

Black United Front opposes desegregation plans

The Black United Front leadership has rejected the School Board's school desegregation plans and reiterated its position that Superintendent Robert Blanchard resign.

Stating that the Board's proposals were designed by Dr. Blanchard who "was primarily responsible for the abusive busing plan that destructively bussed Black children all over Portland", BUF co-chairman Ronnie Herndon said his group does not want the Superintendent to be

responsible for the planning and implementation of a new desegregation plan.

"We can find no acceptable reason why the School Board has allowed Dr. Blanchard to remain as superintendent. Dr. Blanchard was one of those primarily responsible for the creation of the abusive plan that destructively bussed and scattered Black children all over Portland. He has been in charge of the system that has routinely expelled

and suspended Black children in disproportionately high numbers. We feel that the planning of our children's future and the implementation of that plan should not be shaped in any way by the man who has caused so much suffering for our children and our community."

"They are still recruiting students out; Blanchard has not aggressively tried to hire Black teachers and administrators; he knows Black achievement is below the district

norm and has taken no aggressive steps to change this."

Reverend John Jackson explained his belief that a voluntary plan will not be effective. "It hasn't worked with us. They had to remove the upper grades and force the students out. I doubt that many parents from the West Side will want to send their children here. It disturbs me that when they talk about a school in the community, they talk about a 'magnet school'. It's like they want

to give the impression that it is something different; they are trying to induce people to come."

Jackson also discussed the scattering issue. "The school district has scattered and shattered the Black community. Through history Blacks have had to come together and build institutions like the church and social organizations to provide support and a sense of community. We've had to do this to survive."

"Building these support groups is

dependent on a community base. The school district has shattered that community base by scattering our children until they don't know each other and have no sense of community. It is destroying us and our institutions."

Regarding the need for Dr. Blanchard to leave, Jackson said, "The Board has the responsibility for designing a good plan. We want to place this responsibility on the board (Please turn to page 3 col. 2)

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Board discusses desegregation

The first reaction of the Black community to the School Board's proposed desegregation plans was not favorable.

The proposed plans are based on volunteerism, with minor boundary changes.

Board member Herb Cawthorne told the public that "Portland has the opportunity to decide the parameters of the plan. We can discuss the ways that we, as a community, can deal with the problem. The problem is real."

Cawthorne explained that much of the negative feeling against "voluntary desegregation" was that what was previously called voluntary was not voluntary for Black children whose grades had been removed or for whom there was no space to return to the neighborhood school. The new plan would provide a choice for every parent -- the choice to attend school in the neighborhood or to transfer out.

The proposed plans rely heavily on recruitment of Black students to attend white schools and on recruitment of white students to attend majority Black schools. If recruitment of whites is successful, even more Blacks will be required to leave to make room for them. One of the primary complaints of Black parents has been of pressure to transfer and of the inability of the child to return because no space existed for them.

Vesia Loving, who has been an active member of the Community Coalition for School Integration and the Black United Front, told the Board, "I'm not pleased with any of it. To me it's the same old garbage wrapped in a new package." Stating that Portland has deprived and isolated Blacks and the school district has done no better, Ms. Loving said of the voluntary plan,

"Either you want us to desegregate or you don't. Stop pretending . . ." The same people who have been running it for 14 years "are still calling the shots from the grandstand."

Although the plans would establish a magnet middle school at Boise or Eliot school, and would transfer all or part of the Columbia/Whiteaker Middle School to the Adams High School building, no provision is made for the desegregation of the remaining six Albina elementary schools other than the goodwill of those whites who would choose to send their children into the schools. This is the same criticism that the NAACP found with the "Schools for the Seventies" plan as first presented by Dr. Blanchard. That plan converted all Albina schools to Early Childhood Centers, sending older students out of the neighborhood for the purpose of desegregation, but left the elementary schools segregated.

School Board member Steve Buel asked what has changed that would make the Board believe that a voluntary plan would work when it has not in the past. "What has changed to make this voluntary plan successful when we have operated a voluntary, plus a non-voluntary, plan and it didn't create success? What is inherent that would make the committee think that one of these can be successful?" Also, he explained, this year after parents were given a real choice over 380 students returned to the neighborhood schools and "we are behind where we were because now it is voluntary."

Buel said he saw nothing in the plan or "down the road" to change the quality of education offered in "schools notorious for their educational inferiority". He was

skeptical about the willingness of white parents to send their children to a school that was at the lower echelon academically just because it is a multi-racial school.

Cawthorne responded that he has faith that many whites would send their children to King if the program were good, because they would chose an multi-racial experience.

Wally Priestley said volunteerism might be seen as politically appealing -- that it is a political and not an educational concept. He would prefer that the subject be dealt with through educational principles. He agrees with the legitimate demands of the Coalition and the Black United Front to establish a middle school in Albina, but does not like a magnet school. He prefers that white children be assigned to the middle school. Each child should be assigned an elementary school, a middle school and a high school and students should go together through that progression.

