

Editorial

Guest Editorial by Beaufort O. Bailey.

The Board of Education's decision to turn back \$360,000 to the Department of Health Education and Welfare has all the earmarks of sacrificing the best interests of our school children on the altar of political expediency. A careful reading of HEW's expediency. A careful reading of HEW's letter reveals that, while it might well have been phrased more diplomatically, the government's comments can in no way be described as "outrageous demands" or "excessive interference" in local matters.

What did HEW actually say? First they addressed the subject of ability grouping. They did not categorize the practice as useless or discriminatory. They did ask that some form of objective measurement be used to group children. I see nothing so terrible in this.

Let's face it - our schools, just like any other large institution, contain a certain number of racists, both conscious and unconscious - Any child, black or white, also speaks with a heavy dialect, does not dress well or fails to reflect exposure to middle class values in the home, stands a good chance of being categorized as "slow" and thus placed in a remedial group so long as the decision on grouping rests solely on individual teacher judgment. HEW did not say that teacher judgment in this area had to be eliminated, but did ask that it be supplemented by some form of objective evaluation, free of personal bias.

The idea behind ability grouping is that disadvantaged children require extra help if they are to catch up with their peers. Smaller pupil-teacher ratios and more individualized instruction are supposed to enable the disadvantaged child to progress more rapidly than if he were in a regular classroom, make up the differences that hinder his progress, and when he has caught up with his age group, move into regular classes.

HEW asked that the local schools show that our system of ability grouping was achieving this goal. If grouping is working, then it should have been easy to satisfy HEW. Can it be that the system in Forsyth County was not helping children in the slow group progress more quickly than in the regular classroom? If so, that would explain the Board's reluctance to meet HEW's criteria.

Anyway you look at it, the rejection of the HEW money has worked a hardship on the middle class and poor people of Forsyth County. When the School Administration urged us all to support the recent sales tax increase, they told us that if the sales tax referendum failed "every program in the school system could suffer." Now we see this same group turning away \$360,000. It makes no sense to me.

If there is discrimination in either ability grouping or discipline, it should be rooted out and eliminated without the need for HEW coercion. If our policies are not discriminatory and if grouping is serving the needs of our children, then it should have been easy to convince HEW of these facts.

The State of North Carolina has stringent laws prohibiting discrimination in the schools. If we are in violation of HEW regulation we are very probably in violation of state law also. If we are in compliance with our local law, in all probability we are in compliance with federal law and thus had no reason to reject these funds.

It seems clear that four School Board members acted against the best interests of both the taxpayers and our school children. HEW's letter did not make unreasonable demands, officials in Atlanta offered to negotiate, the tutoring program funded by this money has adjudged a success, and sufficient local funds to continue the program are not available except at the cost of robbing a school library and the Career Center budget.

In my opinion the action of the Board in rejecting these funds was a blatant example of trying to rouse latent racial prejudice in time for the November election. I'm confident that the voters of Forsyth County will see through this transparent political manipulation and elect School Board members who will act in the best interests of our children.

B.O. Bailey

A Warning to Motorists: Stop, Look and Listen - - - Schools Are Open AND REMEMBER The Life You Save May be Your Own.



We must protect and provide for the elderly because we are here through their efforts, struggles and hardships...

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sirs:

On this evening (Sept. 5) I was introduced to the "Maiden Issue" of the Winston-Salem Chronicle. I was indeed happy for this simple reason: now we may be able to read about the good things that are happening in and around Winston-Salem. This was my first impression. I do believe that this is what we, as a black race, need.

Freedom of its own news media to let the reading public know of our progress, advancements and our hopes for a bright future. We do not wish to destroy, neither do we wish to make news as a public nuisance; in other words, news of robbery, assault or drugs, but to have something good to read about our people.

I have had experience in writing about our progress in New Jersey, New York, and Philadelphia. We as a race, seemingly different from any other, are really happy and proud to read about the progress of our people. We still have much to learn and so very much to gain from our learning by simply listening.

I hope to become a writer of this new baby paper and make it proud of its name.

There are so much good things happening to our people but not enough strength to make it known to the reading public.

I do wish we as one would make this an enjoyable paper to read and a reference to who's who in the progress of our people and nation.

Mrs. Evangeline Brooks Reid
2909 Patterson Ave.
Winston-Salem, N.C. 27105
723-8284

Refer your news to me and I will be glad to forward it to the Winston-Salem Chronicle.

Dear Sir:

Thank you for introducing your paper in our home. I am a dedicated reader of news pertaining to our people, their progress and anything that is good for us to leave on this earth to let others know we have been here and have left a legacy for our future generations.

—A reader

Dear Sir:

May I take this opportunity to wish you all success in the publishing of your weekly newspaper. I am confident that your paper will add substantially to the continued growth of our community.

Please call on me at any time, if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely yours,
Carl L. Whitney

The Chronicle
welcomes letters
to the Editor
on Any Subject.

Letters must be
signed with
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