

EDITORIAL/OPINION

A first step

There should be no doubt on the part of the Portland School Board that the Black community is united in its demand for quality education. There has been an attitude of disbelief -- a question whether the Black United Front has support and whether parents would go so far as to keep their children home from school. The district has tried to perpetuate the myth that most Black parents are happy with the education provided. That issue should be determined now and the energy used to dispute the Front's credibility should be turned to solving the problems.

Other more reasoned voices say the BUF should now be willing to compromise. This is nonsense. The Front agreed last fall to forego a boycott because promises were made by the district. These promises have been broken. Rather than compromise, the Front must stick to its demands -- demands that are minimal and reasonable.

The core of the dispute is the denial of community participation in staff selection. The time to argue this point is long past. Citizen participation is now the name of the game, required in many federal and local funding processes (including the district's own federal funds). Local government including the state, city and county have involved citizens on screening committees with great success and

the district uses this process to select Area Advisory Board members.

This is an issue on which the Board will have to concede. Parents are demanding a greater voice in the determination of who teaches their children.

The School Board can respond or can learn once again that the only gains that ever come to Black citizens are through struggle. Considering everything, the district can't afford to go through another summer of discontent.

There has been much criticism of the large numbers of four and five years old white children brought to Albina schools to improve the racial ratio. Some of these parents did a great deal of squawking this fall when the return of some Black children to their neighborhood schools caused overcrowding for the young white children. Some of these white parents have never realized and have never cared that by providing special programs for their children the school district has forced Black children out of their own schools. They have not cared that special money designated for the education of Black and "disadvantaged" children is used to educate their middle and upper class white children.

These children are supposedly coming to enjoy an enriched educational experience in a multi-racial setting -- a unique opportunity to go to school with Black children. Yet these parents demonstrated extreme insensitivity when they chose to send their children to these schools during the boycott.



Notes from City Hall

By Charles Jordan
Commissioner of Public Safety

Twenty-two incidents against bus drivers since the beginning of the year have prompted me to appoint one of my police sergeants temporarily as Chief of Security for Tri-Met.

Sergeant Chuck Karl of the City's Crime Prevention Bureau will head the security force for 90 days in response to a request for assistance from Tri-Met officials and labor representatives.

The problems encountered by drivers and passengers have not reached crisis proportion but I consider them a "red flag" indicating that more effective security measures must be taken. The problem will not go away or resolve itself alone. It requires my attention.

It is extremely difficult to know the reasons why and how such incidents occur but I feel we must take action to secure our transportation system for those who use the service as well as for those who provide it. The disruption caused by a few is not worth the inconvenience of the majority.

A number of the incidents have been attributed to young people riding the bus. I would like to encourage all parents to talk with their children to assure that they do not engage in this activity and that they understand the implications of their actions. It would be unfortunate for a responsible, young adult to obtain a police record over what could amount to nothing more than a mis-

understanding.

Our City is the most livable in the United States and that is no accident. It is that way because our citizens, concerned citizens, are interested in maintaining that livability and they get involved. Our City is largely free of graffiti, vandalism, litter, street gangs, racial tensions, desolate slums, pollution and crime and I intend to do my part as a leader in keeping it that way.

My message to parents, drivers, passengers and perpetrators is that this violence will not be tolerated and I declare this to be a closed season to crime of any sort on our transit system. I care.

Letters to the Editor

NAACP and nukes

Letter to Editor:

We are dismayed by the NAACP's coming out in favor of nuclear power recently, and by NAACP officials helping to spread the myth being promulgated by the big energy corporations that "energy means jobs" -- in the NAACP version, that "energy means jobs for Black people."

Facts contradict this myth:

* More energy does not mean more jobs. As everyone knows, unemployment has been increasing during the last several years; energy use, however, has been at an all time high!

* Studies show that nuclear power generation actually provides fewer jobs than non-nuclear options. The Council on Economic Priorities estimates that the combined solar conservation option would generate 3.7 times more

direct employment that is, jobs directly involved in energy production, than the nuclear option -- while saving or producing 4 times more energy at a lower total cost. The American Institute of Architects estimates that conservation measured for new and existing buildings would create 1/2 million to more than one million decent jobs by 1990.

* Jobs in the solar/conservation industry -- sheet-metal work, insulating buildings, etc. -- are much more accessible to masses of presently unemployed workers, including Black youths, than are jobs in the nuclear industry, about half which, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, go to engineers, mathematicians, earth and physical scientists, health physicists, and the like. Many of the non-professional jobs, which today go to casual, often minority workers, involve ex-

posure to what the industry considers "maximum allowable" doses of radiation ("allowable" doesn't mean "safe"; your chances of getting cancer will still go way up from an "allowable" dose); 15 minutes of exposure in a three-month period is often the amount of work available, unless the rules are bent.

