

Black United Front calls one - day school boycott

On May 19th, the birthdate of Malcolm X and two days after the 26th anniversary of the Supreme Court school desegregation decision, Black parents will be asked to keep their children home from school in the continuing effort to achieve quality education for Black children in Portland's public schools.

Announcing that the Black United Front will discuss a proposed one-day boycott at its Thursday

night public meeting, co-chairman Ronnie Herndon expressed anger and disappointment that the School Board failed to keep promises made to the Black community last August to avert a boycott.

Among the promises Herndon referred to was an agreement to include parents in the staff selection process. The BUF asked that a committee made up of administrators and parents recommend selection of principals, and

that a parent committee at each school recommend staff selection to principals. The Board responded with a plan to ask principals to obtain advice on desired staff characteristics from the Parent Advisory Committee -- which is appointed by the principal.

Herndon says the entire "desegregation" plan hinges on the quality of principals and teachers and cannot be effective if it is carried out by the same "insensitive principals and

teachers who have been in our schools for years." Referring to two recent incidents -- one in which a Columbia/Whiteaker teacher told students to turn of "nigger music" and the other in which a Jefferson teacher required students to complete a blatantly racist "job application" -- Herndon said these were not unusual occurrences and that "the psychological, emotional and educational damage done by teachers like this is immeasurable.

The Black community is determined that our children will be taught by competent human beings."

"The press is saying we achieved a victory when we got a middle school at Eliot, but who will staff the school? If we don't have good teachers who are sensitive to the needs of our children -- then we have achieved nothing."

The BUF proposal for parent involvement was opposed by the teacher groups. "I have looked at

the teachers' contract and I see nothing in it that would prevent our plan from being adopted," Herndon said. "If the teachers' unions have problems with our plan, why don't they come and tell us and discuss other ways we could accomplish what we want."

"Why don't the teachers' unions help us get good teachers for our children?"

The community meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m.

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With the Oregon primary election fast approaching (May 20) Ms. Emma Carter assisted many citizens who wished to register to vote. (Photo By: Richard Brown)

Albina Action Center struggles to survive

"The Albina Action Center is still alive. We are serving the needs of the community," said James Hill, interim director in the agency's new offices at 4128 NE Union.

For the past two years the agency has been hit with suspensions of federal funds, threats of closure, allegations of misuse of funds, and now an FBI investigation.

With five directors in two years, the agency board has been accused of manipulation of the staff and of political intrigue.

Currently, TAAC has been funded by the Community Services Agency, but funds for the first quarter have not been received. "This means we live on credit until the

money comes through," Hill explained. "And we have to borrow from the bank at the current high rate of interest. If we use money from one fund to pay bills for another -- that's called 'comingling' -- and it's against the rules. Bureaucratic entanglement is the prevailing mood at CSA, and this keeps us from functioning adequately on the local level."

One matter still held over the agency's head is alleged misuse of funds by a former employee. According to a former board member the government indicated no interest in prosecution and TAAC's attorney advised the board to accept reimbursement of the money.

Because the original expenditure was improper it has been disallowed by CSA and subtracted from future grants. Although he could not comment on the personal matter, Hill said, "I feel that if the government was aware of this and failed to prosecute, they shouldn't continue to punish TAAC."

The FBI investigation is rumored to involve those and other expenditures.

The current crisis began in December when TAAC was notified by Region X, CSA, that unless certain actions were taken the program would not be refunded. Reasons for the action, as stated in the letter, were: 1) Failure to secure adequate

standards of fiscal control; 2) Failure to observe adequate standards of organization, management, and administration; 3) Failure of TAAC to comply with its own by-laws, personnel procedures and Board election policies.

The Board was instructed to appoint an interim board of at least 12 persons (with CSA approval); to dissolve the existing board; to allow the new board to operate the agency for at least a year; to encourage staff to continue with the agency and allow them to administer the programs without "continued interference from individual Board members."

