

# EDITORIAL/OPINION

## Who controls the schools?

A group of former School board members -- discontent with the "new" board -- have set themselves up as a screening committee to insure that future board members are acceptable. Their endorsement and their money -- combined with the fact that the school board election is held at a special election where ten percent of the people vote -- will insure the success of the candidates.

Is this democracy? One of the things Oregonians take great pride in is our open election system. Anyone can file for election -- he needs neither permission nor part endorsement. True, name familiarity and access to money play a major part in our elections -- but the individual who believes he has something to offer still has an outside chance of election.

This new committee is being formed with the sole purpose of subverting the democratic process. Their purpose is to screen, select and finance candidates to the school board -- candidates to the school board -- candidates that will perpetuate their own image.

These so-called leaders are attempting to bring about "rule by committee" to replace government "of the people, by the people and for the people." They apparently believe they are better able to choose our elected representatives than we are.

But look at their records -- Beatty, Cherry, DeWeese, McCoy, Newman, Crowell, etc. al -- They are the former school board members who established and perpetuated an evil system of segregation in the Portland Public Schools. They are the people who when threatened by possible federal intervention -- solved their problem by coercive, destructive programs that have destroyed the lives of thousands of black children. They are the ones who carelessly scattered Black children, while carefully protecting white parents from any responsibility. They are the ones who created the problems the "new board" is now attempting to resolve.

They are the former board members who created such discontent throughout the district that the people have refused to pass levies to support the schools. They are the ones who created discontent that caused two of their members to lose their elections and two others to be re-elected only because they faced no creditable opposition.

The stakes are higher than merely who will sit on the School Board. The ordinary voters are not to be allowed to choose their representatives. The elite functionaries of the power structure will select our public officials for us.

## Letters to the Editor Wants no Black Commission

To the Editor:

Well, now that Governor Atiyeh has officially recognized the demand for a State Commission of Black Affairs (and other minorities) by setting up a "Task Force" to study the idea, Calvin Henry must feel very encouraged that his favorite project seems to have acquired some sort of establishment momentum.

Calvin Henry, and the "Oregon Association for Black Affairs", Calvin Henry, Chairman, has been promoting a Black Commission for about six years. The Portland Branch NAACP was literally trapped into sponsoring the Black Commission in 1977 when Reverend John H. Jackson was President of the Branch. He was asked at a Salem meeting to endorse the proposed legislation for a Black Commission and told Mr. Henry to send the proposed bill to the Branch, for it would require Branch action. However before the Branch received the information a bill was printed by the Legislature with the name of the Portland Branch as one of the sponsors. Of course that put the Branch in a squeeze position. If it disavowed endorsement of the bill it would look like a rift in the ranks of the NAACP branches in Oregon

to the press and the legislators; but by keeping silent and letting the endorsement stand, the Branch was tactically supporting something which historically the NAACP, both nationally and locally, did not approve.

About twenty-five years ago (when there were no Salem, Corvallis or Eugene Branches) and Portland then as now had the largest black population in the state, the national NAACP policy was to get rid of most of the state-sponsored civil rights commissions, and they pretty much did. Oregon had such a Commission which first worked as a private "goodwill" group, chaired by the late David Robinson. Later the committee was incorporated into the Bureau of Labor under the original Civil Rights Act of ORS. Still later, a bill was introduced to abolish this Civil Rights Commission, and the NAACP endorsed it and worked for it. I was President of the Portland Branch at the time, and David Robinson was bitterly disappointed with our action. However, NAACP had recognized for a long time that the Oregon Commission on Civil Rights had become a dumping ground where civil rights problems were sent to be "studied" by the legislature and law enforcement officers. Since the Commission had practically no staff

and only met four times a year, it seemed to NAACP that its chief function was to stand between us and our efforts to get civil rights legislation with teeth. With few exceptions, this was the function of state civil rights commissions throughout the United States, Massachusetts and Wisconsin being the notable exceptions at the time.

To see the idea of a State Commission on Civil Rights, or as it will now be called, a "Black Commission" revived strikes fear and dismay in the breasts of many of us old timers. Are we going to have another dumping ground created? A place to which problems can be referred instead of being solved? Aside from creating a few jobs for minorities, we cannot really see any use for reviving such a Commission. Rather we should have direct action to enforce the very good laws which we have on the books and which are mouldering in dust except for an occasional civil rights case being settled after years of dilly-dallying. From this old-timer to the younger generation: Look this gift horse in the mouth. Its teeth are worn with age and it can't chew much.

