providing programs for the relief of the temporarily unemployed rather than a comprehensive commitment to meeting the economic needs of the entire nation... The lack of a full employment policy, robbed other proposals for a coherence and overarching purpose. By demonstrating that full employment is tied to the solutions of other problems such as the budget deficit, poverty, homelessness, crime, family stress, decaying infrastructure and environmental degradation - that is, by making it do more than just give jobs to the jobless, we increase its potential constituency.

"It is important to prioritize... a legislative strategy that would move us toward full employment: the introduction of an omnibus Full Employment and Economic Justice bill.... which would lend credibility to the ideas articulated in Jobs For All, as well as give new visibility to the goal of full employment; seek support for a permanent, standby job creation program; appoint a high-level government commission to study and propose solutions to the problem of unemployment and underemployment; to increase public awareness of the true magnitude of joblessness... support a new, expanded measure of unemployment; and recognizing that in a globally interdependent economy it would be difficult, if not impossible to create full employment in one nation and that a global 'New Deal' is needed, a final, albeit long-range, initiative would be to call for a global employment summit, perhaps under the auspices of the United Nations."

These are excerpts from a new book by Sheila D. Collins, Helen Lacks Ginsburg and Gertrude Schaffner Goldbert entitled Jobs For all, published by Apex Press. They are seeking signatures on a "New Initiatives For Full Employment" response form. We encourage you to buy the book and support this effort.

THIS WAY FOR BLACK EMPOWERMENT

Clinton And Newt Are In The Same Boat

BY LENORA FULANI

In his hour-and-a-half-long State of the Union address, Bill Clinton didn't once mention us.

Since it was the black vote that gave the Democrats their margin of victory in the few races they managed to salvage in 1994 - like Senator Charles Robb's win over Oliver North in Virginia and Senator Diane Feinstein's reelection in California - you would think that he'd be a little more responsive. But the Democrats are still counting on our loyalty, no matter how often they insult us, abuse us or exclude us.

By contrast, the president did take pains to make his pitch to Independents. The first half of his speech sounded like it had been written by Ross Perot. Why? In 1992, 20 million people broke with both the Democrats and Republicans and voted for Perot because he talked about opening up the political process and taking America back from the corrupt politicians.

So far, Republican Newt Gingrich has managed to capitalize somewhat better than "New Democrat" Bill Clinton on the anger of voters. But Clinton and Gingrich are ultimately committed to preserving the two-party arrangement and may end up in the same boat - the one the American people want to turn over.

With the Cold War ended, we find ourselves face to face with a new set of social and economic problems. The U.S. is not sufficiently competitive in the global economy. We confront a staggering national debt. Our education system is failing. Domestic, street, and racial violence haunt urban, suburban and rural areas alike. Drug use has reached epidemic proportions. Social and moral decadence are found everywhere. Can the Bill Clintons and Newt Gingriches come up with workable solutions? Maybe?

But the real question is: can their proposed solutions - contracts with America, or new covenants, or whatever - be realized? Only if the American people - of all races and economic backgrounds - are building the popular consensus and the will to realize these solutions.

Do the conditions exist for this type of activism? No. American democracy is far too restricted, controlled by big money, centralized and top-down. That's exactly what the American people are so angry about.

How do we address this? With a thoroughgoing restructuring of American democracy - including term limits; full rights to initiative, referendum and recall; automatic voter registration; mandatory televised campaign debates; and ballot access reform. Most importantly, we need to go well beyond the conservatizing two-party system of professional politicians, to a participatory multi-party democracy of ordinary Americans.

During the civil rights movement, black people raised the issue of fairness and inclusion and changed democracy for all Americans. In the 1990s we must once again make the issue of democratic process the burning issue of America, this time with a total political restructuring that allows African Americans - as members of the total American community - to determine a new direction for our country.

CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

An Open Letter To Our Children During Black History Month

BY BERNICE POWELL JACKSON

Dear Young Sisters and Brothers,

All of you are our future and our survival as a people and this world depends on your survival and your hope. Many of you understand that and go to school every day, learn something every day, do something positive for the universe every day. We don't read about you in the newspapers or see you on television, but you are there and you are our hope and we salute you.

Some of you, though, are already lost to the streets, caught up in a downward spiral of violence and pain, headed toward prison or a wheelchair or death. We see your pictures on television every day and we weep for you and for ourselves.

All of you need to know that you come from a proud people, a determined people, a creative people, a prayerful people with a history rich with accomplishment and a love and respect for each other. All of you need to know that history because in that history there is hope for you, in that history there is meaning for you, in that history there is love for you.

The outside world would have you believe negative things about yourselves. The outside world would have you believe that the place for black men is prison, when black men have been doctors and lawyers and teachers and inventors and architects and writers and composers and mayors and astronauts and women of God.

The outside world would have you believe that you have inferior minds, when a black man took a peanut and invented dozens of ways to use it. The outside world would have you believe you cannot learn math, when black people in Egypt invented math. The outside world would have you believe that you can not speak English properly, when you came from a people who spoke many languages when they were snatched from their land and then learned English while shackled to their brothers and sisters. The outside world would have you believe that college is no place for you, when a black woman started a college for her people with only a few dollars in her pocket and a determination that we would have the opportunity to learn.

You are young, gifted and black. Despite those images, despite those negative messages, you are young, gifted and black. Despite the poverty, despite the pain, you are young, gifted and black. Despite the guns, despite the drugs, you are young, gifted and black.

We who are adults have failed you. We have not put up those protective shields that our parents and their parents built around us. We have allowed those negative images to get past a wall of protection and love and into your psyches and your souls. We have allowed the outside world's message that what is important in life is money and cars and jewelry and possessions to invade our community's being when we know that what is important in life is truth and love and respect, none of which can be bought and all of which are the essence of our humanity.

