

Cleaning up our own back yard

Eugene has no ghetto. Nor has Eugene experienced any racial disturbances. Most Eugeneans pride themselves for living in a relatively liberal, prejudice-free city.

They had better take another look.

The Eugene version of the Kerner Report, released last week, should, in its own words, "dispel the illusion once and for all that Eugene somehow is blessed while the rest of the country is damned in a pit of racial turmoil." The 60 page report to the city's Human Rights Commission concerning a survey of the Black community is chock full of supporting evidence.

The survey, taken at the request of longtime Black residents of Eugene, found that a large percentage of Blacks in the city are dissatisfied with job opportunities, housing, medical care and law enforcement. Employment opportunities are the biggest concern; 39 per cent of all Blacks polled were dissatisfied with the job opportunities in this area, and another 12 per cent said they weren't any better than any place else. Some 31 per cent felt they had been discriminated against in applying for jobs in Eugene. Almost half of the city's Black people feel they should receive special training for jobs, and they aren't getting it here.

Approximately one-third of the Black families in Eugene are earning less than \$4,000 a year. With an average family of four, that's below the poverty line. Over 10 per cent of the families have incomes less than \$1,500.

Nearly half of all the respondents to the

survey said they had experienced discrimination in housing. A significant number, 15 per cent, said they had found discrimination in medical care, which may be a more telling indictment. When you need a place to live, you always have some time to look for a home, but when you are sick, you don't have time to look for a doctor. Forty-three per cent of the families with incomes under \$5,000 had unmet health needs.

Other Blacks indicated racism in education, law enforcement, and the city government. Although 62 per cent of the Blacks polled voted in city elections, as compared to 28 per cent for all citizens, the city government is all white.

The Black residents said more minorities should be employed in law enforcement, city government and education—and not in token proportions. Criticizing the schools, the report called for Blacks to be employed at all levels of the school system: teaching, counseling and administration.

Eugene has not had a riot, and if the people of Eugene face these problems honestly and diligently, it never will. We should remember the words of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, the Kerner Report: "The investigation of the 1967 riot cities establishes that virtually every major episode of violence was shadowed by an accumulation of unresolved grievances and by wide-spread dissatisfaction among Blacks with the unwillingness or inability of local government to respond."

This warning should be heeded. The survey discovered that not only does the Black Eugenean feel he faces discrimination in housing, jobs and medical care, he also feels alienated from the local government. Moreover, the Black Community is increasingly compelled to take direct action. Almost all Blacks believed that demonstrations have been effective in raising their quality of living, and half felt the actions of the local Black Panther Party had been helpful.

These are not the feelings of young militants. The people polled were stable residents of the community, averaging 41 years in age. Eighty per cent of those polled have lived in Eugene for over six years. The survey excluded Black University students who are non-residents. Thus the opinions in this survey cannot be taken lightly; they have been nurtured over a period of several years.

To remedy this situation, the report urged a stronger and more active Human Rights Commission, with additional community people of all minorities involved in its operations. It also was suggested the city hire a minority relations specialist, and actively recruit minority personnel. These steps are a good beginning.

Eugene may still rank above most cities in the nation when it comes to race relations, but its residents can no longer piously point to the South and to the Northern urban slums as examples of racism. They have a lot of cleaning up to do in their own back yard.

Letters

Inaccuracies

Two columns in Monday's Emerald concerning U.S. war crimes in S.E. Asia contain some inaccuracies which need correction. Jeff Freed argues that the U.S. maintains a policy of consciously eliminating Asians for the sake of getting rid of them per se, not unlike the Nazi extermination of the Jews.

I would submit that U.S. policy is conscious indeed, but with different goals. The mass killings which have formed part of the military operation in South Vietnam "to win the hearts and minds of the people," are a corollary of the pacification procedures aimed at driving the peasants from their land to "strategic hamlets". This would deprive the guerillas of their base of support as a reverse of Mao Tse Tung: drying up the sea in which the guerillas swim. Massive bombing and defoliation of South Vietnam was to achieve these goals, and constitute the real war crimes in Asia for which lesser fry like Calley should not pay. (See U.S. Army Field Manual 27-10 and the Geneva Convention of 1949 Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War on what constitutes a war crime. The U.S. Army Field Manual is more specific and restrictive than the Geneva Convention. A good general discussion can be found in the New York Times Book Review, March 28, 1971).