Lorna Marple  
Former President and present  
Parliamentarian-Historian  
Portland Branch NAACP

## Opportunity for renewable energy

To the Editor:

Oregonians have the unique opportunity to make a renewable energy breakthrough in 1980 with the initiative petition signature drive for the "Renewable Energy Development and Conservation Act." The initiative implements Oregon Constitution Article XI-D, which calls for the election of a three member, non-partisan Oregon Energy Development commission (EDC) to administer an aggressive financing program for renewable energy development and conservation using existing state bonding capacity.

In addition to making loans

available to individuals, community development corporations, small businesses, and consumer-owned utilities for solar, hydro, geothermal, biomass, wind, alcohol fuels, and conservation projects, the OEDC will be the wholesale power supply agency for our newly forming people's utility districts (PUDs).

Portland General Electric and Pacific Power and Light both have extensive nuclear investments and are fighting the Renewable Energy Development and Conservation Act tooth and nail. They will have made only token efforts to develop renewable energy resources while

the Governor's Alternative Energy Commission indicates there is a tremendous potential in Oregon.

The final deadline for submitting the initiative to the Secretary of State is rapidly approaching; it's July 3. So concerned citizens should "Sign for Solar" now.

Over 15,000 public power advocates, environmentalists, and Democrats have petitions in their possession, so you should not have to look for an available petition. Sincerely yours,

Dave McTeague  
Democratic National Committee  
Person Elect



## Towards energy self-sufficiency

By N. Fungai Kumbula

Ethanol, or ethyl alcohol as it is alternatively called, promises to ease some of Africa's energy woes. The spiralling price of oil that has played such havoc with Western economies has all but ruined Africa's fledgling economies. If present trends are any yardstick to go by, soon it will be ethanol to the rescue.

Several African countries are converting surplus sugar into ethanol which is then used as a gasoline additive. As much as 20% of the gas could be made up of ethanol without requiring any engine modifications. Beyond that figure, the engine would have to be altered.

**ZIMBABWE:** Starting this month, gas distributors around the country are getting supplies of ethanol. The dealers will be adding 15% to all their regular gasoline, thus upgrading it to premium. The new blend will cost the same as today's import premium and will save the country from US\$14 million to US\$17 million annually. This is the extra foreign exchange that the country would have to spend importing foreign oil.

Triangle, a local company, produces the ethanol. The plant is

built right next to its sugar mill in the Lowveld, Zimbabwe's sugar district. It is the largest of its kind outside of Brazil, the world leader in gasohol production. The plant needed only US\$2.6 million in foreign currency to set up and, was completed ahead of schedule.

Triangle can produce up to 15 million gallons of ethanol per year and this should supply up to 15% of the country's gasoline needs. In the future it will be expanded to produce 20% which will result in considerable savings to the young nation. Already, Zimbabwe is emerging as a world leader in energy self-sufficiency.

**KENYA:** The Asian owned Madhvari group is setting up Kenya Chemical & Food Corp. This corporation is building a plant near Kisumu in Western Kenya that will produce up to 15 million gallons of ethanol a year again, using sugar as the source.

**ZAMBIA:** Indeco, Zambia's state holding corporation, has ordered machinery worth US\$22 million to build an alcohol distilling and fodder yeast plant. Using sugar molasses, the plant will produce about a million gallons of ethanol at

the Nakambala estate in Mazabuka. The project will save Zambia \$5 million a year in badly needed foreign exchange.

**UPPER VOLTA:** To arrest the rapid deforestation of its countryside, Upper Volta has embarked on a scheme to use ethanol as a cooking fuel. Generally, the local population just goes out and cuts down the trees. So, the country's ethanol usage is aimed, not at curbing the flow of currency out of the country but, rather at conservation of what is left of her forests.

**SUDAN:** At Kenana, the Sudan has the world's largest sugar project. Now the government is looking towards the production of ethanol within the next ten years. Like most "dirt poor" Third World nations, Sudan has been ravaged by outlandish expenditures on foreign oil.

These are but humble beginnings of what, hopefully, will be Africa's answer to the oil question. As the continent struggles to get a grip on its economy, projects like this will have to be multiplied and expanded. As much sugar as the continent produces, the wheels of progress need not grind to a halt for lack of energy.



## Notes from City Hall

By Charles Jordan  
Commissioner of Public Safety

### EXPIRED DRIVER'S LICENSE

"Your driver's license has expired and you just haven't taken the time to get it renewed. You see an officer approaching and you panic."

The officer will probably follow the traffic violation procedures we discussed April 17.

In most cases you will be issued a citation for your traffic violation as well as a citation for operating a vehicle without a valid driver's license.

If you attempt to elude an approaching officer you may be arrested. Many juveniles will see the

police and try to outrun or lose them in traffic. It will be a simple matter to just pull over and accept the citation. In the case of a teenager, the juvenile may be driven home if the car driven is not stolen.

### DRIVING WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE

"In still another instance, a police officer feels you are driving erratically and suspects that you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol."

