

EDITORIAL/OPINION

Ask Boise community

Tuesday morning, around 1:00 a.m., Herb Cawthorne suggested that Tubman Middle School be placed at the Boise building rather than at the Eliot building as promised.

In its desperation to adopt an acceptable desegregation plan the board committed to place the middle school at Eliot, even though the building is too small and the property is insufficient. The board is now having second thoughts about spending the estimated \$3 million to add more classrooms.

Unfortunately, the Board has not come back to the community to discuss the pros and cons of locating at Eliot. Perhaps other acceptable arrangements could be made if the board were willing to explore the possibilities with Tubman parents and community members. Joe Rieke suggested that Tubman go to the Jefferson building and Cawthorne suggested Boise.

The Boise option does have some possibilities, but it should go to the Boise community before it is adopted. The upper grade students at Boise would benefit from assignment to a middle school. They currently are deprived of the science, shop, music, art, languages, and other programs that other 6th,

7th and 8th grade students have. They enter high school with a handicap.

If Boise is retained as a Pre-K-8 school, it is only a matter of time until its upper grade students are siphoned off. Certain school board members have long sought to send them across the river to the West side.

If the Tubman middle school were to go to Boise, the Boise 6th, 7th and 8th grades would go to Tubman. The lower grades would go to Eliot - within walking distance.

But Boise is not just another school. Its importance to the community goes beyond the education of its children - it is the symbol of a community's struggle to maintain its identity.

It was Jonathan Newman's unwise decision to interfere with Boise that led to the Community Coalition, the BUF boycott and the new desegregation plan. It was over Boise that the community finally decided to say "stop."

The proposal to move Tubman to Boise and make Boise upper grades a part of Tubman should be explored carefully with the Boise community and the Black United Front. It is not a decision that can be made hastily. A lot is at stake.

Talking to the police

The *Observer* has held a series of forums on police/community relations designed to allow community persons to express their concerns directly to those who have some power to make changes. Among the participants have been Deputy Chief Smith, Captain McCabe, the director of Internal Affairs, Stan Peters of the police union and police officers.

Among the concerns discussed are excessive force, harassment and abuse; racist language; deficiencies in the citizen process; excessive patrols; to relationships with youth.

The next step will be to make recommendations in response to these concerns and to present them to Commissioner Charles Jordan and Chief Bruce Baker. Among the issues to be addressed will be police hiring and training; policing methods to insure the public's right to peacefully use the parks and to be safe from police harassment on the streets.

We hope the Commissioner and the Chief, who have been invited to the meeting, will take this as an honest attempt of citizens to impact city government and to participate in the decisions that effect their community.



Democratization of Motherland

By Fungai Kumbula

The last half of the seventies and the beginning of the eighties have set a precedent which we all sincerely hope will continue and eventually engulf the whole African continent.

One of the salvos frequently leveled at the various African governments that took over from colonial regimes throughout Africa have been that in more cases than one, those governments have tended to be just as repressive and totalitarian as their predecessors. There has been a decided lack of fundamental freedoms as evidenced by the continent's disproportionate share of dictators, autocrats and one-man governments; that Idi Amin, Macias Nguema, Jean Bedel-Bokassas, Ian Smiths' and the like to mention just a few.

In the second half of the 70's, there was a decided shift away from this sad state of affairs to a more enlightened participatory democratic system in several African countries. The following are worth bearing in mind as we explore this encouraging shift in African politics.

Uganda: After almost a decade of relentless plunder of the people, pillage and rape of the nation's economy, one Idi Amin Dada was finally toppled by a combined force of Tanzanian troops and Ugandan liberation forces collectively called the Uganda National Liberation Front. A belated, ill-advised attempt at rescuing the belaguered dictator by the ever unpredictable Muammar Kaddafi of Libya backfired when Amin was routed nonetheless.

Last December, Ugandans went to the polls to choose a government for the first time in almost a decade and they elected Milton Obote whom Amin had overthrown nine years previously and who had been Uganda's first elected President some nine years prior to that.

Nigeria: After almost thirteen years of successive military regimes, Nigerians went to the polls in October of 1979 and elected Alhaji Shehu Shagari head the country's first civilian government since the overthrow and subsequent assassination of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa way back in 1966.

So far, the civilian government of Shagari has performed much better than skeptics had thought it would: a healthy sign that democracy can work.

Ghana: For almost a decade, Ghana, the standard-bearer of the decolonization struggle, toyed with one military regime after another. The first civilian government headed by Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah who had led the nation to independence in 1957, was toppled in 1966. The civilian administration of Dr. Kofi Busia that took over for a while was very short-lived and Busia himself was soon on the outside looking in.

Central African Republic: 1979 also witnessed the fall of Idi Amin's comrade-in-blood, Jean Bedel-Bokassa and his subsequent flight from neighbouring Ivory Coast. He was replaced by David Dacko whom Bokassa had overthrown in 1965. This past year, Central African Republicans voted for the first time since 1965 and returned Dacko to office by a rather slim margin.

