

Parents, community determine boycott fate

The Black United Front will present the desegregation policies adopted by the School Board to the community Thursday evening to determine whether the planned boycott of the public schools will be cancelled or postponed, or if it should go as scheduled. The boycott was planned as a protest against the school district's racist desegregation practices.

In spite of opposition from Superintendent Robert Blanchard, the School Board moved to meet most of the BUF demands. Blanchard told the Board that the short term proposals to return Black children to neighborhood schools

"can cause resegregation of several Albina schools which will make much more difficult the accomplishment of the goals of integration addressed by the long-term recommendations." He warned that "charting new policy directions in this manner" (under threat of boycott) "may prove to be precarious."

Ronnie Herndon, co-chairman of BUF, told the *Observer*. "For the first time the School Board has grappled with decisions to insure that Black citizens enjoy the same rights as other citizens. The primary reason this is happening is because of the unity Black people have demon-

strated. I am hoping the Board will make decisions that will begin to give Black people the privileges that other parents enjoy in the Portland school system, the privilege of choice, and that they can create quality education for Black children.

"I am disappointed with Dr. Blanchard's statement Monday which indicated to me that he would prefer that the Black community's choices be limited. Apparently he still feels that to give choices to the Black community somehow would be viewed as illegal. I am disappointed that his view of citizenship is that one community can have choices available while another's choices are

limited. "I have serious question whether he can carry out the new policies, which apparently run counter to his philosophy of what quality education should be for Black children, in the same spirit in which they were developed."

Board Chairman Frank McNamara said, following the adoption of the policies, that although they were passed in response to the BUF demands the policies are in the best interest of the District in the long term. Admitting some element of personal prejudice, he said he is sorry that some of his statements offended people, especially those

referring to the reluctance of whites to bus their children. He credited Ronnie Herndon with pointing out some of the institutional racism in his own beliefs and pledged to try "to make changes so that the destructive effects of inbred prejudice can be changed."

Herb Cawthorne told the *Observer* that he is generally pleased with the policies and looks forward to the development of the long term plan. "As everyone knows, my struggle with this problem goes back a long way and I believe that the Board has demonstrated a commitment in the short run to provide equal choices and in the long run to redesign the

desegregation program in a comprehensive manner.

"This is for the most part what we have been asking for. It is a new Board; there is no doubt about that. The first major action of this new Board has been to alter its approach to desegregation.

"The Black community should be proud of what it has done on behalf of Black children. If we had not stood together, we could not have made this progress."

The Board also voted to send the BUF a letter thanking it for bringing the destructive aspects of the desegregation program to its attention.

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Late night School Board meeting took its toll as Board members struggled until 4:00 a.m. to meet Black United Front demands. James Loving took advantage of extended discussions of proper wording to take a short nap.

Freedom of choice

New policy allows Black student return

The Portland School Board agreed Tuesday night, after fourteen hours of deliberation, to prepare a comprehensive desegregation plan by January 31st, to be implemented in the fall of 1980. Short term policies to be in effect this school year were also adopted.

The major effect of the short term policies is to allow each Albina area youngster to attend his neighborhood school if that is his parents choice. Children who have been transferred out for desegregation purposes can be returned to the schools in their attendance areas.

Children who live in attendance areas where their grades no longer exist can attend nearby middle schools, if they are in the sixth, seventh or eighth grades, or can attend nearby elementary schools.

Children from Eliot who are in the fourth grade and Humboldt students who are in the third grade will be provided classes at those schools.

The only stipulation is that no additional school will be allowed to

exceed 50 per cent minority enrollment.

All children in the Albina area who are administrative transfer students, or who are eligible to be administrative transfer students, may continue in the school of their choice. New school assignments might be for this year only, depending on the alignment of schools in the new comprehensive plan.

To enable parents to make choices, full information on the policies and on the various schools is available at the administration office.

Transportation will be provided to students who attend school outside their own attendance area or who live one or more miles from school. All children can be picked up at their neighborhood school and shelter and supervision will be provided. As in previous years, additional pick up points are available but no supervision will be provided.

Although a specific cut-off date might be designated, it is anticipated

that changes in school assignments can be made until approximately October 1st.

The short term policy includes:

The district will establish a fourth grade class at Eliot and a third grade class at Humboldt, thus giving the parent of resident students in those attendance areas the option to remain in or return to their neighborhood school. It will provide to fifth grade students resident at Eliot and fourth and fifth grade students resident at Humboldt the option to attend a nearby school.

Notices to parents will be forwarded immediately by district staff. The district will move immediately to make appropriate staffing and space arrangements. The superintendent may provide time limits for the exercise of these options created by this resolution. The options provided above will be made available in such a way that no new "racially isolated" (over 50% minority) school will be created.

