

# EDITORIAL

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## Letter To The Editor

Send your letters to the Editor to:  
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### To The Editor

Even though many non-voters think all politicians are crooks, and refuse to have anything to do with the dirty business, I can see no other way for a civilized society to come together for the common good. To be effective in public office is an extremely difficult job, it seems to me, being pulled this way and that by diverse interests whether you're one of "the good ones" or one of the "not so good ones."

It is also inspiring to read one candidate's statement and hope it is sincere. Every office holder must have the highest respect for the law and for the people the law serves." However, in the highest office of the land, we see flagrant abuse of the law. One hopes with revelations of the sorry scandals in the White House, candidates all across America will realize we are a nation under law and honor our laws, not just pay lip service.

Being skeptical myself, I'd like to point out that one of the standard buttons politicians push at election time is how they will get "tough on crime." Invariably their getting tough on crime costs more money. Do any of them pause to look at the actual "crime" statistics?

From the governor to the rookie policeman they all parrot the same refrain "more police, more jails, more prisons." In the current Oregon Blue Book we find:

"Due to projected increases in inmate populations, the Department of Corrections will soon be undergoing the largest prison construction program in Oregon history."

In reality in Oregon from 1997 to 1998 the prison, parole, probation populations all decreased! further, we learn the following classifications of those imprisoned are for:

Assault 8%  
Homicide 15%  
Sex abuse & drugs 38%  
Theft 30%

Perhaps all society really needs to be protected from are the 15% Homicide inmates. All the rest, it would seem to me, should be given rehabilitation. There should be, of course, maximum, medium and minimum rehabilitation programs to be determined by those competent to make such distinctions.

In addition to the skewed prison construction criteria, we are now incarcerating children as adults here in Oregon. This is due to a very bad law we permitted vindictive people to manipulate our fears and to pass, Ballot Measure 11. Youngsters are put in prison for first fights or shop lifting. To their credit the Legislators are modifying some of the worst aspects of this Measure.

One wonders how we could possibly have gone so far afield. The authors of this vindictive, cruel measure 11 were attorneys! In the measure they gave District Attorneys extraordinary power. Many an unbalanced, sick D.A. is responsible for locking up persons without a criminal history, first time offenders, refusing to investigate the so called "victims" malicious charges. Attorneys who make mistakes send a decent person to prison rather than say mea culpa. A D.A. sends an 18 year old to prison even though the "victim" tried to drop all charges! and Judges refuse to let jurors decide on the law as well as the crime in spite of Article I, Sec. 16 of the Oregon Constitution which says the jurors have the final word.

If you are a prison lay minister, or correspond with inmates, or are a Court Watch person you quickly learn that by far the majority we imprison have very little education, have come from dysfunctional homes, have seldom received a helping hand from school teachers to officers of the court.

Rehabilitation won't save tax dollars in the short term, but in the long term the benefits will be immense. Rather than spend another \$ on new jails or prisons, and stuffing sick people inside them, lets concentrate on rehabilitation. We don't have to perpetuate man's inhumanity to man.

Sincerely,

Helen Solem

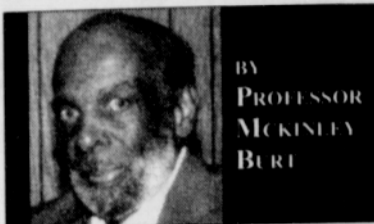
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## Education For A New Century: Blacks

### Technology And Immigration II



BY  
PROFESSOR  
MCKINLEY  
BURT

#### By Prof. McKinley Burt

Readers seemed shocked last week at my revelations of the games played by the U.S. Department of Labor in the 1960's and 1970's: Issuing glowing descriptions of supposedly massive training of minorities in technology while at the same time quietly developing a process for obtaining visas for the import of thousands of Europeans with the very same skills.

It was the famous Roman orator and statesman, Cicero who put it so well: "Not to know what came before you is to remain a child." We would do well to keep this in mind as various northeast community organizations deal with tenuous propositions the school district is presenting as a masterful "reconstitution" of a long-defective educational system. It is said by some to resemble "Reconstruction" - deja vu all over again. Especially vague is technology at Jefferson High.

Cicero would be pleased if he were to learn that African Americans finally have acknowledged and put to work the documented technical skills demonstrated over the centuries. But when will that be? When will 'educated' blacks escape the mind-set and controls imposed by the 'system' (assisted by their own)? Before I continue last week's description of personal experience in this sphere (local

and ugly) I quote earlier writers.

While most of 'us' have read Carter G. Woodson's famed book "The Miseducation of the Negro", few have read his earlier, very incisive volume, "The Education of the Negro prior to 1861." Whereas my research and writings on American blacks involved in technology and invention begins with the documented technical skills of slaves in the South, Woodson, as does W.E.B. Dubois, details a 19th century New England experience.

Pausing for a moment, let me say that over a decade ago I wrote here that, "From Saugus, Massachusetts down to the Chesapeake Bay Area, there were over 236 iron plantations (not cotton), each operated by a complement of slave men, women and children. Doing what they did well on the West Coast of Africa before being kidnapped, these survivors produced iron ingots which the masters shipped to England. There the iron was made into cookware, tools, farm implements, etc. of every sort and shipped back to America at exorbitant prices."

When eager and motivated black students took copies of the article to their classes, racist teachers and curriculum specialists said "its all a lie, disregard this nonsense." As usual I had my documentation, a National Geographic Magazine series by one of America's most noted historians (white) - and a statement from the "British Colonial Office." They kept meticulous records, with the name of each slave and his daily production of ingots. There were no apologies of course, nor is there today as this cruel, ignorant denial of humanity goes on in this school system.

