

EDITORIAL/OPINION

Why not Jordan?

Why not Jordan for Mayor of Portland? Of the two leading candidates Jordan is by far the most promising.

Although he has not been on the Council long enough to become atrophied, he has had the varied experiences that allow him to know and understand the inner workings of the City. He has been responsible for the Fire Bureau, the Police Bureau, the Bureau of Human Resources, Manpower and Training, Neighborhood Environment and other bureaus and departments that give him an inside into a broad spectrum of issues.

Although not as well known to the business community as some, he has a knowledge of and a report with the people.

Jordan needs one more vote to be selected and we must admit some surprise to see Commissioner Schwab voting for Frank Ivancie when she told us during the last primary campaign that she would support Jordan should he run for Mayor.

Compromise candidates are being discussed by some, but why take a has been when a leader with a grasp of the future is available?

Make room for them

A new atmosphere prevails in the Portland School Board -- with Jonathan Newman gone and the Board working on possible desegregation plans without Dr. Blanchard's presence.

Last week the Board acknowledged that the

Black United Front's objections are "a legitimate and accurate expression of dissatisfaction with the district's present program of desegregation". That is a big step for a Board that has always steadfastly denied error and claimed its way is the only way.

Wednesday night a committee of the Board suggested some policies that address short term goals, policies that can be implemented this fall. They recommended allowing this year's third fourth graders to remain at Eliot. This would keep one class of students from being scattered and would demonstrate their intention to address the BUF request that all Early Childhood Education Centers go through grade five, rather than having some stop at grades two, three or four.

One recommendation that they failed to accept was to allow the fifth graders from Eliot and the fourth and fifth graders from Humboldt to return to the community. There would be no grades for them in their schools, but why couldn't they attend nearby schools? According to District figures, which admittedly could be incorrect, there are less than ten Eliot fifth graders and fifty to seventy-five fourth and fifth graders from Humboldt to place.

Probably not all parents would want to return their children to local schools, but at least they would have a choice.

Some believe an extra move would not be educationally sound, but that argument is countered by those who believe that the damage done by isolation is greater than that risked by a move. This is an issue that should be discussed more thoroughly.



Sithole capitulates again

by N. Fungai Kumbula

Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, former president of ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union) and, formerly the most feared person among the whites in Rhodesia, sank to another record low recently. At one point, he was jailed for plotting the assassination of Ian Smith and several other high ranking members of the then all white parliament. He was released from jail when the whites, reeling from setback after setback in the six year old war of liberation, initiated negotiations with the Blacks aimed at finding some solution to the perennial Black-white problem in Rhodesia.

Those ill-conceived negotiations resulted in the abortive elections of last April that saw the "installation of Abel Muzorewa as the country's first Black prime minister." Since then, of course, the whole world has seen that this was just another of a series of subterfuges to keep or maintain the status quo. A few Black faces were going to be pushed up front, window dressing to muffle the protests of a world that will not put up with oppression, discrimination and racism any more.

Muzorewa, Sithole and a Jeremiah Chirau rushed in to aid and abet this nefarious scheme. The rest of the people stood back crying: "FOUL!"

Sithole had just been kicked out of ZANU because his leadership had become suspect. Going along with this plot seemed the only way left for him to maintain some semblance of political viability.

He contested the elections which he had bragged he would win hands down. Before the elections, he had been ranting and raving about how "free and fair they were. Africa had never seen such an exercise in democracy." Just hours after the results started coming in and he realized how badly he was losing, he suddenly changed his tune. Now he was complaining about the elections being rigged. He accused the Ministry of the Interior of interference and intimidating the people into voting for Muzorewa. To make his point, he refused to take part in the government that Muzorewa eventually assembled. Under the system they had used, he was entitled to 12 Assembly seats. He barred his people from taking up these seats.

He held out for two months, protesting the "illegality and the irregularities of the electoral process" and had vowed to hold out indefinitely. A few weeks back, like a dog with a tail between his legs, he came crawling back, crawling back to join the very same system he accused of so

many electoral discrepancies. If that were not enough, he had the gall to hold a press conference and announce that he was abandoning his boycott because he had made his point. What point had he made? None whatsoever. The only point or the only new knowledge garnered from this latest farce demonstrated once again the political impotence that is now synonymous with the name Sithole.

