

NAACP president repudiates Economic Council

Lucious Hicks, President of the Portland Branch, NAACP, has been named by the City of Portland as one of the members of the Inner North-east Economic Council. Hicks said he is not and has never been a member of the Council.

"I don't know why my name has been included when I was not asked and did not agree to join the Council," he said. "I don't know why they would malign my name by saying I am part of the Council. How

can I be part of the Council when the NAACP is suing the City over this issue. That makes me look bad and could make me lose credibility in the community. People will naturally wonder if I'm joining the other side." Hicks said he intends to consult his attorney regarding the matter.

Hicks said he had received a call from Hovee regarding correspondence he had not received and that he later received letters inviting him to join the Council, but

that he did not respond. "I think it is highly unethical for anyone to use my name without my permission simply because they invited me to participate. Also, if they want an organization like the NAACP to be represented, they should ask that organization to name a representative, not choose someone for them."

"Not only have I not agreed to participate, but I have suggested to others that they boycott it," Hicks

said. "I consider the Council a sham, a way to do what the City already plans to do and to give it some credibility by putting it before a committee from this area." Hicks explained that the Council's job has been defined by the City, that the Mayor chose the members, and that its major task is to rezone the area to permit industrial expansion. The work will be done by City employees and the funds will go to City bureaus.

"I don't see any money in this

proposal for the community. When the Council is through, a year or more from now, will there be funds to carry out their proposals? Or will the federal money be spent elsewhere while this committee is still looking for sites?"

The Council does not intend to address the needs of the community - employment, training, housing, social services. It will not devise a plan to enhance the area or assist community people and, according

to Hicks, it will have no community support.

The NAACP, the Northwest Minority Contractors Association, the Albina Women's League, the Oregon Association of Colored Women's Clubs and United Black Front have sued the City of Portland and the U.S. Department of Commerce, charging that federal requirements for input from minorities were not met. The case is expected to go to court June 11th.

PORTLAND OBSERVER

USPS 959-880

Volume 9 No. 20
Thursday, May 24, 1979 10c



First pictures of the assembled princesses of the 1979 Rose Festival Court show the girls from Portland area high schools as they tour the City's river parks.

This year's Court has three princesses of Afro-American heritage, Devi Porter of Jefferson High School, Lori Smith of Wilson and Lynn Talton of Adams. Other court members are Margaret Walters

of Grant; Kathy Corrigan of Roosevelt; Soledad Grefness of Washington-Monroe; Mary Smurthwaite of Madison; Lori Grewe of Lincoln; Rochelle Anderson of Marshall; Cathy Leaverton of Cleveland; Julene Bankston of Jackson; Mary Ferguson of St. Mary's; and Zeena Pliska of Franklin.

Rosearia's Queen of the Court has not yet been chosen.

OSU sabotaging track coach?

by Calvin O.L. Henry

On May 16, 1979, Ray Gault, sports editor for Corvallis Gazette-Times, reported that "Steve Simmons has told his Oregon State University track team that he will resign as Beaver's head coach." Gault went on to quote OSU Athletic Director Dee Andros, "I can't blame him for wanting to talk to his squad first. He did infer that he was going to turn in his resignation, but I have nothing official."

One can't help but wonder why Gault seems to suggest in his reporting that this may be a victory for him and Andros in forcing Simmons to resign. Why? But, should such a resignation take place, isn't it a victory for tradition and racism?

But who is Steve Simmons and what is he doing at Oregon State

University? This question was raised when Simmons was hired as OSU head track coach in 1976 and every year since 1976. Again, why?

Steve Simmons is Black and is a human being. He and his wife live in Corvallis and have two children.

Analysis

Prior to becoming OSU head track coach three and a half years ago, he was the head coach at Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo for five years. Simmons came to OSU with a national and international reputation as a track coach. He has maintained, independently, these connections in spite of OSU athletic program. He is professional and independent, but a

politician he is not. And no one doubts his ability to coach track.

Simmons replaced Berny Wagner who resigned as OSU track coach in 1976 in order to coach track and to administrate other athletic programs in Saudi Arabia. When he came to OSU, Simmons was met with apathy and open opposition within OSU community. And he assumed the helm of a track program that was cut substantially. He had no paid assistants and only 11 1/2 scholarships to build an instant championship track team. Yet Simmons is constantly being compared to Wagner.

