

EDITORIAL/OPINION

Take pride in '84 politics

It does not matter who won the City's special election to fill City Council Position No. 4. Black people and the Albina community have a lot to be proud of in Politics 1984.

In a state that historically kept Black people out, and in a city who will not hire Black people to any significant degree, two Afro-American males opened the door of political opportunity and walked through.

The foundation was paved when former City Commissioner Charles Jordan pursued another career goal. His departure caused a ripple effect in local politics as artificial barriers to politics were forced down as 19 candidates courted the public.

To the voters, tradition, political experience and large campaign expenditures meant nothing because at the polls they chose a fresh face and a different voice. During his 15 years as a television reporter and anchor, Dick Bogle taught Portlanders to accept a Black face. Riding on the colors of the Rainbow Coalition, Herb Cawthorne tapped a new political base that improvised on the norm. From a field of 19, Cawthorne emerged the second runner without borrowing a dime or quitting his job.

A definitive statement on Black political progress with examples of making democracy work for you are appropriate themes for the end of 1984. As the final chapters of Charles Jordan's political career are closed and incoming City Commissioner Dick Bogle are opened, Black people in Portland have a lot to be proud of.

Although Black people lost a commission seat in Multnomah County, the organized efforts of the District 18 leadership forum unseated an incumbent whose victory in District 18 was an example of political unsophistication. But we learned from our mistakes. Despite the presence of the loser of the District 18 community forum the people's choice, Margaret Carter, won the primary and embarrassed the Republican contender in the general election.

So, there are victories and there are defeats. Jesse Jackson set the mood for this explosion of political activity when he concluded his address at the Democratic National Convention by stating, "Our time has come!"

People of color in Portland are rewriting the book of politics. We have learned to use the system and the old guard will have to move over because, "Our time has come!"

Letters to the Editor

The Observer welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be typed or neatly printed and signed with the author's name and address (addresses are not published). We reserve the right to edit for length. Mail to: Portland Observer, P. O. Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208.

No Uncle Toms

To the Editor,
I'm an inmate confined at the Oregon State Penitentiary here in Salem, Oregon, and I wish to "inform" our Black Community about the "propaganda" this institution has selected to represent the Blacks incarcerated at the OSP to misinform the Black community as to Blacks' treatment in the OSP.

The selected few which are the chosen junkies who sell their souls for the OSP, in return that they will have safe passage in bringing or smuggling drugs back into the penitentiary for purpose of profit and not just for themselves but for the administration as well.

Our so-called "Minorities Affairs Officer," Ronnie Martin, this community may be well familiar with and who's purpose is to keep the public informed as to the racial treatment and investigate and correct the problem inmates receive from the officers here at OSP. Instead our Minorities Affairs Officer sits blank-faced to these racial slurs and even accepts the cruel and unusual punishment the

Black inmates purposely are reserved for, by the staff members at OSP.

This institution deserves some watching by our Black community and even some form of communication. Point one (1) is very important to our Black community as to the (Title of Staff Members) being (Correctional Officers) but instead of this title they're really known as (Programmers) to "implant" hatred as a form of rehabilitation. This community should get together and form a communication system so they can correspond with the Blacks in general instead of letting the administration pick out their own profitable Uncle Toms to poison our Black community.

DANNY K. BOYD

Dick Bogle

(Continued from Page 1, Column 2)
tion. We do not have anything in Portland to draw them here. And I would like to make Portland a major league city." He said his first priority was putting together his staff and he planned to retain some of Jordan's staff members.

Bogle said he does not view his victory as a rejection of the traditional candidates whom he bypassed in the election, but, "It's an acceptance of me and my position on issues rather than a rejection of other candidates."

Commissioner Bogle received no newspaper endorsements during the campaign. "I got the endorsement of the people and that is the bottom line."

Herb Cawthorne

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instructor gave him:
"Where were you when darkness hit our land?
"Where were you when man rejected man?
"Where were you when Blacks were made to dance?
"Where were you when women had no chance...
"We can say in December we were together working hard for something we believed in."



