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Celebrating Palestine Solidarity day were (l-r) Faith Mayhew, Native American Resource Network; Fayed Mohamad, Palestine Solidarity Committee; Barbara Malik, Palestine Solidarity Committee;

Mazin Malik, General Union of Palestinian Students; Angela Morales, Portland Central American Solidarity Committee, and Ron Herndon, Black United Front. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Palestinians celebrate unity

by Robert Lothian

A right-wing movement within Israel is becoming stronger in its drive to move Palestinians from their traditional homeland, according to Mazin Malik, a representative of the General Union of Palestinian Students in Portland.

Malik spoke to a small but enthusiastic audience of Palestine supporters gathered Sunday evening at Old Wives' Tales restaurant to celebrate the U.N.-declared "international day of solidarity with the Palestinian people," which was November 29.

Anti-Palestinian sentiment within Israel is focused on the West Bank area, said Malik. The West Bank of the Jordan River, occupied by Israel, is where many Palestinians settled after they were removed from their traditional homeland in what is now Israel after World War II. A movement led by a conservative rabbi is now seeking to displace still further the Palestinians living in three refugee camps on the West Bank, he said.

This movement seeks "to displace the Palestinian population all over the place so they will not be a threat to the Israeli state," he said. "This is a tactic used by Israel all the time." Malik also said the recent attack on a bus in which 17 Palestinians died was carried out by a right-wing Israeli terrorist organization "whose major task in

life is to destroy the habitations of the Palestinian people."

Speakers from the Palestine Solidarity Committee, sponsors of the event, added that Israel is providing an official umbrella for anti-Palestinian activities within Israel while it pursues an expansionist military policy in occupied Lebanon and abuses the civil rights of the Palestinians who live there. The Palestine Solidarity Committee thanked the organizations and individuals present for their support of Palestine.

Regina Brody, representing the Portland chapter of New Jewish Agenda, made it clear that not all Jewish people support Israel's anti-Palestinian policies. "Israel should get out of occupied territories," she said.

Ron Herndon of the Black United Front decried "the absence of fairness in discussing Palestine." The United States does itself a tremendous disservice, for instance, said Herndon, by characterizing the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as terrorist.

Herndon also criticized the segregation of Jewish and Arab students in Israel's school system, and a tax system which makes Arab communities in Israel pay more and receive less. Also, "the same laws that the British used to jail Jews are now being

used against Arabs," he said.

"If this country can question Russia about the way it treats its citizens, and Nicaragua about the way it treats its citizens, then it should also question the way Israel treats Arabs," said Herndon.

A solidarity message from the Willamette Valley Immigration Project followed, offering friendship between the Mexican and Palestinian people, and Faith Mayhew, of the Native American Resource Network, offered similar greetings on behalf of Indian people. "We'll always be there and stand in support," said Mayhew.

Angela Morales, coordinator of the Portland Central American Solidarity Committee, spoke of "the bonds that unite the people of Palestine and the people of Central America." She reminded those present that Israel is a major arms supplier to Guatemala and El Salvador, and that Israel also supported the Nicaraguan dictator Somoza.

A prominent Palestinian flag covered the wall behind the speakers, along with posters and traditional costumes. The General Union of Palestinian Students entertained by singing the Palestine National Anthem in their native language, and they performed a "duepeke," a folk dance dedicated to "the workers of the land."

of U.S. executions.

Amnesty works worldwide to end torture and the death penalty "in all cases without reservation." The organization also works for the release of "prisoners of conscience" — men, women and children detained anywhere because of their beliefs, color, sex, ethnic origin, language or religion provided they have neither used nor advocated violence, and the group works to obtain fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners.

Since it was founded in 1961, Amnesty International has intervened on behalf of more than 20,000 prisoners in over a hundred countries. The organization has 500,000 members and supporters in 150 countries, and 13,000 in the U.S.

Amnesty International works under the mandate of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977.

Portland schools flunk Black students more

by Lanita Duke

GRASSROOT NEWS, N.W. — The effectiveness of education is measured by the scores on a student's achievement test.

According to the basic achievement scores of Black students and Early Childhood Education Centers, the Portland Public Schools are flunking in their efforts to educate the inner city and population of color.

For the last 15 years Black students have started and stayed behind in basic skill achievement. In Reading, Mathematics and Language usage, Black students score 10 points behind and stay 10 points behind their white counterparts.

For Black 5th grade students their Language Usage score is 202. For whites it's 212. By the time the students enter 8th grade the Black student score is 212, while for white students the score is 224.

In Reading and Math the same pattern follows. Walt Hathaway, Director of Research and Development for PPS, said educational gains are made but the level is different.

This discrepancy starts in the Early Childhood Education Centers. Analysis shows the performance level of five ECECs (Woodlawn, Vernon, King, Humboldt and Boise) to be significantly below the district's average. Although the gap between ECECs and the district has been decreased since 1980-81, an educational hole exists

and Black children are falling through.

Dr. William Gerald, Director of Instruction for the Jefferson Cluster where these ECECs are located, did not have a definite answer as to why this academic disproportion exists. "I'm afraid to use the example of kids coming from low socioeconomic environments because that is a controversial statement. But we (District) take demographic factors and relate those if they apply."

Karen Powell, Education Program Director for American Friends Service Committee, said teacher attitudes play a bigger part in low achievement scores. "Some teachers work from the notion that these kids can't learn. Therefore, they (teachers) are putting forth less effort."