In Equatorial Guinea, only a little removed from the Central African Republic, another notorious dictator, Macias Nguema Biyogo, was overthrown and executed. The general who took over has promised elections for later this year.

Botswana: One of the few truly multi-party democracies anywhere in the world has just completed another round of elections. After the death last year of the country's first President, Sir Seretse Khama, his successor, Dr. Quett Masire, simply inherited his system and carried on as his predecessor had done.

Tanzania's Julius Nyerere who has led the country since independence in 1961 has indicated this is his last term in office. He will retire when his term expires in 1985.

Senegal's Leopold Sedar Senghor has, however, beaten Nyerere to the punch. He retired last December after leading the country since independence in 1961. His hand-picked successor, former Prime Minister Abdou Diouf, has been stamping his own brand on Senegal's politics in the past few months.

There is talk that the Ivory

Coast's 76 year old President, Felix Houphet-Boigny, may be retiring soon. Unlike Senghor, he has not nominated a successor but is said to be preparing the country for the changeover.

Then there is **Zimbabwe:** the elections that last year swept comrade Robert Mugabe and ZANU into power have continued their clean sweep. In municipal elections this year, for the first time in almost nine decades, every town and city in Zimbabwe has a Black mayor. The one exception is Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second largest city where municipal elections were put off following the bloody uprising of last March.

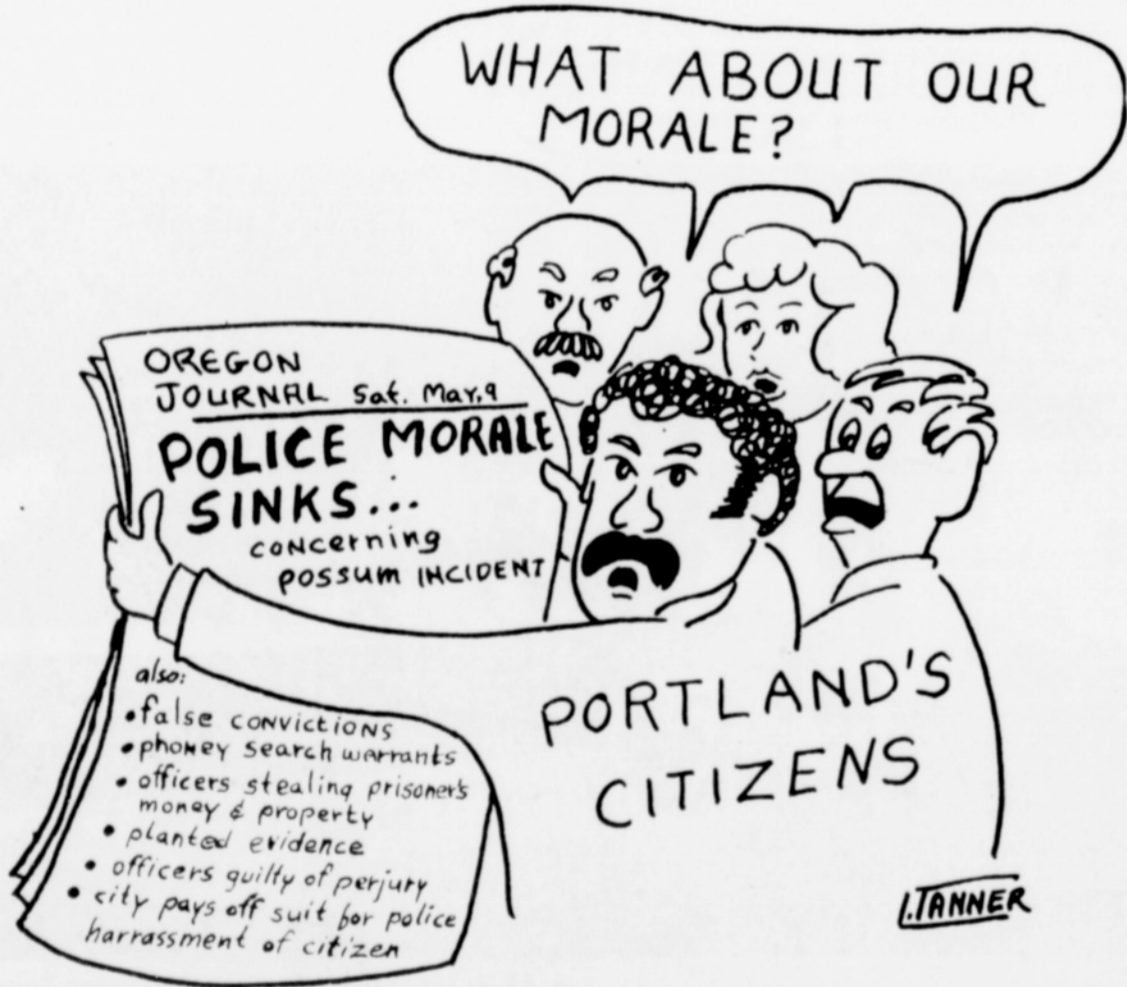
Former dictators, Ian Smith and Abel Muzorewa, though not imprisoned, have been thoroughly humiliated by being completely overwhelmed in the municipal elections. In the words of one foreign correspondent, they have become "non-persons."

