

# OPINION

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## Struggle Against Disparities Continue

### We must push for America's full potential and true greatness

Marking the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the historic March on Washington, U.S. Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, D-Md., chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, released the following statement:

As Martin Luther King Jr.

dreamed, we have made great progress as a nation since that hot summer day in 1963 when hundreds of thousands of people gathered on the national mall, here in Washington, to demand justice and equality for all.

In 1963, we were a very different country. At that time, there were only five African American members of the United States Congress. Today, there are 39 African American men and women who are members of Congress. In the early 1960s, just 4 percent of African Americans

earned a college degree. Today, four times as many African Americans have earned a college degree and that number continues to rise. Lastly, in 1963, one-third of all African American women worked in other people's homes for low wages. Today, a substantial number of African American women work as lawyers, professors, doctors, managers and other professional workers.

Indeed, we have made tremendous gains - gains not only for African Americans, but for all Americans. By expanding opportunity

access for all of its citizens, America has become a model of democracy for the rest of the world.

America's progress, while positive, must not render its citizenry content with the way things are today. We must continue to push this country until it realizes its full potential and true greatness. We will never be able to pursue happiness if inequality denies us the enjoyment of the liberty we fought so hard for.

To those who ask, "When will you be satisfied?" I respond by

saying as long as our children's education is determined by the affluence of their neighborhood, I will never be satisfied. As long as there exist disparities in the incidence rates and treatment of life threatening diseases, I will never be satisfied. We must not be tempted to indulge in the "tranquilizing drug of gradualism" so long as people, the world over, continue to suffer the inhumanity of poverty and hunger.

We must continue to advocate for the rapid evolution of our nation



U.S. Rep. Elijah E. Cummings

into an all-inclusive society. We must not rest and we must not be satisfied until the day comes when "justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream."

## COVERAGE SERVES US WELL

Because Write Around Portland is a small nonprofit organization, we rely on newspapers like The Portland Observer to assist us in creating a comfortable environment for expression.

Over 200 people have participated in one hour writing work-

shops, community poems, card-making and bookbinding events. Participants at the recent block party at Dawson Park also enjoyed visiting over 20 booths from local agencies and artisans and enjoyed live music by the Droney Tones.

Thank you again for helping to spread the word about Write Around Portland. We look forward to continuing our relationship with The Portland Observer and the communities it serves.

Liza Halley  
WRAP Executive Director

## How Our War Leaders Dodged the Army

By DONALD KAUL

Word has reached us that President-select Bush has become a military action figure. Yes folks, I'm not joking. George Bush as G.I. Joe. Who'd a thunk it?

I suppose the doll is meant to commemorate the 52 combat missions Texas Air National Guardsman Bush flew in the Vietnam War, or would have flown had his outfit been sent to Vietnam (and had he not gone A.W.O.L. from his unit about two-thirds of the way through his enlistment).

It occurs to me that the Republican Party has a great opportunity here to promote some of its other conservative heroes with a whole line of action dolls. I'm thinking of a line called the "What Did You Do In the War, Daddy?" dolls.

Like, for example: The Ronald Reagan "Ready For My Close-up, Mr. DeMille" doll, with the head of the Gipper on the body of an Academy Award statuette to symbolize his World War II service: making training films for the army while living at home with his wife, Jane Wyman.

The Daniel Quayle "Praise the Lord and Pass the Carbon Paper" doll, depicting a soldier operating a mimeograph machine, Quayle's job in the public information department of the Indiana National Guard where he spent the Vietnam War, courtesy of influential relatives.

The Dick Cheney "I'd Like to

Help But I'm Going to be on Vacation that Decade" doll, showing the vice-president with a tennis racket, reminding us that he says he avoided service in Vietnam because he had "other priorities."

The George Will "I Fought For You Like A Tiger Among the Hostile Brits" doll, representing the prissy conservative columnist in a scholar's gown redolent of Oxford, where he spent the Vietnam War.