Powell took issue with the explanation that the child's environment was to blame for this low achievement. "All the excuses are negative toward Black children. Parents are victims of that same educational system and if they did not get it in school it's hard for them to help or teach their child something they did not receive."

Gerald and Hathaway said economic backgrounds was more of a determining factor than race. "Looking at the achievement scores of children receiving free lunches, we found similar achievement levels. So, the data says achievement is related to

family income," Hathaway reasoned.

Powell, who spends hundreds of hours monitoring classrooms in ECECs, said she has observed Black students achieving the same level as whites. "But these students are more likely to be female, light-skinned and using all their 'pleases' and 'thank-yous.' They are the ones the teacher pushes and challenges."

Powell and Gerald predicted an increase in the drop-out rate and students receiving modified diplomas if this trend is allowed to continue.

In June, 1984, 58 Black students spent 12 years in school and were unable to read, write and perform math at an 8th grade level. Although the Black student population is less than 10 percent of the total district average, these students made up 24 percent of those receiving modified diplomas.

One of the ways to check this trend is to monitor the district, classrooms and teachers. Gerald and Powell advocated parents to make their child's classroom a second home. "Ask that your child be challenged and pushed. But above all, demand homework!" Powell said.

Gerald added, "Get involved and know what the school's program is all about. Develop a communication system between the school and home."

If these stop-gap measures are not implemented, society and students will be the biggest losers.

Racism ends prostitute program

by Lanita Duke

GRASSROOT NEWS, N.W. — Did a poor administrative decision alter the original focus of the Council on Prostitution Alternatives (COPA)? Has the atmosphere created by this decision alienated the only inner city service provider geared for people of color?

According to some members of COPA a shallow decision by the newly hired coordinator and the regimentation that followed the influx of city dollars changed the council's focus from helping women who need help the most to those who need help the least. And Lisa Clay, director of Friends of Sisters of the Streets (S.O.S.) — the only service provider in inner Northeast — is resigning because, "I no longer feel comfortable being on COPA because of the direction the council is taking."

The Council was the brainchild of various service providers, former Multnomah County Commissioner Gladys McCoy and City Commissioner Margaret Strachan, who reacted to the City's new mandatory minimum fines and imprisonment for prostitution. They educated City Council members to the need to provide alternative opportunities for adult prostitutes who wanted to leave "the life."

COPA was formed to coordinate existing services for prostitutes. This realistic approach to a complex problem was ushered in with a \$96,000 appropriation from the city to fund a coordinator and provide a service fund for client access.

It was during the process to hire a coordinator that charges of bureaucratic insensitivity from the City's Bureau of Human Resources sur-



With her daughter Jesse looking on, Lisa Clay, director of Friends of Sisters of the Streets (S.O.S.), will continue its operations from her home after being alienated by the Council on Prostitution Alternatives. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

faced. Paul Salgado, director of Friendship Unlimited, said, "Outsiders and newcomers felt that a delay would jeopardize funding."

But Clay and others questioned the council's Affirmative Action outreach. "I asked if job announcements were sent to minority newspapers and if the Urban League was contacted."

Ann Kohler, co-chair of COPA, said announcements were sent to minority newspapers and added that the Urban League was contacted. However, sources at the Urban League employment office said they never received the job notice.

Over some objections Susan Hunter was hired and within two weeks an incident of misunderstanding caused her to list the operations of S.O.S. as suspended.

Clay said in October she had two clients living with her who ran up \$170 in long distance telephone charges. After arranging other shelter for the women, Clay requested that they leave.

The clients contacted Hunter and said Clay kicked them out of S.O.S. Without contacting Clay, Hunter suspended S.O.S. as a service provider recognized by COPA. "My intent was to get housing for these women. If I spoke poorly of S.O.S., it was unintentional," Hunter explained.

When Hunter introduced the suspension of S.O.S. to COPA, it outraged some members. Kathy Oliver from Outside-In, an Intake service provider for COPA, voiced her concern in a letter to COPA.

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Fishing rights investigated

by Robert Lothian

Amnesty International's 1984 report lists fishing rights disputes involving Columbia River Indians as one of three human rights problems being investigated by Amnesty within the U.S.

On October 10th, according to the report, an Amnesty observer attended a pretrial hearing in Wasco County Circuit Court in The Dalles. Trials there involve Indians accused of violating federal and state fishing regulations. Some Indians have been sentenced up to five years in prison for the alleged violations.

The defendants deny the charges and allege that they have been subject to selective and discriminatory prosecution because of their ethnic origin. They also charge that they are being made the scapegoats for record low salmon runs in order to protect the interests of the commercial fishing industry.

"Amnesty at this point has not made a determination, they are just there to observe," cautioned Susan Emmons, Amnesty International local coordinator in Portland. "At this point they are still investigating."

After the case is thoroughly researched and if a determination is made that the rights of the Indians have been violated, said Emmons, those Indians deemed to have been jailed unjustly will be adopted as "prisoners of conscience."

They will be adopted by an Amnesty group in a foreign country, she said. The group will write letters and send telegrams to put pressure on U.S. authorities.

The other U.S. cases being investigated by the prestigious international human rights group include the imprisonment of American Indian Movement activist Leonard Peltier, and their main concern, the rapid increase since 1976 of the number (11)