

EDITORIAL

The Portland Observer

Walking Around And Talking Around The Neighborhood

By Prof. McKinley Burt

I've got to do more of this, checking out the environs of N.E. 17th and Alberta at a more leisurely pace. A few years ago I would pedal my bicycle around here, but that got a little scary for a while. The scenario has improved somewhat in the last year - unless you go too far North or South of Alberta and run into the young "businessmen" with the beepers or portable phones.

Within a hundred yards of 'my corner', one may interact with a broad spectrum of age and socioeconomic groups, from tiny tots (carrying \$10.00 bills) to seniors-digging in their pockets for enough silver to get that second beer. In between you get the conversations and viewpoints one might normally expect -- and quite a few that might blow your mind. Right around the neighborhood both black and white America is living, breathing, struggling, hoping and persevering.

Now that interaction with the money-toting tiny tots (3yrs and up) happens at "Otis' Candy Store & Confectionery" at the corner of N.E. 16th and Alberta. Sometimes I break up my day by sitting around this tiny merchandising mart for a hour or so, conversing with the owner and 'tuning in' to the pressure-driven affairs of modern life. Whether it is the chatter of happy, somewhat greedy children, the task-oriented talk of mothers after milk and bread (or cigarettes) or the indignant observations of your own age group, you get a realistic overview of what goes on in all those houses up and down those feeder avenues into Alberta Street.

I don't think that things have really changed that much since I was a kid; only the terms, rhetoric and slang, and the acronyms for the social agencies. Moving a block east from these alcohol-free environs to 'my corner' at 17th, we find the "Texas II

Lounge" and neighboring restaurant. Again, there is what you might call one of my 'observation posts'; and besides, I am able to enhance my 'attitude adjustment' (and perceptions) with a brew. Social intercourse here can range from the downstairs bar and restaurant to the upstairs facility where adjacent to that bar is a popular ballroom -- and across the street is an equally popular annex that serves club affairs and organization meetings. Credit Jeff Parks.

What I am saying here -- for those who have been under the mistaken impression that 'retirement' (alleged) means that I have been dissociated from the mainstream of urban life -- is that I have never had it so good in terms of daily interaction with folks from every walk (and subway) of life, the professionals, administrators, parents, teachers, workers and non-workers, church-goers and 'others'. Actually I think I may have an even broader

window into the 'real Portland' than I had during those years on the faculty of Portland State University -- in these environs, people are more relaxed and 'at themselves'.

Moving up to N.E. 18th and Alberta, we have in the 1700 block on the northside of the street, the "Good Samaritan Church of God". This recently refurbished house of worship brings a brightly upscaling to the neighborhood, not only on Sunday, but throughout the week whenever church activities bring many friendly and dedicated parishioners to the neighborhood. The overall beneficial effect upon the neighborhood cannot be overestimated. The general demeanor and conduct of an area is upscaled by such events, even the conversations of the populace.

At the corner of northeast 18th, we have "Joe's Place" that very popular (and peaceful) neighborhood tavern that I described last winter as the

northeast center for the 'dart game' circuit. A truly busy hub for the type of social interaction we've been describing -- like the other places, a good mix of people, vocations, politics and viewpoints. It is difficult for me to project a better neighborhood for staying on top of things. Thank Joe Benjamin.

I would also comment on the "House of Umoja" which is the residence youth facility across the street from me. In particular I have noticed these past months what might be termed a "positive attitude adjustment" in the demeanor and temperament of the youth here and in the neighborhood. The young people seem to be speaking to their elders again, and not necessarily because their greeting has been solicited. Man, that makes you feel good -- quite often it is the little things that are the real indication of major events in progress. Our congratulations to Director William Jennings.

Girls Terrorize Safeway

BY MAC SPEARS

For more than a week, a group of young girls, whose ages range from twelve to fifteen years, stood outside the entryway of the Safeway Store on Northeast Ainsworth and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard harassing customers as they entered and exited. They would shout obscenities or pull at the customers' packages or pick fights.

They appeared as though they deliberately dressed for the occasion. Their clothing and hair was in such disarray.

They were so brash, bold and out-of-control.

They did all these things without any provocation.

At the time of this coverage, no one had established the motive for their discontentment. Two elderly customers had sustained injury as a result of their pulling, tugging, and pushing.

One customer, who shall remain nameless, stated that she stood in awe, at the check-out counter, as these young girls hurled obscene words at one customer after another. At one moment, as a man and his wife emerged from the store, the girls started-in on them. Words were exchanged. The man balled-up his fists; and then--he quickly shielded his wife and whisked her off to their vehicle.

"I wish that they would have tried something with me...", the customer said, "...they would have been very sorry."

The cashier said that they had been doing this for at least a week. It had been reported to the police but no charges had been filed. The cashier said that the girls live right behind the store.

