

# EDITORIAL/OPINION

## Voting may save lives

Voice Your Concern! Vote!

On November 6, Americans will make a choice that will decide the quality of their life for the next five years.

The end result of this next Presidential election will shape constitutional law, develop or diminish the inner city and re-awaken colonialist ambitions or affirm a nation's right for self-determination.

If the last four years are any indication of the next four, people of color, low-income and the progressive elements of America are in trouble.

This week the Supreme Court resumed its path to the right through judicial decrees which curbed affirmative action, enabled prosecutors to use illegally obtained evidence and granted police officers greater leeway to search individuals, vehicles and homes.

The tune the Supreme Court has set legitimizes the street rap of "justice being just-us."

Prisons, across the country, are filled to capacity as economic, educational and consciousness gap cements criminal behavior as an alternative life-style.

Financially, the rich have gotten richer, and the poor poorer as the median income of Black families dropped to half that of white families. The unemployment rate for people of color is twice and sometimes triple the rate of whites. And the number of those who live below the poverty line are increasing.

As the traditional media concentrates on Russia and Reagan playing "tick-for-tack," the mounting unrest in Southern Africa is being down-played.

Blacks in South Africa are ready to die as they demand to be treated as human beings. The racist policies of "constructive engagement" with South Africa uncovers the hypocritical foreign policies of the present administration.

Talking out of both sides of its mouth, the Reagan Administration condemns Nicaragua for not holding elections the way America says to hold them, while condoning elections in South Africa that exclude 73 per cent of the population.

People of color, the poor and progressive are politically between the devil and the deep blue sea.

The Republicans want a cost-benefit analysis on oppressing the oppressed while the Democrats pay lip service to the ideas of Freedom, but they have yet to embrace the rainbow of issues surrounding jobs, peace and justice.

There is too much at stake nationally, internationally and locally to sit this election out. This may be the only time your voice will be heard. Brush up on the facts, read political interviews and analysis because an informed voter is the best voter.

Voice your concern. Vote November 6!



## POSAF ON SOUTH AFRICA

### History illuminates recent events

by Kamau Anderson

South Africa is a nation in southern Africa that is ruled by a dictatorial white minority. About four million whites brutally oppress an African majority of over 22 million, 2.5 million Coloreds (mixed race) and about 800,000 Indians. Recently, the ruthless repression of Black protest in South Africa has received some coverage by the national news media.

However, a brief analysis of past events is in order to put the present situation in the proper perspective. The internal struggle against the white racist South African government has been on-going for over two hundred years. An example of resistance met by brutality in this century occurred in 1906 when Bambatta was beheaded by the whites to show Blacks what might happen to those who resisted repression. Examples of more contemporary freedom fighters who are punished for non-violent resistance are Winnie and Nelson Mandela (banned and imprisoned, respectively), Walter Sisulu (imprisoned) and Steve Biko (murdered by South African police in September of 1977).

In 1909 the South Africa Act was passed which restricted participation in government and voting to whites only. A similar act was passed in 1961 that created the Republic of South Africa exclusively for whites. Since 1960, more than three million Black people have been uprooted from their homes and relocated in "non-white" areas of the country. Thousands have been killed by South African government forces simply because of their demand for basic human rights and

democracy. In March of 1960, sixty-nine Blacks were gunned down in cold blood for refusing to carry a pass identification book. In 1976 another thousand Black youth were killed for demonstrating against an inferior educational system and most recently, over the last four weeks, more than sixty Black South Africans have been killed by South African police and defense forces.

The recent slaughter of mostly Black South Africans points out the irony and hollowness of the new "reforms." While the South African government boasts about the new constitution (approved solely by whites) as a sign of positive change for the country, the overwhelming majority of Blacks, Coloreds and Indians has totally rejected it as a sham, a means of prolonging white power. The boycotts and demonstrations that followed the constitution's approval were brutally repressed. This vicious repression is what led to the more than sixty murders by the South African government over the last month.

The new constitution only further entrenches the Black majority into the inhumane system of apartheid. It allows the white minority to retain power over the majority population while offering limited participation in the government to Coloreds and Indians. The Black majority, which makes up 72% of the South African population, has absolutely no right to participation or representation in the government. This intentional "oversight" by the white South Africans in power will spell doom for the new constitution. The struggle in South Africa is for a "one-person, one-

vote" system, a multi-racial democracy.

