

EDITORIAL/OPINION

An old story

At a meeting at the Urban League office 9-17-80, discussion on the Richardson family ordeal revealed that most Black people throughout this nation are dissatisfied with police services. It was pointed out clearly that evidence gathered over many decades substantiates that Black people see the police not as a source of protection but a force against whom they should be protected. The Black position in this respect was challenged by U. S. Attorney Lezak. His patronizing response was that he differed with this position because it suggested the spokesman "had given up on the system" and he, Lezak, believed in the system. He also added that he knew how this Black (whom he called a friend) "got to be that way".

The central issue here is Blacks have a right to be free of white racism and its abuses. And, they should be able to expect that law enforcement authorities will carry out their responsibilities to assist in all such matters. The Black experience is that when racists harass Blacks

and burn crosses, racist police are sent to investigate. The results are easily predictable. At the time of the first report of racial harassment it was no different for the Richardsons. This was borne out in the account given by Lucius Hicks, President of Portland NAACP. Richardson stated that racial harassment in Clackamas County was at a maximum and police involvement was at a minimum.

This is a common experience for Blacks in Portland also. The Black United Front has pointed this out in unmistakable language to Commissioner Jordan in attempts to raise the Commissioner's awareness and consciousness relative to the Black community's objections to the teaching of anything by police to Black children enrolled in public schools. Jordan, as is usual, in these instances used the dominant population controlled media to infer that Blacks just don't understand. Jordan stated recently in a radio broadcast that the Black United Front does not believe police are trainable but he does. Who is hallucinating?

How, now Kemo Sabe

The Black community will regard the activities and operations of the personnel office of the Portland Public Schools with a short term attitude of "wait and see." Prior performances of the personnel sector do not inspire any great expectations for improved and non-racist employment practices.

Personnel selection policies over a span of many years indicate that racism was always the guiding theme in hiring and Blacks were the special target rejects. Not one of the persons involved in personnel has a scintillating record of serving as an effective advocate for those Black employees who are shuffled and reshuffled for administrative ex-

pediency from post to post and place to place in the system to provide an illusion of Black advancement and progress. It is also suspected that the previous personnel actions which overlooked and by-passed the more intelligent and intellectually prepared Black applicants have not been discontinued.

Deputy Superintendent McElroy is in charge of personnel now. In the Blanchard era, many Blacks thought of him as the "hatchet man" who controlled the access and presence of Black people in all branches of Portland Public School employment. It is hoped he does not assign Ms. Chavez the role of "Tonto", and that she does not fill it voluntarily.

Consider minority issues

Most of the technical and financial analyses pertaining to the four cable companies competing for the East Portland franchise are available for public scrutiny. Now is the time to decide from the Black perspective which company would offer the proposal with the most progressive impact upon our social fabric.

Of course, we will always demand accountability and high standards in the implementation of the programs that are offered by the successful cable company.

From our perspective, the factors we are using to evaluate the prospects are as follows:

- overall financial strength and probability of

effecting any future rate increases,

- publicly stated comprehensive Minority Business Enterprise policy, employment goals, and a full-time implementation person,
- an access studio in the Black community with capabilities to originate Black programs as well as tap into City-wide program offering to all cable subscribers in Portland.

Though all the companies have done a good job to address the above issues, it is our opinion that, overall, Cablesystems Pacific is our choice to implement them. We urge the City Commissioners to consider our choice.

Discipline discrimination prevails

(Continued from Page 1 Col 6)

that the disproportionate suspension of Black students is not due to "inherent" characteristics of Black students. It illustrated that each individual school's disciplinary policies and practices greatly impacted the overall suspension ratios, and most importantly, on the disproportionate impact on minorities. For instance, one school suspended minority students at a 15.52 to 1 ratio, compared to whites, while another exhibited a .78-1 minority to white suspension ratio!"

The 1978-1979 report does not include school-by-school analysis "because the data provided by the District contained conflicting enrollment figures." These recent

figures contained numerous errors and enrollment figures for the same period vary, depending on which District records are reviewed.

The report does, however, indicate that "Black students, especially Black AT students, are experiencing discrimination, which results in the disproportionate levying of suspensions, particularly with respect to staff - student behaviors."

MHRC makes the following recommendations:

1. The district should conduct its own detailed analysis which would identify specific problem areas and investigate causal factors. A detailed analysis would identify who is being suspended, at what school, at what grade level, what race, and

for what reasons. Such identification will show where and what remedies need to be applied.

2. The District should design and utilize disciplinary approaches that will directly impact on these problem areas. For example, there appears to be critical need for ethnic awareness training for students and teachers.

