

Hanford scheduled for first strike capability

by Robert Lothian

Nuclear holocaust is unthinkable to most people, but few realize the full implications of the arms race or of U.S. nuclear strategy, according to Chuck Bell.

Bell, state coordinator for the Fellowship of Reconciliation and a founder of the Hanford Oversight Committee who is recognized as an expert on the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, said the administration and Department of Defense have developed an integrated plan to achieve a first-strike capability which involves Hanford.

While the Reagan administration talks out of one side of its mouth about arms control, it is actually embarking on a massive arms buildup, and cuts in welfare and social services are financing the buildup, according to Bell. Figures from the National Resources Defense Council, said Bell, show that over 28,000 new nuclear warheads are projected to be produced through the mid-1990s, adding to the present stockpile which is capable of destroying the world many times over.

"What the Pentagon would like to do is build up a tremendous stockpile of nuclear weapons" to regain the superiority over the U.S.S.R. that the U.S. had until the late 1960s, he said.

The Hanford Nuclear Reservation, just 200 miles up the Columbia from Portland in southeast Washington, figures prominently in this aggressive strategy, according to Bell. In order to produce so many new weapons, he said, much more weapons-grade plutonium needs to be produced, more than the present capacity of the Defense Department.

Commercial nuclear power plants could be the source of material for the plutonium, and the Purex plant at Hanford, which now makes weapons material from defense source, could soon be converting commercial waste. An experimental facility for converting commercial waste, using a new process called "laser isotope separation" being developed at Lawrence Livermore Laboratories in California, is scheduled to be constructed at Hanford by the end of the decade, according to Bell.

Also figuring in the scenario, said Bell, is the national nuclear waste dump which could be operational at Hanford by 1990. The waste dump

could be a convenient source of material for conversion to weapons, he said. Some of the material could come from Trojan and other nuclear power plants in the Northwest.

"This is probably the only source for the amount of plutonium they want," Bell said. "The Department of Defense does not have the capacity to produce this kind of plutonium."

Bell said that scientists at Livermore have admitted that the new process they are working on is part of the Reagan arms buildup. If the buildup scenario proves true, it would corroborate what the anti-nuclear movement has said for years—that the entire nuclear establishment, in-

cluding the Departments of Energy, Defense, commercial power plants and research facilities, are integrated into the arms race. "There's a lot of people less paranoid than I am that think this is what is going on," said Bell.

The buildup endangers the world, but it also has local environmental implications. "Reprocessing is very dirty," he said, and the many accidents and leaks at Hanford, not to mention the possibility of an earthquake, does not instill confidence in residents downriver. "We really have a disaster to look forward to," said Bell.



VASSAR JEAN VESSUP (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Local woman encourages youth to get involved in social service

by Jerry Garner

Vassar Jean Vessup is actively involved in many social causes in the City of Portland. Among them are the Police Internal Investigation Auditing Committee, Black United Front, N.E. Christian Advisory Committee, Community School Committee and the Head Start Policy Board.

By volunteering time to organizations, Vessup claims she has gained valuable knowledge which has made it all worthwhile. "The experience learned from participating in such organizations cannot be learned from a book," says Vessup.

Vessup says that young Blacks should not only seek a good education but also get involved in as many social causes as they can. Vessup stated, "Too many young Blacks forget the pains and suffering that many en-

dured during the struggle for civil rights in this country. Black kids today don't seem to be participating in the call for social justice in society."

Vessup, who lives with her seven-year-old daughter, has been employed since August 1977 as an Investigator with the State of Oregon Civil Rights Division in Portland. She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Social Science from Illinois State University and a Certificate in Early Childhood Education from the University of California at Riverside.

In order to compete in an ever-changing world, young Blacks should take advantage of the opportunities that are being offered in society stated Vessup. She feels Blacks should take advantage of the opportunities that people before us went to jail and died for.



