

# Editorials

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## All Roads Lead To Groves Stadium

We are appalled over the extent to which the Winston-Salem Police Department went to facilitate the football game held at Groves Stadium this past weekend. We feel that it is unfair to the citizens living in the area for the police to divert all traffic on 30th Street into the stadium parking lot.

The police channeled all but one eastbound lane into the parking area of Groves Stadium. All of the westbound lanes were forced to go into the parking area.

We can see the need for some controlled access to the area. But, not to the extent of forcefully rerouting people not destined to the Wake Forest game. Controlled access could have just as easily been obtained by having all those policemen actively divert traffic rather than channel everyone into the parking lot.

This approach would have shown consideration for people attending the game as well as people going about their normal Saturday affairs.

We hope that in the future the police department will be more considerate of all the city's residents and not just the needs of a few and their alumni friends.

## Inmates To Benefit From Getting Paid

The North Carolina Department of Corrections will soon have inmates working on the state's roads again. We applaud the decision. Even more commendable, however, is the fact that these inmates will be getting paid for the first time.

Although the pay will be nominal (\$1 per day in some cases) we still believe that the benefits derived by both the inmate and the Corrections Department will more than justify the expense.

For the inmate, it will provide a means for purchasing items that would otherwise be beyond his means. It will also keep some weaker inmates from depending on stronger inmates thereby lessening the propensity for homosexual activity. And it will also begin to give the inmates a feeling of integrity. He will no longer be "working for the man," but for himself. This undoubtedly will decrease the contempt that most inmates feel for correction's people.

On the other hand, the corrections department will benefit because inmates will have something constructive to do with their time. Idleness heightens the frustrations of being in prison and facilitates homosexual activity and rioting. Too much idle time gives inmates a chance to think about the negative aspects of incarceration.

The state will also save money by paying inmates to work. The state's highways have to be worked on at some point in time. If they have to hire outside help then certainly they will have to pay more than what they are proposing to pay the inmates.

We believe that paying inmates is a good first step in the rehabilitative process, but only a first step. There needs to be more innovative programs for inmates. And we hope the corrections department will see the wisdom in not only paying inmates, but making an honest attempt to rehabilitate them as well.

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## To Be Equal by Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

The beginning of the school year should be welcomed by young people anxious to get back to their studies, but in all too many cases it will be characterized by fear of violence.

Each year there are reports of assaults, vandalism, and worse in the nation's schools. No area seems to be immune, city schools and rural ones face a rising tide of anti-social behavior and violence. In some places, many students tote knives and even guns to their classrooms.

The inevitable response to this has been demands for more police in the schools and imposition of rigid discipline. Some say that kids accused of breaking school rules should be suspended or expelled, and a few even argue for the return of corporal punishment.

That's predictable. Equally predictable is the failure of such steps. Turning the schoolhouse into an armed camp guarded by cops inevitably results in escalation of violence and a poisoning of the educational atmosphere.

True, some kids simply cannot continue to remain in the classrooms they disrupt, or to roam among the youngsters they terrorize. It only takes a handful of armed youths to turn a school into a house of terror for the majority that want to study.

But simply kicking them out of school solves nothing. The system hasn't devised ways to handle kids that need special

treatment. Suspensions only deepen their frustrations and encourage them to act out their aggressive feelings. And dumping them into juvenile jails is a sure prescription for turning them into hardened law-breakers.

And there's a real element of hypocrisy when adults wail about youths packing pistols and then fight gun controls that would effectively cut off access to potential death-dealing weapons for all.

Violent-prone and weapon-wielding young people can't be allowed to bully their peers and teachers, but they also need concerned help and assistance that special schools can provide. Focusing on controlling the problem and not on the solutions can only compound the situation.

To the extent that school violence is a reflection of societal problems whose origin is in economic and social disadvantage, it will only be solved when poverty, gross inequality and anti-social attitudes are reduced. Educators must be aware of this, and of the futility of still more calls for more cops.

A more realistic approach would be to examine what there is in the school environment that turns some kids off and allows the others to at least tolerate their behavior. A school in which kids are interested in their classroom work, respect their principal and teachers, and have developed a cohesive school spirit is a school not

likely to have discipline problems, no matter what kind of neighborhood it's in.

It's a lot easier for educators to blame social factors among their students and to call for more police than it is to face up to the very real failures of schools that bore their students and are infected by hostility. Of all the many factors so often mentioned in reports about school violence this one of school environment is the most important and most ignored.

In fact, the drive to combat school violence could well become a factor itself in helping to build a constructive school environment. The key is cooperation between students, teachers and parents to make the school safer.

Working as teams with shared responsibilities could well build the trust and liking so noticeably absent from so many schools. Formation of student patrols gives kids responsibilities and a feeling of self-worth, both of which are damaged when their schools are turned over to gun-toting uniformed guards.

A realistic approach to the problem of violence in the schools demands programs that turn the schools into pleasant, constructive places for students and teachers alike, while protecting the right to learn from those who would sabotage it.