3. The District should investigate the possibility of more direct student training and involvement in school discipline in the form of student advocates, peer counselors, and student mediation councils.

4. The District should seek technical assistance from outside experts to develop and implement a disciplinary system that is fair, equitable and, above all, non-discriminatory.



The old order changes

By Fungai Kumbula

I was talking to a recently arrived Zimbabwean student over the weekend. I asked her what part of Zimbabwe she came from and when she responded, "Park Meadows," I was embarrassed by my next question. I asked how she could say she came from Park Meadows when it was an all white suburb. She very patiently explained that since independence, Blacks have been buying houses in every considerable previously all-white suburbs.

Park Meadows stands out in my mind because I was born and raised at a place called Epworth which was adjacent to Park Meadows. The only Blacks who lived in Park Meadows were the so-called "house servant." Epworth, as it was called then, was an all-Black "suburb" though, of course, we had the usual white administrators, teachers and other government "officials."

The above incident with my Zimbabwean friend illustrates for me one very crucial fact: even though I have followed events in Zimbabwe with the "microscopic precision" of a medical biologist, I have still not been able to keep up with the dizzying pace of change. A few weeks ago also, I was watching some slides of Zimbabwe's independence celebrations and I received a mild "shock."

OK Bazaars is one of the largest stores in Zimbabwe: the equivalent of Sears & Roebuck. During the long, bitter years of Zimbabwe's War of Independence, OK contributed generously to Ian Smith's war effort against one Robert Mugabe. OK was one of Mugabe's bitterest critics. Come Independence Day and guess what? OK Bazaars displayed one of the largest Zimbabwean flags in the whole country. The flag was draped around the entire OK building which takes up a whole block.

Above each of the four entrances was a giant portrait of the same Robert Mugabe that OK had labeled Public Enemy Number One. The hottest selling items in the store were miniature Zimbabwean flags and other independence souvenirs. For

the first time also, Black and white were being served side by side. Of course, while Blacks were jubilant in their triumph, most whites were very apprehensive wondering if the Africans would want to exact their pound of flesh.

Herbert Ushewokunze visited Gwelo, a city in central Zimbabwe recently. His visit had not been publicized before his arrival but by the time he left, the whole country and most of the informed world knew that Comrade Ushewokunze had been to Gwelo today. He is the former chief of the liberation forces medical corps and now Zimbabwe's Minister of Health.

On this occasion he was making one of his surprise inspections of Zimbabwe's hospitals. What he saw at Gwelo General Hospital appalled him. To begin with, the hospital was segregated: one well stocked and well staffed, uncrowded section for the whites and the other poorly equipped, overcrowded section for the Blacks. There were empty beds in the white section of the hospital even though in the Black section they were so crowded some of the patients were forced to sleep on the floor.

Ushewokunze flew into a rage. Boy, did he lambast the (white) hospital administrator! It's bad enough for anyone to be publicly reprimanded but for a white "Rhodesian" to be so lambasted by a Black man whom he had been ordering around for the last ninety years was just a little much. It was so bad the Head Nurse burst into tears.

Before he left, he had the hospital fully integrated and the hospital staff and supplies equally distributed among the patients. He then warned "those knife happy white surgeons who think there are too many Africans walking the earth and who, therefore, take it upon themselves to reduce this number" that he would be watching them very closely. He was accusing them of performing unauthorized and unnecessary tubal ligations in an effort to sterilize African women.

Comrade Ushewokunze is famous

for his temper. Another time he visited Harare Hospital on another inspection tour. Before he entered the hospital, he had already given an ambulance driver a taste of his knuckles. The ambulance driver had taken too long to bring a patient to the hospital thus endangering his life. When he could not come up with a satisfactory explanation for the delay, Ushewokunze let fly with a haymaker and the man bit the dust.

These may seem like very drastic measures on the part of a Cabinet Minister but the medical personnel in Zimbabwe, both Black and white, need a thorough shake-up. Patients have at times complained that when they visit the hospitals, they are treated like dirt. An Ushewokunze type temper is just what is needed to make the medical corps realize that they are servants of the people and not vice versa.

Incidentally, when I go back home to work finally, some time next summer, Ushewokunze is going to be my boss!

When President Canaan Banana, Zimbabwe's Head of State, delivered a sermon to a mostly white audience last month, it was not the kind of sermon the congregation was used to listening to. Matter of fact, they had never had a sermon so strong. The President was finally and publicly saying what the Africans have grumbled about for so long. He was castigating the churches for their collusion with the fallen racist regime of Ian Smith and ignoring the suffering of the African masses. Like his partner Ushewokunze, President Banana told the church delegates that Zimbabwe had entered a new era and the churches will have to adapt.

