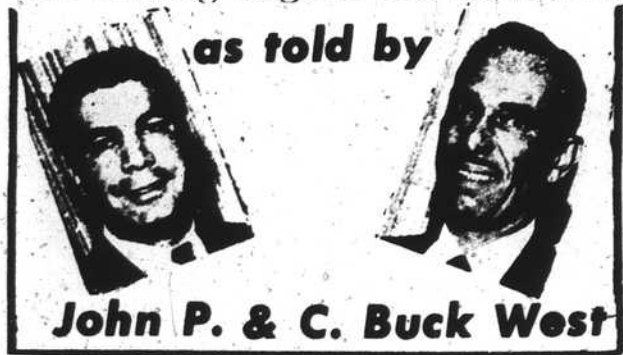


Hidden History

The Unsung Saga of the Black Man



John P. & C. Buck West

SPONSORED BY



(First of a two-part series--From Volume II of the late J. A. Rogers' "World's Great Men of Color")

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

Aframerica's First Great Poet
(1872-1906)

"PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR came on the scene at a time critical for his people. The spasm of sympathy aroused for them during the Civil War was almost dead. The Northerners, having resumed their commerce with the ex-slaveholders, were trying to woo them. Slavery in the South had returned in a new guise with the consent of the North and the white press and pulpit. North and South were generally justifying it by trying to prove that while the ex-slaves were not exactly apes, they were somehow not quite human.

"It was then that Dunbar took up the challenge. In love with his people, but not so much as to be blind to their faults, he interpreted them in song and story with such compelling genius, that a large portion of white America stopped to listen, and was finally led to regard the black man as a human being first, and an African next. It is no exaggeration to say that Dunbar endowed the so-called Negro with humanity in the eyes of hundreds of thousands of his white fellow-citizens.

NONE OF THE world's great poets had a more difficult time. His early financial difficulties equaled those of Camoens and Burns, plus that against which neither Burns nor Camoens had to encounter--the handicap of color.

"Dunbar's father, Joshua, and his mother, Matilda, both came of the humblest stock and both had a love for literature. The father fled from slavery into Canada but came back to join the Union Army. After the war he married Matilda at Dayton, Ohio. Paul was born in 1872.

"He wrote his first poem when only seven years old. At school he won high praise for his diligence and his behaviour. In 1891, he was graduated from high school with honors although, since the death of his father seven years before, he had been working to support himself and his mother.

"ON LEAVING high school he was forced to work as an elevator-boy because of color-prejudice. But with a soul attuned to the infinite he set about his menial and poorly-paid task cheerfully. Prejudice, he decided, should not dominate his soul. With the spirit of John Bunyan at his last, or Mohamet at his camel-driving, he composed verses as he worked. His cheerfulness and courtesy won him friends among his elevator passengers.

"A year later there was a literary reunion at Dayton. Through one of his teachers, Mrs. Truesdale, he was selected to give the address of welcome. To avoid opposition it was kept a secret; his name was not printed on the program.

"When the time came Dunbar walked quietly to the platform and amid general astonishment was introduced by John Clark Ridpath, the historian. Dunbar's address, in its metrical fluent English, and its cultured delivery, convinced all that they were listening to a cultivated genius. At its close he vanished during the applause.

"THE NEXT morning three of the editors who were present called to see him at the elevator and talked with him between trips. One of

(EDITORIAL, from page 1)

years, or longer, have done all of the things for which Powell is being politically castrated by his envious associates.

The Harlem Dandy has done his high living with a flourish but not with hypocrisy. The others have been doing their dipping into the till behind the scenes. Powell has done his before the eyes and ears of the world.

WHATEVER WRONG they claim that Adam has committed, you name it and someone else has done it before him. Adam's only sin was that of his biblical namesake. He could not resist the temptation of living the high, good life. He learned how the others had done it, and were still doing it, and he became an expert in doing what he saw others do.

Majority Whip, Hale Boggs, (the only La. Democrat who voted in Powell's interests) has employed both his wife and son with public funds.

John Nance Garner, former Speaker, as well as Vice President to FDR, always employed his wife as his secretary, with government money. Adam did not invent nepotism.

Every year, after Congress adjourns, a hundred or more House members take trips to every corner of the earth, allegedly on matters of "official business". Adam did not invent the custom of global gallivanting.

REP. WAYNE L. Hays (D-Ohio), chief investigator of Powell's high living, made 47 plane trips between Washington and his Ohio district in one year when he was Chairman of a House Delegation to a NATO Conference in 1958-59. These trips were paid out of committee funds. Powell did not start it.

Hays took two of his staff to Europe, and threw in a newspaper editor for good measure. Uncle paid the whole tab. Adam did not invent this either.

In more recent years, Rep. Hays, who headed the investigation leading to Powell's lynching, took the House Maitre 'D to Europe on 'official business'. (ED. note--Hays voted for Adam to retain his seat.)

Rep. Omar Burlison (D-Tex.), chairman of the House Administration Committee, which is held responsible for 'bird dogging' House spending, apparently forgot he had drawn per diem expenses for 84 of 88 days during which the House was in recess back in '58, when he voted to 'hang' Adam on January 10. Burlison claimed to be on "official business" on both Thanksgiving and Christmas during those 84 days of padding his "swindle sheet".

