

EDITORIAL

Editorial Articles Do Not Necessarily Reflect Or Represent The Views Of The Portland Observer

BY REV. JESSE L. JACKSON

On Aug. 28, we celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s spirit-filled 1963 "I Have A Dream" speech.

Thirty-two years later, the winds of hostility, hate, hurt and violence are still blowing across our land. Homicides have become a national lifestyle through television, videos, movies and commercials, polluting the atmosphere with more violence.

Thirty-two years later, we see a growing sense of indifference to suffering among our fellow human beings. The gap between the very wealthy and the very poor is increasing.

Thirty-two years later, we have abandoned inner cities, plants are closing on workers, hospitals are being shut, tax bases are eroding, jobs are leaving, families are disintegrating, second-rate schools are crumbling, alienated youth are filling up the prisons, as jails have become the number one growth industry in urban America.

Thirty-two years later, drugs are the number one source of death and destruction. Drugs provide money for the sub-economy and the war on drug makers and kingpins has been removed from the radar screen.

Thirty-two years later, economic down-sizing is the number one problem. Earnings are up, wages are down, major mergers, such as ABC with Disney and CBS with

NATIONAL RAINBOW COALITION

32 Years Later: The Dream Unfulfilled

Westinghouse, create more extremes of wealth with fewer jobs. A few more will become billionaires and they will be called geniuses. A few others will become millionaires and they will be called smart. Many more will lose their jobs and have less access to the major media. They will be called unblessed, unlucky and untrained. In the face of this, affirmative action - the quest for equal opportunity - has become a diversion, race-bait and the scapegoat.

Thirty-two years later, Black babies have a third world infant mortality rate. The Black baby who lives is more likely to live and work in inequality and has a shorter life expectancy. When that Black child becomes an adult, he or she is twice as likely to be denied a mortgage loan. For example, a recently study found that the banks in San Diego had made

30,000 loans, but only 27 of them went to Blacks.

Thirty-two years later, there are more Blacks in jail than in college. We are moving toward a generation of parolees rather than a generation of graduates. These ugly disparities and trends must stop. They represent a growing nightmare, not an expanding dream.

We in the Rainbow Coalition have three areas of focus:

1. We must put forth a gallant effort to reclaim our youth. Our Reclaim Our Youth Crusade, along with the Citizenship Education Fund, targets the nation's 50 biggest cities. Ministers and judges in each city are joining forces to help young people avoid unnecessary jailing. The joint venture plans to reclaim a total of 100,000 youth across America. We will encourage 20,000 parents in each

city to take our 5-pint plan to insure the success of our young people. Parents must take their child to school, meet their child's teacher, exchange phone numbers, pick up their report card every 9 weeks and turn off the television 3 hours a night. We can get our children off of the jail track and put them on the fast track if we do those five things.

2. Voter registration. A revitalized commitment to voter registration and to opening up political options by creating more ballot access will renew Americans' faith in the political process.

3. Rebuild urban America. The "giant sucking sound" is not merely American jobs going to NAFTA and GATT cheap labor zones. The giant sucking sound is that as jobs and education diminish, our youth are being sucked into the jail industrial complex. It is now the number one urban industry. For American Express, Prudential and Smith Barney, it's also a new area of investment.

We as a nation must go another way and recommit ourselves to the dream.

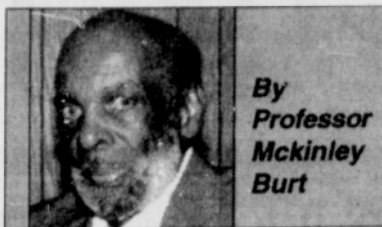
That is why I will enter the city-vote Presidential Preference Election this November in 18 cities. It is part of my continuing effort to put urban policy, reinvestment and reclaiming our youth on the front burner of the American agenda. It is another way to give our nation a reason to keep hope alive.

perspectives

Education: SAT Is Not Short For "Satisfied"

If you too have sweated through the conflicting and ambiguous headlines of recent months, do not think that now you may relax and enjoy a thorough enlightenment on the state of the educational art.

The experts and practitioners interviewed have exhibited the same degree of puzzlement as anyone else.



By Professor McKinley Burt

You will recall that last week we quoted a headline, "State School Supt. Normal Paulus says, '1995 Oregon Math and Science Tests Results Are Unacceptable (Portland Observer, 8/16/95), but we also have "Oregon's SAT Scores Jump 20 Points" (Portland Oregonian, 8/24/95), as well as a full-page warning reflection in the same daily on the same date," Tackling The Test: Here's an update on how the test is changing, how colleges use it and how some remember it." (Both articles in section A.)

