

THE Skanner

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a Better Future Now

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Opinion

Black Lives vs. All Lives and Blue Lives: Why are non-Blacks threatened by the Black Lives Matter Movement?

The recent police murders of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile and the protests that followed have reignited the conversation around the social justice movement, Black Lives Matter. Black Lives Matter, the social justice movement created in 2012 after the murder of Trayvon Martin and the acquittal of his killer sent shock waves through the Black community, is a movement that has stood against racial oppression and the dehumanization of Blacks in America



Tai Harden-Moore, J.D.

Guest Columnist

nearly as much attention as the movement itself. In response to Black Lives Matter non-marginalized groups have responded with their own movements, including: "All Lives Matter," and, af-

ever, it is not simply the term "Black" in Black Lives Matter that has those who oppress Blacks in America concerned and in many cases outraged. The true concern surrounding Black Lives Matter stems from the strength that Black Americans will gain against institutional racism when we unite. The Black Lives Matter movement is giving Black people a united voice in our fight for our human rights. As Assata Shakur said, "It is our duty to fight for our freedom, it is our duty to win. We must

backlash against Black Lives Matter. As Huey P. Newton said, "There's no reason for the establishment to fear me. But it has every right to fear the people collectively — I am one with the people". The strength that comes from the Black Lives Matter movement is threat to the oppression, dehumanization, and inequality that Blacks face in America. The word Black does not undermine the movement. Any person or group that attempts to lessen the strength and power of the movement by placing "All" or "Blue" in place of "Black" is a part of the oppressive society that Black Lives Matter is determined to change.

Tai Harden-Moore is a graduate of Florida A&M University College of Law. Mrs. Harden-Moore has extensive experience advocating to bring attention to the issues that most negatively affect African-Americans. Since being diagnosed with breast cancer at age 31, Mrs. Harden-Moore has dedicated her voice, time, and efforts to raising breast awareness in the African American community through numerous community outreaches and speaking engagements.

“The idea of Blacks breaking loose from the chains of systematic and institutional racism is a threat to our oppressors because collectively we are powerful, and it is that power that has truly sparked the fear and backlash against Black Lives Matter

by uniting Black people in an effort to fight against the deprivation of our human rights.

While Black Lives Matter is a powerful movement bringing attention to the issues that face Black people nationwide, the term "Black" in "Black Lives Matter" has garnered

ter the recent police shootings in Dallas, "Blue Lives Matter" — both attemptsto deemphasize the importance of the Black Lives Matter movement and bolster the unfounded claims that Black Lives Matter is inherently exclusionary and therefore divisive, invalid, or terroristic. How-

love each other and support each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains." The idea of Blacks breaking loose from the chains of systematic and institutional racism is a threat to our oppressors because collectively we are powerful, and it is that power that has truly sparked the fear and

End to Homelessness Starts at Wapato

How many readers would want to live in a dwelling with sewer flies? How about electrical wiring that smolders and emits a noxious odor? Seismically unsound? No fire sprinkler system? No kitchen and inadequate toilet facilities? On one of the most dangerous intersection in Portland? A building considered by the County as "the lowest rated building in the entire inventory of County facilities"? No? At that building on July 7, County Chair, Deborah Kafoury told a standing-room only assembly she chose the Hansen Building, with these safety concerns and a cost of \$140,000 for minor repairs, as a place good enough to house Portland's homeless.

Multnomah County has a better option at the Wapato facility, but Chair Kafoury steadfastly looks for ways to eliminate that site, saying, the location is too far away from downtown or Gresham, or that would cost \$145,000 to make minor changes." I do not believe her reasons are insurmountable. Wapato is a pristine, unused facility built in 2004 to the highest standards of safety. Wapato's natural surroundings enhance a



Harriet Heisey

Guest Columnist

seismically sound building; ADA compliant; free of lead contamination and sewer flies; with modern comfort

“Built as a self-contained, full-service facility in a campus environment, Wapato provides 525 beds, adequate shower/toilet facilities, a commercial kitchen, laundry, and dining hall

systems. It can offer dorms to separate men, women, couples and teens.

Built as a self-contained, full-service facility in a campus environment, Wapato provides 525 beds, adequate shower/toilet facilities, a commercial kitchen, laundry, and dining hall. Generous open spaces provide options for education and job training. There is also space for drug/alcohol treatment and medical care. It is beautifully landscaped with public art,

exercise space and even a dog kennel for resident pets.

Wapato's structure in a job-rich location, with over 115 companies within easy walking, biking, or bus distance, has the potential to end the cycle of homelessness. Tri-Met's Rivergate bus #11 serves Wapato and connects to MAX at the Expo Center. Entry-level to family-wage jobs, with benefits, are currently advertised on A-board signs throughout

purpose and Transition Projects, the proposed operator of the County's facility, is a non-profit organization. Alternatively, the County could staff some or all of Wapato with County employees.

Critics allege a stigma attaches to the building even though never utilized as a correctional facility. Look at the success of McMenemy's Edgefield (former Multnomah County Poor Farm)

the neighborhood, many offering job training. What better location for a population that wants to work and needs a chance?

Critics claim this use isn't compliant with Wapato's financing. According to Multnomah County's 2014 Request for Interest for the Acquisition and Repurposing of the Facility, penalties exist if Wapato is used for private purposes prior to bond repayment. Housing the homeless is a public, not private

and planned redevelopment of the Troutdale Jail as a hotel to see the fallacy of this argument.

Unlike the Hansen Building, (12240 N.E. Glisan Street) Wapato offers the County an opportunity to break the cycle of homelessness with on-site health and employment services in a safe environment. Why warehouse the homeless in an unsafe building when the County can safely get them to self-sufficiency at Wapato?