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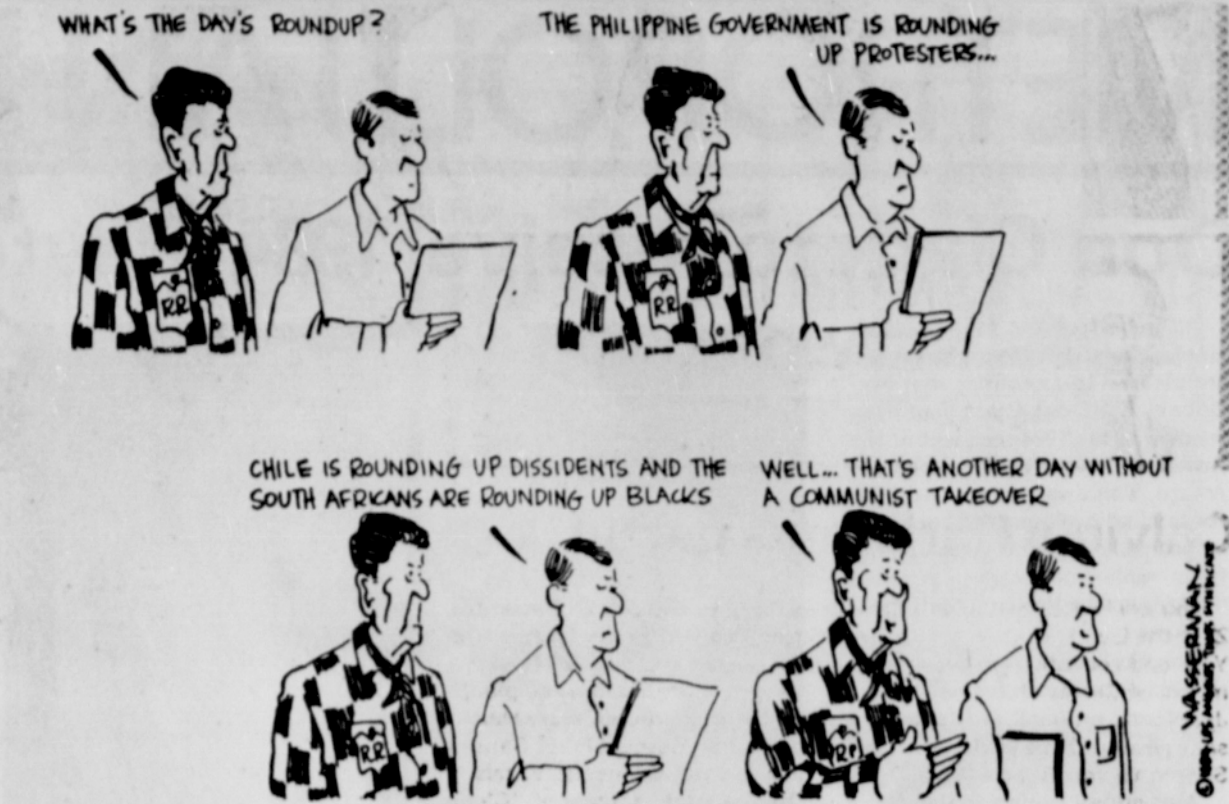
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POSAF ON SOUTH AFRICA

by Marcus Cheatham

Three leaders of the United Democratic Front (UDF) who occupied a room in the British consulate in Durban, South Africa for 91 days emerged last week, and two were arrested and charged with treason, an offense that carries the death penalty. Their story illustrates how international pressure is affecting the situation in South Africa, but it also shows that White South Africa is not ready to yield anything to opponents of apartheid.

Arrested upon leaving the consulate were Archie Gumede, president of the two million strong anti-racist UDF, and Paul David. Billy Nair, who had recently completed a 22-year sentence for sabotage, was carried away on the shoulders of supporters who shouted "Amandla Ngwehu!" which is Zulu for "power is ours," before police could detain him. It was said he would be arrested later.

The treason trial of Gumede, David, and perhaps Nair may turn into a showcase of South African efforts to crush resistance. In September of this year the three were detained when South Africa tried to round up hundreds of opponents of national elections in which Blacks were completely excluded and other people of color given only a limited franchise. They were released by a judge but the police immediately issued fresh detention orders for them, orders which allow prisoners to be held indefinitely and

without charges. Gumede, David and Nair fled to the British consulate where they sought asylum with three other activists who left and were arrested earlier. Both Britain and the U.S. refused asylum to the men, so they occupied a room in the consulate and used their temporary shelter as a platform from which to denounce apartheid.

Meanwhile, international events began to focus attention on the plight of political detainees in South Africa. In Washington, D.C., Black leaders formed the Free South Africa Movement and began daily demonstrations at the South African embassy calling for the release of South African labor leaders. The idea swept the country and protests sprang up in many cities. In Portland the honorary South African consulate has been picketed at noon on Wednesdays and Fridays and four people have been arrested sitting in there.