Again, traffic violation procedures are usually followed, however, you may be asked to leave your car and perform some percep-

tion tests on the street. If the officer is satisfied that you are not under the influence, you are free to go.

On the other hand, if the officer has probably cause to believe you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol while driving a vehicle, you will be arrested. You may lose your driving privileges for a period of 90 days or longer if convicted.

If you are driving a vehicle while under the influence and become involved in a traffic accident when someone is seriously injured or killed, you can be charged with a felony; in the case of a fatal accident, manslaughter.

## Black United Front is community

By Nyewusi Askari

A great deal of attention has been drawn to Portland's Black community (the Black United Front in particular) and many narrow-minded things are being said (publicly and printed) by the defenders of white racism, concerning our black leadership, therefore, it is necessary to give a clearer understanding of what the Black community's leadership is/is not.

At the present time, it is apparent that these defenders are having a difficult time dealing with the positive thrusts for Black community development, by Black Portlanders. To them, the present movement is *strange, unbecoming* and down right *out-of-line*. And daily they speak of us, in *strange, unacceptable* tongues.

The common belief among these people is: The Black United Front, is simply Ron Herndon's *thing*. Another common belief is, *Ron Herndon* is the leader of this Black community. It will be said now, and time and time again, "The Black United Front" is not just simply Ron Herndon. It is not a Ronnie Herndon thing. The Black United Front is a Black community force of community people dedicated to the betterment of their community. Brother Ron Herndon, is just one of the many emerging potential Black leaders from this community.

Portland, like many other basically white, power structured cities, has developed the habit of underestimating Blackfolks. In doing so, it has ignored a very important chapter of Amerikkkan history; the history of Black peoples ability to strive and survive/live and let live/but fight against any and all forces dedicated to keeping us in a "Yessur Massa" position. History reveals the struggle, and the many hundred years of survival against white racism and its defenders. Black people, no matter what is written, no matter what is said, is a proud people, and Portland's Black

community reflects that proudness.

Therefore, the projection of Ron Herndon is merely the projection of the Black community. Ron is simply doing his job as a community worker, alongside other community organizers, workers and professionals. Thus...what our community is, cannot be defined in terms of a few individuals. Neither can the Black United Front and this Black community is not about to allow the white power structure disrupt our internal growth with definitions not fit to be written on toilet paper.

*Strange*, they say, that we are choosing to fight without asking for permission. Not *strange* that some Negroes are finding it difficult "to let go of Ol' Massa." In the meantime, white communities across the state are engaged in continuous efforts to improve everything from the quality of education of their school systems, to the quality of drinking water. Their appointed or elected leaders are daily stating positions of white community concerns, so why, all of a sudden, is it so *strange* for the Black community of Portland to do the same. Maybe, it's because for too long Black people here, have layed back and allowed ill-responsible people to do nothing for them, in the name of "Sumpin." Those days are over!!! We can no longer allow our children to be mis-educated, our sisters and brothers to be misused/abused and murdered by trigger happy cowboys, and certainly will no longer allow our leadership to be defined by power hungry madmen. We, as a community, is not begging for anything...we are organizing to get what is rightfully ours as Black people, a community, and as Americans.

It's very *strange* to the defenders of white racism, that we Blacks have chosen to attack their heroes, such as Dr. Blanchard. Well, Blanchard is just one of many. We find it very necessary from this point on, to make continued efforts to remove

from our midst, those people (Black or white) who are responsible for the continuation of social and political wrong doing to Black adults and children alike, and will not allow any form of injustice against Black people in this community, to go unchallenged.

The Black community is not an isolated island. It is part of the heartbeat of Portland. And it should be expressed that not all whites are racist, just as not all Blacks are Black. A demonstration of white support for the betterment of the Black community is evident in many aspect of our lives. For example, many white businesses and establishments in the business world bring their business to the Black community, for the purpose of the continued growth of the state of Oregon. As the State of Oregon continues to grow, so will Blacks, and an effort is being made by both white and Black businessmen to solve the many problems faced in this area. Many white businesses and establishments, daily, advertise in the Black press, in a continued effort of healthy communityship.

Yet, there is the problem of not enough effort being made by certain white establishments to better their understanding of what the Black community is doing to better itself. Instead of relying on the white press and other forms of white media for information on/about Black people, they should ask Black people. We are the ones being spotlighted. Yet, we are not moved by sensationalism, and we are certainly not asleep on what the real issues are.

It's the year "1980" not 1960, not 1950, not 1940, not 1920 and certainly not "1492." We think differently, fight differently, and our efforts and spirit echo the efforts and spirits of our brothers and sisters across Amerikkka. "Recall that!!!" when you are at a loss to understand our hunger for equal "Justice."

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### PORTLAND OBSERVER

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