

EDITORIAL/OPINION

Christ in the White House?

Ronald Reagan told the nation, Tuesday, that "Americans are turning back to God," and called on Americans to "rise above bitterness and reproach."

The good news that Christianity has come to the White House would be proclaimed throughout the world if it were only true. This would mean that Reagan's murderous campaigns against the people of Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala would come to an end and these people could make their own destiny. It would mean that the President would no longer provide the bombs and bullets to kill children; would not promote the shelling of Lebanon; would not support the apartheid government of South Africa.

Instead, the President would support health and education programs in nations where one-fourth of the babies die before the age of 5. He would aid developing nations to acquire safe drinking water, airports and roads to take their goods to market and houses to provide shelter.

A Christian in the White House would not tolerate the waste of the nation's resources on a massive build-up of weapons of destruction—or their concentration in the hands of a few.

He would not eliminate the social programs that provide the minimal food and shelter for

those who are locked out of the economy. He would ask why the infant mortality rate in some U.S. cities is 5 times higher for Black babies than for white babies; he would provide pre-natal medical care so mothers would not have to watch their babies die in the first year of their lives. He would see the elderly, crouched in their small, dark rooms, slowly freezing to death or making their homes under the bridges.

He would not force millions of American's into unemployment—some of them forever—and would not smash their unions and attempt to remove their hard-fought benefits—unemployment compensation, safety regulations, social security, etc.

Reagan was wrong when he claimed that a moral decline in the U.S. ended with his election in 1984. The truth is that a tragic moral decline began with Reagan's election—a decline far more serious than the street crime and "sexual license" he refers to so piously.

The moral decline in this government has brought an increasingly uncaring attitude toward the poor, a racist attack on minorities and relentless military intervention throughout the world.

It is clear that there is no room for Christ in the White House with its current occupants still there.

Legislative races raise questions

The people of North/Northeast Portland have some serious thinking to do as they prepare to vote, May 15th. Not only is the office of President of the United States at stake, but there are some important decisions that could alter the course of state and local governments.

Perhaps the race of most interest is House District 18. Will Margaret Carter and Harold Williams split the Black vote and hand the district to incumbent Ed Leek? Margaret Carter was endorsed by a community forum designed to select one Black candidate. Should she then receive the endorsement and the vote? Harold Williams, who participated in the forum, now says he never agreed to withdraw if he did not win. If financial and organization support do not materialize, should he step aside for Carter? Will Carter lose votes because she is a woman, and what will be the role of Gayle Troutwine, a white woman who has entered the race?

Another interesting race is Senate District 8. Bill McCoy, the State's first Black state representative and its only Black Senator, is being challenged by Wally Priestley and Bill Stevenson. Although McCoy has raised the ire of much of the Black leadership because he has not provided strong leadership and has provided

weak support for some issues of concern to the Black community, his voting record is good.

Would the voting record of Stevenson or Priestley vary greatly from McCoy's? Would they be stronger advocates for the Black community?

It is understandable that Bill Stevenson, a resident of North Portland and a former state senator and representative, would want to return to Salem. The Senate seat is his only alternative.

With Priestley, it is a different matter. He is abandoning his House seat to run for McCoy's Senate seat. Will even those Black voters who are disappointed in McCoy favor this challenge from Priestly. Priestly received support of Black voters in previous elections. Will those who supported him in past elections support his opposition to McCoy?

This brings up the larger question of whether white politicians should oppose Blacks and other minority office holders. Those who say no, face the issue of mediocrity through absence of challenge. On the other hand, whites who do oppose minorities run the risk of helping eliminate badly needed minority influence in government.

These are some of the questions Black voters will answer on May 15th.

Letters to the Editor

Attacks divide

To the editor:

The *Portland Observer* should be commended for its very perceptive editorial, "Jackson Attack Contrived" (Feb. 29).

Seeing the strength that is growing in a Rainbow Coalition, the mainstream media have sought to undermine it. The attacks on Jesse Jackson by establishment mouthpieces fit into that pattern.

Like many other progressive Jews in the Portland area, I believe that Jesse Jackson is the best of the 1984 Democratic presidential candidates. His opposition to U.S. militarism and his advocacy for the rights of the oppressed are in harmony with the beliefs of millions of Americans—of all races and religions—who desire basic changes in our society. And, as the *Observer*

has pointed out editorially, both the U.S. and Israeli governments have continued their ruthless policies in the Middle East and elsewhere in the world.

