

Wear black ribbon for Atlanta's Black children

Two leading national Black organizations have called for all Americans to wear a Black or colored ribbon as a gesture of respect and universal empathy for the bereaved families of the murdered and missing children in Atlanta until the case has been solved.

The Coalition For Black Colleges and the National Black Child Development Institute have joined forces to launch a nationwide Black Children's Campaign on behalf of the slain and missing children. The

slogan of the Campaign is, "We Must Do More!" Its objective is to focus as much public attention as possible on Atlanta's children so that America will respond to this crisis with the deliberate speed that it demands.

"We in the national Black community have a collection responsibility to do everything we can to eradicate all forms of injustice against them. This assault on Black lives, reminiscent of a bygone era of kidnappings and lynchings,

challenges America's moral conscience with a gravity that is unparalleled in modern American history," says Tony Brown, founder and co-ordinator of The Coalition For Black Colleges.

He continues, "America is being held hostage to the suspicion and fear which besieges not only Atlanta and Buffalo, but every American city until the killer or killers has/have been brought to justice. White America, therefore, indeed all America, has a great if not greater

stake in solving the Atlanta murders of children and the Buffalo murders of Black men if the great American ideals embodied in the Declaration and the Constitution are to be maintained."

Sadly, the deaths and disappearances of Atlanta's Black children coincide with a period in which nationwide conditions for many Black children have reached deplorable and disgraceful levels.

In a recent study, the National Black Child Development Institute

confirmed that vastly disproportionate numbers of Black children face inequitable and unnecessary obstacles to their development in virtually every sphere that can affect their lives. "If both the situation in Atlanta and the incredible fact that 42 percent of Black children live in poverty are viewed in a larger context, it becomes inescapable that we can't afford to wait any longer. Only the concerted and consistent mobilization of the Black com- (Please turn to page 4 col. 1)

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Governor Atiyeh on the Black agenda

By Nyewusi Askari

On March 9, 1981, Oregon Governor Vic Atiyeh spoke at Portland State University. His topic, "Bigotry in the State of Oregon," was delivered in the Smith Center Ballroom. The Governor was invited to the campus by PSU's Black Cultural Affairs Board. Later that same afternoon, Governor Atiyeh granted the *Observer* the following interview.

Observer: Governor, why did you purpose the Racial Harassment Bill?

Governor Atiyeh: Well, I was just plain angry! I have said several times, as a matter of fact, just recently as today, that I really hate bullies. I don't know why. I guess it's a combination of things. Bullies intimidate and make people feel bad, and of course racial harassment of the Black family in Milwaukie, where the family had to fear for their life...it's an emotional reaction.

I was angry. I was asked could I send the State Police just to cruise the area. I called them up right away, and was delighted at the response. There was no hesitancy. It was more than the Governor calling the State Police.

Observer: Has there been a noticeable change of attitude toward you, since the time you announced the proposed Racial Harassment Bill?

Governor Atiyeh: No. I think we are a little more alert security wise. I don't have a very high regard for some of these people. They are liable to flip or something, and there is always someone who wants to shot a Governor, not a Vic Atiyeh, but a Governor, a Mayor, a

President or whatever. So we are more alert.

There is no reason for it other than we are a little more concerned. I have gotten some mail, usually anonymous; have had some things directed at me from the Nationalist Socialist White Peoples Party or something like that, but I am not fearful. My pulse beat doesn't go up.

Observer: Are you agreeable to amendments that would A) require the DA (District Attorney) to present racial harassment cases to a Grand Jury and B) the addition of civil penalties?

Governor Atiyeh: Yes. I'll look at it. I'll look at anything that might be an improvement of the bill.

Observer: What is your position on the South African Divestment Bill?

Governor Atiyeh: I don't see any positives in it. My attitude clearly is, if I thought it would have any salutary affect, I would be supportive. But at the present moment all I can see is, it returns less to public employees, and I am talking about public investment. Our public employees would suffer because the return would not be as great as the returns of the funds. I'll take it a little bit farther.

If the United States were successful in a boycott, I think it's going to hurt the Blacks down there (South Africa), because we are talking about their economy. I think we are going to hurt the people we want to help. Now this doesn't mean that I'm supportive of apartheid. I have talked with a representative from South Africa. He has indicated some very positive steps forward. There have been a recent

change in government policy, and from what I understand, things are moving in the right direction in South Africa, but they are not there yet.

It looks like to me, a no win deal all the way. We'd be better off by stating the public position or say we don't find this type of system acceptable or have the leadership of the United States apply more pressure, I think, is far more meaningful and will not hurt the people of South Africa, or the people in Oregon. In this case, I'll give you another "for instance." It relates to something that already happened.

