

# EDITORIAL

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

## IFCO-Pastors For Peace Violently Attacked 15 Non-Violent Protestors Jailed

This week U.S. Customs agents violently attacked volunteers from a humanitarian aid caravan—the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO)/Pastors for Peace—as they attempted to carry computers across the San Diego border into Mexico.

The 30-vehicle caravan arrived at the border early Wednesday afternoon carrying nearly 300 computers bound for Cuba.

The computers were donated to an on-line medical information system which would link Cuba's medical system, including hospitals, clinics and medical schools. All of the computers were seized, including 23 from Canada which had earlier been cleared by Customs.

As many as 50 riot police with shields moved into place, despite the commitment of the caravan drivers to act nonviolently in all cases. Fifteen squad cars and many uniformed and plainclothes police from multiple law enforcement agencies con-

## NATIONAL RAINBOW COALITION

verged on the border, along with 19 tow trucks. An interagency task force of U.S. Customs, INS, the U.S. Attorney's office, FBI, California Highway Patrol, Caltrans, and the San Diego Police and Fire Departments had planned for weeks to seize the computers before they crossed the border into Mexico, according to unclassified government documents.

After police blocked the way of the caravan, about 20 drivers attempted to carry computers across the border on foot, and were gang tackled by as many as 8 police at a time, who then violently wrenched the computers from their arms. Customs agents

opened the backs of several trucks and began confiscating the computers. Caravan drivers, who had formed a protective ring around the trucks, some even sitting on top of them, were violently dragged away from their vehicles. Several people were injured, including one man who was knocked unconscious by police. He was hospitalized. Custom officials shut down the border to all vehicles and pedestrians for most of the day.

Police arrested 11 men and 4 women, including the Rev. Lucius Walker, Ex. Dir. of IFCO-Pastors for Peace, which, since 1992, has organized 5 national aid caravans

directly challenging the U.S. embargo of Cuba. Also arrested was the Rev. George Hill of Claremont, CA. Those arrested spent the night in the Federal Metropolitan Correctional Facility in downtown San Diego. They were arraigned, but released on their own recognizance without charges being brought against them. However, the feds can still bring charges at a later date.

"It is inconceivable that our government would deny modern medical care to Cuban children and senior citizens," stated Rev. Lucius Walker. JaxFax urges calls & faxes to Robert Rubin (Treasury), 202-622-5300, Fax 202-622-0073; Janet Reno (Justice), 202-514-2000, Fax 202-514-0467; Ron Brown (Commerce), 202-482-2000; and President Clinton, 202-395-3000, Fax 202-456-2461 to: (1) demand an end to the immoral U.S. embargo of Cuba; and (2) demand release of the computers so they can be used to improve Cuba's healthcare system.

## Civil Rights Journal A Legend In Her Own Time

BY BERNICE POWELL JACKSON

Who could ever forget her deep, thundering voice with that wonderful eloquence and the brilliant thoughts behind the words? If you ever heard Barbara Jordan speak, you never forgot it. You never forgot the moral authority, the integrity, the brilliant analysis and the truth of her words.

February is Black History Month and Barbara Jordan was a Black History maker from her college days. A graduate of Houston's segregated schools, she attended the all-black Texas Southern University, where she joined the debating team. It was that team which maneuvered the Harvard debate team to a tie. "When an all-black team ties Harvard, it wins," Ms. Jordan recalled.

She made history again when she became the first African American ever to be elected to the Texas State Senate and the first black elected to

the Congress from the South since Reconstruction. "She proved that black is beautiful before we knew what it meant," said President Lyndon Johnson, who was Jordan's mentor.

She spent only seven years in the U.S. House of Representatives, but she will be remembered forever in our nation's history. "There is no black woman in politics today that is not in her debt," said Eleanor Holmes Norton, Washington D.C.'s congressional delegate.

Barbara Jordan will be remembered forever for her fierce determination to protect the U.S. Constitution during the Watergate fiasco and the ensuring Congressional impeachment hearings. "My faith in the Constitution is whole, it is complete, it is total, and I am not going to sit here and be an idle spectator to the diminution, the subversion, the destruction of the Constitution," she said during those hearings. But then she reminded the nation that she had felt

left out the Constitution by the mistake of George Washington and Alexander Hamilton, "but through the process of amendment, interpretation and court decision I have finally been included in 'We, the people.'"