Tim Travis calling Calley a political prisoner is nonsense. Calley's actions should be considered stupid by most military standards, even assuming the legitimacy of free fire zones, etc. He sent into a village, did not draw any hostile fire and then proceeded to kill the local population. Unlike Calley's defense counsel and Tim Travis, I do not believe that Calley had the mind of a robot. Some men in his platoon exercised better judgment than he did.

Rhetorical analysis as done by Freed and Travis can only make it more difficult

to make the nature of war crimes understood and to get a general Congressional investigation underway.

Acco Hengst
Grad, Soc.

First stone

The question being asked by Tim Travis (Political Prisoners and Bill Calley), "Who will cast the first stone against Bill Calley?" has already been answered. The first stones cast were indictments which triggered a veritable avalanche of testimony at the trial against Calley. The final stones hurled in Calley's direction were the votes of the jurors who heard that testimony.

I'm afraid that Travis has asked himself the wrong question again. What Travis should have contemplated is, "Who is ultimately responsible for a man's action?" Travis's answer to this question would be "The 'attache case carrying bureaucrats in DC'". It seems to me that Travis is using the bureaucracy as much as a scapegoat for Calley as the bureaucracy is using Calley as a scapegoat for the Army. While it is absurd to call on Calley to account for the war crimes of the Indochina War, it is only proper that we demand he account for his own actions at My Lai. Even Travis admits that Calley did have a choice. He did make a decision. He chose to murder rather than, in Travis's words, "put himself up for grabs". Whatever that means?

Jack Robert
Grad., DBS

Additions

Not to question the "decisions" made for the university student body by the "junior class officers", but couldn't there be other "relevant" changes added to the Parent's Weekend? I can think of at least four additional "suggestions" to the

week's activities, that should be incorporated into the general plans.

First, student housing could be brought to our parent's attention. The majority of University students live off campus in apartments or houses. Their problems should be presented and constructive solutions offered. This would mostly be a civic problem providing a splendid opportunity for University involvement.

Second the student issue of powers over funds and rights of appropriation ought to be presented. I question our student government for not approaching the "junior class officers" with a program. Where is your initiative? Here is an opportunity for action.

Connected to this would be an opportunity to present the lack of appropriations to the university system by the Oregon Legislature, cutting off funds to such programs as the work study projects. Here is a chance to influence a mass of voters. Simple tours of Deady and Villard along with panel discussions by various departments, which are faced with a cut back in funds should more than convince the uninformed parent.

Finally we could change the University. Improving its image in the state and the community. It really all hinges around three words—"give a damn".

Bert Paul
Pre-law

Books

Mr. M.J. Fogerty stated in a letter to the Emerald today that he purchased a book at Walden's bookstore for \$7.00 and we had quoted a price of \$8.45. On the surface, this looks bad. It is a situation that has arisen in the past and will probably happen again in the future.

As a matter of interest, this book

(Tyler: The Work of the Counselor) sold in 1964 for \$4.75. Since that time there has been continuous inflation which is hurting us all. Our last two invoices covering shipments of this book give a list price of \$8.45.

We invite you or Mr. Fogerty to come in and examine our invoice records, or better yet I will enclose a copy of the current invoice. Our store, like all college stores, strictly adheres to the publisher's list price. We deplore the increasing cost of books but it is beyond our control.

G.L. Henson
Co-op Manager

For Hughes

Steve Neal's article on Senator Harold Hughes provides an accurate reflection of a remarkable man. By the depth of his commitment and the breadth of his appeal, Harold Hughes has become for many of us the politician of promise.

Work has already begun in Eugene. Help is needed. Persons wishing to volunteer or receive further information should write P.O. Box 1015 or call 345-4296.

Neil Murray
Chairman, Oregonians for Political Choice

NOTE

All letters and columns submitted to the Emerald must be typed and triple spaced and signed with the writer's name and major or in the case of faculty members or staff with their position and department. Maximum length for letters is 250 words and for columns 1,000 words. No copied or reproduced matter will be accepted. All letters will be printed in the order of their submission. Publication of columns is dependent upon their timeliness and quality. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter or column in respect to grammar, punctuation or potentially libelous content.