



We see the world through Black eyes

The racism of neglect

One citizen of the Boise neighborhood said, "I have never seen the Portland School District do anything for Black students. Their only interest is to get federal money."

The entire school desegregation era in Portland can be analyzed and the conclusions reached must agree with this Black mother.

From 1954 until 1963 the Portland Public Schools did not address the desegregation issue. In fact, the vehemently denied that segregation existed and ridiculed those who pointed out the facts.

The School Board did not respond to the demands of the NAACP and other community organizations to desegregate. Finally when adverse publicity got too great, they appointed a "Blue Ribbon" committee to study the situation. The committee had to admit the reality of segregation but found a way around it — they created the Model Schools and further segregated Black students into "Area II", which contained these model schools. Instead of desegregation, they offered compensatory education for those who were "disadvantaged" because of race. Along with this program went an escape valve — the voluntary transfer which allowed the children of the most angry parents to escape.

Dr. Harold Kleiner, who was director of the Model Schools program, proclaimed in 1965 that Black students would not be ready to go to school with white children for another twenty years.

Those twenty years haven't passed, but the arm of the Supreme Court has come closer. So the next plan

was to eliminate the upper grades of the former "Model Schools", sending the upper grade students to schools across the city with the "voluntary" transfer.

The missing link in the policy was the white student. Although magnet programs and Early Childhood Education Centers were established to draw white students, they number only about 700.

The next step is to cut out a section of the Jefferson district and send the students away. And if this is done without resistance, then what?

At no time has the white population been disturbed. At no time has there been "voluntary" forced busing of white students. We doubt that this "voluntary" busing of Blacks only would meet the requirements of the federal courts.

But worst of all, there has never been any accountability to the Black community. What happens to these children when they get off the busses? Are their teachers and classmates prepared to welcome and respect them? Are they included in the social life of their new schools? And most of all, what about their academic achievement? Can the district demonstrate academic progress — can it show positive results for the millions of federal dollars poured into the district because these Black children are here?

Until these questions and others are answered, the Black community will have to agree with the mother who says, "The Portland Public Schools never did anything because they wanted to help Black students."

Community rejects racial plan

(Continued from page 1 col. 6) fight to stop it."

A resident of the Boise neighborhood, Mrs. Loving sees a strong possibility for organized resistance to this policy. "I will do everything I can to stop it," she added.

Lucius Hicks IV told the Observer, "In an attempt to desegregate the schools the very school system itself is forcing residents to choose another non-centrally located school to attend. This is not voluntary desegregation. In fact, it borders on discrimination."

"First of all, the school system has bought the notion that desegregating the schools is a healthy thing to do. Personally, I have problems with this. Secondly,

to achieve desegregation they bus the young Black whose parents have accepted the voluntary busing program. Now, they are preparing to literally force Blacks to go to schools outside of where they live. This is an indication of discrimination on an institutional basis."

Hicks explained that in an attempt to overcome the discrimination that segregated Black students, the school district is discriminating against them again.

Rosell Gilmore, President of the Albina Ministerial Alliance, said, "The plan works to the disadvantage of minority students in that it does not allow enough in any other school to have an impact on course offerings. Black students will find

themselves in very small numbers where they will get lost and be ignored in a large student body. The result will be lack of achievement and motivation. The School Board should reject this policy and check with the Black community to see what Black people want."

"We are the only ones they treat like a game of pool," Betty Overton said. "They knock us around the table and if we don't fit in one pocket they put us in another."

"There is one thing I do have to admit though. The school district is consistent. They don't meet the needs of any children — Black or white."

Letters to the Editor

Respects Gilcrease stand

To the Editor:

The resignation of P.M.S.C.'s Cleveland Gilcrease is a step backward for the Blacks and the poor people in the City of Portland.

As a resident of the City of Portland for more than thirty years, I believe Mr. Gilcrease's position has been one of the most powerful and useful for the Blacks and the poor that a Black man has ever held. That is why there has been such a backlash against him.

I don't know Mr. Gilcrease personally, I only met him once but I like the man for his stand against the power structure which for the past three or four years has tried to destroy his character and plant seeds of doubt about his honesty in the minds of the public.

The two newspapers, the Oregon Journal and the Oregonian have done their job well in trying to destroy Mr. Gilcrease, along with some members of the City Council and the City of Portland bureaucracy, and the Blacks who have let

themselves be used as a tool to accomplish the objectives of the system.

I am not saying that Mr. Gilcrease hasn't made mistakes, we all have from the President of the United States down.

The Revolutionary forces to get rid of Gilcrease have used dirty pool, knifepicking, and conspiracy to force him to resign.

The City has wanted control of the funds that have been allotted to P.M.S.C. for some time, so they can use them as they will.

For a Black person to have a top job in Portland he has to be a yes person, turning his head to a lot of things if he is to maintain it. I am glad Mr. Gilcrease would not bow down to the system and kept his self respect.

