

# EDITORIAL/OPINION

## Bass extradition shows insensitivity to racism

When Victor Atiyeh took office he was an unknown quantity in the Black community. He had never established any significant ties in this community and as a conservative Republican did not receive many votes from Black citizens.

There still has been little evidence that the Governor has given attention to the special problems that face Black and other minority citizens. But the Governor has made some effort to gain confidence of minorities, appointing Blacks to the Parole Board and to the office of Ombudsman and, after his first appointee resigned, to the Affirmation Action office.

What ground the Governor has gained will be lost if he persists in his plan to return Alabama prison escapee Carl Bass to that state. Regardless of promises made by his "brother governor" Fob James, once Bass is within the prison walls there is no reason to believe that he will be pro-

tected from racist guards and administrators. Will the element that punished him for a prior escape by allowing his legs to decay while denying adequate medical care treat this escape with any less vengeance?

Bass is the product of a racist community environment, a racist police and court system, a racist prison. Whether or not he is guilty—and he says he is not—does he deserve to be returned to the inhumanity of a prison in a state where even now the Klan is marching?

The Bass case does much to demonstrate our Governor's lack of knowledge, understanding and sensitivity to the unique position of Black people in American society and his inability to relate the laws, regulations and processes of government to their impact on the lives of individuals.

## Investigate controversial murder

For the last year a prisoner at Oregon State Penitentiary—Floyd Forsberg—has been attempting to get the authorities to believe that he committed a murder for which another man was convicted.

Forsberg has an extensive criminal record including bank robbery, narcotics and burglary. He also claims to have been an informer for the FBI providing information on his current and former gang members. He is fully capable of having committed the murder he is attempting to claim.

Forsberg says the local District Attorney's office has refused to fully investigate his story. Although DA Harl Haas says a thorough investigation was made, Forsberg wonders how that was done without talking to him and witnesses he says can verify his story, and without allowing him to reveal evidence he says will tie him to his accomplices.

Although we have no way of knowing whether Forsberg is guilty of the murder or whether Rod Addicks, the man convicted of the crime, is in-

nocent, thus far all the information provided to us by Forsberg about his other activities has been reliable and most is documented.

Considering the fact that a man who could be innocent is serving a life sentence for this crime it does seem that the utmost effort would have been made by now to determine whether Forsberg's claim is true. The fact that no one from the Multnomah County District Attorney's office has obtained his statement and that no grand jury has been called to investigate his story is incredible.

If the District Attorney's office still believes Rod Addicks to be guilty there should be no hesitation to attempt to disprove Forsberg's claim. There might be no way of proving whether he planned and committed the murder, but if his story was concocted in the prison yard as is claimed by Haas, it should be easily disproved.

Since Haas seems reluctant to pursue this case, Governor Atiyeh should ask Attorney General James Redden to conduct an investigation.

## Letters to the Editor

### Urban League investigating Grigsby charges

To the editor:

Your editorial of September 6th, "Everyone's Problem," carried an appropriate indictment of the Urban League and other organizations regarding the Kevin Grigsby incident.

The Urban League did get the apprenticeship. However, our responsibility does not stop there. In the case of Kevin Grigsby, the LEAP staff did follow through immediately to investigate the issue along with union officials. Several counseling

sessions were held with Grigsby, and since he does not want to go back to the Boardman site, we are working to locate another apprenticeship position for him. We are also working with the appropriate organizations regarding this specific incident to ensure against a repetition. This incident does point out a need to review, again, the procedure and manner in which we prepare clients for new job opportunities and in which we follow up with problems they are faced with.

The Urban League of Portland was founded to create a better climate of interracial understanding by improving the working conditions and opportunities for Blacks and eliminating discrimination and segregation. That goal is as important and relevant to our organization now as it was then.

Sincerely,  
Freddie Pettit  
Executive Director  
Urban League of Portland

### Audit Haas, not Corrections Division

To the editor:

Harl Haas, Multnomah County DA, asks for a performance audit of the Oregon Correctional Division. He seems to feel that there are too many escapes by men he has sent to prison.

One of the main reasons for escapes is the overcrowding of the Division's facilities. The Division would have a lot more room if Haas did not send so many men here for breaking into coke machines, or driving without a license.

The goal of imprisonment seems to be revenge. It seems that six months to a year in the county jail would satisfy all the requirements illegal drivers, i.e., the illegal driver would lose his job, most of his friends, possibly his wife, and the illegal driver would be permanently scarred for life, not only by his criminal record but also by being subjected to the Multnomah County Jail.

It has been estimated by know-

ledgeable experts that there are almost as many rapes and assaults happening inside this jail controlled by employees of Multnomah County as are happening on the streets of Portland. Rocky Butte, as this jail is commonly referred to, is one of the most notorious county jails in the nation. The newspaper coverage of abuses at Rocky Butte has often surpassed the coverage of both state prisons.

A performance audit of Harl Haas, his office, the Multnomah County Jail, might be much more productive in understanding the escapes of Oregon's Corrections Division.

