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Editor's Note:

It took courage for City Commissioner Dick Bogle to publicly denounce the rising tide of racism in Oregon. Recent incidents — threats, intimidation, and harassment in Roseburg; statements with racial overtones by a member of the Oregon Legislature; the growing racial tensions in Portland Public Schools — clearly points out the ugly face of racism which prevails throughout the State. Bogle's statements focus not only on the problem, but on possible solutions, as well.

His statement to **The Portland Observer**, that Oregonians must acknowledge that racism exists throughout the state before a plan for corrective action is undertaken, is sound. His call for a series of open discussions in communities and neighborhoods throughout Oregon is proper. His call for moderation and understanding is correct.

Commissioner Bogle deserves plaudits for his leadership role and heroic efforts as an elected official in denouncing state-wide racism.

It would be extremely encouraging to see his efforts bolstered by other elected officials throughout Oregon.

Bogle Calls For State-Wide Campaign to Combat Racism and Bigotry

by Leon Harris

Calling racism in Oregon "a ticking time bomb waiting to explode," City Commissioner Dick Bogle today called on all 348 Oregon school boards and the members of the Oregon Legislature to help focus public attention on the November 27th Roseburg incident "to ensure it will not happen next month, or a year from now in your own back yard."

The Commissioner's statement was issued as a result of the racism leveled at Benson Tech football players and fans during the game played in Roseburg on November 27th. Portlanders attending the game claimed they were subjected to threats and harassment, spit upon and intimidated by Roseburg High School supporters.

The Roseburg incident led Mr. Jerry Bushman, father of Benson Tech quarterback Joe Bushman, to call Roseburg "the most hostile place I have ever seen." Mr. Bushman, who is white, added, "I felt uneasy about getting out of there."

Calling the action shameful, Bogle added that "the vast majority



of Oregonians will not tolerate racist violence or the threat thereof. We cannot hide from racism by pretending it doesn't exist. The people who exposed the hatred in their hearts at the football game in Roseburg need to know that their behavior was shameful."

Commissioner Bogle stated that the school boards and State Legislature can help by hosting public forums within their districts, discussing what happened in Roseburg, asking people to examine their own attitudes and those of their neighbors. "Take a hard look at local activity, if any, by neo-Nazi or other organized hate groups. Like it or not, they are on the rise in the Pacific Northwest."

The Commissioner also revealed that he had offered to speak at an assembly at Roseburg Senior High School. Bogle states that he firmly believes there is a lot to be gained from his appearance, especially in light of the decision by the Portland Public Schools to cancel all athletic competition with Roseburg Senior High School.

The offer, extended to Mr. Steve Iverson, Principal, Roseburg Senior High School, is tentatively scheduled for Monday, January 18th, the official observance of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, but has yet to be confirmed.

1987 Remembered

by Nyewusi Askari

For Portland's Black community, 1987 began with a bang. Back in early January, Gladys McCoy was sworn in as Chair of Multnomah County by Oregon's first African-American female Circuit Court Judge, Mercedes F. Diez. The position was created by voters in a 1984 Charter change that eliminated the position of County Executive. McCoy is believed to be the first Black woman in the United States to hold such a position.

The political jubilation of Ms. McCoy's victory was short-lived when it was announced that The Black Leadership Conference had charged Governor Neil Goldschmidt of ignoring them and not honoring the promises he made to the organization during the campaign. At a meeting held at Vancouver Avenue Baptist Church, Ron Herndon, co-chair of The Black Leadership Conference, said the group was disappointed at the lack of respect show by Goldschmidt. "Goldschmidt made commitments to us in March. He promised to consult with us in regards to making appointments and decisions which would affect the Black community," Mr. Herndon explained. It was also revealed that the Leadership Conference had made several attempts to contact

Goldschmidt without success.

Goldschmidt responded to the criticism by denying making any campaign commitments. "I don't think they have been treated any differently from anybody else. If it isn't good enough, I apologize. It's no attempt on our part to hide," Goldschmidt said.

However, the Governor's smooth approach fell apart when Mr. Herndon responded that Goldschmidt was playing games, and had excluded critical issues facing Black Oregonians in his "Oregon Comeback Plan."

Angered, Goldschmidt said, "Someone ought to squash Ron Herndon."

In response, Black Oregonians demanded that the Governor apologize, saying the statement was both degrading and inflammatory.

After points and counterpoints from both sides, the Governor met with members of Portland's Black community and later announced his commitment to work closely with Black Oregonians.

After a shaky start, Black Oregonians began to see some signs of progress. Some key appointments were:

- Freddie Webb-Pettet, Executive Director of Adult and Family Services, State of Oregon;

- Kathleen Saadat, Affirmative Action Officer, State of Oregon;

- Mr. Bill Hunter, Director of Employment Security, State of Oregon;

- Ron Herndon, Oregon State Apprenticeship Training Council;
- Paul Cook, Public Utilities Commission;

- Ray Ramsey, Port of Portland;
- Roosevelt Robinson, Oregon State Parole Board.

Currently, Oregon has two Black state Senators: Jim Hill, D-Salem, and Bill McCoy, D-Portland; and one State Representative, Margaret Carter, D-Portland. Representative Carter is the first Black woman in Oregon to be elected to the position.

