

EDITORIAL

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Charles Washington
Publisher
Gary Ann Taylor
Business Manager
Laphael Knight
Graphic Designer

Mark Washington
Distribution Manager
Larry J. Jackson, Sr.
Editor
Tony Washington
Director of Advertising

Contributing Writers:
Professor McKinley Burt
Joy Ramos
Lee Pearlman
Yema Measho

Iesha Williams
Graphic Designer

4747 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.,
Portland, Oregon 97211
503-288-0033 • Fax 503-288-0015
Email: Pdxobserv@aol.com

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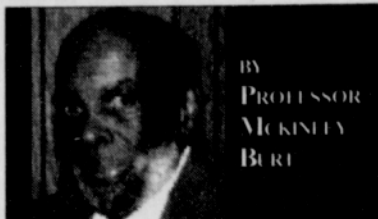
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THANK YOU FOR READING THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

perspectives

Showing My Race: Politically

Incorrect Essays On Identity



BY
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The title to this series is a paraphrase of the title to a great book by African America's top essayist; "Showing My Color: Impolite Essays On Race And Identity", Clarence Page, nationally syndicated newspaper columnist (Harper Collins, 1996).

Some members of 'our' community are waiting to examine the format of the "Year 2000 Census" questionnaire before they decide on their ethnicity. There is a definite madness-in-their-method. Like a number of us, they feel that the 1990 Census missed whole segments of population, largely members of minority groups, there by throwing off decisions by government and business on everything from health care to advertising.

Further, there has been some

ill ease among minorities (particularly blacks) since the categories of ancestry on Civil Service exams began to reflect the cultural discontent of several non-white groups with strong lobbies in Washington (circa 1970s). It was quite natural for blacks to suppose that, if these others were seeking 'genetic space' by label, "they may know something we don't."

It would be extremely unfortunate if Right Wing extremists and other parties in support of discrimination and racism should find the minority house divided-with some even buying that "color blind" scam. And an even worse case would be not to support the administrations statistical approach to the Year 2000 Census.

This sampling approach proposes to count 90 percent of the house holds in each census tract and then use mathematics to determine the number of people in the tract who had not been physically counted. The Census Bureau estimates it "under-counted" the 1990 population by 1.8 per-

cent and, Hugh B. Price, President-National Urban League, notes that the 'overcounted' were 4.4 million college students and affluent whites who owned more than one home.

The greatest fear of the Right Wing, "color blind" contingent-embroiled in a nation-wide fight against Affirmative Action-is that the Year 2000 Census will pick up those 8.4 million people who were missed in 1990. Most of these were African Americans in inner cities and Hispanic Americans in California, Texas and New Mexico. The Republican Party and camp followers shake in their boots at the prospects of such a move - "helping Democrats and shifting money and political clout away from wealthier, mostly white districts.

I was delighted by the reader's response to my December articles highlighting black engineers and inventors who contributed so much to the safety and comfort of mankind. Several remarked, "I thought you had said it all last year during Black History

Month - the engine controls for Howard Hughe's Spruce Goose (our own Don Rutherford, P.E. from Benson High and the University of Oregon)." And there were those who mailed and faxed copies all over the United States - including the story of David Crosthwaite whose thermodynamics, plumbing and air conditioning made skyscrapers possible (I've heard from MIT, Cal Tech, Purdue and the Smithsonian on these - among others).

Strangely, no one has advocated a "color blind" approach to the dissemination of this information about the "black" contributions to the world's technology. All seem in concert with me that it was the 300 year omission of color that did indeed rob generations of motivation and role models. And, additionally, it was the whites as well as blacks who emphasized that the attitudes and prejudice of the white race was structured by omission of intellectual accomplishments - even during the time of slavery - more on this next week!

In addition, Dallas Hall, MD, MACP, principal investigator of CAB and co-founder of ISHIB and Keith Ferdinand, MD, CAB investigators are available for interview. If you would like further information, or to schedule an interview, please call one of the following people; Pamela Bourne (212) 229-8449, Anne Dubois (770) 516-7717 or Jucinda Fenn-Hodson (203) 812-2160 Thank you.