The audit might show conclusively that: 1) hundreds of prisoners suffering severe psychological problems are being sent to O.S.P. and released in much worse shape years later to the streets of Portland; 2) O.S.P. is overcrowded because too many coke machine bandits, bicycle thieves, empty

warehouse burglars and illegal drivers are being sent here. The audit might show that Haas appears more interested in revenge by imprisonment where restitution could have been made, than he is on working on the problems that generate crime. (One of the biggest problems in the state is in his county: it's called Rocky Butte).

The audit might show that while aspiring politicians are claiming there is a lessening crime rate in county or state, more people are being imprisoned than ever before, and this is straining the state's facilities until they are bursting at the seams. The audit might also show that some personnel working for Multnomah County have been accused of worse crimes than the men imprisoned by Multnomah County. And the only reason they occurred is that there was not a thorough performance audit.

Sincerely,  
Donald Danford



## NBC TV in center of African storm

by N. Fungai Kumbula

Last March I was livid with rage when I learned of local boxer Mike Colbert's planned trip to South Africa to fight an Afrikaner named Mike Weir, or was it Charles? I went to town denouncing the trip and explaining why I opposed it. Only a few short months later, I again hit the roof when I heard of the (white South African) Kallie Knoetze-Bill Sharkey (American) fight in Miami. Then I took one Leon Spinks to task for agreeing to fight and subsequently losing to another Afrikaner, Gerrie Coetzee in Monte Carlo. This paved the way for Coetzee to take a crack at the WBC version of the world heavyweight championship. That fight is scheduled to take place in Pretoria, South Africa next month.

The Knoetze-Sharkey, Spinks-Coetzee and the John Tate-Knoetze fight(s) which took place in Bophutswana, one of the "homelands" in South Africa were all part of a series of elimination bouts to determine the successor to Muhammad Ali's title now that the People's Champ has finally retired. Against the advice of his brothers and sisters both here and in Africa, Tate went ahead and fought Knoetze. Some misguided fool at JET exercising abysmally poor judgment, advertised the fight in the TELEVISION section of JET.

In the past several months, Tate has shown a lot of promise in the pugilistic world, working his way to the point now where, if he beats Coetzee next month, he will be the next WBC heavyweight champion. In the cerebral department, however, he has shown a disturbingly high degree of deficiency. It's understandable he wants to be the new champ and earn the big bucks and accolades that come with the title but, is that reason enough to embrace, shuffle and grin at the number one enemy of Black folk anywhere on this planet? Ali was offered \$50 million to stage a number of exhibition fights in South Africa but, after talking to the Africans and other Americans, Black and white, who are opposed to apartheid, he turned it down. Besides, there are other alternatives for Tate to have gotten to that heavyweight championship.

Reverend Jesse Jackson who headed a campaign to stop the Knoetze-Sharkey fight and has, lately, been in the forefront of cutting off sport contacts with South Africa, is again trying to get the Tate-Coetzee fight stopped. So far, Tate has turned a deaf ear and is already in South Africa training for the fight. This fight promises to give the apartheid regime the most widespread favorable publicity to date. Bob Arum, who is promoting the fight and who has become the top promoter of South African boxers, is bragging about the fact that the boxing arena will be "integrated" for this fight. That is what the world press will zero in on: Blacks and whites sitting shoulder to shoulder yelling at the fighters, urging them on. The cameras will never make the

mistake of stumbling on the ghettos of Soweto, Sophiatown, Dube or Alexandria where the true Africa is.

The cameras will never focus on the poverty prevalent in the "homelands" in sharp contrast to the almost sinful affluence evident everywhere in the white suburbs. No one will get to see the Black kids running around half naked with distended bellies and cracked lips, victims of kwashiorkor (a nutrition deficiency disease). If the cameras wander at all, they will be allowed to wander in the right direction, to show one affluent Black businessman or one Black apprentice or one Black college student. And this one "prominent" Black would be used to show the "progress" that Blacks have made. Thanks to our "brother" John Tate and his "boss" Bob Arum, the world will get to see a very 'beautiful South Africa, filled with the happiest' Blacks in the whole wide world. With friends like this, who needs enemies?

NBC Television has expressed an interest in televising this fight via satellite from Pretoria so you too might get to see "beautiful" South Africa. Already a lot of groups and individuals have started to bombard NBC telling them not to televise this nefarious fight. Probably the largest and most vocal as well as the most influential group to contact NBC and tell them to 'forget about showing the fight or face the consequences' is the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa, an umbrella organization governing virtually all sport in Africa. With a membership in excess of 40 countries, it boasts representation of over 300,000,000 people. It was the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa that was responsible for the very successful African boycott of the 1976 Montreal Olympics.

At that time, the controversy was over Canada's (the host nation) refusal to bar New Zealand from the Olympics. New Zealand had incurred Africa's righteous wrath by maintaining rugby ties with South Africa. For a number of years, the African sport governing body had been pressuring countries around the world to cut off all sports ties with the apartheid regime until such a time as all people in South Africa have an equal say in the running of their government. This pressure had resulted in the expulsion of South Africa from most international sport governing bodies such as FIFA, the International Football Federation that oversees the World Cup (soccer) matches, and the International Olympic Committee that is in charge of the Olympics.

