

# EDITORIAL

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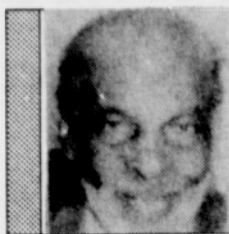
## SEEDS OF CHANGE, CONT'D: CONTROLLING PLANTS FOR YOUR BODY OR AUTOMOBILE

You might say that last week's article "sowed some seeds" of apprehension on very fertile ground--as well it should have. After all, it revealed vital information concerning the "fierce battles for control of human, plant and livestock genes."

One reader says he hopes this series of mine gets the same type of widespread dissemination (national) as my Jan. 8, 1992 article, "The Origin and Spread of AIDS Is Finally Revealed." We were later informed of a connection to "genes", for there is a requirement for a genetic evaluation of the target population (race) before a virus can be deliberately programmed for genocide. This is a far more

efficient procedure than, say, the infamous "Tuskegee Experiment" where blacks with syphilis were deliberately left untreated.

Many readers were unaware that it is possible to get a patent on a new plant variety, while some were aware that in the case of say, roses, it was possible. However, it was not lost on anyone that there were grave implications, indeed, if your meat and potatoes, bread and salad and other food could all be controlled through the proprietary interests of huge multinational corporations. Once most crops are reduced to hybrids, there will be no source but the "company store."



By  
Professor  
Mckinley  
Burt

Let me add an important note here. Last week I recommended the relevant book, "Seeds of Change" by Kenny Ausbel (Harpers, San Francisco, 1994).

Please add to your library an eye-opening little paperback by the SAME NAME, "Seeds of Change: Five Plants That Transformed Mankind", Henry Hobhouse (Harper & Row, 1986, 1987). This remarkable text is as much an absolutely fascinating history of European colonization and control of the world as it is an important introduction to the dynamics of food supply.

There is a superb bibliography and several maps; The chapters are as follows, a. Quinine ("Quinine and the

White Man's Burden"), Sugar ("Sugar and the Slave Trade"), Tea ("Tea and the Destruction of China"), Cotton ("Cotton and the American South"), Potato ("The Potato, Ireland and the United States").

Professor Hobhouse exhibits the same high level comprehension of the logistics of food supply as the multinational corporation: described last week (and the World Bank): "Sugar cane, taken by the white man to the West Indies at the time of the Renaissance and cultivated on plantations by black slaves was the cause of the infamous transatlantic slave trade, which made the Caribbean black rather than red. All this for the sake of a product which is wholly superfluous in the diet, a luxury when expensive and a menacing drug when cheap."

The world itself is becoming more menacing everyday, as we find even the

most committed ecologists and environmentalists brought up short by a new recognition of just how greedy the corporate interests (and Wall Street) can be. Until very lately, most have been beating the drum for "Ethanol" seeing this gasoline additive made from corn as a key element for building an environmentally sustainable economy and eliminating the pollution caused by use of fossil fuels.

The "Institute for Local Self-Reliance" describes a "Carbohydrate Economy", clean, sustainable and based on locally grown plant matter. They note that such items as soy-based inks, plastics made from cornstarch, biodiesel and specialized lubricants made from canola and other seed oils, food processing waste and wheat are all entering the marketplace. (Sounds as if the great black chemist, Dr. George Washington Carver, has been resurrected).

has been resurrected).

However, other more cautious patrons of the "Green Revolution" have noted that the huge international grain and seed company, Arthur Daniel Midland Company, is spending millions on television advertising in beating its own drum for the use of "Ethanol" to reformulate gasoline. "Hold it", thy cry. This corporation is one of the key players in the global game of controlling the world's plant gene bank. "What can they be up to? Certainly not about diversity"--What will be the relationship to the genetics of the corn we eat? And to the pesticide parameters set up by the chemical companies with interlocking directorates? Or to drug firms who make livestock and human hormones? Monsanto, Cib-Geigy).

More next week.

## THIS WAY FOR BLACK EMPOWERMENT: The New Populism

### AMONG ONE OF HUNDREDS OF ACTIVIST INDEPENDENTS

-- Black, white and Latino -- who have been working intently over the last six months to inaugurate a new national independent party capable of seriously challenging the corrupt and gridlocked two-party monopoly that controls politics in this country.

This party-building process began two years ago when 20 million ordinary Americans rebelled against politics-as-usual by voting for Ross Perot and other independents for president of the United States. Since then Americans from all walks of life, from all ethnic and racial groups, and from across the traditional political spectrum have been working to consolidate that voter rebellion into a political party that can wrest power from the professional politicians and return it to the people.

Over the last year and a half we

have witnessed a truly extraordinary political process. We have seen people whom the political pundits said would never even sit in the same room together not only sit down and talk independent politics, but go out into each other's communities and work together to organize.

If this new party we're building is to prove capable of leading America out of crisis and into economic, social and political development, it must be a party that listens to the voice of ordinary Americans. It must be a populist party, a broad, inclusive party of citizen-activists, ordinary Americans of all colors and religions united by their common commitment to government "of the people, by the people and for the people."