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Governor pushes minority commission

Governor Victor Atiyeh has moved toward establishment of a commission on minorities with the appointment of a task force made up of Black and Hispanic citizens to recommend the scope and purpose of such a commission.

Jackie Winters, State Ombudsman, told the House Interim Committee on Aging and Minority Affairs that the proposed commission will answer a three-year dream of many Black and Hispanic people. She said the Governor is dedicated to the establishment of a commission in spite of charges that he is unresponsive to minority needs.

A Black Commission was first proposed by the Oregon Assembly For Black Affairs prior to the 1977

legislature. The organization sponsored enabling legislation in the 1979 assembly.

Calvin O. L. Henry, president of OABA, said his organization feels a minority commission is unacceptable, favoring a Black Commission. "For the Black community to have its leaders push a minority commission is degrading our existence. I would not work with that kind of commission." At its March meeting, OABA restated its endorsement of a Black Commission.

Lucius Hicks, president of the Portland Branch, NAACP, was named to the task force. "In general, what it affords is an opportunity to sit down with a group and make some sense out of the efforts that have been made. It can allow a forum for involvement."

Hicks believes the task force will be able to look at alternatives and

make recommendations. "Some may favor separate commissions; others might go for a 'melting pot'. Those who want one commission would have to be very persuasive arguments as far as I'm concerned. It might come down to political feasibility -- when they would say, 'If this is the only way, do you want it?'"

Louis Alvarez, interim director of the Committee of Spanish Speaking People of Oregon (COSSPO) opposes a minority commission. COSSPO supports a Hispanic Commission. Alvarez has also been named to the Task Force.

"I'm open to finding out what can be done; I am willing to listen to what is available and how it can be done, but I am still convinced that a Hispanic Commission is really needed."

Alvarez hopes the Task Force will

have the opportunity to discuss alternatives and to recommend two commissions if that is the conclusion they reach. He thought acceptance of a Black Commission and a Hispanic Commission was close during the legislative session, but they were prevented by bigotry and racist behavior of legislators.

Those who favor two commissions, as opposed to a minority commission, see the problem and needs of Blacks and of Spanish speaking people, though related, as being distinctive and requiring differing solutions. A joint commission would diffuse and confuse efforts.

Members of the Task Force are Kay Toran, Lucius Hicks III, Freddie Pettet, Thomas Kennedy, Pearl Spears-Gray, Patricia Creal.

Louis Alvarez, Candido Morales, Juan Batista, Consuelo Saratoga, Jose Garcia.

Jackson seeks county position



EUGENE JACKSON

Eugene Jackson of Molalla, Oregon, has announced his Republican candidacy for Clackamas County Commissioner, Position #1.

According to Jackson there seems to have been very little improvement in the conditions of our county government. "The issues haven't changed much over the past several years," said Jackson. "If anything, things have worsened. We still have critical problems with land use planning, a need for more citizen participation in our county government decision-making process, and the critical need to reduce spending and limit property taxes."

But Jackson feels that one of the most critical problems facing the county is the lack of leadership and effective management at the Board level. "Clackamas County can no

longer afford to continue to elect Commissioners who appear to be insensitive to the needs of the people and who lack the skills to develop alternative approaches to meet the increased demands on local government," explained Jackson. "Unless we get some new leadership in our county, we could be facing a major crisis like other local governments are experiencing."

"A change is needed in the way our county budget is planned and developed," continued Jackson. "There must be more opportunity for greater citizen involvement in setting priorities for county program budgeting. For example, how was it decided to exclude portions of the budgets for the Parks, Library and Sheriff's departments from the General Fund? The citizens of this county must play a

City considers name changes

During the past six months, The Black United Front has been working in a co-operative spirit with staff from the Office of Commissioner Mike Lindberg and the Public Works Department. The series of meetings held have been for the purpose of securing street name changes in Northeast Portland, Williams and Vancouver Avenues. The names submitted to the City were Mrs. Rosa Parks for Vancouver and Malcom X for Williams, which would cover the entire length of the two North-South streets.

