

Negroes in Oregon Want Fair Opportunity To Prove Selves

EDITOR'S NOTE: Housing and jobs are two of the most sensitive areas in the Negro's drive for equal rights. Oregon is no exception. What is the situation in this state? Is the Negro making any progress in breaking out of the segregated housing pattern, where it exists, and changing the traditional attitudes that have limited him mostly to unskilled jobs? The following dispatch, the second of two, explores these areas.

By GORDON RICE
United Press International
Mallory Carter, 52, runs a five-chair shoeshine stand on Portland's Broadway. He came to the Northwest from Birmingham, Ala.

"I hope we are to be treated for what we are—as individual persons, not for our color," he says.

His plea is echoed by Nathan Jones, a 25-year-old Lewis and Clark College student who was involved in charges of discrimination against the city Parks Bureau last spring.

"We want a fair opportunity to prove ourselves and be considered as first class citizens," he contends.

"I hope the Negro will be able to walk the United States with dignity and without any prosceniums placed upon him because of his race," agrees Jimmy (Bang-Bang) Walker, a former professional fighter and now editor of the weekly Northwest Defender newspaper.

This is the avowed goal of the Negro in Oregon just as it is across the nation, and two of the most frequently mentioned means to that goal also are the same—jobs and housing.

Portland has Negroes of 112 of its 118 census tracts, but 80 per cent of its estimated 16,500 Negroes live in five tracts in the

Albina district. Eliot elementary school is 99 per cent Negro. Boise school is 90 per cent Negro and Humboldt and Highland each have 85 per cent. Jefferson High School's enrollment is 55 per cent Negro.

Residents of the Albina area live in housing which ranges from slums to pleasant middle class level. A plan by the Housing Authority of Portland to clean up some of the slums and build low-cost housing was opposed and finally killed by some Negro groups, backed by other church and civil rights organizations.

"They said the plan would perpetuate a Negro ghetto in Albina."

Little Gain in Housing
"There has been less gain in housing than in any other area of race relations," says E. Shelton Hill, executive secretary of the Portland Urban League.

"The situation is not as good as it was six or eight years ago." The thing that bothers Hill is that the Negro neighborhood is a recent development, not one that has its roots in history, as in the South. In 1940 the few Negroes in Portland were spread out in 57 of the 59 census tracts.

"Realtors are still using the old dodges," maintains Mayfield K. Webb, president of the Portland Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, but he admits this is only part of the problem.

"We have reached the public and expelled some of their fears. The test will be to have Negroes buying homes, but how are you going to do this if they don't have the money?" he asks.

Pendleton offers another example. That city has only about 150 Negroes in a total popula-

tion of 14,474, yet almost all of them live in a lower class south-west neighborhood.

Seven real estate agencies deny they practice racial bias; they say they have no Negro buyers because the Negroes simply don't have enough money to make the payments on a nice new house in the suburbs.

One Negro family did buy a house in an all-white neighborhood. There were some complaints, but no incidents.

Klamath Falls and Eugene also have developed lower class Negro living areas.

Barriers Must Come Down
"The apparent fact that many Negroes prefer to live in their own community rather than face the prejudices and economic barriers against those Negroes who do want to get out and who have the economic means to do so," Gov. Mark Hatfield said recently.

Efforts also are being made to upgrade conditions within the Negro communities. The outstanding example is the Albina Neighborhood Improvement Project in Portland.

Residents of a 96-acre racially-mixed area, assisted by the Portland Development Commission and federal money, have undertaken to improve their community. They are repairing streets, improving their homes, building parks, planning better lighting and planting trees. The Development Commission will counsel homeowners and assist them in applying for government-guaranteed home repair loans.

Homes beyond repair will be purchased by the commission and razed, and their owners assisted in finding new homes. Two large blocks have been set

aside for a park. Total cost is expected to be \$1,788,261, of which two-thirds will be provided by the federal government.

