

EDITORIAL

The Rainbow Coalition convened a broad coalition of supporters to hold a press conference affirming affirmative action. The National Organization for Women (NOW), Congressman Kweisi Mfume (D-MD), former chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, Katherine Spiller of the Feminist Majority Foundation and other sounded the warning that the Republicans are using affirmative action as a 1996 "wedge" issue to divide Americans, and too many Democrats, including President Clinton, are providing a weak defense.

Recently on the Sunday news shows both House Majority Leader Richard "Dick" Arney (R-TX) and imminent presidential candidate Pat Buchanan said affirmative action is unnecessary and should be done away with. Newly announced Republican presidential candidate, Senator Phil Gramm (R-TX), said his first act as president would be to issue an executive order ending affirmative action. Senate Majority Leader and unofficial presidential candidate, Senator Robert Dole (R-KS), called for a "review" of all affirmative action programs--only to be joined in that call by President Bill Clinton.

That is like Johnnie Cochran and Bob Shapiro saying to O.J. Simpson, in the middle of his trial, that they are going to "review" his case. In the heat of battle, Mr. Simpson does not need someone to review his case, he needs to be defended by strong defense attorneys.

Obviously, as a general principle, no one is against reviewing public policies and programs. Government programs should be reviewed

NATIONAL RAINBOW COALITION

Affirmative Action Myths

from time to time. But for President Clinton to suggest reviewing affirmative action in the middle of this political climate and at the start of the 1996 political season--with this president's lack of a moral center and a demonstrated record of political wishy-washiness, especially on this issue--it is a little unsettling. It is like O.J. Simpson's defense attorneys calling for a public review of his case in the middle of the trial.

There are those who say, "You have to understand, the president is under a lot of political pressure. What do you want him to do?" That's simple--Stand For Principle, Teach And Lead!!

Myth #1: White males are being hurt and discriminate against because of affirmative action. White males are 33% of the population, but 80% of tenured professors; 80% of the U.S. House; 90% of the U.S. Senate; 92% of the Forbes 400; 97% of school superintendents; 99.9% of professional athletic team owners; and 100% of U.S. Presidents.

Since the inception of this nation, white males were given preferential treatment--the right to vote, the right to own land, apply for loans and enter institutions of higher learning. In the late 1800s, white males

were given millions of acres of mineral and soil-rich land under the Homestead Act as a bonus to go west and replace Native American. Such preferential treatment has carried over to 1995. White males are still the most educated, the most highly paid, the wealthiest, the most politically powerful and occupy the most prestigious positions.

Myth #2: Affirmative action creates preferences for women and people of color. After 250 years of slavery, 100 years of apartheid and 40 years of discrimination, this unbroken record of race and sex discrimination has warranted a conservative remedy--affirmative action (reparations are truer to America's history--e.g., Western Europe, Japan and Israel). Those who have been locked out through negative action need affirmative action laws to protect them from both a discriminatory legacy and continuing discrimination. We need not be race neutral, but racially inclusive. We need not be color and gender blind, but color and gender caring.

Myth #3: Affirmative action has hurt people of color, women and the nation. Affirmative action has benefitted the entire nation. It has benefitted corporations--we have the

strongest and most diversified work force in the world. It has benefitted families--allowing two-wage earner households. It has benefitted minorities (African Americans, Latinos/Hispanics, Asians and Native Americans), older Americans and the disabled. It has helped to create a new middle class.

Myth #4: Affirmative action is no longer needed. We cannot fall prey to the insane notion that discrimination is an evil of the past. It is a very painful reality today. While affirmative action has diversified and improved the American workforce and its centers of higher learning, as a nation we still have a long way to go.

If the president conducts a Full public review, he and the country will find empirical proof that when the law is removed or not enforced we return to our old ways and our old habits. Since the Croson decision, minority contracting in the City of Richmond, Virginia has gone from 35% to 1%--i.e., to pre-affirmative action levels.

When the president reviews lending practices, he will find that access to capital and credit are denied to women and people of color because lending decisions are private, subjective and arbitrary. Unless there are laws that are strongly enforced, with a plan that includes goals and timetables, the traditionally locked-out will never gain access to capital.

Upon completion of his review, we urge the president to renew his commitment to affirmative action and strong enforcement of the law. We hope he will make the EEOC and the OFCC visible agencies and forces for good. The falsely accused need protection, hope and opportunity, not scapegoating, divisiveness and undue blame.

perspectives

The Education Scene, II

BY PROF. MCKINLEY BURT

Let me interrupt the flow for a moment. Last Wednesday I made one of my infrequent appearances on cable television, although I hope to resume my former level of exposure.

What I've been doing is some innovative development of that national talk show format--From My Home, Yet!