The district will immediately

notify all parents of children in the Administrative Transfer Program of the board's long-established policy that gives any child the right to return to the neighborhood primary, middle, or high school.

This notification shall be given in a clear but neutral manner so as not to advocate withdrawal from or continuance in the Administrative Transfer Program. At Jefferson, the district will aggressively enforce the requirement that white students who under existing policies should attend Jefferson do attend Jefferson.

(Please turn to page 2 col. 4)

A benefit showing of the film *River Niger* will be held at Clinton Street Theater on September 5th at 9:00 p.m. The feature, starring James Earl Jones, Cicely Tyson and Lou Gossett, will be preceded at 7:00 by *Bingo Long*. The Clinton Street Theater is located at 26th and S.E. Clinton (238-8899). Donation \$1.50.

Racial discrimination brings life-long effects

Kenneth Henson, a man who has spent most of his life in the service of his country, finds himself in the same position as many of the nation's older Black citizens—relegated to early retirement at minimal benefits because of past discrimination.

Henson, who has sought his retirement benefits since 1968, finally filed a suit in U.S. District Court, but the suit was dismissed by Judge James

M. Burns because it was not filed within the statutes of limitations.

He blames many of the misfortunes that have befallen him since he left the Bonneville Power Administration in 1927—including the loss of his career and income, deteriorating health and the suicides of his wife and son—on alleged discrimination by that agency.

Henson states that his entire life has been moved by racial discrimination. After high school, he wanted to be a doctor but could not save the

money to go to college from his railroad wages. In 1942 he joined the Army with the understanding that he would serve in the medical corps but was assigned to a labor battalion with the Signal Corps.

Serving in Burma he witnessed firsthand the favored treatment provided white workers in the areas of health care, rest, food and safety. As a result of tropical diseases and deterioration of high school knee injuries, he was honorably discharged. After considerable time in the

Veterans Administration Hospital in Minnesota, he enrolled in pre-med under the GI Bill. Due to problems with his health he had to withdraw from school.

In 1947, Henson moved to Portland, obtained a position as a clinical lab technician at the Veterans Administration Outpatient Clinic and attended night classes through the University of Oregon. By 1952 he had become a registered lab technologist. Henson says he again was (Please turn to page 6 column 1)

Some Thoughts on the Problem

by W.H. McClendon

"We are much more wary of the system than most whites are. We have, after all, been squelched by it. We have, after all, been denied its many benefits. We have centuries of distrust to unlearn, and we are not likely to forget easily or quickly."

—Sterling Tucker, 1969

Part VII

The dominant population's politicians and public authority figures here have erected strong barriers (real and artificial) to prevent the appearance of any valid content in institutional settings of Black life, experience and culture. The Portland Public School system is no exception. Consequently, one of the major thrusts for the Black United Front is to assure that the thought processes of teachers (Blacks and others) will be opened up to study and interpret a heretofore obscured dynamic intellectual phenomena.

America is comprised of several non-dominant ethnic populations each of which has a heritage, history and culture that is the unerasable foundation of their respective social systems and the basis which allows for selfhood to be preserved. The truth of this is irrefutable.

There is at this very moment no widespread acceptance of Black studies and in most instances its presence is indicative of tokenism and/or an example of repressive tolerance. The battle for social equality, political freedom, economic justice, academic accessibility and unbiased legal structures represent an outright war that has

been in some form waged by Blacks against whites for all of this nation's existence. Therefore the major task Blacks must carry out to counteract the ravages of white mal-education is to remain unwavering in their insistence that the rights of Black people are not to be sublimated to, or buried in the quarrelsome rhetoric that is implicit in the term minority. For too long unthinking Blacks have allowed the semantics of white racism to misdirect their struggles.

Analysis

In America the theme of all social relationships is domination and there is at this time, as over the past 200 years, one dominant population, white. All other ethnic populations are non-dominant. The first step that Black people must take is to reform and restructure the education of their children to the degree that the degrading aspects of white education will be minimized and ultimately eliminated. This is a Black struggle and if it is won then all of the other non-dominant populations will find that their problems, in this respect, will have been solved by this irrevocable precedent.

The BUF has brought into focus some realities that have escaped acknowledgement for some time. Valid complaints effectively communicated publicly are capable of arousing the concern of a large portion of the general public and this can lead to the remedying of grossly immoral and unjust practices. The

BUF has provided an example of the power inherent in being Black and knowing what this means. It has proven viable. The role of collective leadership provided by an assortment of persons with various skills and expertise is now shown to be far more effective and rewarding than the worn out custom of having a "leader." The integrationist/assimilationist orientation of school board and administration advocates is understood by Black people to be an incorrect ideological direction. It is clear that the professed attempts at integration were smokescreens to hide the intellectual devastation of Black children that occurred because the real policy was sophisticated selective segregation.

