

EDITORIAL/OPINION

Who will support Ron Dellums?

Congressman Ron Dellums of California, easily the most outspoken congressional critic of President Reagan's military buildup and the headlong rush to nuclear war is under investigation for use of marijuana and cocaine.

The investigation of Ron Dellums is only another in a long series of government harassment of black spokesmen. The typical pattern is press slander, repeated investigations, occasionally prosecution, and vindication. When, after years of slander, these persons are proved innocent, their political base and their financial security has been eroded. Suspicion remains in the minds of the public—the government persecutors have done their job.

We can name a long list of national and local leaders who have suffered this harassment. It is not new: Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. DuBois, Paul Robeson were earlier targets.

The question now is, will the black community and its leadership rally around and support

Dellums; will they reject him as many did DuBois and Robeson; will they stand in the wings and wait until the verdict is in? Even before the investigation was begun, the members of the Congressional Black Caucus denied Dellums its chairmanship, calling him too radical, too far from the mainstream. This is a demonstration of their fear of identification with the forces for change. Will the members of the Black Caucus defend and assist Dellums, or will they wait their turn?

No black person can promote radical change in this country and not be persecuted by the press and government; yet no change in the conditions of black life—and in the life of all Americans—will occur unless black spokesmen challenge the system. This is one of the dilemmas black Americans must face. Support those spokesmen who dare to challenge and demand change or give up the struggle for justice and accept life as it is.

Protect worker health, safety

Dangerous substances in the workplace remain a serious threat to workers in this state and in the nation. Millions of workers have been exposed to asbestos, coal dust, cotton dust and other substances that cause lung and heart problems and eventual death. Others have been exposed to PCB, dioxin and a multitude of cancer-causing or lung destroying chemicals. Approximately 100,000 die from occupational disease annually while 400,000 new cases are diagnosed each year.

Under the Reagan administration profit has been given a higher priority than workers' lives—federal safety restrictions have been relaxed and enforcements reduced. Governor Atiyeh's budget eliminates eight safety enforcement officers.

Senate Bill 294, sponsored by State Senator

Steve Starkovich, would require labelling of toxic substances in places of employment. This seems to be a simple bill—it allows workers to know that they are working with dangerous substances. Too often they are informed only when they already debilitated and dying.

The business lobby opposes the bill, saying it is unworkable and too costly.

Can certain businesses afford to endanger the lives of its employees? Workmen's compensation and disability payments are costly, as are hours of work missed due to illness. But with a large pool of unemployed and the resulting pressure for lower and lower wages, Oregon's employees can afford to ignore the health and safety of their employees. It is the responsibility of the State Legislature to insure the safety of Oregon's workers.

Corporations reconsider South Africa

(Continued from page 1 column 3)

\$90 million had been lost because the bank—like the U.S. government—ignored signs of extreme social tension in the Shah's Iran. Another shareholder added: "Things are not going to get better in South Africa. So we had better begin to think now about what we're going to do as things get worse."

On January 26, the Chrysler corporation announced its decision to sell off its 25 percent stake in Sigma Motors Corporation, South Africa's third largest auto and truck manufacturing company. Not long before, General Electric backed out of a mining venture in the KwaZulu black "homeland," in part because of mounting calls for divestment in the company's home state of Connecticut. Polaroid, Inc., pulled out in 1977, after learning that its South African distributor had violated a 1971 agreement not to sell products to the government. Indeed, South Africa's own largest company, the Anglo-American Corporation, has expanded its overseas investments—as insurance against future upheavals, according to some observers.

A few companies are even finding ways to profit from pro-divestment sentiment. Chemical Bank still makes trade-related loans of a non-strategic nature to South Africa, but has made no loans to the South African government or companies doing business there since 1974. Chemical is now setting up a special fund that would invest only in non-South Africa-related companies, to capture part of the divested public pension funds and church endowments.

No one understands more clearly that divestment has become a serious matter than the South Africans



themselves. While South African consulates have often conducted low-key lobbying efforts against divestment bills, only recently have South Africa's paid lobbyists become active at the state level, in response to the growing success of state and municipal divestment bills.

These efforts have been successfully countered by groups which enjoy widespread support from churches, organized labor and community organizations. Among the proposals for alternative investment made by divestment supporters in Massachusetts, one particularly struck home with state residents: that the pension funds be used to help revitalize local neighborhoods and generate jobs.