We who are adults have failed you. We have abandoned you all too often. We have left you to the vultures, to the drug dealers, the con artists, the thieves and the carriers of death. We have not taken you by the hand and led you through the valley of darkness to help you see that you can achieve, you can learn, you can find a place for yourself in this world, as difficult a place as it may be.

But during this Black History Month, the lingering spirit of our ancestors call us to rise up and tell you the stories -- the stories of our past, the stories of our hope, the stories of our love. And in telling you these stories, we can reclaim all of our children and ensure our future.

My young sisters and brothers, you are young, gifted and black. The future is yours -- may we help you reach it?

OPEN LETTER

MR. WILLIE BROWN, PERSONNEL COMMITTEE CHAIR

Dear Willie:

I am writing to you because of information I received yesterday from Mr. Pete Kelly, Bureau of Personnel Services. It appears that a city computer is going to be the controlling segment in the selection process for the next Executive Director of the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods. Mr. Kelly informed me that Marsha Palmer, the current Interim Director had received a very high score by computer and was being added to the list of persons being interviewed for Executive Director. Enclosed is a complete copy of choices made by Personnel Committee members, which screened resumes of 75 applicants minus of one who had withdrawn.

After reviewing the draft of Letter of Agreement between the city of Portland and the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods for hiring and supervising of NECN's Executive Director, which had been sent by Diane Linn, Director, Office of Neighborhood Associations to the Board of Directors of N.E. Coalition of Neighborhoods, nothing specifies anything about a computer involvement (copy enclosed). However, after the top 4 applicant choices were 3 Black males and 1 Jewish White female, a lower scoring 5 candidates were added to the interview list. Afterwhich, Ms. Palmer, the Interim Director was added do to a computer score.

Being an active participant, I realized what is taking place in the Northeast Coalition office, which caused me to write a letter to the editor of the Portland Observer in agreement with Prof. Mckinley Burt's Perspectives columns entitled "Blacks On The Way Out? Could It Happen Here?, as a Northeast community activist. Hopefully, as the Personnel Committee Chair, you will not allow the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods to become a victim of the City's game playing processes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Charles Flake, Personnel Committee; Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods

perspectives

Selected Readings In Ebony II (Classics)

More of the solid image-building materials to further self-esteem and hope for the future; the sort of histories and accounts of superb achievements that are needed to sustain and inspire a race of people. And to assure the significant others of this world that there is plenty of documentation for our claims.

By Professor Mckinley Burt

"Black Pioneers of Science And Invention", Louis Haber, Odssey Books (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich) 1970. This is an excellent collection of well-written accounts of major inventions and medical break throughs by African American innovators.

"Black Inventors Of America', McKinley Burt, National Book Co., Portland, Oregon, 1969-1989. The pioneering book on Black Inventors which began the entire genre of investigations of the inventive genius of blacks.

"Secrets Of The Great Pyramid', Peter Tompkins, Harper & Row, 1971, 1978 and later. Easily the best written, documented and illustrated of the books written about the Great Pyramid of Africa. The mathematics, technology, Europe's dependency.

"Mathematics In The Time Of The Pharaohs", Richard J. Gillings, Dover Publications Inc., 1982. This book is the most informative review I've seen of the sophisticated math developed by the Africans during this period. Covers their techniques of numerals and numeration, algebra and geometry (area and volume), fractions, mensuration, arithmetic and geometric progressions,etc. Especially, we find here a complete description of the method of multiplying by doubling. I demonstrated that this "binary" method of computation was the exact same method used by modern computers, thereby winning a National Science Foundation prize for 'The Dalles', Oregon school District (1966).

"Africa Counts: Number And Pattern in African Culture", Claudia Zaslavsky; Prindle, Weber & Schmidt, Boston 1973. This is a broad-ranging coverage of the African continent as a whole; Egypt, Dogon, Yoruba, Nigeria, East Africa--Original and Arabic counting systems, mensuration, record-keeping, forecasting, gambling, calendar, currency etc.

"Number Words And Number Symbols: A Cultural History Of Numbers" Karl Menninger, The M.I.T. Press. 1977. As the title implies, looks at the concept of numbers as developed by people all over the world; Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Babylonians, East Indians, Chinese, Mayans, Japanese, American Indians, Etc. 470 pages.

"Isaac Newton, historian," Frank E. Manuel, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963. This is a priceless reference work for both t.he general public and the serious student of ancient African history, Newton was a prodigious historian whose accuracy (and honesty) in reporting the accomplishments of Africans in mathematics, astronomy, letters and culture is matched only by Plato, the Greek historian and philosopher. It is for this reason, of course, that American scholars prefer not to reveal too much about the prolific cultural investigations of the great mathematician who gave us "The Theory of Universal Gravitation". And Calculus.

In perfecting this theory, Newton held up its publication for several years waiting for verification of celestial coordinates by two European scientists who were using the Great pyramid at Gizeh, Africa for their geodesics (see Thompkin's Pyramid book).

Here, in Manuel's book, Newton is seen to trace down various myths and show that this is the method ancient peoples used to honor and memorialize people of great accomplishment ("Euhemerism"): the ancient hero of Libya, Africa, "Atlas", an excellent astronomer who Discovered The Sphere, Atlantis, an Egyptian colony in Libya, Uranus (Ammon) who first established cities and towns.

-Isaac Newton was also deep into religious studies. His investigations revealed that much of Israel's philosophical development was due to African colonization (as was the case with Greece). There is much, much more as Newton correlates the pantheons of these countries with their African origins in Egypt. Sermons at Cambridge.

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