

# HEW investigates PPS discrimination complaints

An investigative team from the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, is in Portland this week investigating complaints filed against the Portland Public Schools. The complaints charge the school district with racial discrimination.

The HEW team met with school district personnel and with community members. Representatives of the Community Coalition for School

Integration presented them with its assessment of the districts' actions that promote desegregation and that discriminate against Black students.

These include: Construction of Eliot and Humboldt schools in Black neighborhoods; prior to being found in non-compliance in 1975, assigning Black teachers almost exclusively to Black schools.

White schools have been converted to middle schools or closed, but stu-

dents have not been transferred to Black schools. White students living in the Jefferson High School area have been allowed to go to other schools, increasing the percentage of Black enrollment at Jefferson.

The district has failed to recruit Black teachers, with hiring of minorities declining from 19 percent in 1973-74 to 5 percent in 1977-78.

Black students are forced to transfer to schools outside their neighbor-

hood to promote desegregation, while no white students are forced to transfer to majority Black schools. Black students have been forced to remain in the new schools, while white voluntary transfer students have been allowed to return to their neighborhood schools.

When middle schools are established, students from white feeder schools have been assigned to a middle school or a group. Black students have been scattered.

Early Childhood Education Centers have been created in Albina by School Board edict, while in white communities they are established with "community acceptance."

The HEW investigators will write its findings within a few weeks. If the district is determined to be guilty of discrimination, it will have 90 days to offer a remedy. If a remedy cannot be agreed upon, the findings will be forwarded to Washington, D.C. for enforcement. Within 30 days, a

deferral of all federal money would be imposed — not halting current expenditures but stopping new projects or refunding. If no agreement were reached in 90 days, all federal funds would be stopped.

Although HEW can initiate its own review, most investigations are in response to citizen complaints. Monitoring and enforcement of cancellation agreements are also largely in response to citizen requests.

## PORTLAND OBSERVER

USPS 959-680

Volume 9 No. 14  
Thursday, April 12, 1979 10¢



Kenneth Berry was awarded the Portland Jaycees "Junior First Citizen" award for 1978. The award is given annually in recognition of community service. The citation states: "For consistent dedication to serving the community through personal involvement in professional, private, public and social avenues striving to improve communications, understanding, cooperation, performance and appreciation among all. Self-motivated, talented and successful as a teacher, counselor, and musician, Ken exemplifies the belief that 'earth's great treasure lies in human personality.'" Berry was nominated by Mrs. Clara Peoples.

## Inmates support Dr. Blanchard replies: not guilty private visits

Oregon State Inmates and their families are supporting legislation to establish conjugal visits at the prison. The State Street Jaycees researched the bills — HBs 2425 and 2865 — sponsored by Representatives Sandy Richardson and Wally Priestley — and presented testimony before the House Judiciary Committee.

Deone Washington, an OSP inmate, explained that the inmates have investigated the possibility of bearing the costs themselves through a lease option arrangement for trailer units.

He explained the problems of the family that is divided — the husband and father behind bars — and unable to share the intimacies of family life.

"The point to truly consider is that men who have family outside these walls who truly care for them want that needed love which they cannot gain inside these walls. You have a different kind of man behind these walls, the kind that gives a damn enough to want to change and make people understand that he's trying. And that starts at home."

"Many wives have waited for their husbands to be released from this penitentiary and without a place to be released to, many men are lost. We believe that helping the family unit stay alive, even in the smallest fashion, might stop men from coming back to this system."

In the current visiting system, men and their families visit in a large visiting room. Married people can visit four times a month, and persons not married can visit twice a month.

"Now, in the beginning of each visit, the family is allowed to em- (Please turn to page 2 col. 1)

The Portland School District's initial reaction to notification by the Region X office of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, was to question the delay in responding to a 1977 complaint and to allege that significant changes have been made.

"There have been countless changes in the school district since the time that the complaint was filed, and many of those changes alter significantly the facts and conditions that you will be investigating."

The HEW investigation of a complaint filed by the Oregon Minority Educators Organization and a 1979 complaint by a citizen, is based on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, section 601: "No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be

denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

The allegation of the complaint include: the disciplining of Black students, the differences in achievement levels of Black and white students, and the excessive burden of desegregation bore by Black students. Issues to be investigated on: 1) Does the district discriminate against Black students in Early Childhood Education Centers if they are achieving at a lower rate than white children? 2) Does the district discriminate against Black children by requiring them to bear substantially more of the burdens of desegregation?

Dr. Blanchard responded that, "with respect to the 'burden' question alleging that Black students

had to bear a disproportionate share of the district's desegregation program, we have never stated that this is not true . . . We do not agree with the assertion that a larger proportion of Black students participating in desegregation activities constitutes discrimination. Additionally, we can make a strong case today that the question of disproportionate burden is no longer appropriate."

Dr. Blanchard further advised Region X that some of the information requested "simply is not reasonably available."

Makers of the complaint emphasize that the allegations of the complaints are still valid and that research completed by the Community Coalition for School Integration in December of 1978 verify that no radical changes or improvements have been made by the district.



Four young South African men — the writers and actors of SURVIVAL — portray life in South Africa under apartheid.

## 'Survival' explores oppression

by N. Fungai Kumbula

The central theme of SURVIVAL is that if you are Black in South Africa you are in prison whether or not you are actually behind bars. That seems a simple enough sentiment but the way in which it is delivered, put across to the audience is what lifts the play way, way above your ordinary everyday play.

