

Freedom and Social Justice

by Alexander R. Jones

Black Leaders Oppose Psychiatric Drugging of Children

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There is increasing opposition among Black leaders around the country against the psychiatric practice of putting small children on the drug Ritalin, an amphetamine, to handle the questionable diagnosis of "hyperactivity".

Attorney Thomas Broome, President of the National Bar Association, is adamant in his opposition to the use of the drug. "I'm very familiar with Ritalin", he told me in a phone interview. "It surfaced several years ago. I'm opposed to it. In fact, I'm entirely opposed to this whole concept of drugging Black kids. I'm of the opinion that social workers are using Black kids as guinea pigs to further their own careers. That concerns me very much."

When I asked him what kind of results he had observed with Ritalin, he commented "I have observed LACK of results. It doesn't work. I've seen no example where Ritalin has had any effect, other than a negative effect of giving a kid a drug."

Broome's position is well founded. Prevalent psychiatric "diagnosis and treatment" is based on some of the most unscientific thinking you can find anywhere. One of the rare, truly scientific, CONTROLLED studies done on the effectiveness of psychiatric drugs, showed conclusively that the patients who received no drugs at all did the best. Yet this study, and voluminous evidence which shows that psychiatric drugs have, and are, seriously harming people, have been almost completely ignored by psychiatrists. It is easier and more profitable to continue to drug patients. Now they want to drug our children.

James Carter, retired educator of 26 years and consultant to the Congressional Black Caucus, explained "As an educator, I would be opposed to a child taking drugs. I would have a real problem with that." Carter, who is a board member of the Secretary of Education's Task Force on Illiteracy, was one of the chief national architects in the organization of the Black vote which resulted in the return of the Senate to democratic control last November.

Verna Lawes, Executive Secretary for the National Political Congress of Black Women, expressed similar sentiments. "I would never allow my children to be given a drug to alter their behavior. I think that the reason for giving drugs is not so much to make life easier for the patient, but to make life easier and more profitable for other people."

Get the facts. For a FREE booklet on the psychiatric drugging of children, write me at Suite 200, 316 Pennsylvania Ave., S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003.

Alexander R. Jones is the Director of Minority and Third World Affairs for the Church of Scientology (RI International.)

Letters to the Editor

The Economic System in Amerika is Not Designed to Survive on Full Employment

Today around this nation, while the poor and unemployed continue to increase, many politicians are advocating more prisons are needed. Unable to acquire the fruits of a highly materialistic society in a manner that is consistent with bourgeois legal rationality, many resort to illegal means. This phenomenon, however, is not peculiar to Black people in the United States, but can be found wherever the social conditions of economic inequality are allowed to exist. Therefore, it follows that in capitalist countries where economic disparity is most pronounced, crime will reach its highest stage of development. When people are out of work and unable to provide for their families, there is a great propensity to acquire the necessities of life illegally. However, in periods of high employment, the crime rate drops significantly. Universally, the ones who suffer the most in periods of economic depression are the poor, regardless of color.

I'm inclined to believe the economic necessity that forces destitute workers and poverty-stricken masses to commit crimes is exacerbated by the fact that the bourgeoisie defines criminal behavior, controls land and courts, and maintains police as instruments of political oppression, which further increases likelihood of arrest for the working class. In sum, the bourgeoisie do not arrest themselves. St. Matthew 12:26.

The foregoing economic analysis is particularly germane to Black people since we comprise one-third of the poor in Amerika. As a result of being poor, an unconscionable number of crimes are committed by Blacks. However, in utilizing an economic analysis, racial discrimination must also become a factor; otherwise it would be impossible to explain why poor caucasians in this country do not comprise a larger proportion of the prison population. The fact that on the national level Blacks comprise close to 50 percent of the prison population (and in New York State, 80 percent) indicates that the economic analysis must allow for the racial factor.