But to return to Carter G. Woodson's, "The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861." We have this gem from the introduction by the late John Henrik Clarke, a great black historian of personal acquaintance.

"The neglected aspect of the education of the Black Americans prior to 1861 is the proliferation of education and publications among the free Blacks in New England. Many of these Blacks were escaped slaves. Many were originally New England slaves who had bought their freedom by working as skilled craftsmen on the weekends. Because the winters in New England were long and there was not enough farm work for a slave to do all year round, many slaves became industrial workers, ships' caulkers, plasterers, builders and the forerunners of the early industrial inventors. Many of them made tools and other equipment that lessened the burdensome nature of their occupation. Out of this mixture of former slaves, escaped slaves came a Black American of this mixture of thinking class that today would be called middle class. They in no way resembled in their action, attitude and commitment the present class of Black Americans called the middle class. They were committed to the liberation of the rest of their people who were still not free. This could be the most responsible class of people that Africans have produced in America."

Both of Woodson's valuable books may be obtained at the "Reflection Bookstore, Southeast corner of MLK and N.E. Killingsworth.

And in reference to Woodson's comments on the black technicians

who were the forerunners of the black inventors of the Industrial Revolution (over a thousand listed at Mooreland Library, Howard University), I constantly met a stone wall from the school district in the introduction of other motivating material. For instance, this 1894 presentation to his fellow Congressman by Representative George H. Murray who held 8 patents himself.

"...I hold in my hand" a statement prepared by one of the assistants in the Patent Office, showing the inventions that have been made by colored men within the past few years...

This statement shows that colored men have taken out patents upon almost everything, from a cooking stove to a locomotive. Patents have been granted to colored men for inventions and improvement in the workshop, on the farm, in the factory, on the railroad, in the mine, in almost every department of labor, and some of the most important improvements that go to make up that great motive power of modern industrial machinery, the steam engine, have been produced by colored men."

The Congressional Record, 53rd Congress, 2nd session, p.8382.

Next week, the cruelest vise of all, whereby even the local contemporary role models in technology are excluded. And an examination of first rate science projects launched by black teachers and others that were either brought to a screeching halt or completely ignored. Then back to the vagaries of technical training at Jefferson. People are noticing the massive layoffs in technology. I'll have comments from people in the field. Is the district paying attention?

## Many Minority Workers Are Faced With Having More Than One Boss

By: William (Bill) Toomer  
In today's every changing corporate world, many minority employees are saddled with reporting to more than one corporate boss. Down sizing and corporate

reorganization have changed the roles of managers and department heads. Corporations have decentralized management, spreading operational procedures throughout the corporation.

Working for multiple bosses can mean multiple headaches or multiple praises. Good communication, good relationships and trust are the key ingredients if you report to a variety of people. You can not choose the one boss you prefer to serve. Generally, you are working for everyone. It is easier to work for one person, but that is not the new corporate style.

Herein lies the dilemma, which boss to serve first. If push come

to shove honor the most senior person first. Always discuss time frames for all of your assignments, paying particular attention to priorities. Let all your bosses know what is on your agenda so that priorities can be organized properly.

That is called communication. Next to follow is relationships. There have to be give and take on all sides, and if you are in conflict about which project to complete first, talk it out with all concerned.

Finally there is trust. Your bosses must trust that you will make the best possible decisions. They must trust that your goals are their goals and that your chief

goal is to accomplish all of your work assignments. It is important that your bosses know that you are not playing favorites, in short they must trust that you are working for all of them. Your immediate supervisor can assist you in this department.

What do you do when all of your bosses treat you as if you are working for them only? Communicate with them, track your time per assignment and solicit their help with setting priorities.

Reporting to several bosses can be a stressful situation. There are early signs of stress and distress, such as tightness in the chest and throat. When this occurs recognize the symptom and take a break.

## Residential rates go down

Residential and small farm customers of Portland General Electric Co. will soon see their electric rates decrease 5.5 percent. That's because the Bonneville Power Administration will pay PGE \$34.5 million in rate relief for its customers through 2001.

"This payment reflects BPA's commitment to spread the benefits of low-cost power from the Columbia River power system among residential and rural consumers in the Northwest," said

Judi Johansen, BPA administrator.

The agreement between PGE and BPA comes after a year of negotiation over PGE's participation in the "residential exchange program," a provision of the Northwest Power Act of 1980. The law granted access to the benefits of federal power to home and rural customers of Northwest utilities. Since 1980, BPA has provided more than \$1 billion in rate benefits to Oregonians served by PGE, PacifiCorp and

other utilities.

Johansen said BPA is committed to continuing access to federal power after 2001.

"BPA is well positioned to sell power at cost and below market for the foreseeable future," the administrator said. "This means energy from the Columbia River system will help hold rates well below the national average for all Oregonians."

### Dear Editor:

As a citizen who pays attention to the state legislature year after year, I know how much the people in Salem have to get through in one legislative session (and how much they don't get to). Imagine the legislature, on top of everything else they deal with, having 12,000 laws under review. And imagine that if they don't pass each and every one of them, the laws not passed lose effect. These laws that the legislature would have to Preapprove govern safe drinking water, clean air, education reform, child immunizations, and sex offender registration. This is the chaos that a small group of extremists could inflict on our government if Measure 65 passes.

Measure 65 is a recipe for disaster, gridlock, and chaos. It upturns the balance of power, and taking power away from citizen-governed agencies who administer technical details of laws and giving power to a special-interest-dominated legislature that can't even site a prison. The legislature has enough to do now. Don't make them reassess the work that their predecessors have put into action over the last 20 years. I urge everyone to Vote No On 65!

KD Parman  
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