

P E R S P E C T I V E S

By Professor McKinley Burt



Be Prepared! Even if You're Not a Boy Scout

This week we should recall the experiences detailed in the two most recent columns, August 15 and 22; both have direct relevance to this piece. The first of those columns cited the "basic skills and industrial experience of the youth of my generation." And last week a successful small business enterprise was described--an equipment-oriented operation which quite obviously would heavily depend upon such skills. Today, I wish to expand this frame of reference in order to further demonstrated that basic skills are essential for economic and professional success.

Now, back to the small town perspective once again. When I wrote of my award-winning "Computer-Communications Project" in The Dalles, Oregon, the immediate spinoff was not described. At the time, my position in the accounting department of this huge aluminum plant involved computers and communications. The first half of my shift required that I use a golf cart to collect time

and labor distribution data from various departments. After analysis I would code the information and convert it to punched tape for transmission to the remote mainframe computer in Los Angeles. The following week there would be a reversal of this procedure and my machine would print out the 500 paychecks for distribution in our plant.

Immediately following that educational project for The Dalles Junior High School, management offered me the choice of a promotion within the accounting department--or assignment to the electrical engineering department as an "Instrument Technician". Now, I had no prior experience in this latter field, but I suppose that after winning national recognition for a small Oregon school district, it was assumed that I could do anything. It was known, however, that I sponsored a "Kids Science Club" in my neighborhood--and that I was forever obtaining "electronic goodies" from the coin-operated amusement device vendor across the street. It took little time for me to decide to become a "technician" and expand my knowledge base.

An interesting consideration here is that an Aluminum Company is a self-contained city that necessarily operates 24 hours a day, and has its own water and sewage plants, street and maintenance departments, utilities, security, ambulances--and independent power source (in the particular case, straight from Bonneville Dam). The huge power house

handled an electrical load equal to that of a city of 100,000 people. The aluminum reduction process--from bauxite ore to ingot--required this type of electrical power, at 3000 amps and 600 volts. The control room was exactly like that you saw in the movie, "The China Syndrome". Part of my job was to serve a shift at the control board on alternate weeks.

The "Electronic Instrument Division" supervised the purchase, installation and maintenance of the hundreds of instruments required for the operation of a modern industrial plant of this scope. I learned to service power meters, voltage and amperage meters and transformer regulators, rectifiers, generators, pyrometers, electronic scales, wind, humidity and other weather instruments, temperature and pressure gauges, water flow meters, emission analyzers on rooftops, you name it. Calibrating the "mas spectrometer" was my acid test.

Again, it is indicated that our youth--or anyone else--must have those basic skills of math and language, and a good orientation in science that is begun very early on. That is if they are to be able to take advantage of opportunity when presented. And it is strongly implied that such skills have become increasingly important now that there is growing emphasis on "unsupervised performance" and maintenance of "automated equipment". More reason than ever for having "Schools of Excellence" for our children.

Award Lifts Carl Elliot's Spirit

The courageous spirit of former Alabama Congressman Carl Elliot Sr. has been "rekindled" by the recognition he has received since winning the first Profile in Courage award, according to a former aide who nominated him.

Congressman Elliot, whose support of the National Defense Education Act of 1958, which opened new educational opportunities for minorities, cost him his seat in Congress in 1964, had been living in poverty, unable to walk and nearly blind, when he won the award, which included a \$25,000 cash prize.

"Since winning the award," Julian Butler told Parade magazine, which announced the award competition in February, "Mr. Elliot has heard from friends all around the country. Students who did not know that they owed their education to him have been inspired to write and thank him. There is interest in writing his biography and perhaps making a film of his life. And people in the community are planning to fix up his house so he can get around more easily. Best of all, the award has been a tonic to his spirit within him."

The Profile in Courage Award, sponsored by The John F. Kennedy Library Foundation in memory of the late President, recognizes individuals who demonstrate the values of leadership and political courage President Kennedy admired.

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UNITED WAY BEGINS FUND RAISING DRIVE

A community celebration on Wednesday, Aug. 29, will mark the beginning of United Way of the Columbia-Willamette's annual campaign to raise money for area health and human service agencies. This year's goal is \$19.5 million.

Events will take place at the American Red Cross/Oregon Trail Chapter, 3131 N. Vancouver Ave., from noon to 1:30 p.m. Participating in the festivities are Campaign Chairman Bruce Williams, Chairman of the board, First Interstate Bank of Oregon; Portland Mayor J.E. Bud Clark; Julianne Johnson, local actress, singer and member of the Swingline Cubs; Mount Olivet Baptist Children's Choir; plus Ohno the Clown and Smiling Eli.

Several local agencies also will display information on their services. The Red Cross will give away flashlights to people who correctly answer a three-question quiz on being prepared for a disaster, and the YMCA will erect a 16-foot climbing wall for kids. United Way funds nearly 200 agency programs located in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties in Oregon and Clark County on Washington.

PROJECT LINKAGE

Volunteers of all ages and skill levels are invited to donate one day of their time to help North/Northeast area seniors with minor home repairs, yard work and interior/exterior painting. Call Project Linkage at 249-8215. Project Linkage is part of the Senior Opportunities Division of Metropolitan Family Service, a non-profit agency.