Wagner is no longer overseas, and some OSU alumni want him back as track coach. And it appears that Gault is operating from this basis.

OSU's loss to the University of Oregon during a recent dual track meet by some 91 points appears to be the (Please turn to Page 5 Column 1)

Lobdell proposes rate hike, no hearings

John Lobdell, newly appointed Public Utilities Commissioner, met with residents of Northeast Portland Tuesday night to discuss his pending decision to allow Pacific Power and Light Co. a rate increase without public hearings. The meeting was called at the request of several Portland area organizations, after Portland was left out of the Commissioner's schedule of four forums.

PP&L requested a 15 percent rate increase, to increase revenue by \$39.5 million. The Public Utilities Commission staff recommended an increase of 11.5 percent, raising the company's rate of profit from 9.18 percent to 9.91 percent. The public hearings procedure would result in the increase taking place in about November of 1979. Lobdell suggested that the public hearings be eliminated and that the company be allowed an increase of 7 percent to begin June 1, 1979, a profit increase of 9.29 percent. Thus, a smaller increase would be spread over a longer period of time, providing a savings of approximately \$1.9 million to the rate payers but giving the company quicker access to the money.

PP&L has accepted the proposal and has agreed not to request

another increase until May, 1980. Lobdell is seeking the opinion of the rate payers.

Bill Warren, of the PUC staff, explained that since 1974 PP&L's rate increases have risen faster than the local cost of living index. Although he gave the percentage increases for each year -- 20.7 percent in 1974, 11.5 percent in 1975, 14 percent in 1976, 16.7 percent in 1977 -- he was unable to provide the dollar amounts of the increases. He did admit, under questioning from the audience, that since the percentage increase is based on the rate of the previous year, larger and larger amounts of money can be raised from smaller percentage increases.

Warren explained that energy costs are not related to the cost of living, that energy companies in general and PP&L in particular have a different set of problems -- investments in nuclear and coal plants have raised costs.

He said that although Measure 9 was passed by the voters and requires that costs of facilities not yet producing power not be charged to the rate payers, electric rates have not been lowered to exclude those costs. Whether the extra money

collected between December of 1978 and January of 1979 will have to be returned to the customers will be determined by a suit filed by consumers.

Father Bill Curtin of Albina Fair Share urged the Commissioner to protect the public's right to scrutinize the performance of the utility companies. Sister Sidney asked that he support a bill to deny the utilities the right to cut off power if that endangers life or health. She said Portland General Electric made 18,000 shut offs last year, 150 a month in Portland.

In response to the question of whether every household and small business should have the right to essential electricity at a reasonable rate, Lobdell replied that under Oregon law he has no authority to address social issues. He believes he can address an inverted rate structure (lower cost per kilowatt hour to customers who use small amounts, rather than the current lower rates to large users) only if it will result in conservation of energy.

Mary Shuman of the Rate Payers Union, asked why not hold hearings. "Why would the utilities prefer to (Please turn to page 2 col. 4)

Outlook "grim and dim"

Nuclear delay threatens PP&L

Stating that the problem of nuclear waste disposal is a terribly serious matter that is a proper topic of public attention, Don Frisbee, President of Pacific Power and Light Company, asked the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment to avoid taking an "abrupt action" that could eliminate the options open to PP&L in developing future power.

Frisbee testified on HB 2750, which would mandate a moratorium on new nuclear plants until a federal depository for nuclear waste, and SB 898. SB 898 would allow the rate payers (if approved by the voters) to absorb the costs of Pebble Springs providing the utilities decide not to build.

Frisbee said the fall out of 2570, which is estimated to delay construction for approximately ten years, would be to leave Oregon's private utilities -- PP&L and Portland General Electric -- unable to compete with companies from other states for capital investments.

Noting the need for nuclear

generated electricity, Frisbee said the nation faces serious shortages of oil, and although natural gas is more plentiful, prices will rise. The outlook for new supplies of electricity he called "grim and dim."

PP&L with its partners in the Pebble Springs nuclear plants -- PGE and Puget Sound Power and Light, filed its intent to build in 1972 with completion of the 1.2 kilowatt plant planned for 1981. Seven years later "we are virtually nowhere."