Board member Bill Scott said the problem of how to get people to volunteer is a question that must be answered before the Board commits itself to a voluntary plan. Dr. Blanchard took exception to Buel's statement that Albina schools offer inferior educational programs. He said in those schools, "even in Boise", there are a great many students and parents who appreciate the dedicated staff and that quality education is provided.

Chairman Frank McNamara, stating, "There is a certain amount of rhetoric and jingoism in the discussion that disturbs me", said it is easy for other board members to make critical comments. It is easy to say that what we want in front of every effort is improvement in (Please turn to page 2 col. 1)



Michael Grice, Portland teacher, opposes school board plan to close Adam High School. (Photo: Richard Brown)

Governor launches action initiative

Governor Atiyeh announced Tuesday a new affirmative action plan for the State of Oregon. In his Executive Order No. EO-79-22, the Governor said, "The public policy of Oregon is that state government shall be a leader among employing entities within the state in providing to its citizens and employees, through a program of affirmative action, fair and equal opportunities for employment and advancement . . ."

Kay Toran, Affirmative Action Director for the State, explained that under the old plan agencies were encouraged to hire minorities and women but there were no specific goals and guidelines.

The new plan requires that each

agency adopt an affirmative action plan that will include specific goals, an organizational chart and statement of responsibility, and a statistical analysis of the work force. These plans will be reviewed and the programs evaluated regularly by the Affirmative Action Office.

The goal is for affirmative action to be implemented in each state agency and that "the spirit and letter of EEO be adhered to and complied with by all officers of State agencies and any employing units."

Administrators, managers, supervisors and personnel officers will be evaluated on affirmative action performance and a system will be developed to monitor agencies on which

numerous complaints are received. Affirmative action has been a policy in the past. Governor Atiyeh hopes to implement it at all levels.

OABA meets

The Oregon Assembly for Black Affairs will hold its annual membership meeting to report on the status of the corporation and to elect officers and chairpersons of standing committees.

Persons interested in seeking positions should contact the nominating committee at Box 12485, Salem 97309 before December 5th.

The meeting will be held December 8th at 10:00 a.m. at teh Holiday Inn at Wilsonville, on Interstate-5.

Portland youth pursues actor's dream



Barry Organ, a native Portlander, looks forward to an acting career.

By Stephanie L. Michael

The ambition of being an actor may have started as a fourth grader's dream for Barry Organ. But the 25-year-old claims only a tremendous amount of work, faith and more work will bring his goal into realism.

Organ, a Portland native has been living in Los Angeles, trying to promote his acting career without a manager. He says acting has always been in his blood. The young actor says his mother and sister have both been active in the entertainment field.

Over several years, in trying to show his artistic talents, Organ has managed to get a majority of small roles. In the MGM film production "Kansas City Bombers," he portrayed one of the skateboys. In several television programs, "Good Times" and the "Nancy Walker Show," Organ played a small role character. He has also performed in some of the nightclub circuit.

Recently, actor, comedian and social activist Richard Pryor, produced his own film production. The film "Family Dream," will be released sometime in the spring of 1980. Barry Organ has a small role in this movie, filmed in the state of Washington.

"I have a small role in this film where I will be walking down the street with a lady. While walking down the street, Richard comes out of a tavern talking with a group of kids. I'll be wearing a blue hat and red jacket."

It's tough for us young Black actors to get a break. There aren't that many Black films being made let

alone productions with Black actors being produced. Most of the time productions are looking for those older actors with names and agents. Sidney Poitier and Richard Pryor are just now getting into writing and producing their own film productions. Lets face it, most white producers are not doing Black films. They are not Black, and they really don't know anything about Blacks and don't care. Most supposed Black shows have white writers trying to write Black for Black actors. Richard Pryor helps as many as he can. He tries to find good Black actors and actresses and put them into work. He's got alot of contracts coming up in the future. But the choosing of a cast, directors, extras and so on, is not really up to him."

Over the years the themes of Black films and television shows have developed in plot and images. Organ says Black actors and actresses are trying to bring about a change in the industry. He says film stars are trying to show more positive approaches concerning Black people and their lives.

Organ says, "The true realism about Black people should have been shown a long time ago. Blacks don't want superfluous and all those crazy types of movies. But I must say some of those types of flicks are still around unfortunately. Black performers want to get rid of those types of movies because it stereotypes them into a specific role. White producers feel if they play that particular role and do it well, that's the only type of role they can play. Any Black actor (Please turn to page 12 Col 1)



Little Ifetayo Moore looks at a display of art from Cameroon at the Portland Art Museum. (Photo: Richard Brown)