

EDITORIAL/OPINION

Distribution of resources will reduce burglaries

According to the Portland Police Bureau, Portland ranks third in the nation in residential burglaries (one in 12 houses will be burglarized). Law enforcement officials and city leaders blame the high rate of residential burglaries on several things. Some of them are:

- The lack of jail space that is necessary to incarcerate those who are found guilty of burglary. Many burglaries are even committed by a group of burglars.
- The willingness of citizens to buy stolen property, therefore creating a market for stolen items.
- Drugs; often burglaries are committed to support drug habits.
- Careless homeowners; 20 percent of the residential burglaries that occur in Portland is the result of the door being left unlocked.

Although each of the above contributes to the City's high incidence of residential burglaries, there is another cause that is seldom discussed by law enforcement authorities and politicians. That is the unequal distribution of resources in society. For example, in 1980 20 percent of the nation's population, in terms of wealth, owned approximately 76 percent of all the wealth. This means that the remaining 80 percent of the population have only 24 percent of the nation's

wealth to distribute among themselves.

The division of the remaining 24 percent results in even further inequities. For example, the bottom 40 percent of the population owns only 2.3 percent of the total wealth.

According to the recent census figures, the income gap between the rich and poor has been increasing during the last several years. This differential in wealth between the haves and the have nots results in crimes such as residential burglaries.

Lower northeast Portland, between Union and 30th Avenue, has the highest rate of burglaries in the City. There is a great concentration of minorities in this area. Poverty, prostitution, drug dealing and unemployment also run high in this location. (The unemployment rate for Black adults is estimated to be around 35 percent; around 55 percent for Black youths.)

Residential burglaries are not committed by executives earning \$35,000 a year. They are committed most frequently by members of the economic underclass who have been historically, economically, socially and culturally excluded from legitimate access to the benefits of society.

Until elected officials address these social problems, residential burglaries will continue to rise not only in Portland, but also in cities throughout the nation.

EDITORIAL/COMMENTARY

Education woes due in part to sex discrimination

One of the reasons why public education has experienced hard times in the past several years is due to sex discrimination in wages paid to instructors who teach in public schools and institutions of higher learning. Traditionally in society, jobs held by women and ethnic minorities are usually paid lower wages than jobs held by white males. A classic illustration of this can be seen in the teaching profession.

Critics of public education state that part of the reason why the system isn't educating children properly is due to unqualified teachers in the classrooms. They cite the results of the state of Arkansas teachers' competency examination. Ten percent of Arkansas teachers failed the exam. Arkansas is the first state to require its teachers to take a competency test.

Others say that the pay of teachers is low and therefore many qualified

individuals seek a career outside of education. The reason why teachers' salaries are so low compared to their educational backgrounds is due to the high percentages of females who are teachers in public schools and institutions.

Wage discrimination based on sex has been a constant problem in society. The recent comparable worth lawsuit against Oregon Division of Higher Education by women professors is an example. Evidence from the trial revealed that male professors were paid more than female professors. Because teaching is basically a female profession, wages are kept low.

The south has the lowest percentage of male teachers. South Carolina has only 18 percent of teachers who are male; Louisiana, 19 percent; Georgia and Mississippi, only 20 percent. Historically, the south has been

at the bottom in schools, students' test scores, and teachers' salaries.

Once state legislatures and administrators of learning institutions cease wage discrimination against female teachers, the quality of education in public institutions will get better and benefit all children. By offering reasonable incentives, quality individuals will once again enter careers in education.

In order for this to occur, resources must be made available by state and local officials to municipalities. The present system of funding public schools is totally inadequate. It seems that special elections are held monthly, in order to keep schools from closing.

Schools in a wealthy nation shouldn't have to hold special elections from month to month in order to remain open.

EDITORIAL/COMMENTARY

by Governor Vic Atiyeh

I will call her Florence. She is 77, she lives in Eastern Oregon, and she has been a candidate for nursing home care since 1982.

Florence suffers from emphysema, diabetes, arthritis and other ailments. She must receive continuous oxygen.

Nevertheless, she still lives in her tidy older home in a downtown area only a half-block from a grocery store.

She enjoys television and reading. Home Health workers, a housekeeper, and friendly visitors help with shopping and other things she no longer can do for herself.

Florence, and thousands of elderly Oregonians like her, have avoided placement in nursing homes because of an Oregon program other states now are copying.

We recognize the need for nursing homes that deliver excellent medical and personal care. However, many elderly Oregonians need help only with cooking, cleaning, shopping and so forth—not with round-the-clock medical attention.

As a result, in 1980 we became pioneers in ensuring that elderly Medicaid recipients neither went to, nor stayed in, nursing homes if they could be properly cared for elsewhere.

We wanted to help people like Florence stay in their own homes, while we place others in non-institutional settings such as residential care

or adult foster-care homes.

