

# EDITORIAL/ OPINION



## Africa in the news

by N. Fungai Kumbula

### Two commissions: Not one

The Black and Hispanic communities have asked for state commissions to study and document the problems faced by those groups in Oregon and to address remedies. The governor has replied with an offer of a joint committee on minorities, and has appointed a Task Force to study the feasibility. That his commitment is to one commission and not two has been ably represented by his employees.

It should be clear by now that a minority commission is not what has been advocated by these groups and a minority committee is not acceptable.

It is true that Blacks and Hispanics suffer the same injustices and are subjected to racism and discrimination. But the types of repression and the effect on peoples with diverse cultures and backgrounds are different and the corrective measures will have to be different.

Hispanics themselves are diverse enough to have a wide range of specific and unique problems. For example: Among those con-

sidered as Hispanics are Chicanos, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Latin Americans and persons from other Spanish speaking areas of the world -- each group with its own history and culture. There are urban and rural residents; permanent residents, migrants and former migrants; native born Americans, recent immigrants and illegal aliens; those who speak only Spanish and those with only Spanish surnames. A commission would be kept busy dealing with the problems and needs of these vastly different groups of people, let alone tackle the problems of Blacks.

The Bureau of Labor and Industry already has the power to carry out the broad functions of a minority or human relations commission -- to investigate institutional racism and educate the public. What is needed now are separate Black and Hispanic commissions that can document and address problems unique to their own communities.

A joint commission would only defuse, confuse and divide the effort.

**ZIMBABWE:** The newly, democratically elected government of comrade Robert Mugabe is moving swiftly to return the country to normalcy. The one million refugees who had fled the countryside and set up squatter camps out Harare ("Salisbury") have begun to move back to their homes even before the government has stepped in to help. The International Red Cross is coordinating efforts to move them.

The government is also moving swiftly to dismantle Smith's concentration camps ("protected" villages!), which at the height of the war housed more than half a million Blacks. One of the most significant changes has taken place in the press of Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, ZBC, (radio TV), the Zimbabwe Herald and The Bulawayo Chronicle, the two major dailies all of which up until two months ago used to be mere extensions of the South African press, now sound more like the press of free Africa. No longer do they only feature Blacks when they have been arrested for something. It is now dominated by stories of Blacks being promoted to all kinds of positions, efforts being taken by southern Africa's free state to develop and reduce dependence on South Africa. For the first time in its history, the press of Zimbabwe is actually attacking South Africa.

Here in Portland, the celebration for Zimbabwe's independence was a major success. It was a most inspiring evening to see that many people come together to celebrate the happy event. Except for one drunken fool who caused a few problems as the party was winding down, it was truly a "comradely"

affair.

**SOUTH AFRICA:** The shock waves from the people's victory in Zimbabwe have not yet settled in this racist nation. The fallout is being felt in various forms: some of the politicians and pro-government papers are calling for dialogue with the real leaders of the African people, the ones the government labels "radicals" and not the "uncle Toms" that the regime has dealt with all along.

The level of guerrilla activity within South Africa has also escalated dramatically since the beginning of the year. January 25 saw three brothers take over a bank, hold 25 whites hostage and demand the release of an ANC leader Nelson Mandela. After a gun battle with police, the three guerrillas, armed with AK-47 rifles were killed. Two of the hostages were also killed and eleven were wounded.

A police station was attacked with rocket propelled grenades. Two policemen were killed and several others wounded. The guerrillas escaped and have never been found. The police station was located in the heart of Johannesburg.

The people have organized several highly successful Heroes Days for their comrades who fell in combat. The funerals for some of these guerrillas were attended by more than 30,000 people. Also, despite the suppression of free speech, a petition to free Nelson Mandela has so far been signed by almost 50,000 people. Out in the country, whites believe the civil war is already under way. Incidents of clashes and attacks on settler targets in the Messina area and other areas of northern Transvaal bordering on Zimbabwe are being reported

every week now. As in Zimbabwe in the latter stages of the war, white farmers are beginning to run away and the regime is righteously angry.

**LIBERIA:** Over in Monrovia, Liberia, one dictator William R. Tolbert woke up one recent morning to discover his head was missing. Under Tolbert and all his predecessors, descendants of former slaves who went back to Africa to settle, the wealth and power had been controlled by less than five per cent of the population. The majority, the indigenous people, were excluded and their anger and frustrations have been rising over the years as times get rougher and rougher.

