

Recall debate raises tempers

By Nyewusi Askari

While many area residents were busy settling and shaking off the rigors of the day, representatives from the Black United Front, Citizens For A Responsible School Board, Citizens For Community Unity and the Northeast community were meeting at King Neighborhood Facility, in an effort to further clarify their positions on issues surrounding the recall campaign, the present boycott of the Lloyd Corporation, and the threatened Sept. 2, boycott of Portland Public School District No. 1. When the smoke cleared Monday night, it was evident that Portland is in for a long season of unpredictable turmoil.

Each representative were allowed ten minutes to express its organization's position, followed by informal questioning by members of the audience. Two minutes each were given for closing remarks.

First to speak, and representing the Citizens For A Responsible School Board, was Evie Crowell. Ironically, Hal Hart, co-chairperson of the committee, was present but refused to participate, even after being asked by members of the Black community. "I feel we are adequately represented," he said.

Ronnie Herndon, co-chairman of the Black United Front and its representative at the forum, responded: "It's an insult to the Black community that Mr. Hart is refusing to defend his committee's position. He has done it all over town, on T.V., and other forums, yet when it comes to the Black community, he chooses to front Ms. Crowell as his mouth piece. As far as I know, Ms. Crowell has never represented the Recall committee anywhere before, until tonight. Again, we ask Mr. Hart to step forward and defend their position."

Hart did not respond, even to the boos and repeated urging from members of the audience. Visibly shaken, Ms. Crowell proceeded to briefly outline some of her committee's reasons for wanting Newhall, Cawthorne, Buel and Priestley removed from the board:

- irresponsibility in decision making.
- reckless conduct
- lacking qualities of good judgment and,
- jeopardizing the stability of Portland School System.

When questioned about her personal involvement with the Recall committee, Ms. Crowell said she was acting as a private citizen and a concerned parent. "I feel that the manner in which Dr. Blanchard was removed, showed immaturity of judgment," she said. Her answer sparked heated comments from the audience, some posing serious questions about her performance as a former school board member. It was pointed out that only once, while serving on the school board, did she cast a vote favorable to changing the conditions of Black children in the school system. She was also questioned about her lack



Black United Front pickets Lloyd Center, asking supporters not to spend their money. Lloyd Corporation vice-president Bob Cameron is active in school board recall movement.

(Photo: Richard Brown)

of concern for "Quality Education" for Black children past and present.

Ms. Crowell defined the Recall committee as "a broad based committee of concerned citizens; long term residents with a sense of responsibility."

Ronnie Herndon, in explaining the Black United Front's position said, "I'm sorry, that in this day and time, to hear someone talk about how sad it is to see Robert Blanchard go, given the harm he did to a generation of black children."

- desegregation plan -- bussed Black children out of their community, but never mandatorily bussed one white child
- early childhood centers -- almost 69% white in lower grades
- few Blacks hired in the school system

- three (3) times as many Black students suspended three (3) years in a row
- curriculum - a joke to say the least.

"The Black United Front entered the Recall reluctantly. We feel it is a waste of taxpayers money. We also feel that dissatisfaction with school board members should be settled at the polls, however, we will not call off our recall campaign. In the first place, the recall committee gives no indication that it is willing to drop its recall. If we called off our recall, or if the recall of the four school board members is successful, what we'll have is three board members

who don't really care about Black children given the policies, practices and votes they have cast during the tenure on the Board," Herndon said.

Paul Millius, representing the Citizens for Community Unity, called on both the Black United Front and the recall committee to drop their recall campaigns. "The most pressing need is not mass disruption of the Board, but the creation of a climate of decision of plans and programs that meet the challenge of the 80s," he said.

This committee fears a division of communities if the recall campaigns continue. It proposes that the Black United Front and the recall committee work together to solve the problems, thus allowing other issues of importance to become part of the problem solving effort. Some of those issues outlined were:

- declining revenues
- staff changes
- shrinking student population
- program involvements
- school closures

"We want to promote an on-going dialogue within the Portland community to identify these problems and come up with a creative solution for them."

"We are firmly opposed to both recalls of school board members that are now under way. We are asking both sides to cool it, to turn down the rhetoric, to turn in recall petitions, unsigned of course. For those who are critical of the school board, we say, watch them closely, call them to task, but also ask to help. Don't sign...serve!" he urged.

The feeling of the community was best reflected in a comment made by a Black woman, who recently moved to Portland from Chicago. "What these powerful people are failing to realize is, no matter how much money they have to throw around, no matter how successful their recall is or isn't, it all boils down to the children. Without children there can be no school board, nothing. Both white and Black parents know this, and I'm sure, as both concerned parents and citizens, we shall keep our children out of this school system, until the real issues are resolved to the community's satisfaction. Without the children, this system cannot function," she concluded.

WANTED

Persons and organizations who can volunteer time, space, materials, transportation.

Call 288-6700



Black United Front co-chairmen Ron Herndon and Rev. John Jackson meet with (R to L) Miriam Lawson of the Department of Justice, Community Relations Service (CRS), Washington, D.C., Robert Hughes, mediator CRS, and John Mathis, conciliator CRS, both of Seattle Region 10, discuss how the Justice Department might be helpful in preventing community disruption and conflict during the proposed school boycott.

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Albina ministers oppose recalls

The following is a statement of Reverend Garlington, chairman of the Albina Ministerial Alliance:

After careful deliberation and consideration it is the position of the Albina Ministerial Alliance not to support any recall effort sponsored by local community groups.

