

Letters To The Editor

Civilian Police Review Board Needed

The brutal beating of Rodney King and the "not guilty" verdict that justifies police brutality in L.A. is not an isolated outrage. The Oregonian's articles on police abuse of deadly force make it clear that we have a serious problem here in Portland. The 1992 examples alone of "enforcement" by Portland police show that something is dangerously amiss within Portland's police force. Certainly training is a critical aspect of any job. But police resorting to gunfire is not just a matter of the need for training. It is also a matter of police getting away with murder. Portlanders need a voice in controlling the behavior of cops with guns, cops with clubs, cops with fists. We

need a Civilian Police Review Board, a panel of elected citizens with investigation, assessment and disciplinary powers over police behavior.

I don't agree that drug-trafficking and gang violence justifies more police. More police will not protect anyone, especially if you are a person of color. The recent beating of Jacob Johnson, an African American man, in N.E. Portland is an outrageous example. All four people involved in the attack are reported to be white supremacists. Two of those involved were allowed to walk away. The Neo-Nazi Skinhead assailant was charged with a single count of second-degree assault. That this attack is not considered a hate crime sends an alarming message to our community.

It is no wonder the Aryan Nations consider Portland ripe for the picking. Racists attacks are permissible.

We need to start holding accountable those who are supposed to serve and protect. Portlanders should not be victims of police brutality or lenient treatment by police of racist assailants. All four of Jacob Johnson's racist attackers should be arrested and charged with attempted murder. Enact legislation for a Civilian Police Review Board, independent of the mayor and police chief. Demand that Rodney King's attacker be charged under Federal Civil Rights laws.

Sincerely,
Jordano Sardo

Integrity: Les AuCoin Wins Hands Down

I do not know Harry Lonsdale, but I am very disappointed to see him attack the integrity of Congressman Les AuCoin. I have worked with Mr. AuCoin for a number of years while President of the Albina Ministerial Alliance, and as a Minister of St. Mark Baptist Church in

N.E. Portland.

In those years I have come to know Les as an honest, compassionate and dedicated man. He cares about the community, and has demonstrated his concern with results: new housing, job training and development, and programs

to help young people involved in gangs. From what I've witnessed of the race for the U.S. Senate, if it comes down to a question of character and integrity, Les AuCoin wins hands down.

Sincerely,
Reverend Joe Hardie

Portland Did Not "Write The Book On Love"

Some Black leaders in Portland are offensive to the senses. Mr. Harold Williams who represents 100 Black Men Group stated at a rally "The people of Portland wrote the book on love." As Mr. Williams was making his vulgar statements, White Supremacist Groups were protesting the rally across the street. All of the Whites who addressed the rally registered indignation to the beating of Rodney King and the acquittal of the four police officers.

Mr. Charles Jordan and Mr. Harold Williams who are Black, perhaps out of habit, attempted to pacify by casting Blacks as childlike characters. Mr. Jordan is the City of Portland Parks Commissioner. He stated the reason that people didn't riot was because "they

have not lost hope." Mr. Jordan made this statement at a meeting that brought community leaders and city government officials together to discuss hate crimes. Historically, in America Blacks are liked best when jobs are plentiful and wars are deadly. When jobs are scarce and no wars on the horizon we are hated. These are historical facts.

Black leadership is not a popularity contest. It requires courage. Police Chief Dan Potter denounced the beating of Rodney King and the verdict with intrepidity and firmness. 89% of people who were polled hold similar views.

It is a travesty that Mr. Jordan and Mr. Williams offered fixed form of expression that gave solace to bigots.

Surely, the bigots can use Mr. Jordan and Mr. Williams' statements to defend their narrow views. It is no wonder that drugs are rampant and unemployment is so high in Northeast Portland. Mr. Jordan and Mr. Williams offered no input to the solution to the problem. In the 60's there was a saying "If you are not a part of the solution, then you are a part of the problem." When people gather to bare their soles they expect others to pull off the mask also. It is bad form for the people who are receiving unfair treatment to offer explanations that insult reasonable thinking men and women who are seeking solutions.

J. David Cotton
Northeast Portland

Measure 5 Victims Describe Effect Of Cuts On Their Lives

On Saturday, May 9, a panel of legislators heard testimony from individuals who, because of Measure 5, either already cannot get services or will soon lose services they desperately need.

The hearing took place from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., in Hearing Room A of the State Capitol.

As Elsie Hastings of Portland says, "I have inoperable carpal tunnel syndrome and am in a wheelchair so Senior Services provides me with a caregiver five hours a week who changes my bed, does my laundry, cleans my house, and allows me to continue living at home. Now, they may reduce my caregiver's hours or cut her out altogether. I don't know what I'll do then."

"Measure 5 cuts aren't phony --

they are very real -- and we'll all suffer from them!" is the way Sandy Millius, Heart of Oregon Steering Committee member, describes the message the human services clients delivered. The panel explored the impact of Measure 5 cuts on individuals' lives and the impact on our quality of life from the perspective of average Oregonians.