The Office of Commissioner Lindberg and Public Works have researched the feasibility of street

name changes (cost to City), recognized the request was unique to Portland, and made inquiries of other cities which have had street name changes at the request of the B.U.F.

In the very near future, sometime in May, residents, property owners, tenants, businesspersons along Williams and Vancouver will receive from the Office of the City Engineer a cover letter and card requesting their opinions on the street name changes.

The B.U.F. is asking the co-operation of Northeast residents, property owners, tenants, businesspersons, and community organizations by approving the

name change of the above streets. An affirmative response from all will insure that Commissioner Lindberg, responsible for the City's Bureau of Public Works, will introduce a resolution before the City Council.

In addition to the residents and businesspersons who will receive questionnaires, the B.U.F. suggests that other persons and organizations interested in honoring Mrs. Parks and Brother Malcom X in this manner contact the Commissioner. The B.U.F. believes naming streets in the community after Black people will indicate an expression of cultural pride.

Death of a Warrior

By N. Fungai Kumbula

As warriors go, she was very atypical: small, soft-spoken, gentle but with a resolve of steel and an unbreakable spirit in the tradition of the King Tshakas, Lobengulas, Harriet Tubmans and all the other great Black heroes who fought for dignity, equality and respect for the Black nation. She is dead now, at the tender young age of sixty-eight but, it will be hard to forget her: she was the embodiment of the long, bitter, painful struggle against apartheid.

Lillian Ngoyi lived a hard life but her convictions would not have had it any other way. She was born in 1912, fatefully, the same year the ANC (African National Congress) was formed. One would, therefore,

say she was destined to become a major force in South African politics.

She did not join the struggle until she was forty, in 1952 when she joined the Women's League of the ANC. During the defiance campaign of a few months earlier, she had been horrified to see the police arresting and taking to jail very young boys. The brutal treatment she witnessed then, coupled with all the other injustices she had endured in her forty years, compelled her to join the ANC.

She had had to quit school after only a year in high school, so she could work to support her father who was suffering from asthma. She also had to support her mother and brother and so she worked as, and became a very skilled garment

maker.

At the time she joined the ANC, she was a widow with a child to support. The had adopted another child and was supporting her mother also. She soon developed a flair for public speaking which, coupled with her winning personality, soon propelled her to the forefront of the movement. In only one year, she was elected to the presidency of the Federation of South African Women.

August 9, 1956, she led more than 200,000 women to the office of the then "Prime Minister" J.G. Strijdom to protest the extension of pass laws to include Black women. Pass "laws" were designed to regulate the movement of Blacks in South Africa. Our warrior was

arrested and charged in a trial that lasted four years, attracting a lot of international attention. In 1963, she was one of the first Blacks to be held under the 90 day detention "law" and was held for 71 days in solitary confinement without any charges ever being brought against her.

Later, she was served with a "banning" order restricting her to her home in Orlando and cutting her off from the rest of the world. Persons serving banning orders cannot meet with more than one person at a time, may not write for publication or be quoted in the press. The idea is to silence them. The order was still in effect when she died last month.

After the first eleven years of her confinement, she said, "You can tell my friends all over the world

that this girl is still her old self, if not more mature after all these experiences. I am looking forward to the day when my children will share in the wealth of our lovely South Africa."

Recent events in Zimbabwe, which she heard of no doubt, would indicate that that day is not so far off. In flesh, Lillian Ngoyi may not be around to see it, but we can all be sure that her spirit, her determination, her courage, her vision, her wisdom, her resilience, her wholehearted confidence in the struggle will still be around to witness the day South Africa becomes AZANIA. We mourn, Lillian, but we know you are now at peace. May the spirits look after you, Heroine of Heroes.



LILLIAN NGOYI