

What Would King Say? Occupy Wall Street

I always feel inspired and elated, but also challenged and chagrined, at some of the celebrations of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday. There are those, too many folks, who want to sanitize Dr. King and turn him into a dreamer. Too many only quote the part of his "I have a dream" speech that talks about character content and skin color. Too few remember that in the same speech he said, "We have come to the nation's capital to cash a check, and the check has been marked insufficient funds." Dr. King was an economic populist, an anti-war activist, as well as a classically trained theologian. Too many put emphasis on



BENNETT COLLEGE

Julianne Malveaux

year their report shared facts on the relative pay that people of color earn in the public and the private sector and concluded that austerity programs that cut government jobs disproportionately affect people of color.

This year's report focuses on the Emerging Majority, and concludes that unless policy shifts are made, the wealth gap will grow even wider than it

is today. Additionally, they project that by 2042, just 30 years from now when people of color are a majority in our society, nearly 5 percent of the African American population and 2 percent of the Latino population will be in prison if current incarceration trends continue. The report's set of policy recommendations includes a recommendation to end the war on drugs. Indeed, more than half of those currently incarcerated are casualties of the drug war, some with very minor offenses, and others with conditions that warrant drug treatment, not incarceration.

"Economic inequality between whites and people of color will persist unless bold and intentional steps are taken to make meaningful progress towards racial equity, to sever the connection between race and poverty, and ultimately to eliminate the racial economic divide altogether," the report says in its Executive Summary. But such bold words are belied by the growing gap, increasing poverty, the unemployment rate differential, and continuing barriers to educational access in communities of color and among those who are low income. While our international competitors are investing in education, we are simply divesting. It is almost as if we have made a decision to devolve into a developing country.

What would Dr. King say about all this? I think he'd be outside with the folks from Occupy Wall Street, and I think he'd be directing them to a 21st century version of the Poor People's Campaign. I think he'd be standing outside some of the banks, asking why they deserve the bailouts that ordinary people can't get. Just as he occupied a housing project in Chicago, I bet he'd camp out with a family experiencing foreclosure. I know he'd be challenging us all.

There have been significant changes since Dr. King was assassinated in 1968, and the signs don't say white or colored any more. The signs don't have to say it - in some instances outcomes do.

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the latter, without acknowledging the former.

That's why each year, I am excited to receive the State of the Dream report from United for a Fair Economy. This organization does great work in talking about the wealth gap, and their annual foray into exploring the dream has looked at joblessness, homelessness, and austerity. Last

Read the rest of this story online at www.theskanner.com



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1-18-12

SUB-BIDS REQUESTED

Multnomah County
Sellwood Bridge Replacement Project
Bids Due: February 10, 2012

Plans available January 20, 2012, at the OAME Plan Center, ARC Oregon, MCIP, and at the Sellwood Bridge Jobsite Trailer at 8240 SW Macadam Ave, Portland, Oregon, 97219. Bid Packages also available at the ftp site upon registering.

Mandatory Pre-Bid is January 26, 2012 at 8 a.m. located in the Willamette Room in the DEA Office Building located at 2100 SW River Parkway, Portland, Oregon, 97201.

Scope includes: Excavation, Drilled Shafts, and Tie Backs



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SUB-BIDS REQUESTED

City of Portland
Guilds Lake Pump Station Improvements

Rebid Date: January 26, 2012 @ 2:00 P.M.



NATT McDOUGALL COMPANY

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Richard Krumm Chief Estimator

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1-18-12



It is our primary goal as a labor union to better the lives of all people working in the building trades through advocacy, civil demonstration, and the long-held belief that workers deserve a "family wage" - fair pay for an honest day's work.

A family wage, and the benefits that go with it, not only strengthens families, but also allows our communities to become stronger, more cohesive, and more responsive to their citizens' needs.

Our family wage agenda reflects our commitment to people working in the building trades, and to workers everywhere. In this small way, we are doing our part to help people achieve the American Dream. This dream that workers can hold dear regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, creed, or religious beliefs.

The Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters



Representing more than 5,000 construction workers in Oregon State.

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