



ALFRED L. HENDERSON
Editor/Publisher



**WE SEE THE WORLD
THROUGH BLACK EYES**

EDITORIAL FOCUS

This election urgent

The Oregon Primary Election, to be held on May 28th, is an important election for the people of Oregon. Some might say "It is only a Primary", but in some races the person who wins his party's nomination in the Primary is assured of election to office in November.

It is a serious election for Oregonians for we will choose a Governor, a U.S. Senator, four U.S. Congressmen, a State Labor Commissioner, a State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and a Chairman of the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners, as well as legislators, city and county commissioners and other local officials, school board members, etc. It is an election we cannot afford to sit out.

With the possibility of a Presidential impeachment on the horizon, we are cautioned to look for candidates with integrity who openly and honestly will represent those who elect them.

The voters are being bombarded with cliches from the candidates -- one of which is to "throw out the 'politicians' and elect the 'common man'." But let's not forget that the average Oregon "politician" is the "common man". He is the man next door who for any of a number of reasons chooses to serve his community as an elected official. He should not be put aside just because he has given previous service in public office. He should be judged on his record of service and only if that record is lacking or if another candidate seems to have more to offer, should he be rejected.

The Observer will endorse those candidates we believe have the personal integrity and the experience to enable them to best serve all the people of Oregon. We will endorse those candidates who have demonstrated their commitment and their integrity, not only in the field of affirmative action and minority rights, but in those programs -- education, employment, housing, tax reform, etc. -- that effect the everyday lives of people.

Charles Jordan, "the new face that completes the City Council," was appointed to his Council seat in late April. Jordan administers the Fire Bureau and the Human Resources Bureau, which includes most of the city's social service programs. Experience Jordan brings to the Council includes his service as Assistant City Manager of Palm Springs, California; as Executive Director of Portland's Model Cities Agency; as Acting Director of the Human Resources Bureau; and as Director of career education for the Northwest Training Lab. Because of his broad experience in administration and in the social services, Jordan brings a new perspective to the City Council which is ordinarily made up of attorneys and business people. As the City Council's first Black member, Jordan brings or insight into the problems of minorities and the poor and provides a link between City Hall and many people who have never before been adequately represented in city government.

Educated, experienced, dedicated and honest, Jordan is by far the most qualified candidate for Council position #4.

One of the most important positions to be filled is that of Congressman for the Third District, the seat which will be vacated by Edith Green. Mrs. Green has shown us what it means to have a representative who opposes all of the programs that would aid the people she is chosen to represent. With a great Democratic majority in the district, the person who receives the Democratic nomination will undoubtedly go to Washington.

There are several qualified candidates who could serve well, but from among them we chose State Senator Vern Cook. Cook, who describes himself as a "Civil Libertarian", has served in the Oregon House of Representatives and the Senate for 20 years, and has a solid record of support of individual rights.

He is concerned about discrimination and oppression -- not only against minorities but against the poor -- and his record shows this concern. We believe Cook to be intelligent, honest, and open-minded -- a man who does not claim to have all of the answers to the problems of the Black community, but a man who will attempt to find equitable solutions.

John Toran seeks State Senate Position #9. Toran has had experience with the results of legislation through his practice of law, and has experienced the formulation of legislation through his position as Legal Counsel for the Senate Environment and Land Use Committee, with the 1973 Legislative Session. Toran should receive the Democratic nomination.

Bill McCoy is seeking re-election to his House seat. McCoy, who was first elected in 1972, served on the House Ways and Means Committee, an

unusual appointment for a freshman legislator. McCoy also chaired the sub-committee on aging and is a member of the Emergency Board. McCoy, who has a background in social work and public administration, has worked with the aged, youth, the handicapped, delinquent and dependent children, and welfare recipients. His experience with and knowledge of state agencies is an asset to his district and to the legislature. The Observer endorses Bill McCoy, our first Black legislator, for re-election.

Wally Priestley represents the 16th House district. Priestley, called "radical" by friends and detractors, has long been active in civil rights movements. He was among the first to participate in anti-war demonstrations. He went to California to assist Cesar Chavez and the farmworkers long before they became a popular cause. He picketed protesting pollution before the average citizen became concerned. He has been beaten, arrested, jailed for advocating the rights of the individual -- and for this he has received the scorn of the "establishment". Oregon needs a "radical" voice in Salem.

You can if you try

The Observer commends Dexter Henderson for his administration of the Albina Welfare office. Henderson, a white Southerner and retired military officer, came into his job under controversial conditions, but immediately set about to prove that his concern was for the people of Albina.

Within two months, Henderson increased the number of minority staff members from 17 to 25 and appointed the office's first Black supervisor.

Henderson proved that whites who are fortunate enough to be placed in positions of authority can exert their influence to aid the community. Other administrators might well take a few moments to ask Henderson how he found "qualified Blacks" when they cannot, or how he was able to work with the community residents rather than against them.

Divide and conquer

The Black community of Portland is afflicted with divisions and animosities that have developed over the years due in part to various events and pressures effected by the white majority. Many white persons in positions of authority who find themselves in the position of working with the Black community soon recognize those divisions and find a way to capitalize on them. The old practice of "divide and conquer" has worked well through the years.

Although motives are difficult to assess, an occurrence of yesterday had all the symptoms of another attempt by a county administrator to turn individual against individual and organization against organization.

But this attempt (if it was an attempt) failed miserably as the "outs" found the "ins" of the moment and made them aware of the game being played. The result was a moment of unity. We hope this unity is a symptom of a new era -- a time when Black people will work together putting real and imagined differences aside -- for the betterment of the community.

