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Harry Ward wins Peyton Award

Harry C. Ward has been named the recipient of the 6th Annual Russell A. Peyton Award, which is awarded by the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission for outstanding contribution to human relations.

Ward is perhaps best known for his three terms as President of the NAACP and his current chairmanship of the Community Coalition for School Integration.

Ward came to Portland from Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1954. Having been active in the YMCA in Tulsa, he looked for something to do to fill the void. "The Y here wasn't doing much. The NAACP wasn't either, but I decided to run for President." Ward was elected for the 1961-1962, and the 1963-1964 terms. He also filled an unexpired term in 1968.

One of the most serious problems for Blacks in Portland was employment. Under Ward's leadership the NAACP began contacting chain stores — those that had stores in the Albina area and did not hire Blacks. "We went to Kienows first, and they agreed to hire immediately. Dan Kienow was very cooperative. He was a real Christian."

Safeway was not so easy. "We had our signs made and were ready to picket the next day, but Safeway asked for 24 hours. Then they decided to hire and we didn't have to picket. Fred Meyer was the worst. We boycotted them for four months before they finally hired."

Continental Bakery, located in Albina, also did not hire Blacks until approached by the NAACP, Jim Thompson, who is now a supervisor, was the first hired.

Another struggle was against the Housing Authority of Portland. Which at that time was operating largely segregated housing. HAP sought to build a low-income project in the heart of the Albina district. "We saw it as further segregation — building a housing unit for Blacks." Strong opposition from the NAACP and other Black organizations stopped the project.

Ward's biggest fight as President of the NAACP was with the Port-

land School Board. In April of 1962, the NAACP pointed out to the Board that the Portland schools were segregated and asked for desegregation. "I was really naive," Ward explained, "I thought when we advised them that the schools were segregated, they would just go ahead and correct it." Instead the Board angrily denied the segregation existed. After further NAACP pressure the Board appointed the "Race and Education Committee," chaired by Judge Hubert Schwab, a former Board member. The NAACP had no representation in the committee.

The Race and Education Committee found segregation in the Portland schools and made recommendations for its remedy: a limited number of Administrative Transfers (transfers at the Principal's request of students who would benefit from desegregation); Voluntary Transfers, students transferred at their parents request and expense; Compensatory Education in "Model Schools," schools now not only segregated by race but separated administratively. "The NAACP stood alone in opposing the Race and Education Committee. Bill McClendon spoke for the NAACP explaining that the plan was unjust that it further segregated Black children, and that it would not be successful.

"Of course we were right, because here we are, sixteen years later, fighting the same issues. I am especially disappointed in Jonathan Newman, who was a member of 'The Committee of 100' which supported the NAACP's call for desegregation. I am disappointed that he has not supported a more equitable desegregation program."

"Education is one of my most vital interests. Some people wonder why I am so concerned about education when I have no children. But our children are our futures and their education is very important. We can't allow the 'silent lynching' as I call it. Although there have been great gains in employment and housing — and I think in attitudes — there has been no change in



HARRY C. WARD

education. The injustices children have to suffer in the schools are traumatic experiences and it is something we have to deal with."

After leaving the Presidency Ward remained an active NAACP board member. One of the employment fights he began was continued under President Mayfield K. Webb, that with the longshore unions. Because Blacks were denied union membership, the NAACP picketed the docks and involved national union president Harry Bridges and Senator Wayne Morse. Some Blacks became members and a suit filed by others who sought employment was successful nearly ten years later. As a board member, Ward picketed the Portland Post Office following a complaint filed by Tom Vickers, who became President in 1967. "The Post Office had refused to promote Blacks," so we filed a suit and picketed for several weeks. That issue was also decided in favor of the Black employees.

Ward believes great steps have been made in the field of employment. "Few of the major companies hired Blacks then, now most do. You can see a great change since the early '60s."

Ward was elected chairman of the Community Coalition for School In-



Photos: George Page

Minority Contractors program sponsors job fair

The Northwest Minority Contractors Association's Youth Employment Program held a Job Fair for youth last Friday. The Youth Program, which is funded through the State of Oregon, places young people in jobs and training positions.

Among those participating were: Fred Meyer Savings and Loan; Emanuel Hospital, U.S. Forest Service, City of Portland, U.S. Bancorp/U.S. Bank, The Oregon Bank, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Forest Service, Pacific Northwest

Bell, Portland Job Corps Center, Boost Educational Talent Search, U.S. Customs Service, Internal Revenue Service, Associated General Contractors, Associated Builders and Contractors.

Speakers included Curtis Ramsey, Youth Employment and Training Program (YETP) Recruiter; Lewis Carrell, YETP Coordinator; Will Archer, Associated Builders and Contractors; Don Stiffler, Administrator, State Manpower Planning, and Noble Deckard, State Employment Service.

Following the discussions, young people were invited to meet representatives of the participating firms and when applicable to complete applications for employment. Calling the Job Fair a huge success, NMCA Executive Director Eugene Jackson said 47 new clients were enrolled in the program, bringing enrollment to 84 persons.

