

This Man

BY SARAH KEMP

"Next ship to the New World," cries a voice in the night.
To this man this cry brings nothing but fright.
To most the New World means riches and joy,
To this man it means leaving his wife and young boy.

Herded on to the ship like cattle and sheep,
Shoved down into the ship's cold, dark keep.
Across the ocean, to the new land,
This man arrives with shackles on his hands.

Sold to the highest bidder that came,
The bidder cares nothing of his origin or name.
A good strong back and a will to survive,
This man will need it to keep him alive.

The years come and go and god takes and gives,
This man is now gone but his son now lives.
This new man is treated as his father, a slave.
This man, like his father, will have to be brave.

Generation come and generations go,
Passing as quickly as new fallen snow.
When freedom is cried throughout the land,
This man still has shackles on his hands.

He doesn't yet have freedom but hopes for the day,
That the line between colors will vanish away.

One day a strong man of the opposite race,
With a warm, open heart, and a kind, smiling face,
Said that men are the same, no matter what color their skin,
And that's when that awful war did begin.

The war was fought and the cause was won,
This man was now free as was his son.
Although he was free the line was still there,
The feeling of hate was still in the air.

Shunned and mocked, wherever he goes,
What freedom is this? He'd like to know.

Again the years pass, and this man is still scorned,
A new day has come and a new man is born.
This man has a dream of a new better world,
For his wife and young boys and young girls.

A Little Piece Of Portland's History



Employees Christmas party at Rich Manufacturing in December of 1946 or 1947. First from the left in the bottom row is the father of Earl Bennett, Mr. Bennett and on the same row third person O.C. Taylor father of Doris, Gary Ann, Bernadine, Sharon and Ronald Taylor.

"There's A River" In the History and Destiny of African People

As African American/Black History Month draws to a close we should be ever mindful of the necessity to focus on the history, culture and legacy of African people on an ongoing basis. It is in our history that we will find the inspiration and encouragement to keep pressing forward on the painstaking and essential task of rescuing and restoring the race.

Perhaps this is what noted theologian and historian Dr. Vincent Harding had in mind when he wrote his brilliant and inspiring historical treatise *There Is A River*. Dr. Harding no doubt saw in the river a fitting analogy to the history and destiny of African people. The river has an origin, a source, and always flows towards an ultimate destination. During the course of its journey the river may be enlarged by other tributaries which enrich it and make it stronger; it may flood spreading rich deposits of alluvial soil along its banks to make the coming harvests more bountiful; the river may be drastically diminished by devastating draughts that slow its motion towards its appointed goal. But the river is persistent, relentless and resilient in pursuit of its destiny. It may encounter barriers along the way, but it will adroitly flow under, over or around them pressing onward...

There is a river in the hirsute and destiny of African people. Our source is the great African continent, the motherland, the giver of life to African people and the entirety of the species. For countless generations African people were at the forefront of human civilization spreading a vast amalgam of civilizing and humanizing influences from the Nile Valley, the greatest cradle of civilization the world has ever known. The Greeks and Romans sat at our feet, drank from the vital wellspring of knowledge which we possessed, carried it back to their homes and claimed it for their own.

Egypt/Kemet was the envy of the world and in its latter life the source of constant invasion by outsiders eager to conquer the mater teacher of the ancient world. Eventually these invasions took their toll as Egypt lost its independence and was drained of her vitality. It's great genius and wisdom, however, could not be destroyed. Its gifts had already spread throughout the African continent servicing as the foundation for the world view, way of life and "cultural unity" of African people. African people used this foundation to produce the great kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, Songhay, Kongo, Zimbabwe, Azania and many others. We developed remarkable universities at Sankore and Timbuktu which attracted schol-

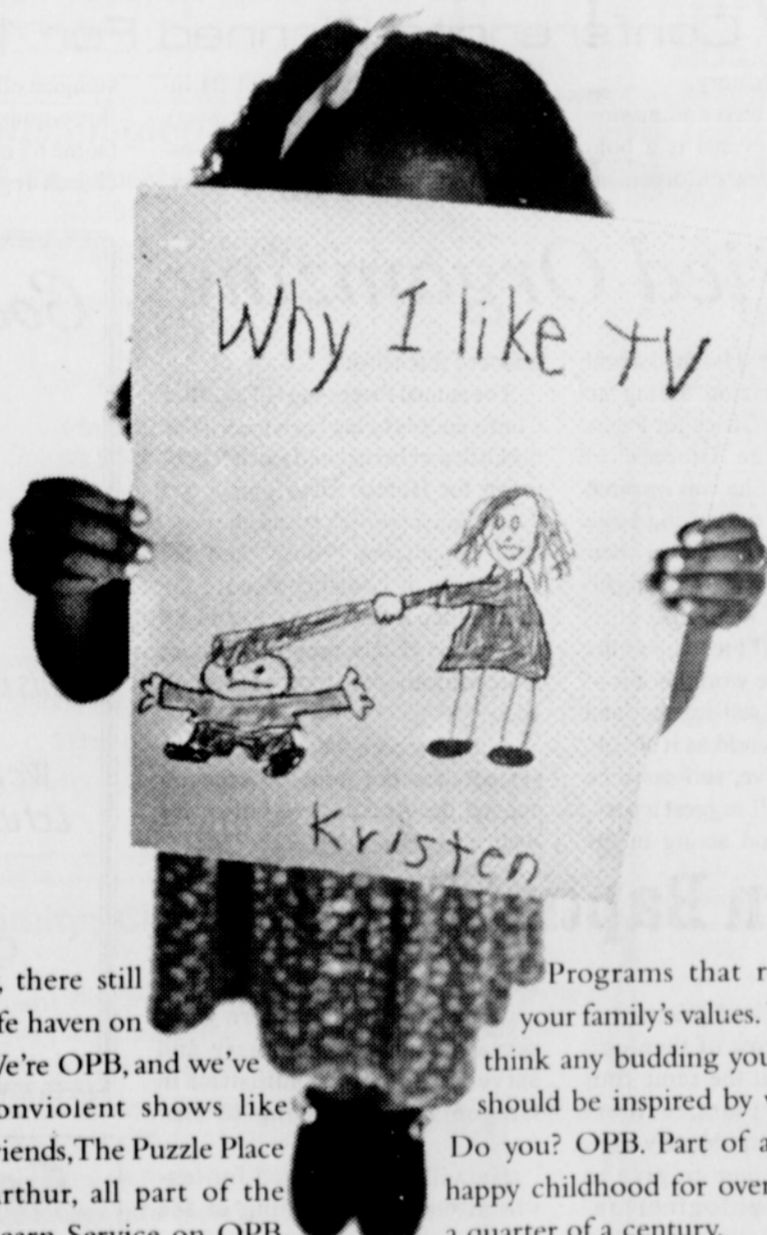
ars from around the world. Even after the demise of Egypt, Africa was a land of knowledge, peace and prosperity for centuries.

Then came the holocaust of enslavement—a disastrous intervention into the affairs of African people by outsiders with negative consequences unparalleled in human history. The


traffic in slaves resulted in the deaths of millions of Africans, millions more were dispersed like cattle or human cargo to distant and unfamiliar lands in the western hemisphere. Trading pattern and relations among peoples and nations were disrupted and the natural course of development of the might continent was distorted and

retarded. Africa was laid low.

But there is a river in the history and destiny of African people. "Truth crushed to earth will rise again." Though drained by the devastation of the holocaust and eventually colonialism, racial oppression and economic exploitation, those who gave the world its first breath of life.



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