Populism -- which predates the categories of "left" and "right" in America -- is the stubborn belief that ordinary Americans should run the country, not professional politicians

and professional bureaucrats and professional "experts." It owes its name to the People's (Populist) Party, which was founded in 1892 by ordinary Americans (Black and white) and which presented the Democrats and Republicans with the most serious challenge so far to their professional rule.

But populism as a current in American political thought goes back even further. It is the belief that "all men (and women) are created equal." It is the commitment to "We, the People" as the ultimate source of power of society.

Populism is to be found in the patriots who massed along the road from Lexington to Concord more than 200 years ago. It is to be found among the insurgents of the Shay and Whiskey Rebellions which followed independence. It is to be found in the struggle of Thomas Jefferson and his Anti-Federalists to have the Bill of

Rights adopted and the franchise extended beyond the circles of the very rich. It is to be found in the work of Frederick Douglas and other Black leaders who fought slavery in the first half of the 19th century, and it was with the abolitionists and "free soldiers" who united to found the Republican Party in 1854.

Populism, in short, is the determination to make the American dream of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" real for all Americans, regardless of their economic status, their race, their religion, their sex, or their sexual preference. It is the belief that ordinary Americans can and should run America; that if we had the power to set social, political and economic policy we would do a hell of a lot better at the job of looking after ourselves and our loved ones -- not to mention the country and the world -- than the professional politicians do.

The professionals have declared

populism dead. They have buried it over and over again. They have told us the American people are "apolitical" and "apathetic." But just when the professionals had succeeded in driving voter participation to an all-time low, the American people stood up and said: We will have term limits! We will support an independent for president! We want the professional politicians out of the business of governing America!

I have often reflected on the fate of the old Populist Party. There are two basic reasons why it failed in its mission to bring about greater democracy to America. First, it relied too heavily on programmatic. When the Democratic Party adopted some of the Populists' demands as platform planks, many party members were willing to give up their independence. The democratic activity of building the Populist party was given up in exchange for a promise from the pro-

fessional politicians. Of course, the Populists' reform planks were soon left behind by the professionals when they entered the smoke-filled back rooms of party wheeling and dealing.

Secondly, the Populists floundered on the issue of racism and inclusion. The fight over whether or not African Americans were to be included as full and equal partners ripped the party apart. The issue of Black inclusion and black leadership remains the cutting edge issue for American populism today.

The only way not to repeat the mistakes of history is to learn from them. We have an extraordinary opportunity over the next few years to open up the American political process, to reignite through peaceful means the American Revolution, to make real the American promise of liberty and justice for all.

Let's go for it.

## Letter To The Editor

Send your letters to the Editor to:  
Editor, PO Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208

### RARELY DOES THE PUBLIC HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO VOTE FOR AN OFFICE SEEKER WHO IS ALREADY QUALIFIED TO DO THE JOB.

An elected official that can hit the ground running effectively and efficiently is a rare occurrence in politics. Mr. Hank Miggins, Metro Auditor candidate, is that rare exception. I can make this statement with firm conviction as I am personally aware

of Mr. Miggins' talents through many years of personal and professional association. My own background and experience as an Audit Director reinforces my confidence about Mr. Miggins qualifications.

I offer the following additional information and recommend your papers endorsement of Hank Miggins based on these critical facts:

For over forty years, led primarily by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA),

accounting and auditing standard setting and professional certification was dominated by private sector interests -- governmental interests taking a back seat. Three events that significantly increased the awareness of governmental accounting and auditing changed all this and increased the awareness and importance of the governmental accountant and auditor. Those three events were: (1) the establishment of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, (2) the passage of the Single Audit Act, and (3) the establishment of the CPA designation, "Accredited Governmental Auditing Specialist." The latter event was AICPA's acknowledgement of the complexity of modern governmental accounting practice and the increasingly involved accounting and auditing rules, court decisions, and government specific regulations. The AICPA also acknowledged that its Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB), charged with standard setting for both the government and private sector was giving primary focus and interest to the private sector. This changed with the establishment of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB).

By its actions, the AICPA clearly indicates that individuals (CPAs) practicing accounting and auditing in the private sector are not qualified to practice in the public sector unless specialized training and expertise has been demonstrated.

The governmental accountant and auditor has always required a broad specialized level of knowledge, skills, and judgmental decision-making techniques unique to the public sector. Mr. Miggins could not have achieved his past managerial accounting and auditing successes in government lacking such knowledge and skills. It is for these reasons I strongly recommend and support your endorsement of Hank Miggins.

The Public can be assured that Mr. Miggins' Certified Internal Auditor designation, coupled with his board base of experience in governmental accounting and auditing qualifies him for the Metro Auditor position.