In spite of this reality, the United States and other western countries continue to overtly and covertly support apartheid. The Reagan Administration's policy of "constructive engagement" with the South African government means exporting over two and a half billion dollars worth of goods and services to this racist government, while importing over one billion, two hundred million dollars in South African goods. In 1982, the total United States involvement in South Africa was fourteen billion dollars, with over 350 United States companies doing business there, exploiting the cheap Black labor that the apartheid system provides.

We are left with the question: "Why has this government, based on racism, lasted so long, particularly with the majority population of Black folks, on the receiving end of the brutal repression? Once the facts are in the answer becomes plain — because of internal divide and rule, a conscious and thorough building of military might and western support over the years. And now, of great concern to many around the world and here at home, is the Reagan Administration's continued political, military and economic support.

But time is running out for the racists in South Africa despite support from the U.S. and others. South Africa will be free. Twenty-four million oppressed Black South Africans will see to it.

For information about how you can support Black South Africans in their struggle, call POSAF at 230-9427.

## Letters to the Editor

### Votes count

Letter to Editor:

He is always reaching and striving for more. The more he gets the harder it is to keep.

In America the highest pinnacle one can reach is the President of the United States of America. Americans will do almost anything to reach that height. When he gets there he stands alone. No other person can fill that slot until he vacates it. The President has vested in him lots of power, honor, prestige and confidence.

He can only reach this pinnacle by people voting for him in free elections, one vote at a time. There have been presidents elected by one vote. His term of office can only last four years. His performance in that term will be judged by the people who placed him there. He can only be elected to serve one more four years, even if he has been a good president. He will do anything, but anything, excluding nothing, to get his second term.

In 1980 we elected our 40th President, Ronald Reagan. Between the first and the 40th president, many served more than one (1) term; many were shot; some killed; some forced from office. Being President is no easy task, but it is still the height of every American to become President of these United States.

In 1984 we will elect our 41st president. There are two (2) candidates running: one Republican, one Democrat.

Every American of voting age has a constitutional right to help make that choice.

This is what Concerned Citizens

are concerned about.

In 1863 Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President, signed the Emancipation Proclamation, giving every citizen the right to vote. He used the troops to guard the polling places while Negroes voted.

In 1877 Rutherford B. Hayes was elected 19th President by one (1) vote by promising the south, in exchange for their vote, he would pull the federal troops off polling places.

When this happened, the Ku Klux Klan, White Citizen Councils, Night Riders, Night Raiders Squads, Black Codes, Segregation, Poll Tax, Disqualification, Death Threats, loss of jobs and credit forced Negroes from the Polls. Lynching, beatings, hanging was an every-day occupation.

In 1901 George H. White of North Carolina was the last Black Representative from the South to serve in Washington during Reconstruction.

In 1928 Oscar DePriest was elected Congressman from Chicago; in 1967, Edward W. Brook Senator from Massachusetts.

In 1964 Lyndon B. Johnson was elected 36th President and in 1965 he signed the "Voting Rights Bill" that restored the right of every citizen to vote again.

In listening to both candidates outline their policies if elected:

When the now-President stated words to the effect that he would remove the reins of federal government from the States' affairs, my mind went back to Rutherford B. Hayes, the 19th President when he removed military control from the voting places. The KKK must have heard it, also. On Sunday, September 2, 1984, they burned crosses in Chicago. An article appeared in the Chicago De-

fender August 27, 1984 entitled, "Recruitment Efforts by KKK." Literature was also distributed in Indiana.

What are we to expect from Ronald Reagan?

What does Mondale have to offer? Every voter should seek answers to these questions before you give up your most valuable possession: YOUR VOTE!

Iris Randle  
Rayfield Mooty  
Directors  
Concerned Citizens

### Likes our style

To the Editor,

I just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate your editorials and articles in the Observer. They are so powerful, educational and penetrating. The Observer reminds me of one of the most prominent newspapers in Nigeria which also deals with grassroots issues.

Lanita Duke's speech at the Jordan Farewell gathering was as if I had written it. It was powerful and very moving. She said so much in that short time. Lanita, I always appreciate you.

Keep up your good work. You are a great educator of the community. We need more like you.

Dapo Sobomehin  
Metropolitan Human  
Relations Commission

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.

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**Wow! The Observer survey:**

MAIL TO *Portland Observer* P.O. Box 3137, Portland OR 97208

We at the *Observer* want to know how you feel about the paper. Please help us by filling out this survey. The information about you, our readers, will help us tailor our news and advertisements accordingly. Thank you.

**ABOUT THE OBSERVER:**

What do you particularly like reading in the *Observer*?

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