

EDITORIAL/OPINION

Criteria for new police chief

Commission Charles Jordan will soon be faced with the task of selecting a new police chief to replace ailing Bruce Baker.

In light of the past year - allegations of police brutality, opposition to the police - schools program, dismissal of indictments due to police misbehavior, the police suit against the city's affirmative action hiring procedure - the appointment will be controversial.

The police officers generally prefer a promotion from within the ranks and are capable of making life miserable for anyone coming in. Others point to the difficulty an insider would have in bringing fundamental changes to the bureau that would adversely affect old friends. Many believe this appointment is an opportunity to find someone who could bring new sensitivity to the bureau, and that this type of person is not to be found in Portland.

Several overriding concerns should be considered in hiring a new chief:

1) Affirmative action - across the nation police bureaus are being required by court order to add Blacks and other minority officers. Portland's statistics show this is a clear possibility for Portland. To avoid the costs of a suit, the new chief must be one who will support the City's two-list civil service system

which is currently in litigation.

2) A new chief will have to be committed to recruiting and hiring minorities, and to eliminating the environment that leads Black officers, once hired, to leave the bureau.

3) A new chief will have to redefine the use of physical force in making arrests or dealing with citizens. Elimination of abuse and unnecessary force would go far to improve police-community relations. Proper, repeated training could do much to eliminate reliance on improper force.

4) A new chief should have an attitude of respect toward minorities and the poor that will not tolerate disrespect by his officers.

5) A new chief should be willing to include citizens in the process of investigation of complaints against police officers. He must be willing to enforce policies and regulations, and discipline officers who do not conform.

If someone can be found within the Portland Police Bureau who can prove by his actions that he has met these criteria, then he should be selected. If not, there should be no reluctance to undertake a national search to find the right person.

The next few years are crucial. This appointment will set the tone for the Police Bureau for many years to come. It should be taken as an opportunity to bring positive change.

Another point of view

On Robert Blanchard

By Marko Haggard, KATU

I did not know Robert Blanchard well...I have no credentials to pretend to speak profoundly about the man or his contributions. But I, like many of you, am stunned by the sudden loss of this 53 year old nationally recognized educator. And I, like you, grieve for his wife, children and family.

I am also concerned that in light of the events of the past few months, we do not indulge in instant, impulsive autopsies. In fairness, we do not know precisely what caused such a tragedy. Was it a consequence of style...a style which demands endless meetings, poor nutrition, smoking, constant stress for achievement etc? Was it a consequence of genes...one's inheritance? Was it a consequence of forced idleness...the abrupt transition from center stage? Was it a consequence of living in an environment that is becoming increasingly hostile, in which our relations (on both or all sides) is becoming increasingly adversarial?

In fairness to the man, it may well be that one or all of the above were causal factors. At

this moment of concern, what might we, the living, ask of ourselves? Might we not ask if our life style is getting too fixed on tension, confrontation, anger, bitterness, retaliation? Does it not appear that we/they is context in which most of our lives is intertwined...the tensions between management/labor; administrators/personnel; bureaucracy/citizenry; media/audience...power struggles all over the place.

Can we reasonably ask people to be involved in school board meetings which go on for eternity day after day...for marathon negotiations that may end up in exhausting all parties physically, mentally, emotionally...wounds that never heal? Sensitivity to legitimate, human concerns is required of the school board, the administration, the teachers.

As we grieve and regret, lets resolve to try to be more sensitive to the concerns, fears and hopes of others...and lets give more time and thought to easing up on our own rat race.

I hope, Robert Blanchard, that you approve these awkward but heartfelt comments.



The rise and fall of one Peter Walls

By Fungai Kumbula

"To the victor belong the spoils; to the vanquished, the soils" is an ancient piece of wisdom shared by all of humanity. In this country it is referred to as the "spoils system" and should soon become quite evident following last Tuesday's massacre at the polls. (For us, it's going to be a very bad year.) This rule of thumb was not honored in Zimbabwe, much to the surprise of everybody.