Frisbee expressed the opinion that if PP&L could have foreseen the future, they might have made different plans, but they still are not sure there were other options that would be acceptable to the public.

There is a mood in the county -- a proliferation of regulatory agencies -- that is not conducive to building new power producing plants.

Today Pebble Springs is at a standstill, but to meet regulations of the siting agencies and to pursue a site certificate, the three companies have spent \$230 million -- \$79

million belongs to PP&L -- and "millions more are on the hook."

An extension of ten to twelve years would put its survival in serious jeopardy, Frisbee said. Besides the millions spent and promised, there would possibly be penalties for cancellations, building costs would increase, and the 8.5 percent interest would more than double the cost. Passage of HB 2750, he predicted, would result in termination of the project.

Termination would so destroy the companies' credibility and debilitate their credit standings, that they would find it extremely difficult to find investors or to get credit.

If Pebble Springs were abandoned, and PP&L's \$100 million investment not charged to the rate payers, but written off the books, it would "virtually eliminate PP&L as a viable agency."

Frisbee conceded that a one year moratorium pending an investigation of the Three Mile Island accident (Please turn to Page 2 Column 4)

Irving Park Liberation Day site

On May 26, 1979 Black people in Portland will be supporting African Liberation Day by having a march and rally at Irving Park from 1:00-6:00 p.m. Besides supporting our people in Africa we also want to demand decent jobs for Black people in Portland.

For the last six years Black people in the United States, Canada and West Indies have celebrated African Liberation Day, on this day special attention is given to our Brothers and Sisters in Africa who are still fighting to free themselves from white rule. South Africa (Azania), Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and South West Africa (Namibia) are the countries still illegally ruled by white people. In Portland we want to inform as many Black people as possible about

what is happening to our people in Africa and we want to raise the issue of high unemployment among Black people in Portland.

Unemployment among Black workers who are over 24 years old ranges between 25 and 30%, and unemployment among young Black people in Portland is close to 60%. Job discrimination is still being practiced by Portland's City Government, Multnomah County's Government, and the Oregon State Government. We are all aware that Black people are routinely discriminated against by Oregon businesses, industries and unions.

High unemployment is helping to destroy our families and community. Without decent jobs our community becomes more susceptible to crime

and drug addiction. Our young people are faced with not ever having the opportunity to have worthwhile employment that will allow them to adequately support themselves or their families. If this problem is going to be changed we will have to change it ourselves, what few gains we have made in this country have come about because we were willing to struggle for our rights.

Individuals and organizations are urged to join in African Liberation Day. The march to Irving Park will begin at 1:00 p.m. in the parking lot of the King Neighborhood Facility on N.E. 7th Avenue. The rally will begin at 1:30 in Irvington Park. Everyone can take these few steps toward freedom. "Let us march on til victory is won!"

Bill repeals death penalty

by Byron Hayes

Public testimony on a repeal of Oregon's death penalty was heard Wednesday in the Senate Energy and Environment Committee. The death penalty was approved by the voters in the November election but most of the testimony was in favor of repeal.

The first witness testified "urgently and strongly" in support of repeal because human life is at stake: innocent people have been convicted of capital crimes and have later been found innocent and released. Studies done on the effects of council (private attorney, public defender or court appointed attorney) indicate that "the poor are most likely to be executed."

A representative from the Fellowship of Reconciliation stated that "the death penalty is a relic of savagery that condones for society what would be murder for the individual." It is murder even if the term "putting to sleep" rather than "killing" is used.

Bud Morrison gave testimony indicating that the death penalty might encourage, rather than deter, homicide. He talked with LeRoy McGay, the last person executed in Oregon. When asked why he had killed a woman and her 18 month old daughter, he said, "I wanted to die and did not want to kill myself."

Senator Ted Hallock concluded testimony by showing an FBI chart which corroborated Morrison's (Please turn to page 2 col. 5)



Members of O.S.P. UHURU, Black culture club, assist Willamette Council of Camp Fire, Inc. of Salem. Joe Brown moves box of literature for Executive Director Glad Miniken, as Mark Garrison and Glen Step watch through the door. (See story on Page 6. Photo: Dave Weintraub, courtesy of Statesman Journal newspaper.)