Black people in Amerika have had a long history of both unemployment and underemployment. After the abolition of slavery, Blacks entered into a sharecropping relationship which was essentially a form of re-enslavement under excessive credit and debt. It was not until the turn of the century that Black people became wage earners to any significant degree. In their attempts to claim a decent wage for a day's work, Blacks ran into discrimination imposed by "Jim Crow" laws. After the passage of Supreme Court decisions and Federal legislation outlawing discrimination, Blacks still encountered difficulty in procuring quality employment. As a result, the unemployment rate for Blacks has perennially been at least twice that of caucasians.

Today, Blacks are imprisoned in disproportion to their numbers in the general society. Black women constitute nearly half of the females in prisons around this nation. Blacks and foreigners make up the bulk of the country's prison population. This high rate of imprisonment reflects the difficulty foreigners and Blacks have in obtaining gainful employment in a racist society.

After two beautiful people I had become very close to were convicted of a crime they had no knowledge of, I began questioning penologists around this nation. They had no pretensions about the goals of their system. It was clearly not based upon any rehabilitative ideal. The system is a better training school for criminals than any of the dens of iniquity that exist in our large cities. . . . the first lesson taught is that the state cares nothing for the so-called criminal, not his well being.

The power structure dares not have a person with high visibility espousing an alternative system. A weak person of low visibility is tolerable.

The Brother was one of the chief organizers of the Poor People's Conference. They went after my Sister because she had a brain and was committed; She was able to teach our people to think in a systematic way about an alternative philosophy of society. Most students, people I've come in contact with around this nation, agree that the society must be changed. They viewed this obligation as a revolutionary duty, but also, and equally important, as an expression of their boundless love for humanity.

In a homogeneous society, racism would not be a factor; but in "Nigger Hating" Amerika where the Black Person at one point in history was considered non-human, it becomes indispensable.

Dr. Jamil Cherovee



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A NEWS SERVICE OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST COMMISSION FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

Good News In the News Room

They were told they couldn't win. They were told the lawsuit would ruin their careers. Still, they continued. And now, four African American reporters on the staff of the NEW WORK DAILY NEWS have been vindicated. They have won their law suit. A jury has found that the four journalists were given lower salaries, fewer promotions and worse assignments because of their race. It is predicted that the outcome will have major national impact. For, it is the first time that a discrimination suit, filed by newspaper editorial employees, actually went to trial, and thus so fully exposed the racism in that industry.

The evidence presented at the trial was overwhelming. For example, the editorial department of the DAILY NEWS hired only 36 African Americans since the late 1940's through 1981—a period of over 30 years. And it wasn't until 1981 that one was promoted into a management position. According to the testimony of Vincent Donato, a former Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) manager, in the two short years from 1979 to 1981, the News hired or promoted 47 people into management positions. Yet none was African American.

As Mr. Donato testified, "We found whites, as a group, were paid more than Blacks. White employees were likely to get merit increases and the increases they got were likely to be higher." Based on its findings, the EEOC has now filed a class action discrimination suit against the DAILY NEWS on behalf of 25 African American employees.

However, statistics never tell the full story. Statistics can't reveal that an assistant night editor told another white staffer that "Blacks are not well suited for journalism [because] they didn't have the background and the education." Statistics can't show how Joan Shephard, a cultural affairs editor, felt after one editor called her a "street-walker". Numbers can't demonstrate how David Hardy, the NEWS' political reporter, felt after he was pulled off the famous Abscam scandal in favor of a white reporter, even though he had exclusive knowledge about one of the Abscam defendants. And figures don't explain the frustration that assistant news editor Steven Duncan, now 63 years old, felt as he was passed over by other white reporters, some of whom he had trained. It was only after he filed discrimination charges in 1983 that he received his latest promotion.

Just as this trial has more than local implications, the situation which it revealed exists in more than just the city room of the NY DAILY NEWS. In newsrooms across the nation the percentage of Blacks and other racial and ethnic peoples at the top management level is only 3%. In fact, racial and ethnic employment at daily newspapers, at any level, is a mere 6.32%.

