

EDITORIAL/OPINION

Publish "johns" photos

Frustrated and disenchanted Regina Wright, an Albina resident, had this to say about the City Club's recent endorsement to legalize prostitution within specific zones. "I'm tired of them making studies of our area!"

Her alienation is echoed by other Albina residents who have seen the ladies of the evening come out in the afternoon. For many residents, the simple freedom to walk down the street has been circumvented by male buyers who cruise around the neighborhood looking to purchase sex.

The City Club report acknowledges neighborhood concerns, but advocates a solution that will create additional problems while amplifying existing ones.

The report has raised a number of questions. Who will work in an area zoned for prostitution? Will it house both male and female prostitutes? If the young and the healthy work in the zone, where will the older and unhealthy work? Where will the zone be located? Who will regulate and enforce all parties involved?

Mrs. Wright and others have seen proposal after proposal, billboards warning buyers about

arrests and sporadic police crackdowns. But the one thing they have yet to experience is a solution. They don't want anymore studies, interviews or research.

The City Club's proposal illuminates a certain arrogance, and we wonder if the 450 members who voted to legalize zoned prostitution ever lived in an area where they could not walk down the street without a car slowing beside them with a proposition for sex.

During a press conference called by the Northeast Prostitution Task Force, a solution used in New York City was brought up. When a prostitute and her customer are arrested, the customer's picture is printed in the newspaper.

It is not the first time this approach has been suggested, but every time it is discussed, resistance to its implementation develops.

There are ways newspapers can print a customer's photograph without being sued for libel. Once the pictures get circulated, tricks will have to roam elsewhere for kicks. And residents such as Mrs. Wright will be able to walk the streets and call their neighborhood home.

Voters shape politics

Charles Jordan's resignation from his City Council seat this week has created a political vacuum in Portland. It is a political vacuum into which several candidates have already stepped, and several more have indicated they will soon follow.

The field of candidates, declared and probable, is already nearing ten in number, and it may grow more crowded by the September 28 expected filing date. No one candidate has emerged as the clear favorite to win.

But there is also another sense in which Jordan's impending departure has created a political vacuum: the candidates have yet to present the voters with any concrete programs they say are appropriate (or possible) for Portland city government. Nor have any of them stated exactly how they will achieve their objectives in office: will they be confrontational or seek our cooperation like Jordan did? Will they seek to represent only the constituency they feel is unrepresented or will they strive to serve the community as the diverse whole it is? Is there any appropriate middle ground?

In a crowded field, some of the candidates are

sure to have been in the public limelight more than others, but this should not automatically earn them the votes of the community. There are many ways to serve a community, and only few result in a high profile for the public servant.

This election represents an opportunity for concerned voters to examine the relative merit of candidates—on the basis of an informed understanding of city government here in Portland and how it affects both personal and collective interests. An intelligent choice can only be made when the voters know not just what City Hall does but also when new possibilities are presented by individual candidates. The temptation to simply vote for the most popular person on the block must be resisted.

The issues are many and complex, but unless the voters themselves understand them and force the candidates to deal with them all, the campaigns will inevitably focus on the few strong points of each particular candidate and the weaknesses of their opponents. Voters should use this opportunity to shape the political climate in Portland—not just to elect a new face.



POSAF on South Africa

by Marcus Cheatham

Mixed race and Asian voters stayed away from the polls in South Africa last month, overwhelmingly rejecting a constitution imposed on them by the white minority government that rules the country.

The parliamentary elections were a step toward implementing the new constitution, recently approved in a referendum of only white voters, which gives Asians and people of mixed race—called "colored" in South Africa—representation in the government, but leaves out the Black African majority.

At one point it seemed the mixed race and Asian voters would abandon the Africans and accept the limited franchise, but more than four-fifths of the electorate did not vote, sending Africans a strong message of unity. People of mixed race went to the polls August 22 and Asians voted August 28.

The boycott was spearheaded by the United Democratic Front (UDF), a coalition of more than 400 organizations opposed to apartheid, South Africa's system of legalized racism. The UDF and related organizations, representing Black, mixed race and Asian people, are opposed to the new constitution because it leaves the Black African majority without political rights or representation in the national government. Three-quarters of South Africa's population is African, 8.7 percent is of mixed race, 2.7 percent is Asian and 14.5 percent is white.

The Rev. Allan Boesak, a prominent South African religious figure and a leader of the UDF,

said, "If this had been a coloured (and Asian) referendum, the constitution would have been overwhelmingly rejected, and the government would not have been able to implement it...if it goes ahead and does so, despite the clear rejection by the people for whom it is intended, then the constitution will have no legitimacy."

