

OPINION

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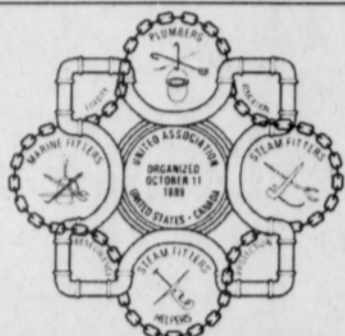
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- WHEN: MONDAY, April 1 through FRIDAY, April 12, 2002, 9:30am - 5pm weekdays
WHERE: Apply in person: U.A. Local 290 Training Center, 20220 SW Teton Avenue, Tualatin, Oregon 97062; 691-1997. Contact: Robert Kimes
AGE: Must be at least 18 years old (proof required - non-returnable copy of birth certificate, or current driver's license)
REQUIREMENTS: High school graduate with C average or better OR GED; AND C or better in one year high school algebra. Official transcripts are required and must be mailed directly from the institution to Local 290 Training Center before April 26, 2002.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY AS TO STUDENTS

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Matt Walters, Business Manager

Powell Promotes Common Sense

BY HUGH B. PRICE
NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE
PRESIDENT

"In my own judgment, condoms are a way to prevent infection. Therefore, I not only support their use, I encourage their use among people who are sexually active and need to protect themselves."

With those words, articulated on MTV last week before a worldwide audience of primarily young people, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell made a ringing declaration - of common sense.

As the AIDS epidemic continues to grow in the United States and in the Caribbean. As it rages through sub-Saharan Africa, in some cases decimating entire regions of countries. As it reaches

epidemic status in Russia and some of the former soviet socialist republics, and in China, India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar and Cambodia...

Urging young people, and others, who are sexually active, especially among multiple partners, to use condoms is what one has to say. It's the first step on the road to beating back the great scourge of our time and one of the most devastating scourges in the history of civilization.

One wouldn't think so, however, by the comments of some conservatives who declare that advising young people, and presumably others, to abstain from sex outside of marriage altogether is the only effective way to prevent the spread of AIDS and other

sexually transmitted diseases.

Ken Connor, president of the Family Research Council, a conservative research and lobbying group, told the Washington Post that Powell's remarks were "reckless and irresponsible" and "a slap in the face" to President Bush's core constituency.

But of course, Powell did not ignore the reality that abstinence is one way to prevent the spread of AIDS.

Instead, he refused to take the head-in-the-sand approach and ignore the reality that many youths are not going to choose to be celibate. He understood that the responsible thing to do is to urge them to face reality, too, and use condoms in order to protect themselves and others.

School Board Wrong on Zone Voting

Lorenzo Poe stands alone with Rainbow Coalition proposal

BY JAMIE PARTRIDGE
RAINBOW COALITION

A crowd of parents and community activists were disappointed when the Portland School Board voted 6-1 to shift election boundaries, but refused to take up the Rainbow Coalition's zone vote proposal.

Board member Lorenzo Poe cast the sole dissenting vote, saying that he agreed with the coalition that zone voting would allow low and moderate income candidates an equal opportunity to be elected and represented on the school board.

Board member Derry Jackson stated that he agreed with zone voting, but instead voted with the majority, suggesting that the zone vote question could be raised at a later time.

I doubt that this board, elected citywide, will ever support zone voting, thereby increasing com-

petition for their seats.

The campaign by the Rainbow Coalition for "vote by zone" began with a letter to the board signed by 40 community leaders and elected officials last December. A public hearing attended by 40 activists in January heard overwhelming support for zone voting. These actions, and extensive coverage in the local print and broadcast media, pushed the board to seriously consider the coalition proposal.

Speaking in favor of zone voting were students from inner Northeast middle schools Chirice Jones and Hannah Brown, plus parent activists Patti Hayes, Jack Herbert and Jerry Watson.

Without school board support, community activists must take the issue to the voters by ballot initiative. However, current Oregon law must be changed to allow such an initiative. Oregon law also prohib-

its increasing the number of board seats.

The Rainbow Coalition favors a zone voting system where every high school cluster has a board representative. Currently Portland has nine neighborhood school clusters and only seven board seats.

Zone voting and cluster representation would put activists on the board who would fight for their neighborhoods, to defend their schools against closure and cuts to staff and programs. Board members from low and moderate income neighborhoods would know about the achievement gap, school drop-outs, and discipline problems from personal experience. A school board made up of mostly moderate and low-income people, reflective of the voting public, would more likely make major changes necessary to turn around low-performing schools.



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