



We see the world
through Black eyes

Avoiding the issues

There was no surprise as School Board Chairman echoed Superintendent Robert Blanchard's claim that the call of the Community Coalition for School Integration for a more equitable desegregation program is "excessive." Dr. Blanchard had earlier told the Board that the Coalition's recommendations for school pairing was an "over reaction."

Newman, as had Blanchard, relied heavily on the middle school reorganization to justify the District's desegregation methods, claiming that "as a result of the gradual and persistent middle school reorganization, the burden of transfer to accomplish integration is increasingly being shared." Neither Newman nor Blanchard explained that no white child has been transferred to a majority Black school as a result of this reorganization. Also, in all but three cases the increased number of Black students in the new middle schools is the result of cross-town bussing (one way).

Newman's second point was the success of the Early Childhood Education Centers in promoting desegregation. "What we believed and have found in fact is that parents, both Black and white, will send their children, by bus if necessary, and without major community upheaval, to schools outside their immediate neighborhood, if the educational programs at the end of the bus line are good." Newman failed to add that white children are transferred to ECEs to desegregate the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs, but that these children do not remain through the elementary years.

Last year 68 per cent of the pre-kindergarten students at Humboldt, the District's most successful ECE, were white. By the second grade only 32 per cent were white. The third grade has been eliminated to make room to import enough white pre-kindergarten students to bring the minority percentage to 57 per cent.

The other ECEs have been less successful. For example King's and Eliot's third grades are 69 per cent minority.

Whereas 240 white children transferred to the 1977-1978 pre-kindergarten classes in the five ECEs only 100 white children transferred in to the first grade and only 13 transferred into the third

grade. Where is the evidence that white parents will voluntarily send their children to schools in the Black community?

The fact that seven elementary schools remain majority Black is evidence that white parents will not voluntarily bus their children. But then, Black parents did not bus their children either until they were virtually pushed out of their schools. Yet the District had no compunction against forcing Black children out of their neighborhoods for the purpose of desegregation. Why not whites, too?

Neither Newman nor Blanchard addressed the Black children still attending majority Black schools. Both have left desegregation to the "good will" of white parents -- who hopefully will sometime in the future decide to send their children to King, Sabin, Vernon, etc.

Newman's statement, "But the inequity which exists is not the result of the efforts of the Portland School Board to eliminate desegregation . . . It is the result of the searegation we seek to eliminate", is misleading.

The inequity is the result of the School District's unwillingness to inconvenience white parents even when that failure places a great burden on Black children and families.

Newman did say, "Racial segregation in schools is wrong, educationally and morally. No democratic community should tolerate a school system that does not affirmatively seek to bring about the conditions in which white and Black children share the same classrooms together."

Those who thought the School Board would act wisely and fairly when the inequities were demonstrated and so worked with or supported the Coalition agree with Mr. Newman. Those who thought the Coalition's work would be a futile exercise and so stood aside can agree with Mr. Newman. Those who knew the School Board to be incapable of reacting positively to the educational needs of Black children can agree with Mr. Newman.

It is because of this agreement that the next steps will be taken. As in the past, when the political system fails to react positively the only recourse is with the courts. The District has drawn the lines and the challenge will be accepted.

would receive \$110. It might sound good, but the low-income worker who pays little tax will receive little if any benefit.

The 12.5 per cent reduction in taxes paid would have the same effect -- doing little for the small taxpayer but benefiting those who have high incomes and pay high taxes.

Would greater benefits be derived by the state keeping that \$170 and using it for education, health, mental health and all of the other needs we are told the state can't afford?

Who will suffer for the \$570 million budget cut -- the persons dependent on the state for services. The elderly who need dentures and glasses, children who need psychiatric counseling or foster homes, parents who need job training.

As this plan and others are discussed by the Legislature and the people it will be important to seek the best tax relief plan -- the one that will provide relief for those who need it most while retaining necessary state and local services.

American Blacks: Stay out of South Africa

by N. Fungai Kumbula

Second and probably more important, when these people return to the U.S., they are almost always interviewed by the various media about their experiences in South Africa. Generally, the bigger the name, the more the media exposure. Ali will attract more attention than 'Shaft.' So, when they are in South Africa the "authorities" will bend over backwards to minister to them. They will agree to temporarily lift the racial barriers so the Americans can perform before mixed audiences, be accommodated at 'white' hotels and be allowed to go anywhere and everywhere.