CONGRESS HAS always closed its eyes to 'off-color' exploits and conflict of interest in which certain of its members have indulged in every session for more years than any member of the House has lived. They could not, however, close their prejudiced eyes to the private affairs of the Harlem Dandy. The eyes of Congress just could not blind themselves to the antics of a Black member living so high--with such pomp.

Congress has seated members who were convicted felons, but they denied Adam his duly elected seat because people were talking about the way this Black man lived. They lynched Adam without a trial, but 10 years ago they accepted Thomas J. Lane (D-Mass.) who had served time in the penitentiary for tax evasion. Lane, not only was seated, but presided over an important Judiciary Sub-committee until he was redistricted out of office in 1962.

Congress has traditionally considered its members as sovereign powers--all except Congressman Powell whom they considered as a Black Congressman who got too big in the White Congress.

them, Dr. Matthews, published one of his poems with excerpts from others which were extensively reproduced in America and England. James Whitcomb Riley congratulated him and quoted his poem, "Drowsy Day." Dunbar now planned to publish some of his poems but the printers wanted \$125.00, an impossible sum for one who was earning only \$4.00 a week. After much discouragement a friend of his guaranteed the amount and the book, "Oak and Ivy," appeared. He sold enough copies among his friends to clear the debt. Soon afterwards he secured employment in the Dayton courthouse with more pay and more leisure. At this time one of his admirers, Charles Thatcher of Toledo, offered to send him to college but Dunbar gracefully declined. He did not wish to be so indebted to

(See HISTORY, page 9)

REP. L. MENDEL Rivers (D-SC) as Armed Services Chairman has been carted off to the Bethesda Naval Hospital for alcoholism, more times than anyone can remember. Could you believe that Rivers would have the gall to cast his vote to defrock the Harlem Preacher. He did! Every Demo Congressman from Rivers' home state of South Carolina also took part in the scalping of the Black Congressman who got "too big for his britches" in the eyes of Dixiecrats, as well as Northern bigots.

Rivers, as head of the House Armed Services Committee has access to the Nations most vital Military secrets. If he were just an ordinary citizen, he could not get security clearance for a janitor's job in an out-house on a government construction job. He is a drunk who could not be trusted to hear the gossip in the John.

Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, the Representative of the Black People of New York's Harlem, was stripped of his chair of the House Education and Labor Committee, but no voices have been heard from the Congress to set Rivers down from his chair because of being a security risk.

PRESIDENT JOHNSON, as well as the late JFK, cited Adam Powell as the best committee chairman in the Congress. Speaker of the House, John McCormack (D-Mass.), concurs with the two Presidents. Powell has been cast aside despite this praise, while Rivers, an alcoholic, is trusted with our national security.

Call it what you will, but regardless of the title, it still spells Racism.

Keep the faith baby! We got a long row to hoe, but togetherness will get the job done.

Powell must be returned to Congress. He is the Black Prince who guards the welfare of Black Americans.

POWELL'S FIGHT is our fight. Let's fight it, baby!

THIS WEEK IN NEGRO HISTORY

AN "NPI" FEATURE

- Jan. 19, 1788 First African Baptist Church organized in Savannah, Ga.
- Jan. 19, 1918 Birth of John H. Johnson, publisher, Johnson Publications, in Arkansas City, Ark.
- Jan. 20, 1800 Nat Turner, who led the insurrection in 1831 which bears his name, was born in South Hampton, Va.
- Jan. 20, 1818 Mary Finger, first Negro woman editor, New York Age newspaper, born in Campobello, S.C.
- Jan. 20, 1959 Atty. Ernest Wilkins, who held a sub-cabinet post in the Eisenhower administration, died.
- Jan. 21, 1816 AME Church founded.
- Jan. 21, 1913 F.M. Jackson Coppin, first Negro woman college graduate (Oberlin) died in Philadelphia.
- Jan. 22, 1793 Benjamin Banneker, Negro astronomer, helped survey and plan city of Washington, D.C.
- Jan. 23, 1817 Richmond (Va.) Negroes meet to oppose U.S. colonization plans in Liberia.
- Jan. 23, 1821 Lott Carey, Baptist minister-missionary-pioneer, sailed for Liberia.
- Jan. 24, 1910 Ann Todd, Negro actress, born in Hartford, Cheshire, England.
- Jan. 25, 1863 First U.S. Negro Regiment (the 45th) organized.

LAS VEGAS Voice

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER (Published every Thursday) DEDICATED to the INTERESTS and ASPIRATIONS for a BETTER LIFE of the NEGRO CITIZENS of the STATE of NEVADA

CHARLES I. WEST, M.D. - Publisher & Editor
ALICE KEY - Associate Editor * JOHN P. WEST - General Manager
DOROTHY WEST - Treasurer * CARITA HARBERT - Office Manager

RAY FEASTER - Advertising Production * EDDY K. KIM, Society
REV. DONALD M. CLARK - Religion * DOROTHY JOHNSON - Food Forum
HENRY MILLER & ROBERT ARRINGTON - Advertising Representatives
CLINTON WRIGHT - Photography * EARL PERKINS - Northern Nevada

EDITORIAL, ADVERTISING & CIRCULATION OFFICES
958 West Owens Ave. (Golden West Shopping Center) Las Vegas, Nevada
Telephone: 642-5308

ADVERTISING RATES FURNISHED UPON REQUEST

Price per copy - 15¢ * One year - \$6 * Two years - \$10
(Application for 2nd Class Mailing Permit pending at Las Vegas, Nevada)