

# Stop work for Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday

The Black United Front and the Albina Ministerial Alliance are advising Black people to stay home from work on Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday, January 15th.

"Since national lawmakers and the State of Oregon cannot or refuse to honor Dr. King, the Albina Ministerial alliance and the Black United Front find it necessary for Black people to recognize our

leaders ourselves without the approval of elected officials." All who proval of elected officials," spokesmen from the organizations said.

All who are able are asked to take a vacation day or make other arrangements to honor Dr. King by recognizing his birthdate as a holiday from employment. In addition, the total community is asked

to join in a celebration of and reflection on Dr. King's life, on Tuesday, January 15th, at Mount Olivet Baptist Church, 116 N.E. Schuyler, at 7:30 p.m.

We believe there have been few Black Americans who have captured the minds and hearts of people worldwide as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. For many of us, Dr. King epitomized greatness which should

be understood and accepted by all of us in the United States. Periodically, tributes are paid to outstanding American citizens in the form of national, state or local holidays by symbolically saying, 'thank you', 'we remember you', 'we respect what you stood for', 'your contribution is not forgotten'."

"However, no Black man or

woman is fully recognized throughout the American community, and the Albina Ministerial Alliance and the Black United Front maintain that Dr. King stands alone when it comes to who is truly outstanding or deserving of recognition.

"Lately, at the national level, Dr. King has created a Congressional debate concluding with an excuse

about cost effectiveness. That is, to honor Dr. King, the cost would be too high for another national paid holiday. We believe the arguments against recognizing the birth of Dr. King are a national disgrace, and an insult to Black people who fully understand that labor is necessary for mere survival in the United States. An additional holiday would not cause us to be less productive."

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**MILES APART --** Members of the School Board's Desegregation/Integration committee Herb Cawthorne and Frank McNamara disagree on philosophy and content of school

desegregation proposal. With no compromise possible, two proposals will be submitted to the full Board.

## Board disagrees on deseg plans

The Portland School Board will receive alternative desegregation plans from its Desegregation/Integration Committee Tuesday night, one from Herb Cawthorne, two or more from Frank McNamara and options from Joe Reike. The committee, which had earlier submitted proposals with alternatives and options for public discussion, had hoped to submit one plan that would be acceptable to the three members.

Fireworks started Monday evening as Herb Cawthorne refused to support plans submitted by Chairman McNamara that would have transferred sixth through eighth grade students from King and Humboldt to west side schools but would have sent no white children to Albina schools.

The committee had agreed that the West Side should be involved in desegregation, but Cawthorne objected to McNamara's method of involving them. "Don't send Black kids out; send white kids in," he said. "I'm tired of moving Black kids around."

McNamara declared that he will not support a plan that "re-segregates", that is, one that significantly increases the percentage of Blacks in schools that are already over or near 50 per cent minority. "If you re-segregate, some judge will make the decisions," he told Cawthorne.

Cawthorne replied that the Board had earlier agreed not to be too concerned with percentages. "The main thing is not to send Black kids through all kinds of gyrations because we're worried about their

percentages."

At the Tuesday afternoon committee meeting, fire turned to ice as McNamara's anger continued to surface.

Reiterating his stand that "if no white students are going to be assigned in, no Black students will be sent out," Cawthorne submitted the following plan:

### Middle School

A middle school to be placed at the Adams High School building, with Adams also remaining a high school. This middle school could serve a small resident population and be a magnet to attract other children, or, Columbia could be closed and the Columbia/Whiteaker students be divided between Whiteaker and Adams. King sixth through eighth graders would be assigned to these schools.

### Boise

Boise would remain a K-8 school, with a pre-school class added. It would be designated an Early Childhood Education Center, with an upper grade center. Care would be given to insure that the upper graders, even if few in number, would receive good academic programs. The building would be renovated.

Cawthorne would not object to Boise becoming a middle school, in a Boise, Chapman, Ainsworth cluster if Chapman and Ainsworth students were assigned to Boise.