April 11, Master Sgt. Samuel K. Doe led a group of junior officers, stormed the presidential palace and took over. In the fighting that ensued, Tolbert, his son A.B., who was in line to succeed him were both killed as were several of his close aides. Government officials who were arrested following the coup are to stand trial shortly. Doe has vowed to stamp out corruption.

**CHAD:** The on again, off again ceasefire in Chad seems to have broken down for good this time. The forces of Defence Minister, Hissain Habre seem determined to fight it out to the finish against the combined forces of President Goukoni Queddei and the other members of the "unity" government. Meantime, southern leader and vice president Wadel Kamougou has also entered the fray against Habre. As the fighting rages in the capital of N'Djamena, 100,000 of its residents have already fled.

### Roberts provides leadership

Oregon Commissioner of Labor and Industry Mary Wendy Roberts is to be commended for her call for a special session of the legislature to plan for the growing economic crisis.

Commissioner Roberts is responsible for apprenticeships, wage and hour complaints and civil rights complaints. In times of recession and rising unemployment these areas are critically affected. Opportunities for apprenticeships diminish, employers are unable or unwilling to pay wage claims, and as competition for jobs increases discrimination prevails.

Commissioner Roberts points to a 20 per cent drop in housing starts and a projected annual decline of 50 per cent; the closing of plywood mills throughout the state; a \$25 million cut in the Highway Department budget; layoffs and profit losses by major employers.

Although Oregon's economy is interdependent with that of the nation, she said it is not productive to merely blame outside forces but "leadership must be exercised within Oregon."

Prior to the proposed legislative session, her Bureau will assemble technical information, economic analysis and indices and seek community participation in determining how the Bureau can best address the economic condition.

When Wendy Roberts was campaigning for office she said she would not merely sit back and let problems come to her desk, but would aggressively pursue the problems and issues that relate to employment and industry.

This action is evidence that her campaign promises were more than mere words. It is rewarding to finally see a state agency take the responsibility to tackle problems that are critical to the least served members of the public.

### Letters to the Editor

#### An open letter from BUF

To the community:

Once again, we wish to express our gratitude for your show of support. As you may know the P.P.S. Board of Education has made some decisions related to educational issues raised by yourselves and the B.U.F. However, we believe actions taken so far are not enough regarding the future of our children's educational needs. The struggle still ahead of us may not end in a matter of days, months, or even years, but we must maintain the highest level of commitment and spirited cooperation for the benefit of our children.

We ask, therefore, and believe

your continued support is crucial/needed. Permit us to express a special Thank You by recognizing the support from the following organizations who publicly backed the B.U.F. plan:

Albina Ministerial Alliance, African Student Union - P.S.U., Black Caucus - P.S.U., Committee to Support The B.U.F., Fight Back, N.E. Coalition of Neighborhoods, N.E. Minority Contractors Association, Oregon Assembly for Black Affairs, Oregon Fair Share - Albina Chapter, and T.H.E. C.R.I.B.

Although we have recognized the above named organizations, we

wish to also express our appreciation to the hundreds of individuals and/or parents who have given their time, money, and support to the B.U.F. either publicly or privately. Also, we are acknowledging the support given by Atty. Derrick A. Bell, Jr., newly appointed Dean of the University of Oregon School of Law; Mr. Herb Cawthorne, P.P.S. Board member, and Mr. Lucius Hicks, III.

Respectfully,

Ron Herndon

Rev. John H. Jackson  
Co-Chairman, B.U.F.

#### Join movement for public power

To The Editor:

In 1980 Oregonians have a unique opportunity to gain control over their energy future. Already citizens in fourteen Oregon counties have placed measures on the November ballot for form People's Utility Districts (PUDs) and start the process of replacing PGE and PP&L. PUDs offer consumers local control over energy decisions and lower electric rates.

To provide renewable sources of power for our new PUDs and assure Oregonians a reliable supply of safe electrical energy, Oregonians for Utility Reform, Sen. Walt Brown, Senator George Wingard, and EWEB Commissioner John Bartels have sponsored the "Oregon Renewable Energy Development and Conservation Act of 1980" initiative petition. Petitions are now available for signature gatherers since the Oregon Supreme Court rejected Pacific Power and Light's challenge of the ballot title.