We therefore call upon the committee for a responsible School board to discontinue their recall efforts. If they do so we have been assured that the Black United Front and their supporters will drop their action.

The recall was not designed as a

tool of use when citizens disagree with an elected public body. It is clear, that such disagreements should be addressed at the polls. It is a proper use, it would seem, if a public body has violated the law, or deliberately and willfully violated board policy or acted in gross misconduct.

Neither this Board nor any future Board should be made to function under threat of recall for every controversial decision. The Democratic process provides for differences of opinion, but let us disagree without being disagreeable.

Because of the extremely divisive

potential of any recall not rooted in genuine misconduct, it is the position of the Albina Ministerial Alliance not to support any recall effort.

We all upon our fellow clergyman and brothers and sisters of goodwill throughout the Rose City to join hands of reconciliation.

Good education predicated upon a basis of equity for both Black and white children is a concern not only to those of us who are Black, many of our white fellow citizens have spent hours addressing the inequities of our system. In a school system that treats all races fairly everyone wins.

OUR TECHNICAL SCHOOL WON'T COST YOU A CENT.

For free job training — plus pay and benefits while you learn — join today's Army. You'll train on the most modern equipment. Benefit from on-the-job experience. And discover that your Army job may also have civilian applications.

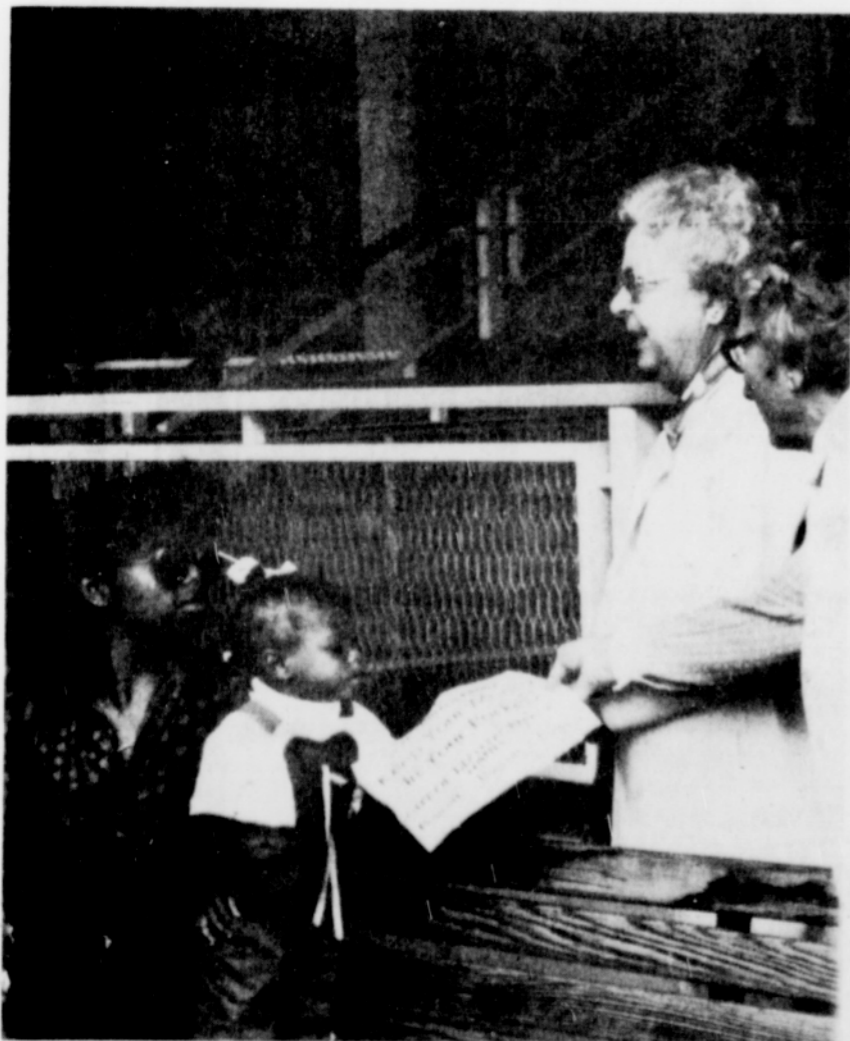
The following are just some of the jobs (for both men and women) for which you may qualify. But all our jobs give you a chance to serve your country as you serve yourself. For more information, contact your Army representative (listed in the Yellow Pages under "U.S. Army Recruiting"), or call the number below:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Administrative Assistant | • Linguist |
| • Aerial Sensor Specialist | • Medical Lab Technician |
| • Air Traffic Controller | • Missile Mechanic |
| • Chemical Lab Assistant | • Missile Repairer |
| • Communications Specialist | • Multichannel Radio Operator |
| • Communications System Mechanic | • Pershing Missile Crewmember |
| • Communications System Operator | • Petroleum Lab Specialist |
| • Intelligence Analyst | • Tactical Circuit Controller |
| • Intelligence Interceptor | • Teletype Operator |
| • Hospital/Food Service Assistant | • Truck Driver |
| • Light/Heavy Vehicle Mechanic | • Weather Observer |

THIS IS THE ARMY

800-421-4422

In California, call 800-252-0011; Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico, 800-423-2769



Doing her share to insure she will be able to get a "Quality Education," Morezeta Baker gives a flyer encouraging the boycott of Lloyd Center to Saturday shopper as Janet Hiner looks on.

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)