

Senate Committee Approves Funding For Gang-Related Task Force In Portland

The Senate Appropriations Committee has approved funding for a special Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Task Force in Portland, Oregon, Senator Mark Hatfield announced.

Hatfield designated Portland as one of four cities to share \$2.4 million in funding for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms to establish a "Project Achilles" Task Force. Other task forces will be established in Charleston, S.C., Atlanta, GA., and Milwaukee, WI.

Hatfield, the ranking Republican member of the Appropriations Committee, addressed Portland's growing problem with gangs, drug abuse and drug-related crime at a hearing before the Treasury, Postal Service subcommittee earlier this year. To help combat the problem, Hatfield worked with Portland Commissioner Earl Blumenauer to designate Portland as an eligible location for a special ATF task force.

Hatfield said the task force would mean the addition of five new full-time federal (ATF) agents dedicated to fighting illegal drugs and gang violence in the City. Project Achilles was formed by the ATF in recognition of the con-

tinuing link between firearms and drug trafficking. The agency has committed itself to making weapons the "Achilles heel" by which the powerful drug dealers and armed criminals could be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Under the "Achilles" umbrella in fiscal year 1990, the first year Congress appropriated funds for the Task Force, 2,042 individuals were recommended for prosecution. A total of 690 individuals were convicted, receiving 5,927 years of mandatory imprisonment, not including 4 life sentences.

To date in fiscal year 1991, ATF agents assigned to Project Achilles in 16 cities have seized 11 machine guns, 1,087 handguns, 45 silencers, 420 shotguns, 664 rifles, 46 sawed-off shotguns, and 52,453 rounds of ammunition. In addition, the ATF initiated 7,270 criminal investigations involving 7,533 defendants being recommended for prosecution in the same period.

"The City of Portland has had an on-going problem in dealing with illegal narcotics and firearms, especially in gang related activities," Hatfield said. "The Bureau has worked closely with Oregon Gang Strike Force, but I am concerned that adequate resources

are not available to maximize the success rate."

Hatfield said there are at least 1,400 undocumented members of the Crips and Bloods gangs and a substantial number of Asian groups operating in the Portland area. "These gangs have a propensity to use firearms to protect illegal business interests, usually narcotics. Designating this task force to Portland represents one more step in the federal governments multi-agency role in fighting this growing plague in Portland," Hatfield said.

"If Portland is going to win its war against crime, we absolutely must stop the human tragedy of gangs and drug addiction," said Blumenauer, Portland City Commissioner. "This federal assistance adds a new weapon to our arsenal and comes at a time when we are seeing renewed determination in Portland neighborhoods and City government to stop gang activity in its tracks."

The Portland Achilles Task Force would target a cross-section of armed criminals and gang related activities, and would assist other law enforcement agencies in addressing the growing problem.

Committee Action May Bring Major Contracts To Port Of Portland Shipyards

The Senate Armed Services Committee has greatly improved the chances that Portland shipyards will win a major ship overhaul contract worth at least \$30 million.

Oregon Senators Mark O. Hatfield and Bob Packwood, supporters of a proposal to transfer the U.S.S. ORISKANY to a foreign non-profit organization for use as an American cultural center in Tokyo, announced that the Senate Armed Services has given its approval of the transfer.

Congressional action was required in order for the Secretary of the Navy to consider the transfer to a foreign organization. The Armed Services Committee gave Congressional approval for the Secretary of the Navy to examine the transfer of the ship to the project's sponsor, the non-profit CITY OF AMERICA, but does not guarantee the transfer. If the transfer does not take place, the Senators said the ship will be auctioned for scrap this fall.

In the event the ship is transferred, THE CITY OF AMERICA organiza-

tion has signed a letter of commitment to the Port of Portland to overhaul the carrier in the state of Oregon.

The ORISKANY is the centerpiece of the CITY OF AMERICA'S proposed trade complex in the heart of the Tokyo metropolitan area. The complex is expected to provide millions of visitors with a cultural, commercial, and educational window on the United States.

The project is supported by several groups, including the Korean War Veterans Association, Vietnam Veterans Institute, and the Marine Cops League.

"Oregon stands to benefit from this idea in both the short and long term," Hatfield said. If the project is approved Oregon ship repair yards will be the major renovation contractors, which could bring millions of dollars to the Portland area. And once the CITY OF AMERICA is located in Japan, the trade and cultural exhibits will benefit our state's commerce," Hatfield said.

Senator Packwood commented, "the inclusion of the U.S.S. ORISKANY

project within the Armed Services bill is wonderful news. I know of no better way to build a cultural and educational bridge between Japan and the U.S. than with projects like this. This will encourage the two countries to learn more about and from one another, which will mean more trade and jobs for Oregon."

Mike Thorne, executive director of the Port of Portland, praised the Oregon senators for their success in promoting the initiative in the Committee.

"This project provides this community with a tremendous opportunity to strengthen both cultural and business ties with Japan" Thorne said. "It also has the possibility to advance future business by attracting considerable attention to the Portland shipyard and its ability to meet this unique ship repair challenge."