Zanzibar, Kenya, Mozambique have also had elections recently and a wide diversity of opinion was expressed in all three countries. In some cases, candidates backed by the government were ousted by independents.

These are only a few selected examples of the wave of democratization that has been sweeping Africa lately. It's almost safe to say that the age of one-man regimes is just about over. The good tidings mentioned above seem to be having a domino effect and causing most African leaders to relax their once total control on the reins of power.

This will have a tremendous boost on the fight for liberation of Namibia and South Africa because no longer will it be argued that most African countries are "just as repressive." It is also a healthy sign of the coming of age of African politics that divergent opinions can now be more openly expressed and African leaders no longer feel they alone have the divine right to rule. In a manner of speaking, Africa is getting back to where she used to be before the Europeans came to "civilize" the Africans.

Welcome back, Africa.



Letters to the Editor

Explore advantages of college education

Dear Editor:

After reading the latest edition of the *Portland Observer*, I had to respond to Ron Sykes' "Sport Talk" column. Ron's observation that Ralph Sampson should have "taken the money and run" is distressing in terms of what it says to the youth of the community. Ron raises the question as to the reason for obtaining a degree. While we can agree that a degree is not for everyone, his statement raises some questions regarding his interest in the improvement in the lot of youth in the community.

Granted, Ralph could have become the highest paid rookie in the NBA; however, the list is long of those who did take the money and ran, faded out in the first year,

and were near poverty not long after. Additionally, the playing life of a professional player is limited at best. Wise money management, wise investment, and careful planning insures that after their playing days, a player can continue to live in the style to which he has become accustomed. Education helps facilitate this process.

Another point Ron makes is that the University of Virginia would not have been interested in Ralph if he had not had his basketball ability. This is a given; however, the University does not maintain him as a student strictly on his playing ability. Consequently, he is benefiting from the total learning process.

I felt a need to share these comments with you, since many times

we hear our young people stating ideas that indicate they can "play" their way out of poverty. While this is possible for some, the stark reality is that less than 1 percent of them obtain comfortable life styles through this means.

I encourage Ron to present a better balanced opinion and positive direction for our youth. Additionally, I challenge him to acknowledge the fact that Ralph had a difficult decision and to respect him for making the choice he feels is in his own best interest.

Sincerely,
Matthette R. Williams
Assistant Personnel Manager
State Farm
Insurance Companies

Stealing our water

To the Editor:

If the United States is to be considered a second-rate nation in the world it is because of the sorry state our economy is in, not because we are weak militarily (we have enough highly sophisticated weapons to destroy the world several times over and intercept whatever the Soviets might send over).

One reason the United States' economy is in such a sorry state is because of government overspending. One such proposed (over) expenditure is the MX Missile system. It would cost more billions and billions of dollars than any of us can really imagine and deal another death blow to the U.S. economy.

Besides the negative affect the MX Missile program would have on the economy, we don't need it militarily. Seventy-five percent of our Trident missiles are on submarines at sea and are undetectable. The missiles can take care of anything the Soviets (or any other nation) could throw at us.

and are undetectable. These missiles can take care of anything the Soviets (or any other nation) could throw at us.

There is another reason for citizens of the Northwest to object to the proposed MX Missile project. Those missiles (if the proposal is passed by Congress) would be housed in Utah, an area with very little water. A recent news item reports that the state of Nevada senate has passed a resolution calling for the federal government to divert Columbia River water to Nevada to be used on the MX Missile project. This is getting mighty close to home, folks.

Please, send a postcard(s) to your elected officials calling for a no vote on the MX missile and all other further nuclear weaponry development.

Betty McArdle
Portland, Oregon

Maine is the only state in the United States whose name has one syllable.



Bruce Broussard
Editor/Publisher

Portland Observer

The *Portland Observer* (USPS 959-680) is published every Thursday by Exie Publishing Company, Inc., 2201 North Killingsworth, Portland, Oregon 97217, Post Office Box 3137, Portland, Oregon 97208. Second class postage paid at Portland, Oregon.

Subscriptions: \$10.00 per year in Tri-County area. Postmaster: Send address changes to the *Portland Observer*, P.O. Box 3137, Portland, Oregon 97208.

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 minority 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.

283-2486

National Advertising Representative
Amalgamated Publishers, Inc.
New York

1st Place
Community Service
ONPA 1973

1st Place
Best Ad Result
ONPA 1973

5th Place
Best Editorial
ONPA 1973

Honorable Mention
Herrick Editorial Award
NNA 1973

2nd Place
Best Editorial
3rd Place
Community Leadership
ONPA 1975

3rd Place
Community Leadership
ONPA 1978

3rd Place
In depth coverage
ONPA 1979

