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Casson leaves NAACP presidency

Ellis Casson has announced that he will not be a candidate for re-election as President of the Portland Branch of the NAACP.

Casson was elected to a two year term in 1970, and took office in January of 1971. He was re-elected to two additional terms.

"Since we will be starting the required 'election procedures' for new officers and board members, I felt that the Nominating Committee and the community at large should be informed that I do not seek re-election," Casson stated. "There comes a time when one must evaluate and set goals and priorities for himself and his family, and for me that time has come." However, I take this means to inform you, and to make it perfectly clear for the record, that I am not being pushed out, for I could run again, and have confidence that I could be elected.

"Six years is a long time, and I have tried to serve well and represent NAACP with dignity and respect locally, regionally, and at the national level."

"Mine is a record I am proud of."

The branch election process - which will choose all officers and an executive board - begins with the October 17th meeting, at which a nominating committee will be selected. The nominating committee will report at the November meeting and the election will be held in December.

"We are looking forward to hosting the NAACP National Convention. I wish the new branch leadership well and I am proud that I was able to play a small part in making the dream of hosting a National Convention here a reality."

Casson is Civil Rights Director for the U.S. Highway Department in Portland, responsible for insuring that minorities

are used on all federally funded highway construction. He was recently appointed pastor of A.M.E. Church in Everett, Washington.

Casson also urged that the community support the national NAACP in its time of crisis. The organization has had to raise \$1.6 million cash to appeal a Mississippi judgement. Although the money was not raised in time, the AFL-CIO and others made loans to meet the quota. A temporary injunction by federal court postponed payment.

If this bond must be paid, this will tie up all of the NAACP's operation funds and the loans must be repaid.

If every Black American had contributed 15 cents, the \$1.6 million would have been raised with ease, but this was not the case. Members and friends of the NAACP still have time to contribute to the survival of the organization.



Jane Cease candidate for the Oregon Legislature meets the voters in her district.

(Photo: Dan Long)

Candidate meets voters face-to-face

Jane Cease, Democratic Candidate for the State House of Representatives in District 18, is a strong proponent of personal canvassing during the political campaign. "Not only do people get a chance to meet me, and evaluate my stands on a person-to-person basis, but I get a firsthand working knowledge of their major concerns," Cease said. "It's the best way of doing your political homework - the best way of becoming a truly 'representative' representative."

open-ended survey conducted during the primary campaign, the Cease campaign discovered seven major issues of concern in the district.

The most pressing concern of citizens in her area is the environment. "People were worried about questions of energy resources and conservation, nuclear safety, land use, mass transit, the problem of motor vehicle emissions testing, population growth, water and air quality, solid waste disposal and recycling," Cease

stated.

Following hard upon the environmental question were issues involving Human Resources, included Senior Citizen programs, child care, child support programs, welfare reform, youth employment and Health care.

Government was a third sea of interest, and voters stressed the need for careful spending, the desire for new faces and talent, improved responsiveness in (Please turn to p. 5 col. 3)

Harper recruits minorities for PFD

Larry Harper, 28, a resident of Portland for two years was recently appointed by the City of Portland as Minority Recruiter for the Fire Bureau. Larry was born in Detroit, Michigan, attended college in Pasadena, California, and when asked why he chose Portland, said, "I felt that opportunities for Blacks here were better."

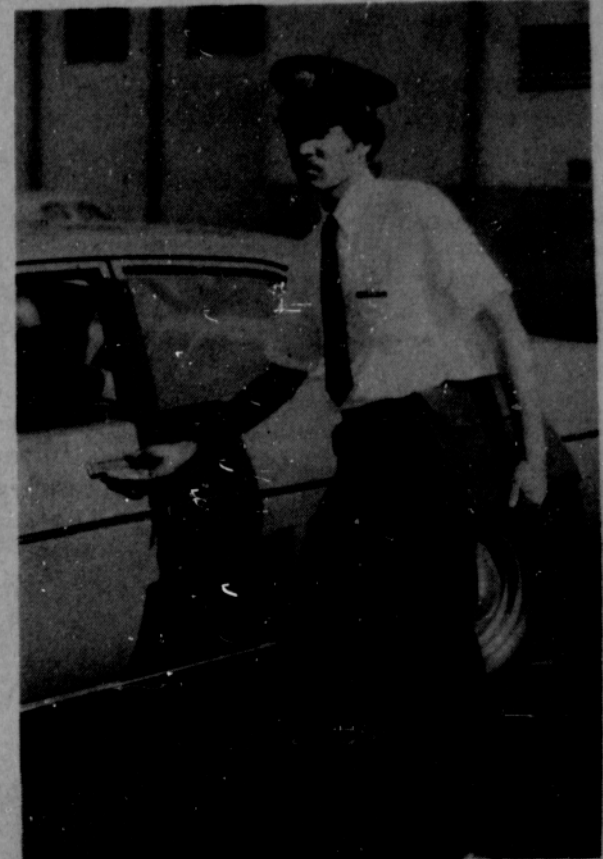
Larry was chosen above 6 other applicants for his present position after spending fourteen months as a firefighter.

