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Racial harassment defendant called 'not guilty'

By Nyewusi Askari

A Marion County Circuit Court jury has acquitted a Salem white man, accused of dousing a Black man with gasoline in a Salem bar.

Richard R. Morrison, 43, was found innocent Monday, of third-degree assault and recklessly endangering the life of another person after only 70 minutes of deliberation by an all-white jury.

The defense contended the November 19th incident was provoked by Maurice Harmon, of Salem, when he was accompanied to Mr. D's Tavern by a white woman.

Morrison claimed that Harmon became angry after being told by Morrison and the bartender to stop harassing his companion and kicked a can containing gas, spilling it on both men.

But Maurice Harmon, 28, has a different version. "I had just left a PTA conference with my wife and son. After I dropped them off, I arrived at Mr. D's Tavern at approximately 5:30 p.m., and upon entering the Tavern, saw a white lady friend. I sat down and we greeted each other with an embrace. A few moments later, the lady bartender said, 'We don't allow that in

here. This is a straight bar.' I responded that this is a public place, and I'm not doing anything wrong.

"During the conversation with the bartender, Morrison began to talk about how much he hated 'niggers.' He continued to direct these racial slurs at me, but I turned so I wouldn't have any eye contact with him. It was my way of telling him that I wanted no confrontation. Approximately fifteen to twenty minutes later, Morrison came up behind me and started pouring gasoline on me.

"I turned, in an effort to knock the can from his hand, but couldn't

and Morrison started hitting me in the head. He must have hit me four or five times. The funny thing about it is; he was able to walk to the rear of the Lounge, attack me, and no one said a word, no one warned me or gave me any help."

Harmon says he was offered a \$500 civil compromise by Morrison's attorney Neil Lathen, but refused the offer. Present during that meeting were prosecutor Michael Brown, and Mary Annada. Brown told Lathen that what happened to Harmon was "a community concern" and that they were going to prosecute Morrison.

Harmon charges that the defense used unfair tactics to win the case: 1) Lathen was allowed to introduce witnesses and testimony unrelated to the case, in an effort to prove that he (Harmon), possessed an assaultive personality. 2) the selection of an all-white jury and 3) the suggestion that an alleged knee injury suffered in the altercation with Morrison was inflicted during a 1977 automobile accident.

"I suffered the knee injury upon being knocked to the floor by Morrison. The injury I suffered in the 1977 accident was a back injury!" Harmon said angrily. In

1979, Harmon, who has a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice, won a discrimination suit against the Department of Corrections. The Department of Labor found the Division guilty of discrimination involving a physical attack upon Harmon. Harmon's supervisor at the time was a Sgt. Schijpler who, ironically, testified as a character witness in the "bar incident" to Harmon's assaultive behavior, altho it was the Division, not Harmon, who was found guilty.

At the trial, Morrison admitted he was highly intoxicated at the time of (Please turn to page 8 col. 1)

PORTLAND OBSERVER

May 7, 1981
Volume XI Number 29
25¢ per copy
TWO SECTIONS

USPS 959-680-855



Duane Peck, Susan Angelone and Frank Turney gather signatures for petition asking for release from Rocky Butte of parole violator Kurt Angelone, who suffers from a rare form of cancer. (Photo: Migel Mendoza)

Governor receives petition

By Nathaniel Scott

More than 1000 Portlanders have signed a petition that will be presented to Governor Vic Atiyeh, for the release of Kurt Angelone.

The petition drive was initiated by the Northwest Ex-offenders Association, after Angelone has surgery for cancer (plasmocytoma of the throat on January 19, 1981), and returned to jail.

Angelone spent 11 months in the Rocky Butte county jail, and after the diagnosis and surgery for cancer, was returned to Rocky Butte jail, while appealing extradition proceeding for an alleged parole

violation to the State of California. The appeal is in the Oregon court of appeals.

The petition is to be presented to the Governor, Friday, May 8, in a demonstration that will indicate the concern of the many people who signed the petition.

Susan Angelone, Kurt's wife, said his last check up show plasmocytoma cells in his blood. The alleged parole violation is for six additional weeks of supervised parole.

Ms. Angelone is preplexed, hurt and confused. She said, "I don't understand how they can put mur-

ders and rapers on close supervised programs, and tell Kurt he isn't eligible for release on those same programs.

"I don't see how they can economically justify holding Kurt (with his medical bills, etc.) when they can't afford to return Oregon's fleeing criminals."

Frank Turney, liaison officer for the ex-offenders, said, "because of Angelone's condition and the psychological effect confinement has on one, he should not be incarcerated; especially in a place that does not have the proper medical facilities."

Police officers meets citizens

A third of a series of police/community forums will be held Saturday morning, May 9, 9:30 a.m., at Bourbon Street restaurant. Police officers working in the area have been invited to participate.

The first meeting provided an opportunity for community people to discuss an array of complaints - language, harassment, brutality, lack of Black officers, inadequate training, lack of response to complaints.

Last Saturday, the subject was citizen complaints. Present to hear the victims' point of view were Deputy Chief Phil Smith, Lt. Rod Achly, head of Internal Affairs and Stan Peters, president of the police union. Also speaking were Mike Bailey of the Public Defenders office, which hears many complaints of police abuse, Barry Sheldahl, from the District Attorney's office and DA Mike Schruck.

Lt. Aichly said there is a disproportionment number of complaints from the Black community - mostly consisting of excessive force, harassment and verbal abuse. Although many persons say they are not notified of the outcome of their complaints, he said there is a "rigid policy" to notify. Regarding charges that persons who call to

make complaints are treated rudely, Achley said, "Being polite has limitations. When people call with outrageous, unreasonable complaints" it is impossible to be polite. He denied that police officers are given all of the testimony of the complainant prior to be questioned, but admitted that they are provided a summary of the complaint so they can respond to it.