If anybody deserved "the soils" in Zimbabwe, it was Peter Walls, former commander of the Rhodesian forces. It was he who had persecuted the war against the liberation forces for most of the past ten years. He had directed raids into neighboring Zambia, Mozambique and Angola with the resultant deaths of hundreds of innocent African women and children. He had directed the destruction of African crops and livestock so they would not feed the freedom fighters. In short, Peter Walls provided the military muscle that kept the whites in control.

Come independence and, far from being prosecuted for crimes against the state as he should have been, Walls was instead appointed supreme commander of all of Zimbabwe's armies and charged with the task of forging a single army out of the three then in existence. It was very surprising, yes, but quite in line with the Africans spirit of reconciliation. All along the Africans had said all they were really interested in was building a single nation out of the ruins of the nine decades of colonial misrule.

Walls accepted the appointment but abruptly resigned recently and took a trip to South Africa where he made some very uncomplimentary

statements about Zimbabwe and its new leadership. He "predicted" there will be a civil war pitting African against African before too long. He also for the first time publicly revealed the coup that he had formulated to overthrow the hours old government of Robert Mugabe shortly after he had won his stunning electoral victory. Walls further revealed the other plans that had been laid down to bomb the assembly camps where the 30,000 guerrillas were housed during the elections as well as the letters he had sent to Margaret Thatcher, the British Prime Minister, asking her to declare the elections null and void to prevent Mugabe from assuming power. All these revelations were being filmed by a British Broadcasting Corporation TV film crew.

Naturally, when the Zimbabwean government heard all this, it was understandably upset and several parliamentarians called for legal action to be taken against the errant Walls. Prime Minister Mugabe felt particularly betrayed. In the end the government simply decided to fire General Peter Walls. True, he had already resigned but, that would have made him eligible for a government pension. By firing him, the government made sure he will now not be eligible to receive the pension or any other benefits normally extended to former civil servants.

Further, Walls is now barred from ever returning to Zimbabwe. He is fifty-seven, and has no skills other than being a soldier. He has no pension or retirement fund to live off on the rest of his days and no readily employable skills. What he had hoped to gain by turning on the very government that had not only forgiven him all his sins, but

also actually adopted him no one really knows. So far it as brought him nothing but grief.

If he had hoped to bring chaos by his resignation, he has been disappointed. Nothing of the sort has happened. None of the whites who stayed on in the army have followed his example. If he had hoped to lead a new exodus of the whites who he believed are the backbone of the Zimbabwean economy, he has been disappointed in that respect too. He has not even been able to shake foreign investors' confidence in Zimbabwe in spite of these damaging but false accusations. Zimbabwe keeps on humming merrily along.

The only logical explanation one comes up with has to be that, being the hard-core racist he has been all his life, Walls could not reconcile himself to living in a Zimbabwe that has suddenly become a normal society where each and everyone is judged on merit and not on colour. In such a society, he knows he cannot survive because, based on merit, he cannot qualify for anything other than menial labour. The psy-turvy; it is the Africans who are giving the orders and the Walls who are doing the running around.

If anyone has use for a fired, racist, former child killer, terrorist, bomber, segregationist, with ten years experience in bombing refugee camps, violating sovereign countries' territorial integrity, civilian crop destruction and other such nefarious activities, please contact this columnist at the *Portland Observer*. This man comes with the highest recommendation from co-conspirator Ian Douglas Smith.

Letters to the Editor

Local governments fail Albina community

Letter to Editor:

I write to you out of concern for Portland, my home for all of my 32 years.

It has been my observation of N. and N.E. Portland (Albina area) where I grew up that the overall quality of the living environment - houses and business buildings - has steadily deteriorated expanding geographically with occasional stop-gap projects that stand out like islands of progress. It hurts me to know that there has been no substantial progress in 30 years and there is no real hope of change in even my lifetime!

I have observed that much favorable political fall-out (our Secretary of Transportation seems to have benefited most) has occurred and hotoriety shed on Portland because of the following: "model" railroads (lightrail); "model" zoos (two ballot measures involving millions of dollars were promoted to provide animals with a "model city" of their own with superior care); "model" freeways and air-

ports; "model" civil stadium; "model" waterfront parks, skyscrapers and industrial parks; "model" mass transit system and bus mall; etc...Portland has been proudly acclaimed as the "most" liveable city in America" but for whom? Whatever happened to the idea of a "Model City or Community" for people in Albina?

