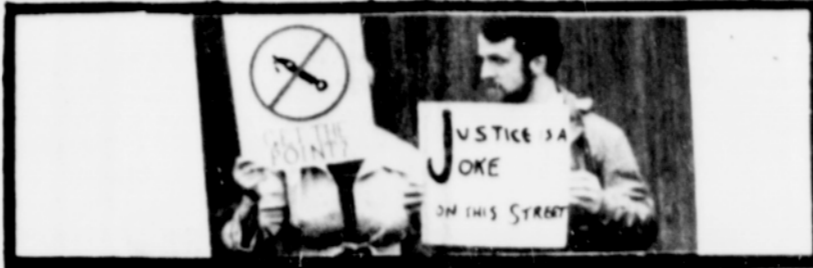


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Two Sections

Neighborhoods march against crime

Activist raps
City Hall

by Jerry Garner



Northeast Portland residents have had enough of the drug sales in their neighborhoods and took to the streets last week with a march and rally. They have also been picketing on a

regular basis at the corners of Alberta and Grand. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

by Jerry Garner

Last Thursday more than 150 protesters marched in the rain along Alberta Street and Union Avenue shouting the slogan, "Push the Pushers Out." The protesters were referring to

the drug dealers who sell narcotics openly on the streets of Northeast Portland. The marchers were also protesting the problems of prostitution in the neighborhoods.

King and Eliot Neighborhood Association Crime Prevention Committee

sponsored the protest march and pickets. Protestor after protestor complained to the *Observer* about their frustration at City Hall and the criminal justice system for not enforcing the law in their neighborhoods.

Ron Herndon, co-chairman of the

Black United Front was one of the many community leaders who attended the rally and march. Herndon said, "People living in Council Crest don't have to stand out in the rain and worry about dope. The question should be asked, 'Why is it that in certain parts of town we have to get out in the rain and do this nonsense?'"

One local minister was carrying a picket sign on Alberta Street stating city officials are not concerned with the drug and prostitution problem in the King and Eliot neighborhoods. The minister said, "People downtown think our neighborhoods aren't important because there is a high number of minorities and poor living here. Also, the King and Eliot neighborhoods have a high unemployment rate. Myself and others from the neighborhood association committee were once told by someone in City Hall that this area was the red-light district."

Not only were the protesters angry at the Mayor's office, they were also critical of the criminal justice system for not cleaning the streets of drug dealers and prostitutes. One young mother who was picketing with her 5-year-old son, said, "The police want to keep this in our community because this is what helps keep Black people suppressed and depressed. As long as drugs are in the community and all the young mothers are addicted to cocaine and everybody is free-basing, getting high, letting their kids run loose and not being concerned about their education, nobody here will ever develop enough brains to do anything

to make this a livable area. I wouldn't be surprised if the police were bringing the drugs into the neighborhood for the drug dealers. I have seen the police on many occasions stop and talk to drug dealers and drive away."

Some of the protesters were supportive of the police. Toni Williams, one of the organizers of last Thursday's protest and a King Neighborhood Improvement Association executive board member, gave praise to Captain J. T. Davis of North Precinct. Williams said, "Captain Davis and his men have been wonderful. They have made themselves extremely visible to everyone, including the local dope dealers. They haven't interfered with anything we have done, but they were there if we needed them. They should be thanked for doing this."

Williams said Northeast Portland wants some action from City Hall. "For years our neighborhoods have been used as dumping grounds for everything that comes along," says Williams. "The Northeast Portland neighborhoods should be given the same respect as any other community in the area."

Among those who participated in last Thursday's march and rally were Mayor Bud Clark, City Commissioner Dick Bogle and Mike Lindberg.

Members of the King/Eliot Neighborhood Association Crime Prevention Committee plan to hold more marches and picket to protest the selling of drugs and prostitution in their communities.

Toni Williams, an Executive Board member of the King Neighborhood Improvement Association, says city officials have been ignoring the problem of crime in Northeast Portland for years.

Williams said that former Mayor Frank Ivancie didn't care about the crime problems in the Eliot and King neighborhoods. Ivancie wouldn't cooperate at all with the neighborhood associations, replied Williams. Williams said that under the Ivancie administration, the crime problem in the King and Eliot neighborhoods became worse.

Williams was also critical of former Police Chief Ron Still. "At least Penny Harrington makes herself visible. She will come out and answer questions for the neighborhood association and the community. She puts herself out front."