I have spoken of this earlier, a communications technology is expanding at a tremendous pace. I have reached audiences of tens of thousands in a single radio broadcast in cities like Houston and Atlanta, will have a formal studio soon, I hope.

In respect to that television program (N.E. Spectrum, '38). I may have given incomplete citations of two very important books on African American history. The first was "Staying Power: The History of Black People In Britain", by Peter Fryer, Humanities Press, N.J. 1984. Has extensive notes and bibliography. Tells documented story of tens of thousands of American blacks who fought on the side of the British rather than for their cruel slave masters during the American Revolution: Combat troops, cavalry, boat captives, sailors, tailors, cooks, etc. Promised their freedom, win or lose, the British were as good as their word. Thousands were embarked from southern seaports, transferred to Canada or England where they retired on lifetime pensions (why weren't we told this?).

The other important book is, "Isaac Newton Historian", by Frank E. Manuel, Belnap Press (Harvard University), Cambridge, 1963. One immediately begins to appreciate why American writers have deliberately shied away from revealing the true scope and breadth of this great mathematician who proposed the famous theory of "Universal Gravitation". While European greats from Leibniz to Voltaire created a tradition in studying and evaluation of Newton's research in historiography, religion, Egyptology and metaphysics, over here you are denied knowledge of the real foundation and thrust of his grandiose thinking that paralleled that of the North African whom he studied so avidly.

I detail more information in this vein because I have had many phone calls. Several years ago I detailed how Isaac Newton held up that "Theory Of Universal Gravitation" waiting on more accurate measurements of the "Great African Pyramid" by astronomers John Greaves and Tito Livio Burattini: Newton's theory, like the computations for the launch of "Sputnik" into space by the Russians, required coordi-

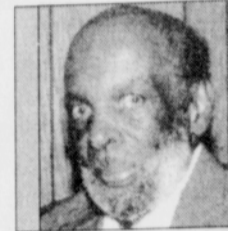
nates and geodesics that were derived from this meticulously accurate structure of the ancient Africans. One should also read Chapter I of Peter Tompkin's, "Secrets of The Great Pyramid", Harper & Row, 1971, 1978 (Paper, Colophon Books).

Now, back with Sir Isaac Newton, we find that one of his first books--and perhaps most important--was "A Dissertation upon the Sacred Cubit of the Jews and the Cubits of several nations (African): in which, from the Dimensions of the Greatest pyramid, as taken by Mr. John Greaves, the ancient Cubit of Memphis is determined." What a title and what a revelation! Further reinforcing the Israel/Africa connection we have the classic, "A Dictionary Of The Bible: Comprising The Antiquities, Biography, Geography And Natural History", by William Smith, Classical Examiner in the University of London.

Here we have extensive exposition of the impact upon Israel of various African conquests and colonizations; African icons, artifacts, tools, artisans and many other examples of technology transfer and cultural assimilation are lavishly illustrated and cited.

For access and reference to overseas libraries and archives I wish to thank Dr. Dimitri Alexander, the grandson of an immigrant Jewish engineer who was an accounting officer of mine, forty years ago in Los Angeles, and Dr. Nohaud Toulon, head of the Urban Studies Dept. at Portland State University--my former boss of mine and formerly Minister of Housing for the State of Egypt.

Be sure to check out Manuel's book on Isaac Newton who nearly told it all: The Atlas Mountains" of North Africa named after a real African ruler (made a god through technique of euhemerism); African development of solid geometry, discovery of the Sphere (math essential to Newton's 'discoveries:



By Professor McKinley Burt

Vantage Point

Developing A Need New Breed Of Black Elected Officials

What is the role of electoral politics in the struggle for Black empowerment and what is the role of Black elected officials in the empowerment process?

These may well be the most critical questions/issues which a National Black Agenda Conference must address. Unfortunately, after the heroic struggle to regain the right to vote in the U.S., Black voter participation is far from ideal. Large numbers of Black people are alienated from the electoral political process. There are more than 6 million African Americans who are not registered to vote and Black voter turnout for local and state elections is often extremely low. Many within the Black community, particularly among the most oppressed sectors of our community, see little relationship between voting and a change in their life circumstances.

There is also growing disillusionment with Black elected officials. In the 60's and 70's there was a sense of optimism that the election of Black people to various public positions would lead to real empowerment and real change for the Black masses. Black America now has more Black elected officials than ever before, but very little has changed for the masses of poor and working people in the Black community. Replacing White faces with Black faces in old places has not led to empowerment or change for the Black masses.

On the contrary far too many Black elected officials have lost the character and fighting spirit which characterized the movement of the 60's; a movement which propelled Black people into elected office in record numbers. And, far too many Black elected officials have become corrupt, self-aggrandizing tools of the system who have been reduced to managing the mess created by a racist and oppressive system.

