

Casson endorses Ombudsman



Attorney John Toran, Jr., opens his campaign office at 5266 N.E. Union with an Open House. Toran is seeking the Democratic nomination to the Oregon State House of Representatives, District # 16.

Sharp criticism of City Commissioners who failed to support a proposal for a city-county "ombudsman" or "people's advocate" came Thursday from Ellis Casson, Candidate for City Commissioner Position No. 1, now held by Connie McCready.

Casson said newspaper and television coverage of the informal city council session Tuesday, at which the Director of the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission, Russell Peyton, presented a 33 page report recommending establishment of the ombudsman position, was "incredible."

"How can Commissioners McCready and Ivancie possibly think that the present handling of citizen complaints by their offices is adequate?"

Casson said.

"This is more evidence that incumbent City Council members -- with the notable exception of Commissioner Goldschmidt -- believe that citizens of Portland have no business interfering with the way they, in their omnipotence, are running the City."

Casson said he is also "disappointed" in failure of Commissioner Loloyd Anderson to support the ombudsman concept "because I thought better of him." He said Anderson's suggestion of making city employees more responsive to the public "is, of course, part of the problem. But it misses the point that the ordinary person feels cut off from his city government, including the elected officials."

Casson noted that the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission was asked to make an extensive study of the ombudsman function last fall by the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners with the concurrence of the city council.

"Now, when the report is brought to the Council for discussion, both Mrs. McCready and Ivancie have the unmitigated gall to admit they haven't even read it, but dismiss the concept out-of-hand anyway," Casson said.

One newspaper account said Anderson had not read the report either, but the Commissioner denied this was so.

Casson said a local government ombudsman -- who would answer citizen complaints and be the citizen's advocate in finding his way through the governmental maze -- is "needed desperately in Portland."

Casson also criticized Commissioner McCready for asking recently that election reform measures be instituted by emergency ordinance, "flaunting the advice of the city attorney who says to do so would be unconstitutional." Mrs. McCready's suggestion, Casson charged, "is an election year grandstand play."

Goldschmidt challenges opponents

City Commissioner Neil Goldschmidt, a candidate for mayor, challenged other candidates "to announce with me that they are making a long-term personal commitment to local government and the future of this city."

Tuesday noon in a speech at the Northeast Rotary Club, Goldschmidt pledged "to serve at least one full term as mayor of Portland, if I am elected. The next four to eight years are critical for the future of this city, and I plan to be right here doing everything I can about that future," he declared. "No man should be running for mayor without making that promise."

Goldschmidt added that "the kind of effort we need now in local government is to demonstrate to people that the small problems of the city can be handled. Until we can deal with these smaller problems suc-

cessfully, we will never gain the confidence of the public, which we need to deal with the larger regional problems. Ultimately, that will determine the quality of life for our citizens. I see this as the sort of effort that requires time. City government, which is closest to the people, ought to be where this citizen-government relationship happens. If we can't have it right here in Portland, then it may not be possible anywhere."

Goldschmidt went on to say that the sort of campaign he is trying to run, one which involves thousands of people, is the kind of effort needed to build responsive government after the election is over. "Television and radio campaigns can't replace personal contact after election day -- so it would be politically false to be elected principally by using them," he said.

Haas team formed

Attorneys Baril L. Green and Raymond M. Kell have announced that they will serve as Lawyer Co-Chairmen of the Haas for District Attorney Committee.

Mr. Kell stated that, "My primary reason for supporting Earl Haas for District Attorney is his outstanding administrative ability and proven capacity to work with all levels of government, federal, state and local."

Mr. Green commented that, "Earl Haas will bring to the District Attorney's office a genuine concern for people. This is because of his superb record in the State Legislature; as a proven experienced trial lawyer; and as a supporter of consumer and environmental legislation."

Senator Haas said that he is "gratified that these two distinguished lawyers are assisting my campaign."

Burgwin runs for school board

Scott Burgwin, a 1970 graduate from Madison High School, is a candidate for Portland School Board Position # 3. He is presently working for the Portland Recycling Team, a non-profit corporation. He believes tax reform is needed to shift the burden off

the property tax for school funding and that more state and federal aid is needed. All of these things need to be sought very actively and loudly. We need to quicken our move towards formalizing our school classrooms, with an alteration in teaching methods and an opening of our schools to the communities. The school needs to move closer to the community and this is not accomplished by setting up advisory committees that are obscure and lack any decisive power whatsoever. The answer is to make each school (community), autonomous, because this is the least bureaucratic way to attack problems of a community. The power of decision should lie where the problems are.

