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## Buying Freedom

Belatedly, there is a growing interest in the development of self-help black economic power. For example, Buy Freedom was founded a year ago to identify and support black-owned businesses that all take a five point-pledge to treat all customers with courtesy, offer competitive prices, give price discounts (if possible); create new jobs (when possible); and become involved in the life of the black community. Here is an excerpt from a recent speech given by black TV journalist Tony Brown in DC on behalf of Buy Freedom, as transcribed by New Options newsletter:

*Ladies and gentlemen, we are not poor, and we are not a minority. We are a cultural-economic market that has been trained to behave as a poor minority. There are more blacks in America than Canadians in Canada, and as many blacks in America as Poles in Poland. Last year we earned in excess of \$200 billion. We spent in excess of \$180 billion. . . .*

*Today we are 11% of the population. We buy 18% of the barbeque, 20% of the rice, 26% of the Cadillac cars. 56% of us own our own homes, 26% of us travel exclusively by airplane, 40% of all records purchased are purchased by black teens. . . . If you took blacks out of America, Wall Street would collapse last week! [laughter and cheers].*

*Why is it, then, that we have that much money, but we do not have what whites have? Simple. Whites spend their money with whites, and blacks spend their money with whites [laughter].*

*Every other ethnic and racial group in America turns their money over in their own communities from five to 12 times before one penny leaves. They spend their money at a 360-degree angle so [pounds podium] it comes right back to them. In the black community, we turn our money over with one another less than once. We spend it at an 180-degree angle: directly away from ourselves.*

*How can you have what white people have? Just be simple and logical about our condition. How can you have what I have with you spending 95% on me and 5% on yourself? Blacks spend 6.6% of their money with another black person—a black business or professional. We spend almost 95% of our money outside our neighborhoods.*

Buy Freedom has over 100 business members in DC so far (New Options, PO Box 18324, DC 200036; Buy Freedom, 1501 Broadway, #2014, NYC NY 10036. You can also obtain a two-hour recording of Brown's speech for a \$12 check made out to Tony Brown Productions at the Buy Freedom address)

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the Contadora peace plan. The petition drive continues through mid-February. (Info: National Student Action Center, PO Box 15599, DC 20003)

### ECONOMICS

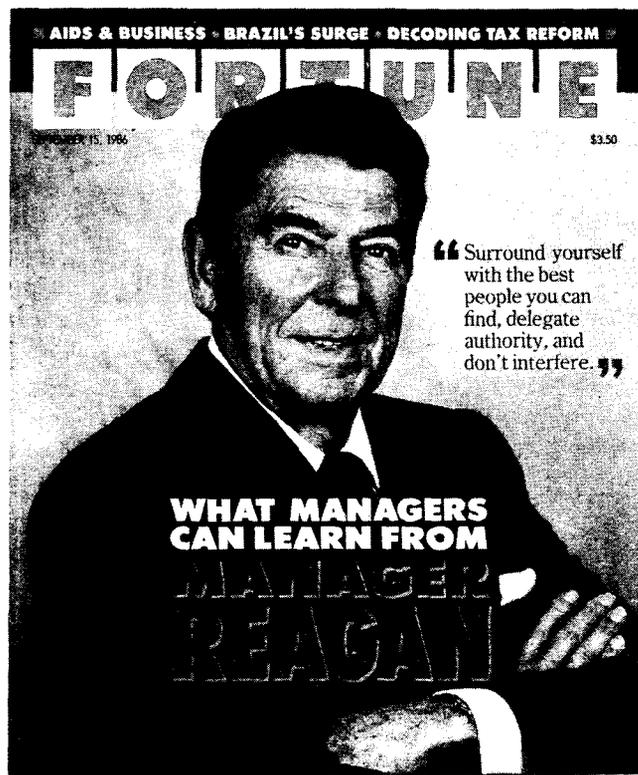
● The demand for emergency food for the poor and homeless increased about 25% in 1986 according to a report to the US Conference of Mayors.

● The Democratic staff of the Joint Economic Committee has prepared a study that gues that weak economic growth rather than family dissolution was the main reason for the sharp rise in poverty between 1979 and 1986.

### PEOPLE TO WATCH

Former Senator John Tower, co-chair of the White House Iran commission, is the brother-in-law of Sam Cummings, head of Interarms, the largest private arms dealing firm in the world. Robert McFarlane, was once on Tower's senatorial staff. The other co-chair, Edmund Muskie, played a major role on Nestle's Instant Formula Audit Commission, which is credited with taking the heat off Nestle for its sales of infant formula to the Third World. Nestle won a Silver Anvil Award last year from the Public Relations Society of America for its strategy. Frank Carlucci, new NSC head, was political officer at the US Embassy in Leopoldville when Congo leader Patrice Lumumba was murdered. In 1964 he was