The struggles against U.S. nuclear weapons escalation, military intervention, racism, sexism, and domestic bureaucratic warfare against the poor are all part of an overall struggle. We must not allow the establishment to divide us.

Norman Solomon

No Blacks?

To the editor:

By some accounts the February 25th voter registration drive wasn't a smashing success. There's a question arising out of this situation which I hope someone in the Black community can answer. If the Black leadership can't mobilize significant numbers of its own people for voter

registration, how can they hope to actually get out the vote? How can they ever expect to deliver the goods to their constituents?

The great majority of people canvassing last Saturday were whites, with scarcely a Black face among them. Apparently, the plan is to use the white liberals to do all the political legwork in the Black community. This is marginally effective at best. Why not send those white liberals back to canvass their own community?

Mike Metcalf
Society for the
Preservation of Democracy

The *Observer* welcomes *Letters to the Editor*. Letters should be short, and must contain the writer's name and address (addresses are not printed). The *Observer* reserves the right to edit for length.

Hounding Jesse

by Carl Bloice

Ethnic humor isn't funny. Off-hand remarks characterizing whole peoples in ways other than as they wish to be identified are offensive and shouldn't be made. Polish jokes aren't funny, neither are notions about "Gypsy" cabs and getting off "Scot free." Terms that are particularly offensive to minorities that have suffered historical discrimination and oppression have absolutely no place in civil discourse, no matter how private, and that includes the disgusting remarks made about Native American peoples that many people somehow think are all right to make.

Jesse Jackson is quite right. Using the word "Hymie" was insensitive. One should never characterize people behind their backs in ways we wouldn't were they present. That includes terms like "mick", "chink", and "a-rab". Jackson's apology was in order.

On the other hand, one would have to have rocks in his or her head to believe that the media controversy that has buffeted Jackson this past week resulted from his use of one offensive word.

Jackson has charged that he is being hounded. He is.

In the edition of February 4th, long before the present controversy developed in the pages of the *Washington Post*, the *People's World* said editorially:

"There is a lynch mob out to get Jesse Jackson for the simple reason that the dynamic Black candidate for President has suddenly stopped looking so quixotic. A combination of bold and imaginative initiative in the Middle East coupled with a growing number of people being exposed to Jackson's foreign and domestic programs, has moved him into second place among the Democratic hopefuls. There are a lot of people who don't like that, or what the 'Rainbow Coalition' stands for, and they are the kind of people who would rather engage in smear and innuendo than debate policy."

The policy that some people don't want debated is easy to figure out. It's the Middle East, or—to be more precise—the question of national rights, a homeland and self-determination for the Palestinian people.

There are a lot of people out to get Jackson. We can be sure the front-runners in the pack are

operatives in the Reagan campaign and some of those carrying rope are power brokers in the Democratic Party who don't like people making waves in what is, in fact, their party. But the coordination of this latest hounding of the Black candidate is clearly coming from certain Zionist forces who support the policies of the rightwing Shamir government in Israel and who are determined that Middle East policy not be part of the 1984 election year discussion.

If there is any question that the attack on Jackson is motivated by questions much larger and much different than the use of an offensive term, consider the current attempt by some Zionist figures to keep the conflict alive. On Monday, Howard I Friedman, president of the American Jewish Congress, called upon Jackson "to re-examine other statements he has made in the past..." Other improper language? No, what Friedman has in mind is something quite different: the conflict in the Middle East.

This is not the first time that a political lynch mob has been called out to deal with a Black political figure who has dared to question Washington's unflinching support and collaboration with Israeli expansionism and the suppression of the Palestinian people. It probably won't be the last. The tactic is simple. First, spread the story about an alleged "Black-Jewish conflict." Then, make it clear that the precondition for dampening the mythical conflict is for Black leaders to line up behind Tel Aviv.

Let's be clear. Jackson is not under attack from "Jews," as the major media would have us believe. He is being hounded by representatives of a political movement promoting their own narrow interests in this country and the Middle East in allegiance with some of the most reactionary forces at home and abroad, including the Reaganites. Those interests are not the interests of the mass of Jewish working people whose security and advance is served by democracy and self-determination abroad and the ideas embodied in the "Rainbow Coalition" at home.

