

"Gang Banging" Is a Business, Too.

JAMES L. POSEY

James Posey is a local small business owner with a background in social work and community activism.

"Gang Banging" -- It may not fit the traditional notion of a business enterprise but a close look reveals some surprising similarities. For example, a lot of successful people have developed their own business because they could not gain opportunities through regular employment. I'd say that's real true of "gang bangers." Surely everyone knows that one goes into business to fill an unmet need, to satisfy a market. Young people know that there is an unlimited market for violence and corruption seasoned by fear and frustration, particularly in Northeast Portland. There is a sense that they can have a field day because when they weight the other options, there is very little risk of failure, and success is virtually assured. Just ask the little young dudes riding around on bicycles selling crack cocaine in broad daylight!

The not-so-obvious benefits to our alienated youth is the recognition and a sense of respect they obtain. Recognition is important to an otherwise invisible existence, labeled by many a lost generation. Negative attention is better than no attention at all. One wonders if a more sophisticated business could have gotten as much attention and publicity as these "gang bangers" are getting. This publicity has been a windfall for the "gang banging" business. As far as respect is concerned, young people have discovered that everybody instantly respects a .45 or a 357 magnum. And, since many young people can't seem to gain respect in traditional ways, to them, negative respect is certainly better than no respect. True, it may be a false sense of respect, but many see their stock rise with every TV news report, newspaper portrayal, or special youth program designed to contain their activities. The Mafia, Jesse James, Al Capone, Bonnie and Clyde combined

couldn't raise enough hell to get scared NE residents to demand calling out the National Guard.

The most powerful comparison to business and gangs is the notion of ownership and belonging. Check out General Motors, IBM, Nike or some of the other big boys when they come under attack and their profit position is compromised. It may not be from the barrel of a gun, but you can bet there is guts if not blood involved. When it comes to the need to belong, hey, let's face it; it is a major, if not the most powerful, motivation in human behavior. That's largely what gang colors, "home boy", and the other gang symbolism is all about. Actually, it ain't too much different from the swoosh and Nike Town.

But more than anything else, it's about economics. As one former young "blood" members said on a TV interview, "We ain't stupid, it's about economics. If we had other options, we would take 'em." I guess to me that's why it's a sad irony to hear residents asking for the intervention of the National Guard. Instead of asking that the National Guard come into the community to quell the unrest, residents should be demanding that the National Guard make sure it hires and trains as many of these Black youth as it does a representative number of white youth. I have first hand knowledge that the National Guard is not a part of the solution, but in fact, is a part of the problem. The Air National Guard, in particular, is maintaining a virtually all-white, private flying club. The Guard is a large, far-ranging economic system in which Black youth, especially those with a poor education or criminal record, will never participate. Northeast residents should be sure that when they are attempting to drive out the demons, they don't risk getting the devil himself. The National Guard has relatively few people of color in their ranks, and many in the Guard are likely to come from

places like Grants Pass, Medford, North Bend, and Albany. They would arrive in the community, packing M-16s, with little or no training in how to contain riots and civil disobedience, or conduct law enforcement operations. Some guardsmen have never seen a Black person alive and up close. It might be a bit hard for them to distinguish between a gang member and a teacher at the Black Education Center. Residents should be careful what they ask for; they just might get it.

As far as economics goes, the local police are not much better. It was about four years ago that I had breakfast with then Captain Potter at the Lloyd Center Red Lion Inn. The discussion was about how the police hiring process through the civil service system and police union politics almost totally excludes the recruitment and hiring of Blacks. We discussed a strategy to address the problem by establishing a pre-employment training academy made up primarily of Northeast residents. The police already have a reserve officer or deputy program that has for years been serving the same purpose, primarily for white residents. Well just the other day, I saw now Chief Potter coming out of the King Neighborhood Center. He had just finished a news conference outlining measures to stop the latest outbreak of gang violence in Northeast Portland. I asked him about our discussion of several years ago. He indicated that his office is trying to establish a citizen training academy, but it has been slow in coming. I'd say it's damn slow in coming, about five or six deaths too slow. I hope Northeast residents demand that he get on with making this happen with the same insistence that they are demanding the intervention of the National Guard. Because it won't be the armed forces or the National Guard that will put the "gang bangers" out of business. Rather, it will take the efforts of the National Guard and the rest of the community to include them and share the fruits of their business.

Letter To The Editor:

I deeply disagree with Senator Mark Hatfield's stand against Oregon initiative 9. Environmentalists must agree that homosexuality is not ecological. As an unnatural behavior, Homosex should be eligible for medical assistance. There is a full medical cure for Homosexuality practiced in China. Perhaps another cure could be found. Measure 9 would redefine Homosex as an illness thus making victims eligible for medical aid.

Even stronger is my disagreement with reasons Hatfield cited for taking his stand. Hatfield wanted Christian love for homosexuals. Implied was to support and do nothing to cure them. This reasoning applied to AIDS frustrates many sufferers who want a cure. True Christian love helps heal prob-

lems, not hide them.