It hurt me to see people like Kent Ford and other Blacks fall in the trap that has been set for them to help cut another Black man's throat. This is the method whites have used to obtain their objectives against Blacks since slavery, and it's a shame that Blacks are still willing to sell each other out for a price. Whether it is

money, I do not know, but there is a price tag attached I am sure.

The poor and the Black have talked about what Mr. Gilcrease hasn't done for them. Wait until about six months or a year. They will find they won't be getting anything. I have seen it happen too many times. I am sorry for the group that has been used, for they as well as others are the losers.

I am ashamed of the Blacks in this town who could have helped Mr. Gilcrease, but who remained silent as always when an issue like this comes up.

To Mr. Gilcrease: I admire you for your stand right or wrong. You remained your own person. You may have lost the war, but you won the battle because when you come out from under something like this feeling good, and feel you did your best that's the main thing. Good luck, God Bless and stay strong. Be your own man even if you have to stand alone because weakness is man's downfall.

Sincerely,
Vesta Loving

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Desegregation

The 'Hurricane' in our community

by Herb L. Cowhorne

A community can be devastated by a force of nature. It takes very little to imagine the destruction a hurricane can cause. It ravages a community. Everyone knows a massive flood can change a neighborhood forever. When we think of a community being destroyed, it is easiest to think in terms of a force of nature. But there are other ways to weaken the cohesiveness of people living together.

We have seen one way in which this can be done right in the City of Boise. No natural force has hit our community — no hurricane, no flood. But, still, there has been, and continues to be, a powerful force which seeks to weaken the fabric of our community.

The power behind this destructive force is the Portland Board of Education. The "Hurricane" is called desegregation.

Since 1964, the Portland Board of Education has embarked on a program designed to eliminate "racial isolation" from the public schools. This, in itself, may be an admirable goal. Nevertheless, the manner in which desegregation has been sought is misguided, confused, and not as effective as it could be.

As the "hurricane" of desegregation gained momentum in 1964, a plan was developed. The plan called for the restructuring of the schools in the so-called Model Cities area. Many of them became Early Childhood Centers, while others were pressured to alter their programs in order to attract white students from across town. In all honesty, the educational value of some of the changes has been magnificent. A glance at Eliot, Irvington and Bates will confirm this belief. However, to achieve these changes, many contend that the Portland Board of Education has used our community and its children as the pawns in the game of desegregation.

Hence, the program has been called

considered. As one Black secondary school official said, "I find it difficult to support this program because it's one-way. I could support it if it involved two-way busing." Many feel the burdens for desegregation have been carried by the Black community of Portland.

Portland's desegregation efforts are confused, weakened by inept leadership. Black students travel across town, but they are received poorly in many cases, because not enough is done to make the transition a smooth one. At Harvey Scott Elementary School last September, for example, a serious altercation erupted between Blacks and whites. The principal, Harold Kuhn, was taken by surprise. In the face of a bad situation that could have gotten worse, he moved quickly. Student discussion were held in place of classes. Parents were contacted and asked to help bring about better understanding. Mr. Kuhn came to Northeast Portland to speak with parents of Black students transported to his school — for five years, no one from that school would come to our community.

My point: Mr. Kuhn faced the problems of integration with no specific prior preparation. The disturbance, a complete surprise, led him to develop an intriguing 20 point plan for integration. Yet the school district did very little prior to his appointment to help him learn about Black children, about racism, about methods of achieving harmony in his school. He learned through confusion, and this above all demonstrates a lack of leadership in the school district administration.

The desegregation program here is thought to be less effective by some because it fails to integrate, although Black bodies are transported to attend school with white bodies. Teachers must be trained to demand quality from Black students. They need to be evaluated on their abilities to provide balanced instruction to all students. Moreover, administrators must be prepared to



receive Black students. If they have no connection with our community, which most do not, then they must be required to develop relationships. There are many things which must be done to make this desegregation program effective and equitable.

The "hurricane" of desegregation has struck our community. Had we known in 1964 what its effect would be, perhaps it might not have been so devastating. But now that the powerful force has done its initial damage, it is time to regroup. The damage can be minimized, if we get involved and let the Board of Education know that this community wants the same consideration other neighborhoods receive.

Our children are the foundation upon which we build tomorrow. If we will not fight for their right to the best education possible, not only have we weakened our prospects for the future, but we have negated our great heritage of struggle as well.

Legal heroin

(Continued from P.1 Col.4)

million users," Hatcher argues. "In effect there already is a heroin maintenance program — and it's being operated by the underworld as opposed to the government."

The only way to find out if heroin maintenance would help," he says, "is by trying tightly controlled small experiments."

Even more outspoken is San Francisco Superior Court Judge Francis McCarty, an 18-year veteran of the bench. "We have between 7,500 and 20,000 heroin users in this city," McCarty told PMS.

