

EDITORIAL/ OPINION

Time for a new Superintendent

The Black United Front and other community organizations have called for the resignation of Superintendent Robert Blanchard based on his philosophy and actions on the education of Black children. Black Students have been widely scattered throughout the district to further desegregation, while Black students attending still segregated neighborhood schools have been denied academic achievement.

After ten years of federal and state assistance and of special Early Childhood Education Centers designed to draw white children, these same ECECs still test lowest in the district on achievement tests. Parents have complained about many problems: principals, teachers, lack of bus shelter, etc. The Superintendent's response to Black people and groups has often been negative and arrogant.

Ten years ago, when Dr. Blanchard came to Portland, the NAACP opposed the Blanchard plan on the basis that while sending older Black children out of their neighborhoods to promote desegregation, it left the lower grades about 100 percent Black. As a desegregation formula, the plan was inequitable and deficient.

Nearly ten years later the community Coalition found that not only were desegregation efforts haphazard and ineffective - they were destructive to Black children who were isolated in white schools.

In the words of one Black educator, Dr. Blanchard's policy has "destroyed a

generation of Black children."

For the first ten years Dr. Blanchard had nearly unanimous approval of the School Board. Except for Wally Priestley, who was elected in 1976, Blanchard had unanimous support for nearly all of his proposals. Seldom was any serious difference expressed in public, the Board choosing to show a united front.

The new board has not had this united appearance. There are not only difference among the members but also differences with the Superintendent. His recommendations are not quickly and silently passed; they evoke lengthy discussion.

The Board members have been criticized by the daily press for taking too long to make serious decisions.

The Board has the difficult problem of healing ten years of destruction in the Black community. That task isn't easy. We are not satisfied with the Board's desegregation plan but we understand the difficulties they have faced in their endeavor.

We believe that the Board must hire a new superintendent - one who will meet the challenge of educating Black children with enthusiasm and skill, and who will willingly involve the Black community in this task.

Until this happens there is not much expectation that any plan will be successful or that the Black community will consider the Board's intentions sincere.



African update

by N. Fungai Kumbula

Egypt: The deposed shah of Iran, forced out of Panama where he had been since being forced out of the U.S. has now temporarily found refuge in Egypt, a move that could precipitate the downfall of one Anwar Sadat. The shah has not been a very popular figure in either the African or Arab world and Sadat's granting of refuge to him will further alienate Egypt. The "peace" treaty Sadat signed with Israel had had Egypt isolated enough already and the shah's arrival in Cairo will just pour oil on Egypt's troubled waters. Already there have been sporadic reports of protests by Egyptian students. The shah's presence on African soil is also said not to sit too well with the majority of the Africans who have been trying to build better working relations with the Arab world. Question is: how long will Sadat stand the pressure?

Chad: After less than a year in office, the "government of national unity" in Ndjamena seems on the verge of collapse. Eleven separate factions had met in Lagos and agreed to form a coalition government and also end the civil war Chad had been embroiled in since the fall of the French backed regime

of Felix Mallooum. Most of the fighting now involves the forces of interim President Goukuni Ouedei and foreign minister Hissene Habre. Foreign embassies are being evacuated and tanks are said to be rumbling through the capital, Ndjamena.

South Africa: September 22 there was a "mysterious" bright flash off the coast of South Africa that was observed and reported by a U.S. Vela observation satellite. Though it was strongly suspected of being a nuclear explosion, no conclusive report was ever issued.

Now an exclusive CBS report aired February 21st, and prepared by Israeli journalist, Dan Raviv alludes the explosion to a joint Israeli-South African nuclear collaboration dating back to the 1950's. Further, a recent UN report on South Africa's nuclear capability details collaboration between not just South Africa and Israel but also the U.S., Britain, France, W. Germany and other western countries. No wonder this report is being suppressed.

The U.S. The House of Representatives has just set aside \$20 million in aid for the new government of Zimbabwe. Meantime independent reports indicate the count

may need as much as \$6 billion just for reconstruction alone.

Zimbabwe: The new cabinet has just been announced and it is dominated by some heavy academics: physicians, chemists, lawyers, public administrators, economists, political scientists and the like. It is without a doubt the most academic cabinet anywhere in the world, the U.S. included.

Banana for President? That's right. The man selected to be Zimbabwe's first Black president is called, believe it or not, Cnaan Banana. He used to be Muzorewa's deputy in the UANC but broke away after Muzorewa failed to show any backbone and became just a mouthpiece for Ian Smith. Muzorewa had him jailed and he just came out of prison. He joined ZANU and became famous for adapting the "Lord's Prayer" to the goals of nationalism. "Teach us to demand our share of the gold; forgive us our docility..."

