



*We see the world
through Black eyes*

Appointment in order

Dick Davis, Director of the Department of Human Resources, recently announced that J. N. "Nick" Peet, Administrator of the Public Welfare Division, will assume the duties as Administrator of the Children's Services Division. We think this is a good appointment. We know that Children's Services Division has been beset with numerous problems. We expect Mr. Peet to bring direction and order to the Division, which he has very ably done in his previous position.

We do think, however, that it is time Mr. Davis made some top appointments of minorities and women. We urge Mr. Davis to fill the position Peet has left - Administrator of Public Welfare - with a minority man or woman.

Housing urgent need

Congratulations to the Emergency Helping Agencies Committee of the Tri-County Community Council. After much discussion, they are embarking on a long overdue analysis of emergency housing needs in the greater Portland area.

Helping agencies have long recognized the need for emergency housing, as well as regular housing, but have felt powerless to cause the development of such resources.

We hope that the Committee will not overlook the large numbers of decayed, dilapidated and deteriorating houses in which people are forced to live - in highly unsanitary conditions, faced with rodent problems and in constant fear for their own safety and security.

We recommend that particular attention be given to the Albina community with its high minority population, high unemployment and low income, high crime rate and low percentage of clean, decent housing at reasonable rates.

Committee members, we will be watching your efforts and stand ready to assist you in your endeavors.

Get involved now

The Tri-County Local Government Commission, a group that was formed to study the workings of local government has made recommendations for changes and will be seeking public input.

These changes, if adopted, will drastically effect not only county and city government, but public service districts and special boards such as the Columbia Region Association of Governments (CRAG) and Tri-Met.

These changes could make many of these boards elective, could change their functions, or could eliminate them altogether. Elected members could serve geographic districts or be elected at-large.

These reforms are supposed to make government more coordinated and more responsive to the people.

This is too important to matter for us to sit back and allow changes to be made that could effect our lives for years to come. Many of the recommendations made by the Commission, or made by the public, might be desirable. Others might not. This issue requires our study and evaluation, and our participation - in numbers large enough to be seen and heard.

Let's not sit back and lose what little we have - then start hollering after the decisions have been made by others.

Another Point of View

THE ABORTION DECISION

by Kenyon C. Burke
Guest Editorial

In the midst of the fanfare and Happy Birthday U.S.A. festivities surrounding the Bicentennial, it was heartwarming to see the U.S. Supreme Court clarify and strengthen the rights of women to decide for themselves whether or not they want to terminate a pregnancy.

Although the Supreme Court's landmark 1973 abortion decision indicated that termination of a pregnancy was basically a decision for a woman to make herself, there were hold-outs among us who wanted to limit and restrict that right by insisting that husbands or parents of a minor give their consent.

In the abortion cases recently decided, the elimination of a requirement for a husband's consent to his wife's abortion and the limitation of parental participation in decisions where minors are involved are but logical extensions of the original opinion.

The soundness of the principle is indicated by Justice Blackmun's common sense argument that when a husband and wife disagree, only one can prevail and that since the wife "is more directly and immediately affected" her views should bear more weight.

Also, the court's extension of the right of decision to "mature minors" is not simply dictated by the logic of the 1973 decision, but also by the common experience that where safe abortions are forbidden by law or by parental fiat, back alley butchers flourish.

The price of illegal abortion in the days preceding the Supreme Court's abortion decision was paid in the currency of women's dignity, women's health and women's lives.

Though many paid the price, none paid it more often and more cruelly than minority groups and the poor. More than nine out of 10 of those who died at the hands of incompetent practitioners in the days before abortion was legal were Black and Spanish-speaking.

While abortion and its physical and psychological ramifications are not to be taken lightly, access to medically supervised abortion does bring about significant health advantages to individuals and their families.

Since the 1973 Supreme Court decision gave legal sanction to abortion, the maternal death rate and infant mortality rates have materially declined. Any attempt to interfere with a woman's right to personally make a choice on this crucial matter would reverse that trend and be a step back into our dark and ignorant past.

One would hope that the court's reaffirmation of this most intimate of privacy rights might serve to defuse much of the heat out of the abortion issue and free up activists to deal with improving the quality of life of all people alike and respond positively to the real gut survival issues we face in the Bicentennial year.

THE BLACK PRESS - OUR FREEDOM DEPENDS ON IT!

Seniority in schools

by Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
Copley News Service

It takes a bit of imagination to see how discussion of seniority practices in Congress can relate to the education that students receive in schools.