Can it be that the NAACP in endorsing the views of the oil companies and utilities, is willing to trade the interest of masses of currently unemployed Blacks -- not to mention the other minorities as well as the unemployed whites -- for the hope, not very great, that in 20 years the nuclear power industry will employ a few more Black mathematicians or geologists?

John Blank

For the Portland Fight Back Steering Committee

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Refugees, relief and resettlement

By N. Fungai Kumbula

There are, at the moment, more refugees in Somalia than there are people, ordinary citizens that is, in Botswana - 1.3 million refugees as opposed to the 800,000 people who make up Botswana. Djibouti, the former French colony on the Horn of Africa, is now home to some 30,000 refugees, fully 10% of its 300,000 population. Djibouti used to be called the Afars and Issas. Sudan houses a further half a million refugees and another 500,000 reside in Zambia, Mozambique and Botswana.

So much has been written, said and done about the boat people of Cambodia and Vietnam. Now the news is chokelof of accounts of Cuban refugees. At the same time very little is being said or done about African refugees; the refugee population in Africa now approaches the 4 million mark. There are more refugees in Africa right now than any other place in the world and Somalia has the world's highest refugee population. Did you know that? Bet you didn't. Is the lack of attention due to the fact that they are "only Africans?"

Most of Africa's and indeed the world's refugees are concentrated in the Horn of Africa, the area encompassing the Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Somalia. An 18 year guerrilla campaign by Eritrea to break away from Ethiopia's grasp has forced some 30,000 Ethiopians into neighboring Djibouti. In eastern Ethiopia in the desert region called the Ogaden, Ethiopia has been engaged in another bitter struggle with the Western Somali Liberation Front, WSLF. The WSLF wants to wrest control of the Ogaden from Ethiopia and annex it to Somali because the Ogaden is populated mostly by ethnic Somalis. In 1977 the Somali government joined in the war against Ethiopia and invaded Ethiopia. The Somali government supports the WSLF's claim that the

Ogaden is actually part of Somalia. Somalia lost the war and was forced to withdraw. However, the WSLF presses on with its campaign and so the wave of refugees keeps swelling. Somalia has a population of 3.7 million and a per capita income of \$125.00 per annum. So she is rather ill equipped to deal with this colossal refugee problem on a long term basis. Give her credit, though, she is doing a commendable job. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimates that Somalia will need approximately \$140 million but so far has received only \$18 million from international relief organizations. Though there are some agencies and groups in the United States working to get aid to Somalia, their efforts have been stryimed in Congress. The UNHCR warns that unless assistance is rushed to these refugees, they could face a disaster that would make Cambodia (Kampuchea) look like a picnic. An end to the political conflicts in the region could go a long way towards resolving the refugee problem but, at the moment, that is a very forlorn hope.

Of the 30,000 refugees in Djibouti, 20,000 have fled the fighting between Ethiopia and the WSLF in the Ogaden. The other 10,000, mostly professionals such as college professors, students and other intellectuals who were instrumental in the overthrow of one Emperor Haile Selassie fled their homeland in 1976. They were fleeing what they perceived as the ruling military junta, the Dergue's crackdown on intellectuals. They insist on staying in the city, Djibouti, where there is already a 50% unemployment rate. They have, therefore, not endeared themselves to much with the locals. Less than three years old, Djibouti (the country that is) is still busy trying to make a go of her nationhood.

The bulk of Eritrea's refugees,

some 300,000 of them, have taken refuge in the Sudan. Adding to them are some 67,000 Ugandans who fled their homeland in the wake of the overthrow of Idi Amin Dada. With their country still in a state of political flux, it does not look like they will be leaving any time soon. There are also some 5,000 exiles from Zaire and some Chadians.

Sudan has managed to resettle some 42,000 of these 400,000 refugees. They have been given little plots of land where they are given the means to fend for themselves. Over 100,000 of the refugees have, however, stubbornly insisted on staying in the urban areas with half of them, 50,000 in Khartoum, the capital. Next month the Sudanese government will host a pledging conference, with the assistance of the UNHCR, and the objective is to interest potential donor countries in a \$50 million development program designed to resettle all of Sudan's refugees.

Only in Southern Africa is the picture for refugees looking brighter. With the happy resolution of Zimbabwe's war of liberation, the half million refugees who had fled to Mozambique, Botswana and Zambia are beginning to return home. The government of Zimbabwe has made the resettlement of these people its number one priority. Various African leaders are now busy working on a plan for the peaceful resolution or cessation of hostilities in the Horn of Africa and in Chad. If Zimbabwe's shining example can be repeated in Ethiopia the Ogaden and Chad, Africa's refugee population can be just as amicably settled. In the meantime, the international community needs to double, triple and quadruple its relief effort to Africa if a major catastrophe is to be averted.

On top of all her other problems, Ethiopia has just recently filed an appeal for aid for some 5 million drought victims. When it rains, it pours.