Independence Day has been set for April 17th. On that day, the British flag will come down for the last time to be replaced by Zimbabwe's Red, Black and Green. "Ain't no stopping us now, we're on the move!"



Notes from City Hall

By Charles Jordan, Commissioner of Public Safety

Message to my brothers in OSP

By Nyewusi Askari (aka Kelly Norman)

Brothers, it's all too easy for us out here to trip out, sing torch songs and tune out to your situation at the prison. It's all too easy to come up with ill-logical reasons why, we can't relate to the truths you tell us each week in your column "Behind The Walls," which is printed in the *Portland Observer* newspaper.

Each week you come to us; alive, forceful, and in your own way, very beautiful. It's a testimony of what imprisoned Black men can do to help our process of liberation, despite their position in life. And thus, you represent a very positive force in the Black community, altho you aren't here with us.

It is for this reason and many more, that you must continue to speak your truths to us. Like you, we are imprisoned by the guardians of a system, which for hundreds of years, have tried to destroy us. Yet, like you, we continue to survive; for we know that freedom is not an illusion.

Nevertheless, achieving freedom is not an easy process, and during that struggle we tend to miss each other, lose each other, become overwhelmed by frustration, disappointment, defeat and a feeling of non-progress. These are very real realities; a segment of the war designed to kill the spirit of those of us who believe in total victory.

Thru media manipulation, and neglect, you are often made to feel that nothing positive is happening in the Black communities you were snatched from. You are made to believe that the order of each day here, is dope, cadillacs, whores, the

killing of each other, deception, complacency, apathy, crime and the ever present "Superfly mentality." Not so.

As has been since the moment we first set foot upon the shores of Amerikkka, we are fighting to regain the freedom taken from us. We have our glory moments: the freedom trains, the rebellions, the Garvey movement, the Civil Rights movement, and a rich history of constant struggle. We have our moments of glory and from the ruins and ashes, have emerged great, powerful Black leaders...Marcus, Martin, Malcom, Stokely, H. Rap and thousands more.

But for us, glory is short lived as in any war. Leaders rise, leaders die and the days bring darkness and silence. Today, in 1980, there is much darkness and silence hanging like dark grey clouds over our battlefields, leading many of us to believe Black people are finished.

But witness the rise of Black United Fronts across Amerikkka; witness the efforts of millions of Black children to get an equal education; witness the efforts of Black mothers and fathers to raise their children, protect their families, make a living working everyday, and at the same time, fight in the war for Black liberation by any means necessary.

We cannot ask more of them at a time when inflation is at 17%. We cannot ask more of them at a time when even the future of the guardians of this crazy system, is uncertain. There is much suffering

here, too much instant death, too much grief, too many paths going downhill.

We are a nation of people, like any other nation...multi-colored, multi-talented, capable, creative, fighters, doctors, lawyers, educators...we are a nation.

We have our superflies, uncle toms, dope dealers, etc. like any other nation, yet, those negatives are not our totality. These negatives have yet to be converted into new men and women; and believe me they can be. Witness how the Black Panthers, CORE, SNCC, the Black Muslims etc. of old, converted thousands of pimps, whores, dope fiends, superflies and uncle toms, into respectful Black men and women, dedicated to our survival.

We love you brothers, and ask that you not allow the guardians to make you think West, when you should be thinking East. Don't allow them to make you hate the people you should love.

Continue your work. Continue to be warriors. We need your spirit out here, altho you are there. Ours is a battleground, yours is a battleground, and there is a meeting place in between, where we all will one day get together, break bread, smile, rejoice and feel the love we haven't been able to adequately express.

You see, love travels thousands of miles without making a sound. So, think of that when you don't hear from us. Think of that when you wonder how we feel about you.

We are merely extensions of each other...

Cable Communications is big news in Portland and could be big news in your community. It could be if you make your interests known to cable companies that are competing for the City franchise.

Besides TV and communications, cable will provide new jobs and careers for minorities and women and major contracts for minority business enterprises. The time is NOW to communicate your ideas, opinions and concerns to all competitors so that their proposals will be responsive to your needs.

You may be wondering, what does Cable Communications mean for me? My community? Isn't Cable Communications about entertainment and pay TV? First run movies, sporting events and special shows for children? About stations beamed by satellite across the country? Yes, it is that and a whole lot more.