Barbara Jordan will be remembered forever for her integrity and her ability to call the nation into account. Most recently, as chairperson of the Commission on Immigration Reform, she spoke out against a proposal to deny automatic citizenship to the children born in this country to illegal immigrants, saying, "To deny birthright citizenship would derail this engine of American liberty."

In 1979, after serving only three terms in the House of Representatives and stricken with multiple sclerosis, Barbara Jordan announced her retirement and her plans to return to Texas to teach at the Lyndon B.

Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas. Her courses were so popular that students had to enter a lottery to take them and her students remember her always having a copy of the Constitution in her purse.

Barbara Jordan once said that she never intended to be a run-of-the-mill person and clearly she succeeded in her goal. The daughter of a Baptist minister who worked two jobs to pay for her college tuition, she recently visited the elementary school named for her in Austin. She told the students, "Study hard in school, and don't let people put you in a box and close it." Barbara Jordan didn't let anyone put her in a box. Had her health held out, she may have added the Vice Presidency or even the Presidency to her list of firsts. Barbara Jordan was a Black History maker who lived in our time. She was, indeed, a legend in her own time.

## Vantage Point

### "Where There Is No Vision The People Perish"

BY RON DANIELS

Martin Luther King was a visionary whose capacity to dream and articulate his dream to the suffering masses of African humanity in the U.S. helped to fuel one of the most profound social movements in the history of this nation and the world.

Unfortunately, the forces of reaction have gained ascendancy in this nation and through their "Contract on America" seek to turn back the clock on the hard fought gains of the '60's. Indeed, Black people, people of color, poor and working people and the struggling middle class are being conditioned to believe that the kind of Economic Bill of Rights which King was speaking to and fighting for at the end of his life is an anachronism in the current climate of the "free market" and "global competition."

The American people are being conditioned to accept a kind of modern day Social Darwinism, a "survival of the fittest" doctrine where there are winners and losers in the new world order of global competition. We are being conditioned to accept obscene levels of inequality, poverty, misery and a prison-jail industrial complex as part of the natural order of things. We are being conditioned to accept the notion that the concept of a culture of rights where the government and the public sector guar-

antee a basic standard of living for all of the people who live in this country is simply and outmoded and unworkable idea.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." If the masses of Black people, people of color and poor and working people vision of a new and humane society, then we will surely perish. But if we are true to the spirit of Martin Luther King, then we are challenged to confront the current crises with the resolve to pose the visionary alternative.

It was Martin Luther King who called upon us to push for a transformation of American society: "I am convinced that...we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin the shift from a 'thing oriented' society to a 'person oriented' society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered."

The contemporary meaning of this message from Martin is that we must reject the notion that we "market," profit, property, accept the contention of the radical right and the Republicans that gross inequality and extremes of wealth and poverty are inevitable in American society. We do not have to be bound by their view that there is something old fashioned and unrealistic about the concept of

a culture of rights which ensures that every person in this society is entitled to certain basic human rights: a decent job with decent wages or a guaranteed income; quality affordable health care for all; affordable housing; quality education; and, a safe and clean environment.

On the contrary we must go on the offensive articulating a vision of a culture of rights as an integral and indispensable ingredient in a new and more humane society; a society where social and economic rights are accepted as inalienable rights which cannot be violated. And, like Martin Luther King, we must be prepared to put our bodies on the line to struggle for the realization of our vision and our dreams.

The recent general strike and turmoil in France demonstrates that somewhere in the world there are working people who are unwilling to accept the demands of the corporate elite that the safety net for poor and working people and the middle class be dismantled to protect the competitive position and profitability of the bankers and bosses, shareholders and bondholders and the captains of commerce and industry. Similarly, in the Chiapas region of Mexico, the indigenous people have revolted to resist the destructive impact of NAFTA and other international and national policies being imposed on them by an undemocratic and corrupt government. The Zapatista Liberation

Front is determined that there will be a new day, a new society for indigenous people into the 21st century. They are not prepared to accept the status quo, to suffer and die.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." Black people, people of color and poor and working people must be equally determined to become unmovable in the U.S. in defense of the basic human rights of the vast multitude of people who are being victimized by the Contract on America.