The renewable energy petition will finally allow us to get the conservation done and renewable

energy sources underway. The initiative implements Oregon Constitutional Article XI-D to make existing state bonding capacity available for low-interest loans to individuals, businesses, local governments, and consumer-owned utilities to develop solar, wind, geothermal, alcohol fuels, low-head hydro, wood-waste, and conservation.

In 1980 Oregonians will be able to vote on the "Oregon Model" of public power and renewable energy

#### Folk Art exhibit wrong

To The Editor:

A statement "Black women in Oregon do not quilt..." appears in the ethnic arts division of the current Oregon Folk Art Exhibit at the Oregon Historical Society. Such information is scheduled to travel to other points in the United States. It would appear that tax-supported agencies and endowments would NOT knowingly assent to be captive or accomplice to "irresponsible" distortion. I challenge the Oregon Historical

when we collect the necessary 55,000 signatures to place the "Oregon Renewable Energy Development and Conservation Act" on the ballot. Write Oregonians for Utility Reform, P.O. Box 12763, Salem, Oregon 97309 for information and petitions.

Sincerely

David McTeague  
290 18th St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Society to set a "high priority" for a photo inventory of individuals and group quilts made by Afro-Americans who live in Oregon including accompanying photos of persons.

My we expect a future exhibit postscript "Get It Right?"

Sincerely,

Mrs. Osly J. Gates

CC: Executive Director, Oregon Historical Society



### Notes from City Hall

By Charles Jordan  
Commissioner of Public Safety

If you believe that you did not violate any traffic laws when cited by that police officer, go tell it to the judge! Your failure to appear in court or dispose of that traffic violation can be serious!

REMEMBER THAT FINE YOU WERE GOING TO PAY?

"YOU FORGOT TO PAY THAT FINE FOR A CITATION YOU RECEIVED SIX MONTHS AGO. THEN, OF COURSE, YOU FORGOT ABOUT THE COURT DATE, SIMPLY BECAUSE IT JUST DIDN'T SEEM THAT SERIOUS." WELL! IT IS SERIOUS!

A bench warrant has been issued for your arrest and your driver's license has been suspended. This warrant may be served at your home or your place of employment.

If you are stopped by an officer under these circumstances it is very serious! Even though you are stopped for a minor traffic violation, you must appear before a judge for the previous violation and your failure to appear in court.

You will be asked to step out of your car and the officer will handcuff you. You will be searched and "taken into custody."

REMEMBER THAT FINE YOU WERE GOING TO PAY?"

At this point, YOU ARE UNDER ARREST.

The officer will have you sit in the back seat of the police car. You will be driven to the Multnomah County Booking Facility located at 1021 S.W. Fourth where County correctional officers will receive the Portland City Police Report and take you into their custody for booking.

The police officer is released of the responsibility for your custody at this point.

WHAT IF I WAS STOPPED WHILE DRIVING? CAN MY CAR BE TOWED? HOW DO I FIND IT AFTER MY RELEASE FROM THE MULTNOMAH COUNTY BOOKING FACILITY?

If there was a passenger in the car at the time of your arrest, that person, possessing a valid driver's license, may be allowed to drive your car (with your permission) to a place of your choosing, if that auto is not needed for police evidence.

Otherwise, upon your release from custody, you should call the Bureau of Police Auto Records Division at 248-5720. If your car has been towed, this division of the Police Bureau can direct you to its location.

You will have to pay, in cash, a towing bill of \$31.45, plus a \$5.00 per day storage fee if your car is im-

pounded four hours or more. These charges are due to increase July 30, 1980!

"HOW DO I FIND MY CAR AFTER MY RELEASE FROM THE MULTNOMAH COUNTY BOOKING FACILITY?"

If, in another example, your car is illegally parked when towed, you will be required to pay the fine in addition to the towing bill and storage fee.

If you feel your car was towed in error or the charges were excessive, you can appeal to the City of Portland (either the Auto Records Division or the Commissioner of the Office of Public Safety) to get reimbursed for the amount you paid to recover your car.

IF I HAVE BEEN ARRESTED, BOOKED IN THE COUNTY FACILITY AND THEN IT IS DECIDED THAT I MUST BE HELD AT THE COUNTY JAIL, WHAT HAPPENS TO MY PERSONAL PROPERTY? Can it be seized?

Yes! If there is anything on your person that the officer feels could be used as evidence!

In this instance, the procedures for handling your personal property are different. If you are interested, join me next week!

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