When they come to the U.S., they will be asked whether they saw any signs of discrimination, whether they were barred from certain facilities and if they witnessed any instances of police brutality. Of course, to all these questions they would have to answer "No," which is just what apologists for apartheid will be waiting for. Then they can say: 'We told you so.' All these horror stories about Sharpeville, Soweto, etc. are pure fabrication.' The fact is, whether we like it or not, the word of one of these "leaders" carries more weight than yours or mine. This is what the conservatives would use as ammunition to attack any anti-apartheid action the U.S. might consider taking.

So, to all Black entertainers, athletes etc.: the word from your brothers and sisters is: 'Stay out of South Africa. Do not be used by the enemy to undermine our struggle to be free. We feel bad enough when white Americans speak up in defense of this modern day slavery but, it just kills us when we see our brothers and sisters join the enemy ranks. If you want to come to Africa, come to Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Zambia or the rest of the motherland where slavery has now been abolished.

As for forcing apartheid to integrate theatres and hotels for the duration of a tour, what good does that do when, the moment you leave the theatre, the sign "No Bantu (Blacks) Allowed" goes up again? Do those few hours of "integration" make up for the damage you do to the cause of Black liberation? We have no quarrel with anyone trying to make a living but, we strongly object to our brothers' and sisters' participation in an act detrimental to the cause. As I conclude this, I have just gotten word that a Holly Maxwell, female singer, is planning to tour South Africa next year. If you see her, please give her a copy of this appeal.

It is now a well known fact that South Africa deplores any form of Black advancement. For that reason, the regime discourages or prevents prominent Blacks from visiting the country since they would set a 'bad' example: South African Blacks seeing their brothers and sisters in influential position would thus find more ammunition, more inspiration, more determination to do away with apartheid so they too can set up a system where they will play their rightful roles, a system based on meritocracy rather than race. The only outside Blacks that would be welcome in South Africa are those engaged in menial jobs who would thus reinforce the apartheid doctrine that this is the 'natural order of things.'

Over the past few years, there has been a slight modification of this policy. As racism has been denounced and, in some case discarded the world over, attention has been focused on South Africa and the regime has found itself the center of controversy in several areas. In fact, it has created so much controversy in the UN, the Olympics, professional organizations and other international bodies. Currently, South Africa is barred from participation in the Olympics, FIFA (the international soccer governing body), ILTF (International Lawn Tennis Federation), all UN agencies such as World Health Organization (WHO), and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

The initial response was one of defiance: the 'go it alone policy' but, as pressure mounts, the regime realizes that even some of its staunchest supporters are having difficulty defending apartheid. Apologists for apartheid have always stressed the mineral wealth (gold, diamonds, uranium, etc.), her professed opposition to communism and her 'strategic position' -- straddling the oil routes from the Middle East to Western Europe and the U.S. Apparently, racism is more tolerable than communism. These arguments have, however, grown thinner and thinner over the years as anti-apartheid groups apply the heat. What South Africa is worried about is that these apologists may no longer be able to muster enough votes to prevent the imposition of economic sanctions against her. They, (the apologists) have already failed once, in 1963 when the United Nations imposed an arms embargo.

These developments have forced apartheid strategists to think of new ways of improving South Africa's image abroad. They have bought full

page ads in New York and other Eastern city papers, lobbied Congress and have been making efforts to contact the Black community directly. They know that Congressional actions and Administration policies vis a vis Southern Africa are generally a result of pressure from the Black community. This is where Black entertainers and athletes come in.

South Africa has been reaching out to Black entertainers, athletes and other such public figures to come visit South Africa. A number have already either taken up the offer or gone there of their own volition. Dobbie Gray who, a few years back recorded the very successful hit, 'Drift Away' went to South Africa early in 1978. Percy Sledge, until a few years back, a fairly successful R&B singer (often taken as the flip side of Wilson Pickett during his heyday) visited South Africa and Rhodesia in 1972. Not too long ago, the Supremes were thrown out of South Africa after they ran afoul of apartheid.