Hatfield claimed separation of church and state. That fallacy has been disproved on Christian television and the Supreme Court by Christian lawyer Jay Sekulow. The same Congress that approved the first amendment also established military chaplains.

Military chaplains have Federal support to spread the gospel but their command authority is separate. This prototype should be duplicated throughout government, all the way to public schools. Instead of following the original prototype, modern liberals redefined separation of church and state to imply total abstinence from God in affairs of state. Congress must reestablish the correct interpretation and act accordingly.

Hatfield said Christian views

should come from the heart and not be legislated. Legislation should reflect the highest ideals, providing an environment which supports a society of virtue and continuous growth toward perfection. The heart needs training to be right; such training is no longer given in schools, by the examples of our elder statesmen, business leaders, or many traditional churches.

Hatfield could be healing major social problems by turning this nation toward God. Instead like any liberal he uses misapplied, twisted, illogical, and false reasons to condone, thus spread the mental disease Homosexuality, now growing in epidemic proportions. Because of gross incompetence, Hatfield doesn't deserve another term in office.

Sincerely,
Kirk W. Fraser

perspectives

by Professor McKinley Burt

"I Will Do Anything To Win This Election" Sincerely, George Bush

Who said the man was a liar? You watch your mouth. Who are these Democrats and media pundits, not to mention Bill Clinton, that maintain you should not expect to hear the truth from these presidential lips. That headline statement above is absolute proof -positive there are times when you may safely read his lips (and he does mean "anything").

As the administration was telling it, there was no money for many of the vital programs and initiatives being offered up by congress or requested by federal and state agencies seeking to maintain a decent service level in a deteriorating economy. The number of "vetoes" exceeded the number exercised by any president since the founding of the republic, despite the fact that millions more (including children) were dropping below the poverty level. And though growing unemployment and projected layoffs are approaching "depression" not recession, levels.

But suddenly, as the polls indicated that the president's confidence level had slipped by double digits in many places, Bush did exactly what he has been accusing congress of doing the past four years. He dipped into the old "pork barrel" and began handing out money like a sailor on leave. Bush quickly indicated the targets of his "gentler-kinder" philosophy, scrapping a campaign schedule to visit the McDonnell Douglass plant in St. Louis

where they were told they could sell 72 F-15s to Saudi Arabia. This move required billions in advance payments to finance the company just as in the recent sale of fighter aircraft to Taiwan.

During the same two week period, Newsweek Magazine reported that Bush announced \$23 billion in foreign arms-sales contracts, federal subsidies and disaster relief ("Bush has made a career of doing whatever it takes to win an election"). Now, this is the man who paints Bill Clinton as a "Tax and spend democrat" and who says that the thousands of American schools that are ill-equipped with the modern science equipment needed to reach the goals of yesterday, let alone any "Year 2000" projection, "do not need more monies to waste--give 'em choice". The schools are having trouble just financing the removal of the lead from the plumbing.

Then, of course, we have the billions the Department of Agriculture used to subsidize grain shipments to Iraq not long before the invasion of Kuwait. As though we were stupid children, we are told that this was a "non-military transaction". A well-rounded idiot could perceive that if a nation did not have to spend its money on food, then, it could spend that same amount on "weapons"--and Iraq certainly did just that! Perhaps, if none of this idiocy seems to make sense, we should remember that George Bush is a former head of the CIA, and that the region

where the "Comedy Of Errors" plays daily, is the oil-rich Middle East. "Who knows but the shadow, what goes on in the hearts" and schemes of man? Evidently, a number of folks do, as a number of defectors blow the whistle before congress or a special prosecutor--or write a book. The Iraq-Iran war is now seen in a new light.

The strangest scenario is where the Bush administration flails away at the "arms dealers" and asks for penalties against those nations who are jeopardizing world security by selling weapons of mass destruction to third world countries, the United States is now the world's biggest arms dealer. And this country screams in dismay as Russia tries to sell three elderly submarines to Iran. The "defectors" mentioned above now document, along with foreign journalists, that this country happily supplied both sides in that Iraq-Iran war which left millions upon millions dead on the desert killing floor. Did we ever collect on these bills? That will not raise the dead, of course.

We note in passing, that Bush betrayed his beloved "families" by vetoing the "Family Leave" bill. And that other potential republican voters and campaign contributors are being wooed by dangling before their eyes the huge profits that will result if all those jobs are shipped to Mexico under that "Trade Act". Things may get better, but I don't know when.

Dear Fellow Oregonian:

As a concerned Oregon citizen, I am asking you to join with me in voting No on Measure 9, if passed, would be the first piece of legislation in this Nation's history which would take away Civil Rights from any of its citizens, and would encourage hate, intolerance, distrust, and violence.

