

# METROPOLITAN



Panel participants were (left to right) moderator Robert Lamb, Penny Harrington, Lee P. Brown, and Alberto Guardiola Mata. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

## Panel discusses law enforcement and and the ethnic community

by Jerry Garner

"The biggest need in the police department is to change attitudes," said Portland Police Chief Penny Harrington. Harrington made this comment during the final session of a three-day conference of the North-

west Regional 1985 Ethnic Minority Conference III.

The conference was sponsored by the North/Northeast Community Mental Health Centers, Inc. of Portland. It was the third such conference to be held in Portland since 1982.

Besides Harrington, the Saturday

panel included Houston, Texas Police Chief and former Multnomah County Sheriff Lee P. Brown; and Alberto G. Mata, Jr., Ph.D., an assistant professor of Social Work and Mexican-American Studies Center, University of Texas, Austin. The panel moderator was Robert Lamb, Regional Director for Community Relations, U.S. Department of Justice, Region 10, Seattle, WA.

Brown told the 65 or so individuals at the Red Lion Motor Inn/Jantzen Beach that his research from 1976 to 1982 on the National Minority Advisory Council on Minority Justice task force, indicated that America was a paradox in which a large segment of the minority population feel left out of the mainstream of American life. Brown also stated that "police need to learn to not only deliver our services, but to preserve and advance the principles of our democracy—the Constitutional rights of the individual. This would create an atmosphere conducive to improving relations between the police and the minority community," Brown said, adding, "then police would not use excessive or deadly force."

Chief Brown described a program he has implemented in which police are assigned to certain neighborhoods to research community needs. The police serve as a "linkage" between the citizens and the city government.

Chief Harrington said that communication would improve the problems between police and ethnic minorities in Portland. Harrington said another element that retards the communication between the police and ethnic minorities are issues. "The issues may be real, but they do not help solve the problem."

She said that we frequently get tied up with the issue of racism. "Racism is a difficult thing to prove, we can suspect it, you can think that it's going on, but to actually point to someone and say that a person is racist or that practice is racist, leads to a big conversation on racism."

Harrington said that instead of this, we should have conversations about behaviors and rules that are affecting our lives; that we need to change. "Attitudes aren't easy to change, but we can change behavior fairly easy. Behavior is governed by rules; so you can set up rules to say what the behavior should be," said Harrington. "By adopting rules that make the system more fair, and by hiring and recruiting from every ethnic background in our society," she said, eventually attitudes will change. In addition, good police work

should be recognized, she said.

Dr. Mata spoke on minority groups' invisibility in mainstream society. Mata said that a lack of accountability is worse than racism. "We're producing and controlling services for some, and keeping others out."

Dr. Mata has done work on street life and young people. Police, health and teaching professions could provide "linking institutions" to assist all segments of society, said Mata.

For the first time, the conference addressed Asian-Americans as a minority. This group will receive more attention at the next conference tentatively scheduled for Dec. 4-6, 1986 at the Jantzen Beach Red Lion Motor Inn.

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### The Royal Esquire Club's Community Service Statement by A.D.S.

From time to time we highlight individuals in our community who stand taller than others at the time.

On Wednesday, November 20, 1985, I met with James Berry and Michele Albert, but before I say much about them let me see if you can remember as far back as the late 60s, say 1968 or 1969 or 1970 (the model cities days, so to speak). OK, so you do or you do not, but anyway, under the model cities programs many programs were started using federal dollars to organize and administrate the program (or concepts). One such program was the Minority Contractors Association, known to us as the Albina Contractors Association. Later there was the Northwest Contractors Assn. and Contractors Management Assn; and also later and under a different directive there were two or three forms of the National Association of Minority Contractors. None of these organizations exist as a viable force today.

Approximately five years ago James Berry and Michele Albert opened the Northeast Business Center in a building on Union Ave. in Northeast Portland which they renovated themselves.

They represent the only minority contractor plan center in our community. Presently, they bought a building on North Killingsworth Street still in the heart of our community, which they will name Killingsworth Plaza. The building at present, which they are continuing to renovate is the offices of the N.E. Business Center, and the offices of Business Week Northwest, which is a television program highlighting businesses primarily located in our community (Albina).

I was totally impressed, with the commitment and diligence of James and Michelle. I could see the spirit of the 60s in their eyes helping the "little guy." While I was there, I saw several contractors, or I guess some would call them "handy men", but nevertheless, they were looking for honest work, and James was able to help them, moreover he gave them hope and pride which is what our people need.

I remember a few years ago, I used Robin Mayfield and Al Winefield and they in turn hired other workers; between the two men they renovated and painted the entire buildings of Exodus from 16th and Alberta to 17th and Alberta, and the building on 15th and Killingsworth. These two men were proud of their work, and I was proud of our relationship. Some of my funding sources were not very happy with my internal community involvement and my nepotism. My belief is that all across America you can see real economic development by looking at the internal pride and commitment from within a particular community or neighborhood.

Obviously, I would like to see more unity as far as economic development is concerned within our community. I think an alliance between Representative Carter, Senator McCoy, Skip and Grace, would be good. I further think an alliance between James and Michele, Skip, Grace, Anita, George Page and Art Alexander would be good. And further, I think that an alliance between the Black United Front, the NAACP, and the Urban League would be good. Economic development is a lot different from social development. In social and political development, the pooling of ideas and service is mostly all that's needed; but in economic development, the pooling of resources is what's needed.

Under the title of Economic Development Phase I Albina, I would like to see a meeting happen between at least the above-mentioned people, but not limited to just them.

If our community is to develop economically there must be clear communication between the people who represent our community, and our community services; and the pooling of our resources to provide real jobs, services and products.

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