The purpose of the Youth Program is to place minority youth — the most underemployed group in the state — in meaningful employment.

Seminars explains equal opportunity laws

The Oregon Bureau of Labor will hold a free Equal Employment Opportunity and Wage and Hour Seminar in North Portland as a continuation of the bureau's Neighborhood Business Assistance Program.

The workshop, aimed at helping the smaller employer in North and Northeast Portland, will be held at the University of Portland, Buckley Center, 5000 N. Willamette Boulevard, December 27th, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The neighborhood assistance workshop is a spin-off of the highly successful Violation Prevention Program instituted by the Bureau two years ago. According to Bill Stevenson, Labor Commissioner, "The business community's response to the initial program has been enthusiastic. I am hopeful that the extension of this program to the neighborhood level will significantly benefit smaller employers, especially those who cannot justify hiring a full-time personnel officer, but must operate their businesses in accor-

dance with Oregon labor laws."

The seminar will cover specific problem areas such as hiring, maternity benefits, injured workers, payroll records and recent changes in the laws that regulate the employer-employee relationship.

Employers and other interested parties are invited to attend. To register for the class, contact the Bureau of Labor's Technical Assistance Division at 1400 S.W. 5th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97201, or call 229-5087.

Educating the Board of Education

Coalition challenges Blanchard

The Community Coalition for School Integration responded Monday evening to the remarks of Superintendent Robert Blanchard that the Coalition's recommendation for pairing schools to achieve desegregation is an "over reaction" to the problem and that it is "unworkable."

Charging that the school district has an unwritten policy that no white students will be assigned to a majority Black school, Coalition coordinator Oralee Beach challenged Dr. Blanchard's claim that the reorganization for middle schools has placed the burden of segregation more heavily on whites. "For the first six years, white children bear nearly all the burden of desegregation that resulted from the creation of middle schools," Blanchard said on December 11th.

Ms. Beach pointed out that the creation of middle schools in Southeast and Southwest Portland and the resulting transfer of children has nothing to do with desegregation. In four cases middle schools have been organized on the fringes of Albina and have provided desegregated middle schools for some Black children. However, creation of these middle schools has revealed that "two-way assignments are not acceptable." These middle schools provided an opportunity to desegregate majority Black school but the opportunity was not used. In each case the lower grade children in the attendance area of the middle school (nearly all white), who had to be assigned to a new school were sent to white schools. The latest example

took place this fall when Beaumont was designated a middle school, with Beaumont lower graders transferred to Alameda rather than to Sabin.

Another example of refusal to "inconvenience" white parents happened when the Coalition revealed that forms used for Administrative Transfer students required that the child stay in the new attendance area though high school while white parents sending children to ECEs did not have the same requirement. Rather than ask the same commitment from whites that it had from Blacks, the district changed the forms to encourage that the child remain in the new school through the grades offered.

"It is clear that there is a behavior policy that says whites will not be assigned to schools close to 50 per cent Black." It would be possible to use middle school reorganization to desegregate but that would mean assigning whites to majority Black schools.

Dr. Blanchard had stated that only 7.3 per cent of the Black students are bused involuntarily from school where no grade level is available for them and to him this was a minor problem. He therefore charged that the Coalition proposal to meet this problem was an "over reaction."

Ms. Beach explained that the Coalition is not only concerned with the 351 students (although it disagrees with the number), but is deeply concerned about the 1,767 children in predominately Black elementary schools and the 1,413 voluntary transfer students. Aside

from the scattering and isolation of transfer students, how many are really voluntary? If Black students must be recruited to leave the Albina schools to make room for white Kindergarten and pre-Kindergarten children, is it really voluntary? If there is no room for a voluntary transfer student to return to his school, is it really voluntary? "If you have to do what you volunteer to do, then 'volunteer' is in question."

"When you understand all that we are addressing you will understand it is not an over reaction," she told the School Board.

Ms. Beach also challenged Blanchard's statement that the logistics of pairing are "perhaps unsolvable". She told the Board, "I need to say that the information you receive from the district is not always accurate enough for you to use for reflection and decision making."

She refuted the Superintendent's statement that 15,000 students would have to be bused to pair schools at a 70/30 ratio. Blanchard later admitted that he had counted all of the children in the schools involved, not just those that would be bused. The coalition estimates approximately 5,000. She also advised that there would be no need to attempt to put all 15,000 of those students into the seven Albina schools, a fete Blanchard had called impossible, but that only the number necessary to balance the schools would need to be transferred.

She also challenged the 70/30 ratio since the district's current policy for the Albina schools is 50/50 (Please turn to page 2 col. 6)

The Challenge of the Eighties

by Herb L. Cawthorne

(The following is an address to the Portland City Club of December 15, 1978.)

The Era of Mature Discussion

Two years ago, on the pages of the *Oregonian*, I wrote in a critical tone that in Portland the assumption is that "a desegregation program is best managed when public discussion and education are kept to a minimum." I had quietly observed that, when it came to the integration process, the community was uninformed. Parents were confused and unsure about both the rationale and the process of desegregation. Many teachers were infected with misconceptions. The integration thrust of the district, lacking the unifying effect of open communication, was fragmented and piece-meal and poorly managed.

