



For the children of Atlanta and for all children who are hungry, suffer and live in fear.



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National Black United Front organize for action

By C. Eddie Edmondson
for Grassroot News N.W.

Over 800 paid delegates to the second annual convention of the National Black United Front (NBUF), chanting "Forward together, backwards never," met in a Brooklyn high school this past Fourth of July weekend and ratified a constitution, by-laws and structure for NBUF members and chapters throughout this country to "resist the suppression and oppression

visited upon our people in this country," said the Rev. Herbert Daughtry, chairperson and spokesman for NBUF, and whose renomination unopposed signals the trust for the man who recently publicly challenged the leadership of Urban League president Vernon Jordan, on the theory that the highly connected and well paid Black leader, who shares the same board rooms and tennis courts with some of the richest and most power-

ful corporate executive in this country, is out of touch with the needs and lives of the majority of Black people in this country who depend on modest or subsistence incomes to live.

Established a year ago, NBUF (pronounced "N-Buff" by its members) grew from a grassroots network of six recognized chapters, including Portland, Oregon and New York City where Rev. Daughtry was active in 1978 in establishing a net-

work of Black UnitedFront chapters throughout the City and in Brooklyn where Daughtry is head pastor of The House of the Lord Church. Called the Metropolitan BUF, the New York Chapter acted as host for the second convention.

The first Black United Front was established in the 1960s in Cario, Illinois and is still headed by its leader Rev. Charles Koen. Originally begun as an umbrella for almost all Black civil rights, civic

and social organizations in the small southern midwest illinois town once famous for its connection with Abraham Lincoln, the BUF of Cario has been in a continued militant battle against the white leadership which denied the demands of the Blacks for civil and equal rights.

Not unlike the original Cario BUF, BUF's under NBUF are composed of various Black community organizations who apply for mem-

bership within the community regardless of political or social ideologies just so long as the are Black owned, run and funded organizations. Rev. Koen served as a midwest regional coordinator for the founding organization after NBUF began last year.

Ron Herndon, co-chairperson and spokesman for the Portland BUF, and who served as the national secretary last year, was (Please turn to Page 7 Col 1)

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Mrs. Edna B. Kett joins community members, parents and students to protest School Board plan to close Adams High School. March to July 2nd School Board meeting was sponsored by the Black United Front. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Boise goes to Grant

School Board closes Adams, Jackson

School Board politics entered a new era Thursday as the Board, with its two new members, pushed through its plan to close Adams High School. A surprise move, with no advance notice even to the residents of the school area, was the closure of Jackson High School.

In related action -- also unannounced to the community concerned -- was the assignment of Boise students who live in the former Washington/Monroe district to Grant High School. Tubman students will not be assigned to a

high school together, but will go to the high school in the area where they live or to a magnet school.

The meeting was long and hostile, with Chairman Forest Reike attempting to cut off public testimony and board discussions to end the meeting by 10:00 p.m., and the public demanding to be heard. Herb Cawthorne, who called the meeting a "travesty" with a pre-arranged decision, accused Reike of choosing from the speakers list, those he wanted to allow to speak.

Steve Buel accused the board and

staff of hiding the fact that closure of Jackson would be considered, stating that he had called the press and the Jackson residents to let them know. Many persons from Jackson said they had found out the afternoon of the meeting date.

The 50 percent rule was raised again as Dr. Fenwick admitted the switch of Boise students to Grant rather than Jefferson was for "desegregation" purposes. Frank McNamara had introduced an amendment to be included in the policy if the changes had put Jeffer-

son over 50 percent minority, however the shift of Boise students probably prevents that.

Among the members of the public testifying were:

Vesia Loving - "The only thing removed is the chains and the shackles. Blacks are still enslaved in Portland. No racist, prejudiced individuals have the right to sit up and make judgement."

Mark Rother - Northwest/Southwest Coalition for a New (Please turn to Page 3 Col 1)

Return students to neighborhood schools

By Herb Cawthorne

Several weeks ago, I indicated that should the "new board" decide in public to close Adams High School, after the former Board has already closed Washington/Monroe, I would file a complaint in federal court alleging that the closure of these two schools violated the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment and amounted to an act of racial discrimination. It was clear, according to press statements and official comments, that Adams was the only school to be considered for closure in the summer months. As it turned out, however, in a move that can only be considered the height of political maneuvering at the expense

of children, parents, and goodwill in the community, the "new board" abruptly closed Jackson High School as well.