Hasting and many of the people testifying and in the audience have overcome personal hardships -- such as physical disabilities or lack of money -- in order to attend the Salem hearing. To honor the effort so many will have made to be heard by the Oregon Legislature, the panel compiled a report in the hearing and sent a copy to all legislators and the Governor.

The two-hour hearing, convened by the Heart of Oregon Coalition, was conducted by a bipartisan panel of legislators. Panelists were Senators Ron Cease, Grattan Kerans, and Cliff Trow, and Representatives Peter Courtney and Mary Alice Ford. Individuals from all walks of life testified, including seniors losing in-home care, students facing tuition hikes and program cuts, people with mental health problems (or their relatives), persons with disabilities, and other people who need publicly funded services.



The Los Angeles Dream Explodes: Again!

In the 1930s, black poet Langston Hughes wrote a poem, "Lenox Avenue Mural":

What happens to a dream deferred?
Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore--
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over--
like a syrupy sweet?
Maybe it just sags like a heavy load.
Or does it explode?

BY PROF. MCKINLEY BURT

I appreciate those calls from readers and several local social organizations in response to my last week's article that explored the Right Wing infiltration of some of the nation's Police Departments. Today, I would draw your attention to an equally volatile situation in urban dynamics that has the potential for further explosions; THE HOUSING RACKETEERING PRACTICED OR SUPPORTED BY OUR FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.

It has been 500 years since western man devised the racist concept of a "Ghetto" in which to imprison and exploit the minorities of a nation (the Jewish population of Venice, Italy in the 15th century). Had you been following last week's hearings of the House Banking and Urban Affairs committee, you would have concluded, "nothing has changed!" In this instance, we may evaluate not only the situation in Los Angeles but in Portland, Oregon as well.

Again, I am able to quite factually report on that California situation which had a great deal to do with the "DEFERRED DREAM" that exploded (1954-1964 Business & Real Estate Accounting). I have no idea why the testimony (revelations) given before that congressional committee should have proved so "shocking" to several of the congressmen, when tens of millions of Americans--and the press--have been aware of the situation for almost a century. Nevertheless, tongues were clocked and blame was facetiously assigned to others, almost without exception.

Held to the griddle were the following players: The Federal Housing Administration, the National Mortgage Associations (Fannie Mae and Freddy Mae), The Federal Reserve Board, The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), and several large urban banks. Testifying "for the people," we had the National Air Housing Alliance, and the Communities for Accountable Reinvestment, among others. All in all, we heard the same old litany of RED LINING, DISINVESTMENT, and Gentrification. Obviously, nothing had changed since the first hypocritical hearings held immediately after the Watt's riots of 1965.

Be sure to keep Portland in mind as we review these facts. The chairman of the hearings and several congressmen constantly reminded the testifying witnesses from these governmental agencies that it had been their sworn, legal duty to exercise their regulatory authority in monitoring the performance of their own agency as well as that of the banks and mortgage companies in respect to a nationwide surge in housing discrimination.

Typical lame excuses ranged from the protestations of the Federal National Mortgage Association--"Yes we know, and we are constantly striving to improve our packages" (whatever that means) to the straight-faced statement of the Huntington National Bank of Columbus, Ohio; "We have discovered that intercity mortgages can be QUITE PROFITABLE. As a matter of fact we have gone to a number of the BLACK CHURCHES and made them OUR AGENTS, splitting commissions with them". This came after an admission that they had belatedly discovered the intent of the Federal Community Investment Act. We note that in Portland there has also been a sudden surge of highly publicized protestations of a firm commitment to finance intercity housing. Real or fancied?

We note, too, in respect to Portland, not only the shenanigans of the Dominion Real Estate company(s) and the ruthless exploitation of the poor

(black and whites) wishing to achieve home ownership--but the incredible activities of a gang of real estate brokers, appraisers, investors and victimized (?) banks (do you believe in the tooth fairy). See Sunday's Oregonian newspaper, front page article, "Breaking The Bank."

Two salient facts leap out at you; how is it that rascals and high fliers CAN GO TO PORTLAND BANKS AND SECURE INFLATED PROPERTY LOANS WHEN HARD-WORKING, NORTHEAST CITIZENS ARE TURNED DOWN DAILY--AND THEY INTEND TO LIVE IN THE HOMES? It is just not believable that astute, hard-nosed bankers can, in deal after deal, over-lend by tens of thousands of dollars on properties the rest of us are denied access to at any price. There is an ugly game going on here and it smells of inside deals and PAY OFFS. Does Secretary Kemp plan an announcement on these shenanigans in his housing agenda?

And we may ask too, in view of the highly publicized nature of these rip-offs, where are our criminal justice authorities on this? The District Attorneys, the federal prosecutors and the grand juries, the Real Estate Commission, the state legislature, the County and the city? And, above all the FEDERAL REGULATORY AGENCIES, the F.D.I.C., The Federal Reserve Board and others whose failures to properly oversee the functions of banks were so clearly brought out in that Congressional Hearing on housing?