Performed by four young Black South African men who also wrote the script, SURVIVAL takes the audience on a trip to the home of apartheid. What the audience sees is that there is definitely no difference be-

tween the outside and the inside of the prison. Either way, the Black South Africa is caught in a vicious system; from the day he is born to the day he dies, he cannot seem to get away from a system that is bent on his destruction.

The most powerful aspect of SURVIVAL is that the four actors, Seth Sibanda, Faus Kekana, Selaelo Maredi, and Themba Ntinga portray ordinary everyday Blacks who are merely trying to survive. As we watch them trying to find their way through the maze of apartheid laws designed "to keep the Blacks in their place," the full scope of this evil sy-

stem hits home with the ferocity of a sledge hammer.

The triumph of SURVIVAL stems from the effectiveness with which the message comes across. Even a Martian who arrived on Earth today could not fail to see what the actors wish to portray. We laugh with them when they make fun of their new companion in jail, Habakuk. In one scene when he has to go and empty out the slop bucket, they tell him to go give it to the sergeant.

Our stomachs turn when we see the prisoners choke on the rotten food they are fed, in prison, and we (Please turn to page 2 col. 5)

## Rally supports nuclear moratorium

A Nuclear Moratorium Rally will be held on the steps of the State Capitol next Friday, April 20th, at noon. The moratorium, sponsored by the Nuclear Moratorium Coalition, is designed to bring attention to HB 2570, which would halt the building of nuclear power plants in Oregon until the federal government is operating safe and permanent waste storage sites.

Announcing the rally, spokesmen for the Nuclear Moratorium Coalition said, "The events of the past few weeks have convinced us that it is necessary to work together to institute a moratorium on nuclear power in Oregon. The near disastrous accident at the Three Mile Island Nuclear Plant and Governor Atiyeh's apparent attempt to change the face of the Energy Facility Siting Council have been disturbing developments. On March 12th the

Federal government released the Interagency Review Group report on disposal of radioactive waste. That report indicated that a solution to the waste disposal problem is far in the future. The report states that the feasibility of geologic disposal has not been demonstrated. We are also told that it won't be until at least 1992-95 before an experimental repository will be readied.

"It is inconceivable for us to allow further nuclear plants to be sited and built with the waste question still to be answered and the probability of another Three Mile Island type accident occurring again."

The Coalition advocates an emphasis on non-nuclear sources of power. "The utilities which supply electricity to the people of Oregon must realize that we do not want nuclear power plants. We ask them to turn to the future rather than

fighting to keep it away. A full crash program of renewable resources such as solar, wind, bio-mass, and geothermal must begin today. We believe that Oregonians, when given the choice and the help, will learn to conserve during the transition period."

All citizens who are concerned about the social and health dangers of nuclear power are urged to attend the rally to demonstrate desire for passage of HB 2570. Those unable to attend are asked to contact their legislators in support of the bill.

Organizations making up the Coalition at this time include: Oregon Environmental Council, Greenpeace, Trojan Decommissioning Alliance, Sierra Club, Oregon Young Democrats, Students for a Nuclear Free Future, Clergy and Laity Concerned, Grey Panthers, (Please turn to page 2 col. 4)

## A. Philip Randolph: Confronting today's challenges

by A. Philip Randolph

I am happy to have this opportunity to address my brothers and sisters as I celebrate another birthday, this one being my 90th.

For most people, birthdays offer an opportunity for careful personal reflection. They are a time for taking stock, a time for evaluating the course of events. Now, as I mark the beginning of my 91st year, I wish to make a few brief comments about the difficult challenges confronting Black people and all American workers.

In many important respects, today's challenges bear a striking similarity to the problems we have grappled with for decades. Essen-

tially, they are problems of economics, and problems of politics. And, most important, they are problems which cannot be solved in isolation from the overall society.

Consider for a moment the plight of our Black youngsters. Throughout the nation, thousands upon thousands of Black teenagers and young adults have no opportunity for obtaining decent employment. They are forced to waste their talents, to waste their youthful enthusiasm, indeed, to waste their lives. To make matters worse, some political leaders dismiss this scandal as a necessity, a permanent feature of our economic system.

Consider also the condition of

low-wage workers throughout the so-called Sunbelt, and throughout America's great urban centers. Amid affluence and new-found wealth, thousands of workers — Black as well as white — receive subsistence wages. And because so few have the protections of a union contract, they have no job security, no fringe benefits, and no rights in the workplace.

And consider the new political atmosphere in America, an atmosphere best characterized by crude conservatism, and social defeatism. From every corner of the land, we hear demands for cuts in school budgets, social security payments, health care, and jobs for the

unemployed. And we hear inflation blamed on the moderate wages of workers, and the dimly low wages of those people forced to accept the minimum wage. Workers and poor people, the true victims of inflation, are everywhere scolded for their so-called excesses.

How do we deal with these problems? Who do we look toward for support and cooperation?

In my view, we have one reliable and steadfast ally — the trade union movement. And I make this statement based on seventy years of experience in the civil rights and labor movements.

Why the trade unions? The answer, I believe, is quite simple: The

vast majority of Black people are workers, and the trade union movement, even with all its imperfections and failings, is the most effective, and most powerful defender of the interests of all American workers, Black as well as white.

At this very moment, for example, organized labor is spearheading the attack against the Administration's so-called austerity budget. It is the trade union movement that has fought to preserve the minimum wage, and to keep the CETA jobs program intact. And it is the trade union movement that has mounted a major effort to organize low-paid and exploited workers throughout (Please turn to Page 3 Column 1)

