

EDITORIAL/OPINION

The end of an era

When Boise Elementary School closed its doors Friday the culmination of a twenty year struggle was realized. When Boise reopens in one or two years as an Early Childhood Education Center, along with Tubman Middle School at the Eliot building, community children will have an ECEC, a middle school and a high school in the community.

The struggle for quality education at Albina schools began in 1963 with the NAACP demand for desegregation. There followed a retrenchment of segregation with the Model Schools system which locked students into inferior schools but, through the Administrative Transfer, provided a release for children of parents who protested too much. The highly financed and highly publicized program was a dismal failure.

Then came Blanchard with his "Schools for the '70s" plan — elimination of the upper grades for Albina schools, forced scattering of black students to isolation in white schools, and enticement of white preschoolers to black schools to provide "desegregation" statistics.

Blanchard's downfall came when even further restrictions were proposed for Boise and King students, barring them from Jefferson, Washington and Grant.

This led to the Community Coalition for School Integration, the Black United Front's boycotts, the election of Steve Buel and the appointment of Herb Cawthorne and Sarah Newhall to the School Board, and the resignation of Jonathan Newman — the board's desegregation "expert."

The passing of power from the business con-

trolled board to a people oriented board brought a fundamental change in the district's one-way forced busing program and the termination of Superintendent Blanchard.

When the downtown business community realized it had lost control it made an unsuccessful recall attempt, then helped select and finance candidates to replace those who had acted against their will.

The story is well known, but it is a chapter in Portland's history that should be remembered. The successful struggle against an immovable and insensitive school board and superintendent showed what a few people — united and informed — can do. It is what real democracy is about — controlling the institutions that play a vital role in the lives of citizens and of the community.

This struggle also should remind us that we have let the power slip away and inspire us to regain it.

We also must remember those who worked and sacrificed for our children: the Coalition; the Committee for Quality Education for All Children; the BUF; school board members Herb Cawthorne, Steve Buel, Wally Priestley and Sarah Newhall; Ronnie Herndon; Dr. Matthew Prophet and others.

Boise has long been a focal point in the struggle — the last stand where parents and citizens had to say, "Can't take no more!" The new Boise can become the focal point in the new struggle to disprove the myths that poor or black children cannot learn and to provide real quality education.

Sales tax in trouble?

The Select House Committee that was appointed by House Speaker Grattan Kerans to pass the sales tax referendum out of committee and onto the House floor for a vote is having trouble.

The committee has added a ceiling on state and local government spending—designed to make the sales tax more to the liking of those who cry that there is too much government spending. Business leaders favor the sales tax, which shifts the costs of government from the large property owners to the wage earners, and of course favor a ceiling. They are balking at

the idea of allowing twice yearly elections to override the ceiling.

In the meantime, rumors are circulating that some House Democrats are having second thoughts. After all, why commit political suicide by supporting the hated sales tax only to see the tax defeated by the Senate?

It is also said that many Democrats who voted for Kerans' special committee didn't even know the effects of a sales tax as compared to a homestead exemption or a graduated income tax. Some red-faced Demos are wishing they hadn't been so quick to say yes.

Letters to the Editor

Boise students attend three schools

To the editor:

I have watched in silence for the past three or four months to see what the school board and the school district would do in preparing the parents, the students and the community for relocating the Boise students.

I am writing this because most parents and the community are unaware of the transactions which

are going to take place that will place somewhat of a hardship on parents. The students will be scattered to three different schools: Columbia for grades 1-5; Whitaker for Pre-K and Kindergarten; Adams for 6-8 grades.

I feel this kind of scattering unnecessary.

Not one board member or anyone from the administrative level has come to counsel or meet with the

community as a whole. Yes we have had meetings where two or three people, who are considered the principal's advisory board, made decisions for the whole community and with no communication with the majority of parents.

I feel this is just another insensitive act as always happens when dealing with important things in our community. I am hoping that this has been an oversight and that there was no intent to ignore this community as has been done in the past.

There are six black aides who have not been assigned because the principal took teachers and aides by seniority. At least, this was the procedure to a point then one aide who had less building seniority went to the administration building and was placed at Columbia. I am sure it would have been much easier for her to be assigned that the blacks who will be displaced. There will be only one black teacher and a special education teacher.

Vesia Loving

Ms. Amanda Jackson

Hats off to Maestro Ken Berry!