The superintendent of PPS continues to defend racist education as though it is of superordinate value and graced with unquestionable social sanction. The Black population must remain alert to criticize and expose at every level those facets of public school operation that reflect racist policy. This administration requires close scrutiny and there are no justifications for the Black community to have confidence in any refined language that may be easily just a new wave of evasion and manipulation.

School Board members McNamara, Priestley, Buel and Cawthorne inspire confidence among a wide assortment of people in the Portland community. It is easy to recognize that they have integrity and will give serious and sincere attention. (Please turn to page 5 column 3)

Vaughn manages Benjamin Franklin branch

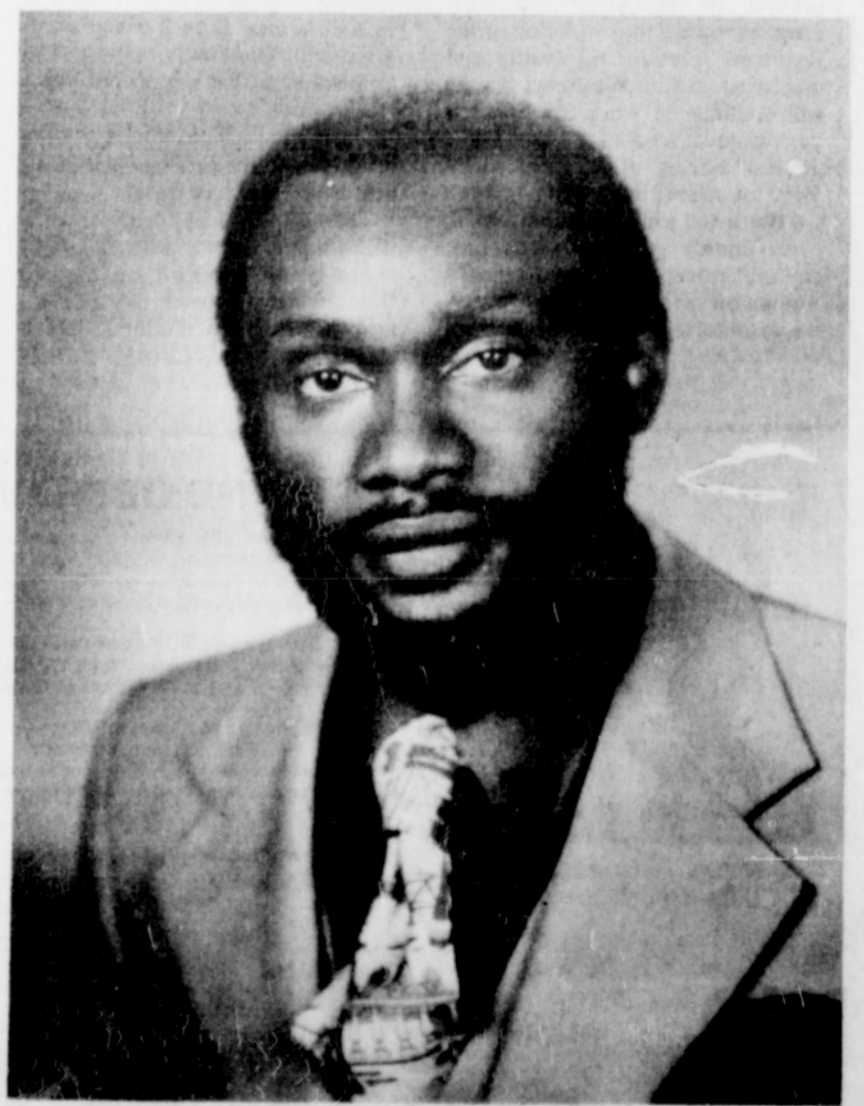
Gresham resident Noble L. Vaughn has been named branch manager at Benjamin Franklin Federal Savings & Loan Association's new Walnut Park office, according to Robert H. Hazen, association president.

The new office, scheduled to open in late September, will be located at 5775 N.E. Union Avenue, at the corner of N.E. Union Avenue and N.E. Jarrett Street.

Vaughn joined Benjamin Franklin in 1972 at the Stark Street office and worked in the loan and customer service departments. In November 1973 he transferred to the Hollywood office and was promoted to branch loan officer in January 1974. In March 1977 he joined the Hawthorne office as a loan officer where he worked prior to his most recent promotion to branch manager at Walnut Park. The new branch manager served as the Benjamin Franklin loaned-executive for the 1978 United Way campaign.

A resident of the Portland area since 1956, Vaughn was graduated from Jefferson High School in 1967. He attended Mt. Hood Community College and has completed courses through the Institute of Financial Education.

In his spare time, Vaughn, 31, enjoys working with children. He was an active participant in the Albertina Kerr Big Brother program for more than a year and has served as a baseball coach for the Meadowland Little League for two years.



NOBLE L. VAUGHN