



*We see the world
through Black eyes*

No endorsement

It is with great regret that we withhold our endorsement for County Commission, Position 3, from Gladys McCoy. We have been very disappointed with Mrs. McCoy's performance on the School Board and do not feel that we can give her our endorsement on that record.

Mrs. McCoy is a good and talented person and we do not question her desire for an excellent education for all children, but we do not see her role on the Board as providing the leadership and independence necessary to insure that Black children and Black families are properly served. Mrs. McCoy was elected district wide -- not by the Black community -- and she is responsible to all of the citizens, but as a Black woman we expected that she would have a specific concern for the education of Black children.

The School District has been in a state of turmoil over desegregation and its ramifications -- busing, the Newman Plan, middle schools, teacher attitudes, the treatment of Black students, etc. For the first time the Black community has risen up and said a resounding "no" to one of the district's desegregation moves. The school reorganization proposals, even when adopted, are not providing the middle schools adjacent to the Black community that were to have been the answer, leaving the necessity for dispersing Black students across the district. The Albina elementary schools remain segregated. Last summer the federal government found the district discriminating against Blacks in its disciplinary procedures and other complaints are currently under investigation.

Yet Mrs. McCoy has not come to the Black community to determine what is happening to kids. She has not come to ask why there is such great dissatisfaction with the district and with her performance on the Board. Neither has she looked into the allegations constantly being made against the district -- of mistreatment, rejection, and neglect of Black students. She has assumed that because the objective of the district, of herself and of most Blacks -- the objective of desegregation -- is proper then the actions of the district are proper. She has promoted and defended them.

Mrs. McCoy has relied on the information provided her by the administration and has accepted the administration's recommendations. She has not independently determined the validity or the completeness of the information on the proposals and recommendations. Her role on the Board has been one of almost unanimous acceptance of the recommendations of Dr. Blanchard, and Board members Newman and Ridgley.

Mrs. McCoy states that because she is a wife and mother and has a full-time job, this many times out of the Portland area, she has not had the time to make the community contacts or do the fact finding that we would have expected. The County Commission position is a full-time paid job with a limited staff and she would be able to devote her time to citizens.

There are some positive aspects of having Black people in elected positions, even when those people are not as responsive to Black interests as they should be. Their positions can open doors to other Blacks and they can provide role models for Black youth.

It is with some degree of pain that we do not endorse Mrs. McCoy. We hope that pain is mutual and will make Mrs. McCoy more aware and responsive to the Black community during her final year on the School Board, and, if she is elected, in the important role as a county commissioner.

Not this time

Another candidate we cannot endorse this year is State Senator Vern Cook, who is running for the Democratic nomination to the U.S. Senate. We have always endorsed Cook in the past and consider him to be a man who is concerned about the plight of those who are traditionally left out of the political processes.

Cook opposes affirmative action on the basis that citizens should not have to pay for the crimes (slavery, segregation) of their ancestors. Cook believes in equal opportunity -- that each applicant should be selected on his own merit without regard to race. We see affirmative action not only as a method to make up for past discrimination but as a guard against current discrimination. The days of racial discrimination are not over and a look at the employees of any major company will demonstrate the continuing need for affirmative action.

Cook also opposes Indian fishing rights and promises, if elected, to support legislation to eliminate treaty rights.

As a member of the U.S. Senate, Cook's vote would hinder Carter's minority "set-aside" programs, strengthening of affirmative action requirements, and the protection of Indian rights. Therefore, although we have great personal regard for Vern Cook, we cannot recommend his election to the U.S. Senate.

Biskar over Schwab

Arnold Biskar, candidate for the City Council position held by Mildred Schwab, is a well qualified candidate. A certified Public Accountant, he has the business expertise to run a city bureau effectively, yet has a great concern for the rights of the people. He is concerned about neighborhoods and how city business affects neighborhood residents as well as strengthening the residents' influence in city decisions.

He is interested in expanding housing availability, especially for the elderly who would like to live downtown near the services they need.

Commissioner Schwab has been available to the public and has usually responded favorably when contacted regarding specific issues. This places her in good stead with many voters.

Her management of the Park Bureau, we believe, has demonstrated her inability to effectively manage a large bureau and to plan for maintenance and growth. Although she responds when asked, she does not always see or foresee the problem. A good example is the playground at Unthank Park. Although the City did not design or build the park, its maintenance is a City responsibility. After a child was killed by a swing set, the other swings were removed. But the Park Bureau did not see the other dangerous play equipment at the park and it was not removed until five months later, after a meeting with angry citizens. We do not believe the lack of attention to be purposeful neglect, but to be a lack of foresight on Ms. Schwab's part.