Harper explains that there are opportunities for Blacks in the Fire Bureau, but only for those that are both interested and willing to put out.

As Minority Recruiter, Larry will assist minorities in their training as well as recruit them. "The Fire Bureau can be a very rewarding career and offers many fringe benefits," Harper goes on to say, "but it takes dedication and is very demanding."

There are certain requirements to be met such as: age for non-veterans - 21 through 25 years; for veterans - 21 through 30 years. A person would have to pass a written examination, physical exam and an oral interview. Mr. Harper states that there are numerous fringe benefits and the starting salary is \$1,007.07 per month upon entrance and increases annually to peak out at \$1,475.07 as a firefighter.

Larry is a member of the International Association of Black Professional Fire



LARRY HARPER

Fighters and recently attended their fourth Biennial Convention held in San Diego, California, September 24th

through October 1st.

The Northwest region is represented by only Portland and Seattle.

A clear and unmistakable difference

by Bayard Rustin

More than anything else it is the election of the president which determines whether Black Americans will go forward or backward. The Black struggle for equality, after making impressive gains during the nineteen-sixties, has been at a stand-still for the past eight years. But this November Black Americans will have a unique opportunity to get things moving in the right direction again.

The problem is that even many of the victims of present policy - the teenager who can't find his first job, the worker who has been laid off - are saying it doesn't make any difference who is elected. This cynicism is understandable after eight years during which government policy has seemed only to make things worse, but it couldn't be more wrong. For without the right kind of President, things will continue to get worse.

In a race that is extremely close there are clear and unmistakable differences between presidential candidates Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter. They differ not merely in style and personality, but in their approach to the basic issues con-

fronting the nation. On every important issue - from the cities to taxes to health care - Carter is obviously superior.

President Ford is running on a record which deserves to be thoroughly repudiated. His platform flaunts an ultra-conservatism and disregard for human problems that was out-dated when it was the creed of Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover.

Analysis

Ford's election would mean the continuation of policies initiated under Richard Nixon that have been disastrous for all working Americans, and especially for Blacks. Nearly eight million Americans are unemployed, two and a half million more than when Ford assumed office. And there is little hope of improvement given present policies. In the last year alone, the number of Americans living in poverty increased by more than two million. Since 1970 Black unemployment has averaged more than 10 per cent.

Today nearly one out of seven Black workers can't find a job. The gap between Black and white income which was narrowing in the sixties is growing again. The average Black family is worse off than it was six years ago.

It would be bad enough if Ford had simply followed a wrong course of economic action. But what is worse is that he seems totally oblivious to the human and social cost of unemployment. Rather than being a leader in civil rights, Ford has attempted to exploit racial tensions for political advantage. Overall, his performance has been dismal. He has substituted obstructionism for program. He has shown no capacity for the imagination and vision needed to inquire and unite the American people.

In contrast to Ford's insensitivity and lack of sympathy for the poor and unemployed, Jimmy Carter offers compassion and understanding. Carter forged an admirable and courageous civil rights record as governor of Georgia. He promises to be a dynamic and aggressive President who can work effectively with Congress to pass much needed legislation. (Please turn to p. 6 col. 3)

Names in the News

Ivan Cannady, Los Angeles real estate man, son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Cannady prominent Portland pioneers, has donated many issues of *The Advocate* and his Mother's scrapbook to the Oregon Historical Society. Mrs. Cannady was the first Negro to be admitted to the Oregon Bar.

Mrs. Edith Harrison is administrative vice principal at Roosevelt High School. Mrs. Harrison will travel with the women's athletic teams and coordinate some social functions. A Teacher Corps graduate, former teacher at Tongue Job Corps, and researcher at Grant High School, she brings varied experience and an interest in young people to the position.

LeRoy Randolph celebrated his seventy-third birthday, October 17th. The remarkable Mr. Randolph is active on the usher board of Bethel Church and is a member of the senior citizens.

Mrs. Helen McColloch visited in Portland for three weeks and has returned to her home in Houston, Texas. Lillian Spiller and Nellie Folwkes arrived Sunday from Houston, Texas. All three ladies are sisters of Mrs. Alice Robinson, Jewel Bowman and Manie Murphey.

Those in Charge of the Annual Banquet of the Railroad Senior Citizens to be held October 29th at the Matt Dishman Center, hope to make this year's event the best ever held.

Recovering nicely at their respective homes are Annabelle Caldwell and Lenore Gaskins.

Tamela Woods, currently a Freshman at Oakwood S.D.A. College, Huntsville, Alabama, graduated in 3 years from Wilson High School. She left early in August to visit a friend in Denver, Colorado and proceeded on to Chicago, Illinois for the funeral of her paternal grandfather and to visit relatives. Before she arrived at Oakwood she stopped by Taft, Oklahoma to visit her aunt.

Tamela, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Herman Wood, sends word that things are going well and she is enjoying the new school year but she misses home and friends.

Mrs. Alfred Cox Sr. and her son have returned from an extensive trip in the East.

