

HONORING DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Strike

continued from page 10

with housing, public assistance, education and training, and economic stability and mobility compound their predicament.

In the case of public housing, for example, federal guidelines bar people with certain convictions and criminal activity – mostly

drug-related, but also violent and sexual offenses – from receiving assistance.

However, local agencies manage federal housing programs and have authority to create their own guidelines. In many areas, agencies go beyond the federal guidelines to evict or deny housing to entire fami-

lies if any one member has an encounter with the criminal justice system, regardless of whether they were ever convicted.

Similar restrictions exist on receiving food assistance, federal grants, and need-based aid for college. There's also the significant challenge of debt incurred

from moving through the criminal justice system.

"Examples include various types of 'user fees' that get tacked onto a conviction, public defender fees for defendants who exercise their right to counsel, and 'pay-to-stay' fees to offset the costs of incarceration, among many, many others.

Total criminal justice debts can rise into the hundreds, thousands, and even tens of thousands of dollars," the report reads.

The report makes several recommendations to both public and private sectors

ing upon a year being employed in his field. At night he goes to school to earn an HVAC certification, which will be his third professional license. In the future, he hopes to start his own company to give peo-

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on improving outcomes for Americans with criminal records. Most recommendations center on new or updated legislation in employment, background check regulations, public assistance, criminal justice debts including child support, educational aid, and more.

Currently, Lewis is com-

ple second chances.

"You have to give people something to do, something they can be proud of," says the father of two. "You serve your time, and then it's like double jeopardy because every time you apply for a job it comes up. It's one strike and you're out. Even in baseball there's three strikes."

Two Men

continued from page 2

like me – for guapos used to working the instructive and destructive intersections of our city's several vigorous ethnic streams with our robust mainstream – late night Timothy Lake is as near as we may ever come to immediacy with our Creator. To the unspeakable grandness of our universe.

Toughness and tenderness all at once

And that's when it happened. That's when Dr. King and President Johnson came back to me.

A couple of minutes earlier, I had wrestled my heavy peepers away from that great mystery above us. We had just settled our tired bones into our shared Northface bag, when those two big men crackled to life, right there on the furry black backsides of my eyelids.

I saw Dr. King's polished black eyes; I saw President Johnson's determined brows; both of them in a monochrome matching Timothy Lake's nightscape. Had they appeared like that on my iPad, had this been a FaceTime call, I would've snapped a still shot. I would've sent it and them lickity-split to OregonLive.com.

Historians characterizations of President Johnson's Machiavellian modus operandi notwithstanding, there's unmistakable tenderness in the lines across the President's forehead, lines marking his and Dr. King's historic meeting of minds. It's a moment that hardly ever happens. Not in the individuated and accelerated West, where tough guys like LBJ rule.

Not in the more communal cultures of all those

developing nations constantly sending their most ambitious families packing here; nacent nations where we follow tender guys like Our Lady Aung San Suu Kyi and Arch Bishop Desmond Tutu and His Holiness Dalai Lama.

Mainstream commentators aside, we know that the responsibility of making common meaning between both kinds of men – one trading in political punch, the other committed to circulating spiritual capital – falls among us New American dreamers. It will also have to be the work of our women, coming into their political and moral authority, to blend better these two distinct streams of leadership. To lead better, by better articulating both.

President Johnson's 1960s Great Society initiatives were and remain, a great national agenda. Disappointment with his and the Reverend Dr. King's common cause is mostly on account of our misunderstanding two kinds of giants. Like we mistake fir for pine. Like we mistake planets for stars.

Ancient evergreen enforce humbled silence. Old school congressmen trade horses. Spinning planets pull us to rocketing expensive science way out there; blinking stars pull ambitious sailors across dark seas toward American ideals.

Each kind of leadership, every kind of heavenly body, is essential to good society. American success depends on us understanding and weaving daily, both Reverend King's eyes and LBJ's brows.



It takes one mind to have a dream, and many hands to shape it.

More than 50 years ago, Martin Luther King Jr. shared his vision for a gentler, more harmonious world. Today, his words continue to inspire us all.

At Providence, we're proud to be part of our Portland communities, as a caregiver and an employer. We believe every life touches all those around it. And the best way to fulfill a dream is to share it for a lifetime.

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