We therefore endorse Arnold Biskar for City Commissioner, Position No. 2.

Cease - District 18

Jane Cease is an active community member who advocates a fair tax system, programs for senior citizens and youth, and adequate school financing. Her occupational background is in solid waste disposal and land use planning, both vital to the health of the inner city and its residents.

Mrs. Cease's community service includes: Governor's Community Services Committee, Citizen Task Force for City Budget Review, State and Regional Citizen Advisory Committee on Solid Waste Management, Multnomah County Mental Health Advisory Board. She has been a citizen advocate at every legislative session since 1967.

The Observer endorses Jane Cease for the Oregon Legislature, District #18.

Return Ivancie

Two candidates are challenging Frank Ivancie for City Council, position #3 -- State Senator Stephen Kafoury and Mike Burton.

Kafoury has an outstanding voting record in the Legislature, where he is identified with urban affairs and human rights. He has taught at Jefferson and AYOOC and lives in Irvington.

Burton has been active in neighborhood associations in North Portland. He is interested in urban development, citizen participation and sound management.

We, however, support Frank Ivancie in his bid for re-election. An honest conservative, Ivancie has not always voted the way we would like but he has come through on some important issues like supporting PMSC funding.

We are concerned about the consolidation of power in the hands of the Mayor. The Mayor's growing influence on the School Board -- with the probable appointment of his former assistant, Bill Scott, to the School Board and the proposed City/School Commission -- concerns us. There are those who welcome the Mayor's entry into this area, with the hope that he will be a positive influence on the Board -- that anything would be better. But we believe in separation but cooperation in decision making for the City and the School District to be proper. No man -- not the Mayor, not the President -- should hold the power to control both.

This is not to say that we are dissatisfied with the Mayor's programs, but to maintain an independent voice on the City Council, we endorse Frank Ivancie for re-election.

Heard for Education

Three candidates are competing for the position of Superintendent of Public Instruction. The position is now held by Verne Duncan, a former teacher and administrator. A competent but quiet person, Duncan is most criticized because of his lack of aggressive advocacy for education with the Legislature.

Ruth McFarland, an instructor at Mt. Hood Community College, emphasizes more effective teachers and fewer administrators; more appropriate textbooks; and testing as a tool to help teach rather than to exclude students.

State Senator Fred Heard, who teaches at Oregon Institute of Technology, has served on important committees dealing with education -- Ways and Means, the Emergency Board, and the Senate and House Education Committees.

Among Heard's proposals, should he become Superintendent of Public Education, are: a locally controlled reading program; expanding community schools; increasing vocational education; creating a department of urban education; strengthening affirmative action; and, if necessary, seeking from the Legislature tools for more effective enforcement of State requirements; and incentive grants to local districts to develop more effective reading programs.

Education in Oregon is in a near-crisis situation with instability of financing and low public faith in the educational system. Heard has the relationship with and the working knowledge of the Legislature to use it effectively in the interest of better educational programs. His legislative record attests to his energy and ability.

The Observer endorses Fred Heard for Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Plummer - Position #5

Berna Plummer is a candidate for the Republican Party nomination to the County Commission, Position No. 5.

Mrs. Plummer is currently affirmative action officer for the county. Previous experience includes planning and evaluation for the county, teaching and early childhood education. She is interested in criminal justice, having served on the CRAG Criminal Justice Technical Committee and the City/County Security and Privacy Committee.

Mrs. Plummer is active in the Republican Party and was a delegate to the 1976 National Convention where she participated in the Black Caucus effort to demonstrate to the Republican Party the need to involve Black voters.

The Observer endorses Berna Plummer.

Measure #3 - Yes

Ballot Measure #3 enables the state to sell general obligation bonds to provide financing for multi-family housing for the low-income elderly. The fund created would be called the "Elderly Housing Fund", and would be administered by the Department of Commerce.

Private companies, individuals or governments would be given grants, loans or contracts to build housing to be rented to the low-income elderly. Because there is a great shortage of suitable, low-cost housing, we endorse this measure.

Park Levy - Yes

The people of Portland will vote on a six-year, \$19.7 million serial levy for park improvements. The property tax increase would be 54c per \$1,000 assessed evaluation. The proposal includes improvement of existing parks as well as development of some new facilities.

The City's parks and the programs that take place in them are important to the community. Vote yes on the City park levy.