At this moment, Richard ('Shaft') Roundtree is over there working in a movie about the liberation struggle. The fact that he has been allowed into the country to do this particular movie indicates to you the movie can only be knocking our struggle. Initially, Arthur Ashe, the 1975 Wimbledon tennis champion, used to urge Black athletes to go to South Africa as a way of weakening apartheid. He played there once or twice, I think, but is now one of the strongest advocates of severing all sport contacts with that unholy nation. Lee Elder golfing great, has also been invited to play over there on a number of occasions. Earlier in 1978 there was a lot of excitement when it was announced that Muhammad Ali was going to fight in South Africa.

Several things are involved when Blacks go to South Africa for whatever reason. First, they are, though apartheid admits it only grudgingly, citizens of what they consider the 'leader of the free world.' The U.S. carries a lot of clout in world affairs. As past events will attest, it is the American veto that has saved South Africa from being expelled from the UN, from economic sanctions and from an oil embargo. These Black entertainers are regarded as the leaders of the Black community -- the very same community that has been pressuring their government to get tough with apartheid. If the "leaders" of this community could be persuaded to be a little less hostile, U.S. pressure would diminish.

Who will benefit?

Governor-elect Victor Atiyeh has revealed the skeleton of his tax reform package. Still bare bones, there is hardly enough substance to the plan to determine its results. But some general conclusions can be drawn.

The basic elements of the plan are: 1). A 22 per cent rebate of 1978 personal income taxes; 2). A 12.5 reduction in personal income taxes; 3). A 1.5 limit on taxation of owner-occupied residences; 4). tying the increase of assessed value to statewide increase in personal income; 5). renter relief; 6). ability to vote for levies exceeding this limit; 7). revenue sharing to make up tax losses to local governments.

These measures would result in a loss to the state of approximately \$570 million in taxes -- or a budget cut of \$570 million.

Who would benefit? \$170 million would be refunded to 1977 taxpayers at 22 per cent of their taxes paid. A person who paid \$200 in state taxes would receive \$44. A taxpayer who paid \$1,000

Letters to the Editor

Conflict of interest not serious problem

To the Editor:

I have received a copy of Larry Baker's "Behind the Wall" column which was printed on Thursday, October 19th. Because I direct the American Bar Association program which has been providing funding assistance for the Prisoners' Legal Assistance office since 1976 I am writing to respond to some inaccuracies.

It is true that ABA funding for this program has terminated, but not because we are disinterested. In fact, our original funding commitment for PLA was to have been for only one year. Due to what we believed was the excellent operation of the program we received authorization from our National Management Board to make an extraordinary second year grant. This was followed by a second "extraordinary" year of funding as a continuation grant from the ABA. In other words, we funded the project for nearly two years in excess of our original commitment. The reason that we are unable to support the program any longer is that the funding on which the ABA has relied is no longer available.

Some serious questions were raised in the column about the conflicts of interest which may be inherent in the funding of a prison legal services office by a state corrections department. Unfortunately, funds for such programs throughout the country are very limited and program sponsors and operators must go where they can to obtain the money necessary to sustain their projects. Similar conflicts of interest can also be said to exist with state funding of public defenders or tax supported "public advocate" of-

fices. After all, in a criminal case the State is the plaintiff, the prosecutor, the judge, and in many cases the defense counsel. While a funder may exert some influence over categories of matters that an office may handle (public defenders work only on criminal matters, legal aid offices do only civil case work), the individual attorney bears full responsibility for deciding which cases he or she will take and how they will be handled. No government agency -- even the Department of Corrections -- can offset those decisions.

As you know, in *Bounds v. Smith*, the U.S. Supreme Court decided that prisoners have a Constitutional right to court access. Despite the Supreme Court's decision states have been slow to provide the financial support necessary to allow inmates adequate access to law libraries and the services of attorneys. About the only place that legal service operators can go for the necessary wherewithal until general state funds are appropriated is to the corrections department. If no other state agency is able to support legal services for prisoners, the corrections depart-

ment must do so. It is, after all, that department to which the Supreme Court in the *Bounds* case spoke most directly.

Sincerely,
David J. Linden
Project Director
American Bar Association

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ALFRED L. HENDERSON
Editor/Publisher

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