

# Point of View

## PEOPLE, PLACES and POLITICS

By Joe Neal



The scares emanating from the Tylonol capsule poisoning made Halloween a dull night. The evil and mischievous spirit which is often referred to as the Goblin during Halloween, visited us earlier in this city of Chicago, where cyanide laced capsules were found. With such a heavy hand as death getting involved in the Halloween games, it was not the place for the youngsters who were only concerned with receiving treats. But, the Goblin of Chicago had lowered our trust and increased our fears of accepting anything, be it from neighbors or relatives.

The heart of the nation's trust level has been damaged. The trust which we have placed for years in the purchase of over-the-counter drugs without fear of death has been eroded and will take some time to reach the level it once had.

The drug companies have shared a trust level with the citizen similar to that shared by the doctors. After all, it was the drug companies from which the doctors prescribed their medicine.

The suspicious and distrust generated by the Goblin of Chicago are taking their toll on the psychic of the citizenry. For years we have been gravitating toward an economy controlled by a few big corporations. We accepted with pleasure the accessibility of packaging of food and drugs because it seemed to address our needs of freedom and our desire for selection. The Goblin of Chicago is attacking this freedom and desire in such a way as to allow the citizens to become amenable to the restrictions necessary to protect life or the citizens' health.

Suppose the Goblin of Chicago's mask covered the face of a Right Wing Terrorist, who had as his purpose to institute nation-wide fear and distrust of shopping in the supermarkets of this country; it could possibly cause wide spread disruption in the nation's largest cities. If such disruptions did occur, it would be very easy for crazy Right Wing politicians to move in and establish a new order to things in a very totalitarian way.

You see, this Tylonol death has implications far beyond the death of the individuals killed so far, because the place of the attack will appear to be more important than the object of the attack, which thus far has been Tylonol, Eledrin and Visine.

The purchasing of all food is usually done by walking into a store and going directly to the counter, where the item of purchase is located. These stores are the places where the nation's cities eat. I would hate to see some Right Wing politician kill a lot of people by lacing these products with cyanide because he did not like the consumer price index being too high.

We don't know what can be done about such acts of poisoning drugs and foods. We all cannot rush back to the home remedies of the past or plant a garden or fruit trees, because many of us would not know where to start.

But, YOU CAN BE MORE WATCHFUL OF WHAT YOU BUY.

**NEVADA'S LARGEST AND MOST COMPLETE BLACK COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER**

## Letter To The Editor

Dear Editor:

The continuing saga in a long string of injustices against Blacks continues under the guise of a Reduction In Force (RIF) or employee layoff plan masterminded by our new superintendent of schools Bob Wentz. As the former Superintendent of the predominantly Black St. Louis Public Schools, where he likewise "cleaned house" to the detriment of Black educators, we should have been prepared for the worst instead of quietly awaiting the inevitable. Our school board is now on the verge of formalizing the \$3 million in budget cuts because it says this action, at Governor List's request, will keep the state from going broke.

Why would Superintendent Wentz and the school board "volunteer" these staff cuts, causing the elimination of a disproportionate number of jobs held by Blacks and the downgrading of other Blacks from higher to lower positions? We are told, of course, that it is for the sake of helping the state remain solvent. But is that the real reason?

I do not have proof positive — but consider the evidence. Central to the layoff plan is seniority. In fact, seniority is the sole basis for determining who gets laid off or bumped from a higher to a lower position. Blacks generally have less seniority than their white counterparts — that's a fact. According to union agreements seniority alone is to be considered when employee layoffs are to be made.

How the areas to be cut were determined in the first place is another question many Black people have. As we understand it, staff cuts were to be concentrated in support areas so as not to affect the classroom. Which brings us to yet another concern. Why were administrative positions which are held by Blacks all of a sudden expendable after so

many years being considered necessary for the overall operation of the school system?

The dust has not settled yet. We know that the budget cutback plan proposed at the school district contains some dangerous and sinister connotations for Blacks and minorities. Take for instance the "bumping" provision, where administrators with more seniority can take someone else's position forcing the displaced employee to go to an even lower paying position. I will be watching to see what happens when the layoff notices begin to filter down from the top to the bottom.

Las Vegas is sadly witnessing the clock being rolled back to the pre-1960s within the Clark County School District. It is apparent that there will soon be few Blacks in the school district with decision-making authority as a result of this layoff plan.

From the Director of Information to the Human Relations Coordinator to numerous assistant principals, deans, counselors and even the only Black high school principal in the state, whose job has been threatened for reasons other than RIFing, Blacks stand to lose considerable gains under Wentz's superintendency.

I applaud Virginia Brewster for her valiant efforts as the only Black school board member to bring this issue out for public exposure and scrutiny. Certainly without her input and involvement, the full magnitude of these atrocities might not have been revealed.

If Black Las Vegas care at all about the education that their children or other people's children will receive in years to come, then they should attend the next school board meeting. At that time, the board is expected to vote on the budget-cutting plan that will in one stroke nullify nearly a quarter-century of Black progress in education.

Name Withheld By Request

## GREAT SOCIETY OR MEAN SOCIETY?

By John E. Jacobs

Whatever one's opinion of President Reagan's political prowess or his leadership performance, history doesn't seem to be his strong point. I say that because in a recent major address the President gave a history lesson on the Great Society that was seriously mistaken in its reading of the recent past.

He suggested that progress for blacks and poor people was being made through 1964, after which the costs of Great Society programs sent the economy into a tailspin worsened by inflation, which lowered the real incomes of poor people.

That analysis suggests a lack of familiarity with the Great Society programs and with recent economic history.

First, we should be very clear about the results of those programs lumped

together as "Great Society" programs. They worked. And they worked well. They



John E. Jacob

helped reduce the numbers of those living in poverty by improving education and providing jobs and training opportunities.

And they did not cost much. The programs targeted to the poor never formed more than a very small part of the federal budget.

Interestingly, it was the programs that primarily benefited the non-poor that escalated so sharply. The enormous

amounts of the budget defined as "social welfare expenditures" are almost completely devoted to such programs as social security and Medicare,

see some similarities to the late 1960s. It is the impact of another huge arms buildup that is breaking the budget, not the relatively modest resources that

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whose beneficiaries are mostly non-poor elderly people.

Many experts locate the cause of the economic slide of the seventies in the huge spending associated with the war in Vietnam — spending that pulled money out of investments and consumer spending and dumped it into non-productive battlefields.

If the President would take another look at his own budget problems, he might

help poor people survive and invest in human resources.

From his speech, it See JACOB, page 13



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