Metro (Metropolitan Service District) has clearly missed the obvious and opportunity to act and take leadership here. Portland government would rather approve lavish statutes on bus corners and encourage foreign investment than to ensure warmth for children. Multnomah County prefers "urban renewal" in the not so old suburbs along I-205 for business and private investment. The federal government cannot be relied upon for adequate corrective effort, and local control.

Former Trailblazer, Maurice Lucas observation that the Portland Black community is not aggressive enough in pursuing what is right and in their interest may be correct. To

date the Black United Front has shown some sign and hope of correcting this situation.

It is abundantly self-evident that the true solution must come from the residents of Albina! One possible route for housing action and results is for the residents to unite into a coalition for the use of referendum and initiative to establish a locally controlled organization with an area-wide tax base and tax levies to convert Albina into a habitation comparable to other refurbished Portland communities.

The 1981 Oregon State Legislature should not be ignored. Pressure and publicity are required.

Will there be overall improvement and establishment of a "Model Community" in Albina? The "Irresistible force" is only with those in the community who decide to act.

George Steveson

Disapproves editorial language

Letter to the Editor:

After reading your editorial "Opposition as principal" which appeared in the September 18 issue of your paper, I am not certain if I should take up arms against the Portland Police Department, or just break out in a good old fashioned laugh. I would do the latter if I were not so concerned about the negative impact of your comments upon both the Black and white community in the Portland Metropolitan area.

First let me say that I respect your opinion as an individual; and surely you as an editor of a major Black publication have the right to advise your readership of issues having a direct bearing on their daily lives as well as to voice an opinion on such issues. Yet, for the life of me, I find it difficult to accept the role you played in the recent editorial. Your comments could not have been more caustic and in my judgement, inappropriate. If I didn't know better, when I read such expressions as "...racist, militarist decisions...unconcealed tour de force...police are the first line of the organized population..." I would have believed I was reading a publication of the Black Panthers, the KKK, or


even an inner-office memo of that grand old gentleman who wanted to rule the world -- Adolph Hitler. Instead of representing a respectable publication and the public on the issue of the CJO Program, you seem more prone to headline the event as would the Revolutionary Worker.

What has happened to your role as a twentieth century leader in the Black community? Are you really so bitter that you lose sight of the positive role you must play if the defined social evils are ever to be broken down so as to provide a wholesome life for all citizens regardless of their ethnic, racial or socio-economic background. How can we as a people bring about improvement in our society if the words of hatred and aggression are heaped so high with such powerful fertilizers by an influential gardener such as yourself. Is there at least one good aspect of the CJO Program to which you could have addressed yourself, or is the truth of the matter that you do not understand what the program is all about? I for one feel that we should welcome any program which has any possibility of improving our neighborhood livability rather than polluting the minds of many who could benefit from any form of education

available. Statistics will show that our neighborhoods are already laden with unnecessary crime primarily due, in my judgement, to the lack of respect that we as a people have for one another. What have you done recently to improve this element of respect within your own area of influence?

I suggest that you take the time to fully read the program proposed by the Portland Police Juvenile Division and inform your readership as to the truths and good that can be achieved from such a program.

Robert Pierson



Bruce Broussard
Editor/Publisher

Portland Observer

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The *Portland Observer* was founded in October of 1970 by Alfred Lee Henderson.

The *Portland Observer* is a champion of justice, equality and liberation; an alert guard against social evils; a thorough analyst and critic of discriminatory practices and policies; a sentinel to warn of impending and existing racist trends and practices; and a defender against persecution and oppression.

The real problems of the Black population will be viewed and presented from the perspective of their causality: unrestrained and chronically entrenched racism. National and international arrangements that prolong and increase the oppression of Third World peoples shall be considered in the context of their exploitation and manipulation by the colonial nations, including the United States, and their relationship to this nation's historical treatment of its Black population.

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