Although it's impossible to list all the accomplishments and appointments of Black Oregonians during 1987, here are some highlights:

- January 1987 — Five new NAACP officers are sworn in office by African-American Judge Belton Hamilton at Vancouver Avenue Baptist Church;
- Allen Temple C.M.E. Church celebrates its 38th anniversary;
- First A.M.E. Zion Church celebrates its 125th anniversary;
- The Second Annual King Day Celebration is held Jan. 18, at the Red Lion Inn (Jantzen Beach);

Threat Received

by Nyewusi Askari

On Tuesday, December 29, 1987, at approximately 9:45 a.m., I received a telephone call that caused me to immediately sit down and write this article. Unlike the abundance of calls I receive daily, this one stressed how "the lives of niggers who work for Black newspapers ain't worth a plug nickel." It also emphasized that my recent article "Letter to the Roseburg Community" places me at the top of the list.

Obviously, the caller sought to instill fear in this writer. Fortunately, he failed to do so.

Having grown up in the Deep South at a time when violence, hate and segregation were the orders of the day, it is extremely difficult for me to welcome fear into my life. It's unacceptable, inappropriate and despicable.

In the 1920's, my great-grandfather, Poppa Iley, was shot in the stomach because he refused to sell the family's land. It happened one evening while the family was eating supper. A Model T Ford stopped at the house and three white men stepped out. "Iley! Are you ready to sell this land?" one of them asked. Poppa Iley, sensing that something strange was about to happen, stepped onto the porch and in his boldest voice said, "No. I've told you time and time again that this land belongs to my family, and it's gonna stay in the family."

A split second later, one of the men produced a shotgun and aimed it at Poppa Iley's stomach. And with my mother, her sisters and relatives looking on, a sudden blast from the pointed shotgun tore through Poppa Iley's stomach.

Within minutes, word about the shooting had spread a hundred miles. Not knowing if Poppa Iley

was dead or alive, and knowing that the nearest hospital was almost 50 miles away, the KKK set up roadblocks in an attempt to prevent anyone from taking him anywhere he could receive medical help. Fortunately, relatives solved that problem by putting Poppa Iley's bleeding body beneath the back seat of a Model T Ford.

Poppa Iley lived and our family still owns the land he refused to sell.

Poppa Iley's spirit set a standard for our family: a spirit that lives on through me and other members of my blood family. It's the same spirit that cause my mother to stand up to southern racists and declare her intentions if they "laid a hand on my chillens." It's the same spirit that caused my family to march with the Deacons for Defense, from the town of Bogulusa, Louisiana, a KKK stronghold, to the town of Franklinton, Louisiana, in protest of the murder of a Black soldier. And it's the same spirit that causes me to do whatever I can, within my limitations, to help make this world a place where we all can live without the threat of racial injustice always lurking at our front door.

Writing is a personal freedom I have given myself and I refuse to allow some obscure, dissatisfied person(s) take it away with a treating telephone call.

Life goes on.

Footnote: When I went south to attend the funeral of my mother in 1985, only one of the three men responsible for shooting Poppa Iley was still alive. One had died of stomach cancer, another had died from being kicked in the stomach by a plow mule, and the other was slowly dying from cancer. I talked to him. He thought I was Iley.

New Law Goes Into Effect Friday

by Nyewusi Askari

Beginning January 1, 1988, Oregon's new Parental Leave Law goes into effect. Introduced by the Governor's Commission on Child Care and enacted by the 1987 Legislature, the new law applies to employers with 25 or more employees. The law does not include seasonal or temporary employees hired for a period of time defined to be less than six months.

Entitled "Parental Leave: Right to Leave and Reinstatement" (ORS 659.360-659.370), the law grants a parent working for a covered employer, and who makes a timely request, up to 12 weeks unpaid parental leave. Where both parents work for covered employers, parental leave is not required to be given to both parents for the same time. However, if both covered employers agree, parents may take concurrent leaves. The 12 week period shall be 12 consecutive weeks, commencing with the birth or the taking of adoptive custody. Each parent is entitled to one portion of the 12 weeks where both work for covered employers.

The law, which will affect approximately 5,000 businesses or 9% of the state's employers, is expected to benefit state workers, as well as an estimated 550,000 employees in the state's private work force.

The Bureau of Labor and Industries has the responsibility of enforcing the new law through its Civil Rights Division.

Some key definitions of the new law are:

- "Parent" means an employee with parental rights and duties as defined by law who is responsible for the care a nurturance of a child, and includes the adoptive mother or

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Block-By-Block Program Starts Weatherizing



Photo by Richard J. Brown

Friday, December 18th at 9:15 a.m. Commissioner Mike Lindberg held a press conference that kicked off the Block-By-Block Weatherization Project in the King Neighborhood and the insulating of the attic of Mrs. Christine Wilson (L), of N.E. Grand. The project is based on a pilot project operated by the Portland Energy Office last year that weatherized 68 houses in two neighborhoods. This year the program will be full-scale. A combination of revenues from the City, all three utilities and the Oregon Department of Energy will total over \$400,000, making it possible to serve four neighborhoods and 600 houses. In addition to King, the other neighborhoods this year are Kenton, Brooklyn, and Brentwood-Darlington. For more information, contact Elise Anfield, Commissioner Lindberg's Office, 248-4145; or Sandra Parker, Portland Energy Office, 287-9914.

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