The award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Bishop Desmond Tutu, Anglican Bishop of Johannesburg, also highlighted the situation in South Africa. On December 10, just before Tutu received the prize for his leadership in the struggle against racism, South Africa dropped detention orders against 14 people including Gumede, David, and Nair. Although South Africa says neither Tutu's reputation nor international pressure had anything to do with the decision it is widely interpreted as a deliberate

effort to deflect criticism.

In reality, South Africa never intended to let Gumede, David and Nair go, as their arrest on charges carrying the death penalty shows. The three are still in fighting spirits, however, saying "We feel this occupation has certainly achieved its purpose of focusing world attention on the shocking racial oppression and evil apartheid system in South Africa."

It is clear that South Africa is still willing to go to any length to silence opponents. While only the people of South Africa can fight and win the struggle against apartheid, Zak Yacoob, publicity secretary of the UDF, says anti-apartheid demonstrations in the U.S. are "a source of inspiration for the oppressed." The Free South Africa Movement has called on Americans to recognize December 23 as South Africa Sunday. Churches across the country will be marking Christmas Sunday with ceremonies for the men and women facing Christmas from a prison cell for their opposition to racism.

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

Should education be colorblind?

Along the Color Line by Dr. Manning Marable

The mergers of formerly all-Black colleges into state systems and the fiscal crisis of Black private universities are only aspects of a broader, two pronged approach to reverse the gains of the Black freedom movement in the field of education. One aspect of the strategy is the marginalization of Black professionals: the demise of affirmative action policies designed to increase the numbers of Blacks in white schools, and the deliberate "phasing-out" of younger Black teachers. Desegregation brought thousands of Black students into graduate and professional schools, equipping them to compete in the white educational hierarchy. By 1974, over three thousand Afro-Americans were employed at white colleges, and over one third of them held administrative posts. But according to the research of Calvert Hayes Smith, 94 percent of the Black administrators surveyed held "staff positions" which were basically peripheral, and they existed at the pleasure of others. Black administrators usually held limited institutional authority, and their "decision-making responsibilities" were frequently poorly defined.

The strategy employed to "phase out" Blacks from secondary and primary level education involves the use of standardized tests to determine the "competency" of prospective teachers. In 1980, Florida initiated statewide teachers examinations: to date 80 to 85 percent of all those tested have passed, but the Black passing rate is between 35 to 40 percent. In Louisiana, 132 Southern University

students graduated with education degrees in the spring of 1983. Only 35 Black students in this graduating class took the state test; and nine passed. Howard University's Institute for the Study of Educational Policy noted in a September, 1984 report that the "recent emphasis on teacher certification and standardized tests for determining competency may result in a significant reduction of Black representation in the teaching profession." Afro-American students who majored in education are now "switching career plans and looking for non-teaching jobs."

Standardized tests, when properly developed, can be useful as one of several criteria to determine the quality of instruction. But the common denominator in these seemingly separate issues is the final result — the decline in the total number of Blacks within the field of education, and the marginalization of those Blacks in white institutions from wielding potential or actual authority. For example, any significant drop in enrollments of Black education majors in undergraduate schools will, within 10 years, seriously reduce the growth of Black doctorates. About one half of all Afro-American doctorates are in the field of education. The impact of such policies is "racist," yet the design is "colorblind," based on the metaphysical notion of meritocracy. Black professors judged on their "individual" merits may be denied tenure — but who is to determine whether Black Studies-oriented journal publications are of greater or lesser significance than mainstream white

academic journals in judging a tenure file? If an oppressed social group is denied "group solutions" or color-conscious criteria in determining examinations, jobs, tenure, and administrative posts, their subordinated class status is effectively perpetuated, since few Blacks are in positions of authority in the educational hierarchy to determine the criteria for what comprises "standards." Racists in the 1980s do not have to employ segregationist rhetoric to frustrate Black educational and socio-economic advancement. All that is required is the firm rejection of Blacks' demands as a group, and the advocacy of individual rights to compete in the public marketplace for jobs or other benefits, without the past restrictions of color. This is precisely the strategy of the Reagan Administration: "color blind" rhetoric is being used to destroy Black educational and social advancement.

Dr. Manning Marable teaches political sociology at Colgate University. "Along the Color Line" appears in over 140 newspapers internationally.

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