A study of the effects of racial imbalance in the area's schools also is under way. The goal is to increase the value of their homes and make living a little more pleasant for Negroes who can't or don't want to leave.

The picture is brighter for the Negro in jobs than it is in housing, although the degree is the subject of considerable debate.

Most of Oregon's Negroes hold unskilled, low-paying, menial jobs. There are some professional people.

In between, in the skilled salaried jobs, a great voice has existed.

"These areas were closed for so long that it seems to me we lost two or three generations," Webb says. The problem of under-employment is minor in Oregon compared to some other sections of the country; there are no Ph. D.'s working as clerks, but Webb points out there are men washing cars who could be working on the waterfront.

The construction and metals industries have employed Negroes for some time. After strong pressure and the threat of demonstrations, the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union has enrolled some Negroes, but the NAACP refused to claim a victory until it sees how regularly the Negroes work.

"We've got a long-standing quarrel with most of Portland's union," Webb says.

Negroes are finding employment as retail clerks, especially in grocery chains, and there is slow, un spectacular improvement in other fields.

One of the state's largest employers of Negroes is Pacific Northwest Bell, which has made a conscientious effort to seek them out. An estimated 70 to 75 Negroes are among telephone company's 5,900 employees, most of them in the Portland area. One is an interviewer, another an installer, and still others hold positions as operators, accounting and clerical workers, technicians and maintenance workers.

Negroes Lack Training
As it is across the country, lack of training is a big handicap to Negroes looking for jobs. There are no programs set up exclusively for them.

The Urban League's employment bureau has had more requests for clerical workers, engineers and accountants than it can fill, but these are skills that are scarce nationally in both races. The Urban League recently established a Skills Bank in Portland to assist in match-

ing job seekers with employers.

Some professions, notably social work and teaching, are becoming increasingly popular. Negroes are showing up in the school systems of many cities where there are few others of their race.

Coos Bay, Madras, Estacada and St. Paul have them.

"What happened was that these places were just recruiting teachers and these happened to turn up," says Hill. He feels that if people are willing to entrust their children's education to a Negro teacher they should be willing to accept other members of his race in less sensitive areas.

However, many Negroes are caught in the same vicious circle that afflicts those in other parts of the country. They have few skills and cannot get good-paying jobs; because of lack of money they are forced to live in a substandard Negro community; and because of community conditions, their children do not stay in school and learn skills that would enable them to get better jobs.

In Gov. Hatfield's words: "Where do you break into the circle? You don't. We must continue to shave the circumference."

In the meantime, these efforts to "shave" are being

made more and more to the attention of white Oregonians, with varying reactions.

"The Negro has been going too slow for 100 years," says Portland attorney John R. Faust Jr. "The contrast between their non-violent demonstrations and the violence of their opponents heightens an impression of the justice of the Negro cause."

"I feel he (the Negro) is being pushed by the authorities," comments a Portland housewife. "Go slow. Take it easy."

Fewer people say, as did one Beaverton resident, "I cannot see any effect of the civil rights controversy on me or my family."

One evening, however, she came home from her progressive school and casually reported that the class had been told the facts of life in the new "The Stork Didn't Bring You" manner. "At last," thought the gratified father, "my daughter has acquired a new interest in life." Eyes aight, he asked her, "Aren't there any questions at all about the things you heard today that you want to ask Mommy and Daddy?" "One," replied the daughter promptly. "Just what does a girl wear for that?"

A young Southern belle asked her mother, "What do you give a man who has everything?" Her mother answered unhesitatingly, "Encouragement."

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Some are so colored as to simplify their food gathering. This we call "aggressive" coloration. The stripes of the tiger resemble the lights and shadows of the jungle floor. The spots of the leopard, resemble sunlight. Alligators look like logs; and their eyes, the knots.

Protective mimicry is the result of a slow process which has gone on for millions of years. The "mimics" are always fewer than the ones imitated. Females are more likely to be thus protected, probably because of their slower movements when laden with eggs or young.

