

# EDITORIAL/OPINION

## Military spending eliminates jobs

For many years Americans have been brainwashed to believe that the huge defense budget was necessary to support the nation's economy. We were told that a cut-back on military spending would bring unemployment and economic disaster.

The Machinists Union, which would be affected as much as anyone by a drastic cut-back on military contracts, has found that the opposite is true. Far from aiding prosperity, excessive arms production weakens civilian industry and is a major cause of inflation and unemployment.

**Inflation:** The \$2 trillion expenditure on war over the last generation has sapped the strength of the economic system and crippled industry's ability to restrain price hikes. Productivity growth has been slowed and chronic inflation has resulted.

**The "Brain-Drain":** Forty percent or more of all scientists and engineers work on military-related projects, drawing them away from civilian research and production.

**Unemployment:** The diversion of capital and technology has eroded the American industrial competitiveness and weakened our international trade position. Countries not burdened by huge military spending are able to penetrate US markets, thus eliminating American jobs.

**Fewer jobs per dollar:** Defense spending is one of the least labor intensive fields. Machinist Union studies show that as military spending increases, machinists lose jobs. Military spending increased 500 per cent between 1975 and 1978, but 12,000 machinist jobs were eliminated.

Over five million Americans have jobs directly related to military spending and some communities are completely dependent on the war industry. Because of this dependence, individual Senators and Congressmen seek more and more funds to continue and to increase war production. Fortunately Oregon is not in this dilemma. Any move to lower military spending will have to address the plight of these communities and help them convert to alternative uses of military facilities and to production of civilian products.

Senators McGovern, Mathias and others have introduced the Defense Economic Adjustment Act which will address these needs. If successful, this bill will eliminate dependence on excessive military spending and will enable the reallocation of some of the billion-dollar defense budget to much needed programs in health care, housing, education, employment and training, energy, mass transportation, environmental protection, etc., etc., etc., which are now denied because of "no available funds".



Please don't cry in my soup.

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

The Salvation Army Moore Street Community Center is located in the Albina Community as a public service to those who live nearby. We appreciate the support and attendance the children have given to our various program and we will continue to provide meaningful activities.

We feel that at this time it is necessary to remind all parents of our program hours. The center offers a full schedule of supervised activities for children ages 6-12 from 3 p.m. to 5:45 p.m., Monday through Friday. We are not equipped to open before 3 p.m., so please do not have your children dropped off earlier. Our program ends promptly at 5:45

p.m. All children under the age of 12 must be out of the center by 6 p.m. unless previous arrangements have been made with center personnel. We do not have adequate staff to safely supervise these children after 6 p.m. Thank-you for your cooperation in this matter.

Joyce Gonzalez  
Program Director

### PORTLAND OBSERVER

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## The process of desegregation

By Herb Cawthorne

The Board, last August, promised to develop a comprehensive plan on desegregation. The plan will, ultimately, include ways to better represent Black history and culture in the classroom; it will also include specific directions for the improvement and achievement in several schools. The Board will also make certain that the district progresses in its efforts to produce minority hiring gains. The plans before you now focus primarily on identification of facilities and the reorganization required to meet earlier commitments for middle schools. The following discusses the process, the details, and the flaws in these plans. Alternatives are also discussed. Please—read these plans as PRELIMINARY.

### THE PROCESS

Working under a very restrictive timeframe, the desegregation/integration committee's work cannot be taken as anything near a final product. The document here is not even representative of a committee consensus—we simply "agreed" to present these possibilities to the community for discussion. I have kept myself open for the possibility that our present thought will not work or will not be acceptable. The advantage of presenting material to the community is that more citizens will have the chance to respond, thus influencing the second draft in a substantial way.

### THE DETAILS

As you study the possibilities, I hope you will keep in mind these observations.

1. The word "voluntary" is used in regard to parents selecting to transfer their children to schools which the district seeks to integrate.

a. No student, Black or white, would have to transfer for reasons of poor program, irregular grade levels, or no space in the local school—I will not support a program with these features.

b. The success of the voluntary plan is rooted in parents making choices that place their children in integrated settings.

c. No one on the Board expects—or would tolerate—a situation in which the transfer volunteers were all

Black or all white. Before this process goes much further, the Board is obliged to demonstrate that this can be done.

2. In a voluntary system, the Board will be required to provide extraordinary leadership in the community and firm direction to the staff to bring about the desired number of students in the program.

3. Reorganization is proposed to meet the following objectives:

a. To create at least one middle school in the Albina community.

b. To correct deficiencies in school planning that left numerous Black children with no standard school assignments;

c. To enhance possibilities for choices to encourage voluntary transfers among Blacks and whites.

### THE FLAWS

The space problem is central: There cannot be choice if there is no room in the Albina schools. If we have to restrict the enrollment of whites transferring into the Albina schools in order to make space for resident students, then we are working against the cause of integration and, in effect, resegregating. On the other hand, if we have to recruit Blacks out of their resident schools—simply to lower the "magical" percentages—and make room for white students, this would be an extension of the inadequacies of the past program. I could not support this.

If the Black parent selects to transfer a child, the space must still be available to the local school in case the parent changes her mind at any time in the future. This exist for white parents who transfer their children. When the white parent leaves the neighborhood school should the child return. When a Black child transfers, the district tries to fill that space with a white child from outside the area to achieve a better balance racially. Later, if the Black child should want to come home, there may not be any room. In a voluntary program, every parent who wants a child to go to school in the neighborhood must be able to exercise that choice at any time. Since I am not certain this can

be done, I must inform you that I see this as a major flaw in these plans.