Unlike commercial television broadcasting, cable makes it possible to "narrow cast" to target special interest and minority groups. For example, with a cable hook-up you are going to be able to watch neighborhood productions -- classes, plays, dance, music -- through direct video programming in your community. In fact, at "community access" studios that will be part of the cable system, you could be a performer, a communicator, neighbor-to-neighbor.

With cable, you will also be able to watch meetings of local organizations, such as the School Board, the Black United Front, or the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods even when you can't get out of the house.

Better yet, and completely unlike regular over-the-air broadcasting, for an extra fee you'll be able to sign up for "two-way, interactive" cable. With a two-way hook-up you'll have opportunities to participate in local meetings. By pushing a button next to your TV set you'll be able to express a preference, be part of the action...communicate.

There's more. The experts tell us that someday we'll be able to shop, bank, even use the library -- all via cable. In the near future it is likely that you'll be able to connect home security alarms to the cable system. This kind of hook-up will insure rapid fire and police responses to emergencies, even when you're not at home.

All this (and more) is for the future, but the near future. Right now, at least eight cable companies are in the final month of preparing proposals to construct, operate and develop a comprehensive cable communications system in Portland. The company that submits the most competitive proposal will be awarded a City franchise to "wire" the

whole east side.

The "most competitive" proposal is going to have to be very good indeed, and very responsive to community interests and concerns.

Just to get in the game, for example, every competitor must guarantee at least 35 channels into each subscriber home, and four back out again (the two-way, interactive channels). Of the 35 channels in, at least five must be dedicated to community access for groups and individuals.

I anticipate that the winning proposal will also guarantee facilities, equipment, training and marketing know-how for the use of the community access channels.

That's the home network part of the cable system. The system will also include a non-entertainment institutional network that will tie together schools, hospitals, businesses, government and non-profit agencies. This will be one of the first such institutional networks in the nation.

What about minority jobs, careers and contracts? The "request for proposals" issued by the City contains certain Jordan amendments you should be aware of.

Minority Business Participation. Every applicant for the cable franchise must spell out a program in its proposal for purchasing minority goods and services in developing the cable system. The proposals are due by April 30, 1980. The target minority participation rate is 10 percent. This could mean up to \$4,000,000 in contracts for qualified minority business enterprises over the next several years.

Payroll-Specific Equal Employment and Affirmative Action

City code specifies that franchise

applicants must be EEO-certified. My amendment requires further that each applicant develop an EEO/AA plan that is tied directly to payroll projections in each job category, and that the plan be honored over the fifteen year life of the franchise.

This means that from janitor to administrator, installer to programmer, minorities and women will have outstanding opportunities for training and employment in one of the hottest industries of the 1980's.

Other Jordan amendments concern strengthening the already strong privacy and security requirements in the request for proposals, and encouraging applicants to propose "special rates for special people." (Some of the people and organizations who most need cable services can least afford to pay for them.)

Cable could be good news for your community if you get involved. Remember that it also means new jobs, careers and contracts for minorities, specialized and responsive community programming, and new forms of citizen participation for your community. However, for competing cable companies to be responsive to your concerns, they must know of your concerns before their proposals are submitted at the end of April, 1980.

I encourage you to learn as much as you can about this new communications tool, and to follow closely the City's cable franchising process. Cable means the potential for enhanced communication in your community.

For more information contact Commissioner Jordan's office at 248-4682 or the office of Cable Communications at 248-5585.



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Revolution in El Salvador

(Continued from P 1 Col 6)

life for so many Central Americans. Afterwards, the students taught -- and lived -- the urban poor and rural Indians, directing literacy programs, building farmer's associations, discussing the dignity of the individual.

As the most outspoken prelate in Central America, Romero came to symbolize this merger of the church's moral leadership with the interests of the oppressed. He was the visible embodiment of a prediction made by the Cuban guerrilla leader Ernesto (Che) Guevara: "When Christians begin to give an integral revolutionary witness, the Latin American revolution will be invincible."

There is strong reason to believe that the Archbishop's assassin had

immediate connections with the regime in El Salvador or with right wing groups acting under its tacit approval. They may even have been professional killers from the anti-Castro Cuban underground based in Miami, imported especially for the purpose of ridding Central America of Oscar Romero.

In the end, however, his murder may have the opposite effect. Already people refer to Romero as a martyr. He will probably be the patron saint of the Central American Revolution, the man whose life -- and death -- helped galvanize an entire region in rebellion against brutal oppression.

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* Bonpane spent several years in rural Guatemala as a missionary priest.