

## Minority Business For The Year 2000 And Beyond; Part I

BY PROF. MCKINLEY BURT

It is certainly not a case of "Here We Go Again!" The American economic and political picture has changed the business environment for all and sundry and in a most drastic manner; at all levels of entrepreneurship and for all races and classes. Yet the fundamental prerequisites for success remain the same: Preparation and commitment.

In this current approach to methods for achieving a better share of the American/Portland economic pie, what we most emphatically will not do is take more than a passing note of those really high-flying black enterprises. Though *Ebony* and *Black Enterprise* magazines like to feature these ventures in detail, we think the more "meat-and-potatoes" type operations make for better models and learning techniques for the multitude. Besides, look at what is happening to many of them because there is not a supporting minority economic and social substructure.

Just briefly: TLC Beatrice International Holdings, Inc. has had a

rocky and uncertain road as the nation's largest black-owned company (Over a billion dollar valuation). This food distribution business, founded by the late Reginald E. Lewis, has been run by his widow, an immigrant Asian attorney and as indicated in a recent network show (Pinnacles), the business is no longer considered "black," or nearly as promising.

A strong tide of disappointment has run through America's black communities at all levels since Johnson Products Co. of Chicago, one of the nation's most prominent black-owned family businesses (hair care) merged with IVAX Corp., a white-owned cosmetics and pharmaceutical conglomerate. Perhaps toward the end of this series we might consider how in many cases some foresight and planning might prevent these "cultural losses" occasioned by death or divorce.

At a recent meeting of a new crop of prospective minority entrepreneurs, I was questioned about two in particular of my past experiences. Teaching business at Portland State

University and at the Northeast extension campus, and as Advisor to Minority Business for the Model Cities program. Since as before, my advice/curriculum is drawn from real-time experience as a business owner and accountant for scores of different types of enterprises, there was appreciation that I brought in some current practitioners and successful former students (now 20-year veterans).

After dealing with information retrieval (and glut), marketing, purchasing, leasing, form design and control and the aspects of accounting that NO COMPUTER CAN DO "FOR" YOU, it was pointedly revealed that "we" still have some structured disabilities related to establishment prescribed "plantation economics." A frequent plaintive query was "how do we start a business without the playing field leveling provided by "set-asides," which definitely seem on the way out?"

Some may remember that years ago, I anticipated the eventual phase-out of this institutionalized disability

where the minority or female business person might be deprived of the real competitive learning skills necessary to a "real" function in the American economy. Many noted that in the actual "real-time" business enterprises I got my university students to form and operate (successful), I insisted that they market solely on the basis of ability. Of course, there was a game plan for the racist shutouts.

This was especially apropos to marketing plans aimed at wealthy operators now romping in the "Elysian Fields" of properties once owned by hard working Portland blacks. As I describe the scene in my social comment in "Perspectives," on page 2: "Urban Renewal.. when the grand removal saw the personal urban planning and wealth-building dreams of black people go down the drain (and into the coffers and bottom lines of corporate giants that straddle the Coliseum area)." Not unlike the experience of many whites in the Columbia Gorge. Pay attention!

### Bob Rau To Open Luncheon Events At Albertina

Bob Rau, noted authority on antiques and for seven years co-host of the OPB television show "The Collectors", will open a special fall series of luncheon events at Albertina's at The Old Kerr Nursery on Monday, September 18.

Mr. Rau, himself a collector of fine antiques as well as a licensed appraiser of antiques, a writer and a nationally-known consultant, will discuss treasures from the past and then will informally appraise small antiques guests may wish to bring.

The luncheon events are open to the public and reservations open August 11. Tickets for the event, including the discussion, appraisal and Albertina's 3-course gourmet luncheon, are \$20.00 each and must be purchased in advance. For reservations and ticket information, call 231-0216. Because of limited seating, early reservations are advised. Mr. Rau's talk and the luncheon will be repeated Wednesday, September 20. Albertina's is located at 424 N. E. 22nd Ave., Portland.

The luncheon series will continue Monday, October 2 with Maggie Zelgani of Gourmet Works of Art and on October 16 with author and humorist Sue Kirby. The concluding luncheon of the series, Monday, October 30, will feature Sandra Lee Koch, "The Hat Lady" and chocolateer Dick Fuhr of The Candy Basket.

All proceeds from the special luncheons will benefit the programs of Albertina Kerr Centers, one of Oregon's largest human services agencies.

### On Town Hall:

#### Aug 20 One Size Fits All

Seattle's school board has urged its schools to require uniforms or adopt dress codes. Schools struggling to combat gang violence believe uniforms could help.

#### Aug 27 The Power Of Talk

TV and radio talk shows alternately entertain and enrage us. The president himself scolded extremist talk programs for helping incite the kinds of prejudices that led to the Oklahoma City bombing. Yet talk shows also feature poignant personal experiences that can change the lives of viewers for the better.

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Miss Jr. West Multnomah County - Preteen

## Megan Rose Daniels



Parents Names: Michael and Janet Rust of Portland, and Charles O. Daniels

Activities: Peninsula Little Softball, Tennis, Portland Foursquare Homeschoolers Handbell Choir, Celebration Singers, Acting and Drawing.

Sponsors Of Certification Fee: Evelyn Harris, Realty World Progressive, Hair by Brian Sims, and Pieces of a Dream.

