

Cell Talk

By Asmar Abdul Seifullah

Prison is the curtain that separates people who have broken the law from those people that live inside the law. The primary purpose of prisons are to ensure law abiding citizens safety from criminal acts: Secondly prison is the place set forth by society to house law breakers and to hopefully reform them into law abiding citizens. In essence prison is the outgrowth of society at large and in both instances above prison has failed miserably simply because society at large has failed to address the concept of crime properly.

In the first instance crime is on the incline as opposed to decline. More people are committing crimes at a greater rate for a greater number of reasons than previously. In essence the tax payers are supporting a system that doesn't work adequately and they are still living under the threat of criminal acts. Therefore, the concept of deterrence through incarceration is a total fantasy that should not be supported by tax dollars. Building more prisons only means that you've got more space to house law breakers. That

particular line of thoughts doesn't even come close to addressing the concept of a relatively crime free society. If the statistics bear themselves out and if more people are committing crimes and if the recidivism rate of prisoners remains at 87% the logical thinking people of America need to think about adopting another approach to the problem of crime and punishment. The recidivism rate clearly shows that corrections in America isn't correcting anybody but to the contrary it is working in reverse of one of its primary goals.

What would you do with a ball team that lost 87% of its game or a lover that loved you only 13% of the time? The logical answer would be to sell the team and find a new lover. But the American Correctional System is illogical and equally illogical are the taxpayers who support a failing system.

There is more money in incarceration than liberation which is proven by the whole concept of colonization and annexation employed by world powers. It's only the poor, the disadvantaged and the

minorities who end up with prison numbers instead of social security numbers. The statistics speak for themselves, Blacks, Chicanos and Indians are incarcerated at a far greater rate than Caucasians and all are minority groups. The rich are exempt from incarceration and in many instances prosecution which is illustrated in the cases of Richard (Tricky Dick) Nixon and Patty (Rob-a-Bank) Hurst. It's certain that if the United States really wanted to address itself to the question of crime and punishment it would first attack the social ills of the country.

Racism is criminal, discrimination is criminal, the denial of economic opportunity is criminal, indoctrination through education is criminal and the support of a criminal justice system that is more criminal than the criminals it confines is criminal and immoral. How this country's can be so hypocritical in its justification of confinement as it is now practiced is one of the great mysteries

If a Black child steals a toy he is

immediately sent to juvenile detention but if a white child vandalizes and burns a school the analogy then becomes: boys will be boys. When Black people use drugs they become junkies but whites who fall victim to drug abuse becomes addicts or misguided youths. The Black junkie goes to prison and the white addict goes to the hospital.

Crime and punishment is big business in America. It's a corporation supported by smaller corporations like prostitution, drug traffic, gambling and graft which are controlled by America. While the public worries about some Blackman pimping a white girl, certain segments of America pimps the public with pornography, sex aides and another boat load of heroin from Turkey. Any time there is a lapse in morale the system points at the "Niggers" in the ghetto and says to the public -- at least you're free, white and twenty one. This isn't radical thinking...its simply fact.

We would like to thank the *Portland Observer*, its editors and publishers for removing the curtain that separates Black prisoners from

the Black community. Many good things have come about as a result of the space allotted us in the paper. Many people have come to think of Cell Talk as Asmar's column but it belongs to the people who read it and support it concepts. Black prisoners realize that they have a voice through this column and they are heartened. Many of the articles I write are unpopular in subject and content to many people but they represent a honest view shared by a majority of Black prisoners. They also represent a side of the story that isn't told very often and for this we are thankful.

Black prisoners aren't satisfied with this particular system and we deeply resent house niggers misrepresenting the conditions here.

Equally as disturbing are frequent visits by Black public officials, (most recently Commissioner Charles Jordan) who come down here and spend time with house niggers and whitefolks. It's insulting at best and it's a silent sanction to the oppression that Black prisoners are subject to. The silence of so called Black leadership is just as con-

deming as the racist jailers who hold us in bondage.