To the editor:

I know you were thrilled beyond your greatest expectations if you attended Youthounds 83 at Jefferson High School June 5th. The program was also broadcast on KBOO. Truly the entire program was super, very enjoyable and spiritually uplifting. Youthounds 83 is the type of entertainment our city needs more often because it is inspiring to our young people. "The Lord is with you."

As for Maestro (please) Ken Berry, who is a musical genius,

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Quorum of One

by Greg Wasson

SALEM — Two weeks ago, the Oregon State Senate approved bills dramatically increasing the negative consequences of conviction for drunk driving.

Two months earlier, the VIPs restaurant at the Corvallis/Lebanon freeway exit began serving beer and wine by the glass.

A mixed signal?

"I guess you could argue that," admits Sen. Jan Wyers (D-Portland). "The other argument would be that the presumption is that the people who drink there wouldn't be the ones who drove away. Also, it's not illegal in Oregon to drive having had a drink. Most people can handle a drink or two with their meals and drive away and do quite acceptably. So it isn't necessarily totally inconsistent."

For its part, VIPs rejects even the suggestion of a problem. After three separate attempts to land an interview, an individual who would identify himself only as a spokesperson for the chain said he doesn't consider the freeway oasis, located miles from the nearest city, a truck stop.

"That is what we perceive to be a family restaurant serving full dinners and as an incidence to that we have beer and wine. It is a restaurant like any other."

Right — and guns don't kill people; people kill people.

Which isn't to say that VIPs

shouldn't have been granted the license. It's just that the situation is a graphic demonstration of the paradox inherent in discussions of what to do about drunk driving: We know that drunks on the highway kill, but America, especially the West, is a mobile society.

Gil Bellamy of the Traffic Safety Commission says that fact is well demonstrated by the statistics.

"Seventy-five percent of drunk drivers get drunk at public establishments. Yet, less than a third of the liquor in this state is sold at taverns and bars. The problem is that virtually 100% of restaurants and bars that serve liquor have parking lots. You expect people to drive there."

Cheryl J. Gettis, the Oregon Liquor Control Commission supervisor in charge of Linn County, says the problems some individuals have with alcohol aren't addressed by the licensing regulations adopted by the OLCC.

"Specifically in the case of VIPs," adds Gettis, "there was no criteria, pertinent statute or regulation that weighed against the issuance of a license. Currently, mobility of clientele isn't an issue that our regulations address."

But, says Bellamy, it could be. "We will have the laws in this society that the bulk of the people want. That's not fifty-one percent; that's more like what three-quarters

of the people want. And if three-quarters of the people say 'It really violates the principles of common sense to allow wine and beer sales at a restaurant adjacent to a freeway,' the state will stop allowing it."

As stated above, though, the legislation currently being considered is aimed at the consumer, not the distributor. The major bill would require that upon a person's second drunk-driving conviction, the car he or she was operating be impounded for 120 days. Wyers, who heads the Senate Justice Committee, estimates that the cost to the individual under such a law would be somewhere around \$800 storage and handling charges.

More importantly, the law would grant additional power to the police. Depriving someone of their car for four months is a strong statement, perhaps the kind of message we want to send out about mixing driving and alcohol. Despite constitutional mandates to the contrary, however, it's well established that, sometimes, laws are selectively enforced.

Police are like anyone else and have a tendency to deal more harshly with people they don't like than with those they do. This problem is especially evident in rural communities and raises the question of whether this is the best approach to take toward solving what everyone agrees is a serious problem.

Bill extends health insurance

About 30 million workers and their dependents have lost their medical insurance through unemployment. The House Energy and Commerce Committee has approved HR 3021 to provide limited assistance to the unemployed, but the bill is languishing in the Ways and Means Committee where Reaganites hope to kill it.

The \$2.7 billion needed to fund the measure, sponsored by Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Cal.), was included in the First Budget Resolution passed by the House but actual appropriation of the funds is contingent on Congressional passage of the "Health Care for the Unemployed Act" and President Reagan's signature.

The measure amends Title XXI of the Social Security Act to establish a Federal-State entitlement program for jobless workers and their dependents who are either receiving unemployment compensation or who have exhausted their benefits. States would be eligible for federal matching payments ranging from 50 to

100 percent of the program's costs, depending on the state's unemployment rate.

States would have the choice of providing benefits through their employment service or through a private insurance carrier. Benefits would include 9 days in the hospital, 10 doctor visits per person, and full prenatal and delivery care. Persons enrolling would pay 2 percent of their weekly unemployment compensation.