As Martin Luther King once put it, "true compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it comes to see that the edifice that produces beggars needs restructuring." We must offer a vision of social transformation, of a radically changed society where social and economic justice and genuine democracy are integral to the very fabric of the nation.

It is that vision which will enable Black people, people of color and poor and working people to rise above the constraints of our current circumstances to struggle for the dawning of a new day.

It is that vision, the capacity to imagine and dream that things can be different that will energize the apathetic and indifferent to forge a people movement that will create a new tomorrow. In the face of formidable odds we are challenged to choose life over death.

## perspectives

### How Just Is The "Just" Stamp? Black History For 32¢

Several callers said that their spirits were considerably lightened by the decision of the U.S. Postal Service to issue a commemorative stamp in honor of the great African American biologist, Dr. Ernest Everett Just. (1883 - 1940).

Dr. Just pioneered the study of cell life and human metabolism. In the 1920s and 1930s, this brilliant Phi Beta

Kappa graduate of Dartmouth University became the first to unlock secrets of cell function that shattered many long-held scientific theories about cell structure and function. Much of the research that established him as the world's leading authority on egg cells and the development of marine animals was done at the famed "Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory" in Massachusetts.

Beginning in 1909, Dr. Just became understudy and research assistant to some of the most eminent men in his field; A.H. Sturtevant and Calvin Bridges in Chromosome genetics, K.S. Cole and Selig Hecht, the American pioneers of biochemical and biophysical neurology--and the noted cytologist E. B. Wilson. By 1916, Just again displayed his intellectual abilities, earning his doctorate in Zoology from the University of Chicago, magna cum laude.

For twenty marvelously productive years, Dr. Just studied and experimented at Woods Hole with the reproductive cells of marine animals. In his writing Just said that understanding the working of cells would be useful in finding cures for such diseases as sickle-cell anemia, cancer, leukemia and other diseases caused by abnormal cell growth (this writer cannot help but speculate that if this genius were with us today, we would have a cure for AIDS).

Half a century before the space age, Dr. Just applied various amounts of magnetic energy to eggs to determine the effect on cell division; he found marked difference. Building upon his work and the

conclusions in his published papers, space scientists in the 1960s began launching biosatellites into orbit. They wished to expand Just's pioneering research to study the effect of the earth's magnetism (and radiation) on an assortment of plants and animals.

By 1930, Just was recognized world wide as a leading authority in his field, and had been named vice-president of the American Society of Zoology.

But nevertheless, he still suffered many of the slings and arrows of an "outrageous fate"--the color of his black skin.

Despite all the good press in academic bulletins, Just became embittered over never being asked to study at prestigious universities. At Howard University, the facilities at the under funded black college were not those needed to support a scientist of his caliber. The Julius Rosenwald Fund furnished some support for five years but it was far from adequate; a few thousand for books, equipment and research. Remember, this scientist was the greatest in the world in his field, but rejected by the Rockefeller Institute.

Like some blacks before him, Dr. Just left America for Europe and found complete acceptance and support, academic, emotional and financial. For years he carried on his research at a marine biology station on the Bay of Naples in Italy. From 1938 to 1940 he lived in France and published two of the greatest of his over fifty works: The Biology of the Cell Surface and Basic Methods for experiments on Eggs of Marine Animals.

The advent of World War II saw him return to America and a teaching post at Howard University. He died shortly afterwards in 1940, at the age of 57. In 1957 the Woods Hole scientists published a 'revised' version of Dr. Just's book on "Basic Methods..." In 1930 in a farewell speech at the Wood's Hole Research Center, Just had said, "in one year at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in Germany I received more assistance and fraternity than I ever did her."



By  
Professor  
Mckinley  
Burt

## The Portland Observer

(USPS 959-680)

OREGON'S OLDEST AFRICAN AMERICAN PUBLICATION  
Established in 1970

Joyce Washington--Publisher

The PORTLAND OBSERVER is located at  
4747 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
Portland, Oregon 97211

503-288-0033 \* Fax 503-288-0015

Deadline for all submitted materials:

Articles: Friday, 5:00 pm Ads: Monday Noon

POSTMASTER: Send Address Changes to: Portland Observer,  
P.O. Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208.

Second Class postage paid at Portland, Oregon.

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Subscriptions: \$30.00 per year.

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