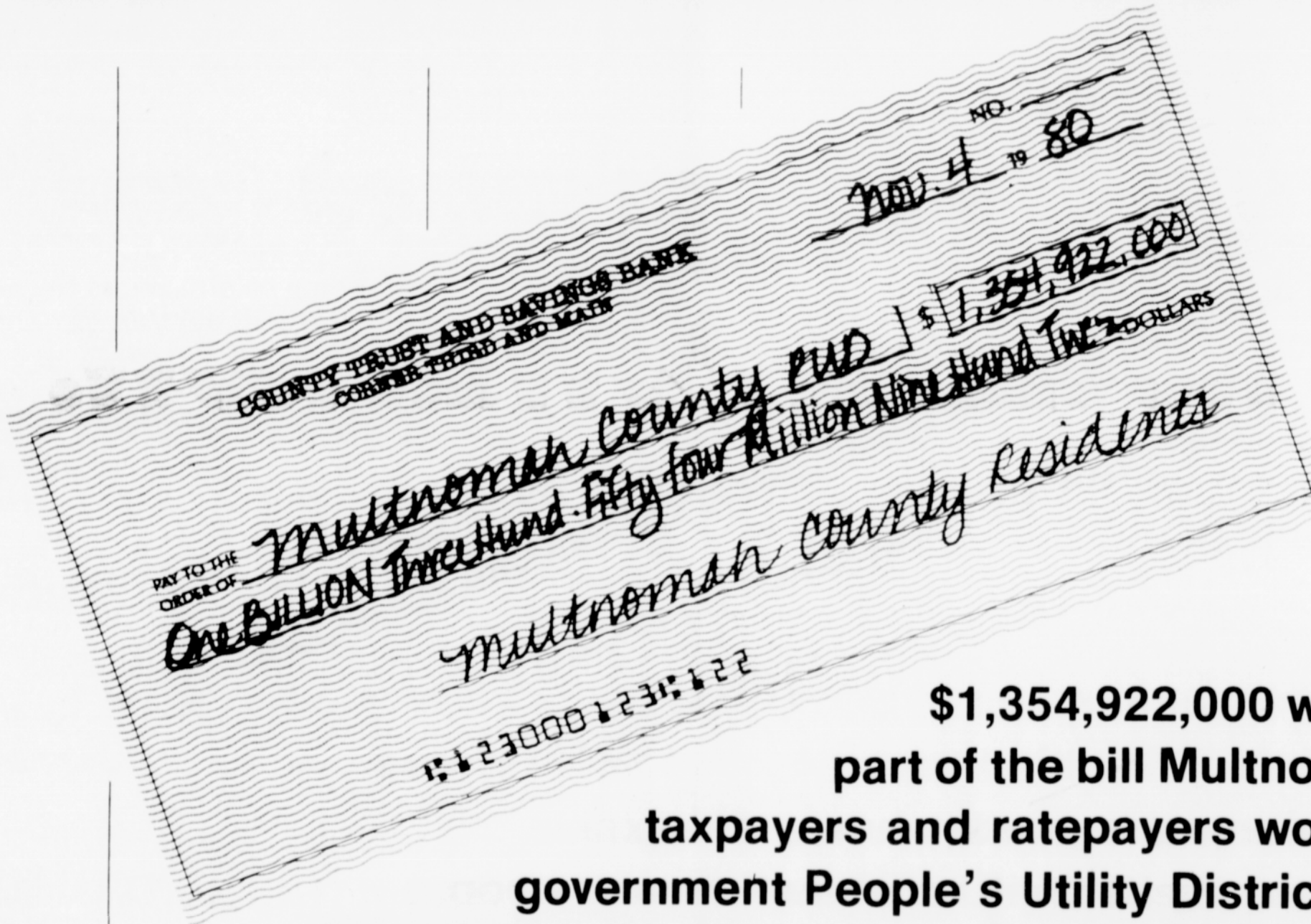
Area pot luck

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Hmong residents are police non-responsiveness and the physical harassment of Hmong residents by their American neighbors. The Hmong, having no other choice but to live where housing is available, would like to live in harmony within the community. They have been beaten and robbed of food stamps and have had their money taken. Their biggest gripe is people thinking they have money. The Hmong residents are one of the poorest groups of refugees that live in Portland.

More than 8 million Blacks aren't registered. Are you part of the problem or part of the solution?

P.U.D.: Who needs more bills?



\$1,354,922,000 would be just part of the bill Multnomah County taxpayers and ratepayers would foot if a government People's Utility District takes over the existing electric system. Enormous costs would be incurred by the P.U.D. and would be passed on to local residents through increased taxes and utility bills.

Under a P.U.D., local residents would have to pay for:

- Engineer's report
- County election expenses
- Salaries and expenses for politician directors and government employees
- Overhead and operating expenses
- Litigation on property condemnation
- Bond payments
- Bond interest and expenses
- Purchasing electricity or building new generating facilities

No wonder it's called a People's Utility District ... it's the people who will pay!

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