A new scapegoat

The Eastport Nursing Home, which was charged with patient neglect, generally unsanitary conditions and filth, by the State Health Division and the County Division of Medical Services, has come up with a new excuse. The owner, Alex Fehrer, states that his nursing home is inadequate because he had to hire minority persons as janitors and they threatened to "cause trouble" if they were dismissed. He pointed out that Title VI of the Civil Rights Act requires that agencies receiving federal funds employ minorities.

Title VI does require the employment of minorities -- but it does not require the retention of incompetent employees. It does not say minority people cannot be fired.

The Civil Rights Act was not meant to include minorities only in janitorial positions -- but in all levels of employment -- but if Fehrer wants to use minority janitors there are minority-owned janitorial services as well as competent individuals available.

We assume the Health divisions will not allow the Civil Rights Bill or the affirmative action requirements to be used as the scapegoats for a negligent nursing home operator.

Division brings power?

Dear Editor:

I would like to respond to the editorial in the *Portland Observer*, May 2, 1974, titled "Choosing Wisely". In this editorial Mr. Henderson attempts to give a brief (opinionated) examination of the major candidates for Oregon's governorship.

There were several statements which left themselves open to comments and clarification, but I would like to respond only to the last section on the gerrymandering procedures of Secretary of State Clay Myers in regard to the division of the Black community into 4 election districts for the state legislature -- the House and the Senate. Mr. Henderson stated that Mr. Myers did this division within the Black community because, "he (Mr. Myers) would receive less flack and less political threat than from any other group of citizens".

I don't pretend to know what Mr. Myers' motives were -- to me, that's not the issue -- the issue is how we as Black people, Black voters, perceive and use these results to our best advantage. It just might be that Mr. Myers did us, the Black community, a favor.

A recent Oregon law states that a candidate for a legislative office must run from the district in which he resides.

Therefore, if the Black community is made up of one district, that would probably assure us of our one "Black" in the House, representing

our one "Black" district -- with many qualified Blacks running against each other for these two positions. That would put one of "us" on the 13-15 standing committees of the Senate and one of "us" on the 13-15 standing committees of the House. I don't know how you feel, but I don't call that "power".

Now, by dividing the community 4 ways, there are some of "us" in 4 different districts for the House and the Senate. This means that the white man running for office has to speak to that percentage of "us" in that particular district. But more important, under the new law, it means that it gives Blacks an opportunity to organize, support and stand behind Black candidates in 4 different districts in both the House and the Senate.

In recent years we have been striving for more Black unity, for a more united effort on all causes within the Black community. And that's beautiful, as long as we put it in its right perspective. As Black people we have to think beyond the circle of Black unity. Because, like it or not, we are a minority in numbers, not only in Portland, Multnomah County and Oregon, but throughout the country. We alone have yet to put in any candidate, even though our united percentage of votes, large or small, has often been the deciding factor in many elections across this nation. Almost any Black elected official will tell you it took more than

just the Black vote to put him into office.

With a little political strategy and expertise and a whole lot of unity, the new district division provides us with the possibility of having 8 Blacks in the state legislature -- 4 in the House and 4 in the Senate; 4 of "us" to serve on the 13-15 standing committees of the

House, 4 of "us" to serve on the 13-15 standing committees of the Senate. Now, somehow that percentage looks much better to me.

As I see it Secretary of State Clay Myers has increased the possibilities of the Black community from having its "one" district with its "one" representative to having up to 8 representatives in our state legislature -- and to me, that's

both progress and power!

Sincerely,
Eugene Jackson

[Editor's note: If Mr. Jackson's logic were followed to its natural conclusion, "we" would have Black Representatives and Senators serving in all of the districts of Portland and in some other areas of the state -- including Mollala.]

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Straight answers to the most often asked questions about your electrical service:

Q

Is PGE researching to develop new power sources such as geothermal, solar power, even the wind itself?

A

We certainly are.

Our research budget for 1974 is nearly \$900,000. Recently we contributed \$30,000 to the state of Oregon to aid in the exploration of geothermal sources. And the electrical industry as a whole has set aside some \$100.2 million this year for research. This amount will undoubtedly increase each year. Government and the electrical manufacturing industry, too, have recently increased the size of their research budgets in the quest for new energy sources. Increased research is underway.



Send for PGE's Straight Answer booklet
**Conservation Center of
Portland General Electric Co.**

P. O. Box 1788
Portland, Oregon 97207

Discrimination charged

Dear Editor:

Recently when I mentioned that the Oregon Labor Press was not being objective in its reporting of candidates and has ignored my candidacy and the candidacy of another fine candidate, "Chuck" Thompson, in favor of their hand-picked choice the editor attacked and chastised me and called me ignorant. I've been a union member of different unions about twenty years.

The Labor Press says I'm "ignorant" and "won't waste any ink exposing me to its members," but I would like for your readers to decide just who is ignorant. Am I ignorant because I advocate laws that protect the pensions of working people without any fancy strings attached? Am I ignorant because I believe that Oregon needs laws that will give union members a state bill of rights, so that they may have redress under state law when they are being treated unfairly by their unions? (I'm not implying that all unions mistreat their members and ignore their wishes but some do, and these are the ones that need reminding as to who is supposed to serve whom.) Am I ignorant because I believe that all

unions must be financially responsible to their members? Am I ignorant because I believe that local unions must be strengthened, not merged with other locals to form giant labor conglomerates that all too often lose touch with the needs and wishes of their members? Am I ignorant because I believe that the members are the union, and that all too often no one bothers to ask or seems to care how the rank and file feel about issues? But maybe the real reason the Labor Press says I'm ignorant is because I say what I believe and not what they, "the union bosses", want to hear.

Thank you,
W.J. (Bill) Dwyer
Democratic candidate for
Labor Commissioner

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