

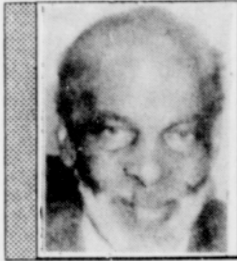
EDITORIAL

The Portland Observer

perspective

We Said We Were Unhealthy, Not Virtuous

When I asked last week, "Can Politicians Reform Health Care In America?" I had no idea that we would have had such an apparently negative answer this past weekend. Following Saturday's 'leak' of the president Clinton's comprehensive panacea for our aches, pains and disabilities. Sunday brought us an unprecedented White House press conference that disagreed with ninety percent of the interpretations placed upon that document.



By Professor McKinley Burt

No one, but no one, ever expected a Health-Care model that would meet the needs of all people, the professional standards of all practitioners, or the structural imperatives of all providers. What I do think the public had a right to expect (including all of the above) was a sincere and committed approach to solutions which evidenced a recognition of the seriousness of the problem and the long-term threat to the welfare of our nation. It is our somewhat fanciful hope that all this confusion and strident clamor does not indicate more business-as-usual and dedication to the 'bottom line.'

We note that campaign contributions from health-related business interests have soared 46 percent during the first half of 1993; This is according to data from the Federal Election Commission. The very new members of congress that the public has placed so much faith in to reverse business as usual in the health field are the principal targets of the determined political action committees.

Everyone in the system seems to be gaming; Side shows abound. All of us taxpayers want the government to collect its money from those who have borrowed funds, but really! These doctors, principally chiropractors, osteopaths and podiatrists who owe the feds \$3.2 million for their medical education (Oregon figures) are having their delinquency touted by some of the media as a major charge upon health-care dollars. Rubbish! This is a tiny fraction of that amount ripped off by over-charging, over-billing pharmaceutical chains and drug houses.

Who is kidding who? Many of the new medics have barely setup practice and certainly have yet to pay

for expensive facilities and instruments, or the rigged malpractice premiums now under investigation. The Department of Health and Human Services reports that, nationally, the delinquency figure stands at \$279 million.

Well, that is just the amount one group of testing laboratories is alleged to have defrauded the government of as they face indictment. True, there are malingers and dead-beats in every area of life, but a number of us think that some of the media reports have been grossly unfair.

There is a growing realization in this country that what we have to deal with in the case of our health-care system is a gigantic money machine (scheme) every bit as under-regulated and free-wheeling as was the Savings And Loan industry. And as we watch the frantic scrambles and manipulations to preserve turf and perks, we fear the same collapses and debacles.

But, given all that for the current system, we still have the big question, "who is going to pay for the 'new' health plan with all its ambiguous ramifications and projections--all obviously poorly understood?" I've seen a common inquiry in the headlines at the out-of-town newspaper stand, "Clinton Team Looks For Other

Money Sources?" Oh, yes, that they are doing because they have been rebuffed early by some of their biggest projected sources. As I said early, the big boys are scrambling to protect their turf.

For instance, the big campaign contributors in the liquor industries have said no way on their slated burden of the contemplated "Sin Taxes". The tobacco industry is also making unpleasant noises about taxing sin, so what about that \$105 billion dollars the administration expected from these sources? We must keep in mind, too, that THE STATES are going after this type of economic support as hard and fast as they can--plus more gambling casinos, River Boats and lotto games (Don't leave out the Indians, they're moving up fast). Were the Feds also looking this way?

Are some of us mistaken or ill-advised when we say that there is something not quite right about all of this; not just financially weak planning and structurally disastrous, but morally and ethically as well? I mean, really--basing the health and future of our nation on three of our most disastrous habits? We can do better!



Celebrate Diversity

THIS WAY FOR BLACK EMPOWERMENT Building Bridges

by Dr. Lenora Fulani

The Perot "phenomenon" isn't going away. Polls conducted this summer indicate that in a three-way race for the presidency, Perot would top President Clinton by four percentage points and Republican Senator Robert Dole by five points. In a two-way race between Perot and Clinton, Perot would gain the White House with a 9% margin. No wonder leaders of both major parties are paying attention.

Some folks with in the Perot movement believe that a third party can be built by appealing to voters from the same constituencies (primarily white and middle class) that gave Perot his 19% of the vote in 1992, rather than reaching out to include other under-enfranchised communities. As they see it, this approach could double the numbers to 38% and, with this base, a third party could take the White House in a three-way race.

They favor what might be called

"A Better Management Party"--one which would promise to manage the economy and the government better, but would not create a qualitatively different kind of party from the Democrats and the Republicans. This "new" old-style party would run the risk of stifling the social movement that began as Perot-style populism. Perot and his millions of followers saw the "revolution at the center" they were launching as having more to do with the need for a revolutionary overhaul of the entire way politics is done in this country, than with some abstract notion of being "at the center," half-way between the left and the right. Any effort to organize Perot's populist movement, into a third party must be, in my opinion, equally revolutionary.

There are others in the independent movement, including myself, who are putting out a more radical strategy for building a new party. It involves reaching out to other under-enfranchised communities and, in the

process bringing about a conservative/liberal synthesis and a new kind of party--one with a national multi-racial majoritarian base which can produce a third-party victory in the 1996 presidential election.

The majority of ordinary American--conservative and liberal, right and left, white and Black--share a desire for a radical democratic restructuring of the political process and, through politics, of economic policy. That's the bridge between us, that's what we have in common, and that's why the old political categories have become so meaningless.