## County Grants To Enrich Kids

Clark County has grants funds available for projects to help young people.

Karmel Shield, coordinator of the County's Youth Investment Fund Program, said about \$76,000 is available for new projects to help rural youth.

The Youth Investment Fund was established by the Clark County Board of Commissioners to help improve the lives of young people. In the past, the project has helped Hispanic youths stay in school and move on to college.

The project also involves community services in which young people do public service in return for group recreational opportunities, dramatic arts classes and counseling assistance.

"The fund is just not about dealing with problems," Shields said. "It's about preventing them from happening by offering options. A number of programs are doing great things, but most of the programs take place in urban, suburban areas. This year we want to make rural community projects a priority."

If interested in suggesting a project call Karmel Shields at 699-2130.

## Seattle Magic Wheels Portland Brothers Free Kids Picnic

Northwest United Brothers M.C. Association

Kid's Happy Clown Faces

Free Pop • Free Food • Big Fun • Games

August 19th, 1995 12:00 Noon

Alberta Park (19th & Killingsworth)

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282-6847; Iron Horse: 282-0271; or 287-8673

## Army Hometown News

Army 2nd Lt: Robert C. Murray has graduated from the 72-day Ranger training course at the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Columbus, GA.

The training phases are conducted at Fort Benning, in the mountains of northern Georgia, in the desert at Fort Bliss, Texas, and in the Florida swamps. The course is designed to develop confident and capable small-unit leaders.

Additionally, emphasis is placed on developing skills in the planning and conducting of ground, airmobile, airborne, and waterborne patrolling operations.

Murray, an infantry training officer at Fort Benning, GA., is the son of Clifford Murray, and Dina Murray, both of Portland.

He is a 1989 graduate of Roosevelt High School and a 1994 graduate of Portland State University, Ore.

Lt. Murray attended the Infantry Officer Basic Course prior to Ranger School; his next duty station will be at Schofield Barracks, Wahiawa, Hawaii for a 3-year tour of duty.

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## Wilson Keeps Up Push On Affirmative Action

Gov. Pete Wilson of California is now the point man in the fight to eliminate affirmative-action programs based on race and sex.

In speeches across the country, and in a successful push to eliminate preference programs in the University of California system, the governor has seized upon an issue that by all accounts commands the attention of many Americans.

But this is a 180-degree switch for Wilson, one he has made rapidly since affirmative action shaped up as a major issue in the 1996 presidential campaign and he decided to get into the race.

For most of his 30 years in public life, Wilson, a Republican, has strongly supported race- and sex-based preference programs in hiring, contracting and college admissions.

As recently as last September, he signed a bill to make it easier for minority-owned businesses to qualify for state aid, among the most criticized types of affirmative-action programs. And in October, just before winning a second term as governor, he said, "I have long supported set-asides as a means to assist traditionally underrepresented businesses." Set-asides programs reserve a share, sometimes fixed, of government contracts for minority-owned businesses.

## CRC Chairperson Praises Voting Rights Act

U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Chairperson Mary Frances Berry called on all Americans to join her in commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act. "This Commission is proud to have played a vital role in preparing the way for this watershed event in the history of the civil rights movement," she said.

The Commission's first public hearing, held in Montgomery, Ala., in December 1958, was on voting rights.

Like the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was built on a foundation of facts and recommendations presented by the Commission in its early reports. These two acts are regarded as the cornerstone of U.S. civil rights as they exist today.

"The creation of the Commission by Congress in 1957, and enactment of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts," Berry noted, "were Federal government responses to America's growing revulsion over officially-sanctioned injustices suffered by African Americans. Many of the challenges to such injustices,

the sit-ins, the Freedom Rides, the civil rights marches, participated in by Americans across racial lines and captured by television camera crews for the evening news, galvanized public support for passage of these laws."

The 1965 law, strengthened by amendments in 1982, has provided vital voting protections and greatly increased the participation of African Americans and language minorities in the American political process, Dr. Berry stated.

Referring to the long history of denying African Americans and other minorities access to the ballot, Berry cautioned that the Nation should be vigilant against any weakening of the law and of voting rights.

The Commission on Civil Rights Chairperson noted that proposals to change the law and its enforcement are numerous.

The key to judging a proposed change is whether it will actually strengthen voting rights.

She pointed out that minorities still face barriers to electing representatives of their choice at all levels.

"But if we look at the history of

voting rights, we find that in one Southern State for example, only 7 percent of the African Americans of voting age were registered on the eve of the passage of the Voting Rights Act," she added. "Two years later, a majority of African Americans of voting age were registered in that state."

Dr. Berry recollected that in 1960 President Dwight D. Eisenhower had called the right to vote "one of the strongest pillars of a free society."

"Our society cannot afford any weakening of the pillar," she said. "The most appropriate way to praise the Voting Rights Act on its anniversary is for all Americans to register and vote to show their appreciation of this most fundamental freedom."

The U. S. Commission on Civil Rights is an independent, bipartisan fact-finding agency. Its members are Chairperson Mary Frances Berry, Vice Chairperson Cruz Reynoso, and Commissioners Carl A. Anderson, Arthur A. Fletcher, Robert P. George, Constance Horner, Russell G. Redenbaugh, and Charles Pei Wang. Mary K. Mathews is Staff Director.

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