"We figure, conservatively, that at least 60 percent of the criminal calendar is drug related. Heroin maintenance would knock out 50 percent of the black market, especially if high quality heroin were available."

The sort of program McCarty favors would first legalize heroin, then administer it in government-controlled clinics to registered addicts free or at a few cents a dose, thereby undercutting the profit in black market heroin.

Although there have been no heroin maintenance clinics in America since the 1920's, the federal government did institute the controversial methadone maintenance projects of the late 1960's.

In 1969 the federal government spent \$46 million on methadone and other drug treatment programs. By 1976 the budget had increased ten-fold.

It is partially because methadone maintenance has had so little impact on drug addiction, however, that a strong opposition has emerged against any legalized heroin projects.

Surprisingly, some of the staunchest resistance has come not from local police — where it might be expected — but instead from community groups and drug counseling programs.

"A band-aid solution" designed to "pacify people" is how Amos Henix, founder of New York's Reality House detoxification project described the new proposals. An ex-addict himself, Henix adamantly opposes any scheme to provide heroin to junkies. And, he says, his neighbors in Harlem are just as determined.

"If I can believe what I've been told, the people are going to blow them up if the government tries to put any clinics here. The people have had it as far as these band-aid solutions are concerned. If they think they're going to put one in our community, they better think again."

Nancy Jo Albers, who works in Oakland, Ca., as the Alameda County Drug Co-ordinator, believes "setting up a heroin maintenance program would be one of the deadliest things that could happen." Albers, whose background is in local community work, insists that "the government should not be involved in narcotizing the public."

A committee of the Michigan legislature is holding hearings this month on a bill proposing establishment of a state-run experimental maintenance program. Detroit's Recorder's Court Judge Justin Ravitz, who made his reputation working with militant Black union organizers in the late 60's, regards the proposed system as a clever maneuver to "cool out the cities."

"It seems to me that in Detroit and

other big cities we're reaching the point where community impatience over jobs and basic social problems might not be held back any longer. Heroin maintenance, on the other hand, is part and parcel of the whole repressive approach to urban problems in America. Those who call for more cops, bigger prisons, stiffer sentences, even death penalties are really in bed with the people who propose heroin maintenance."

"We would be forfeiting the struggle over the real issues if we paralyze half a million people with heroin and accept the government as pusher," Ravitz maintains.

Gary's Mayor Hatcher admits that the major reason the national League of Cities endorsed heroin maintenance projects is that "they are convinced it could help control crime" — a concern expressed most loudly not in the ghetto but in the middle class and commercial districts of the cities.

"Sure, at some point we've got to quit kidding ourselves," he said. "Of course people don't use drugs just because they like them. Eventually we've got to ask what kind of society is this that produces a half million addicts. But I can't be as cavalier as Judge Ravitz about the crime problem right now."

Frustration with the mounting crime problem was the key to a San Diego County grand jury's recommendation last August to establish a network of county-run clinics for free heroin distribution to registered addicts.

The San Diego grand jury denounced expansion of the county's \$6 million methadone detoxification program as "a contemptuous and unnecessary expenditure of public funds."

Crime control is central to the new federal interest in legalized heroin maintenance. Wesley Pomeroy, who left the Berkeley police department to join Peter Bourne as associate director of the White House Drug Abuse Policy office, wants police out of drug control completely. Declaring a drug illegal, he argues, only drives up the price on the black market.

Pomeroy's argument flies in the face of most law enforcement sentiment. Peter Bensinger, director of the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration, believes legalization experiments would only increase the demand for drugs and give the "wrong signal to the American people."

California Attorney General Evelle Younger declared recently that heroin maintenance "would be a disaster in the United States." And Los Angeles Police Chief Ed Davis dismisses it as "just like giving booze to an alcoholic." Both Davis and Younger are Republican candidates for governor.

So far, however, the momentum appears to lie with some form of heroin maintenance, and the bets among Washington policy makers are that initial experiments will begin within the next two years.

"The opponents say heroin maintenance won't work," sighs San Francisco's Judge McCarty.

"They say it won't stop the black market, that it won't stop addiction. Well, I don't like negative thinking. Try it! If after two or three years it doesn't work, we'll make modifications. But we just can't sit back and do nothing with the intolerable situation we're in now."

"Mark Schwartz, for several years a Bay Area radio and television reporter on California criminal justice, is a member of PMS's foundation-funded urban task force of scholars and journalists. This is the first of an occasional series by Mr. Schwartz on drug use and control in America.

Quizzes and Answers

What criteria are eligible for admission to a 100 hospital?

1. Veterans with a service-connected disability.
2. Veterans who cannot afford treatment elsewhere.
3. Veterans receiving a 100 pension.
4. Veterans who are 65 or older.

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