Ebony Rose Ski Club Annual Tennis Tournament

The Ebony Rose Ski Club will hold its annual tennis tournament Sept. 5th-9th. This is the 5th year ERSC, Inc. has served as the sponsor for this fund-raising event.

During this time the tournament has grown from community event to one of the premier tournaments in Oregon. This year's tournament includes an Unranked Juniors Tournament and Open Division.

The juniors portion will start play at 5:00 p.m. on Sept. 5th and Sept. 6th with Semi-Finals scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 9th. All junior matches will be played at the Portland Tennis Center. The Open matches begin Friday, Sept. 7th at three sites, Irving Park, Grant Park (Grant High School) and the Portland Tennis Center. Play continues at all sites thru Saturday with Semi-Finals and Finals on Sunday Sept. 9th. Cash Prizes for all Open events and Men 40 and over. Prizes, trophies, and gift certificates for all other categories. Entry deadline Saturday, Sept. 1st. Entry forms available at Players Racquet Shop, Courtside Tennis & Apparel, Portland Tennis Center and all Portland Area Tennis & Racquet Clubs.

Money raised from this tournament is donated to the ERSC, youth activity program. For further information contact Con Johnson, Tournament Director at 281-4102.

Enjoy Discount Days at the Fair

The 1990 Oregon State Fair has five discount days people should take advantage of.

August 24, Oregon State Fair Director's Day, ride all the carnival rides free from 10 a.m. to noon.

August 27, KATU Day, children (age 6-12) gain free admission with a KATU coupon. With \$8 and a KATU coupon you can ride the rides all day until 6 p.m. and get 11 game tickets. Some games require more than one ticket.

August 28, Young at Heart Day, all those who are 65 years and over gain free admission.

August 29, Pepsi-Cola Day, children gain free admission with a Pepsi-Cola coupon. With \$7.50 and a Pepsi-Cola coupon you get 10 rides tickets, or with \$2.50 and a Pepsi-Cola coupon you get 10 rides tickets, or with \$2.50 and a Pepsi-Cola coupon you 11 game tickets. Some games require more than one ticket.

September 3, Franz Bread Day, buy one adult admission and get the second one free with an on-package coupon available on Franz Premium White Bread packages. In the case of an adult and a child, the higher price must be paid.

Also, get two-for-one carnival rides from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. with a Franz sticker at the Franz Booth at the State Fair on September 3.

Letter to the Editor

Some Oregon State Penitentiary "employees" haven't lost their home-training instilled during childhood. They prefer to see clean cafeteria tables and floors and orderly lines, clean cells and clothes and bodies. In reference to the latter, can you imagine our next governor being restricted to only 2 showers per week? For sure, in between time, that governor would have a few embarrassing press conferences. And suppose his or her colleagues, equally steadfast workers, were granted unlimited shower days. Would that be a case of cruel double standard or discrimination?

As an OSP worker employed for three years, I am subjected to the aforementioned treatment because I am not tagged a "privileged" employee. The department where I work is considered below the beast's belly: eternally vile and unthinkable--our Law Library. At least six of us are permanently outlawed from taking an employee shower, down in the employee shower area, on the following days: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday. It's okay for us employees to disrupt our busy schedules to take a hard-earned afternoon shower on the yard and return to duty before the 4 o'clock Count.

This less-than-perfect procedure is a nickel short of being a security nightmare. Imagine 50 naked prisoners standing backside to backside while the first 50 naked prisoners growl at each other over only 5 yard showerheads, and another 50 naked prisoners watching them watching the others. Very little exaggeration in numbers but much substance in truth. Furthermore, "privileged" employees on the Inmate Management Floor and on the Education Department Floor can shower Monday through Friday. I have tried to imagine what else could be wrong with Law Library employees. Do we excrete less healthy sweat per hour? Do we use a far superior brand of all-season deodorant that also combats dirt and grime? Are we feared (thus psychologically tormented) because we are more capable of using our collective intelligence, whereas higher-rung management wished we would roll over and die and not smell?

I respect a consistently clean-smelling human body. Especially my own. Especially my co-employees. Others here think soap and water are contagious diseases to lickety-split from. I have taken over 4,000 illegal showers during the past three years. Unless this discriminatory practice by management is curtailed in the near future, and to circumvent costly litigation, I will continue to take illegal employee showers so I can maintain reproachless hygiene.

Raymond Cornelius
(an outraged OSP "employee")

Letter to the Editor

It's Like a Conviction Without a Trial

I wish to take this opportunity to express my thanks to Mr. Allen B. DeSchweinitz, vice president, chief compliance officer, SAIF Corporation, for his "Patients as pawns" letter to the editor which appeared the first week in August. Captain Queeg could not have stated his point more eloquently.

Until the revelations contained within his letter, I have been somewhat at a loss as to why the SAIF Corporation has targeted alternative avenues for treatment of injuries, namely chiropractic, with a zeal reminiscent of the holy crusades of the dark ages.

