

# EDITORIAL

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## The Portland Observer

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THANK YOU FOR READING THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

**I**t is now 29 years since "they" took Dr. King away from us. 29 years since his leadership was stolen away from the progressive movement. 29 years since the day an assassin's bullet changed the course of history.

Think of it--Martin Luther King, Jr., would still be only 68 years old. Younger than Reagan. Younger than Dole.

The assassin's bullet took away three decades of his voice, his wisdom, his energy. When the historians look back on America in the second half of this century, one of the conclusions they will have to draw is that the right wing took power at least in part because our progressive leadership was gunned down--in November of '63, and in April and June of '68.

The Rainbow/PUSH Public Policy Institute is meeting in Memphis this week, to honor the life of Dr. King. Our goal is to consider the lessons of his life, as we reconstruct our vision and our politics for the 21st century.

We remember that Dr. King was an apostle of nonviolence, a prophet of social change, a radical.

We remember that Dr. King died as he struggled side-by-side with

# NATIONAL RAINBOW COALITION

## Memories of Memphis

garbage workers, organizing a union. We know him as a man of peace, who took on a president and an FBI, trying to end a war.

We believe Dr. King was killed not because he was a "dreamer," but--as Reverend Jackson always reminds us--because he was "a drum major for justice."

We do not yet know who killed him, really. So, we support the King family in their quest for a new trial for James Earl Ray. It is a lasting stain upon our nation that so many questions about his death remain unanswered.

We understand that the Lorraine Motel is the place where the momentum shifted from our side of history to the right-wing version. And though we have had our victo-

ries in the hard days and nights since April 4, 1968--including the Jackson campaigns of '84 and '88--we have yet to regain the initiative.

We understand that Dr. King was a strong believer in Jesus as an advocate for "the least of these;" in the promise of America; and in the right to vote for change.

As he wrote in the famous letter he composed in his jail cell in Birmingham: "One day the South will know that when these disinherited children of God sat down at lunch counters, they were in reality standing up for the best in the American dream and the most sacred values in the Judeo-Christian heritage, and thusly, carrying our whole nation back to those great wells of democracy which were dug deep by the

founding fathers."  
They did not kill our freedom and justice movement when they assassinated Dr. King, but they certainly did set it back some. We miss him still. Our mission is to continue his struggle, until his dream becomes reality.

**Taking Stock**

Reverend Jackson last week led a group of 30 stockholders into the R.R. Donnelly & Sons Company board meeting while 300 pickets marched outside. The action was in support of the \$500 million class action law suit filed on behalf of more than 600 Black Donnelly workers.

"Racism, ageism, and sexism must end," Jackson said. "We intend to stand up and fight back. From LaSalle Street to Wall Street, our presence will be felt."

The picket line was set up as part of the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition's Wall Street Project, which has just opened its office. The project will establish a rating system for corporate responsibility, which will include company policies towards African American employees, Hispanic and female employees, stockholders, vendors, consumers, and pension funds.

# p e r s p e c t i v e s

## Doing Small Business On A Small Planet

**I**'ve done everything but 'shrink the kids', right? Well, not quite. It is true that I made a pitch for Schumacher's "Small Is Beautiful" and that I later cited a "Small lending" trend to match. But now it is time to kick back and reflect. What next?

Not for long, mind you, for several 'dark horses' are coming up fast on the outside--no pun intended, that's a horsing metaphor. I intimated the possibility at close of my article of March 26, "...will the powerful economic giants created by the buyouts and urge-to-merge move quickly to sop up any commerce they may have missed?" You may find that the 'Amalgamated International Corp.' also has discovered that your idea for door-to-door deliveries is very profitable.

While you're idling your motor at the starting line for the great new 'entrepreneurship 500'-visualizing a beautiful new web page that Michelangelo, himself would have

been proud of, or pricing that IPO (Initial Public Offering)--consider the following before you move out of your basement office and warehouse.

First off, there is a 'business information glut' the likes of which has not been seen since the California gold strike of '49, or the Yukon Gold Rush. Keep in mind that in both these cases those who reaped the big steady stream of profits--and never got cold, hungry, or dirty--were the 'Information Entrepreneurs', where to find it, how to pan it, where to sell it ("and oh, by the way, we were a full service outfit, supplies, equipment ant repairs").

Believe me, nothing has changed, this century or this year, except for the prices, options or the size and glitz of the seminars. When I was a naive young accountant many years ago, I thought I needed all the pre-

mier information services available in order to be competitive. I ended up with both Prentice hall and Commerce Clearing House Tax Services--and lost six hours a week of productive time trying to keep up with the almost daily arrival of "Critical" loose leaf insert sheets.