The Tom DeLay Affirmative Ac-

*Mr. Wolfowitz' world-view, in common with those of so many of his colleagues, has not been contaminated by military service.*

tion doll, showing a white man on the ground with a black man's foot resting on his neck, meant to represent the House Majority Leader, who claims he tried to enlist during the Vietnam War but that all the billets had been taken up by minorities.

The Wolfowitz of Arabia doll, showing the deputy defense secretary in his flowing robes and headscarf. When squeezed it would say "Weapons of Mass Destruction. Watch out!" Mr. Wolfowitz'

world-view, in common with those of so many of his colleagues, has not been contaminated by military service.

And then there's the Saxby Chambliss doll, featuring a man in running shorts dumping another man out of a wheelchair. Chambliss is the Georgia senator who won office by labeling his opponent, Max Cleland, soft on national security. Cleland lost both legs and an arm in Vietnam, while Chambliss got a deferment due to bad knees. They miraculously healed themselves as soon as the war was over, however, and he is now a jogger.

I hesitate to suggest a Rush Limbaugh doll. Rush got a medical deferment from Vietnam because of anal cysts and, worthy as he is, I'm not sure how we could depict that in good taste.

And then, for a change of pace, you could have a doll showing a gaunt figure in a bleak cell. That, of course, would be Sen. John McCain, a rare Republican who did serve in Vietnam—as a real naval aviator. He was shot down and spent years as a POW, often suffering torture.

This would be the "War Isn't As Much Fun As Politicians Make It Seem, Kids" doll. I'm not sure there's a market for that but you can never tell.

Donald Kaul recently retired as Washington columnist for the "Des Moines Register."

COMMUNITY HEALTH FORUM  
SEPT. 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2003, Thurs., 6:00 – 8:00 pm  
KEY BANK COMMUNITY ROOM  
5330 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

### Racism And The Impact On Your Health

Presented By Corliss McKeever  
AFRICAN AMERICAN HEALTH COALITION

• Beverages, vegetable and fruits served

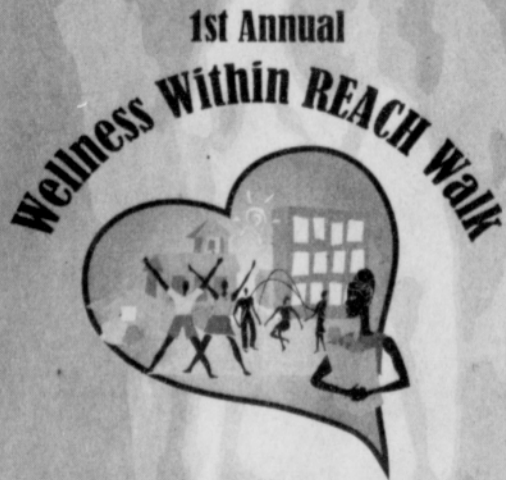
- Registration available for 1<sup>st</sup> "Wellness Within Reach Walk"
- African American Health Coalition, Sat. Sept. 6<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 am.

• Obi Hill of Reflections Mirror Image Bookstore will display books available on health and wellness. 503-288-9003

Sponsored by the African American Chamber of Commerce, Health and Awareness Committee. 503-244-5794.

Walk The Path Of Health

**AAHC** African American Health Coalition, Inc.



September 6, 2003

#### What

Join us for the 1st Annual Wellness Within REACH Walk Sat. September 6, 2003! Walk the 1.5 or 4-mile course.

#### When

The walk begins at 9:00 a.m. Other event activities begin at 8:00 a.m.

#### For more information

For more information about participation or to volunteer contact the African American Health Coalition, Inc. at 503-413-1850, wbeamer@aahc-portland.org or mield@aahc-portland.org

#### Where

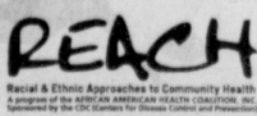
Start and finish at Dawson Park, located at N. Vancouver and Stanton in Portland, OR.

#### Why

The purpose of the walk is to celebrate our community's health and sustain ongoing free physical activity classes for African Americans in the Portland metro area.

#### Entry

Entry fee is \$15 per person.



### If It's New or Informative,

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