



We see the world through Black eyes

Now what?

After thirteen years of providing services to the poor PMSC, the original "War on Poverty" agency, no longer will receive the government's funds for the poor. There are many reasons and many regrets, but the main question now is who and what will take its place?

Community Services Administration, Region X, the funding agency will make those decisions and its representatives indicated that there will be some consideration given to the desires of the existing programs and perhaps governmental bodies. No firm commitment was given as to how much input the people of Portland will have in these determinations.

One option -- the one used when the Seattle CAP agency was closed -- was for Region X to do the job of funding and overseeing agencies that receive poverty funds. That might work in Seattle because the Region office is located there and should have some idea of its problems and resources, but it would hardly do for Portland.

One of the purposes PMSC has served is as a planning body -- viewing the needs of the entire city and seeking funds to meet those needs. PMSC provided a method for citizens to select and oversee the projects they wanted and needed. The Region X office could not serve this function and, based on past performance, would not lobby for Oregon.

Another alternative Region X could choose is to select one of the existing agencies to serve in that capacity, but we doubt that any existing agency would have the knowledge of, sensitivity to and interest in the entire city or receive the support of the citizens of the entire city.

Although the city and the county are both suspect in the events that lead to the closing of PMSC, it

might be necessary for the city to take over the role of PMSC in providing for city-wide planning, citizen involvement and fiscal management of poverty funds coming into Portland. Whatever happens, a unified community is the only way to insure that the needs of Portland's poor are served.

Freedom of speech?

A judge has been replaced by the voters following his courtroom remarks that a young rapist might have been reacting normally. His remark upon learning of his defeat was that "Free speech is the real loser."

A judge's biased and deformity remarks from the bench can hardly be protected under the guise of "free speech". The judge is a man who has a specific charge to be fair and impartial, yet his demeanor and the courtroom has a great deal to do with the jury's reaction to witnesses and their ultimate decision. Too often the judge makes his feelings known to the jurors through his facial expressions, gestures and casual remarks.

In Multnomah County, not long ago, Judge Robert Jones discussed his negative opinions about the Black Panther Party with a jury that was later to hear several cases against young Black men -- one of whom was reported to be associated with the Panthers. Earlier that same jury had listened to Judge Roth's opinions about hippies and drug users.

These are the kind of remarks -- coming from the respected judge -- that can bias juries and prevent justice.

The recall action should be a clue to all judges to search their own minds and consider their own actions. The judge is almost God in his courtroom and must be above reproach.

Education is worth a damn!

by Herb Cawthorne

I overheard someone say, "Now that they have begun to let so many Black people into college, the college degree doesn't mean anything. You can go to college, get your degree, and still be as unemployed as the next guy." The conclusion rings loud and clear: "Education is not worth a damn."

This notion is widespread in our community. It's a simple form of anti-intellectualism, as though anything dealing with the improvement of the mind is not of much value, unless we can see the benefits directly in the jobs we obtain. This view serves to undercut the vision Black boys and girls must have if they are to continue to struggle for freedom and dignity in America.

Education, whether on weekends in community schools or at the university, is essential to the progress necessary to make this American system deliver the fruits of prosperity to our doors. If those who have been frustrated by the educational system, who have been battered by it and made to feel inferior by its inherent inequities, denounce the system we have at present -- well, that's one thing. But to denounce education is sheer stupidity.

Why, education is all around us. Education is your grandfather, whose pearls of wisdom prove every day that living well and living long is an achievement filled with understanding, ups-and-downs, and a will to make this life worthwhile. Your

grandfather has learned that the new generation will make another stride toward equality, and he is content with the many strides his generation has made.

Education is grandmother, whose heart smiles like sunshine, and whose love will never admit that America's racism has left a blemish on her otherwise perfect soul. Listen to her words, recognize her life, and you will find a strength and a beauty which shows the highest human development. And she only had a third grade education!

Education is your mother, whose struggle to maintain the dignity of Black womanhood is a gift for you. More than anything else, she wants you to know that whatever she has become, you should become more. She lives so you will live better. And the last thing she wants you to do is to throw away the chance for improvement, for enlightenment, for a way to create a just society for her grandchildren.

Education is all around you. Education is your brother, whose relentless fight for hope and identity could have culminated in the easiest way out. His bitterness could have turned inward, upon his own people and himself. But he refuses that route. He will not sell dope to children; he will not sell Black bodies to white businessmen from across town; and he will not sell his soul to the FBI for a few pennies a month. Granted, the "system" has failed him, and his presence will never let us forget it. However, his

manhood, his refusal to be swept away, has sustained him. And he is still a man.

Education is your lovely sister, whose backbone makes the whole family stand erect. She is the doctor who could only find a way to get into nursing school. She is the politician who could get no encouragement. She is the mother of the child some no-count individual fostered but had no time to support. She reads, she keeps herself above the indignities of American life, and her smile is enough to make a bad day go away.

Education is more than school, it's your father, whose deep commitment is quietly reflected in the fact that you seldom see him. The two jobs he works are a small price, if you will take the resources he can provide and make them produce a better world for his people.

Education is your attitude about yourself and your life and your obligation to your people. Will you accept the vicious system of racism and injustice which poisons the potential of Black people in this country? Will you let the "system" grind you up, spit you out, leaving you with nothing but a foul taste for all education? Will you stand by, doing nothing to fight back -- or will you, in spite of it all, struggle to be somebody?

Too many of our people take a passive approach to education. It is as though someone should pour education down their throats. And, of course, he who demands nothing gets nothing. Education is worth a damn.

The question is, "Are you?"