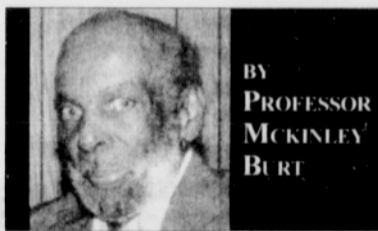
Thanks to many years of experience in business and industry, including office management and systems design, I've been able to visit several friends with home offices (or offices away from home) who, though surrounded by computers, etc., are victims of the same trap.

Chagrined is hardly the word for it as I point out that yes, their system capacity and capabilities have seen a dramatic increase over the short time that I visiting. But for whose benefit? What has happened, they soon realize, is that 'their' system has ex-

panded to accomodate the business of 'others'. A time-wasting mass of new files, bulletin boards, objects, data paths, instructions, commands, etc. Market persons will love you.

Such data labyrinths are a reflection of all the solicited and unsolicited inputs one drowns in as soon as it is even hinted that a new enterprise is underway. And a computer assisted enterprise is just as susceptible to these disinformation onslaughts I suffered at the hands of those tax service companies. Input and output along the Byzantine convolutions of ever-evolving information corridors slyly steals time that would better be used in actual marketing and in intelligent networking.

"The Medium Is The Message", Marshall McLuhan's truism, has more meaning that ever, but the small business person has more than an 'electronic 'Gutenberg Galaxy' to worry about. Next week we will explore more of the new commercial landscape.



BY PROFESSOR MCKINLEY BURT

## Civil Rights Journal: Honoring Paul Robeson

**BY BERNICE POWELL JACKSON**  
**A**pril 8 was the 100th anniversary of the birth of Paul Robeson, another of our nation's nearly-unknown heroes. Now there is a way to help educate many Americans about this American Renaissance man and to honor him at the same time.

Despite great obstacles and facing much racial prejudice, Paul Robeson entered Rutgers University in New Jersey in 1915 and graduated as a Phi Beta Kappa scholar and an All-American football player for two consecutive years. He was the second African American to graduate from Columbia University Law School.

But Paul Robeson was more than a scholar and athlete. As an actor, his

portrayal of Othello on Broadway received great acclaim. His deep bass voice singing folk songs and spirituals such as "Old Man River" was known around the world. He was beloved in Russia, India, England and Japan and eastern Europe because he sang the songs of the peoples of the world in the language of those people and touched their hearts. For thirty years, from World War I until after World War II, Robeson's extraordinary achievements kept him in the world spotlight.

But Paul Robeson was more than an outstanding scholar, athlete and performer. Paul Robeson was a man deeply committed to the struggle for justice and peace in the world.

Robeson, however, paid a high price for his outspokenness against

racism and on behalf of peace. During the 1950's he found himself a target of Joseph McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee, which declared almost anyone a "communist" who espoused views which they disagreed with. Robeson was never charged with a crime and never arrested or put on trial. But Robeson's love of the Russian people and their culture and his deeply-felt commitment to peace made him a natural target.

Branded a communist, Robeson found it impossible to get work anywhere in the U.S. and he was denied a passport. He was not even allowed to leave the country for travel not requiring a passport--to Canada, the West Indies and Mexico. All doors to stage, screen, concert hall, radio,

TV and recording studio were locked to him.

Paul Robeson was a man who bowed to no one. When summoned before the House Un-American Activities Committee and asked why, if he liked Russia so much, he had not stayed there, Robeson replied, "Because my father was a slave and my people died to build this country and I'm going to stay right here and have a part of it, just like you. And no fascist-minded people like you will drive me from it. Is that clear?"

Because of his stand against the Congressional witch hunt, Robeson became a "persona non grata" and his name is almost unknown to young people. But his is a name, his is a voice, both singing and speaking, that the world needs to remember.

## This Way for Black Empowerment: The End of Mobutu

**BY DR. LENORA FULANI**  
**T**hirty years after the end of the Cold War, people in the so-called Third World--where the superpowers fought most of their battles by proxy--are still digging themselves out of the rubble.

In most of these "hot spots" the precarious path to peace, rule of law, and democracy has been made bitterly difficult by these countries' devastated infrastructures, fractured societies, and by the failure of the U.S. government to support democracy with the same enthusiasm (and money) with which it "fought communism". But lately there have been signs that the ordinary people in these countries have had enough of the transition to democracy. They want democracy now. Last week's electoral victory in El Salvador by a

democratic coalition opposing the fascist-leaning ARENA Party is one hopeful example. The imminent demise of the Mobutu dictatorship in Zaire is another.