Letter to the Editor:

Hypertension or high blood pressure is one of the leading causes of heart disease in the United States. However, this common and potentially life threatening disease that affects twenty-five percent of the American Adult population, is still not well controlled.

Among those at highest risk of hypertension are African Americans who have an 80 percent higher stroke mortality rate, a 50 percent higher heart disease mortality rate and a 320 percent greater rate of hypertension related end-stage renal disease than seen in the general population. Despite their greater hypertension risk, African

Americans often have less access to health-care resources and are usually not well represented in clinical trials.

To this end the International Society on Hypertension in Blacks (IHSIB) with support from Bayer Corporation, Pharmaceutical Division has conducted a hypertension study in African Americans that compares the effectiveness and safety of three commonly used

anti-hypertension drugs. Calcium Antagonists in Blacks (CAB) showed that once-daily calcium channel antagonists Adalat CC (nifedipine CC), Procardia XL (Nifedipine XL) and Norvasc (amlodipine) provide comparable 24-hour blood pressure control and can be used safely for the treatment of hypertension in African Americans.

These results are now published in the Archives of Internal Medicine. Details of the study results

"A Call to Reason Responsibility, and Action"

Statement to Rev. Jesse Jackson - "The American people will be shocked to learn that this lame-duck Congress, along party lines, intends to impeach the President After continuous polling this fall, the people continued to appeal to the national leadership for proportionality and balanced judgement between the error of the President's act of private indiscretion and the national interest or the people's agenda. Nov. 3rd, the people spoke.

The act of indiscretion was not an impeachable offense. It was not a high crime. It was not treason. It did not violate and responsibility from Congress.

The 81 questions Judiciary Chairman Henry Hyde sent to the President seemed to be a move toward amicably resolving this matter. However, it became a Trojan Horse that reopened the wound and the hurt and the national diversion from issues of great substance that matter to our people.

The Judiciary Committee's determination was to conduct a full-scale hearing. As such, it should have been least as fair as the Watergate hearings - full debate without limits. Instead, controllers have limited debate and limited witnesses to artificially shape the policy and process.

They are trying to railroad

impeachment through the Gingrich lame-duck Congress because they know we, the people, have sent new leadership to the next Congress to put the nation back on course. We see anger, posturing and obsession by Congressmen Tom DeLay (R-TX), Bob Barr (R-GA), and Charles Canady (R-FL). The present lame-duck leadership seems not to get it or to care. The people sent new leaders to the Congress to send a message - Do not impeach the President.

If Congress will put this matter in perspective, then they will deal with issues facing Appalachia. Issues facing urban and rural America. Issues of pain and opportunity in a period of such prosperity for some. Focus on Issues that affect us where we live. 1500 Americans dying from cancer every day. A coal miner dies from black lung disease every six hours. Millions of children are going to asbestos-laden schools. There are those who want to risk Social Security by privatization and subject it to fluctuating market forces. This is a glorious and yet a critical moment in our history.

Speaker-designate Bob Livingston (R-LA) is talking too little in contrast to Speaker Gingrich (R-GA) who talked too much. In that vacuum, extremist forces are moving us to national disas-

ter. Rep. Michael Pappas (R-NJ), Rep. Rick White (R-WA), Sen. Al D'Amato (R-NY), and Sen. Lauch Faircloth (R-NC) all lost their reelection bids in November precisely because of the obsession with trying to politically destroy the President and sacrificing the issues that affect Americans every day.

If you need any proof that the impeachment debate is partisan, look at the Gingrich precedent. Speaker Gingrich lied to the Special Counsel Investigating his ethics 13 times! And the underlying conduct that was investigated was a violation of tax laws, not marriage vows. And yet the Congress did not remove Gingrich or even censure him. They gave him reprimand, a fine and moved on.

Lame-duck leadership and extremists are trying to hit the President, but they are only hurting the country. I have talked with the President and the First Family. They are entitled to heal their family in private. The President is dealing with this by showing public strength in the face of private pain. The strength is real, but so are the pain, the contrition and the resolute commitment to become stronger. The real question is whether the Congress will punish the country in their effort to harm the President.

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