Another Oregonian—she is 89, and I will call her Abigail—is an excellent example of how times have changed for elderly Medicaid recipients. Abigail had lived in an adult foster-care home, in which a family typically cares for five or fewer elderly persons. But she fell, broke three ribs, and spent some time in the hospital.

When she no longer required hospitalization, she was moved to a nursing home. Friends back at the foster home figured the wheelchair-bound Abigail would stay there permanently, and that they would never see her again.

However, Abigail valued her independence, followed her doctor's advice, and rebuilt her strength. She left the nursing home in early November, returning to her friends at the foster home.

Before, her friends' fears would have been accurate: Once placed in the nursing home she might never have left.

Forty-five states have followed the lead of Oregon, the first state in the nation to reduce numbers of nursing-home residents.

The 7,400 Oregonians we have kept out of nursing homes since this effort began is about equal to the total population of Newport.

Before we began this effort, the rate of elderly Medicaid recipients being admitted to nursing homes was growing more than twice as fast as the

numbers of over-75 Oregonians.

No one has to tell a taxpayer about the frightening costs of that kind of growth (one estimate is that this program saved Oregon \$12 million this year alone).

Nor does anyone have to tell the friend of an elderly person what independent living does for morale or can do for longevity.

Dollars and morale are not the sole reasons for this program; common sense, too, is at work.

Although other developed countries typically institutionalize no more than 1 or 2 percent of their elderly, an American's chances of spending some time in a nursing home run as high as 40 percent.

We owe success of the Oregon program not only to our own ingenuity, but also to the indomitable spirit of people like Abigail who try to improve their chances of living outside a nursing home.

Meanwhile, even though Florence is living at home, she has trouble keeping housekeepers because her prickly personality makes it difficult to be around her. However, Florence understands she will go to a nursing home if she loses her housekeepers, so she is trying to improve her behavior.

In other words, neither Abigail nor Florence is giving up on herself.

And we, as Oregonians, are not giving up on our elderly.



AIDS and the Black community

Along the Color Line by Dr. Manning Marable

"Scapegoating" and political intimidation are usually a "normal" part of American society and politics. In previous instances, the victims frequently have been people of color—Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, Native American—who have been hounded from their jobs, or victimized by police surveillance and oppressive tactics. But the latest chapter of political harassment and the hysterical manipulation of public intolerance focuses on people afflicted with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, or AIDS. The AIDS issue must be viewed both as a public health problem and as a civil liberties concern with grave political implications.

Currently there are over 14,300 AIDS victims, and approximately 200 new cases are diagnosed each month. Most of the victims have been homosexuals, intravenous drug users, and recipients of contaminated blood. Most prominent civil rights leaders, Black religious figures and politicians have been at best reluctant to discuss AIDS, or to address the broader implications of the disease within the Black community. At least one prominent Black journalist recently characterized AIDS as purely a "white man's problem." One factor behind this is the reality of homophobia, or anti-gay and anti-lesbian bias, which affects many Afro-Americans. Another element is the lack of accurate information about AIDS among Blacks, and a failure to comprehend that those afflicted with this disease may become victims of hysterical political repression.

"There's still belief" among Blacks "that AIDS is a white man's disease," observes Dr. Wayne Greaves, chief of the division of infections at Howard University. However, "AIDS is color blind." Recent data reveal that one fourth of all AIDS victims are Afro-Americans. In Maryland alone, for

example, 116 of the 222 AIDS cases to date are Blacks. Greaves also notes that 107 of 191 children below age 13 who have been diagnosed with AIDS are Black. About half of all Black AIDS victims are homosexuals, and 38 percent have been drug users.

The political dynamics of the AIDS panic have escalated dramatically. Several months ago, the Defense Department announced plans to screen all 2.1 million military personnel for AIDS. Those found having the disease are supposed to be given medical treatment and receive "honorable discharges." However, anyone who admits during an AIDS screening that he or she has used drugs or is a homosexual will be automatically discharged. Gays and lesbians discovered outside the AIDS screening process may be court-martialed, fined or imprisoned. Many can receive dishonorable discharges, which would mean the loss of all veterans' benefits and hospital care.

State officials have also begun to use AIDS as a justification for voiding basic civil liberties. In mid-November, for instance, New York State Health Commissioner David Axelrod declared that "investigators" would use "warrants to go into hotel rooms" to halt "dangerous sex" practices linked with AIDS. "Some hotels may be the primary venue for this kind of high-risk activity," Axelrod asserted. The inherent dangers of this policy are self-evident. Thomas Stoddard, a leader of New York's Civil Liberties Union, explains: "Once the government enters the business of regulation of sexual conduct, the temptation is almost irresistible for it to continually expand its desire and capacity to regulate... Some people even live in hotel rooms. It's abhorrent that the state peer into activities taking place in the bedroom. Now that it's begun,

where does it stop?"