There, as in Michigan, the Ford

Motor Company lobbied vigorously against divestment, arguing for an amendment that would have exempted companies which observe the so-called "Sullivan principles" of corporate responsibility. Black unions in South Africa have publicly rejected this approach, which involves voluntary, company-sponsored improvements in working conditions, as cosmetics and difficult to monitor or evaluate.

Adoption of the Ford amendment in Massachusetts would have exempted from the divestment bill's coverage 11 of the 13 companies in South Africa in which state pension funds are invested. In Michigan, Ford's lobbyist implicitly conceded divestment's impact by asking state legislators to exempt the automaker as "an economically distressed corporation." The University of Michigan, another active opponent of the bill, may still challenge it in the courts as an infringement on university autonomy.

Divestment advocates are far from claiming that the battle has been won. In mid-1982, U.S. banks had \$3.6 billion in outstanding loans to South Africa's public and private sectors, and direct investment was estimated at \$2.6 billion. Moreover, the Reagan administration has removed restrictions on trade with South Africa's military and police, and eased them on nuclear-related exports.

Nevertheless, divestment as an issue has generated a potent, "new federalist" approach. It promises to keep apartheid more effectively on the minds of millions of Americans who do care, after, about the way their money is spent.

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"Water, water, everywhere, and not a drop to drink," may become the next official Oregon motto if the State legislature fails to address a lengthy list of water right issues before it.

Water right issues include maintaining the minimum stream flow needed to sustain aquatic life, in-stream use (say for recreation) versus out-of-stream use (perhaps for irrigation), or the maintenance of ground water safe for human consumption.

These and other water rights issues have existed unresolved for many legislative moons, largely because it is impossible to address one right to Oregon's most renewable natural resource without alienating a large or powerful block of special interests. But perhaps the most compelling reason for the Oregon legislature's failure to address these conflicting and highly emotional claims is that it is difficult to convince people in a state as wet as Oregon that water is a scarce and precious resource.

The players in this water game are nearly endless, each with needs for certain amounts of water at specific times in varying quantities:

- Farmers require water for irrigation and livestock.

- Municipalities require drinking water and minimum streamflows for sewage discharge, as do many industries.

- Recreational users, as well as hydroelectric utilities, require sizeable in-stream water flows.

- Commercial and sport fishers require not only minimum stream flows, but also preservation of specific stream habitats for fish procreation and rearing.

Complicating the issue of water rights, of course, is that most of these uses conflict.

One solution to Oregon's water rights dilemma may be impossible to achieve because of conflicting claims, but any resolution—any at all—may be well nigh impossible to achieve because traditional sources of information—the technical experts—seem to have reached a stand-off.

One example of this stand-off is a benefit-cost analysis conducted by the Army Corps of Engineers. In 1978, they concluded that the economic benefits generated by irrigation approximates the economic costs of lost hydro-electric power due to the withdrawal of water from streams.

Perhaps more significant to the impasse is the legal mare's nest of Oregon's water allocation system. A non-stream water right, once issued, is held in perpetuity, as long as the holder exercises his/her right within any five year period. Thus, each year the legislature fails to adequately address water policy, the State's managerial flexibility decreases. Each year the conflict continues, the options available to all Oregonians are further reduced.

At the center of Oregon's current water program is the Water Policy Review Board. Several bills this legislative session would attempt to alter Oregon's water policy by changing the composition of the Review Board's members. The real problem, of course, remains: Past failure to adequately address Oregon's conflicted water policies have resulted in a future that has been mortgaged more than once.

Portland State University's Insti-

tute for Oregon Policy Studies, in a work entitled "Past Commitments, Current Problems, and Water Choices for Oregon's Future," seems to have accurately outlined the choice:

The [Water Policy Review] Board has had the opportunity since 1955 to protect minimum in-stream flows, to classify waters, and to allocate water based on its determination of the public interest. The Board has the ability to anticipate and perhaps prevent harm to in-stream uses by continued consumptive appropriation. Instead, the Board maintains a permissive policy on future consumptive appropriations from most state waters. Harm to in-stream uses under this policy is almost inevitable.

It will be difficult to undo a generation of neglect—to pay off that overdue mortgage—yet the Oregon legislature must begin sometime. Perhaps the place to start is with the reconfirmation hearing of the Water Resources Department's director, James Sexon. While Mr. Sexon, an Atiyeh appointee, is not responsible for the entire tangle of Oregon water rights, it is certainly appropriate for him to address these issues at his reconfirmation hearing next week in Salem.

