

More Blacks suffer glaucoma, blindness

Glaucoma appears to be much more common in Black Americans than in whites -- and it more often results in blindness, the most dreaded complication of this disease.

This means that the racial differences and its implications should be thoroughly studied, according to participants in the first National Conference on Glaucoma Detection and Treatment, a symposium sponsored by the National Society to Prevent Blindness.

Dr. Patricia E. Bath of Martin Luther King Jr. General Hospital,

Los Angeles, has studied the "blindness registers" in 16 states and found that Blacks outnumbered whites two to one, on a per capita basis. What is more, glaucoma was listed as the cause of blindness in Blacks eight times more often than in whites.

"Nobody knows why," she said. "What is clear is that Blacks may be at increased risk."

Glaucoma may be insidious, silent, 'thief of sight' in American whites, but that's often not the case in Black patients," said Dr. Alfonso Cinotti of New Jersey Medical

School, Newark, N.J. "Rather, the disease develops at an earlier age, progresses much more rapidly than it does in whites, and more often results in blindness," he said.

He told of a 27-year-old Black hospital worker whose glaucoma could not be controlled with drugs -- something almost unheard of in young white women. Similarly, a young Black medical student came to the doctor because of a persistent headache. This turned out to be an early symptom of glaucoma, a stage which should have been easy to treat. Instead, he had to undergo

surgery to relieve the pressures building up within the eye.

"There also appear to be different and more serious surgical complications in Black patients," said Dr. Robert E. Dawson of Durham, N.C., president of the National Medical Association. "There may also be social and economic complications," he added. "For example, some patients may not follow a prescribed drug regimen, or they may have trouble getting to and from the treatment center."

Some of those attending the

meeting were mildly skeptical, because most of the information gathered up to now has been on individual cases. The problem may merely reflect less satisfactory treatment, for instance.

"Sound data must be collected before any real progress can be made," Dr. Bath agreed. "In fact, there are few really sound statistics on any aspect of glaucoma," she said.

It is only with a firm epidemiological base that research can proceed on to studying underlying reasons for any racial differences

that do exist. It may also be necessary to study different approaches to treating glaucoma in whites and Blacks; treatments that work with one group may not be effective in another, so alternatives may have to be found.

Gathering such statistics may be difficult because American Blacks are not one homogenous racial group," said Dr. Axel Hansen of Meharry Medical College, Nashville, Tennessee. "The mixture is so diverse that the data may just have to be lumped together as 'white' and 'non-white'."

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School Board presents desegregation plans

The School Board has voted to submit to the public for discussion two desegregation plans and a series of suggestions for multi-cultural curriculum, teacher training and a magnet middle school program developed by the district administration.

Unable to agree on the concepts or the specifics of desegregation, the Board has accepted for public discussion two plans moving toward a 50-50 racial mix.

Herb Cawthorne, who boycotted the Monday meeting, returned to his seat on the Board Tuesday. Cawthorne had declined to participate further until allegations of

Black children in "racially isolated" schools caused by School Board action would be in non-compliance with federal regulations and could lead to a court suit. This was the main argument in resistance to allowing Black children to return to neighborhood schools, which would increase Black percentages.

In response to Board questioning, McClanahan said regarding the legality of allowing Black percentages to rise to earlier levels, "The answer, I guess, is, perhaps theoretically you could return. And anything; that is a mere return and can clearly be seen as that, I think, is probably all right, from a legal

resegregation by Frank McNamara and Superintendent Robert Blanchard were substantiated or dismissed.

McNamara told the Board Monday night that he was surprised at being accused of directing "invidious remarks" at Cawthorne, but that after reviewing the facts had determined that Plan I (the voluntary plan) is quite viable and his original concerns about resegregation under this plan were not fully born out.

McNamara's concern is based on previous opinions of the Board's legal counsel, Mark McClanahan, that any increase in percentages of

standpoint. But what is really a return is difficult to say."

Buel: "A return to what?"

McClanahan: "Well, pre-1964, I guess."

Plan I

Boundary changes: The Area III portion of King (Union to 10th, Fremont to Prescott) would go to Sabin, with 6th through 8th to Beaumont.

The portion of Sabin that is south of Failing and west of 14th, and the portion south of Fremont between 14th and the Sabin east boundary, will be transferred to Alameda.

The portion of Alameda north of (Please turn to page 2 col. 1)



BOYCOTT PREVIEW. Herb Cawthorne was absent from Monday's School Board meeting protesting unfair charges of radical resegregation against voluntary desegregation option.

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Board's direction dangerous

by Ronnie Herndon

The recent school board discussion about desegregation have produced some of the most insulting racist, confused rhetoric that this community has witnessed in many years. Instead of talking about what is needed to develop quality schools in our community, we have been treated to 100 miles of verbiage about boundary changes, clustering, and how to keep the Black student population below 50% in any school.

Statements gush forth about not allowing more than 50% Black students in this school, not allowing more than 40% in another school. It sounds as if some board members and administrators are talking about contagious beings who cannot be allowed to gather in large percentages for fear they might contaminate the populace. Portland has schools that are nearly 100% white, neither the board or administration look upon this as unusual, unnatural or dangerous. The assumption is that Black children cannot learn if they make up the majority of a school's population. This racist manure is thrown around with alarming ease and frequency. Arthur Jensen would feel quite at home in these discussions.