All employees of 25 or more workers who provide health insurance would be required to continue those benefits for at least three months following layoff. They would be required to offer an open enrollment period to the unemployed spouses of their employees.

The bill also authorizes direct federal payments to public and other hospitals that are providing medical care to the poor without fee.

Ben Riskin, a board member of the Coalition for a National Health Service, said the real solution is

enactment of Rep. Ron Dellums' (D-Cal.) bill to create a comprehensive community national health program. Calling the Waxman bill too limiting, he recommended that, "We should simply expand the services provided by the Public Health Service to cover all the unemployed while the fight continues for the Dellums bill."

Douglas Fraser, former head of the United Auto Workers union, ridiculed the corporations' contention that laid-off workers can convert to individual insurance programs that cost \$200 per month. Describing an unemployed man who was sentenced to five years in prison for stealing insurance papers to obtain surgery for bleeding ulcers, he said, "This intolerable situation would not have existed if Congress had enacted a universal, comprehensive, national health insurance program such as the labor movement and many other progressive organizations have recommended. We continue strongly to support this goal."

Jobless rates continue increase

by Charles Goodmacher

Oregon and Washington are tied for the dubious title of being states with the fifth highest rate of insured unemployment — 5.4 percent for the week ended May 21. The nationwide unadjusted rate was 3.9 percent, the Labor Department reported Friday.

Official statewide overall unemployment in Oregon for the month of May was 12.2 percent. The rate for the Portland metropolitan area was 10.9 percent. Data adjusted for seasonal changes reflected an increase of 6,000 nationally during the week of May 28, compared to the previous week.

Many economists privately agree that official unemployment statistics vastly underestimate actual jobless-

ness and that new claims for unemployment benefits are a better indicator of economic change. New claims are the first sign that more workers are joining the jobless.

The number of jobless workers filing initial claims for state unemployment benefits nationally rose for the second straight week at the end of May to 461,000.

Official overall unemployment rates, on the other hand, may go down simply because the period of eligibility for unemployment benefits eventually expires. Discouraged workers — those who have given up on finding a job are totally ignored. So, too, are workers illegally hired "under the table" yet no longer employed and those youth who have yet to find any employment.

Insured unemployment only includes those people who are out of work and covered by unemployment insurance. There are 86.8 million workers covered by such insurance nationally.

The department's Employment and Training Administration also reported that during the week ending May 21, a total of 3,614,000 people received regular state unemployment checks, the same number as a week earlier.

The 3.6 million national figure for state unemployment benefit recipients does not include 2 million others who receive jobless checks under extended or special programs, or federal workers, newly discharged veterans and railroad workers.

Labor dispute

(Continued from Page 1 Column 4)

"It gets pretty hot out there," said Burnside. Police have been on the scene repeatedly to break up shouting matches between protesters and Hatch employees. On May 20th, five thugs, two of whom were later identified as Hatch employees, assaulted and injured several pickets, targeting one in particular. "They proceed to a tap dance on him," said Burnside. The pickets suffered broken ribs, possible spleen damage, face lacerations and concussions, and one of the injured had to see a neurosurgeon, he said.

A short time later, early on the morning of May 22, 26 union pickets were arrested after they refused to move out of the way of a

crane, stopping work for a few hours. They were charged with criminal mischief, with a bail of \$150 each.

Burnside said that while in general the police have treated the pickets with respect, he's disappointed in the time taken to hear the assault case. A hearing was scheduled almost a month after the incident, he said, but "if one of our people were to go out there and beat someone up, they'd be in jail immediately."

Meanwhile, company owner Robert Hatch said that "our people are working above capacity," because of the union protest. "The reason they're out here is just to harass us," he said of the pickets.

"The quality of our work has never been questioned," he said. "We're qualified contractors. We're way ahead, we're here to build this job and that's it."

When asked about the safety violations alleged by Burnside, Hatch answered, "That seems a little petty doesn't it, really?" As for hard hats, "I don't wear 'em," he said.

Hatch said that two employees have quit work on the freeway project since the protest began, but that he has "a stack of 500 applications" of people who can take their place. "Those pickets are sitting there starving to death, and our people are taking home \$800/week. What I mean is, who's winning?" he said.

Hatch said he has enjoyed the "morning entertainment" provided by the pickets. "I really had a good time with those guys. It's just been fun," he said.

Burnside said the unions will hold a "stop the scabs" rally on Saturday, June 18th, 8 a.m. at 4128 NE Halsey. Union members and the general public are urged to attend, he said.