It would seem that the "Los Angeles Capers" I experienced in the 1950's have moved north with a vengeance. As an accountant for several mortgage and real estate companies I can attest that the in-depth exploitation of an IMPRISONED ghetto population was perfected there and exported across the nation. It is interesting that the administration shouts for law and order and more troops, but no real solutions. Remember the 1988 protestation of President Bush, "I am haunted by the specter of poor children in the street." I would say that this man is haunted by nothing so much as a failure to raise millions at a campaign dinner.

CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

By Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

Massacre In South Africa Uncovered

No one doubts that racist apartheid is slowly being dismantled through a process of struggle, sacrifice and negotiation waged by the African National Congress and the people of South Africa. Yet, as each day goes by more and more evidence is being uncovered about the existence of government sponsored "state terrorism" against the people of South Africa, as well as the violence and death perpetrated against millions of others in the region of southern Africa.

It makes one a little nervous, to say the least, that the very government officials who sanctioned unmitigated bloodshed and violence against the majority of the people of South Africa are now some of the same south African government officials who plead for "trust and understanding" amidst transition to a free South Africa. It is important to remember the years of "constructive engagement" by the United States toward apartheid South Africa.

One month after George Bush was elected to follow Ronald Reagan as President of the United States, a barbaric massacre occurred in South Africa's Natal region. We recall back in 1988 that a dramatic increase in the number of defenseless civilians, many of whom were children and women, being killed was reported almost daily. The South African government issued declaration after declaration that their source of the increasing bloodshed was "black on black violence and rivalry."

Yes, there has been political violence among contending forces within South Africa. The point, however, is that much of this violence was and con-

tinues to be instigated by the South African government's paramilitary and police forces. This is a well documented fact and the extent of the state's terrorist activity is becoming ever clearer.

It is interesting that it took until 1992 for there to be a "trial and conviction" of official South African police units for acts of "politically motivated" violence and crime.

Captain Brian Mitchell and four other members of the South African police were found guilty of committing the Trust Feed Massacre in December of 1988 when 11 villagers were murdered. In the small village of Trust Feed in Natal, the police shot up a house containing women and children and continued to fire into the house to make sure that everyone inside was dead.

The day after the Trust Feed Massacre, the South African government issued a statement blaming the incident on "tribal rivalry." According to published news reports from the trial, the attack on Trust Feed was actually planned by the police to eliminate supporters of the United Democratic Front, which is related to the African National Congress. It was also revealed that police units from Natal had been working in support of the Inkatha movement led by Buthelezi.

It was later confirmed that the victims of the Trust Feed Massacre were not political activists, but were in fact holding a funeral vigil for persons who had earlier been killed by the "death squads" of South Africa. At the trial the police officers claimed that they shot up the wrong house by mistake. The issue is

nobody's house should be the target of vicious state sponsored violence and intimidation. It remains to be seen what the courts in South Africa will do to these policemen for following orders from sources high up in the government of South Africa.

At the time of the Trust Feed Massacre, the anti-apartheid movement here in the United States was very critical of the Reagan-Bush foreign policy toward South Africa.

Although today the movement against apartheid in this country has subsided somewhat, it is of necessity to remain vigilant during this period of transition.

President De Klerk's latest offer for a transitional government to be ruled by an "executive council" is still far short of allowing the will of the people of South Africa to determine the nation's future. De Klerk appears to be eager to have a governmental structure that will provide privilege and disproportionate power to white South Africans over black South Africans.

Of course, the destiny of South Africa is in the hands of the people of South Africa. The African National Congress and others are attempting to negotiate a settlement to avoid further bloodshed and oppression. Justice demands that those responsible and guilty of massacres and other "war crimes" be held accountable for their hideous deeds. Mercy does demand compassion, yet freedom demands learning from the past so that this history of unprecedented exploitation and injustice is not permitted to continue.

Hundreds Of Foster Parents To Be Honored In Oregon

May is Foster Care Awareness Month in Oregon and workers of the Children's Services Division are working with local groups to show their appreciation for foster parents.

In recognition of foster parents' dedication to children, youth and families, Governor Barbara Roberts has signed more than 2,500 certificates of appreciation. The certificates will be given to foster parents at various break-

fasts, teas, luncheons and parties throughout the month of May.

Foster Care Facts:

- There are an average of 2,600 foster homes in Oregon... 3,600 children in foster care. However, because of CSD's "Family Unity" model (work to keep families together) the number of kids in foster care dropped six percent in 1991. Nationally, foster care has increased 20%.

- Foster children display more serious problems. Since 1988: Mental difficulties (up 35%) Physical difficulties (up 43%) Behavioral difficulties (up 140%).
- Payments to foster parents are only 56% of the USDA estimate of the cost of raising a child.
- There is a critical need for minority and bilingual foster homes in Or.

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