

# EDITORIAL/OPINION

## Firing indicates power shift

The termination of Robert Blanchard as Superintendent of Schools has a greater significance than the future of one man. It is an indication of increasing power in the hands of the people. For the first time, the downtown business establishment is not running the school district.

The effort of the "establishment" to maintain control was great - with some representatives speaking before the board, others attending the meeting Monday night, a still others making high pressure phone calls indicating that they would not support a needed school levy if Blanchard was not retained. But their efforts failed and four members of the Board voted to terminate Dr. Blanchard.

The efforts of the Black United Front - its successful Boycott, its fingering of allegedly incompetent administrators, its call for Dr. Blanchard's resignation, its laying the responsibility for the miseducation of Black children at his feet kept the issue before the public and kept the pressure on the Board to resolve the issue - the issue of who runs the public schools.

The Black United Front and the Black community are being credited - or blamed - but the real decision was Dr. Blanchard's. He found it impossible, or unacceptable, to work cooperatively with the new Board - a board no longer dominated and controlled by the representatives of the "establishment." As the four members of the Board most closely identified with and most responsive to the people coalesced it became more and more apparent that Dr. Blanchard could not stay. As the *Oregonian* so aptly stated, he was a "businessman's educator."

It should be carefully noted that if a threatened recall vote materialize it will come from the downtown business establishment.

The dissatisfied West side parents who threatened to recall the "old" School Board if they adopted the Coalition's pairing plan are now threatening to recall the "new" Board. But this group has no vested interest and will fizzle.

The real recall effort will come from those who have always controlled and who believe they still know what's best for Portland.

Although the termination is being referred to as the "end of an era," it is also a beginning - an opportunity for a new Board to begin a new decade with a new administration. Many problems - opportunities - need to be addressed in the coming years. The Board will find a dynamic new Superintendent who will prepare our children for life in a multi-cultural, rapidly changing world.

The "new Board" is now firmly in control and it must retain its unity in spite of the threats and criticism that will come. Termination is sad for any person and the Superintendent, whatever his faults, is a man. But it happens every day. The great disaster predicated for the district will not happen - no more than it happened to PP&L when it fired its leader (twice).

Those staff members and dissenting board members who truly care about children will join together and work with the Board and with Dr. James Fenwick as they launch the district into a new, more sensitive and caring era.

Fenwick's success, and that of the district, depends on his and the Board's desire and ability to address the educational needs of Black children.

The real "discord, fragmentation and tumult" will occur if the white community continues to use Blanchard's termination to heap racist recrimination on Blacks.

## Letters to the Editor

### The uses of student power

To the Editor:  
I have had the pleasure of having several articles published in the "Observer" while being confined at OSP, and now that I am soon to be released, where I will enter the biggest arena of confinement, I would like to see this article published, as my good-bye and hello.

Three paragraphs from the book "The Student as Nigger" by Jerry Farber.

"How do you raise hell? That's a whole other article. But just for a start, why not stay with the analogy? What have Black people done? They have, first of all, faced the fact of their slavery. They've stopped kidding themselves about an eventual reward in the Great Watermelon Patch in the sky. They've organized; they've decided to get freedom now, and they've

started taking it.  
"Students, like Black people, have immense, unused power. They could, theoretically, insist on participating in their own education. They could make academic freedom bilateral; they could teach their teachers to thrive on love and admiration, rather than fear and respect, and to lay down their weapons. Students could discover community, and they could learn to dance by dancing on the IBM card, they could make coloring books out of catalogs and they could put the grading system in a museum; they could raise one set of walls and let life come blowing into the classrooms; they could raise another set of walls and let education flow out and flood the streets; they could turn the classrooms into where it's at a "field of action" as Peter Morin describes it. And believe it or

not, they could study eagerly and learn prodigiously for the best of all possible reasons, their own reasons.

"They could, theoretically. They have the power. But only in a very few places, like Berkeley, have they even begun to think about using it. For students, as for Black people, the hardest battle isn't with Mr. Charlie. It's with what Mr. Charlie has done to your mind."

And in closing, I would like to continue quoting and quote the words of Portland's own, George Page, "Back what you believe in!"  
Nathaniel Scott 41877

### Thanks

Dear Editor:

A most sincere and warm thank you is extended your way from the Community Services Program, U.S. Census Bureau, for contributing outstanding printed coverage of 1980 Census related materials. This attitude is reflected from the Director's office downward throughout the staff.