Some in the independent movement believe that the Black community is not ready to go independent. They rest their conclusion, presumably, on the fact that in 1992, unlike millions of white voters, the Black community did not go for Ross Perot. This analysis fails to take into account a most critical determining factor: In 1992, Ross Perot did not go for the Black Community.

Added to Perot's passivity toward the Black vote was the aggressive campaign waged by the Democratic Party to contain its most reliable voting bloc. Clintons, entire strategy was to hold on to the party's liberal/left wing while competing with Bush and Perot for moderate and conservative white voters. Had Perot reached equally aggressively into The Black community and the rest of the old New Deal coalition, he might be sitting in the White House today.

The possibility of a mass break from the Democratic Party has been on the agenda of the African American community for some time. In 1984, during Reverend Jesse Jackson's first run for the presidency, hundreds of Jackson delegates to the Democratic National Convention in San Francisco urged him to walk out and continue his candidacy as an independent. After Mondale operatives and party officials double-crossed him on a rules change agreement and floor whips muscled votes to defeat

every one of Jackson's platform planks, the largely Black delegation was ready to go the third-party route.

But Jackson squelched the "revolution" and pledged his loyalty to the Democrats. Since then he has used the threat of going independent to strengthen his own position as a power broker inside the party.

Of course, while wielding that threat, Rev. Jackson and the Congressional Black Caucus are among those Black leaders who have played a key role in dissuading the African American community from breaking with the Democrats. Even so, Black participation in the 1992 election was down by 13% from 1988/ Perot received 7% of the Black vote. Both my presidential campaigns and my decade-long efforts to create a Black-led, multi-racial independent catalyst for a major coalitional third party have shown me that the day is fast approaching when the Black community will make that break en masse.

Black elected leadership is well aware that while Clinton's campaign tactic of smooth talking Black voters without giving anything of substance to the Black agendas worked in '92, it will not work again in '96.

The Black community has a long history in the struggle for democracy. The civil rights movement was, after all, largely about the right to participate in and be empowered by the political process. It was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who told the country that Black people would never be truly free without "a radical restructuring" of that process. In so many words, that was Ross Perot's message to under-enfranchised white American in 1992.

That Black community is revolutionary in its sensibility. So is the white "center." The coming together of these two vast elements of our society in a new third party, will precipitate the second American Revolution.

ENROLLMENT CLIMB CONTINUES

Oregon school enrollment should continue its record climb this school year, according to State School Supt. Norma Paulus.

An estimated 549,000 students are expected to enroll in Oregon's elementary and secondary schools,

about 14,000 more than last year.

Enrollment has climbed since it hit a record high of about 510,000 in 1990-91. Most of the growth is due to an increase in the number of Oregon births which began in the late 1970s.

All grades, except the first, are

expected to increase. The largest class should be the sixth grade. That class--the Class of 2000--should number more than 44,000.



Letter To The Editor

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The Brainwashing Of Black Youths

The African-American inner city youth are the victims of an organized plot of those whose power is on the ebb, world wide. The plot is to destroy the family structure, desire for education, self-esteem in the world community and to erase all sense of morality, respect, and brotherly love and recognition among the race and to dispel and annihilate unity or chances that a majority will ever listen to one or more African Americans leaders.

These plotters are very shrewd in reaching their targets. Ask yourself: "If I wanted to uniformly reach and influence African Americans all across the nation with the same idea or trend, how would it best be accomplished?"

Well, movies are as good vehicle for this plan, as African Americans have very little sense of identity so they will identify with the superfly, gold chains, jehri curls, and the New Jack City mentalities but the movies can only be a supplement to the real vehicle.

Music! Our teens are told to kill each other, call each other nigga this and nigga that, to be for a color not a cause, but rarely to try to achieve the

highest grades, raise a family or unify with their people to overcome a common oppressor.

To prove how potent the music is and how the organized plotters recognize this; when the record Cop Killer came out, the perpetrators immediately recognized that cops would be killed once this message got out and was picked up through repetition of hearing. The record was pulled but now protests are made over the videos of African American sisters nude and displaying what should be covered, nor the rap music that lead African American teenagers further and further away from being civilized citizens of cities, states and the world.

A national push should be made to educate the rap artist themselves as to the effects their music is having on the nation and future world of African peoples. Though the 1st Amendment protects them, an effort, a serious effort should be made to reach them.

D J's who play rap music should be moved to interject positive messages throughout the day warning youths that there is no future in disrespecting yourself or your kind. That gang bangers who are not killed stand the chance of spending 20 or 30 years

in prison, that dope money is sweet for a short time only, but prison sentences are long, hard and lonely.

I keep abreast of what is happening nationally and I see very little if any, open messages or advertisement to deter African American self destructions. African American Communities should destroy (throw paint on or set afire) bill boards advertising alcohol in the communities. You won't find these bill-boards in upper class communities of whites, chinese or other civilized people.

This is a war and every Black man and women in America who is healthy should feel obligated to something, be it ever so small. If we can't, we will be as the American Indian, wiped out--by the effects of music.

The older generation is able to cope for the moment, but when the young generation becomes the old generation, what shape will they be in? What will they be able to do in a world that is space age?

The outlook isn't good if we don't make serious efforts to clean up the ears and minds of our children.

Alvin Conell
Salem, Oregon

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