The proposal, will require no federal funds and, according to the Senate amendment, all design and restoration work will be done by American firms.

Pay And Park Lots Receive Complaints

City Commissioner Dick Bogle has come to the aid of the hundreds of shoppers, visitors and commuters who have complained of enforcement abuses at downtown Portland's pay-and-park lots.

Bogle's amendments to the city's pay-and-park code, adopted unanimously by the City Council, will:

- Reduce the basic charge for a violation from \$15 to \$12, and maximum charge from \$75 to \$24. This brings pay-and-park surcharge fees in line with fines for overtime parking at downtown meters.
- Increase to three the number of unpaid

surcharges required before a vehicle can be impounded. The old code allowed lot operators to tow a vehicle with only one unpaid surcharge.

-Require lot operators to send certified notices to registered owners before impounding vehicles. Previously, vehicles could be towed without prior notification.

-Reduce the penalty for occupying two parking spaces from impoundment to the issuance of a surcharge citation.

-Increase the time after which a vehicle left without prepayment can be im-

pounded from 10 hours to 24 hours.

-Require that surcharge citations and subsequent notices include a statement that written complaints may be submitted to the city's license Bureau if attempts to resolve a complaint with the pay-and-park operator prove unsuccessful.

Over a period of several months, Bogle, License Bureau personnel and representatives of the industry worked to achieve consensus on the amendments. At the same time, City Center Parking, which operates a majority of downtown Portland's pay-and-park lots, worked to put a new enforcement system into place.

"Our object was to relieve pay-and-park customers of any undue burden, while assuring that lot operators are able to collect legitimate fees," Bogle said. "What we arrived at is eminently fair to all concerned, especially people who come downtown to work, shop or play."

Open Letter to the Community

We would like to thank you... the community... our customers... for your continuing support. It is your support that paves the way for economic development, future employment opportunities and community pride.

We, your local Black Beauty suppliers, have banded together to share our expertise and strengthen our purchasing power to pass on savings and quality service to our customers.

Through your continuous support, we can maintain economic independence and community stability.

This message has been brought to you by:

- Mrs. C's Wigs
- Skin Deep Beauty Supplies
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The only American author to win the Pulitzer Prize four times was poet Robert Frost.



Perspectives

By Professor McKinley Burt

In the Beginning Was The Word: Conclusion

I hope you enjoyed this series on early African literature as much as I have. It always seems to restore my strength and to renew my determination when I "return to the well" as it were.

Though you readers, students and teachers have universally resounded that it will be useful and motivating to employ African (and African American) literature to spark interest in gaining reading skills, other benefits should be kept in mind. For one thing, these written-in-stone recitations prove and attest the cultural heights reached by our ancestors. At the same time this literature accurately chronicles the political and technological scope of African nation building and administrative organizations.

What amuses (and pleases) me is the fact that so many ludicrous European claims to have been first on the ladder of civilization can so easily be put to rest. How often have we encountered statements like the following about the Greek poet "Homer"-- The Iliad and the Odyssey, Achilles and Agamemnon. "A poet of supreme genius arose and the FIRST AND GREATEST EPIC POEM OF THE WORLD

WAS CREATED!" Now, we know better, reading African epics and sermons carved in stone as much as 2000 years earlier. And it is only lately that "the man" acknowledges that HOMER WAS ILLITERATE.

Most of us are familiar with the more common figures of speech, metaphor, simile, hyperbole, etc., but there is another form, demonstrably African in origin-- and equally demonstrably African American in style and manner; the "Epithet" (definitely not a "cuss word") as used 3000 years ago.

"Big Curl"; a priest with a huge side-lock of hair.

"The hungry one"; a tax collector

"The red boys"; a night shift at the Aswan quarries who became coated with red dust.

"Indestructibles"; the circumpolar stars.

"Tireless ones"; all stars except the circumpolar ones.

"Opening of the waters"; constant sounding off water depth by boatmen.

There is much, much more but we are limited in space; "Thy rod and thy

staff, they comfort me," a phrase frequently found in African devotional literature 1500 B.C. (23rd Psalm). These were symbols of royalty over much of the continent. Also interesting is the fact that most of the "modern" literature of the "Existential Philosophy" is seen to be lifted almost verbatim from the African genre. This philosophy (Sarte) is the one that reflects modern man's despair and rejection of today's culture, and led to that disturbing statement, "God is dead." Africans wrote this way twice, when the Old Kingdom failed, and again when the Middle Kingdom fell to invading Asiatics.

In conclusion, let me cite a three volume set of books, any of which will open your eyes as you realize that these beautiful poems, prayers and stories contain the basic format and style of all the EUROPEAN literature you've read. Written thousands of years ago, they synthesize the best of Ethiopian, Sudanese and Egyptian thought at the time. Each volume is \$11.95 and postage is \$2.50 each or for set.

Ancient Egyptian Literature, I, II, III; Mariam Lichtheim, University of California Press, 2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, CA. 94720.