Letters to the Editor

Wants fiscal responsibility

To the Editor:

In light of your editorial of August 25, 1977, I think it is appropriate to outline the mandate I have given to County appointees to the Portland Metropolitan Steering Committee.

I have asked them to make certain that public funds are publicly accounted for and, to the maximum extent possible, that these funds be allocated to programs directly benefitting the community's poor.

Each County appointee who pursues this agenda has my full support.

Sincerely,
Donald E. Clark
Chairman

Community group intercedes for inmate

To the Editor:

In re to John W. Ellett's letter in the *Portland Observer*. Dated thus, September 1, 1977. In the section, "Letters to the Editor," Volume 7 No. 36.

A group of concerned citizens in the Albina community have read his letter and are concerned with his statement regarding his constitutional and Equal Rights not being adhered to.

Be assured we know nothing of Ellett's case, neither his guilt or innocence. We

at this time have not involved ourselves with this aspect of the case. Our involvement to date is the concern of his rights to a fair trial, regarding his request for a change of attorney, in his search to secure a counselor that he felt was being fair, due to the apparent situation of possible monetary difficulties to hire one of his choice, should this be the case, and having his rights defended by a public defender.

We will and are questioning this point to the affect of being assured, that should there be any law saying the number of

lawyers "or the exchange number" one should ask for during one's trial, when or if one feels his rights are not being upheld, at any given point in his trial, while it is actively being tried, should this not be granted.

This we stand to question in his behalf and ask for a retrial, with adequate and sufficient representation and respect, in the name of the law, which we uphold.

Since we read Ellett's letter in the paper, requesting any help one could offer, we have spoken with the District Attorney's Office, Judge Davis' Office,

Disagrees with Concordia position

To the Editor:

I was disappointed to read in your August 11th edition a series of charges by the Concordia Community Association against the Housing Authority of Portland. I hope you will not again print such items without first hearing both sides of the story.

The story's first paragraph mentions "a series of problems with HAP including poor maintenance of the grounds, street parking, and the efforts of HAP to develop their adjoining property." In all such cases HAP commissioners and staff have met with residents and worked out solutions. Often the "problem" has been that HAP has not had the money to do what it and the Concordia residents wanted. HAP cannot spend money it does not have. When we get the money to do things, we must, by law, do it carefully and deliberately.

The claim that the neighbors "learned through the press that HAP is planning

to sell the property" is false and misleading. We informed the Concordia Community Association as early as April 1976, and repeatedly since in both written and oral communication, of HAP's intention to sell the property. What they read in the press was a report of HAP's decision to retain a real estate broker. That decision was just one of a series of steps toward ultimate sale and was arrived at in a regularly scheduled meeting open to the public. We were not trying to put anything over on anybody.

CCA members were not "told by a HAP spokesman that a private developer could build as many as 200 units on the site." They were told that, as presently zoned, up to 168 units could theoretically be built on the ten acres. That was just a matter of arithmetic. Actually, the Planning Bureau has said it would not approve that many units.

In 1975, a joint task force of both Concordia and HAP officials met with

school, police, traffic, fire and public works people. This coincided with a policy decision by HAP to limit future family housing to projects of 30-40 units on scattered sites.

Your article does not mention that HAP offered to sell the vacant ten acres to the Concordia residents so that they can protect their neighborhood at their own expense rather than at the expense of the 5,000 families on HAP's waiting list. Most of them are living in sub-standard housing, and cannot afford to own or rent decent shelter at present day market prices. HAP's duty is to develop new low rent housing, and proceeds from the sale of the Dekum Court property will help us move forward in that direction. I would hope that the *Observer* would support HAP in this.

Sincerely,
James O. Brooks
Executive Director

PMSC

(Continued from page 1 col. 6)

If PACT is selected, what kind of service can Albina expect from an organization that has been hostile?

If there is no planning agency, what assurance will there be that people in all areas will receive proper attention?

Will the Head Start programs be placed directly in the hands of the Portland Public Schools, whose community involvement and commitment to the poor is questionable?

Now that the goal of the destruction of PMSC has been reached, will the hidden agendas surface? Will the warring factions fight on until all the programs are lost?

Attorney Von-Berger's Office, Salem, Oregon's Public Defenders Office, the *Portland Observer*, and we will be having communications with the NAACP, in the very short future.

We can give our concern, our time, our energy and efforts to meet those needs in which your letter expressed. Regarding Constitutional Rights to a fair trial.

Naomi C. Wrighten
(And Concerned Citizens)
287-7527

4H clubs

(Continued from page 1 col. 1)

A program in 4-H sports will continue, and Alexander plans to add a new dimension to the rally squad by recruiting boys as well as girls into the program.

Alexander also has an art class at Boise School, and hopes to continue with a chess club and a new group interested in plants and soil.

Eight staff members are working out of King Neighborhood Center, anxious to expand the program in the inner city, adds Alexander, "I will be working at Columbia Villa, adding new programs and continuing those that have been popular in the past."

4-H presents an opportunity for parents, other adults and teachers to become involved as volunteers and influence the development of young people. "Our goal," adds Alexander, "is to help youth to learn how to learn, to use knowledge, to relate to changes as they occur and to develop a positive self image."

The staff at 4-H Urban Center invites the community to call for further information and to encourage the goals of the inner city program. The Center phone number is 287-1770.

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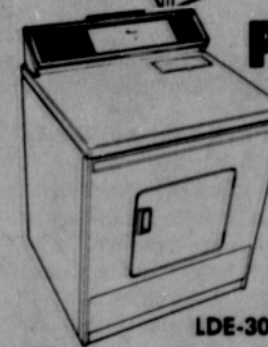
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