The eruption of Mt. St. Miami

By Nyewusi Askari

After months of reported police violence against Black people in Miami, Florida it was inevitable that the Black community would scream "No more!" and move in mass to state their case. So, as Mt. St. Helens' burped ash and smoke, so did Miami.

The spark that lit the fuse was the cold blooded murder of brother Arthur McDuffie, on December 17th 1979, by four white cops. (It is reported that they were joined by at least 8 other cops during the killing). Five months later, on May 17th, an all-white jury in Tampa, Florida returned a "Not Guilty" verdict. Minutes after the verdict, an estimated 5,000 Black people stormed the Metro Justice Building in downtown Miami and the City exploded.

And above the rumble of Black anger, fire and smoke, came the non-sensical voice of Florida's Governor Graham declaring, "murder, assault, no matter what the asserted justification, will not be tolerated." Other predictable voices were also heard: "Race riot," "Senseless violence," "Why are they doing it?"

Apparently the white communities and their uniformed agents (the cops) had not been listening to the voices from within the Black community; their pain and anguish over the probation given a white cop gunslinger, for sexually molesting a 11 year old Black girl, or the "No charges" filed against white cops who illegally broke into a brother school teacher's home, beat and

Bigotry

To The Editor:

While there's a lot of agitation over "hostages" in Iran, May Day in New York saw a social explosion in which people clubbed and battered one another into smithereens, and in the South not long ago, some groups engaged in a frantical conflict that left several dead and mangled. This, is a democracy with liberty and justice for all!

The other day the news media carried the item that if you didn't like the way we're treating Iran, then go there. It is this kind of bigotry and intolerance that violates

arrested him and then claimed they had made a mistake. Indeed they had...made mistake after mistake, involving the systematic, methodical assault upon Black people.

Then came the biggest mistake of all, the murder of brother McDuffie, working man out taking a bike ride, minding his own business when confronted by white cops who were just cruising through the Black community looking for a "Niggah" to kill...any niggah...and they did...clubbed his brain out onto the funky pavement.

The verdict of "Not guilty" on all charges was a slap in the face of the Black community. The verdict clearly suggested three things, (1) the murder of Black men in Miami is acceptable (2) that the all-white jury were looking for/and protecting their own (the killers) and (3) that the City of Miami didn't give a damn about the feelings of the Black community. Realizing this, the Black community known as Liberty City came back with its own verdict: "guilty on all counts!"

In a desperate attempt to regain control of the situation, the Governor called in 1200 national guard troops, including the Rev. Jesse Jackson and Andrew Young. It was like a page out of the 1960's, however, this wasn't the 1960's and Black people in rebellion can no longer be "calmed down" by hand picked system leaders, or the threat of white force. Sure, Blacks of Miami listened to what these hand picked Black men had to say, but they made it clear that both Jesse and Andy should really focus on the dangerous situations taking place in their own backyard.

and contradicts the very central principle of democracy and frequently it is carried on in the very name of democracy! And often they who most loudly proclaim their own rights to free speech are the first to deny it to others who may happen to disagree with their particular views.

It dazes and outrages all decent conscience when people pretend to be defending democracy by indulging in Hitleristic tactics. The hypocritical "cliche" "like it," or "leave it" belongs to this category. Are we to like what is undermining our own country's well-being? If we are, as the authors of this cliché

The message from white Amerikkka's law enforcement agencies is clear; expect no prosecution of white cops who kill Black people, especially Black men. Even the presence of the federal government doesn't mean justice will come. Black people remember the brutal murder of brother Jose Torres in Texas, by white cops. The federal government indeed did prosecute the "killers" of Jose, the result... "a one dollar fine and a suspended one year sentence!"

From the communities of Black America, a message is also clear; a new generation of Blacks have been born; young Blacks who remember the violent aggressions of white men against their brothers, sisters, mothers and fathers; the imprisonment of their leaders and allies. They have seen, they have heard and in the future we shall see mass, Black community organization to insure the Black community's survival against all forms of Klanish terror.

There is really no justice or democracy for Black people in most white courts, nor is there City protection for Black people, from gun toting, trigger happy, white cops who occupy our communities, therefore, the pending survival of our Black communities will depend on our ability to organize United Fronts, capable of mass community organizing; organizing designed to bring about maximum results, while at the same time insuring the least amount of damage to the community as possible.

The situation in Miami is, "Just the same ol song, but with a different meaning..."

seem to imply, then we are helping the country to take leave of itself. All societies, including our own is continually imperiled by anarchy on one side and tyranny on the other depending on the political extremists to the left or right for leadership. The democratic principle is to guard against this even if it may mean dissent and non-conformity versus dissenters and non-conformists who would destroy democracy, even in the name of democracy.

Sincerely,

Paul Brinmen, Jr.