Within this atmosphere of calculated silence, the Black community was made to suffer drastic alterations in its schools. Its children were scattered and isolated throughout the city, many of them forced to take the bus to schools far away from their homes. Quietly, so that the white people of Portland would hardly know what had happened, the Portland School District pursued a plan which sought to address the elusive notion of "racial isolation." My comments of two years ago are no longer applicable today.

Whether the assumption has changed or not, the district can no longer operate as though this community is not mature enough to discuss forthrightly the complicated issues of school desegregation. The chief credit for this positive change belongs to the *Community Coalition for School Integration*.

A Brief History of Desegregation

The concern over racial segregation and the need for integration in the Portland Public Schools can be traced to the early Sixties. On April 20, 1962, the Portland Chapter of the NAACP charged that racial segregation existed and was a detriment to the aspirations of Black youth.

In 1963, after fifteen months of study, the Committee on Race and Education was unequivocal in reporting that "Our studies indicate that our schools in their present educational practices are not achieving their purpose for students from culturally deprived circumstances and this is particularly true for Negro students." In response, the Board of Education set forth policies to achieve a reduction in the racial isolation of children, as well as reduced class sizes, and greater educational opportunities for children in need.

In 1970, with the advent of the "Schools for the Seventies" plan, the voluntary programs stimulated by the Committee on Race and Education were drastically altered. The "Schools for the Seventies" plan, after little more than three months of public discussion, mandated two major components of the desegregation program, which were: 1. *An Administrative Transfer Program* to encourage open enrollment and avoid the concentration of minority students; 2. The creation of *Early Childhood Education Centers* resulting from the elimination of upper grades from all schools in the Albina community.

The inequity which exists today began in 1970 and was the result of purposeful action on the part of the Board of Education. Since voluntary plans did not sufficiently desegregate

the schools, involuntary plans were implemented — and the disruption of such involuntary plans was forced upon the shoulders of the very people least able to withstand the negative impact.

The Community Coalition for School Integration developed in response to a substantial concern, a concern that has festered beneath the surface of our daily lives for nearly fifteen years.

Coalition Research Findings

In an extensive research process, the Coalition found that the Portland School District discriminates against Black students in the desegregation process. As a result of grade elimination in the schools in the Black community, upper grade children were forced to take the bus to schools outside their neighborhood. In spite of Dr. Robert Blanchard's weak contention that white students have substantially shared the burden of desegregation, the fact is nearly 33% of the Black school population is bused, while only 2% of the white population travels to school for desegregation purposes.

Not only are Black children asked to shoulder the burden, but they are scattered and isolated in a manner insensitive to sound educational goals. The 451 children from King, for example, are dispersed to 42 different schools. There is no chance for coordinated neighborhood involvement. This unmanageable and thoughtless scattering is so obviously unfair and inequitable. It is even worse in light of the fact that much of the transferring is forced.

The district claims that 351 Black students are forced to attend schools outside their neighborhoods because (Please turn to page 2 col. 4)

Community celebrates African Kwanza festival

Kwanza is a holiday based on the traditional harvest ceremonies of West Africa. Kwanza is a Swahili word meaning "first fruits." Traditionally African people worked hard throughout the year planting and caring for their crops. When it was time to harvest their crops, African people held a big celebration. Everyone brought what they grew to contribute to the festivities. African people came together to share in the fruits of collective work and enjoy the common rhythm, harmony and peace so deeply rooted in the spirit of the community.

During the late 1960's Ron Karenga identified Kwanza as a holiday which reflected the richness of the African past, present and future. The celebration of Kwanza lasts for seven days, beginning December 26th and ending January 1st. Each

day of Kwanza represents one of "the" Seven Principles of Blackness, a Black value system developed by Ron Karenga.

Each day of Kwanza is dedicated to thinking about the significance of each principle in our daily lives. Activities are held each night to emphasize the value of the day.

The seven days of Kwanza and the values that are acknowledged are: first day — Umoja — Unity; second day — Kujichagulia — Self Determination; third day — Ujima — Collective Work and Responsibility; fourth day — Ujimaa — Cooperative Economics; fifth day — Nia — Purpose; sixth day — Kuumba — Creativity; seventh day — Imani — Faith.

On the last day of Kwanza a big celebration is held. This is a time for Black people to come together and make joyful noises, give thanks and

enjoy the blessing of living and acting together to strengthen the community.

Black people in Portland have celebrated Kwanza for the past six years, and again it is time to collectively celebrate this holiday. Kwanza is a time for Black people to acknowledge the progress made through hard work in the community and set even higher goals for progress in the future. Kwanza is a real example of the traditional unity which has existed among Black people throughout history. Kwanza expresses the true nature of Black people sharing and working together for the positive development of the Black community.

For further information on Kwanza please stop by the Talking Drum Bookstore today, located at 1634 N.E. Alberta Street.