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Solon Sanders:

## Police Brutality, Accident, Or Hospital Negligence?

by Jerry Garner

Solon Sanders, a 47 year old Black man, died March 31st from head injuries he received during an altercation with Portland police officers. Sanders was declared brain dead by doctors at Kaiser Sunnyside Hospital. Sanders' family gave the hospital permission to discontinue all life support systems.

According to the police, on March 20 they received a report of a stolen car from Vernon Mae Sanders, Age 43, Sanders' estranged wife. The police said Ms. Sanders did not list any suspects when reporting the theft.

On March 24, 1987, at approximately 12:35 a.m., a Portland police officer on patrol observed the reported stolen vehicle traveling eastbound on N. Lombard in the St. Johns area. The vehicle was operated by Margaret Ann Williams, age 37, an acquaintance of Sanders. Sanders was in the passenger seat.

After confirming that the vehicle was still listed as stolen, the officer requested additional police units. As these units closed in, the vehicle was stopped near N. Woolsey and Lombard. The police, performing a felony stop, used the police car's p.a. system to instruct the driver and passenger on what to do.

The police report said Williams followed instruction and was taken into custody without incident. However, the police claimed that Sanders refused to comply with the officer's instructions. They said Sanders made several motions, as if reaching for something inside his clothing. An officer grabbed him and took him to the ground; Sanders struck his head on the pavement causing a cut above his left eye. An ambulance was called to the scene, but Sanders refused assistance.

Once the police had both Williams and Sanders in custody, it was determined that Sanders was the husband of Vernon Mae Sanders, and that the car was registered in both of their



Solon Sanders in hospital bed prior to life support system being unplugged. Photo courtesy of family

names. Sanders and Williams were then released and retained possession of the vehicle.

Although Sanders refused medical treatment at the scene, Ms. Williams later took him to Bess Kaiser Hospital on Greeley

Ave. Sanders was treated and released. He was taken to Bess Kaiser a second time that same day, because Williams said the bleeding from his cut would not stop.

Sanders was again treated and released from Kaiser.

The next day, March 25, 1987, Sanders lapsed into unconsciousness at Ms. Williams' residence and was taken, once more, to Bess Kaiser. He was subsequently transferred to Kaiser-Sunnyside where eventually he was declared brain dead.

Although the police alleged that Sanders was taken to the ground because he refused to comply with the officer's instructions and because he made several motions as if reaching for something inside his clothing, Williams said that wasn't the case.

"Sanders did exactly what the police officers instructed him to do. He had trouble keeping his hands up, he was nervous because they had those guns pointed at him," said Williams. "He was shaking as he was moving from the car, his hands went down, then two police officers slammed him to the ground, handcuffed him, lifted him up and threw him into the car," added Ms. Williams.

A spokesperson from Bess Kaiser said that the hospital would not release any statements pending the completion of the medical examiner's report.

Besides his wife, Vernon Mae, Sanders is survived by three children: daughter, Veronica Sanders; and sons, Solon Sanders III and Antonio Sanders.

## Private Industry Council to Provide Job Training

by Jerry Garner

The newly formed Private Industry Council is planning on providing vocational skills training, basic skills training, customized training, on-the-job training, and pre-employment and job search training for approximately 3,000 youth and adults who face significant barriers to employment.

The training plan was contained in a draft submitted by the PIC to the State of Oregon Job Training Partnership Administration. The new PIC is authorized to develop and administer Federal Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) training programs for residents of the City of Portland, Multnomah County and Washington County, beginning July 1, 1987, through June 30, 1988. Funding for the training will total \$5,404,110.

The PIC said in the 62-page draft that its purpose is to provide youth and adults with skills needed, as defined by employers, to obtain long-term employment and economic self-sufficiency.

Last year the Multnomah/Washington Private Industry Council and the Portland Private Industry Council decided to consolidate the two corpora-

tions into one and create a single service delivery area comprised of Multnomah and Washington Counties and the City of Portland on the recommendation of a joint committee consisting of members from both boards.

The committee gave the following reasons for consolidating the corporations. They are as follows:

- Greatly expanded training and employment opportunities for the residents of both counties and Portland;
- A single effective approach to employers with concentration on service and without the hindrance of jurisdictional boundaries;
- A strengthened resources base a potential for additional JTPA and non-JTPA funding;
- More political clout to effect change to improve the potential for self-sufficiency of more applicants.
- Reduction of administrative duplication and expanding administrative capabilities;

- Greatly enhanced marketing to employers in marketing.

Under the new consolidated PIC, eligible applicants seeking PIC services will have access to all services provided in the service delivery area, regardless of where they initially entered the system. In the past, applicants could only attain services within their jurisdictions.

In addition, the joint committee recommended that the PIC have a board consisting of 26 members, with 16 coming from the private sector and 10 public sector representatives. The private sector appointments will be made according to the population of each jurisdiction. The public sector will be appointed jointly by the local elected officials of the three jurisdictions.

PIC officials said the new PIC will be better equipped to serve as a catalyst for change in Oregon's economy—facing up to the problems of joblessness, illiteracy, school drop out rates, teenage parents, welfare recipients, and other critical issues that confront the Oregon economic well being.



Marie Brooks has her blood pressure checked during the Urban League's Adult and Senior Services Health Screening last week. The screening was performed by Healthlink for citizens 60 years and over. Photo by Richard J. Brown



Eight-month-old Antonio Tardy enjoys March's sunny exit at Peninsular Park with his mother Angela Tardy. Photo by Richard J. Brown