President Carter said to Iran, "We are going to boycott. We are not going to send you anymore wheat unless you set our hostages free." Well, our hostages didn't get out, and the only ones that really suffered were the United States wheat farmers, including Oregon's.

And then the President said to the Russians, "Unless you get out of Afghanistan, we are going to boycott the Olympic, and all we hurt were our American Olympic athletes. Out of those boycotts, the only ones I can tell were hurt were Americans; not Iranians or Russians.

If it had a productive result, I would say, great! It worked! I couldn't think that the Russians were going to get out of Afghanistan because they wanted Americans to participate in the Olympics.

So I just try to be realistic about it. I want to achieve the same results that most people want, but I think there are better ways of doing it.

Observer: Bills have been introduced to require State agencies to

include their Affirmative Action record and goals in the budget process. Another requires performance evaluation of managers to include Affirmative Action. Do you support these bills?

Governor Atiyeh: The first one looks like a quota type of thing, and I don't support quotas. I can say that now because, we have a record of a performance that I think is moving in the right direction, so people can understand that that doesn't mean that I don't want Affirmative Action. I'm getting it, but not on a quota basis.

I find it interesting that the Annual Report of Kay Toran and our Affirmative Action office, that our percentage of employment and state employment was just about at target, as to the number of minorities that are involved. That was not a goal of ours. I mean, we didn't say we had to hit this percent. We did, but we didn't do it on a quota or percentage basis.

We are constantly reviewing Affirmative Action from Kay's office. She is constantly working with state agencies and division heads. She has good communications with them. I have a great sense that there is a commitment, in the state agencies, by department and division heads, and I think we are moving in the right direction.

Observer: What are you doing with your budget process to guard the interests of the poor, i.e., welfare, education, and employment?

Governor Atiyeh: I've said many times, and I personally worked on my budget myself, that we've made some changes in Human Resources (Please turn to Page 11 Col 3)



Governor Victor Atiyeh pauses to discuss issues of special concern to the Black community. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Sarah Newhall seeks school board position



SARAH NEWHALL

Photo: Richard J. Brown

programs in the North-Northeast area of the City.

Ms. Newhall joined the Board during the conflict over desegregation, and as a Board member supported the major elements of the Black United Front's proposals. "I supported the establishment of Tubman Middle School and voted for parent involvement in staffing - although I want it extended to all schools," she said.

She has taken an advocate position on the School Board - working with other agencies to coordinate and enhance their services with the school district. She played a leading role in bringing together community forum on the problems of the Southeast Asian refugees and the local communities' response to them. She is available to students and families to assist them with individual problems with the school district.

"Another area of concern is discipline. Herb Cawthorne and I went out into the community and talked with parents to learn their expectations. I have worked closely with the American Friends Service Committee School Program and the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission, especially with regard to the disproportionate number of Black students being suspended. We have adopted a new discipline plan

and are targeting those schools that seem to have problems. We are collecting data that was previously never available - so we can identify the problems more specifically."

Affirmative Action: "I am a strong advocate of Affirmative Action for minorities and women. There have been some specific changes - Edith Harrison is principal of Tubman; Harriet Adair heads the Desegregation unit; Bill Gerald is at King; Althea Chavis is director of personnel. There has not been much progress in hiring personnel, but that is something I plan to look at more closely."

The district is currently involved in a training program with the City, which provides CETA training of aides so they can become certified teachers. This program was promoted by Ms. Newhall.

Work experience: "I am involved now in attempting to improve the quality of the work experience programs. I have worked with organized labor and Portland Community College to pursue an occupational skills center that would be an alternative to Benson. It would provide a good academic education along with vocational skills."

School Closures: "The Board has to look closely at the criteria used by the closure committee, especially with high school closures. We need

to make sure that the impact on the total community is equal. The decisions are not cast in stone."

Blanchard's termination: "I am one of the four Board members who voted to terminate the Superintendent's contract. This was not a single issue decision - I felt the need for a Superintendent who could be more responsive to the wide range of community input, including Blacks; who had personnel management skills; who could involve the community in creating a comprehensive plan for school funding and educational programs; and would be able to provide information to the public and promote public support and confidence."

Levy: "I support the March 31st school levy. If the levy fails many programs of great significance will be jeopardized. For example, I believe we need kindergartens and support programs in the elementary schools. The levy is to replace lost state and federal funds - not to add to the current programs."

"My goal, as a Board member, is to provide education of equal quality in the schools throughout the district. I am particularly concerned about student achievement. The education offered by the district should enable every graduate to have the skills and the experiences to get a job and to continue education, as they choose."



Dr. Asa Hilliard autographs a book for Charles Myrick during Black History gathering. (Please see story on Page 6 Col 1).

(Photo: Richard Brown)