Junious Williams (standing), discipline consultant for Portland Public Schools Desegregation program, and Halim Rashaan (sitting), Chairman DMAC, at Irvington School Wednesday, Sept. 25, addressing parents, staff, and DMAC members on district discipline policy study. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Philippine labor leader sees revolution ahead

by Robert Lothian

A Philippine labor leader who visited Portland last week described a growing opposition movement that is bringing the country close to revolution against the authoritarian Marcos regime.

Meynarado Palarca, founder and Secretary General of the Center of Nationalist Trade Unions in Mindanao, is on a nationwide tour to inform American unionists and the U.S. Filipino community about the growing opposition and repression in his island country.

Palarca described unemployment, poverty, even starvation coupled with the 13-year-old martial law instituted by Marcos as fuel for the insurrectionary feeling in the Philippines.

Strikes, major protests and demonstrations are sweeping through the cities and countryside, he said. "It is our hope that we could get rid of Marcos and replace him with a truly democratic government, freely elected."

As in Latin America and other parts of the Third World, U.S. aid is being used to prop up an unpopular and dictatorial regime, said Palarca. The islands were a colony of the U.S. from 1900 to 1946 and two strategic military bases there are the key to the U.S. presence in the Pacific. U.S. leaders have said that the loss of the Philippines to communism is a much greater threat than the loss of

Nicaragua or Central America. If U.S. troops invade anywhere in the near future, it could be the Philippines.

Palarca said the bases and U.S. military forces support the Marcos regime and should be withdrawn. In addition, he said that \$70 million in military aid and \$100 million in economic aid sent by the U.S. to Marcos is being used to suppress the opposition. "It is being used to kill our children," he said.

Although labor organizations and opposition groups are ostensibly legal and have the right to demonstrate, repression comes swiftly under martial law limitations, Palarca said. Twenty people were killed by security forces earlier this month, and 58 labor leaders and activists have been killed, kidnapped or assassinated since Jan. 1, he said. Religious fanatics often do the dirty work of Marcos and the military, according to Palarca. "They are killing people indiscriminately. They don't respect the rights of the people anymore. That's always the reaction of a dying regime."

Palarca described a vast opposition organization called *Bayan*, or the New Patriotic Alliance, which has enlisted 10 million teachers, peasants, workers, lawyers, church people and ethnic minorities out of the country's population of 52 million.

The KMU, a coalition of 500,000 trade unionists, leads strikes and labor protests. "Our mode of action

is militant action—strikes, demonstrations, general strikes," said Palarca, who is a KMU delegate. Of 200 strikes since Jan. 1, 80 percent were won by the unionists, he said. Palarca added that the KMU is independent politically, aligned neither with the Soviet Union nor with China.

Palarca, 35, was a utility bill collector and president of the power workers union in Devao City, a large seaport, before becoming a full-time labor organizer. His work takes him through the countryside organizing opposition and staying with peasant families.

He described extreme poverty caused by an economic crisis which has left 35 percent of the workforce unemployed. He saw children subsisting on a diet of sugar cane, and noted, "A majority of Filipinos die without seeing a doctor," he said. A rich 10 percent of the population, and transnational corporations like Del Monte, Dole, United Brands, Boise Cascade, and Georgia Pacific own most of the land, he added.

Palarca said his life is in danger because of his activism, but he fears not. "I don't make myself very conspicuous," he said. "In the Philippines today, we live day by day, we don't live for tomorrow." He hasn't seen his wife and three daughters for months, and when asked if they were safe, he said, "I hope so."



Singer/entertainer Lou Rawls, host of the 6th annual United Negro College Fund's (UNCF) "Lou Rawls Parade of Stars" telethon, joined by (left to right) UNCF president Christopher Edley; Wayman F. Smith, III, vice president-corporate affairs for Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc.; Ms. Wallis An-

nenberg; actress Diahann Carroll; and actor Sidney Poitier. Over 300 Hollywood celebrities and special guests attended the event. The "Lou Rawls Parade of Stars" telethon is scheduled to air on Saturday, December 28th.

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