The neighborhood association invited Still on many occasions to attend meetings to discuss the problem of crime in the community. Williams said, "Still didn't attend a single meeting. He would always send someone else. If the association asked his representative a direct question, the only response we heard was, 'I am sorry, but I am not an authority to answer that question.'"

Williams, who was one of the organizers of last Thursday's protest against prostitution and drugs, has lived in the King neighborhood for 27 years. She says that the present level of drug trafficking and prostitution is the worst in memory. "I can hear the dope dealers from my back yard and see the prostitutes and their customers in my front yard. I am somewhere between the gate post and the fence."

Williams says the prostitution problem has gotten worse. "In the beginning there used to be about 10 girls working Union Avenue. Lately, I have driven from my house to Thompson Street and counted 30 prostitutes. That's a lot of young ladies out there."

The neighborhood member said that tougher penalties are needed to eliminate prostitution and drug dealing. "Johns" (prostitutes' customers), should also be given stricter penalties, said Williams.

Williams was asked to comment on whether she believes city and law enforcement officials will make more arrests if more jail space becomes available. "No," replied Williams. "At one meeting, I was told by an officer that regardless of the availability of jail space, the arrest rate of prostitutes and dope pushers wouldn't increase. If this is the case, then public officials are misleading the community. I believe the folks in City Hall think that people in Northeast Portland have so many problems (unemployment being the main one) that they are just on their soap box about dope dealing and prostitution. 'Give them a couple of days; they will forget and some other problem will come along,'" Williams said. This time, the community will not forget.

"The community wants action from city hall, but so far we haven't received any," says Williams. "For years Northeast Portland has been a dumping ground for everything that came along. I don't think the people living in the area should tolerate this. The people living in Northeast are just as concerned, interested and God-fearing as any other place in Oregon. I don't think their dignity should be stepped on. I just don't."

National march against South African apartheid

by Nathaniel Scott

"I hope all of you realize the success you have had in the last 12 months," Ron Herndon, co-chairman of Portland's chapter of the national Black United Front said to the 400 or so protesters at last Saturday's anti-apartheid demonstration. The demonstration was organized by Portlanders Organized for Southern African Freedom.

The protesters rallied at Terry Schunk Plaza after a brief march for justice. The march covered a 20-block area in downtown Portland.

Portland's march was part of a nationwide movement that drew thousands of protesters from such widely-scattered areas as Eugene, Oregon, and Washington, D.C.

In Portland, Mayor Bud Clark proclaimed Friday and Saturday, Oct. 11 and 12, days of protest against apartheid.

The mayor's proclamation was read by his aide Oliver Smith, who then presented the proclamation to Trevor Fowler, the African National Congress western region representative.

Fowler, keynote speaker at the rally, said he appreciated the opportunity to "present the case of the people of South Africa."

Today, thousands of people are gathering across America to oppose apartheid, he said. "Your effort to isolate apartheid has been successful [since] you kicked out Van Pelt." (Calvin Van Pelt was the honorary consul until he resigned after repeated picketings.)

Speaking for the 24 million oppressed people in South Africa, Fowler said, "Thank you for expressing your

moral outrage against apartheid. We thank you for your continued support.

"Apartheid is alive but it won't be around too much longer," Fowler said. "People in South Africa have said, 'We have had enough.'"

Fowler maintained that sanctions, boycotts and demonstrations are working against the South African regime.

Pressure on the government can be seen in the fall of the rand and "white businesses closing at a rate of one a day," he said.

"Young people in South Africa will accept nothing less than freedom," he said. "There can be no peace in southern Africa while apartheid exists."

Fowler said "The people of South Africa shall fight until victory is won."

He observed that Saturday was an appropriate time to talk about the release of Nelson Mandela.

"We [the majority of South Africans] have said who our leaders are; we don't want anyone selecting our leaders. We pledge that we will continue to struggle until apartheid is dismantled."

Friday, in observance of the national anti-apartheid days, Portland State University students held a full day of events.

The events, which drew a small crowd of students, included films, guest speakers and a symposium entitled: "What is the impact of international pressure on South Africa?"

PSU's keynote speaker was Avel Gordly from the American Friend Services Committee.

She told the 50 or so who gathered to listen to her speech that, "The things we do, do make a difference."



(Photo: Richard J. Brown)