

# precepts

## Haste Makes Waste And We Can't Afford It

First, let me clear up a misunderstanding that resulted when I left out a phrase in last week's education article. I agreed with the Oregon Education Association in their "opposition" to three of the ten components of the Oregon Educational Act. These were "a. The Certificate of Initial Mastery b. The Certificate of Advanced c. Extension of the School Year." The first two were opposed for their subjectivity and discrimination against certain population groups--and "School Extension" lack of funds.

Clearly, the Oregon Educational Act itself, including the components opposed, principally addressed the growing concern that the states youth were not being adequately prepared to become productive members of the workforce. In that this approach sub-

stantially differs from a historic and traditional concept (Wistful) that public schools should be about preparing students for "higher education", the shift in goals may be attributed to pressures from the business community and concerned parents.

While it is reassuring to find that educators can be responsive to reality, you will note that I dealt with a certain indecisiveness on their part in adopting the "Asian, or the European" model for school-to-work programs in the modern industrialized world. I cited what can be regarded as a "trendy" approach in adopting for-

ign role models for a transition structure, particularly the abandonment of the "Japanese model" for a suddenly intriguing "German Standard."

Though I demonstrated a personal familiarity and implied satisfaction with the German system (my own education), my ill case was based on a fear that such "trendy" exercises imposed in the socio-economic structure of the United States: University graduates; only males; 22 or 23 years of age at date of hiring. Clearly, our educators "could not see the forest for the trees"--or the visions of grants.

At this point, I refer my readers to

previous articles where I have made the case for building the "school-to-work" programs on a structure that is already in place and demonstrated to be workable. Perhaps even more importantly, these COMMUNITY COLLEGES have, unlike "foreign systems", evolved within the socio-economic structure of the United States. There are 16 community colleges in Oregon, serving more than 300,000 students a year. They offer two-year college transfer programs, vocational training and community education.

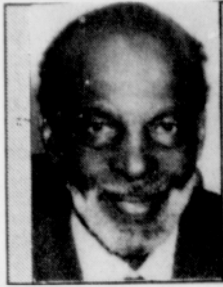
I emphasized the considerations of the experience-based vocational training programs at these institutions and the long-time cooperation with a business community ally in need of skilled workers. Also, there was the matter of economics as community

colleges were being picked as a less expensive educational alternative (Certainly, an even more pressing force at this time). But, I think my most crucial observation was that very early on (K to 12th grad) these institutions must be perceived as real and viable educational goals--and that the designers of the Oregon Educational Act (HB3565) would have done better to have structured the community colleges into the system in a meaningful way.

This is why I joined the Oregon Education Association and some fellow members of the Associated Oregon Industries in opposing those two "Mastery" components of the act. We do not want the rigid tracking and closure on opportunity found in either of the foreign education systems. Haste does make waste.

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by Professor McKinley Burt

## This Way For Black Empowerment

### The Two-Party System Has Nothing To Do With Democracy

BY DR. LENORA FULANI

The presence of "outsider in the 1992 presidential race--independents like Ross Perot and myself and insurgents within the major parties--threw an unusual spotlight on the undemocratic practices used by the Democrats and Republicans to limit the voters' choice of candidates and narrow the range of issues discussed during the campaign. Rather than allow the voters to decide on whether a candidate is "viable" or not, party bosses work behind the scenes to throw anti-machine candidates off the ballot, to limit media coverage of non-insiders and to pressure debate sponsors to exclude insurgents. not content to merely control the choice of candidates, the parties also try to limit who gets to vote, by failing, year after year, to pass much-needed reforms--such as agency-based registration and election-day registration--that would bring more voters into the democratic process. These exclusionary practices

have been explicitly defended--indeed, recommended--by many major party leaders and by their pals in the press, as necessary to the preservation of the two-party system. But why should we be interested in preserving a system that has ruined our economy and produced a generation of corrupt politicians who do the bidding of their corporate contributors rather than of the people they were elected to represent?

There have been some fair-minded elected leaders of both major parties who have been willing to fight this anti-democratic trend and to open the door to multi-party democracy. Among these fighters for democracy the undisputed champion is Congressman Tim Penny, Democrat of Minnesota.

During the 1992 election cycle, Rep. Penny was a tireless advocate for the rights of third-party and insurgent candidates to be included in the presidential debates. He sponsored a bill,

the Democracy in Presidential Debates Act (H.R. 791), which established objective criteria by which independents could qualify for inclusion in the debates. Next month, Rep. Penny will introduce a new version of this bill to the 103rd Congress. He will also introduce two pieces of legislation that deal with other unfair aspects of our electoral system: the Fair Elections Act of 1993, and the Election-Day Registration Act of 1993.

