

EDITORIAL/OPINION

Demand Affirmative Action

It's time to drop the dime on Multnomah County Commissioner Gretchen Kafoury's side-step of Affirmative Action as she continues to represent a section of Multnomah County with the highest percentage of Afro-Americans while only employing a Black secretary.

This type of window dressing mirrors the lily-white administration in the county. There are no staff persons of color in any significant role advising County Commissioners. And in 1985 Portlanders interested in the preservation and participation of Affirmative Action should find this type of Affirmative Action inactivity unacceptable.

When she first took office, we publicly questioned her about her staff. When questioned directly by our political reporter, she said she was hiring her campaign manager and a close friend. Those are questionable credentials to represent a district in Multnomah County which is suffering from unemployment, poor housing, uncertain medical coverage and a host of problems created by decades of institutional racism. Kafoury is perpetuating a hiring trend that locks out community residents and people of color from employment and participation as key advisors to elected policy makers. As a white female, Kafoury has replaced the discriminatory "Old Boy" network with a regressive "Old Girl" network.

Kafoury's actions are inconsistent with her image and actions as an electoral champion of liberal causes. The re-districting that created District 18 was supported by Kafoury who will-

ingly gave up her legislative district. Certainly, we commend and applaud her concern for low-income, women, and other progressive issues. But there is something paternalistic about liberal politicians who say they support Affirmative Action, yet they never show enough initiative to hire a person of color in a policy-making position.

For too long the Afro-American community has been pimped politically by so-called liberal politicians who knew what was best for us. Portland politics are filled with these liberals who reach a certain political plateau and the concerns of our community are the first to go.

Kafoury is part of a political clique who has historically enjoyed the electoral support of the Afro-American community, but in times of economic contractions, bias from the liberal community has favored those in the network and not Affirmative Action.

The Afro-American community should not operate with politically short memories. The contradictions of liberalism in America led Malcolm X to this observation 25 years ago: "The only difference between a Republican and a Democrat is the difference between a wolf and a fox."

We expected much more from Kafoury than political nepotism which is elitist, narrow and waves with racism. Our community has an investment in Multnomah County and we deserve members from our community to be employed to represent us, not friends or political allies of the commissioner.

PROSAF ON SOUTH AFRICA

The Mayor and all four City Commissioners sponsored a resolution on April 3, endorsing a bill in the state legislature directing the state to divest funds from banks and corporations doing business in South Africa.

"The policy of apartheid practiced in South Africa and Namibia is racist and contrary to American values," according to the resolution.

It further states that U.S. investment strengthens apartheid by supporting the economy and providing tax revenues to enable the South African government to buy the technological and military means to enforce apartheid laws.

The bill, H.B.2001, was introduced by State Representative Margaret Carter. It is supported by numerous community organizations, including

the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, the NAACP, Democratic Party of Oregon, Black United Front, Rainbow Coalition and the Oregon Women's Political Caucus.

In March, 1983, the City passed a resolution encouraging the Public Employees Retirement System to divest funds in companies that conduct business in South Africa.



CITY OF
PORTLAND, OREGON

Proclamation

WHEREAS, many people believe certain policies of South African governments to be racist in nature and contrary to American values; and

WHEREAS, a number of Portland residents are organized to provide information to their fellow residents regarding South Africa; and

WHEREAS, the Portlanders Organized for South African Freedom has developed a series of activities to provide opportunities for Portland residents to increase their knowledge regarding South African policies; and

WHEREAS, the American Committee on Africa has designated March 21 to April 6, 1985 as South Africa Weeks throughout the United States as a method of educating the nation about South African policies; and

WHEREAS, it is beneficial to a full understanding of the issues regarding South Africa for each citizen to study the matter and determine his/her own position;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, J.E. Bud Clark, Mayor of the City of Portland, Oregon, the "City of Roses", do hereby proclaim the weeks of March 21 to April 6, 1985, to be

SOUTH AFRICA WEEKS

in Portland, and call upon all citizens of Portland to study the issues and to determine their personal position.

J. Bud Clark
J.E. Bud Clark, Mayor



Street Beat

by Lanita Duke and Richard J. Brown

Police Chief Penny Harrington is interested in bringing back a curfew for youths 17 and under. The Street Beat team asked, "How do you feel about a curfew?"



Darrell Eldridge
Marketing Representative

"It's a good idea. The longer kids stay on the streets, the more trouble they get into. I'll support a curfew."



