

Black Women To March Oct. 25: Nothing To Atone For In Philadelphia

By PROF. MCKINLEY BURT

We should think not, given that we speak of black women, that less-than-silent majority that has made significant contributions to humankind since the beginning of recorded history. 4000 years ago, African Queen Hatshepsut started urban planning.

And given that the genetic heritage of every living human being has been traced to a single African female living less than 200,000 years ago - Mitochondrial DNA-the significance of a black "Eve" is not lost upon us. My neighbor said, "If they feel a compelling need to march, it is because we self-centered black men have failed to let the world know who and what black women really are."

That cannot be said of this column and this writer. Many readers of the Portland Observer have acknowledged the many inspiring and motivating accounts of the magnificent contributions of black women to the culture and technology of the world. Our first reading of media interviews of the sponsors does not indicate that these energetic and aggressive women have any of the "identity" concerns expressed by many members of the "Million Man March."

Cofounder Asia Coney is quoted, "...The focus will be on issues such as the development

of black independent schools, rites of Passage Centers and support for U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters' call for an inquiry into alleged CIA involvement in cocaine trafficking in African American neighborhoods."

That statement about "independent schools" will give the White House the most jitters, given the President's concern about the dilution of public school funding. My correspondents here and elsewhere profess a very skimpy if any knowledge about a so-called "Million Woman March" organization. One male from academia says, "I perceive no coherent agenda and no particular social or philosophical mantra."

Now, that's hardly fair; obviously, the very same assessment could be made of the "Million Man March" (A rose by any other name). What I would more 'reasoned' comments began with an almost universal dissent with the selection of Winnie Mandela as the keynote speaker. "Here we go again with that 'celebrity-enhancement; instead of meaningful structure." In this case how about, "notoriety-enhancement?"

Other commentary ranged from, "I think it is terribly important that the most under-recognized and under utilized resource of the black race is going to demonstrate their solidarity

on the 'world stage'" to the less poetic and more utilitarian statements. An Atlanta teacher and businesswoman said, "I'm going because I want to be sure the orators and their grandiloquent rhetoric don't take over."

She went on to describe her ideas for "organizational structure that would provide pragmatic models for our young black women to emulate in the fields of business and technology; professional women of all races who excel in these arts. I would have us develop books, manuals, videos traveling seminars, you name it. I'm serious Mr. Burt."

Lady, I am sure that you are just as committed as you sound. Another, much younger woman, expressed the concern that "her mother might be right about some problems of approach that might be inherent in a 'generation gap'". It seemed the older woman had been among a large group of black women who came of age in all-black colleges between 1955 and 1965- and rebelled against not only the southern caste system but against "uncle Tom" black school administrators.

Whatever the turn of events, this march will be well worth our close attention and in-depth analysis. DNA prints aside, the historical documentation tells us what heights our sisters can reach. Continued next with both early and late bibliographies.

Grant High School's 4.00 Senior Kelva Marie Johnson



What do sisters Kelva Marie, Tova Joanna and Tara Louise Johnson have in common besides being the only children of low-income, single parent Lulu R. Stroud-Johnson and the grandchildren of the late Kelly Dolphus Stroud (first Black Phi Beta Kappa to graduate Colorado College in Colorado Springs)?

Kelva Marie Johnson is currently an accumulative 4.00 Grant High School senior student. In 1994, Kelva's sister Tara Louise graduated 4.00 Valedictorian from Grant. Kelva's sister Tova Joanna graduated Grant in 1995 -- also a 4.00 Valedictorian! Barring any future attempts to change the direction

Kelva is headed at Grant, Kelva likewise intends to graduate 4.00 Valedictorian from Portland's Grant High School in June of 1998.

Kelva's plans are to enter college in the fall of 1998. Her school choice will depend heavily on the financial aid offered and the scholarships and other assistance she secures. Tova and Tara are Presidential Scholars and Educational Opportunity Program students in the College of Agriculture at Oregon State University (OSU) in Corvallis. (Note: Tara is now continuing her studies at OSU after a one-year medical leave.)

Among Kelva's many recreational interests are photography, the Grant High School football games, tennis,

track and bikeriding. Academically, Kelva Marie's classload at Grant has included African and African-American Studies, Honors English, Spanish 7-12, Biology, Conceptual Physics, Interactive Math 5-6, Pre-Calculus, Chemistry, U.S. History and Global Studies, Economics, Ecology, Photography 3-8 and Yearbook Publications.

Kelva's college interests are headed in the direction of pre-medicine, agriculture, psychology and the arts. Her future plans include attending a four-year college, graduating and continuing on to graduate school. Eventually, Kelva expects to be known as Dr. Kelva Marie Johnson!

RELIGION

Religious Leader To Visit City

Oct. 15-19

Dr. Celeste Ashe Johnson, President of the International Association of Minister's Wives and Minister's Widows, Incorporated will bring greetings to the Minister's Wives and Widows in the Portland Oregon area. Dr. Johnson as the vivacious and dynamic leader of the International group will lead the group in "Project Outreach to Minister's Wives and Widows" with the theme "Positioning Ourselves for the turn of the Century."

Dr. Johnson received the bachelor of Science Degree in Education from the Elizabeth City State College. She then earned a Master of Science Degree in Education from the Elizabeth City State College. She then earned a master of Science Degree in Education, Supervision and Administration from the City College of the City University of New York. She studied for the Doctor of Education Degree at the University of Massachusetts and earned the Doctor of religious Education Degree from Christ Theological Seminary. She was awarded the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Sacred Literature from the Commonwealth University. She holds Certification in Management of Life Long Learning from Harvard University.

For additional information please call in the Portland area (503) 282-4545 OR (800) 388-2003.

Minister Participates in Religious Freedom Week Celebration

Emmanuel Temple's Rev. Robert Richardson delivered the opening remarks and prayer last Sunday at this year's Religious Freedom Week service sponsored by the Church of Scientology. With approximately 175 attending, Rev. Richardson applauded the efforts of his fellow guest ministers and event organizers. Joining the celebration as the keynote speaker, Richard Fenn from the Religious Liberty Association of the NW, spoke on the difference between rejoicing in our freedom of worship, and merely "tolerating" it. He spoke on pending federal legislation that will loosen regulation on the practice of religion. An annual, national event, Religious Freedom Week was started in 1988 when the religious community drew up a resolution asking that the week of September 25 be designated Religious Freedom Week. The resolutions was passed by both the House and Senate and signed by President Reagan. Also present was Rev. Helen Burke, of the Church of Scientology Celebrity Centre who read "The Prayer for Total Freedom" as written by L. Ron Hubbard. Desiring to see Religious Freedom Week become a permanent observance, Presidential Proclamations were issued the following two years. Each has urged Americans to observe the week with appropriate ceremonies and activities. Because of this support, Religious Freedom Week is now officially recognized in the Chase's Book of Annual Events. City of Portland proclamations have been issued each year for the last two years.

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