Only 18 percent of the mixed race voters cast ballots, and an even smaller percentage of Asians did so.

UDF efforts to organize the boycott drew a heavy-handed response from the government. In the weeks before the election, more than 300 organizers were jailed in a wave of detentions aimed at stopping the boycott movement. On the day mixed race voters cast ballots, 150 demonstrators were arrested. Protests spread to schools where more than 600,000 pupils stayed away from classes to urge their elders not to vote. When Asians went to the polls, clashes grew violent. Police broke up demonstrations with rubber bullets and tear gas after shots were fired. During the period, at least two bombs rocked South Africa. One explosion at a police station killed five people.

The new constitution is part of South Africa's plan to deny Africans citizenship in their land of birth, thus protecting white privilege. Under the constitution, mixed race and Asian people send representatives to parliament, which is divided into three segregated chambers, one for each racial group, except Africans. The president has near dictatorial powers, picking representatives

from each of the chambers to sit on an advisory council that has absolute veto power over any legislation. The white chamber of parliament also has veto power over the minority chambers.

The South African government seems unconcerned with the boycott, calling the turnout "reasonable" and vowing to implement the constitution this month. Prime Minister Pieter Botha said the boycotters were "wreckers" who had "nothing to offer other than violence and revolution." Asked if the South African government could go ahead and implement the constitution in spite of the legitimacy question, the president of the South African institute of Race Relations said, "The South African government has never had moral legitimacy and yet it continues to function."

Apparently, South Africa has achieved at least one of its goals—international support. The Reagan administration views the new constitution as a sign that apartheid is changing enough to justify continued U.S. backing for the regime. While carefully hedging his remarks, Chester Crocker, assistant secretary of state for African Affairs says the new constitution represents a "positive development."

Marcus Cheatham is a member of Portlanders Organized for Southern African Freedom, a local citizens action group that supports Black majority rule in Southern Africa and an end to U.S. support for apartheid. For further information call 230-9427.

Letters to the Editor

Don't mislead voters

To the Editor:

Though I believe people have a right to support whomever they wish, I don't believe they have a right to misinform the voters regarding the electability of an individual candidate.

In a letter signed by several individuals supporting Herb Cawthorne, it was stated that his School Board campaign resulted in a "decisive victory." However, the truth of the matter is he was not elected decisively, nor was he the

choice of a majority of the voters.

In his 1981 School Board race, where he was challenged by two other individuals, he lost at least 72 precincts outright, and in precincts where his opponents' votes were combined, he lost at least 55 percent of the vote.

The final vote shows Herb receiving 30,265; Bob Goldstein 14,230; and Sherry Reynolds, 21,498 votes. When you combine his opponents votes of 35,728, you find that 5,463 people did not support Herb, not counting at least 17,696 people who did not even vote.

So let's not fool the voters on the

subject of electability for the Portland City Council race where there are 232,629 registered voters.

The 1984 race of Charles Jordan resulted in his receiving 80,781 votes, to his opponents 28,423 votes. Now that is a "decisive victory."

Carl Jackson

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.

Fire Bureau record exposed

(Continued from Page 1, Column 6)

do, in a couple of weeks, what should have been learned in high school."

Crisis in Opportunity

Mildred Schwab, Commissioner in charge of the Fire Bureau, said she feels strongly about affirmative action. But as recently as last week, she failed to hire a minority who placed second on the civil service

exam.

"It is bureau policy to hire 'number one,'" she said. "When I've asked minorities, who did not score 'number one', if they were interested, they said 'Don't hire me because I have to live with these guys.' They feared resentment and harassment from other fire fighters."

"Minority fire fighters need the same opportunity as white fire

fighters," Marcus said. "I don't care what color a person is that puts a fire out. But the community should demand that minorities be given the same opportunity to be a fire fighter in the city of Portland."

As it stands now, the budgetary crunch within city government leaves no training program, and history reveals when the Fire Bureau gave people of color a chance, they also took it away.

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ABOUT YOURSELF:

How did you obtain this copy of the Observer?
 I subscribe I picked it up at a distribution outlet.

How often do you read the Observer?
 weekly every other week occasionally.

Do other members of your household read the Observer?
 Yes No If 'Yes', how many? _____

Are you married? Yes No

What is your sex? Female Male

What is your ethnic origin? Black White
 Hispanic Asian Native American Other

Are there children under 18 living with you?

No Yes If 'Yes', how many? _____

Do you own or rent your home? Own Rent

Are you registered to vote? Yes No

Are you a Democrat Republican Independent

What is your highest level of education?
 grade school high school some college
 college graduate school

What is your occupation?

What is your age group? 16-24 25-34 35-49
 50-64 65 & over

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