If I were a student or an affected parent or guardian, I certainly would retrieve these commentaries and pursue them with undivided attention. But at the same time, I would go to Dalton's, Powell's, or Barnes and Noble for some outside critical comment on the SAT.

We know that according to a Louis Harris Poll commissioned and just released by NACME - The National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering -- more than 50 percent of all students plan to drop high school level mathematics and science, regardless of their career interests and without knowing the most serious consequences." I worked with this organization during the 1970s, representing Portland State University at several of their regional West Coast meetings. Working against all odds, they have made yeoman efforts to countervail against an often uncaring educational establishment.

I am aware of the few special programs that the Portland School District has for reaching minority students who have somehow survived the miseducation at lower grades and are given a concentrated dose of science and math in a "talented and

gifted" type program at the end of the trail. These of course, are not part of the regular curriculum, but are supported by special grants from government for "those people."

Several years of interviews with such students and their parents or guardians (many of whom I have known since they were children themselves) re-enforce my perception that the "chosen" and scholastic performers - SAT,

etc. - would have made it anyway; that is despite the system. The "Family Incubator" of caring, nurturing and motivation saw to that.

So it is that in both the cases I have cited, the input and commitment of parents is required. How many of you remember the famed educational accomplishments of that African American Catholic Priest in Chicago? They called him cold, hard and unrelenting - because parents were forced to attend all regular support meetings as well as any special disciplinary sessions -- miss one and you were out! But his high school had over 95 percent of the graduates going on to college, and almost as many getting their degrees.

So it is that you can well understand my distress this summer at discovering how many seven and eight year-olds are returning to school this fall, unable to read. Of course they were promoted, we can't lease the coliseum for kindergarten and K-1. I have talked to many parents and somehow have refrained from choking them; there is no way they could not have known and been aware of the consequences.

In recent weeks, my articles have dealt with two catastrophic consequences of this "miseducation": The over-concentration of blacks in the "public sector" (extremely vulnerable to current layoffs), and "The End of Work," the best-seller detailing how technology is putting an end to most jobs that require no high degree of cognitive skills nor math and science. It is not only the case that colleges and universities may admit students on the basis of the SAT, but that employers may be following suit. We have got to care more and be involved more.

Rights Group Tackles Affirmative Action

The hot topic of affirmative action will be the subject of a series of upcoming discussions in Portland.

"Community Dialogue" forums, sponsored by the Metropolitan Human Rights Commission, are a new project to bring about the discussion of important issues of the day.

According to commission director Helen Cheek, the groups will engage in dialogue, not debate.

The aim is to bring the wisdom of ordinary people to bear on difficult issues, Cheek said.

Priorities include the presentation of accurate unbiased facts and providing an opportunity for the exchange of ideas and opinions with the goal of creating an informed public.

Trained facilitators will attend the sessions to help keep the flow of discussion on track.

To prepare, participants will be expected to read background material provided by the human

rights commission. The material will present factual information and different points of view.

Three series of discussions are planned:

Community Dialogue Number One will meet on Tuesday, Sept. 26 and Oct. 6 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Red Cross offices at 3131 N. Vancouver.

Community Dialogue Number Two will meet on Wednesdays, Sept. 27 and Oct. 4, also from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Jackson Community School,

10625 S.W. 35th.

And Community Dialogue Number Three will meet on Saturdays, Sept. 30 and Oct. 7 at Koinonia House (Campus Ministry) at Portland State University at Southwest Montgomery and Broadway from 10 a.m. to noon.

The commission said pre-registration is necessary to control the size of the groups, which will be limited to about 15 people.

For information, call 823-5136.

Civil Rights Journal

Summer Signs Of Hope

BY BERNICE POWELL JACKSON

Amidst the terrible stories of a New York teenager being killed for a quarter, of children being killed by their mothers or baby sitters, of more drive-by shootings in neighborhoods across the country, there are stories of people doing something about the violence. They are signs of hope for us all.

Glenville Hoop It Up is a basketball tournament run in Cleveland's Glenville neighborhood. It was the idea of three men who are leaders at Morning Star Baptist Church as their way of reaching out to the young men in the community who often have nothing to do and no positive, supervised activities.

"After four years, we now have 850 young people - boys and girls, from age 9 and up - involved in our program," said Ray Reid, who acts as director of the program.

It is the commitment of those three men and a few others who volunteer their time for this summer weekend program that makes it a real sign of hope.

"We believe it's important for these young people to see men in the community who are positive role models and who care what happens to them," said Reid. For Reid and the two assistant directors it means giving up every weekend from June to August. "But the rewards are great," he said.

The only funds Glenville Hoop It Up receives are \$3,000 from the city and small grants from local church groups to pay for the awards, plaques and tee-shirts and the young people receive for participating in the program. "all the money gets put back into the kids," Reid explained. What if every community had a Hoop It Up program?

