

OPINION

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King Memory Drives 'Justice Sunday'

The National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice, a 30-year old network of criminal justice professionals from across the country, have scheduled the day before the Martin Luther King holiday, Sunday, Jan. 19 as "Justice Sunday" to address the issues of crime and its effects upon communities of color.

Currently, more than 875,000 African Americans and 300,000 Latinos are incarcerated nationally; more than half of each group in state and federal prisons are serving time for a non-violent drug or property offense. One of every seven black males in the age group 25-29 is incarcerated on any given day, as well as one in 24 Hispanic males.

While the overall figures for black and Latina women are

lower, the number of women in prison has been rising at nearly double the rate for men since 1980. In addition, statistics indicate that 70 percent of children with parents in prison will also end up in prison.

NABCI is calling on policymakers, community leaders, and the public to develop more constructive solutions to crime and substance abuse with plans to encourage a national dialogue and action designed to reconsider sentencing, drug, and imprisonment policies; examine the role of community and religious organizations in responding to these problems; and empower communities by providing resources that enable them to build on the strengths of individuals and families.

Judges Should Respect Our Civil Rights

The NAACP strongly urges the United States Senate to again reject the nominations of Judge Charles W. Pickering Sr. of Mississippi and Judge Priscilla R. Owen of Texas to federal appeals court judgeships and calls on President George W. Bush to nominate mainstream judicially balanced judges that respect our civil rights laws.

Local branches in Mississippi and Texas initiated opposition to both nominations on the grounds that each has a record and judicial temperament that consistently reflects opposition to civil rights.

"The re-nomination of failed judicial candidate Charles Pickering is a clear signal that the party of Lott has no intention of becoming the party of Lincoln and that they'll continue to play the race card and practice the politics of racial division," said Julian Bond, chairman of the NAACP National Board of Directors. "Judge Pickering's past racist behavior on the bench and his writings opposing interracial marriage ought to disqualify him from the

post he now occupies. Elevating him is a sop (same old procedure) to the racial politics that has proven so successful for the Republican Party from Barry Goldwater in 1964 through 2002. They have no shame!"

Eugene Bryant, president of the Mississippi State Conference of NAACP Branches, said: "In light of the hateful and bigoted remarks by Senator Trent Lott, the senate sponsor of Judge Pickering, we had hoped the President would choose to move beyond this difficult time for many Mississippians and indeed, the entire nation. Instead, with the re-

nomination of Judge Pickering, President Bush allows old wounds to fester and engenders racial divisiveness for years to come."

President Bush announced the nomination of Pickering and Owen Jan. 7, after the Senate Judiciary Committee rejected both candidates last March. A vote is expected within the next month.

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— Eugene Bryant, president of the Mississippi State Conference of NAACP Branches

Letters to the editor:

Tone Down Cuts by Passing 28

Gov. Kulongoski's budget for the 2003-05 biennium, released Friday, makes one thing clear: Ballot Measure 28 is the only guaranteed way to mitigate significant budget cuts.

The Governor has made substantial cuts across the budget that will impact every Oregonian, of every political persuasion. Ballot Measure 28 will raise \$412 million in additional revenue, but the majority of Oregonians will pay only \$3 a month in additional taxes.

Oregonians should hear, loud and clear, the message in the Governor's budget: Oregon needs Measure 28.

Charles Sheketoff, Executive Director
Oregon Center for Public Policy

Caregiving Coverage Applauded

I'd like to thank all of you at the Portland Observer and especially Wynde Dyer for the terrific articles you printed on family caregiving needs and respite services (Jan. 1 issue). I know this is a subject of interest to many in our community, and it certainly helps to let people know that there are resources available in our community.

I have already been called for respite service as a direct result of the article that highlights the Moore family. Thank you so much!

Cynthia Cohen
Metropolitan Family Service

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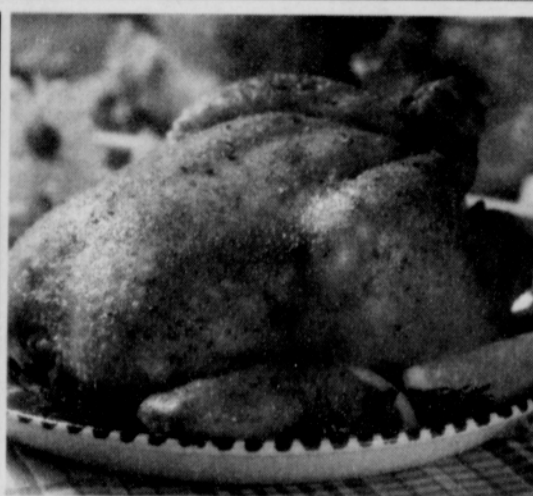
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