At this point there is no student voice, or student knowledge on the school board. At a place in time when 18 year olds have the right to vote, and "awareness" of all types is increasing at younger and younger ages, it is ridiculous for a school board to determine policy without having a sound knowledge of what those persons that are most directly affected by the policies think.

16-year old seeks election

Glen Livingston, 16-year-old student at Grant High School, announced Friday that he will run for the Portland School Board as a write-in candidate.

Livingston earlier had withdrawn because the courts had ruled out another 16-year-old John Linder, on the grounds that a candidate must be a registered voter.

Livingston said students should have one of their own number on the School Board. He expressed hope that he could bring about "dialog" between the board and students. He would like to win Seat 1 on the board, now held by Jonathan Newman, who is seeking re-election.



John Toran (center) discusses the issues with candidates for city commissioner, Ellis Casson, left, and one of his opponents in the House race, Wally Priestly. Casson and Priestly attended the opening of Toran's campaign headquarters.

Talk of the town

Excerpt from "Talk of the Town" section of The New Yorker magazine -- unsigned March 11, 1972 issue.

On April 20, 1971, the Supreme Court announced its decision in the case of Swann vs. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education -- the first "busing" case to be ruled on by the Court. The decision was unanimous, and the opinion, which was delivered by Chief Justice Warren E. Burger, stated that although the judiciary had neither the mandate nor the desire to set a "fixed mathematical racial balance" of white and black students in public school, government-ordered busing was a proper Constitutional remedy in districts where segregation was officially sanctioned and school authorities offered no other acceptable plan for desegregating.

In North Carolina, where the order applied immediately, Jonathan Yardley, an editor of the Greensboro DAILY NEWS, wrote that summer, "Since May, the order of the day generally has been: we are going to obey the law, and we are going to obey it fully, and we are going to obey it in good spirit." Yardley supported his contention by citing what had happened in Greensboro, where a case like the one in Charlotte had been before a lower federal court at the time of the Supreme Court ruling. Once the ruling had been announced, he wrote, the Greensboro suit was quickly and amicably settled, without the expected "community-wide resistance and school-board recalcitrance."

Less than a month after the Supreme Court decision, the government imposed a strict busing plan on the school system of Austin, Texas, and, as the United States Commission on Civil Rights later commented, the plan was "courageously accepted" by local school authorities. However, the decision was not accepted by a federal judge for the district, who rejected it, late in July. About that time, Republican state chairman from the South met to discuss strategy for the forthcoming election year, and reported afterward to President Nixon that the increase in school desegregation was destroying his Southern base. Other reports indicated that his base was also being weakened by Governor George C. Wallace, of Alabama, who was clearly pre-

paring to run again for the Presidency, and who had indicated that he intended to make busing his principal campaign issue if he ran. During the summer, Governor Wallace began hitting that issue hard and constantly, and charged the Nixon Administration with having done more than any preceding administration to desegregate public schools. Then, on August 3rd, President Nixon publicly repudiated the Austin plan, which had been approved by both his Attorney General and his Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. The President also announced that he had ordered them to hold busing "to the minimum required by law" and had asked the Secretary to submit to Congress that same day an amendment to the proposed Emergency School Assistance Act -- providing a billion and a half dollars to aid schools in the process of desegregating -- to "expressly prohibit expenditure of any of those funds for busing." At the time he made the announcement, he said, "I am against busing as that term is commonly used in school-desegregation cases. I have consistently opposed the busing of our nation's schoolchildren to achieve a racial balance, and I am opposed to the busing of children simply for the sake of busing."

Of course, the Supreme Court had stated in the Swann case that it was not approving busing for the purpose of achieving racial balance in schools, and no one, except perhaps bus manufacturers and bus drivers, had ever proposed busing for the sake of busing. In fact, just about everyone disliked or regretted the use of busing, but in most cases so far no one has devised a more effective method for breaking up un-Constitutional patterns of segregation in public schools, and in some cases no one has devised any other method. (As it happened, the busing ordered in Charlotte to destroy segregation was less than the busing that had been used there to preserve segregation.) Two days after the President's statement, Governor Wallace announced that he would run for the Presidency, and attacked Mr. Nixon by telling the press, "He just keeps saying he's against busing, and our children just keep on getting bused." A week later, the Governor ordered that a schoolgirl in Alabama who had to ride twenty-two miles to school by bus be reassigned to a school nearer her home. That made the front pages, and

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