Patrick Claney
10 Years Old

"It's a good idea. It will protect kids from muggers and others."



E. Carmichael
Broker

"I don't know if I can support that. A 10:30 p.m. curfew is not very realistic."



Mrs. Clarine Smith
Retired

"I think it's a good idea. It will help young people accept rules and regulations and eliminate some street problems."



Judy Castropel
Production Line Worker

"I would support it. People aren't safe on the street. We even need a curfew for older people."



Mike Futch
12½

"It's good. Kids won't get into trouble and parents won't worry about their kids."

Beyond "neo-liberalism"

Along the Color Line by Dr. Manning Marable

There is a pronounced tendency among Black elected officials and civil rights leaders to blame most of our current woes on the Reagan administration. Undeniably, the Reaganites are conducting an unconditional war against Black people's interests, manipulating clowns like Clarence Pendleton to hoist the banner of "reverse discrimination." Yet few Afro-American leaders have begun to reassess the limitations of their own political practice and theoretical orientation, in the midst of our fight for racial equality and democratic rights. "Neoliberalism," or Reaganism with a human face, represents no real solutions to the national drift to the right over the past decade. Nor does a simplistic revival of the policies of the New Deal or the Great Society.

Most Black politicians and civil rights spokespersons are liberals. Obviously, some tend toward more leftist or social democratic definitions of what comprises liberalism, such as Georgia State Senator Julian Bond. Others are more moderate by temperament or inclination—Charles Rangel, Andrew Young, and Bill Gray—but are nevertheless liberals by any standard. Liberalism still retains many fine qualities: a desire to implement public programs which reduce poverty and unemployment, expand public health facilities, reduce taxes on low-to-middle income households, and to reduce the bloated Pentagon budget. Liberals comprise the majority of Americans who want an end to the illegal U.S. war against Nicaragua; they are the core of the freeze movement; and they advocate the abandonment of the Reagan-apartheid axis, better known as "constructive engagement" with South Africa.

But liberals and liberalism are not in vogue, at least among the majority of the white electorate. Why? Unlike many conservatives, liberals lack any theoretical orientation, beyond a well-meaning pragmatism. Liberals believe that all views, no matter how controversial, merit serious discussion. They dwell within an endless series of paradoxes — no blacks, no whites, just greys in slightly different hues. They feel at home within ambiguity, and find something meaningful in vagueness. Liberals simply don't like to make distinct choices. And more than anything else, they do not wish to be considered "extremists." Jesse Helms and other ultrarightists in politics are held in contempt not so much for what they advance within the government, but for their vitriol, their extreme behavior and unwillingness to compromise.

And at last a basic reality of American political culture emerges: a small band of dedicated, hardworking "extremists," when properly organized, can implement their program within the political system and ultimately win over a majority to their views. To do this, the "extremists" must have a cause, a reason for mobilizing people; and they must be willing to suffer short-run losses and defections from their own ranks in order to achieve their goals. White liberals have almost no causes, beyond a collection of platitudes. In contrast, the New Right has a cause and a clear-cut vision of the future. Liberals like Mondale vacillate in critical moments: reactionaries like Reagan virtually never retreat. This is precisely why the Democratic "neoliberals" and conservatives will fail to overtake the next generation of conservatives, such

as Jack Kemp and Lew Lehrman. A lukewarm version of fiscal austerity will alienate progressives from the Democratic Party's ranks, and will be insufficient to attract conservative Democrats from Reagan's constituency.

Nearly 150 years ago, the abolitionists were an isolated band of "extremists." The cause seemed utopian—the abolition of slavery. Yet on this issue, they refused to compromise, and ultimately they achieved a national majority to destroy an immoral system. Two decades ago, many whites attached Martin Luther King, Jr., as an "extremist." He had a dream—the destruction of racial segregation, and the achievement of Blacks' political and civil rights. On this question, Martin could not compromise. What should our political vision be in the mid-1980s? We must advance politics in the abolitionist and civil rights traditions, going beyond traditional liberalism. Our first goal is the abolition of racism, root and branch, in any form; the destruction of South Africa's system of apartheid; the achievement of full employment, free public medical care, and universal education. Poverty, in every form, must be abolished; women's inequality, and especially the severe economic and social oppression of Black women, must be ended. Liberals may find these goals utopian. But until the Black movement clarifies its vision of a just, democratic social order, and is willing to become as "extreme" as the New Right for its own cause, the trend toward Reaganism will continue.

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