### Humboldt

Fourth and fifth grade classes would be added, with a section of the district transferred to Beech through a boundary change. At least two

rooms would be added. Sixth through eighth graders would go to Ockley Green Middle School.

### Boundary Changes

Boundaries between King, Alameda, Sabin, Boise and Irvington would relieve overcrowding at King. Five rooms would be added to King.

### Transfer Policy

Black students could voluntarily attend schools outside their attendance area for desegregation purposes, but also could attend their own school. Those who do transfer would be free to return.

McNamara presented two plans. King and Humboldt would be clustered with Chapman and Ainsworth, possibly with Sylvan and West Sylvan. Chapman would be the middle school. Sixth through eighth graders could go to Chapman or Sylvan.

Boise would become a magnet middle school, open to any student from the cluster, but with no white students assigned. Or Boise could be a middle school for Boise and optional for Buckman students.

An alternative would be to establish a Monroe middle school for Buckman/Boise students, while leaving Boise Pre-K to 8.

Joe Reike added the option of a magnet middle school at Monroe.

The Board also plans to receive proposals for curriculum development, multi-cultural education, and teacher training at the Tuesday meeting. The Board meeting will be held at the administration building at 7:30 p.m.

## Union redevelopment begins

by Ulysses Tucker Jr.

Union Avenue has been the focus of several planning and redevelopment endeavors over the last six years, involving public agencies, neighborhood groups, businessmen, and private organizations.

The Union Avenue Redevelopment Program was established in December of 1973, to revitalize and redevelop the corridor as part of this larger effort. Subsequently, in December of 1976, the Portland Development Commission (PDC) opened its Union Avenue Improvement Program Office at 4008 N.E. Union Avenue.

"We're trying very hard to help minorities get a piece of the pie," said Thomas Kennedy, the articulate manager of PDC. "I say piece of the pie because we will never get an equal share."

The major goals of the program are: to benefit the community in economic terms and in terms of social welfare; to enhance the visual characteristics of the Avenue; to enlist the commitment and support of the private sector in the commercial redevelopment of the corridor; to promote orderly land-use activity; to improve the Avenue as a major city traffic and transit street and mass transit facility. These goals are supported by area residents, some local governmental agencies, and businessmen.

"Currently, we have the largest number of minority contractors participating ever in the history of Oregon's highway department,"

said Kennedy. "We are expecting to have over 17 per cent of the excavation of the streets and landscaping done by minority firms," he said. "This office has worked very hard to get where we are, and Commissioner Charles Jordan and his staff have played a great role."

The Union Avenue Corridor, as addressed by the Union Avenue Improvement Program, extends 3.35 miles along N.E. Union Avenue from the Broadway/Weidler couplet on the south to Columbia Blvd. on the north, with east/west boundaries being a block-and-a-half on either side of the avenue.

Union Avenue is a major north/south arterial in N.E. Portland, with thirteen major intersections and an 80-foot right-of-way. Union Avenue carries twenty thousand vehicles per day, and the volume is expected to increase in the next few years to its peak.

Traffic improvements will effect greater access between the corridor and Swan Island, Columbia Boulevard, the airport, and Southeast Portland, as well as other commercial districts, and will increase Union Avenue's effectiveness as a major arterial.

"The whole purpose of this 9.6 million dollar beautification program is to make the avenue a more attractive thoroughfare, and to turn it into a more desirable place for shopping. We also want to make it a safer place," said the native of New Orleans.

When asked about the role that

minority businessmen would play in this redevelopment process, Kennedy replied, "First, you have to qualify as a successful businessman, then as a minority."

"But we do have a program to help existing businesses to expand their operation," Kennedy added. The help for the businessmen will come in the form of an "Investive Rehabilitation Loan" which allows a business to borrow up to \$50,000 at three per cent interest.

"There have been four of these loans given to businesses," said Kennedy. "Out of these four loans only one has gone to a minority."