Several persons had attempted to reason with the girls and establish some kind of truce. People actually felt sorry for these young terrorists.

On Wednesday, July 7, 1993, a Restraining Order was enforced and the girls were physically removed from the property by police officers.

The cashier shared that the girls were from broken homes and that she had, personally, attempted to help them; but, "This has gone too far", she shared.

The Zairian People Need Our Support!

by Dr. Lenora Fulani

In the past month I have had the honor of meeting with two distinguished African leaders who came to the United States on an urgent mission; they seek the support of the American people in the desperate struggle for democracy in their country, Zaire. On May 14 I interviewed Lambert Mende, the minister of communication and press in the democratic transitional government of Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, on the "Fulani!" cable TV show. And on June 13 I met in New York with Kibassa Maliba, the co-president of Zaire's main opposition political party, the Union for Democracy and Social Progress. Both of these brothers emphasized how important it was that the American people, and in particular, African Americans, keep up the pressure on President Clinton to make good his promise of supporting African democracy struggles like the one being waged in Zaire.

Since 1965 Democratic and Republican presidents have supported - economically, politically and militarily - the corrupt and bloody dictatorship of Mobutu Sese Seko. Today,

after almost 30 years under his rule, the Zairian people are among the poorest in the world. Congressional testimony has revealed how Mobutu and his corrupt officials stole the food out of children's mouths by diverting "Food for Peace" foreign assistance to their own use. Mobutu's "presidential allowance" has swallowed up such a huge portion of Zaire's national budget over the years that today no schools are open, the hospitals have no beds or medicine, prison inmates are not fed, and the tropical forest is growing back over the national roads system. There is no official economy. Only an underground economy exists, and Mobutu is the biggest racketeer of all - illegally smuggling Zaire's diamonds, cobalt and copper to get the money with which he must pay his elite Presidential Guard to repress the hungry and increasingly rebellious Zairian people.

In testimony before the Senate Subcommittee on Africa on June 9, George Moose, the assistant secretary of state for Africa, said, "The United States supported Mobutu for

more than 25 years, perceiving him as a bulwark against pro-Moscow sentiment in central Africa, but such Cold War balancing considerations no longer apply."

Indeed they don't. Since 1990, when the communist world collapsed, our Zairian sisters and brothers have been slowly and painfully organizing a transition to democracy. A remarkable national assembly, the Sovereign National Conference, met over the course of 17 months and elected a transitional government, headed by Prime Minister Tshisekedi, to lead the country to elections. But under pressure from the Bush administration, the National Conference had to agree to share power with Mobutu.

Not surprisingly, Mobutu refused to "share" power with the opposition. He has used his wealth and his private army to destroy Zairians' dream of democracy.

Tshisekedi and his Cabinet are under virtual house arrest. Tanks surround the parliament building. The offices of the opposition press are firebombed, and young

boys selling the newspapers are attacked by Mobutu's soldiers. Opposition leaders are under constant threat: Minister Mende had to escape Zaire in a canoe, hidden under fishnets. Kibassa Maliba's home was attacked twice by Mobutu's soldiers; in the second attack, one of his sons was killed and two other children seriously wounded.

When Bill Clinton defeated George Bush last November, Zairians went out into the streets to celebrate. Bush had been a personal friend of Mobutu's; with the Democrats in power, they thought, surely Mobutu's days were numbered! The opposition press in Zaire reported every word Clinton uttered during his campaign about "support for democracy in Africa." But the Zairians, like many others who listened to Clinton's promises, have reason to be disappointed: Assistant Secretary of State Moose (appointed by Clinton to be the first African American to hold the top African post at the State Department) testified to the Senate last week that "Mobutu is clearly to

blame for Zaire's collapse." But in response to the obvious question of what to do, he replied: "It is not our position that Mobutu must go."

Meanwhile, Mobutu's provocations threaten to plunge Zaire into a civil war, reproducing, on a much larger scale, the tragic situations in Somalia and Liberia. If Zaire's democratic transition is to be saved, it must, as Minister Mende insisted, be "accompanied by the international community." Prime Minister Tshisekedi's government must be officially recognized and assisted, and Mobutu must be isolated and repudiated. African Americans and their representatives in the congressional Black Caucus have a key role to play in making sure the Zairian people get that support from the United States. Without us, Clinton would not have been elected. Without the 40 votes of the Congressional Black Caucus, Clinton cannot get his legislation passed.

There are some signs that the CBS might be getting ready to use its political muscle. They have to. African lives depend on it.

Hatfield Looks At Community Policing

In an effort to gain further insight into community policing activities, Senator Mark Hatfield met with a variety of organizations on Friday, July 9, that ranged from a youth services outreach center for at-risk teens, to Portland's new Chief of Police.