Mimicry is operative, even in the depths of the sea; fishes are dark colored above and light colored underneath. To the birds above, the dark looks like the bottom of the sea or dark water. To enemies below, they resemble the sky.

By many and various ways does Nature continue the species, even resorting to misrepresentation and creating conditions and creatures to look like what they are not.

The speaker stressed the utilization of local "caretakers"—physicians, teachers, lawyers, law enforcement and probation officers—as the front line defense in preventive mental health.

Attending from Jackson County were Dr. Frank M. Wilson, Donna Gilkey, the Rev. Fredrick R. Evans, and from Josephine County Bernice Benjamine and Dave Gould.

Hunt for Survivors Of Shipwreck Fails
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No fatalities were reported but at least four persons were injured, and a number of others suffered shock.

A railway spokesman said 10 of the train's 18 cars left the tracks.

Cause of the derailment was not immediately known.

Traffic on the CNR's main line was re-routed.

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Small Worlds Around Us

By LYNN M. WATKINS (Register and Tribune Syndicate 1963)

Nature Often Plays Tricks To Protect Some Animals

There are many of Nature's subjects that look like what they are not. For obvious reasons Nature designed some of her children to exactly represent some other creature, and placed them in the same environment, even endowed them with similar habits and characteristics.

In the insect world mimicry is carried to its farthest point, often faithfully duplicating the original and genuine. A startling example is the "measuring worm" which, when alarmed, raises itself from the twig and looks exactly like the small plant branch. The body of the worm takes the position of the leaf stem, even its color is much the same as the twig on which it rests.

The "walking insect" resembles a dead twig, both in color and shape. The deception is so perfect that very few of us ever see this peculiar creature, in spite of the commonness of them. The natural enemy, too of the walking stick, is fooled.

Just about everyone is familiar with the piercing noise of the Katydid on warm summer night. Yet it requires a sharp eye to pick out the light green insect in the mass of green foliage.

The whippoorwill sitting in the woodland path looks more like a stump of dead leaves than a bird. Nature planned it exactly that way. The brown markings on the quail so perfectly

match the surroundings as to make the bird almost invisible. The woodcock, until it flies, is a part of the forest floor.

Many creatures seem to know in what environment their coloration is most effective, and react accordingly. Many animals, in the face of danger, freeze into immobility and escape detection. Place the same animal in different surroundings and it will attempt flight, rather than risk exposure.

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Try and Stop Me

By BENNETT CERF

THERE'S a darling little eight-year-old girl in Long Island who's giving her parents some sleepless nights. Her interest in life seems to be confined exclusively to one subject: clothes. Arith-

metic, history, and literature she disdains. All she does is pore through the fashion magazines.

One evening, however, she came home from her progressive school and casually reported that the class had been told the facts of life in the new "The Stork Didn't Bring You" manner. "At last," thought the gratified father, "my daughter has acquired a new interest in life." Eyes aight, he asked her, "Aren't there any questions at all about the things you heard today that you want to ask Mommy and Daddy?" "One," replied the daughter promptly. "Just what does a girl wear for that?"

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Starlings Ignore Chasing Efforts

ATLANTA (UPI)—State officials put on a great show of force Monday but lost another round in their battle to dislodge thousands of starlings from the Capitol.

Eight selected marksmen fired shotguns into the swarming birds for 20 minutes, killing an estimated 2,000. But one discouraged official remarked "that didn't even dent them."

The pesky birds picked the Georgia Capitol for their winter roost and come in at night, defacing the Capitol.

Secretary of State Ben Fortson tried various means of getting rid of the birds, before hitting on the shotgun approach.

"The idea is not so much to kill them as to scare them," he said.

"We let them settle down good in the trees and get comfortable and then we blast away and keep them moving."

Fortson's men dived some 5,000 starlings in forays last week, and hoped another session might convince the birds that they've not welcome.