It is clear that Africans in America need a dynamic new movement for Black empowerment as we struggle to liberate the masses of Black people into the Twenty-first Century. And, that movement must start with an understanding that electoral politics is only one dimension/aspect of the struggle for Black empowerment. Non-electoral forms of struggle i.e., mobilizing/organizing around issues, demonstrations, boycotts, strikes, civil disobedience, rebellion etc. are as important as electoral politics in the empowerment process. Indeed, it has been the over investment in electoral politics to the neglect of other forms of political struggle that has stymied Black progress. It is also important to understand that the leaders of non-electoral forms of struggle are every bit as legitimate as Black elected officials. Both elements comprise the Black political leadership within the African American community.

A new movement for Black empowerment must also produce a

new political leadership including a new breed of Black elected officials. We need to elect people to public office who are possessed with a vision of social transformation. This racist-capitalist system must be fundamentally changed/transformed if the masses of Africans in America (in the world for that matter) are ever to experience a decent quality of life on this planet. The goal for progressive Black politics and progressive Black political leadership must be the creation of a new society. Amerikkka as is simply will not do.

Therefore, we need Black elected officials who are willing to expose the contradictions and hypocrisy of this system; politicians who are dedicated to educating the masses and creating the mass consciousness required to build a massive movement for change. For example, Black elected officials should be stridently and consistently attacking welfare for the corporations and the wealthy in this country including the ongoing multi-billion dollar taxpayer bail-out of the S&L industry. We need a new breed of elected officials who will actively participate in the process of developing progressive, people oriented agendas; politicians who will carry the Black Agenda with them into the corridors of power and fight like hell to strain the system to benefit the masses of Black people and the oppressed.

We need elected officials who,

in the face of the call for cut backs, will demand drastic reductions in the military/war budget rather than reductions in desperately needed social programs; politicians who have the guts to fight for reparations to repair the damages to Africans in America inflicted during the criminal enslavement of our people; We need a new breed of elected officials who are connected to the grassroots, who act on behalf of the grassroots and are accountable to the grassroots; politicians who are willing to work with community based movements and grassroots political leaders to engage the struggle for Black empowerment and Black advancement "by any means necessary."

A new political movement that will impart a new understanding of the role of electoral politics in the empowerment process and produce a new breed of Black elected officials will not be created by osmosis. We must make this movement out of the collective intelligence and committed contributions of thousands, even million of sisters and brothers who are determined to fashion a new future for Africans in America and the world. The forthcoming National Black Agenda Conference will be one of the critical events in the making of a new political movement for the empowerment of African people. Its success will very much depend upon your input and your involvement. Remember, "we are the leaders we've been looking for."

BLACK EMPOWERMENT: We're Caught In The Gridlock

BY DR. LENORA FULANI

The 10th Congress has been in session for nearly a month. In that time it has enacted a handful of democracy reforms aimed at demonstrating that there is a willingness on the part of both Democrats and Republicans to make elected officials more accountable to the public.

Now Congress and the president are focusing on "issues." These include welfare reform, the federal budget, the Mexican bail-out, and the minimum wage. But the political situation in this country is such that governmental approaches and solutions to these issues are not effective. Take the issue of health care. A

local hospital may establish a special clinic to provide nutritional counseling to pregnant mothers. This program might be enormously effective. But there is no evidence that such programs can be generalized throughout the health care system. Look at what happened in the last session of Congress when the president attempted to initiate health care reform. Even the most modest attempt to reform the health care system became so highly politicized - caught in the crossfire between the American Medical Association, the pharmaceutical companies, the health care union bureaucracy and the political action committees - that nothing could be done to transform the medical industry. Not to mention that the entire dialogue never addressed the quality of health care. The declin-

ing quality of hospital and medical care for ordinary Americans - infants, people with AIDS, cancer patients, people with diabetes and heart disease, our elderly - is a national tragedy. But the bipartisan government is unable to do anything about it.

There has been a lot of discussion about political gridlock, about how partisan concerns and competition have made Congress and the state legislatures unable to take initiative and create workable social and economic policy. This is certainly true. But when the political pundits expound on the pitfalls of gridlock, they leave out the equation that it is our lives, our children, our homes, our jobs, our quality of life which are caught in that gridlock. We pay taxes to support a govern-

ment bureaucracy that does not work for us. We are the first generation of Americans who cannot promise our children that they will do better than we have done. We have friends and family members who are caught in the net of drug and alcohol abuse. We are the victims of violent crime. Many children in this country still go to bed hungry. Where are the solutions to these problems?

We have to face the reality that these solutions cannot be produced by our government under the current arrangement. Government is too politicized; politics is too corrupt; and the American people - of all races and religions and income levels - do not have a voice, do not have the power to redirect this country. Until we deal with nothing else.

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