The greatest danger in the AIDS controversy is the abhorrent correlation being made between suppressing the rights of gays and lesbians and the steps needed to halt the spread of the disease. One Massachusetts legislator last month claimed that a child in his district had contracted AIDS because an AIDS victim "deliberately" donated blood. Other political conservatives are manipulating the fear of AIDS to defeat local and state gay rights legislation. In Houston, former mayoral candidate Louie Welch stated that one way to combat AIDS was to "shoot the queers." Welch's unsuccessful campaign was based largely on scapegoating homosexuals and appealing to the electorate's most irrational fears. And legislation is currently being proposed before the New York City Council which would "ban" all persons who have AIDS, including teachers and any students, from the public schools.

We are witnessing the proliferation of AIDS-related violence, both vigilante and institutional, which threatens not only those afflicted with the disease, but many others. Blacks, more than any other Americans, should know that political intolerance and bigotry which masquerades as benign policies in the "public interest" are anathema to democracy. We, too, have sons and daughters who are AIDS victims; and we must take a more assertive stance against every form of political harassment and abridgement of civil liberties aimed against any other minority groups. Scapegoating gays and lesbians is no solution to the tragedy of AIDS.

Dr. Manning Marable teaches political sociology at Colgate University, Hamilton, New York.

Letters to the Editor

To the Militant Editorials, Nov. 22, 1985

To the Editor:

I believe that confrontation in any dialectical sense means that there is contradiction going on. Why label Brother Farrakhan "Anti-Semitic"? "Anti-Semitism," is the most obnoxious noun in the dictionary of modern politics. Zionists have been cunning enough to exploit this loose term for their own benefits. They've described Anti-Semitism to be the most dreaded social and spiritual disease of the non-Jewish mankind. Anti-Semite, whether man or monster, is one who without exception hates all the Semitic races. I can't even name a single European non-Jew who ever hated the Semites. Who hated the Assyrians, Egyptians, Babylonians and the Phoenicians in ancient times? Who's working day and night to subjugate and destroy the Muslims and Christians of the Middle East?

Brother Farrakhan knows, a man who tosses worms in the river isn't necessarily a friend of the fish. All the fish who take him for a friend, who think the worm's got no hook in it, usually end up in the frying pan. All these things dangled before us by so-called liberals posing as a friend and benefactors have turned out to be nothing but bait to make us think we're making progress.

Brother Farrakhan teaches us the knowledge of our own selves, and of our own people. The Nation of Islam clears us up—morally, mentally and spiritually—and reforms us of the vices that have blinded us here in the Western society. The Nation of Islam stops black men from getting drunk, stops their dope addiction if they had it, stops nicotine, gambling, stealing, lying, cheating, fornication,

adultery, prostitution, juvenile delinquency. I think of this whenever somebody talks about investigating the Nation of Islam. Why investigate Brother Farrakhan? They should subsidize him. He's cleaning up the mess. He's saving the Government millions of dollars, taking black men off of welfare, showing them how to do something for themselves.

The Militant, Marxist-Leninist class analysis, negate our nationalism. I believe the basics of Marxism on this question can be stated in these main points: 1. They should give unconditional support to all sections of the oppressed people in the struggle against their oppressors, including the unconditional right of the oppressed to self-determination. 2. This does not negate the importance of nationalist demands that do not explicitly call for the downfall of capitalism. 3. Likewise, being the most exploited, workers and other oppressed classes of the oppressed nations are the best fighters for nationalist demands. 4. Marxists can and should support and participate in nationalist movements of oppressed peoples that are not based on the national-capitalist elements, utilizing them as a key weapon in the fight for socialism.

The Militant Editor's view flows from a misconception of Marxism, fostered by falsification of Lenin's ideas on national liberation. From a Leninist point of view, support to Black nationalism is a principled revolutionary position.

The subjection of Afrikan-Americans in the U.S. has been basic to the existence of capitalism here for over four hundred years. This oppression is more than simple ex-

ploitation of Black and poor caucasoid workers at the point of production. It covers every facet of the lives of all poor people in this country. Every institution is used to maintain this oppression. The overall national oppression of all poor people, and the class exploitation of Black workers are indissoluble.

The Nation of Islam, under the leadership of Brother Farrakhan demands complete Afrikan-American control over the economic, politics, culture, education and every other sphere of the life of Black people. It recognizes that we must rely on our own power to gain this. In its revolutionary form, as advocated by Malcolm X, it proposes a program for mass liberation. Obviously, Marxist-Leninists whose main aim is to destroy capitalism and imperialism can only define a movement of oppressed people for such goals as a revolutionary, not reactionary movement.

For a Marxist, the first rule of politics should be: with the masses we are everything, without them, nothing. Marxism-Leninism is a science of struggle with universal principles which can apply to every movement.

The three main objectives of the Nation of Islam has been self-determination, political power, and land for economic control. Poor workers, in turn, are concerned with job-related issues, such as insurance, health and retirement benefits, layoffs, salaries, and the wage-price freeze, not owning.

Dr. Jamil Cherovee

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