Department of Human Resources Charges Vary For Medical Procedures

Consumers buying a house or car can scour the market, looking for top quality merchandise at a competitive price. However, health care purchasers rarely talk money until after the fact. A seriously ill or injured patient may wind up wherever the ambulance stops. A patient needing surgery is likely to go to the hospital her doctor recommends, regardless of price.

In sum, price competition among hospitals does not exist for most cash-paying customers. Meanwhile, prices for most hospital procedures continue to spiral. In the absence of true competition, charges for the same procedure may vary wildly from one hospital to another, a fact that is documented in a report scheduled for July publication.

The report, called Top DRG 1989,

shows the range in average charges for the 20 most frequent inpatient medical and surgical procedures in 1989. For each common medical and surgical procedure, the report shows the 20 hospitals with the highest average charges and the five hospitals with the lowest average charges.

For instance, the most common hospital procedure in 1989 for patients under 65 was having a baby. Average hospital charges for the 28,900 women discharged with normal newborns in 1989 ranged from a high of \$889 at Mid-Columbia Medical Center in The Dalles to a low of \$129 at Providence Seaside Hospital. The average charge for Oregon was \$495.

Hospital charges can vary depending upon the length of stay, the intensity

of care, the level of services and technology and the amount of discounted or indigent care at the hospital.

Charges do not necessarily reflect how much a patient actually paid because Medicare, Medicaid, and a growing number of private health insurers pay hospitals according to pre-negotiated rate schedules.

Top DRG 1989 provides a statewide average charge for each of the common medical and surgical procedures, and, where applicable, the national average charge for Medicare patients.

Charges for Medicare patients are recorded on separate tables from those who are under 65, accounting for different medical care needs and the generally higher costs for treating the elderly.

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Reinvestments in the Community

Is it to be Cultural Literacy or European Literacy?

BY PROFESSOR MCKINLEY BURT

My recent, somewhat cursory comment on the bestseller, "Cultural Literacy" by Prof. E.D. Hirsch -- "middle class polemics, intellectual masturbation" -- was meant to "cut 'em off at the pass." Of course we agree with his warning, "Children in the United States are being deprived of the basic knowledge that would enable them to function in contemporary society."

But I said that on June 27, didn't I? "The teacher tests are biased alright -- biased against an ignorance of the basic skills and techniques (math and language) necessary to decode the data base of knowledge which supports our contemporary culture." What could be clearer? What is not very clear at all, or very likely, is that the school district's curriculum people -- given the racist mindset they have demonstrated over the past two decades -- will pursue a "cultural enrichment" that employs and integrates the documented motivational and role model materials furnished by the authors of the BASELINE ESSAYS (or by the Local Consultants).

Hence, the intent to "cut 'em off at the pass" -- before the traditionalists pretend that there can be no "cultural literacy" other than (or exclusively) within the context of Professor Hirsch's definitions and reading lists. Nothing could be further from the truth, and certainly in this series of front page articles I have identified scores of basic African and African American contributions

to the culture and technology of the world. It is not just a matter of the "omissions and thefts" cited in Bill Cosby's video that obtains here -- it is the fundamental truth of Marshall McLuhan's observation, "The Medium is the Message."

And therein lies the danger. An examination of Mr. Hirsch's projections makes it quite clear that the schema he projects is as much as "cultural SUPREMACY" as it is about "cultural literacy." The overall structure fits very well with an embodiment of that racist polemic of an upstate New York newspaper editor, "Manifest Destiny" (of the white races) -- much in the sense of the last part of the title of Charles Darwin's epic, "...and The Preservation Of The Favored Races of Mankind." The citations, demonstrations and bibliographies furnished by the good professor would not differ that much in impact from the exclusionary preferences and guidelines of the IMMIGRATION LAWS which structured this republic.

What we need is a school district and a school board that is in step with the enlightened and perceptive educators of this nation who realize that as we approach year 2000, a significantly large and steadily growing proportion of our population is of so-called "minorities" -- groups who are well aware of what they have contributed to the world civilization (in toto, the greater role). It is incomprehensible that a reasonably enlightened educational establishment

could not perceive that minority achievements in science, mathematics, literature and music work just as well as lesson elements and paradigms as the Greek modes. The author of "Cultural Literacy" asks the following:

Test your cultural literacy. Can you put the following in context?

absolute zero	Homestead Act
Alamo	larceny
Billy the Kid	leucis
capetbagger	jazz
El Greco	lame duck
Faust (title)	manna from heaven
gamma rays	nom de plume
penis envy	rococo
sea legs	tabula rasa
Valhalla	Waterloo, Battle of
Zeltgeist	

But we ask why -- in addition to the innumerable scientists and mathematicians of color cited earlier -- cannot the contributions of the great Black classicists of literature and poetry be utilized, from Pindar whose works were required curriculum in the school Shakespeare attended, to Pushkin and to the magnificent writings of the Dumas family that encompassed novels and plays which also became operas by the great composers of the world? Why? Why? Continued next week.



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