

The Portland Observer 25¢

Election Countdown: Whats' It All About?

BY MCKINLEY BURT

That is a good question and many African Americans are realizing there may not really be a "choice" at either the presidential race or at lower levels. We may have to consider the old Chinese proverb: "A matter of the known devil or the unknown devil".

On the one hand we have an administration that has trashed every revered concept of good, decent and honest government, with an equal regard for "all" of its citizens--and on the other, we have the head of a state that is one of only two which have never passed a Civil Rights Bill. A leader who has been described as "environmentally Sterile"; it is recited with some humor that the biggest pollution of Arkansas waterways is the runoff of chicken manure from the states' largest industry (supplying the nations' fast food outlets with chicken wings).

At those "lower levels" of political contests, we find yet another new phenomenon; a number of African American journalists and organizations are barely making a hesitant tongue-in-cheek endorsement of even minority candidates. Truly, it seems, "the thrill has gone" wherever the citizens have made any serious evaluation of their elected representatives. Even lovers hate to be taken for granted.

Each week, I review a half-dozen black newspapers published around the

nation in major urban centers. To an extent never seen before, African Americans are questioning the performance of that cadre of "Elected Black Representatives" which for a number of decades, now, has been extolled as the political and economic hope for "the folks". Like whites who are disenchanted with the process, with the promises of everything and responsibility for nothing--blacks, too, are asking pointed questions and demanding "delivery schedules" from their own.

The bitterest complaint seems to be the accusation that a great number of EBO's (Elected Black Officials) are simply coasting along from term to term, basking in the aura of a "traditional democratic electorate" which they take for granted. Now, searching questions are being asked about "committee work, bills sponsored, specific help and patronage delivered to constituents--and, above all, information retrieval sessions and workshops for the local people at the grassroots level. There seems to be greatly increased disaffection with the electronic media primadonnas--a desire for a meaningful interface, not mere rhetoric.

I think what is being asked for is not only "change", but more than simply a change in faces; after all this is not simply a "game of musical chairs". There is bitterness, frustration and fear abroad in the land. Here in Oregon,

especially Portland, we hear the same rumblings. Not for the first time, as you well know, but with increasing vigor the query is made, "but just what the hell does he/she do for us? And with the same insistence, that question is being asked of a number of the "appointed" black officials whose contributions to the welfare of the brethren are some what less than detectable.

A frequent point is made and it is quite well taken; "they wouldn't be there is whites hadn't delivered these positions to massage the plantation--to keep things reasonably quiet and under control, and to keep the succeeding generation dreaming". Therefore it is being increasingly put forth by thinking blacks in the community that obviously we cannot expect any more of most than we are getting because they are responsible to "the man". Lots of meetings, seminars, retreats and travel, are seen as nice perks by many grassroots blacks ("we got a educated middle class too--just like white folks"), but, now, with the growing economic crunch and other pressures, they are demanding some changes. Their desires may yet be vague and somewhat unstructured, but there is mutiny pending in the ranks.

I detect that it is a national phenomena, but never in all my years here have I ever heard such a disillusionment with black leadership--even from traditional, faithful white liberals.

Urban League Young Professionals Sponser Candidates Forum

The Urban League Young Professionals will hold a Candidates Forum on Saturday 311 from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at PCC Cascade Campus, Main Auditorium, 705 N. Killingsworth. The free event will include candidates for local, state and federal offices as well as representatives of state ballot measures. Members of the news media and public are invited to attend.

Confirmed participants include

U.S. Senate candidates Bob Packwood and Les AuCoin, mayoral candidates, Vera Katz, state representative candidates Margaret Carter, Avel Gordly and Marilyn Schultz, and representatives of five presidential candidates.

Candidates and representatives will have several minutes to present their arguments before taking questions from the audience. John Holley, president of the Young Professionals, will serve as moderator.

The forum is being offered as a community service. The Young Professionals also conducted a Voter Registration Drive recently.

The mission of the Young Professionals is to provide a forum for African Americans and others to network while increasing opportunities for social interaction, professional development and community service. The group currently has 71 members.

1992
ELECTION
NOVEMBER 3rd

KidPAC Names Three Metropolitan Legislators As "Best Friends Of Kids"

Oregon KidPAC named three Portland metropolitan area legislators as "Best Friends of Oregon Kids" for 1992.

The political action committee formed to advocate for children awarded the citation to only five legislators statewide, saying the Legislature had not progressed in meeting the needs of children.