The new version of the Democracy in Presidential Debates Act would ensure that voters get to see all significant candidates debate each other--not just the candidates that the major party bosses have decided are "significant." Under the provision of this bill, all candidates who have qualified for Primary Matching Funds by January 1 of election year must be included in a special debate, organized prior to the first primary, and sponsored by a non-partisan, non-profit

organization. This would give the voters the opportunity to see and evaluate all significant candidates before the establishment media decides for us who is "viable" and therefore, who will get coverage and who will not. Then, in the fall of the election year, all candidates who receive public funding for their general election campaigns (that is, the major Party nominees) must participate in two general election debates, again, to be sponsored by a non-partisan organization. Independent candidates who are on the ballot in at least 40 states and who have raised a threshold amount of campaign contributions, must be allowed into the debates with the major party candidates. If a candidate refused to participate in these debates, they would forfeit the millions of dollars of public money they would otherwise receive for their campaign.

The Fair Elections Act of 1993 would streamline the process for third-party candidates to gain access to the

ballot in elections for president, U.S. senator and U.S. representative. In an attempt to shield themselves from independent competition, Democrats and Republicans in state legislatures have passed discriminatory ballot access laws which require third party candidates to collect 25 to 30 times the number of signatures required of the major parties, to file signatures earlier, and in some cases, to pay filing fees that are not applicable to major-party candidates. In 1988 I was the first African American and first woman to succeed in getting on the ballot in all 50 states, but I had to spend 18 months and almost all of my \$2 million campaign chest to do so. The Fair Elections Act would do away with filing fees and early deadlines, and reduce the overall number of signatures required of independents to a reasonable maximum, tied to the number of voters in the state who participated in the last election.

Finally, the Election-Day registration Act would require every state to

permit voters to register on the day of the election. Despite self-serving warnings that such a system would lead to massive fraud, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Maine and North Dakota have already successfully implemented this reform, increasing their voter participation rates to 15% above the national average, with no threat to the integrity of the election. Rep. Penny's bill would extend this democracy measure to the other 46 states plus the district of Columbia.

These three bills would level the electoral playing field by removing the limitations on our basic constitutional rights--the right of association, the right to vote, and the right to run for office. We need this kind of sweeping restructuring of the election process in order to bring ordinary people into politics and make government work for us. Call or write your Congresspersons today. Tell them to support these bills. Tell them that we, the people, want more democracy.

### From Montgomery To Memphis: The Transformation Of Martin Luther King

#### VANTAGE POINT

by Ron Daniels

April 4, was the 25th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King. As might be expected, there were a multiplicity of local, state and national ceremonies and memorials to mark the occasion. In my judgement, there is so much pomp and circumstance, so many commemorations, and so much celebration, indeed mystification of the man and his life that we are in danger of losing the real force and power of this courageous drum major for justice.

The Martin Luther King that we see in Montgomery in 1955, and the King that stirred our hopes in Washington in 1963, is not the same Martin Luther King that we see at the time of his death in Memphis. When we first become acquainted with the young

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, he is the hesitant leader and reluctant performer who is virtually drafted to spearhead the Montgomery bus boycott. The eloquence of his oratory, the amazing power of his convictions in the face of adversity and his extraordinary faith in the capacity of the people to wage and win the struggle for self worth, dignity and civil rights catapulted Martin Luther King into national and global prominence.

To his death Dr. King had a deep and abiding faith in the promise of the American dream. He was in the truest sense a Black American who saw it as his duty to perfect the imperfect American union as it relate to Black people and the oppressed in this nation. The first phase of his work as a social

reformer was devoted to eradicating the blatant indignities of the apartheid system in the southern part of the U.S. Embracing the philosophy and tactics of his beloved Mohandas Mahatma Ghandi of India, Dr. King initiated a massive assault on the bastions of segregation throughout the South using non-violent direct action. The white only sings on buses, lunch counters, hotels, water fountains, toilets, beaches and cemeteries fell before the onslaught of army of non-violent warriors for social justice. By the time of the historic March on Washington in 1963 King had emerged as the symbol of a civil rights revolution that was changing the face of a nation.

The second phase of Dr. King's work was devoted to the struggle for democratic rights, particularly the struggle to achieve voting rights for a disenfranchised African population in the South. King reasoned that restoring the franchise would enable African Americans to seize control of their

political destiny by marching on ballot boxes as well as marching in the streets. The Selma March in Alabama was the critical turning point in this struggle, ultimately prodding the Congress of the U.S. to pass the Voting Rights Act of 1965; the most comprehensive measure adopted to protect the voting rights of African American since Reconstruction.

The third phase of the work of Dr. King is the phase few people talk about. It is characterized by an increasing awareness of and indictment of the institutional and systemic character of racism, militarism and poverty in the U.S. No doubt this phase of his work was deeply influenced by the urban rebellions and call to Black Power that rocked the nation at the very height of the civil rights revolution. The urban revolts along with SCLC's venture into the northern ghettos, persuaded Dr. King that something more than civil rights legislation was required to cope with the staggering problems of poverty, un-

employment, inferior housing and inadequate education affecting the masses of the Black poor. The war in Viet Nam which was draining away the nation's resources, "like some demonic destructive suction tube," was the final event that transformed Dr. King from a race leader and civil rights advocate to a severe critic of U.S. capitalism and imperialism. He became a proponent of fundamental change.

