

## AFRICA INSIGHT Democracy: Why it doesn't Work In Africa.

BY PROMISE KING

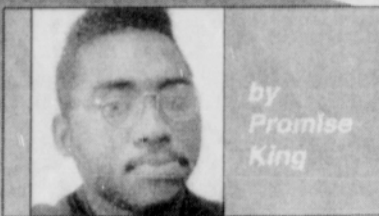
Many tongues are wagging about how inept Africans are in keeping to the rules of democracy. These folks are quick to point to the hordes of military dictators that are ruling most African countries. And the senseless killings that have resulted.

In as much of Africa's experience with democracy has failed miserably, it does not any way represent Africans inability to govern themselves. It means the system is unworkable in Africa. I will tell you why.

Unlike the western set up, African societies do not have the corresponding social structures that foster political parties. There are no broad economic classes and there are no workers on one side and owners of capital on the other side. African countries have peasant farmers, bureaucrats and those who live off the production of others. On what basis are you going to build democracy with these ingredients?

When there are no economic or political interests to bond people across ethnic lines and you insist they form themselves in parties, what you get are ethnically-based parties.

In effect these are not parties. These are fronts and gangs. And when



by Promise King

you pit them against each other with government as the prize, the end result is scuffle and clashes. And when this happens some white folks throw their hands to heaven and say, "look at these Africans, they do not understand democracy."

Folks, Africans understand democracy. And we have practiced it for centuries but in our own way. African democracy is about individuals and not parties. The individuals know who can be trusted to represent his interests. The African allegiance is to that person and not to the biggest political party that may not have his interest at heart.

And in Africa, without foreign politics, we make our decisions by consensus not by confrontation.

Because democracy works in the western world does not guarantee it would work in the woods of Africa.

Give us our chance.

Promise King is an associate editor of the Portland Observer. He was born in Nigeria, West Africa.

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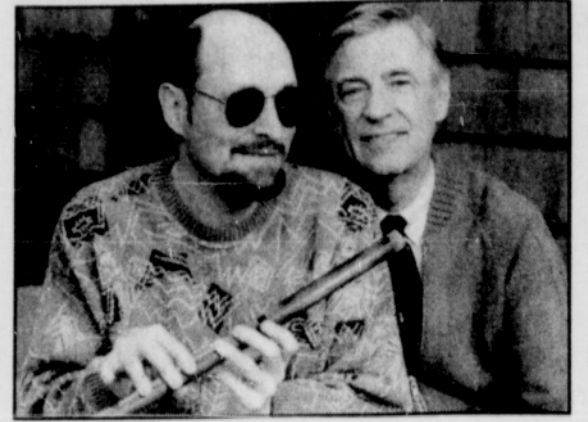


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From a worldly point of view, there is no mistake so great as that of always being right.

—Samuel Butler

## Mister Rogers Says "Everybody's Special"



**Left:** Neighbor Maggie Stewart shows Mister Rogers bread pudding and uses the leftover raisins and nuts to make sandwiches -- each one different -- on program #1686 during the new week of Mister Rogers' Neighborhood programs about Everybody's Special, premiering on PBS August 28 - September 1. **Right:** Blind jazz musician Eric Kloss offers Mister Rogers a musical way to talk about uniqueness by playing an array of flutes -- each with a different sound -- on program #1690 of Everybody's Special, airing on PBS August 28-September 1. During this new week of Mister Rogers' Neighborhood programs, Fred Rogers helps children understand that everybody is special in this life and that everybody they meet has something special to give and receive.

Photos by Richard Kelly

"We're special because of who we are inside..." That's the message of affirmation Fred Rogers shares with children in the upcoming Mister Rogers' Neighborhood programs scheduled to air August 28 - September 1 on PBS. The series, entitled "Everybody's Special," encourages children to discover and affirm their own uniqueness.

Mister Rogers tells his young audience that, "If you look for it, you can find something extra special about yourself, and about your neighbor." Through songs ("There's Only One Like you," "It's You I Like") and visits with neighbors -- old and new -- Mister Rogers explores the meaning of "unique." Identical twins Kelly and Megan tell about their differences; we get a

glimpse of the many ways children and grown-ups use mirrors to reflect their images; Mr. McFeely delivers a video showing how people craft guitars individually to make each one distinct. According to Rogers, "When a child begins to see him or herself as unique, as special, it opens the door to the possibility of seeing others in the same light. This is the foundation children need for learning to become caring and competent adults."

But sometimes people feel bad about themselves and feeling special isn't that easy. In fact, there are a couple of "neighbors" in the Neighborhood of Make-Believe who Aren't feeling Special at all. We discover why Prince Tuesday doesn't like himself and why Cornflake S. Pcially is convinced that no one cares about

him. How could this happen in the Neighborhood? Can anything be done to help them?

Throughout the week, King Friday looks for a neighbor who can help his son see himself in a better light. It seems that prince Tuesday thinks others like him only because of what he appears to be on the outside -- a prince wearing royal robes. Meanwhile, the Neighborhood plans and prepares a grand surprise birthday party for the unsuspecting Cornflake S. Pcially. But because everyone has been Extra careful not to mention his approaching birthday, Corney assumes that nobody cares about him. Through the week, we learn what friends can do for friends at times like these.

## DR. ROTHMAN TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY CARE AT SPORTS EVENTS

Edward Rothman, D.C., F.A.C.O., a chiropractic physician in Portland and member of the Oregon Chiropractic Sports Council, has volunteered to provide medical emergency care at several sports events in the next few months.

He will give emergency medical care at the following events: On July 29, Rose City Relay, Lewis and Clark College; August 5, he will serve as medical director for the International Martial Arts Tournament, Madison High School; August 12, Regional Open Karate Tournament,

Linn-Benton Community College, Albany; August 26, Seaside, Hood to Coast Run; on October 1, the Portland Marathon.

Dr. Rothman is a leading expert in chiropractic sports medicine. He has a long and impressive list of awards and accomplishments, has authored and co-authored chiropractic research articles and has written several columns in a variety of publications dealing with general healthcare issues, martial arts and fitness.

He has coordinated

chiropractic and emergency medical care for several martial arts event on the east and west coasts and has served on the medical team for the Hood to Coast Run and the Portland Marathon. Prior to establishing his chiropractic practice in Portland in 1992, his practice was in Fairfield, Connecticut. He taught full-time at Western States Chiropractic College from 1989-1992, and is frequently asked to lecture there.

He has been featured in electronic and print media.



"Men grow to the extent that they are the beneficiaries of diverse ideas."  
Whitney M. Young, Jr.

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Proceeds benefit the Century Club, which exists to encourage and financially support minority and low-income youth participation in Scouting.

Our keynote speaker for the event is Dr. Robert Ingram, President of the National Conference of Black Mayors, Inc. Master of ceremonies is KOIN-TV's Mike Donahue. For ticket information, call the Boy Scout office at 226-3423.



Dr. Robert Ingram



Mike Donahue



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