The Supreme Council for Sport in Africa had approached New Zealand several times urging her to terminate her rugby matches with South Africa but New Zealand had adamantly refused. Come the '76 Olympics, the Council approached Canada and told her that if New Zealand participated, all African countries would withdraw. Canada hedged and hawed but did not expel New Zealand so the Africans walked on the

first day of competition. This was a bitter blow and a major setback to the Olympic contests because, in withdrawing, the Africans removed, among others, Filbert Bayi, the Tanzani "miracle miler", John Akii-Bua, the world record holder of the 400 meter high hurdles, the Kenyans, Kip Keino, steeplechase, Henry Rono and Samson Kimombwa 800 meters and Miru Yifta, Ethiopia's ageless steeplechase wonder. All of these athletes were expected to provide most of the excitement and their non-participation robbed the Olympics of a great deal of prestige. A lot of questions which sports buffs had been looking to the Olympics for answers were never answered and never will be.

Some people were none too happy with this approach used by the Africans and charged that 'sport and politics should not mix.' I agree; it would be nice to divorce sport and politics if it could be done but, it cannot. If you watched the Olympic Games or any other international meet (or even college football and pro football) you will no doubt have heard the national anthem of the winners being played. Now, how much more political can you get? Why play the national anthem of France or Malaysia? Why not play the winning athlete's favorite tune, like "Good Times" or "No Woman No Cry." Why don't the athletes come in simply as Maria Perez or Delwyn Madkins and not Maria Perez of Venezuela and Delwyn Madkins from the USA? And why was it necessary to keep harping on the fact that the Soviet Union had won 50 gold medals and the US 33? Remove the flags, the national anthems, the country of origin and the Olympics and all sport can be made apolitical. Right now, a group of people are planning to demonstrate at the Moscow Olympics against the jailing of Soviet Jewish dissidents. Is that any different than the action taken by the African sports body?

The Supreme Council for Sport in Africa has warned NBC which will be televising the 1980 Olympics from Moscow that, if they go ahead and televise the Tate-Coetzee fight, then the African athletes will refuse to grant NBC correspondents any interviews at all. This would put a big hole in NBC's Olympic coverage. If NBC heeds the African warning and withdraws its offer, that would lessen the impact of this latest sneaky South African propaganda scheme. On the other hand, if NBC remains hard-headed and shows the fight anyway, there will be a big showdown in Moscow. Chances are the Africans would solicit the support of other Third World and sympathetic Western countries.

If we cannot get through to Tate and Arum, the next best thing is to make sure that their 'victory' turns to ashes; that they not be allowed to reap any rewards from this act of treason against all our brothers and sisters. The stakes are getting higher and we're playing for keeps because we are playing for survival.

## Teacher rep disputes history value

(Continued from page 1 Column 4) the ill-housed. On the other hand, it could well happen that the guilty party in order to lighten his uncomfortable moral burden, will finally begin to rationalize his sins and affirm them as virtues.

Ms. Miller asked that a system be devised to include from the requirement teachers who are proficient in Black History and that teacher representatives be involved in all negotiations on this policy.

School Board member Herb Cawthorne expressed his astonishment that a representative of a major professional organization could be opposed to the "inclusion of ethnic cultures in the curriculum and the mandatory development of teacher sensitivities in this area.

He said, "Since its earliest beginnings, the American public school system has been deeply committed to the maintenance of racial and ethnic barriers.

"When a Board of Education moves to communicate its educational imperatives that every child receive the most sensitive education possible, which may include a special focus to develop the staff ex-

pertise necessary to produce on that commitment, it hardly seems productive that professional organizations of teachers should speak in a way that maintains the wrong perspectives of racial order."

The intent of the Board, he said, is to positively recognize the values, the experiences, the realities of social and political life in America. In noticing these realities, the Board has wisely chosen to demand that its teachers understand the children to whom it impacts the values and information of education.

Cawthorne quoted Earl Conrad's "The Invention of the Negro": "Negroes are now viewed variously as criminals, cowards, comics, congenial rebels, Uncle Toms. Whites believed that blacks had special animal faculties, more rhythm, for example, than white people. They could sing and dance better because these were primitive gifts. Most of these ideas sprang directly from professional racists. Others were invented by the press.

"The final specific task is for the white citizen to undo his diabolical inventive genius, to transcend an unconscionable tradition."

The only way to change old attitudes, Cawthorne explained, is to

challenge them, and ways to challenge them is through requiring teachers to learn Black history and culture, and through a commitment of the administration and Board to demand changes in perspectives that will allow children to receive better education.

"This better education comes when the stereotypes, the false images, the negative perceptions, the debilitating characterizations of Black people are eliminated.

"The Black community has asked for a positive reflection of its cultural identity; no less than we would want for every child throughout the district.

"The teachers of this district will have to accept a much stronger responsibility to carry out the task of education. The requirements of the Board will regard to the desegregation program it intends to develop is a reflection of that need. It seems appropriate, and beneficial, that teachers be exposed to information, perspectives, world views, cultural identities, that will enhance their capacities to communicate with young children. This needs to be uniquely focused upon in working with Black children or other ethnic groups."

## PORTLAND OBSERVER

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