The common bond is the similarity of seniority practices in Congress and in education. Traditionally, teachers with the most experience have first choice of teaching assignments just as members of the House and Senate with longevity have, in the past, filled all the top congressional assignments.

In recent years Congress has reevaluated and changed its traditional seniority patterns. By doing so, it has considerably improved its responsiveness to public concerns.

It is my opinion that the schools must do the same. In the inner-city schools are many dedicated, talented teachers. Year after year they are able to successfully challenge youngsters and help prepare them for today's world.

However, if the level of teaching in these schools is to be uniformly high, then the balance between inexperienced and experienced teachers must be equalized. This can only be done by modification of teacher seniority practices.

A recent study showed that the number of inexperienced teachers is much higher in center city than in suburban schools.

For instance, in Los Angeles schools, Area B includes the communities of Vernon, Huntington Park and South Gate with 42 schools. In these schools, the students are 83 per cent minority of which 37.5 per cent are Blacks and 43.5 per cent have Spanish surnames. In this area, 26.2 per cent of the teachers are inexperienced, being either probationary or long-term substitutes.

In contrast, Area L, which includes the communities of Canoga Park, Chatsworth and Woodland Hills, has 49 schools. The students are 11.4 per cent minority and 88.6 per cent white. Probationary or long-term substitute teachers make up only 7.2 per cent of the staff.

Why does this pattern of inexperienced teachers in the center city prevail?

The answer is not news. Teachers tend to prefer the middle-income areas. Teaching assignments in the inner city are considered harder, less rewarding, farther from where teachers live and, in some cases, frightening. Teachers, as they gain seniority, often move from the center city into suburban schools.

At present, the situation in Los Angeles is further complicated by the fact that the city is in danger of losing \$100 million in federal funds because its school-teachers have been racially segregated. In the past, Black teachers have been a source of capable teachers in the center city since they were traditionally excluded from predominantly white schools.

If Black teachers now have an equal

opportunity to teach anywhere in the district, the problem of keeping experienced teachers in the center city grows larger.

We know there are no easy answers. But we also know that action must be taken. It is clear that traditional seniority practices are counterproductive. On the other hand, the random selection for teacher transfer or lottery plan can only be considered as an interim or expedient way to face the present problem. The lottery is the method recently adopted by the Los Angeles Board of Education in response to federal pressure to desegregate its teaching staffs.

Seniority practices must be modified. Facilities must be balanced to provide for a varied and rich learning climate.

To do this, a faculty must be mixed, by subject interests, race, sex and experience. Only in this way can children be prepared to enter the complex world that awaits them.

Opening a discussion of seniority practices is like opening a beehive. But those who take leadership in discussion and in action should receive courage and inspiration from the U.S. Congress. Nowhere was seniority more ingrained and protected than in that august body. And yet, changes were made.

Or, to put it another way, if Congress can do it, anyone can do it. The stakes are high, the discussion heated and the results, I pray, will make the best possible educational climate for children.

AME Bishop demands liberation

(Continued from p. 1 col. 6)

Now there are forces that will come out of Mozambique, out of Angola, and out of Zaire that will topple the Smith governments.

Brookins said he appreciates the efforts of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to at last form a policy on Black Africa. Kissinger's policy now is that the government understands that it can deal no differently with Black Africa than it does with white nations that sought freedom and received aid from the government to insure majority rule.

Kissinger has asked that Blacks form a high level committee to consult with him on how he should deal with Africa. "It is the first time in the history of this country when the State Department was even inclined to respect Blacks enough to respect their opinion as it relates to their own culture and native land."

Brookins has some advice for the government:

1. The United States should ask the U.N. Security Council to send peace keeping representatives to South Africa;
2. The Republican Party and President Ford should come out publicly and denounce the tragedy that is going on in South Africa;
3. The United States should send Blacks to dialogue with Blacks in South Africa to find out what is really happening there, since news reports are not usually accurate;
4. The United States should use economic sanctions against South Africa.

Brookins assesses the Soviet Union's activities as "playing with Africa." "They attempt to come in on the side of the freedom fighters to give the impression that they are friends of Africans. The future of Africa must be determined exclusively by Africans. The reason is that the white powers have not responded to Africa for hundreds of years on the basis of that which is good for Africans. It is in the interest of Russia, in the interest of America, in the interest of France, in the interest of Germany, in the interest of Britain and all of the rest of them. It is for this reason that all of those struggling forty-six nations that now claim independence have political independence but still have economic slavery and colonialism, and if not colonialism, then neo-colonialism. And of course the end result is the same. They have a symbol of freedom but they do not have economic freedom and until you get economic freedom it all becomes just a paper job and a symbolic thing."