Nellie Fox for Labor

The contest for Labor Commissioner is one of the most hotly contested and one of the most important. The Bureau of Labor includes the Civil Rights Division, Wage and Hour, and Apprenticeship and Training. It is designed to protect the rights of working people.

Several of the candidates are well qualified and could do a creditable job.

Senator Mary Roberts, a former caseworker and juvenile counselor at the Albina Human Resource Center, has served one term in the House and one in the Senate. She served as a member of the Labor, Consumer and Business Committees and has a good legislative record.

Ralph Groener, Clackamas County Commissioner and former Legislator, has a record of involvement with people's issues. He was active in the grape boycott, is a past president of the Day Care and Child Development Council of Oregon, is chairman of the Oregon Coalition for National Health Security.

Jose Bustos, active in Spanish-speaking groups, advocates independence in the Labor Bureau -- freedom from influence of either labor or business. With connections in neither camp, he offers that independence.

Nellie Fox is director of Legislative and Political Education (COPE) of the Oregon AFL-CIO. Although involved in the union movement most of her life, Ms. Fox could not be considered a "labor boss". Rather, she was a member of the retail clerk's union whose activities on behalf of women and low-paid employees brought her the recognition that enabled her to move into the upper ranks of the AFL-CIO. She is an example of the part of the labor movement that brought job security and decent working conditions to this country and has worked for economic and social reform.

We are concerned about too close ties between organized labor and the Labor Bureau that is supposed to enforce labor regulations, but we do not think that would become a problem in this case. We believe Nellie Fox has the ability and desire to strengthen the Civil Rights Bureau. The Observer endorses Nellie Fox for Labor Commissioner.

Chrest - District #15

Representative Jim Chrest was appointed to the House in 1974 and elected in 1976. Prior to going to the Legislature, Chrest was involved in organizing the North Portland Citizens Committee. He was involved with youth activities -- baseball and "Project Busy Kids" -- and helped organize the North Youth Services Center.

In the Legislature his activities have included: introducing legislation to requiring hospitals to offer the pap test (cancer detection); working for passage of unit pricing which aids consumers; worked for compensation of crime victims; proposed successful legislation to promote education of handicapped and gifted children; was active in promoting "Project Independence" which aids elderly persons in their own homes.

Chrest's work on behalf of the elderly, the consumer, and education and his efforts to preserve and enhance Smith and Bybee Lakes and Columbia Slough make him an asset in the Legislature. His ability and desire to work with the people are supplemented with the determination and independence to use his talents for the benefit of his district.

The Observer endorses Jim Chrest for the Democratic nomination for the Oregon Legislature, District 15.

Blumenaur - Position #3

Earl Blumenaur is challenging incumbent County Commissioner Alice Corbett for position No. 3. Mrs. Corbett has provided no leadership in her tenure on the County Commission and during the period that she was designated as the Commissioner for North-Northeast district, she was not seen in this neighborhood.

Blumenaur has campaigned on the theme that he will be a full-time working Commissioner. He proposes a night court for those who must now take time off work to go to traffic court and for other legal business; tighter controls on the police records system (CRISS); improved government efficiency; and added citizen involvement.

The Observer endorses Earl Blumenaur for County Commission, No. 3 (Democrat).

Previous endorsements:

- County Chairman -- Don Clark (Democrat)
- Governor -- Bob Straub (Democrat)
- Governor -- Tom McCall (Republican)
- Legislature --
- Wally Priestess -- District 16 (Democrat)
- Gretchen Kafoury -- District 13 (Democrat)
- Carol Bryant -- District 14 (Democrat)
- State Senate -- Cindy Banzer -- District 10 (Democrat)
- Measure #1 -- Yes
- Measure #2 -- Yes
- Measure #6 -- Yes

Endorsements with no opposition:

- Bruce Broussard -- District 16 (Democrat)
- Jewell Lansing -- County Auditor

REGISTER - VOTE



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Published every Thursday by Exie Publishing Company, 2201 North Killingsworth, Portland, Oregon 97217. Mailing address: P.O. Box 3137, Portland, Oregon 97208. Telephone: 283-2486.

Subscriptions: \$7.50 per year in the Tri-County area, \$8.00 per year outside Portland.

Second Class Postage Paid at Portland, Oregon

The **Portland Observer's** official position is expressed only in its Publisher's column (We See The World Through Black Eyes). Any other material throughout the paper is the opinion of the individual writer or submitter and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the **Portland Observer**.

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