As crime, gang and drug statistics are on the rise throughout the nation, the Senator focused on working programs in the Portland metropolitan area and how they can be integrated on a national level to combat this trend. Senator Hatfield began the day with Portland Police Chief, Charles Moose. They spent some time in Chief Mosses' office discussing inner city problems like PAL, whose objective is crime

prevention for youth through education, recreation and athletics, serve a primary function in the battle against crime. The purpose of the program is to have police officers work with at-risk young people in a non-threatening environment and inform them about the problems of crime, drugs and gangs.

Just as in larger communities, smaller cities like Troutdale are facing new obstacles in city policing. Senator Hatfield talked with Chief Brent Collier of the Troutdale Police Department and discussed "TPD's concerns for the city. They will use this discourse to help develop possible solutions for smaller-staffed agencies in the state and nationally.

He also visited the King Facility

and met with representatives of a number of organizations that cater to youth in areas from gang outreach services to job training and education. He is interested in input and feedback from the young people who are benefitting from the services housed in this center.

To round out his day, and to gain a community perspective, the Senator visited Columbia Villa Apartments whose residents have gained national attention for their efforts to thwart the effects of crime in Portland's largest apartment complex. He shares their pride in activating a community force that created a unique local and regional partnership with the Sheriff's office and Housing Authority of Portland (HAP).

Nation Of Islam

There are a large number of people who do not study the Holy Quran but are students of the Bible. I offer this writing hoping to motivate the Bible readers to become familiar with the Holy Quran. The Muslims are taught that the Holy Quran was revealed to correct the adding in and taking out of Bible by world rulers who's motive was not good.

Correction!!!!

"Third Annual Picnic For Pregnant Women" Friday, June 16, 1993, Noon to 4pm

Alternate Routes To The Oregon State Fair

Due to heavy construction near the Market Street Exit, the Oregon State Fair is advising fairgoers to avoid using the Market Street Exit off I-5 as they enter Salem to attend the 1993 Fair Scheduled for August 26-September 6.

Fairgoers coming on the I-5 southbound should take Exit #258, North Salem Exit/State Fairgrounds. Continue on Portland Road then turn left on Lana and head straight to the Fairgrounds.

Fairgoers traveling northbound on the I-5 should take Exit #253, Mission Street/Sanitam Exit, turn left on Highway 22 (Mission St.) and continue to 17th St. Turn right on 17th and follow the signs to the Fairgrounds. Signs will also be posted to direct traffic.

New Front Door

(continued from page 1) river, and a parcel located in the site's southwest corner. Another exciting prospect for future growth exists in front of and over the parking garages planned along NE Broadway. The garages are designed to allow for future expansion in the form of retail and office space.

Ideally, the vision is to extend the growth seen on NE Broadway all the way to the waterfront," says Glickman. "Throughout the design phase we have maintained view and pedestrian corridors all the way to the Willamette River, creating a new and exciting focal point for the city."

Celebrate Diversity

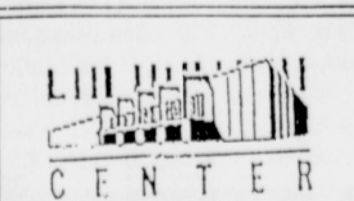
SCHOOL IS OUT WATCH OUT FOR THE CHILDREN

Letter To The Editor

Send your letters to the Editor to: Editor, PO Box 3137, Portland, OR 972108

I am writing in response to the letter to the editor that was published in your June 30 issue from W. Gary Grimmer, Executive Director of POVA. Assuming that Mr. Grimmer is white, his statistics are not impressive at all. Everyone in the Pacific Northwest knows why POVA is on the hot seat. He uses the term minority but does not tell exactly how many Blacks are really involved. His letter states that 42% of POVA's Convention Sales Department is minority. Ask Mr. Grimmer how many are Black, which is the real issue. White people are quick to point out how they have reached or exceeded their goals...Big Deal! they are only doing it because they are required to, not necessary because they want to. If POVA wants

to boast, show us your BLACK statistics...not your minority ones. Since I do not know about their minority intern program, I cannot comment, however my friend had an opportunity to visit the POVA office, recently, and she tells me that it was nearly all white females. Let's tell the truth about the matter. It appears that when it comes to conventions and tourism, everyone is getting the opportunities except Blacks. I applaud The Portland Observer for following up on matters such as this that may not have ever been known to many of us in the Black community. The only time these hotels and visitors groups are interested in Black is when it means green...to them! Dan Mitchell, Portland



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Portland, OR 97217
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24 hr Show Information
(503) 248-5144
Calendar Of Events For July
11th Dog Fanciers
All Breed Dog Show
Hall: A,B,C,E
21st - 25th Multnomah County Fair
Hall: ALL+ 31st -
Antique & Collectible Show & Sale Hall: ALL

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