"What we have to do is withhold our self-righteous involvement and self-serving involvement after the fact. We went into Angola after the fact to try and say that we were for the Angolans when we went there only in the interest of Ameri-

ca and we went there in contest with Russia, with no interest for the Angolans at all."

The U.S., he said, became involved in Angola because we were afraid it would go communist. "Africans are not inclined to go communist, or democratic, or fascist, or Naziist. They are trying to get their freedom and whichever government serves that end, they will cooperate with, at least for the time being. Hungry bellies know no morals and no more than hungry people here are concerned about a philosophy, hungry people don't go around looking for philosophies - they go around looking for bread, and butter, and goods, and services; and this is what is going on in Africa. America will not lose in Africa if America moves now. We call on the Secretary of State to give massive economic aid to Africa on all fronts - particularly in the area of rural development, of education, in the area of health and nutrition and that alone will make friends for this country."

Brookins believes that the United States will have to respond to the crisis in Africa. "I don't think there will be any voluntary, moralistic response to Africa's problems. I think that circumstances will cause America to respond. We are no longer that world respected power, where everybody is bowing at the shrine of our liberty while we are actually denying freedom and opportunity and democracy here in America." What will bring America to that point is the realization that the Third World controls the U.N. Also, the greatest crisis of the future will be in the production of food and the only land available will be in Africa. The U.S. will also be dependent on Africa for oil and metals. "Africans will use that which is beneath their feet to determine where their feet will go."

Another factor is that there are 30 million Blacks in this country and this year Blacks will use votes to make certain that a stronger, more viable, more sensitive foreign policy relates to our homeland; to insure that the administration of 1977 will confront the issue of Black and white.

"We do not think it is right for this nation to use one kind of foreign policy for white nations and another kind for Black nations - it is in this same sense that we can no longer allow that administration to apply one kind of equal justice in this country to one race over against the other race. Blacks are no longer waiting for handouts - we are no longer waiting for welfare - we are waiting for the same job market, for the same economic advantages, and for the same political advantages to participate in decision making levels that the rest of America is all about."

Regarding the upcoming election, Brookins said President Ford has continued the same "do-nothing" policies for Blacks that Richard Nixon did - on all counts. He expressed the opinion that Jimmy Carter is saying the right things - he has promised to place Blacks at all levels of government and to look at the regulatory agencies - and based on his record in Georgia, he offers more hope. "If we get him in office and he doesn't do what he says he will do, we'll get him out of office." He said Carter might be earthy enough, Southern enough, genuine enough and naive enough to do the right thing.

"We know America is going to respond because we're not going to rest until it does. We're not going to do it violently; we're going to use the non-violent, highly sophisticated economic techniques and strategies to make this government more responsive to what we are all about."

The African Methodist Episcopal Church will be in the forefront of this renewed drive for Black liberation at home and abroad. "We are going to use the Black Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Church is 177 years old. It is the liberation church; it is the only church that is concomitant with the history of this nation and we are going to use our own vehicles to insure, for example, in these 14 Western states that we get from the political administration that which these underprivileged and these Blacks, particularly are entitled to."

Bishop Brookins received world-wide attention when he was declared an "undesirable inhabitant of or an undesirable visitor to Rhodesia" and barred from Rhodesia by the Ian Smith government. This followed his efforts to aid the economic and social development of Black Rhodesians and his public pronouncements in favor of Black majority rule. The Rhodesian press credited Brookins with initiating, in the United States, support for the 5 1/2 million Black people who are in a life and death struggle for majority rule in Rhodesia.

Brookins served as Bishop in Central Africa - Zambia, Rhodesia, Malawi, Mozambique, Zaire, Tanzania and Angola - from 1972-1976. In June, 1976, he was appointed to the United States' largest Episcopal District, the 17 states west of the Mississippi River.

Brookins is a native of Mississippi. He is a graduate of Wilberforce University and Payne Theological Seminary (D.D. 1951). He pastored First African Methodist Episcopal Church in Los Angeles from 1959-1972. In keeping with his belief in the church's involvement in economic and social development First African (Please turn to p. 8 col. 5)



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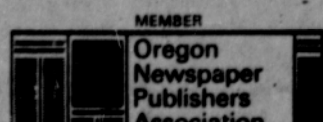
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