Do Something is the name of another program for young people. It is a national non-profit organization which provides young people with

small grants to implement their creative ideas for improving their communities. It also provides leadership training for young people to build their skills and community knowledge.

The brainchild of Michael Sanchez and actor Andrew Shue, Do Something was formed after both attended a Clinton rally where the presidential candidate commented on a button which simply said "Do Something." Do Something has worked with young people in Newark, Boston and Selma, Ala.

In each case a local board of directors, composed of young people under 30 marks the decisions about the programs to fund in their community. For example, the Newark Do Something Fund makes grants to Ana Cruz, a 17-year-old who held an environmental fair in the Ironboard district, which faces high rates of lead poisoning and has several toxic waste sites; to Markutia Simmons, a 23-year-old who wanted to set up a junior urban service corps; and to Samuel Sykes, a 22-year-old who wanted to start a program to teach kids to shoot pool, not guns in Newark's Central Ward. Funds for the program come from the corporate sponsors, foundations and private donations.

Do Something takes leadership development for young people seriously. It does a local leadership training programs for young people which includes public speaking, problem solving, constructive criticism and fund-raising. In addition, it sponsors a national fellows program which is an eight-month training program and internship for young people.

There are signs of hope for our youth all across the country. There are people who care about our children and people who are doing something in their own communities, their own churches or mosques, even in prisons. These are my heroes and sheroes. Let's give them our support. Let's do something ourselves. Let's be signs of Home.

KKK: America's Legacy Of Hate

BY BERNICE POWELL JACKSON

A few weeks ago the New York Times ran a story about the town of Noblesville, Indiana, a suburb of Indianapolis.

It seems a trunk was recently found in a Noblesville barn. Inside the trunk was a listing of many of the town's most prominent citizens of the 1920's, all of whom were members of the Ku Klux Klan. Also packed in the trunk were hoods, sashes and crosses -- the Klan's well-known paraphernalia.

The discovery of the Klan list in Noblesville has had different effects on its citizens. Many don't want to talk about this part of their history at all. Indeed, the local historical society, which now holds the Klan list, has voted to restrict access to it and has required researchers to gain the consent of all descendants of the Klansmen, a nearly-impossible task. Some citizens are embarrassed disgusted by their ancestors' actions; others try to explain away the awful nature of Klan activity, insisting it was more of a social group than anything else.

Try telling that to James Cameron. In 1930, two blacks were lynched in Marion, Indiana, after being dragged from jail cells by a mob. The mob also was to lynch Mr. Cameron that day, but decided moment to let him go. Mr. Cameron clearly remembers the Klan's involvement in his almost-lynching. He started and now runs the Black Holocaust Museum in Milwaukee, which tells the stories of the lynchings of African Americans.

Try telling that to the family of Vernon Dahmer, Sr. in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Mr. Dahmer, a NAACP leader and store owner, was killed in 1966, the day after he announced that blacks could pay their poll taxes at his store so that they could vote. Mr. Dahmer's accused killer was Imperial Wizard Sam Bowers, who was also linked to the killings of Michael Schwerner, James Chaney and An-

drew Goodman. Bowers was acquitted by an all-white male jury and the Dahmer family is still trying to have the case re-tried.

Klanwatch, the project of the Southern Poverty Law Center which monitors the activities of white supremacist groups, found that even in the 1980's the Ku Klux Klan was active in Texas, where it operated paramilitary camps and attacked Vietnamese fishermen in Galveston. Klanwatch now warns that while there is disarray in the Klan groups, with the largest one fracturing in 1994, white supremacy groups are still active across the nation.

Modern KKK clones might not wear white robes and burn crosses and they don't just live in the South. For example, Pennsylvania state officials say that state now has the largest growth of white supremacist activity in the nation. And white supremacists are alive and well in skinhead groups and, increasingly, in the militia movement.

Of the nation's 150 militia groups now operating in 22 states, at least 36 have ties to the white supremacist movement, according to Klanwatch. Indeed, buried deep in news stories about accused Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh have been references to his white supremacist beliefs.

Skinheads, most of whom are young, are also a growing racist movement. A recent National Public radio story focussed on skinhead youth in Allentown, PA., who boasted of beating up gay people and attacking police. In that story Pennsylvania Human Rights Commissioner Ann Van Dyke says that middle Americans want to believe that organized hate groups are disconnected from the mainstream. But Ms. Van Dyke warns that skinheads exist because middle America creates an environment in which bigotry can take hold and that they feed off the resentment of everyday people. Skinheads, she says, say publicly what others say privately.

Letter To The Editor

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