What had he hoped to achieve by this boycott? Nobody really knows. Maybe he expected Muzorewa, plagued by internal dissent and a restive electorate, to come and beg for his assistance but Muzorewa never did. That underscored another low in Sithole: that he needs Muzorewa more than Muzorewa needs him. Why didn't he just back out of politics altogether instead of joining such a bankrupt regime and destroying whatever credibility he may have left? The answer lies in his shameless lust for power, a lust so all-consuming that he has ceased worrying about such things as respectability, credibility or veracity.

As with everything else, that same lust for power that, at one point, drove him to the pinnacle of authority will be the self same lust to bury him in the abyss of self destruction.

Parent endorses demands, opposes boycott

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year. Ms. Pittman blames the problems with suspensions that developed in Jeffery's sixth and seventh grade years on her involvement with the Title VII committee.

Ms. Pittman also is involved with attempting to get her daughter on the Jefferson rally squad. It took over a year to get Cassandra into Jefferson, and this year she will be a full time student in the dance program. Cassandra was selected by the students as a member of the Senior rally squad, but was suspended with other Black girls, due to what were called inexcusable absences.

Ms. Pittman filed an appeal and expects Dr. Larry Ayers, the Jefferson principal, to take care of the problem but if that fails "I will go to the Supreme Court if I have to."

"So you see I'm not against the boycott because my children have had it easy. They haven't."

Ms. Pittman explains that there are some real problems if children were kept out of school for several months or a year. She fears retribution against children who participate, both in disciplinary matters and in grades. No matter what Dr. Blanchard and the boycott leaders say, there is no way they can keep teachers from punishing students, she explained. Discrimination by teachers, which she has felt directly, is one of her main concerns. Having worked in several schools in the

district and dealing with teachers firsthand, she feels that many teachers will retaliate.

She also worries about the attitude the children will have when they return to school, the validity of the classes they attend while boycotting and whether they will receive credits, the students falling behind their classes, and students receiving welfare having problems receiving their school allowance.

Ms. Pittman has served on the Title VII committee for five years, two years as chairman. The purpose of the committee is to advise and monitor the Title VII program, which uses federal funds to assist Black children who are transferred to white schools and white children in those schools who are educationally disadvantaged.

Two years ago the district was found in non-compliance with federal regulations when it was discovered that Black children were being suspended and expelled in vastly greater numbers than white students. In order to receive its Title VII money the district agreed to take certain steps to insure no discrimination. Among these was that no student would be suspended for more than five days and that personnel be assigned to intercede for children and/or insure that steps were taken to solve the problems in order to keep them in school.

As a staff member at Adams High

School, Ms. Pittman was aware of at least one student who was suspended, never returned and no contact was made with his parents. She was not aware of any one from the area office being assigned to assist Black students who were having disciplinary problems.

In her own experience, no one came forward to assist her with her problems of keeping Jeffery in school. Her attempts to get help from the administration failed.

Although the non-compliance finding against the district threatened the award of Title VII funds and the district is still operating under the waiver, Ms. Pittman has no recollection of discussion of the percentages of Black students suspended and/or expelled at the Title VII committee meetings. Following the finding of non-compliance two years ago she had requested information on individual schools so those schools could be watched to see if there are any changes, but this information was never received.

Although there was some discussion of reasons for suspension at various schools at a Discipline Workshop held by the district and others, she saw nothing that indicated the percentage of Blacks being disciplined as compared to whites and no particular discussion of dealing with the discipline problem of Black students.

Letters to the Editor

To the Editor:

It is good that Newman quit the School Board. Now, if Blanchard would leave, we could get down to some real negotiations! How can we reconcile equality when the deck is stacked with people who don't or who are against equal treatment! Everyone knows or should know that there is no equality in the whole system. In over 400 years we are still without

representation. We all need to look at each other as human beings, not as white, Black, etc. God didn't use definitions. You can't find it in the Bible. He said, "Go ye in all nations!" So, let's get on with getting along with each other and do unto others as we would like others to do unto us.

The same goes for the nation and the world. How can we reconcile having so much while some nations

are starving. There is so much that needs to be done right here. There is something awfully wrong when some groups have everything and others nothing! So, let's start with the children and teach them that they are their brothers keeper. Unless we do these things we are denying them the education that they so desperately need for a full life and happiness!

Reuben A. Lindley

Park change brings concern

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product as equal, but neither she nor Mrs. Duwan were invited to participate on that committee.

Mrs. Johnson said the City did not notify them that there had been a change and has never advised them of the specifications of the equipment purchased on the differences between it and what had originally been planned.