"In the post-Measure 5 climate, the Legislature failed to follow through on the goals of Oregon's first legislative Policy on Children, Youth and Families," said Leslie Haines, Portland, chair of the political action committee organized to be an advocate for children.

"This year's short list of "Best Friends" includes only those legislators who took a leadership role during the 1991 session in advancing the commitment to address children's problems and resisted budget cuts in programs for children," Ms. Haines said.

The metropolitan legislators named were Sen. Frank Roberts and Reps.

Mary Alice Ford and Beverly Stein, all of Portland. Reps. Tony Van Vliet of Corvallis and Eldon Johnson of Medford also received the designation.

In conjunction with the designations, KidPAC announced it would make contributions of \$500 each to the campaigns of Reps. Ford and Stein.

The failure of the legislature to advance a children's agenda is reflected in only five legislators being cited in 1992, compared to 14 named when Oregon KidPAC announced its first "Best Friends" in 1990. Four of the 1992 designees were on the first list. Rep. Johnson is listed for the first time.

"Reps. Ford and Stein, in addition to their leadership roles on the human resources committee, focused on the need to advance the children's agenda with a full day of hearings during the legislative session," Ms. Haines noted, while Sen. Roberts and Reps. Van Vliet and Johnson, who served on the Ways and Means Committee, were instru-

mental in protecting and advancing state funding for children's programs.

"As Oregon moves forward in addressing the implications of Measure 5 in the 1993 Legislature, advocates for children will face even stronger pressures for budget reductions," Ms. Haines said.

KidPAC's objective is to keep Oregon's children high on the state's political agenda and to support legislators who take a leadership role in advancing the legislative policy adopted in 1989:

Children are the future. Children deserve the best possible mental and physical health.

Children deserve adequate food and safe shelter.

Families should be supported and strengthened.

KidPAC was formed in 1990 by advocates of children. Members support and understand the importance of addressing the issue of diminishing government resources for children.

City And Oregon Arena Corporation Reach Development Agreement

The City of Portland and the Oregon Arena corporation (OAC) have concluded a Development Agreement and several other related agreements for the planned Oregon Arena Project that contemplate completion of the \$205 million sports and entertainment complex in time for the Portland Trail Blazers 1995-96 season.

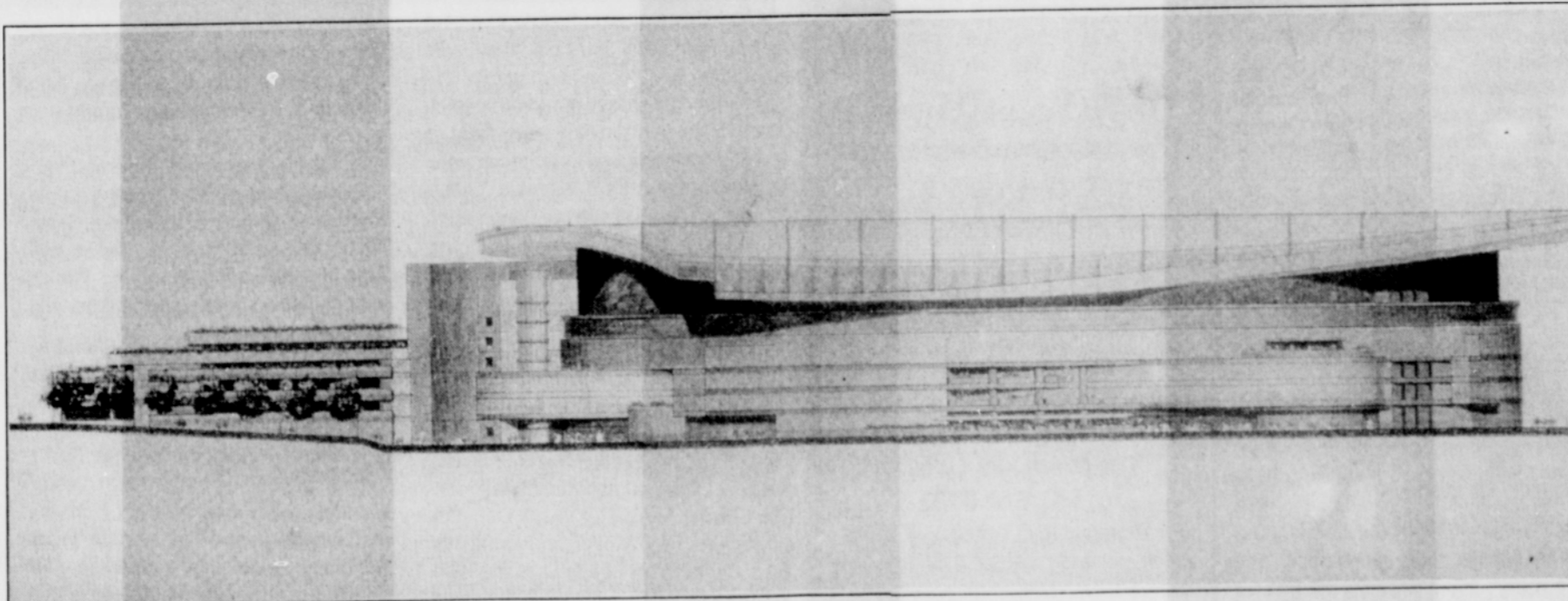
Portland City Council is scheduled to take action on the agreements at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 29th, along with the Development Agreement, the Council will review the Exclusive Site Agreement, Memorial coliseum Operating Agreement, Arena Ground Lease and Entertainment complex Ground Lease. If Council approves, and all remaining agreements are completed, construction is expected to begin between February and April of 1993.