The journalists' side of the gang-up on Rev. Jackson has been enthusiastically upheld by the *New York Times*, throwing one reporter after another into the fray. One of them, Fay S. Joyce, complained last

Sunday that in protesting the attacks against him, Jackson had "drawn no distinction" between extremist groups like the Jewish Defense League and "Establishment Jewish organizations and leaders." That's just an attempt to sow confusion. The fact is that the main pro-Zionist force operating in this election is quite well established. It is The American Israel Public Affairs Committee and it isn't just picking on Jesse. It has already waved its rope at *New York Times* columnist Anthony Lewis and had a hand in events that led to Alexander Cockburn losing his job on the *Village Voice*. Both were charged with being too pro-Arab.

Long before the proverbial 1984 began, the operatives from a number of Zionist groups had compiled and circulated throughout the country a voluminous dossier on Jackson and the people around him. The document is complete with the most onerous kinds of McCarthyism and numerous out-of-context quotations from the candidate to be employed as the need arises. We can be sure that we haven't heard the last from these people.

One thing is certain. The people out after Jackson aren't the least bit interested in unity in the movement against Reaganism. These disruptive, splitting, foul operations only serve the man in the Oval Office—some people charge that that is the intent.

One of those very active in the AIPAC is Mark Siegal, a member of the Democratic National Committee. He commented to Joyce, "Just because there have been unfortunate comments by one man doesn't mean Black leadership hasn't been extremely supportive." Supportive of what? Zionist policy, of course. There is an offensive paternalism in this kind of political blackmail. The time has come for people of good will of all colors and ethnic persuasions to tell these people where to stick it, stand up on our own two feet and say without apologies: Jewish people, Jewish culture and Jewish tradition are admirable, honorable and deserve our fullest respect and that has nothing to do with sanctioning the rape of Lebanon or the continued occupation of the Golan Heights, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

reprinted from *People's World*

Primary brings controversy

(Continued from page 1, column 6)

Cease and Walter Martin, Democrats, and Republican Brent Hamilton. House District 19, now held by Jane Cease drew her husband, Ron Cease, Robert Castagna, Anne Greenfield, Thomas Kelly and Mark Rothert on the Democrat side and Gregory Nelson and Marilyn Schultz as Republicans.

Ron McCarty, who has been running as an Independent and a Democrat for years, might finally succeed in District 16, where he is opposed by Donnella Slayton, a Roberts protegee.

The shake-up in Senate and House seats in Northeast Portland is the result of Jim Gardner (S6) and Rep. Barbara Roberts (H16) filing for Secretary of State.

Other state-wide offices in contention include:

State Treasurer—Rep. Grattan Kerans, speaker of the House, Democrat; former Rep. Bill Rutherford, Republican, recently appointed to the position of State Treasurer by Gov. Atiyeh; and David Cargo, David Chen and John Smets, Republicans.

Attorney General—Former State

Senator Vern Cook, Democrat, seeks the Democrat nomination to challenge incumbent Dave Frohnmayer, Republican.

N.E. Boosters

(Continued from page 1, column 6)

informal information sharing and education that took place when PDC officials were physically in the community, he said. "Now that everything is downtown, you have to make an appointment." Brooks praised PDC's current Northeast staffperson, Warner Wong, however, for being very helpful to the Boosters.

Brooks said he shares the concern of many community activists that most of the jobs in Northeast created with PDC and other government assistance are not going to neighborhood residents. He said some of the businesses are frustrated about not knowing how to get screened applicants and the Boosters and the PDC are talking about how to implement a system to accommodate the needs of both business and unemployed area residents.

Brooks is hopeful that the Boosters' resurgence will be an important part of revitalizing Northeast Portland.

KBOO training

KBOO Community Radio is holding a regular series of workshops to train volunteers in the Portland area in radio news. The training program consists of a KBOO volunteer orientation, two air operator workshops, voice training, writing for radio and interviewing. After completing the six week program, volunteers are integrated into the KBOO News Department to work as producers, engineers, reporters, editors and anchors on a daily half hour newscast aired at 4:30 p.m. Currently the focus of the newscast is national and international news. Sources include the Pacifica National News Service and the BBC.

The next round of training begins with a Volunteer Orientation at KBOO, Wednesday March 21st, 7 p.m. KBOO is at 20 S.E. 8th. Call KBOO Volunteer Coordinator Dave Lifton.

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