I am enclosing a Certificate of Appreciation, signed by our national Director with this letter to add to the numerous awards, plaques and trophies that you already have received.

Very Truly Yours,

Mary Wendy Roberts,  
Commissioner, Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries

Again, thank you for your concern and assistance.

Louis H. Drake  
Community Services Specialist

### Supports two commissions

Dear Mr. Henderson:

I applaud the insight of the Observer shown in the editorial of April 24, "Two Commission: Not one," pointing out the need for two special minority commissions to examine the needs of Black and Hispanic communities.

I endorsed this idea as a State Senator and continue to endorse it as Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor and Industries.

There already exists a Governor's Commission for Women. And the Black and Hispanic communities

badly need a similar group to examine the economic, community and social barriers they face.

I openly offer the services of the Bureau to facilitate the formation of such a commission and would be more than happy to meet with community members interested in spearheading the effort.

### School Board dumps Blanchard

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commitments to real educational opportunity, improved elementary education, equitable and effective discipline, and much increased openness in communication with the public and the dedicated teaching staff of the district."

In response to questions whether his statement was proper at the time, Scott said he wanted to call public attention to what is happening. "Too much is at stake to change the horses at this time."

He said throughout his six months as chairman, the Board has not given adequate attention to issues. "I have tried to use rational processes to try to get response from the Board "careful decision

making." He also said the community is not focusing on the critical problems.

"I am flabbergasted that he would do this," Steve Buel said. "I don't believe personnel decisions should be made in a press conference. He stepped outside of a process that we wrote and we agreed to, and he did so without informing us."

Sarah Newhall said the press conference was inappropriate and that she had not been informed. "He's guilty of breaking away from the process imposed on all of us and this is diverse. I am very upset about it."

The Board had adopted five criteria against which to measure

Dr. Blanchard. These criteria were adopted at a public meeting June - which was attended by administrators. The criteria are: 1) personnel management; 2) relationship with Board including preparation of materials for Board meetings; 3) comprehensive planning; 4) community/public relations; 5) Curriculum and instruction.

One Board member added, "Bill talked about a coming crisis; there is a crisis now because of the lack of cooperation of staff." Aside from Blanchard's reluctance to participate in Board meetings and his negative attitude toward Board members, the defiance of administrators has become more open in recent months.



## War of liberation in Lesetho?

By N. Fungai Kumbula

About the size of Maryland and surrounded on all sides by South Africa, Lesetho is an independent Black republic that has been struggling to stand up on her own since attaining independence from Britain in 1965. Her peculiar geographical location has necessitated her dangerous dependence on South Africa, Free Africa's Public Enemy Number One.

Consequently, despite her small size and relative "obscurity," Lesetho has been one of the most successful African countries when it comes to soliciting international aid. Both East bloc and Western countries seem to think that providing aid to Lesetho will reduce her dependence on South Africa.

That as it may, this has tended to overshadow Lesetho's shameless repression and Prime Minister Leabua Jonathan's authoritarian rule. A brief look at the country's history will suffice to show this authoritarianism and a total disregard for the people's political, civil and human rights.

During the time when Europe was shamelessly raping Africa and placing virtually the whole continent under colonial domination, King Moshoeshoe placed the then Basutoland under British "protection." The idea was to forestall any colonial designs on Basutoland; the King intended to revoke the "protection" agreement as soon as the threat of colonialism was removed.

Following the end of World War II and as was happening all over Africa, Basutos began to agitate for self-rule also and to demand the ouster of the British. A party called the Basutoland Congress Party, BCP, was formed in 1952, and over the years managed to pressure the "brutish" British to grant the Basothos local autonomy. The BCP managed to sweep village and district council elections and 30 of the 40 seats in a National Council. The BCP platform stressed local participation in self-government and opposed chieftainship which it

saw as a tool of continued British domination.

In the meantime, another rival organization, the Basotho National Party, BNP, had been formed and, along with the Marema-Tlou Freedom Party, MFP, had contested the 1960 election prior to independence in 1965, elections were held to determine who was going to form the new nation's government. By this time, the BCP and MFP had demonstrated their popularity and Britain, ever fearful of a "radical" African government coming to power in a former colony, opted for the Kenya solution: this calls for backing a less threatening faction.