Secondly, the legislature must address these issues itself. After all, Mr. Sexon will be reconfirmed or not at the pleasure of the legislature.

If a continued plundering of our water resources is the will of the legislature, then that is what Oregonians will get. But if our elected officials want to help preserve our natural heritage for future generations of every species, the time for action is now.

Time runs out for Namibia

(Excerpted from Human Relations: A Global Perspective, by Ambily Eteke)

It is no longer an exaggeration that "time is running out in Namibia." It has to be liberated. As long as the Namibian problem remains unsolved in terms of Security Council Resolution (SCR) 435, and as long as the anachronistic and pernicious apartheid system remains alive, peace and international security in the southern part of our continent will continue to be threatened, and the "home-grown" resistance will escalate.

Namibia is a land of wealth and awesome beauty, but also of poverty and terrible oppression for the blacks. Perhaps it is the richest country in the world in relation to the size of its population and perhaps it is also the most exploited na-

tion in the world by the Westerners. Namibia is about 318,261 square miles, which is about the size of California or as large as England and France combined. According to U.N. estimates, Namibian population is about 1.5 million people with a gross domestic product (GDP) of \$1,000 per capita. And yet, about 80 percent of the population (blacks) are living below poverty level.

Apartheidism

Race is the determinant factor in Namibia. A non-white child has only 20 percent chance of surviving disease and malnutrition to reach the age of five. The government spends about \$700 annually for each white child's education. Whereas the average income for a white is \$3,500, a black person earns less than \$200 a year.

The Apartheid Law classified Namibians into three groups: 1) blacks/natives (80 percent); 2) mixed race (10 percent); and 3) whites (10 percent). The major agricultural and mining areas are part of the white homeland. About 30,000 of the whites are German-speaking people, while the majority of the whites are African-speaking and English-speaking, constituting seven percent. According to Rev. Z. Kameta, "have these three gods [race, language, color] taken the place of the trinity in the hearts of our white brothers?"

Reactions

In January 1981, South Africa again broke off negotiations with the U.N. to set up internationally supervised elections. At the same time, South African troops were busy invading Angola from Namibia to attack SWAPO bases. This, in our opinion, is an act of aggression against the Angolan Sovereignty. With the latest rejection of a negotiated settlement, South Africa again faced threats of U.N. sanc-

tions. However, in April 1981, the supposedly "free world" of the U.S., France and Britain, chose to veto any such sanctions. Instead, the U.S., Canada, Britain, France and West Germany have decided to pursue the issue from the "contact group's" point of view.

The complicated activity of the Western world has continued an aggravated history of blunders and negative reactions in African nations. In the last organization of African Unity (OAU) meeting held at Kenya, the African nations condemned the roles of the West. The strongest criticism of U.S. policy came from the liberation movements.

What the self-styled free world forgot to continuously understand is that African people have the right to decide what is good for themselves. They forgot to remember that there are socialist (or communist) parties even in the Western world. Rather, their major concern is that "Africa is going communist..." The battle should be devoid of ideologies of "isms." Already millions of Africans are concerned and frustrated over the mis-happenings of ideologies in our continent. They feel that something is wrong, drastically wrong, with foreign ideologies but because of the "picture painters," they cannot quite put their fingers on it. The African people should be allowed to adopt their "economic order" that faces reality.

Time is running out in Namibia. We believe, and accordingly declared, that South African racist government policies are bound to fail. Nothing can stop the Namibian people from becoming independent. This is not only because they are waging a just struggle but also because they are defending their right to self-determination and freedom.

Letters

To the editor:

We all know so much has been said and written about Portland's School Board. The bottom line is our town needs *decisive leadership in the area of education*. Such leadership has to come from the Board members. However, every voting member of the community, regardless of whether they are property owners, renters, or have kids in school, has the responsibility to make this leadership happen.

Some incumbent members of the School Board are still working on a "comprehensive educational plan." We have had enough of "planning." It's time for results, and *workable solutions* to serious problems.

It is my personal judgement that one candidate, Jim Standing, has the integrity, desire and commitment to fill a void on the Board. He certainly has the "technical" credentials to do a good job, but more important, I believe he has the feeling of what needs to be done to make our School District Number One. He is a team player, but also capable of making independent decisions. If you don't vote on the 29th—you lost.

Fran Ariniello

Portland Observer

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