With Laurent Desire Kabila's rebel forces in control of eastern Zaire--and extending their control over new territory each day--the end of President Mobutu Sese Seko's 31 year reign of terror is no longer in question. The question being discussed in Zaire's nervous capital city, Kinshasa, these days is this: will the cancer-stricken President-for-Life die first, or live long enough to see himself overthrown by the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (ADFL)? Many Kinshasa residents are holding out for the latter scenario, and make no effort to hide their pro-Kabila sentiment, even as

Mobutu's security forces take down their names.

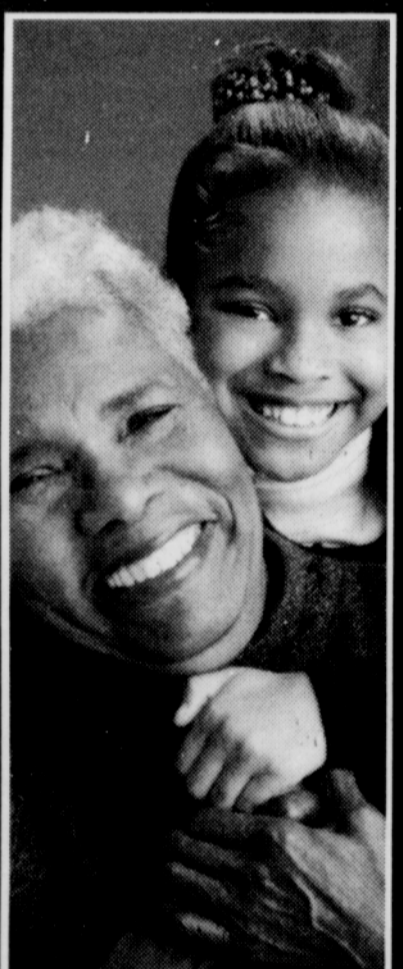
Making a virtue of necessity, many in the U.S. foreign policy establishment are beginning to say that the ADFL's blitz against Mobutu's thug-gish and sorry excuse for any army is a "welcome" development. Not the whole foreign policy establishment, by any means.

Those still ensconced in the State Department must stifle themselves and hang tough with Mobutu, since that agency's Africa policy runs on automatic, and hasn't been adjusted since the 1980's "Congo Crisis." But many influential organizations and individuals are now releasing eloquent statements about "Mobutuist tyranny."

This month of April marks seven years since the beginning of Zaire's "democratic transition", when

Mobutu was scared enough by the collapse of the Berlin Wall to permit some limited political freedoms to his people. Zairians rushed into this narrow opening and enlarged it. Two years after Mobutu's 1990 announcement that he would "permit" two additional parties to exist in addition to his ruling party, Zairians had forced the convening of a 2800 delegate Sovereign National Conference, the goal of which was none other than the drafting of a new constitution, the formation of a new transitional government, and the election of a new transitional parliament, all with the mandate of guiding the country to free elections by 1994.

The "war" in Zaire did not start with Kabila's uprising last fall; rivers of blood have been shed for years by Zaire's brave



## Don't Abandon Oregon's Schools!

Since 1992, Oregon schools have suffered service cuts equivalent to over \$230 million. This has meant increased class sizes, shortages of materials, deferred maintenance, and other damage to Oregon's children's education and future. That is why The Coalition for School Funding Now! was organized to work for equitable and adequate funding for Oregon's K-12 public schools.

The minimum necessary to achieve that goal for the 1997-99 biennium is \$5.75 billion: \$4.012 billion from the state plus \$1.738 billion in local revenues. That works out to an annual per pupil figure of \$4,656 (ADMw). This figure also represents the removal from the formula of \$272 million in ESD funding and \$26.1 million in Portland PERS costs.

One of the most important principles of the Coalition is that all Oregon children deserve a decent education. School funding that funds some schools at the expense of others is no solution. Pitting one Oregon child against another is not only bad policy - it is wrong. Unfortunately, that is just what the current legislative school funding proposals do.

We have returned to the State Capitol to make three key points to legislators on school funding, and to ask that you promise not to abandon Oregon's schools.

**Point#1:** Don't Rush to Pass the "Cut the Schools Budget"

**Point#2:** Dedicate All Additional May Forecast Revenues to K-12 Schools

**Point#3:** The Money is There to Get to \$5.75 Billion - Where is the Will?

**-The Coalition for School Funding Now!**

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