Perhaps the most profound speech ever made by Dr. King was "Beyond Viet Nam a Time to Break Silence," was delivered April 4, 1967 in New York, one year before his death. In that speech Dr. King said among other things that, "I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without having first spoken to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today--my own government." Standing confidently at the rostrum at the Riverside Church a growing, evolving Dr. King proclaimed: "I am convinced that if

we are to get on the right side of the world revolution, we must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin the shift from a 'thing oriented' society to a 'person oriented' society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people the giant triplets of racism, materialism and militarism are incapable of being conquered."

It was this Martin Luther King who journeyed to Memphis to identify with the struggle of sanitation workers even as he prepared to launch a massive poor people's campaign; a maturing Martin Luther King that was now prepared to declare, "true compassion is more than flinging a coin at a beggar; it comes to understand that the edifice that produces beggars needs restructuring." This is the transformed King which the U.S. could not afford to let live. It is this King that we as Africa Americans must forever keep alive!

### A High-Skill Workforce Means Better Jobs For Oregonians

BY BARBARA ROBERTS

Oregonians should have good paying jobs that can support their families. That means making sure that Oregonians have the skills they need to fill today's more technical jobs.

So I proposed in my 1993-95 budget a package of education and job training investments designed to give Oregonians the skills and education they need to fill the high-skills, high-wage jobs being created in Oregon.

Oregon's economy is changing. Today, we must compete internationally in order to succeed. Production flexibility, quality products and market innovation will make the difference for Oregon businesses.

These realities require a dramatic change not only in our educational system, but also in the work place. Today, 85% of the workforce in the year 2000 and 45% of the workforce in

the year 2010 are already employed in Oregon's businesses. It is not enough to educate our children for the jobs of tomorrow. Oregon must also train and upgrade the skills of our current workers for the jobs we need today.

In the 1991 session I worked with the legislature and a coalition of workforce and education interests to produce four initiatives which fundamentally changed Oregon's education and workforce development agendas: the Workforce Quality Council, the Educational Act for the 21st Century, the Workforce 2000 Act, and the Legislative Adoption of the Oregon Benchmarks.

My workforce agenda for the 1993 session directs \$125.5 million in lottery funds to upgrade the skills of Oregon's workforce and the education systems for Oregon's children, so that Oregonians can get better jobs.

For example, our young people need an education that will prepare them for tomorrow's jobs. So I dedicated \$14.8 million in lottery funds to begin staff training, youth apprenticeships, school-to-work transition for students with disabilities, and joint high school-community programs.

Many Oregonians face special problems in today's work place because they lack basic skills or their industry is changing. So I put \$37 million into maintaining Oregon's JOBS program, an education and training effort that has helped more than 12,000 Oregonians move off welfare, becoming tax payers, not tax users. And I also dedicated \$10 million to help train and retrain workers who have lost their jobs as Oregon's economy changes, to expand services to students not succeeding in high school, and to give persons with dis-

abilities employment opportunities.

Here in Oregon, as across our nation's business-not government-is the driving force of our economy. Local communities shouldn't betold what type of training and jobs they need from "on high" in Salem. So I proposed \$23.7 million to improve coordination between the private sector efforts and the public sector programs, including \$21.3 million for Regional Workforce Committees. These local regional committees will identify the training and business development that's needed in their area.

A highly skilled workforce alone cannot guarantee good jobs for Oregonians, but it is a critical component for economic success. I will continue to work to bring in new jobs, to keep the jobs we have and to make sure that Oregonians have the skills they need to get those jobs.

### Whiteley Leads United Way's 1993 Fund Drive

Benjamin R. Whiteley, chairman of the board and CEO, Standard Insurance Company, is volunteering as general campaign chairman for United Way of the Columbia-Willamette's 1993 communitywide fund drive.

As campaign chairman, Whiteley leads the efforts to collect contributions from donors in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties in Oregon, and Clark County in Washington. The campaign, which is the largest annual fund drive for human services in Oregon and Southwest Washington, is set to kick off Sept. 1.

Whiteley has been an active United Way volunteer for more than 20 years, most recently serving on the 1992 campaign cabinet as vice chairman. He serves on the boards of numerous charitable and professional community groups, including the Leaders Roundtable, Oregon Business Council and the Oregon Trail Coordinating Council. He is a current board member and a former president for both the Boy Scouts of America, Columbia-Pacific Council, and the Ar-



Benjamin R. Whiteley

lington Club, and is a former board member of the Portland Chamber of Commerce.

Whiteley has recently completed recruiting volunteers for the Campaign '93 cabinet. These individuals will oversee fund raising activities for particular regions and population groups within the four-county area.

Happy Easter!