Sincerely,  
Robert H. Strickland, MPA, CFE,

## Vantage Point

### Black America Should Rally Around Ben Chavis

#### WHEN THE NAACP SELECTED DR. BENJAMIN F. CHAVIS AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR A WAVE OF OPTIMISM AND EXPECTANCY SWEEPED BLACK AMERICA.

Black people were looking for a new direction for the NAACP. Dr. Chavis has not disappointed. He immediately set the tone for his administration by going directly to the "hood" in South Central Los Angeles to await the verdict in the second Rodney King beating trial. He has been a major inspiration for the Urban Peace Movement which is working to end the fratricide fueled by gangs in Black communities across the nation. Indeed, the crisis of Black youth had become a major focus for the NAACP. The struggle for "economic democracy" has also been intensified as Dr. Chavis scored a milestone victory by signing a \$50 million Fair Share Agreement with the Denny's corporation.

But perhaps the most important dimension of the dynamic new direction set by Dr. Chavis has been a new openness to reaching out to all sectors of the National African American Community. Given the massive crisis ripping at the very fabric of Black life in our communities Dr. Chavis has prioritized creating greater unity among the various leaders, organizations and constituencies in our communities Dr. Chavis has prioritized creating greater unity among the various leaders, organizations and constituencies in the Black community. Black America watched with great satisfaction as Dr. Chavis participated in a nationally televised Unity Forum convened by Cong. Kweisi Mfume, Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus. The new Executive Director of NAACP stood on the same platform with Jesse Jackson, Maxine Waters and Minister Louis Farrakhan and entered into a covenant to advance the struggle for justice for Black people. And, the masses of Black people beamed with enormous pride when Dr. Chavis refused to break the Covenant with Minister Farrakhan over the Khalid

Muhammad affair. Refusing to buckle to outside pressure (as many Black leaders did), Dr. Chavis courageously called for a Black Leadership Summit conference to discuss and agenda and unified approach to solving the crises afflicting the Black community. Dr. Chavis made it clear that Minister Farrakhan would be included in the Summit.

Most recently, Dr. Chavis took another bold step in his campaign to promote unity in the Black community by convening a meeting of nationalist, pan-africanist and progressive leaders. Hosted by the 50,000 member Detroit branch of the NAACP (the largest branch in the Association), among those attending this historic meeting were: Dr. Conrad Worrill, Chairman of the National Black United Front, Charlene Mitchell, Co-Chairperson of the National Alliance Against Racism and Political Repression, Dr. Maulana Karenga, Chairman of the US Organization and the creator of Kwanzaa, Cornel West, Vice Chairman, Democratic Socialist of America, Gwen Patton, Director, Southern Rainbow Education Project, Adjoa Aiyetoro, Director, National Conference of Black Lawyers and Dr. Leonard Jeffries, Chairman of the Black Studies Dept. at CUNY.

The meeting was an overwhelming success. It is a tribute to the leadership of Dr. Chavis that leaders who would not have come to a meeting convened by the NAACP a year ago sat around the table together to discuss ways and means of working collaboratively to cope with the crisis in the Black community. Black leaders who in some cases had serious differences with each other agreed to set aside their differences to explore creating operational unity for the sake of the greater good of the Black Nation.

It has been this kind of new direction and bold new leadership which has been like a breath of fresh air revitalizing our oldest and largest civil rights organization. During the last year the membership of the NAACP dramatically increased from 490,000 to 650,000 as Black people from across the nation have taken a

new look at these NAACP. More than 60% of these new NAACP members are under 30 years old. Dr. Chavis' tenure at the helm has not been without difficulties, however.

Some within the NAACP who were/are comfortable with the old NAACP have consistently resisted the new direction charted by Dr. Chavis. And certain elements of the media, particularly the New York Times, have been severely critical of Dr. Chavis in an obvious attempt to discredit him and his top associates. Dr. Chavis' refusal to distance himself from Farrakhan and the Detroit meeting with nationalist, pan-africanist and progressives are particularly troublesome to his detractors inside and outside of the NAACP. Joe Madison, a board member who has emerged as a major critic of Dr. Chavis, described the inclusion of Farrakhan in the call for the Summit as an "extreme move" and labeled the leaders who attended the Detroit meeting as a group of "washed up radicals from the past." Indeed, the Detroit meeting has caused such concern among some of the Board members that Dr. Chavis may be in serious jeopardy.

From my vantage point, as a lifetime member of NAACP, its time to Rally Around Ben Chavis! Too many Black leaders who have had the courage to stand up for Black people have fallen prey to forces external to the Black community and their apologists inside the Black community. Black America should not forget that no less a personage than W.E.B. DuBois was run out of the NAACP. All too often the Black masses apathetically watch as courageous Black leaders are cut down. Ben Chavis should not become a victim of our apathy and inaction. The voice of the masses of Black people needs to be heard in a ringing endorsement for the new leadership and new direction of the NAACP. Without our support Ben Chavis and the new direction he has blazed may be in danger.

Persons interested in working to support Dr. Chavis and his new direction for NAACP should call the national office: 410-486-9100.

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