For those who wonder about the skewed and—dare we say it—racist coverage of papers like the NY DAILY NEWS, these statistics provide a clearer understanding. However, knowledge is insufficient without action. Our communities must begin to better use their power. In cities with large African American and Hispanic populations, such as New York City, the daily newspapers depend on the newsstand sales in these communities . . . and on the advertising dollars supported by the business of these populations. If we want our dailies to provide more balanced coverage of our communities, we need to show them how their continued racist coverage will affect their pocketbooks.

We also applaud the efforts, from the inside, of the interracial Institute for Journalistic Education, a watchdog and training organization. The Institute provides top-notch training for racial and ethnic journalists and has consistently spoken out against the shameful hiring and promotion practices of this nation's daily newspapers.

The greatest credit, however, goes to the four journalists who persevered through five long years of legal maneuverings until they won their day in court. Their battle is far from over, of course. THE NEWS, in all its arrogance, will continue to fight with all the money and power at its disposal. But nothing can erase the decision nor the evidence upon which it was based. As always, it is not only organizations, but also two or three people united in action, who continue the movement for change.

INVESTMENT IDEAS

Choosing Retirement Alternatives

Nearing retirement? If so, you're probably counting on your company's retirement plan as your primary source of retirement income. But not all company-sponsored retirement plans are alike. Some plans distribute the money to retirees all at once in the form of a lump sum distribution. The retiree can then choose the investments that meet his or her individual needs.

Other plans, however, do not offer the choice of a lump sum distribution. These employees are faced with deciding between several monthly annuity retirement options. There are three common options available to retirees in this situation. These options are examined below in the case of a 65-year-old retiree and his wife.

A. Life and 50 percent to the surviving spouse. For example, a retired couple might receive income of \$850 per month for as long as they both are alive. After the husband's death, his widow receives \$425 per month for the rest of her life. The surviving children will receive nothing.

B. Life and 100 percent to the surviving spouse. For example, the same couple might receive \$700 per month as long as either is alive. This option provides more widow's benefits but with \$150 lower monthly income while both are alive (\$850 versus \$700).

C. Life only option. In this example, the retiree could elect an option that pays income only as long as he lives. Neither his widow or his children receive any income payments under this option. This option would provide the retired employee with an income of \$1,000 per month for life.

Most people want to take care of their families, so they usually lean toward taking either option A or B, which provide widow benefits. The

cost of these benefits, however can be excessive. For example, if the employee chose option A and lived for 18 years after retirement, the cost to provide widow's benefits would be \$32,400! Even if the retiree's spouse predeceases the employee, the employee still pays for the widow benefits because he or she cannot change from one option to the other.

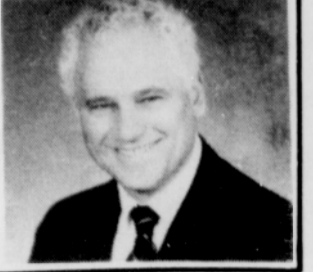
One solution to this dilemma is to combine life insurance with option C—life only payments. With option C, the employee receives \$1,000 a month, a full \$150 or \$300 more a month than is available with options A or B. By investing a part of this extra money into a life insurance policy, the retiring employee can provide benefits to a spouse and heirs and increase his or her retirement income.

To find out how you can increase your retirement income and provide for your family and heirs, talk to a professional investment broker about the variety of attractive insurance policies that are available today.

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by Gov. Neil Goldschmidt GOVERNOR



News From Neil

School Funding Reform Commissioners Named

Gov. Neil Goldschmidt named seven prominent Oregonians to the Governor's Commission on School Funding Reform.

Members were announced at a news conference in Beaverton. The Commission was created by the 1987 Legislature, to deal with Oregon's school finance problems.