It's not too late to register to vote

Hundreds face imminent executions

by Jon Stewart

(PNS) - By Christmas 1976, Leon Troy Gregg, 27, may already have become the first man to have been legally executed in the U.S. in almost 10 years.

Gregg - whose name is engraved on the Supreme Court's historic July 2nd, 1976, decision on capital punishment (*Gregg v. Georgia*) - shares the pale green death row cells of Georgia's Reidsville State Prison with 31 other condemned men. All lost what may have been their last and best constitutional challenge to the death penalty on October 4th, 1976.

On that date, the Supreme Court refused, in a casual two sentence announcement, to reconsider its decision to permit the death penalty for murder under certain statutory conditions.

While the court's decision to approve the death penalty applies to only three states (Georgia, Florida and Texas) with 147 death row inmates, attorneys for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund believe the court's green light will probably open the door for another 100-140 executions in up to 14 other states with death statutes

similar to those upheld in July.

Several hundred other death row inmates will remain in legal limbo in states such as California (56 on death row), where the constitutionality of the statutes is uncertain.

David Kendall, attorney for the NAACP, says Gregg and 21 other inmates in Georgia, Florida and Texas, whose rehearing petitions were specifically denied October 4th, represent "the cases furthest advanced procedurally. In these cases executions could come as early as six to eight weeks."

Within days after the July 2nd court decision - the week of the nation's bicentennial observance - workers at Reidsville State Prison began rewiring the electric chair.

Decision sparks New Debate

The imminence of an actual execution in this country has unleashed a clamor over the legal and moral issues of capital punishment reminiscent of the early 1960s, when crowds gathered for all-night vigils at prison gates to protest executions.

"People haven't been thinking about these issues for 10 years," says Deborah Levy, director of the American Civil Liberties Union's death penalty project.

"Capital punishment is understood as one of those questions that belongs in debate class," she adds. "It hasn't been a reality and people haven't thought about what it means for society to take life."

Levy believes that at least one execution will probably have to take place before people get aroused enough to turn the tide back. "I think that when we come to that actual execution," she says, "people are going to turn away from it just as they did 10 years ago."

The sheer number of people on death row may itself have an impact.

"We're not talking about one or two executions a year, like in the sixties," says Levy, "or even a couple of dozen a year, like in the fifties. We're talking about hundreds a year, which we haven't had since the thirties."

In fact, the number of death row prisoners in Georgia, Florida and Texas alone exceeds the total annual execution toll in the U.S. for any year since the 1920s.

Ironically, the large number of prisoners on death row last spring - nearly 600 - was in part the result of a backlash to the Supreme Court's 1972 *Furman* decision. That ruling declared all death statutes then in practice unconstitutionally cruel and unusual because they allowed judges and juries unlimited, arbitrary and "freakish" discretion in determining who would live and who would die.

Such wide-open discretion had resulted in glaring racial and economic inequities in the use of the death penalty.

Between 1930 and 1967, when Louis Joe Monge became the last person to be legally executed, 3,859 persons were either hanged, shot, gassed or electrocuted in American prisons.

Of them, 54 per cent were Blacks, who constituted roughly 13 per cent of the population.

Nine out of 10 of the 455 persons executed for rape during those years were Blacks.

And nearly all those on death row have been poor - and consequently poorly represented by counsel in most cases.

In efforts to redress such imbalances following the *Furman* decision, 35 states

drafted new death statutes along two lines: some required mandatory death for certain crimes (presumably removing all discretion and arbitrariness), while others, such as Georgia's, set up judicial procedures requiring judges and juries to hear all aggravating and mitigating circumstances in each case before passing sentence.

Despite the rapid pace of death sentencing under the post-*Furman* statutes, no executions were possible until the Supreme Court stated what kind of statutes are constitutional.

This summer's ruling finally ended the major uncertainties by declaring mandatory death sentences unconstitutionally cruel and unusual punishment (thus sparing some 300 death row inmates), while upholding the constitutionality of statutes requiring limited, directed discretion.

Following the July ruling, nearly all of the 18 states with unconstitutional death statutes began revising their laws in accordance with the Georgia statute.

The court will decide later this term on the constitutionality of the death penalty for crimes other than first-degree mur-

der, such as rape, airline hijacking and robbery.

Observers predict that by this time next year at least 35 states will have constitutional death statutes.

Will Inequalities Persist?

Abolitionists contend that even the new death statutes requiring case-by-case limited discretion will fail to prevent the discriminatory use of the death penalty.

University of Pennsylvania sociologist Marc Riedel reported last spring that the percentage of non-whites sentenced to death had risen from 26 per cent to 52 per cent in the four years since the 1972 *Furman* decision. He also found that while most murder victims are non-whites, death sentences are most often declared in cases involving the murder of a white by a non-white.

"It's clear," says the NAACP's Kendall, "that even a constitutional statute can be applied unfairly or unconstitutionally."

Kendall says future constitutional challenges in individual cases will be (Please turn to p. 3 col. 3)