In honour of Samora Machel, the former Jameson Avenue, Harare's main thoroughfare, has been renamed Samora Machel Avenue. Jameson Hotel is also now Samora Machel Hotel. The statue of Cecil Rhodes was torn down from its pedestal on Samora Machel Avenue and carted off to a museum.

So much has changed and is changing in Zimbabwe I think I will get lost when I go back!

Plant closures

PART II

By Dr. Manning Marble

Conservatives in business and politics charge that the crisis of 'capital flight' is no crisis at all, but a liberal-left illusion. According to the research of M.I.T. professor David Birch, who examined the records of a business credit rating service, Dun and Bradstreet, only 2 percent of all private business employment change occurs per year as the direct result of plant closing and relocating elsewhere. Birch's statistics, like anyone else's are only as good or accurate as his model of inquiry. Objectively, we know that between 1967 to 1976, the Sunbelt's manufacturing stock grew at roughly twice the rate of that in the Northeast, and 65 percent faster than in the Midwest. We know, by other statistical evidence, that one sixth of all industrial jobs in New England between 1969 and 1975 disappeared. We know that between 1960 to 1980 that there has been a massive shift in the American population from the urban North to the suburban South and West, following the flight of capital. Yet Birch's figure of two percent would hardly account for the massive demographic and economic changes that have occurred since 1960.

The problem is explained simply by reexamining the question. Professor Birch assessed the behavior of 200,000 firms, which in turn own a total of 5.6 million individual businesses. Of this number only 2 percent per year closed down, relocated and reopened—although usually in the South and West. But does this account for all shifts in capital or property, and not just plant closings per se? The answer is no.

How does capital flight occur? Besides the simple closing of a business, factory or plant and its relocation elsewhere, the process includes:

- the running down of existing older facilities, usually done by not replacing worn-out machines, and using the savings to reinvest in new firms, in municipal bonds or other branches of the same firm.
- partial capital shift. This is

where same machines, skilled workers, clerical and managers are moved to a new area, either in the U.S. or outside of it. Some "less productive employees" may be laid off, but the old business or plant continues to function at a diminished level of productivity and profitability.

- out of state investment. This happens primarily in the Midwest, New England and Mid-Atlantic states. Corporations maintain production levels at the old facility, but take the profits and invest in new enterprises in the Sunbelt or abroad. In corporate circles, this is a time-honored practice termed "milking." It is politically safe, because it is a virtually invisible form of disinvestment. Workers are often not aware of milking even inside of their plants. But milking is widespread and economically destructive. For example, in a 198 poll of the Ohio Manufacturers Association, 70 percent of all corporations in the state spent the majority of their net capital for investment outside of Ohio. In the process of milking, fewer new plants are built in the original location to replace older ones. In major economic recessions, as in 1973-75 and today, older industrial states in the "Frostbelt" are not able to

recover as rapidly as Sunbelt states.

- Exportation of capital. This happens when banks export their capital and reinvest overseas. Bank laws guarantee the secrecy of all banks' major foreign transactions. However, one Ohio banker informed the media that the state's major banks had exported one quarter of a billion dollars in 1975 alone. The result is that smaller businesses are unable to compete for bank funds for expansion or even for working capital.

Multinational corporations can afford to pay the bill to the individual consumer; small businesses cannot do so. This forces small producers and distributors out of the marketplace, and artificially raises the prices of goods everyone buys.

Some of the forms of capital flight are blatant—and these are the forms that are recorded as "plant closings." The vast majority are more subtle. But all kinds of capital flight are as disruptive as if an employer loaded his plant onto the rear end of a pickup truck and drove off into the sunset. Either way, the interests and needs of individuals (the owners and managers of capital) are placed ahead of the needs and concerns of society as a whole. Profits are placed ahead of people.



Bruce Broussard
Editor/Publisher

Alfred Lee Henderson
Founder



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The Portland Observer is a defender against racist assaults, persecutions, insults, harassments, discriminations and related evils; a vigilant champion for justice, equality and liberation; an alert guard against social atrocities; a thorough analyst and severe critic of discriminatory practices; a sentinel to warn of all existing and impending detrimental racist trends and practices.

The real problems of the Black population will be viewed and presented from the perspective of their causality: unrestrained and chronically entrenched white racism. National and international arrangements that prolong and increase the oppression of Third World peoples shall be considered in relation to the continued abuse, exploitation, political manipulation and contrivances implicit in the relationships that have characterized America's historical treatment of its Black population.

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