Stan Peters denied that police have full access to the testimony and added that the union contract does not prevent release of information to the public. He would like to have complaints made under oath to eliminate "harassment" against police officers. He claims police officers have fewer rights than anyone since they must answer complaints or be terminated.

Mike Bailey said in his opinion the only way to stop police abuse is through community organization. "Justice don't live in the courts no more." He said there is a double standard - what would be called misbehavior by an upper class woman, becomes disorderly conduct and resisting arrest when a poor Black woman is involved. "The misconduct is in the racism and class structure." He said 30 percent of the persons defended by

the Public Defender are Black.

DA Mike Schruck said the important thing is "to let those in government know what the hell is going on." The people have a right to open communication with their elected officials. He said his door is open and he will accept complaints. Sheldahl said four police officers have been convicted of criminal behavior.

Chief Smith said he will pass the complaints expressed at the meeting to Chief Baker and Captain McCabe of North Precinct and recommend administrative attention. "The fact that people are here with complaints means we aren't meeting people needs."

Some of the problems discussed were:

Linda Madsen: Repeated arrests for the same alleged violation. "You can't go down the street without being arrested."

Black man: It took three hours for the police to come when called because wife was threatening with a gun. When they arrived they said they couldn't do anything.

Vesia Loving: A man was beaten by police, then taken to Rocky Butte with no medical care.

Joe Harris: His door was kicked (Please turn to Section II P. 3, C. 3)

African leader speaks here

Portland will be host to Johnny Makatini, representative of the African National Congress (ANC), the leading South African organization struggling against apartheid and for majority rule.

Makatini has been the official representative to the United Nations and to the U.S. since 1978. A former law student, high school teacher, and ANC organizer, Makatini was forced into exile in 1962. Since that time, he has served as representative of the ANC to

Morocco and to Algeria. In 1967 he became a member of the National Executive Committee of the ANC and was made Deputy Director of International Affairs.

Johnny Makatini will give a talk, open to the public, at 3:00 p.m., on Tuesday, May 12, at Portland State University, Smith Memorial Center, Room 338.

The talk is being sponsored by the African Students Association of Portland State University, the

American Friends Service Committee and the National Anti-Apartheid Campaign.

Makatini will speak on the current situation in Southern Africa and the status of the boycott campaign and proposed United Nations sanctions against the Republic of South Africa.

At a time when Southern Africa is once again in the headlines, this visit by a representative of Black South Africa takes on a special significance.

Community united

Legislative district approved

After hearing overwhelming support for making one legislative district in the inner northeast community, the House Committee on Election and Reapportionment voted unanimously to one district that would have approximately 44 percent Black population, 47 percent white and 9 percent others.

The committee held a formal hearing at King Neighborhood Facility last Thursday night.

Testifying in favor of division of the area among three legislative districts, with the theory that Blacks could impact three legislators, were Calvin O.L. Henry, President of Oregon Assembly for Black Affairs; Pina (Williams) Bonner, Gail Washington and Bobby Gary.

Calvin Henry, saying, "Those of us who know must teach," said the one-district proposal might not serve the best interest of the Black community.

Robert Phillips presented the "one-district plan" that was drawn by Legislative Research to include the greatest possible number of Blacks and is called the "Phillips Plan" follows the I-5 freeway on the West and includes the Eliot, Boise, Piedmont, Woodlawn, Vernon and King neighborhoods and portions of Concordia, Irvington and Sabin.

He associated the community's request for one-district with the American revolutionaries "who struggled for identifiable representation."

Ron Herndon, speaking for the Black United Front, said no minority group had ever asked to be divided in order to gain power. Further, all the successful Black legislators in history have been elected by and responsible to large Black populations.

"Blacks must consolidate their strength rather than divide their strength," he said, charging that those who would divide are ignorant of Black History.

Bruce Broussard, publisher of the *Observer*, explained the history of the neighborhood associations and their working relationship, the Union Avenue re-development project and new economic development plans, demonstrating that the federal, state and city governments consider this as an integral community. He asked the committee to follow their own rules that say a community of common interest cannot be divided.

James Hill, calling himself a "disenfranchized citizen," asked for "empowerment of my community."

The applause, shouts and mood of the crowd demonstrated support for the "one-district" plan. Among the speakers were Walter Braxton, Bob Boyer, Judy Knawls, representing the A. Phillips Randolph and Union Organizations; James Hill, Joe Harris, Brent Hamilton.

At the committee meeting in Salem the next morning, Rep. Jane

Cease, who had attended the hearing the previous evening presented a new plan. It would have formed a district reaching from the Willamette River, through central Albina, through the Concordia neighborhood and surrounding the airport. She stated that she did not believe the hearing in Portland was representative because the Urban League and NAACP had a banquet that night and could not attend.

Chairman Glen Whallon explained that the hearing was held on Thursday because a school district meeting on the possible closure of Jefferson was on Wednesday, the only other night available to the committee. He added that he had received a phone call from the NAACP during the previous week saying the organization was for one district, then received another call Monday saying they had changed their mind. He had not received testimony from either organization.

Robert Phillips told the committee that he had sent letters -- and copies of the four proposed plans -- to several organizations including the NAACP and Urban League explaining how they could submit testimony in writing or in person urging them to make their thoughts known to the committee.

Most of the committee members considered the testimony Thursday night to be a strong message for "one-district" and after some discussion the vote was unanimous. (Please turn to Section II P. 4 C. 1)



James Hill testifies before the House Committee on Elections and Reapportionment at King Neighborhood Facility. (Photo: Richard Brown)