

OPINION

Opinion articles do not necessarily reflect or represent the views of The Portland Observer

Offer Real Change

Bush spokesman doesn't get it

BY AMAYA SMITH

President Bush's hiring of conservative new commentator Tony Snow as his press secretary proves that Republicans remain out of touch with African-Americans and minorities as a whole.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Bush's approval ratings fell to historic lows in the African-American community, which remains outraged with the inadequate, failed and misleading response to the disaster.

In October 2003, Snow went on FOX TV and said that racism isn't a big deal anymore. He was defending Rush Limbaugh's controversial comments that Donovan McNabb was overrated and that reporters are disposed towards black quarterbacks.

"The comment wasn't racist," Snow said,

"but that did not stop political opportunists from accusing Rush of bias." Snow added, "Here's the unmentionable secret. Racism isn't that big a deal anymore. No sensible person supports it. Nobody of importance preaches it. It's rapidly and thankfully becoming an ugly memory."

How can Republicans claim to be mending fences with the African American community and hiring Tony Snow who just doesn't get it?

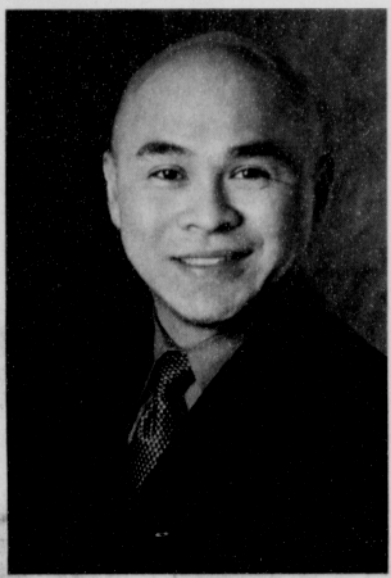
Snow will continue to offer the same PR campaigns and misleading answers we've come to expect from the Bush Administration. Americans all over the country are ready for change but President Bush keeps offering more of the same failed and incompetent leadership.

If Republicans were truly serious about reaching out to African-Americans they would back up their hollow rhetoric with a real change in policies and leadership.

Amaya Smith is a press officer with the Democratic National Committee.



Trung D. Tu for Circuit Court Judge



Trung D. Tu thanks the Oregon Black Political Convention for its endorsement of him in his bid for Multnomah County Circuit Court Judge.

Vote for Trung
by
May 16th

www.TrungTuForJudge.com

Don't Sign Spending Cap Petition

Protect seniors, disabled and children

BY KAPPY EATON

Oregon voters are urged not to sign Initiative Petition #6, the proposal to put a cap on state spending, because it could lead to severe consequences for seniors, the disabled and children.

If enacted, the measure would tie state spending to inflation rates and population growth. Known as "The Taxpayer Bill of Rights" or TABOR, this initiative would put into the Constitution a rigid and arbitrary spending cap on funding for public services such as education, health care, transportation and law enforcement.

The costs of some state services, such as provided in the Oregon Health Plan, are rising faster than

inflation. In this time of rapidly changing economics, the inability of the Legislature to act quickly in fiscal matters could be disastrous to Oregon's future.

Data from Colorado's 13 years of TABOR shows a decrease of 25 percent in funding for education and social services. Voters sus-

by the Oregon Legislative Fiscal Office, Oregon's General Fund would have been reduced by 25.6 percent if a TABOR-like measure had been in effect from 1990 to 2005.

The League of Women Voters has long supported adequate, fair and equitable funding for Oregon's

This initiative would put into the Constitution a rigid and arbitrary spending cap on funding for public services such as education, health care, transportation and law enforcement.

ended the law for five years in 2005 after tuition for in-state higher education rose 21 percent, and Colorado dropped from 37th to 44th in the nation in K-12 education spending as a percentage of personal income. California voters turned down a similar proposal in November 2005.

According to an analysis done

institutions of public education, human services, and public safety.

Initiative #6 would have far-reaching, unintended consequences for Oregonians and we urge citizens not to sign the petition.

Kappy Eaton is governance coordinator for the League of Women Voters of Oregon.

New Prisons: But For Whom? Halliburton job raises suspicions

BY JIM HIGHTOWER

Look out - here comes Halliburton again! With its own personal sugar daddy occupying the vice president's chair, this giant government contractor keeps getting multibillion-dollar, no-bid contracts from the Bush-Cheney regime, despite having been found guilty of shoddy work, massive cost-overruns and fraudulent billings.

Its latest windfall, however, should not merely be worrisome to tax payers, but also to anyone concerned about Mr. Bush's anti-democratic penchant to extend ever-more police and military power over We the People. Halliburton has been granted a \$385 million contract for a most unusual project: building a network of detention centers across our country. Up to 5,000 people could be "detained" and held in each of these centers, which are to be run by homeland security authorities and possibly located on unused military bases. "Detain" of course, is a euphemism for "incarcerate" - or "lock up." And "center" is a gentle term for "prison."

So, why does America suddenly

need to spend a third-of-a-billion dollars to establish a new mass prison complex in our country? The feds and Halliburton cryptically say that the detention centers could be needed for "some kind of mass migration" or for "the rapid development of new programs." When asked what is meant by the ominous term, "new programs," a Halliburton spokeswoman said she could provide no additional information.

Another curious aspect is that the administration refers to this as a "contingency contract," saying that the detention centers might never be built, but that Halliburton will have the cash and authority to move quickly if and when given the go-ahead.

The corporation's executive vice president says that Halliburton is "gratified," because the deal "builds on our extremely strong track record in the arena of emergency management support."

But who is to be managed, and in support of what policy?

Jim Hightower is the best-selling author of "Thieves In High Places: They've Stolen Our Country And It's Time To Take It Back."

It's your future

W O DO YOUR PART

Because you can.

AM **620** KPOJ
PORTLAND'S PROGRESSIVE TALK STATION

620kpoj.com

Subscribe! 503-288-0033
Fill Out & Send To:

The Portland Observer

Attn: Subscriptions, PO Box 3137, Portland OR 97208
subscriptions are just \$60 per year
(please include check with this subscription form)

NAME: _____
TELEPHONE: _____ ADDRESS: _____

or email subscriptions@portlandobserver.com