Measure 9 was designed by the Oregon Citizens' Alliance (OCA) and is intended to amend the Oregon State Constitution to relegate gay men and lesbian women to the status of second class citizens. It would make it legal to discriminate against them in housing, insurance, finance, employment, po-

lice protection, health care, and in all other aspects of daily living.

The OCA is a neo-Nazi, fanatical religious hate group, which is targeting a vulnerable segment of our society by spreading half-truths, and out and out lies about the sexual orientation of gay men and lesbian women. The OCA, with its Measure 9, is attempting to equate the sexual orientation of a large segment of our population with pedophilia, sadism, and masochism, none of which has anything to do with sexual orientation.

Gay men and lesbian women do not want "Special Rights", they want Equal Rights, and Measure 9 is struc-

tured, not only to take away their Equal Rights, but to take away the Equal Rights of all those perceived to be gay or lesbian and from all those who support them.

Measure 9 is a dangerous piece of legislation and has the ability to open doors to all kinds of abuse, not only to gays and lesbians, but to all minorities, as well, and to any person or group of people, whom the OCA considers not to be in agreement with its own biased, hate-filled and bigoted agenda.

Please join with me in voting NO on Measure 9 in November.

Sincerely,
John Kurka

This Way For Black Empowerment

By Dr. Lenora Fulani

T · E · D · D · Y

On Monday, September 14--the day before the New York primary--Congressman Ted Weiss died. Mr. Weiss, who had represented the predominantly white and Jewish 8th Congressional District on the West Side of Manhattan for 16 years, was one of the few liberals left in his party. It was common knowledge that Mr. Weiss, who had undergone major heart surgery twice in the last few years, was dying.

Within hours of his death, state Democratic Party leaders swung into action. New York election law allows party leaders--without consulting the voters--to appoint a replacement if the winner of the primary dies or is otherwise unable to run in the general election (in a one-party town such as New York, whoever wins the Democratic Party primary is assured a victory in November). So party leaders needed to make sure that Congressman Weiss, though deceased, would win the Democratic primary.

This would not have been a serious problem except for the fact that the New Alliance Party, which I head up, had mounted a challenge to Mr. Weiss (who otherwise would have run unopposed) in the person of Arthur Block, a progressive Jewish attorney with impeccable credentials as a legal scholar, an educator, and a civil rights and democracy lawyer.

Suddenly all hell broke loose! There was a chance--remote, but the anti-democrats don't like to take any chances--urgency voters in the 8th C.D. to pull the lever for Mr. Weiss despite the fact that he was dead in order to make sure that the candidate of the New Alliance Party--which he said "opposes democratic ide-

als"--lost. David Dinkins, the city's first Black mayor, said they should vote for Ted Weiss and against the New Alliance Party, whose Policies he called "offensive." The Manhattan district leader, a Black state assemblyman from Harlem, chimed in on the same note. In response to reporters' questions, Mr. Block extended his condolences to Mr. Weiss' family, colleagues and friends--and that was that. He refused to participate in turning Ted Weiss' death into a political football.

On Primary Day voters woke up to editorials in every major newspaper obediently echoing the shamelessly antidemocratic scare tactics of the Democratic Party honchos.

I was appalled that these Democratic Party politicians and their friends in the press had turned the death of a human being into a platform for a political attack on the New Alliance Party. I was particularly offended by the comments made by Mayor Dinkins.

The mayor chose to attack the New Alliance party in the liberal Jewish community he routinely courts at the expense of the Black and Latino communities which delivered his victory in 1989. As his own re-election bid next year looms on the horizon, he is again seeking to ingratiate himself with Jewish electorate; trashing the Black-led NAP is one way to do it.

Now if Mr. Dinkins is so dead set against my "offensive policies," I challenge him to bring this anti-NAP attitude up to Harlem! I challenge him to level the same charges against Barbara Taylor, an African American educator and New Alliance Party leader running in Harlem's 70th Assembly District! I

dares him to run the same line on the Black youth in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn--the same youth I prevented from rushing the cops last year in what would have been a bloodbath (justifiably angry, they had come out into the streets in the hundreds when a seven-year-old Black child was killed in a hit-and-run accident and the cops helped the driver and his passengers get away before the little boy was even treated!) Mayor Dinkins (who is more at home at the U.S. Open Tennis Championships than in the Black community) had to sneak in and out of the community with a police escort.

Instead of taking pot shots at Arthur Block, why didn't the mayor come into the Black community and take a shot at me? Because, like the state chairman of his party, David Dinkins is playing a vulgar and opportunistic political game. He's using NAP as a smokescreen to cover the criminal and immoral corruption of the Democratic Party. Just as he forced NAP's candidate for the U.S. Senate, the prominent Arab scholar, Dr. M.T. Mehdi, off his Christopher Columbus Quincentennial Commission under pressure from New York's Zionist mafia, he is using the occasion of Congressman Weiss' death to score some more points with Jewish voters. He won't come to Harlem to take me on because he doesn't think it will help him politically. He doesn't have the guts for that fight. The only balls he has are tennis balls.

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