## Great Moments in Journalism



expelled from Zanzibar for plotting the overthrow of the country's leader. In 1965 he assisted in the removal of President Kasavubu of the Congo and his replacement by Gen. Joseph Mobutu. In the 1970s he was involved in American efforts to resist the growth of radical politics in Portugal and as Deputy Director of the CIA helped in an abortive attempt to destabilize South Yemen. He also lobbied Congress successfully to exempt the CIA from certain provisions of the Freedom of Information Act and developed a close relationship with General Richard Secord. His last known employment was at Sears World Trade, described in Fortune as the subject of speculation among international traders that it was a front for US intelligence activities. (Covert Action Bulletin, Winter 1986, Box 50272, DC 20004 and the Nation, Dec 20)

### ORGANIZING

● ACORN, the community organizing group, got involved in a number of successful senatorial campaigns, including those of Tom Daschle, Wyche Fowler, John Breaux and Tim Wirth. One failure: Bob Edgar's campaign in Pennsylvania.

### FARMING

● A recent conference on farming near cities, held at Tufts University, brought a recommendation for "metropolitan food plans" to encourage agriculture near cities from Roger Blobaum of the Family Farm Defense Fund. Also on hand was Booker Wheatley, of Montgomery, Alabama, who has developed a system of pre-season contracts with consumers. He plants; they harvest. Stewart Smith of Tufts University pointed to the potential for small farmers near cities to "market higher in the food chain" by on-farm processing of food. (Alternative Agriculture News, 9200 Edmunston Rd, #117, Greenbelt Md 20770)

● Nearly all of New England's dairy farmers are organizing a cartel to help push up wholesale milk prices and help in dealing with marketers. Says New Hampshire state agriculture commissioner Stephen Taylor: "It's vital. We are losing dairy farms in New England at the rate of one a day."

### NEW ZEALAND

● Last month, the Reagan administration was reported preparing a plan for economic penalties against New Zealand because of its ban on American nuclear ships. Included would be a ban imports of New Zealand agricultural products.

● 75% of all murders in the US involve people who know each other. They are crimes of passion, therefore unpremeditated and unaffected by fears of punishment.

● Between 1928 and 1961, the murder rate in states with the death penalty was 6.93 per 100,000 people; without it, the rate was 2.73 per 100,000 people.

● In Canada, the murder rate was 3.09 the year after the abolition of the death penalty; several years later, it dropped to 2.74.

● 54% of those executed since 1930 have been black. Blacks comprise only 11% of the population.

● In Georgia, blacks whose victims were white are eleven times more likely to receive a death sentence than any other type of homicide.

● Since 1972, 62% of the people on death row have been unskilled, service or domestic workers and 60% were unemployed at the time of their crimes.

● In Texas, 3 out of 4 convicted murderers with state-appointed attorneys were sentenced to death, as opposed to only 1 out of 3 who were able to pay private attorneys.

● In New York, a murder trial and first appeal cost the taxpayer \$1.8 million as opposed to the \$600,000 it costs to keep a prisoner in jail for 40 years.

● Since 1900, 25 people were executed who were later proved to have been innocent. 343 have been released from death row on the discovery of evidence that cleared them. —Jan Wiersma, Northern Sun News Based on statistics from criminal justice consultant Robert Domer, Canton, Ohio, and Amnesty International

What did the president know? He doesn't know. — Garry Wills

This president is much different (from Richard Nixon). The last two times when we've gotten together, he's started off by telling a story. Just a little Irish story. That son of a gun is really one of the great guys. I envy him for his ability to say, 'Have you heard the one about...?' —House Minority Leader Robert Michel.

## WOMEN

● Belgium has established an office of secretary of state for social emancipation to look after women's issues. The French, on the other hand, abolished their ministry for women's rights last spring. There is some talk that the office's duties will be taken over by a new department called the Ministry for the Rights of Man.

### *What's happening*

The Jewish Women's Newsletter offers news, features and resources for Jewish women. PO Box 335, Berkeley, CA 94701.

**Career Opportunities in the CIA:** pamphlet making the case against the CIA on campus. Free from Radical Education Project, Box 606 Memorial Union, 800 Langdon St, Madison WI 53706.

**ACORN**, a grassroots organization of low and moderate income people is seeking organizers to work with its local chapters in 22 states. ACORN has worked on such issues as homelessness, jobs, and fair banking. Sue Hutchinson, ACORN, 300 Flatbush Ave, Brooklyn NY 11217 (718-789-5600)

## Freedom in Central America

● Infant mortality in Honduras is the second highest in the western hemisphere.

● 72% of Honduran children under five suffer some form of malnutrition.

● 57% of the Honduran population lives in extreme poverty.

● Unemployment among Hondurans is 24%.

● Honduran GNP was at a -1.5% rate in 1982.

● In El Salvador, since 1980, 60,000 have been killed, almost always by "security forces."

● El Salvador has 1.4 million war-displaced persons. 700,000 are homeless.

● Guatemala has 120,000 orphans, many made orphans by "security forces."

—Central American  
Report

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