In as much as the suit I had planned to file centered on the closure of Adams and Washington/Monroe as the only high schools closed, legal counsel gave me the affirmative sense that the case was strong, that legal precedent supported it, and that the "burden" argument as an indication of discriminatory intent was sound footing on which to challenge the decision in court. Now that the new board has voted to close Jackson as well, a suit narrowly centered on the school closure outcome, seeking remedy for extensive discrimination, does not have the legal strength my

lawyers think is essential if we were to spend the time, money and energy in litigation. Therefore, I am continuing to assess the situation. I will not file at this time the law suit which was prepared since the factual circumstances have been substantially changed.

Nevertheless, the very act of secretly deliberating toward the closure of Jackson as a political choice to avoid the possibility of litigation underscores the legitimacy of the Black community's claim that there is gross and unjustified burden placed upon Black children and parents in the school closure process and results. The "new board" decided to close Jackson, and this in no way minimizes the impact on the Black community, even if it alters

the legal standing. This action of closing Jackson was a negative response to a positive opportunity.

There was a tremendously positive coalition of Northeast and Southeast parents who were working to make Adams a high school with renewed vigor, a much better program and more students. The School Board could have endorsed this positive energy. Instead, they closed Jackson without notice to that community and without any serious respectful attempt at public involvement.

The entire process has produced a clear message and it is one I think the Black community will heed. The message is clear: Continued involvement in the administrative transfer (Please turn to Page 12 Col 1)

Benson graduate heads for chemistry career

Grassroot News, N.W. - By now our proud 1980 graduates have put their gowns away and have hit the pavement in search of employment. One graduation occurred without the public fanfare that it warrants. In 1981, Benson High School had its first Black female graduate, Toni Marie Graves. In the last four years, there has been a threat of a school boycott, a new School Board and the death of the school Superintendent. Without fanfare during this period, Toni survived Portland's West Point.

Did she have any doubts about attending an all boys school? "I put that in the back of my mind. I was attracted to Benson because of their math and science programs. My first week, I was hiding behind the corners and running up the halls. I went to the office during this time because I wanted to leave, but I followed the advice of the principal and gave it a month. In that month I started to look at my future and their science and math program. I kept telling myself that I was there for the education and not just appearances."

In many cases Toni was the only girl and the only Black in many of her classes. She gave an account of how her fellow classmates responded. "At first it was very rough. Their reaction was like 'What are you doing here?' It was bad but I had to ride out the rough tide. There were so few brothers there to support me but the few that were there, did."

You've probably heard stories where someone who was a first in

something, had a teacher to put them under their wings. Toni had no such teacher. "I was on my own totally. Most of the teachers were men who were close to retirement. They reacted like you shouldn't be here. This is an all guys school. What are you doing here?"

"A lot of teachers didn't like it and they would show it in various ways. For instance, they would pick on me regarding a problem and ride you if you didn't know it. When I asked for help they would try to make you feel dumb. You know, like you should really know this."

A typical day for Toni was attending classes, doing research, and bringing a mountain of home work home to burn the midnight oil. She indicated that she received a great deal of support from her home. "My mother and father always told me if someone else could do it, so could I. They just said keep on at it."

And keep at it she did. Toni graduated in the class of 81. The first and only Black woman to survive Benson Tech. Currently, she's working at the Corp of Engineers and is boning up on her math at Portland State. She plans to attend Oregon State University this fall as a major in Chemical Engineering. There's no way to conclude this article, but with the concluding thoughts provided by Toni. "I have arrived. All the people who said I couldn't do it; all the people who didn't want me to do it; well, I did and I'm looking forward to other Black females to do the same."



TONI MARIE GRAVES

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Angie Davis joins PDC Board

Mayor Frank Ivancie has appointed Mrs. Angie Davis and Mr. John Piacentini to the Portland Development Commission. Mrs. Davis is the employment manager for the Portland office of Pacific Northwest Bell.

The 5-member Portland Development Commission oversees Portland's urban renewal ac-

tivities. Under its direction, the Commission staff develops plans, acquires properties, relocates persons displaced by project activities, assists in the rehabilitation of homes and buildings, contracts for the design and construction of public improvements, promotes industrial growth and the expansion of business in the City of Portland.

Assassination plot exposed

A lengthy investigation by PNS correspondent John Dinges has uncovered significant new leads in the still inconclusive official investigation of the murder of four American missionaries in El Salvador last December. The new evidence sharply contrasts with the official theory of the crime -- that it was committed on the spur of the moment by young soldiers acting beyond the control or authority of higher military or government of-

ficials. Instead, these new leads indicate the murders may have been a military operation planned and authorized by superior officers. If this theory proves correct in subsequent investigations, the result could have far-reaching implications for U.S. policy toward the Salvadoran regime. Mr. Dinges was the author of the PNS investigation into the accuracy of the State Department's White Paper on El Salvador. (Please see page 8)