Mr. DeSchweinitz has accused, tried and convicted 824 licensed chiropractors in the State of Oregon on charges ranging from chicanery, quackery, and collusion to malice and theft; and, to save the taxpayer money, he has done this without the burdensome mess of trial by one's peers. Mr. DeSchweinitz has further accused, tried and convicted thousands of Oregon working men and women of intent to steal from the State through fraudulent or overstated injury claims, dullness of wit and malice toward their employers. This conviction was especially easy since the thousands of workers plead guilty by virtue of seeking help for their injuries from physicians other than medical doctors. Throw into this assemblage of dishonest, socially disoriented group of malingerers an undisclosed but significant number of ambulance-chasing attorneys who have also been accused, tried and convicted by Mr. DeSchweinitz of excessive greed and of advocating for all of the above mentioned crimes and misdemeanors.

We now begin to get a much clearer picture of why the SAIF Corporation has fallen into such dire straits thanks to this peek into the thought processes of our public servant, Mr. DeSchweinitz.

There was little-to-no public debate relative to the issues in Mr. DeSchweinitz' article. The only noise that was given any attention at all was that of the accusations made by some of the SAIF corporate officers. I think a truly open debate with all parties having access to the raw data relative to the costs and effectiveness of chiropractic care as opposed to other forms of care for soft tissue and skeletal injuries other than broken bones would be most interesting.

Since chiropractic is a totally drugless form of treatment, I would be most interested to learn more about any close relationships that may exist between insurance companies and pharmaceutical interests: this and the AMA lobby could possibly shed some light on why insurance companies do not flock to the side of chiropractors as questioned by Mr. DeSchweinitz.

Personally I think that we, as taxpayers and working men and women of Oregon, need to take a large tongue depressor and look right down the throat of this mismanaged nightmare called SAIF. Perhaps a large dose of castor oil might be in order. One never knows what might be flushed out.

David A. Larson

Along the Color Line

The Tragedy of Marion Barry

By Dr. Manning
Marable

For months, the media followed the controversial trial of Washington, D.C. mayor Marion Barry with a perverse mixture of fascination and disgust. Sex, drugs and public illegality always sell. The Barry trial had it all. Acting as a legal pimp, the federal government obtained the services of Barry's ex-girlfriend, Rasheeda Moore, to snag its victim. Ample evidence was presented in the trial proving to most observers that Barry had been a casual user of drugs for many years. Evidence of government malfeasance was abundant as well. Scores of Barry lieutenants and confidants had been indicted and convicted of various crimes during the past decade.

The political circus came to a disappointing end, however, when the jury found the mayor guilty of only one misdemeanor--possessing cocaine. It acquitted him of one count, and couldn't agree on twelve additional charges. Barry now claims that he was vindicated, and has announced plans to run as an independent for a D.C. Council Seat.

Marion Barry is surely guilty of many things--dependence on cocaine, infidelity to his long-suffering and silent wife, and most of all, political stupidity. But the Barry case makes no sense outside of its broader political and racial context. The federal government's entire case rested on entrapment of the

worst kind. No one seriously believes that Barry's decision to enter a hotel room with his former lover was dictated by a desire for crack. Sex, not drugs, motivated the mayor. Barry's certainly guilty of adultery, and his libido's out of control. His problems with alcohol and cocaine certainly made him unfit to hold public office. But the authorities would have been wiser to pressure Barry to resign, in lieu of facing criminal charges and a protracted and disruptive court trial. Instead, they were determined to place the black Democrat on a federal prison.

Barry's central argument which attempted to justify his behavior was the thesis that a pattern of FBI and judicial harassment exists against African-American civil rights leaders and elected officials. The argument is certainly true, based on the evidence over nearly half a century. In my own research on a political biography of black American leader Malcolm X, I have uncovered an extensive pattern of illegal electronic surveillance, the opening of private mail without warrants, and political harassment. COINTELPRO, the FBI's Counterintelligence Program in the sixties, plotted the destruction of civil rights organizations, and led to the imprisonment of hundreds of black activists. In the 1980s, hundreds of black elected officials, judges and other community leaders were sub-

jected disproportionately to surveillance and harassment. Congressman John Conyers and other members of the Congressional Black Caucus have investigated many instances of political harassment aimed at blacks. The goal is to reduce African-American political clout within the system, and to intimidate leaders to back away from the establishment.

But the real tragedy of Marion Barry lies not in his cocaine dependency, which he shares with literally millions of white, Hispanic, and black Americans. His tragedy is his inability to place his community's objective interests ahead of his own. By his series of errors and criminal acts, Barry's has undermined the drive for D.C. statehood off years. His behavior provides justification for racists and political reactionaries to undermine other African-American leaders. But his greatest tragedy was Barry's failure of vision. The great strength of the black freedom struggle's political tradition, from Frederick Douglass to Martin Luther King, Jr., was the linkage between politics and ethics. What was morally correct was also politically correct. Barry's contempt for the ethics of the black struggle, his contempt for his wife, children and constituents, could never be justified. Marion Barry's only real service which he could perform would be to withdraw permanently from public life.

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