Over 83% of the total cost of the Arena complex will be paid for by OAC. The \$34.5 million in City-paid capital costs for public improvements will be repaid from user fees on Arena and Coliseum tickets, revenues from the City-owned parking garages in the Complex and other City income generated by the project. The site is largely on publicly-owned property adjacent to Memorial Coliseum.

The project outlined in today's agreements includes:

An Arena seating more than 20,000 for basketball.

A design that would accommodate



National Hockey League standards.

An eight-level, 1,060-space parking garage attached to the Arena.

A 62,000 sq. ft. entertainment and office complex that will include, in the first phase, three restaurants, a centralized ticket office and a 370-space, two-level parking garage.

Two City-owned parking structures and a surface lot with approximately 1,200 parking spaces.

A public plaza two-and-a-half times the size of Pioneer Courthouse Square available for staging events, located

between the Coliseum and new Arena, plus several other open spaces.

An interior and structural upgrade of the Coliseum to allow for continued use as an arena and convention/exhibit facility.

Retaining and upgrading 40,000 sq. Ft. of the existing Coliseum exhibit hall.

Reconstruction of three roads and construction of several new roads to improve traffic circulation for the district and the Arena.

Stipulations in the Agreements in-

clude the following:

OAC will take over operation of the Coliseum on July 1, 1993 under a 20-year agreement and will assume all risk of losses.

OAC will advance funds to the City if capital costs for public improvements exceed \$34.5 million due to unexpected cost overruns. Any OAC advances will be repaid over the life of the project only from the public share of excess project revenues, if any, after such revenues are used to repay City debt on bonds issued for public im-

provements and other City costs related to the project.

Metro, which now operates the Coliseum, and the City, will need to amend the Consolidation Agreement by December 1, 1992 to permit OAC to take over the management of the facility.

Net revenues from the Coliseum will be divided 40% each to OAC and the City, and 20% to a capital reserve for future Coliseum improvements.

The City will pay for, and perform, all necessary seismic upgrades to the

Coliseum outside the \$34.5 million public improvement budget. These are required regardless of the Arena project because the state building code recently upgraded Portland to seismic zone 3. If the Coliseum seismic costs exceed \$2.5 million, the City will have the right to close the Coliseum or operate it for non-Arena purposes.

The city will receive a 6% user fee on tickets sold in the new Arena and the Coliseum. The user fee will offset any future admissions tax or similar levy imposed by the City or Metro, up to 6%. An Admissions Tax Offset Agreement will be negotiated between the City and Metro by December 1st along with the Consolidation Agreement/amendment.

OAC will pay the city 4.9% of gross rental income on the entertainment and office complex (excluding office leases to OAC, the Trail Blazers, Arena vendors and affiliates).

In order to ensure a coordinated traffic management plan, OAC will operate all parking on the site, including public parking under management contract with the City. The City will own and receive public parking revenues. OAC will own and receive revenues from the Arena garage and entertainment and office complex garage. A Transportation Management Plan, that includes a bus shuttle system, will be submitted for City Council approval prior to February 1993. Basic features

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