Chair of the Commission will be Bob Ridgley, President of the Oregon School Boards Association, and also President of Northwest Natural Gas Co., Portland.

Also named by Goldschmidt were Dale Weight, Portland; Alice Norris, Oregon City; Ann Aiken, Eugene; Stuart Foster, Medford; Mayor R. Charles Vars, Jr., Corvallis; and Alex Byler, Pendleton.

Serving with the citizen members will be Speaker of the House Vera Katz, Portland; Senate President John Kitzhaber, Roseburg; Senate Minority Leader Cub Houck, Salem; and Rep. Larry Campbell, Eugene.

The Governor noted that most of his appointees have had experience as members of local school boards. He said he did not name professional educators to the Commission because he wanted the effort to be free from any hints of special interest bias. But he promised that experts from the education, finance and business communities will be called upon as the Commission forms working subcommittees to deal with special problems of school finance.

Goldschmidt also noted the broad geographical representation of the Commission, and the range in types of school districts. Byler, he noted, is knowledgeable about small rural districts, while Ridgley is a former Portland School Board chair.

The new Commission expects to work closely with a number of citizen groups, including the League of Women Voters, which this week announced its plan for a statewide school finance study. Goldschmidt noted that Sharon Little, League chair, had been asked to serve on the new Commission, but had declined because of other commitments. The League's work will be important to the new Commission, he promised.

Appointment of the new Commission is the latest of several steps the Governor and Legislature have made this year.

Passage of the School Safety Net measure in May, the addition of \$30 million in state aid to local schools, a Constitutional amendment allowing more productive investments for the Common School Fund, took place during the legislative session.

"As I have said many times, passage of the Safety Net was only a first step toward solving the larger problem of providing stable and adequate funding for our schools without bankrupting the taxpayers of this state," Goldschmidt commented.

He cautioned voters that Safety Net budgets would in many cases mean severe cuts in basic program, and the Safety Net should not be seen as a permanent solution to school finance in Oregon.

Members named to the Commission include:

- Ridgley, 53, is currently president and chief executive officer for NW Natural Gas Company in Portland. A graduate of Harvard Law School, he is also president of the Oregon School Boards Association. Ridgley had served on the Portland School Board for twelve years.

- Weight, also 53, is the chairman of the board, president and chief executive officer for The Benj. Franklin Federal Savings and Loan Association in Portland. He is currently a member of the Executive Council School of Business Administration of Portland State University. He also serves on the State Accident Insurance Fund (SAIF) and the director of the Oregon Business Council. Weight holds a doctorate in Finance and Business from the University of Oregon.

- Norris, 43, is a graduate in English Education and Journalism from Oregon State University. She is a freelance public relations specialist and a campaign manager. Norris has served as a member of the Oregon City School Board for seven and a half years, where she was chairman for two years. She also served as the president of the First Oregon Trail Pageant in Oregon City.

- Aiken, 35, is an attorney at Thorp, Dennet, Purdy, Golden and Gettett in Eugene. She is a graduate of the University of Oregon School of Law. Aiken served as the chief clerk of the House of Representatives in 1983. She currently is a member of the Eugene 4-J School Budget Committee and on the board of directors of Fox Point Preschool.

- Foster, 45, is a lawyer and partner in Foster and Purdy in Medford. He is presently a member of the Medford School Board and the past president for the Medford Chamber of Commerce. A graduate of Willamette University School of Law, he is an elected member of the Board of Governor's for the Oregon State Bar.

- Vars, 50, is currently the Mayor of Corvallis. He is a member of the Executive Board of the Oregon District Four Council of Governments. He is also served on the Oregon Road Finance Policy Committee. A University of California graduate, Vars is also a professor of Economics at Oregon State University.

- An attorney and partner of Corey and Byler, Byler is 55. A graduate of Willamette University College of Law, he has served as a member of the Legal Education Committee of the Oregon State Bar, President of the Pendleton Rotary Club and a board member of the Pendleton School District.

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