Wildwood Playgrounds claims that the City accepted equipment with: smaller platforms, lower rails, narrower horizontal bars, shorter bridges, no long slides, and a wood preservative treatment that violates American Wood Preservers Association standards.

Wildwood platforms are 16 or 32 foot square platforms, whereas the Timber Form equipment has a series of 12 square foot platforms. Wildwood contends that the longer platform is safer for more passive children and that it is safer to leave a slide from a large platform than from a small one.

Wildwood's rails are 2 foot 9 inches or 3 foot 3 inches above the deck while Timberform's are 2 foot or 2 foot 3 inches off the deck, a difference of 30 per cent. They maintain that it is easier for a child to fall off a deck with lower rails and that at six

or 8 foot off the ground that is a real danger.

They state that Timberform's horizontal rails are 25 per cent narrower and that the suspension bridge is 15-20 per cent shorter. Also the Timberform bridge does not have rubber spaces between the planks as specified.

Mrs. Johnson states that she has no preference between the companies or the contractors, but believes the City should provide assurances of the equipments' safety. A savings of \$550 is not worth endangering a child's safety. "Once the equipment is installed it will probably have to stay. We would like to have the safety problem solved before a child is injured. It is too late then."

Another point at issue is preservation of the wood structures. Columbia Cascade changed its wood treatment process three years ago to meet non-toxic requirements and the new process is not approved by the Society of American Wood Preservers, Inc. It also does not appear to meet U.S. Department of Agriculture standards. The company guarantees the product and estimates a 20 year life expectancy, but since they began production eleven years ago and changed the process three years ago there is no achievement

record. They state that they have received no complaints of deterioration.

Citizens also fear that the equipment will not last. Similar equipment in Irving Park is deteriorating, but the City does not know what preservation process was used.

Suspensions

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Suspension records show the following percentages of minority students suspended: Atkinson 15.6; Boise 4.2; Brooklyn 5.5; Buckman 1.9; Creston 2.7; Glencoe 15.8; Grout 4.6; Lane 10.0; Mt. Tabor 10.1; Normandale 6.2; Sabin 1.7; Woodstock 37.9; Applegate 1.4; Beach 7.0; Capitol Hill 1.8; Chapman 6.0; Chief Joseph 5.4; Clarendon 2.3; George 1.2; Gray 4.1; Hayhurst 40.2; James John 19.4; Multnomah 38.5; Ockley Green 17.4; Peninsula 9.6; Sitton 2.0; Faubion 7.7.

Glenhaven 13.1; Gregory Heights 5.1; Kelly .2; Lent 2.1; Marysville 1.5; Rice 2.8; Rigler 3.0; Rose City Park 7.0; Scott 6.2; Vernon 8.3; Whitman 1.9; Woodlawn 19.0.

Suspension records for 1978-1979 school year are currently being completed.



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Thoughts on the problem

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educators. This means that in an equitable and just manner they will offer education that motivates children to learn and stimulates their interest in scholastic achievement. The cultural and intellectual backgrounds of Black children are to be viewed as areas to be improved and enriched and not to further establish notions of academic unreadiness. Teacher negligence and incompetence should not be overlooked or excused. The fact that the Black population must be especially concerned about such matters is a galling example of the racist contempt and snobbery that prevails at the highest administrative level of this school system.

There is another dimension to the educational debacle which confronts School District I. It has to do with the unembellished disclosures of authority and leadership figures consistently acting out highly visible roles as racists over a long time span. Not one criticism of this nature is even forthcoming from any of their friends, associates, colleagues, or adversaries who are presented with evidence of these transgressions. The responses to criticism are always coached in language that directs attention to errors in judgement, a lack of experience, or a poor understanding of the issues rather than an acknowledgement that racism was

being exercised. When Blacks assign these displays of racism and the racists the labels that are warranted by evidence they are invariably differed with by other whites.

Sophistication in the art of administering racist education undoubtedly will be a prime requirement when a new school superintendent for School District I is selected. Because the current superintendent's preparation in this area is below average gross mistakes were easily detected. The social and political perceptions of Black analysts have reached an extraordinary level of accuracy. They are exceedingly skillful

at recognizing and categorizing white racists and their brands of racism, functional or pathological, overt or concealed. Black development in this area is adequate to meet the challenges that will arise from innovations and techniques developed to keep racism education in operation. Increases in racist sophistication, the same as in all other endeavors, is subject to the law of diminishing returns.

One more point, as white racism becomes more easily exposed the more difficult it is to find 'Toms' to prop it up.

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