### THE ALTERNATIVES

Boundary changes have been used in this plan to make attendance patterns more consistent and to narrow populations at some schools to better accommodate the resident students. The flaws mentioned above could be taken care of with boundary changes.

I have presented the administration proposals for boundary changes and have asked for the numbers and racial percentages that would result from these changes. The goals should be schools with populations of between 35 and 65 percent minority. I believe boundary changes are worthy of the Board's review.

At this time, I do not believe Portland needs to solve its integration concern with an extensive mandatory transportation program. If it is to be voluntary, the Board should respect the right of parents to select the environment in which they would like to place their children. Our obligation, then, is to encourage the best quality education possible, while making available programs that foster integration as well. foster integration as well.

The policy regarding the early childhood education centers should guarantee space in the ECEC's for all children residing in the clusters resulting from the boundary changes. Essentially, we would have two ECEC magnet schools to provide for every child in the cluster. I believe this would be educationally advantageous and benefit those who are part of the boundary changes.

Whatever is done with regards to these changes, the schools will have to be excellent. We will have to bolster the teaching staff and the programs so that those schools involved in the desegregation program have exceptional resources and facilities and personnel.

The Board's desegregation/integration committee will hold meetings to hear comments from citizens before the next draft is presented to the entire Board for review. If you have ideas or concerns, please let me know.



## WHAT'S MY COLOR?

by N. Fungai Kumbula

"Last year, 150 Coloureds were reclassified as white; 10 whites became Coloured; six Indians became Malay; two Coloureds became Chinese; one Indian became white; one white became Malay; four Blacks became Indian; three whites became Chinese." Wait a minute. What's going on here?

If you are confused, do not panic: you are not the only one. Relax. The world has not quite gone crazy. The above quotation is a report on some of the rulings handed down by the South African Population Registration Board.

South Africa's notorious apartheid system restricts every South African to a particular racial category. That's where the Population Registration Board comes in. Once on has been classified as whatever race, one is confined to the limitations or privileges of that particular group unless one can successfully appeal to the PRB for reclassification. The white minority monopolizes all the privileges: they have the vote, control the army, police force, a navy, air force, the economy, the government, the judiciary, the civil service, educational system: in short, everything.

The Japanese who are considered "honorary whites" can enjoy most of the privileges reserved for the whites as long as they "behave". Next in line are the Chinese, Indians and Malays, lumped together as Asians. Below them are the Coloureds, people of mixed parentage. At the bottom of this heap are, of course, the majority Blacks. For anyone who has thought about it, classifying people into racial groups can be a very tricky business.

So what does the PRB use for determining who is what color? The usual: skin tone, facial features and the texture of one's hair. Now consider the case where one sister could come out very light while her brother could be real dark. The PRB simply classifies the sister white and the brother Black or Coloured! But, that's not the end of the story. Coloured and white cannot live under the same roof. So, who-

ever is the odd person out will have to find a foster home! Most are just abandoned.

Given the absurdity of this situation, it is no wonder the PRB is so busy. If you are classified Black when you should actually be Chinese, that deprives you of a few more privileges than you would otherwise be entitled to. That also takes you "out of your race". Further, since one cannot marry someone of a different color, if one falls in love with someone "outside one's race", one of the parties has to convert to the spouse-to-be's race! If you divorce and fall for someone of yet a different color, then you once again try to get the PRB to reclassify you accordingly. Are you still following?

The stories coming out of South Africa concerning some of the results of PRB rulings would be downright ridiculous if they were not so serious. Take the case of the sixty five year old woman who had been white for the first sixty years of her life. She contacted some disease that caused her skin to take on a darker shade. She was bounced off white buses, thrown out of white shopping areas and evicted from her home in the white suburb; this despite all the evidence she had to prove she had been white for six decades! She spent years petitioning the PRB and by the time she was finally cleared, she was so exhausted she died a few months later.

Then there was the celebrated case of Janet Laing, daughter of white parents who happened to be born with a

darker hue than anybody else in her family. In 1967 she was classified Coloured and consequently barred from all-white schools. After 15 months of appeals and careful scrutiny of family trees on both sides, she was finally reclassified white. By this time, however, she had become estranged from her family and, years later, she ran off with a Black man. Last year, she suddenly left him, disappearing with their three children.

A cornerstone of the "heartbreak laws" is the Mixed Marriages Act passed in 1949 and which prohibits marriage across the color line. "Violation" of this law can lead to quite a stiff prison term. Justification for this excessive bit of absurdity is the Afrikaner paranoia that intermarriage would lead to the "extinction of the white race". Convincedly overlooked, of course, is the fact that nowhere in the rest of Africa where whites continue to comprise a small minority has there been such a mad rush by the Africans to take white spouses. Nowhere in the whole world, for that matter, has a particular racial group been "married to extinction".

South Africa, therefore, remains the only country in the world where the citizens enjoy the dubious distinction of belonging to three, four, or maybe five different racial groups during a single lifetime. "Passing" has always been frowned upon in each and every society: many a mother in South Africa has known the heartache of "losing" a child who suddenly turns a different color for whatever reason. Your "heart-break laws" at work.

So, when you go to South Africa, which I sincerely hope you have the good sense not to do, stop by the Population Registration Board offices. You might be surprised to find that you have been living the "wrong" color all your life.

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