The shame and pity of this is the fact that 26 years after the "Brown" decision, no one can produce any conclusive evidence that the so-called school integration has improved the academic achievement of Black children. There is growing evidence that when Black children are sent out of their community (that's the way integration usually works) they are placed under a great deal of stress and they develop lower self esteem, plus lower educational and vocational aspirations!! In view of this why would sane people continue talking about sending Black children out of their community, or

limiting their percentages at their neighborhood school. Academically and psychologically these remedies have been abysmal failures.

We are told that the Board's current gyrations are being performed in the name of desegregation.

How preposterous. Desegregation means that you eliminate a system that denies the privileges of citizenship to Black people. Desegregation enables Black people to exercise the same range of choices as any other citizen. In the case of schools, desegregation does not mean that you force Black children to leave their community to supposedly receive a better education. As a matter of fact all this does is introduce a new form of segregation because you have once again limited the choices of Black people.

White children are not forced to leave their community to receive a decent education, if they leave their community it is by choice, Black children should not be treated any differently. Desegregation of schools means that Black parents must be able to send their children to a good neighborhood school if they choose. Without a good local school they have no choice -- either send their children to a poor local school or send them out to a white school that has not been able to educate Black children.

Next we are told that the percentage of Black children in schools must be limited because of federal and state law, regardless if this practice is racist and proven to be academically and psychologically unsuccessful for Black children. Black people's 400 years of being denied human rights in this country, makes us all too familiar with laws that do us harm; our historic decision has been to challenge unjust laws in every way possible. Strage isn't it, the schools were closed for Dr. King's birthday but (Please turn to page 2 col. 4)

White House Conference sets proposals

Eugene Jackson, Executive Director of the Northwest Minority Contractors Association, recently returned from the White House Conference on Small Business, held January 13-17, 1980 in Washington, D.C. Mr. Jackson was one of nearly 2,000 delegates attending the conference. He had been elected to represent the state of Oregon at one of 57 state and regional meetings held all over the country during the past 18 months.

The purpose of the White House Conference was to establish a series of proposals to chart a course of action for federal policies impacting small business during the 1980 and 1990 decades. The delegates worked through the issues presented and developed final recommendations for presentation to the President and Congress that should signifi-

cantly influence the future of small business in America.

President Jimmy Carter made the opening address setting the stage for a vigorous and challenging week of activities. Other officials who addressed the group were William Miller, Secretary of Treasury; Alfred Kahn, Assistant to the President on inflation; Luther Hodges Jr., Acting Secretary of Commerce; Vernon Weaver, Administrator of Small Business Administration; Congressman Parren Mitchell of Maryland; and Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin.

The twelve major topic areas discussed by the delegates were:

- Capital Formation and retention
- Minority Business Development
- Innovation and Technology,

- Inflation,
- Veterans,
- Federal Procurement,
- energy
- Women in Business
- Government Regulations and Paperwork,
- Economic Policy and Government programs,
- International Trade, and Education,
- Training and Assistance.

Over 325 issues in these major categories emerged from the state and regional meetings held prior to the national conference. Through a group consensus and voting process, the top five issues were identified under each major category. This led to a final vote by all delegates to identify the top 15 overall issues and recommendations of the 1980 White (Please turn to P.2 Col. 4)



EUGENE JACKSON

Counselor's advised based on experience

When Margaret Carter offers career counseling advice to mature, divorced or child-bound Portland Community College students, her advice comes not only from her professional view as a masters in educational counseling but also from first hand experience.

Ms. Carter went to college while raising nine children and going through a divorce and remarriage.

"It's really hard for women to go to school who don't have the total support of their whole family," Ms. Carter said.

When Ms. Carter's nine children indicated they were threatened by her return to college she said she sat down with them for a talk about how they could help in her new role as student-mother. The result was a group of helpful, rather than resentful children.

One 42-year old woman who was taking two classes at PCC lost the emotional support of her husband when she decided to take four classes, Ms. Carter said.

"I went into the home and let the husband know she didn't want to be free of him," Ms. Carter said. "She wanted to be a teacher all of her life, ever since she was a little girl and that was what she was trying to do -- not run away to school or anything like that."

Ms. Carter said the woman is still married and now the manager of a real estate firm.

Ms. Carter, who was a counselor at the Albina Youth Opportunity School before coming to PCC seven years ago, has also brought 17

women from Pacific Northwest Bell into PCC programs.

"Some of the women in the phone company group have refused to accept promotions because they could not leave home long enough to take part in a brief training session in Renton, Washington," Ms. Carter said.

She said that confidence is the key to beginning career decisions for most people who come into her offices at Cascade Center and at Sylvania Center.

"Many people come to us seeking careers and they know exactly what they want to do," Ms. Carter said. "But they lack the confidence, the money, the academic skills or the goal orientation to get that accomplished."

"I talk with the students about their whole life and we work together to find out how they can accomplish their goals."

Free placement tests and career interest tests are offered by the PCC counseling center for students who are interested in their aptitudes in various areas, according to Ms. Carter.

"Sometimes just a conversation about role models -- people who students admire -- will head a student in a career direction they've never thought of before," Ms. Carter said.

Ms. Carter is at the Cascade Center of PCC at 705 N. Killingsworth, on Tuesday and Thursday and at the Sylvania Center at 12000 S.W. 49th Avenue on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.



When Margaret Carter offers career counseling advice to mature, divorced or child-bound Portland Community College students her advice is shaped both from professional educational counseling theory and firsthand experience.