In Lesetho that faction was Jonathan's BNP; significantly, Jonathan also received the endorsement and backing of South Africa and the Roman Catholic Church. Though the elections were heavily rigged and there was a lot of intimidation, detention of known BCP supporters, entire (BCP strongholds) villages not counted, the BNP managed to win by only two seats: 31 seats to the BCP-MFP's 29.

Jonathan was in and both South Africa and Britain sighed with relief as did the Catholic Church. However, the drama was far from over. The Basotho merely waited the five year period to the next election. In the 1970 elections, the BCP was winning handily when Jonathan suddenly called to halt the elections, declared a state of emergency and suspended the constitution. To date there have been no more elections and the constitution remains suspended.

The BCP government then moved in with a vengeance to crush BCP resistance. Hundreds of BCP supporters were arrested and others forced into exile but, support for the BCP has been growing rather than dying. The Jonathan regime went so far as to bomb miners who were protesting the regime's decision to grant mining rights to the South African based Anglo-American

Corporation. Between 200 and 500 of the protesters were killed.

The only option left open to the opposition was to launch an armed struggle; to try to overthrow the Jonathan regime by force. In April 1979, BCP leader Ntsu Mokhehle, then in exile in Botswana, announced the formation of the Lesetho Liberation Army. Jonathan has tried to portray the LLA as the creation of South Africa, intended to "destabilize a legal Black government." This claim has succinctly been refuted by Edgar Motuba, editor of a Lesetho Evangelical Church newspaper call Leselinyana ("Little Night"). Argues Motuba: "Jonathan's government was put into power with the backing of South Africa." Others also charge that 35 BCP members were arrested by South African police as they crossed the border and handed over to Lesetho authorities in exchange for South African refugees hiding in Lesetho.

The week of June 1st saw a fierce day long battle ensue between BCP guerrillas and government troops. In the end the government displayed nine bodies, allegedly of the BCP guerrillas and huge quantities of weapons captured. What this demonstrated was the seriousness of this fledgling war of liberation in this unlikely of places. After Jonathan's naked usurpation of power following the "70 election," some African leaders are having second thoughts about how closely they want to be allied with such a despot.

Even with the happy resolution of the Zimbabwe problem and the projected imminent peoples victory in Namibia, it appears Southern Africa will continue to be a hotbed of revolution at least for quite some time to come. Lesetho's war of liberation also underscores one most important point: suppression, repression and oppression will not be tolerated any more, whether it is practised by a Jonathan (Black) or a Botha (white).

Pamberi Nchimurenga!



## Notes from City Hall

By Charles Jordan  
Commissioner of Public Safety

### VICTIMS.

"You've just cashed your paycheck and you are walking to your car. Suddenly, someone grabs your arm, hits you over the head, and when you recover from the blow, your money is gone and your arm is broken."

"A police officer or ambulance takes you to the hospital, and you realize you will be unable to work for awhile, but you have many financial responsibilities."

The Portland Police Bureau will send a report to the Victim's Assistance Program, or you can call them at 248-3222.

This program will help you make financial "arrangements" to cover your obligations, as well as lend emotional support throughout the Court ordeal.

If a suspect is apprehended and goes to trial, the Victim's Assistance Program helps you understand the Criminal Justice System in a Criminal Case.

They also offer community resource referral, so that your immediate needs can be assessed and filled -- from emergency food, to shelter, to someone who can fix a window.

This program aids all assault victims whose major needs are referrals, comfort, and case information, however, no financial reimbursement is made. The Victim's Assistance Program will inform you of other service agencies available to help you.

One such program for victims is sponsored by the State of Oregon Department of Justice.

Under a law passed by the 1977 Oregon Legislature, victims, physically injured during a crime, can receive financial assistance. The law recognizes that bringing the criminal to justice is not enough. Crime victims suffer long after the crime has been committed, due to physical disabilities, loss of income, and perhaps even the death of a loved one.

This program will compensate innocent victims of crime by paying medical bills up to \$10,000 (or the amount not covered by insurance up to \$10,000). In addition, the State will pay up to \$200.00 per week for loss of wages up to \$10,000. If physical therapy is needed for your rehabilitations, \$3,000 is available to cover that cost.



ALFRED L. HENDERSON  
Editor/Publisher

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