Kennedy continued, "It's important to note that because of the characteristics of the community, we encourage minority participation from all the business people who come to the area. For example, look at Church's Chicken, and Popeye's, they're all private people who came into the area. If you noticed, they've hired Blacks from the community which is a great help. Then there's Fred Myer's, who just had a major renovation job performed—now there are more Blacks working there than ever before. They use my office to conduct the job interviews," said a delighted Kennedy.

Working in cooperation with the Union Avenue Redevelopment staff is the Northeast Business Boosters Association, an active neighborhood group of one hundred and fifty business people and interested individuals who recognize the

(Please turn to page 8 col. 4)

## Miracle drugs might be murdering the elderly

by Gregory Bergman\*

(Editor's Note: Elderly citizens are the major consumers of prescription drugs in the United States today. And many of them take drugs in combinations which are sometimes deadly. Right now, according to PNS correspondent Gregory Bergman, very little is being done about this problem, which affects 70 per cent of the population over 65.)

She seemed like perfect proof that modern medicine can work wonders: 73 years old, afflicted with high blood pressure and a heart condition, but kept clear-headed and functioning with the help of two miracle drugs prescribed by her doc-

tors.

But when irregularity prompted the elderly woman to use a heavily advertised, over-the-counter laxative, the miracle almost killed her.

The laxative transformed the digitalis prescribed for her heart into a toxic substance, and increased the loss of potassium associated with the thiazide diuretic which controlled her blood pressure. The result was cardiac arrhythmia—an irregular heart beat. It put her into a hospital emergency room, close to death.

Because of inadequacies in U.S. medical practice, a quantum leap in pharmaceutical production, and public ignorance of its hazards, older Americans regularly consume

too many medications in doses and combinations that are often deadly.

Dr. Michael Reiter, a staff specialist in pharmacology for the elderly at the San Francisco Mental Health Department, said many of the drugs prescribed through Medicare can cause side-effects in the elderly, including hazy vision, loss of coordination, confusion or depression. "This creates a danger that adverse reactions could be wrongly diagnosed as senility or even mental illness," he warns.

A number of changes take place as the body ages, and they can make pharmaceuticals more dangerous, he says. "Organ systems function less efficiently, causing drugs to be absorbed, distributed, broken down and excreted at slower rates." A

normal adult dose can be too high for an elderly person.

"The same dose you and I might take successfully could make an 80-year-old quite agitated," according to Dr. Jack Segal, acting chief of medicine at Long Beach General Hospital, and co-author of a Southern California survey of nursing home patients. "The elderly brain is exquisitely sensitive to the toxic side effects of some of these drugs. You've got this entire population that responds to medication quite differently than you would expect from the standard textbook."

These risks are compounded when several drugs are used simultaneously, says Vera Labat, director of the Over Sixty Geriatric Clinic in

Berkeley, California. "Multiple medication is a big problem among older people. Often, medicines prescribed years earlier are still being used; people have changed towns, changed doctors, run short of money to buy new prescriptions and continue taking old ones, or are going to two or more physicians for different ailments."

Moreover, it's a problem of enormous proportions. Although they comprise only ten per cent of the U.S. population, elderly citizens (over 65) consume 25 per cent of all prescription drugs. A Michigan study found that one out of four senior citizens in its survey took four or more prescription drugs at once. Half reported using over-the-counter analgesics, laxatives or ant-

acids which might interact toxically with prescribed drugs. Among the institutionalized, it was not uncommon for elderly patients to receive eight or ten different daily medications.

Some 70 per cent of the elderly now use prescription drugs, most of which are administered in amounts appropriate for an average, 150-pound middle-aged adult in good health. On all counts, the profile does not fit the typical senior citizen.

The result, much too often, is too many drugs, in too large doses. And unless something is done about it soon, the problem will only become more enormous. By the year 2000, the over-65 portion of the U.S. (Please turn to page 8 col. 1)



FREE FOR ALL: She She Griggs, Kim Griggs, Debbi Griggs and Pat Miles.

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)