

Winston-Salem Chronicle

Founded 1974

ERNEST H. PITT, Publisher

NDUBISI EGEMONYE

ELAINE L. PITT

MICHAEL PITT

ALLEN JOHNSON

Executive Editor

JOHN SLADE

Assistant Editor

Olympic 'games'

According to purveyors of doom far and wide, the Soviets' withdrawal from the 1984 Olympics will herald the downfall of the games as we know them today.

The petty, dastardly Russians have ruined the games, they say, and cursed them to be used for political interests rather than remain the pure contests of athletic skill they were designed to be.

Nonsense. Those arguments are about as logical as naming an "official soft drink" of the 1984 Olympics with a straight face or having a Hell's Angel carry the Olympic torch part of the way to Los Angeles.

Similarly, the "purity" of the Olympics is about as big a myth as the tooth fairy or Santa Claus.

The games are commercial, hypocritical and, most of all, political even without the withdrawal of certain nations or nightmarish acts of terrorism, as occurred in 1972.

If politics weren't involved, they'd simply mix teams from different countries and have them compete on international squads rather than on national teams waving flags and wearing patriotic colors.

Though many of us won't admit it, the main cause of our Olympic heartache is not that the Soviets' absence will hurt the Olympic tradition. What we regret more than anything else is that Pat Ewing and Michael Jordan won't get to dunk the Soviet basketball team all the way back to Siberia or that our track team won't do likewise to the Soviet runners.

We really wanted to see Indiana's fiery Bobby Knight coach the Soviets into the ground simply because they are the bad guys.

It's sort of like Winston-Salem State and A&T: Losing to anyone else is tolerable but losing to the Soviets is the worst kind of defeat.

And that rivalry has its roots in politics. Hitler knew that when he tried to use the games to assert "Aryan superiority." Jesse Owens knew it when he showed Hitler what he could do with his Aryan superiority.

So did Jimmy Carter in 1980, when he withdrew the United States from Olympic competition in the Moscow Games in a meaningless protest against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. We're sure the Soviet military effort suffered mightily after that move and that the people of Afghanistan were given the moral boost they needed to keep up the fight.

We're by no means defending the Soviet snub. But we also didn't approve of Jimmy Carter's decision to rain on the Soviets' parade simply to get a measure of symbolic revenge for Afghanistan.

Both acts reek of childish, tit-for-tat diplomacy that accomplishes very little athletically or politically.

What the Soviets and Americans have managed to do in the last two Olympics is stick their tongues out at one another and make nasty faces.

Given that these two children could blow up the world if they irk one another sufficiently, we hope they grow up soon.

Crystal-clear hindsight

Sometimes what you've written can be overshadowed by where it is placed.

A case in point is last week's editorial entitled "Post-election notes."

The editorial read, in part:

"-- As we noted in the pre-election editorial above, the Black Leadership Roundtable passed its acid test by endorsing Tom Gilmore even while prominent members of its leadership worked on campaigns for Eddie Knox and Rufus Edmisten.

"Or so we thought. Some Knox workers at St. Stephen Baptist Church started the day by handing out flyers that listed the Roundtable's slate of endorsements, but featured a handwritten "amendment": Tom Gilmore's name was crossed out and Eddie Knox's written in.

"Some say the tactic originated within the Roundtable's membership.

"How the organization handles the matter will have a significant bearing on the Roundtable's future....

"-- Elections in these parts attract mercenaries like picnics attract ants. You know the species: They'll campaign for the highest bidder no matter what he or she might stand for.

"Maybe we should pay them to leave town."

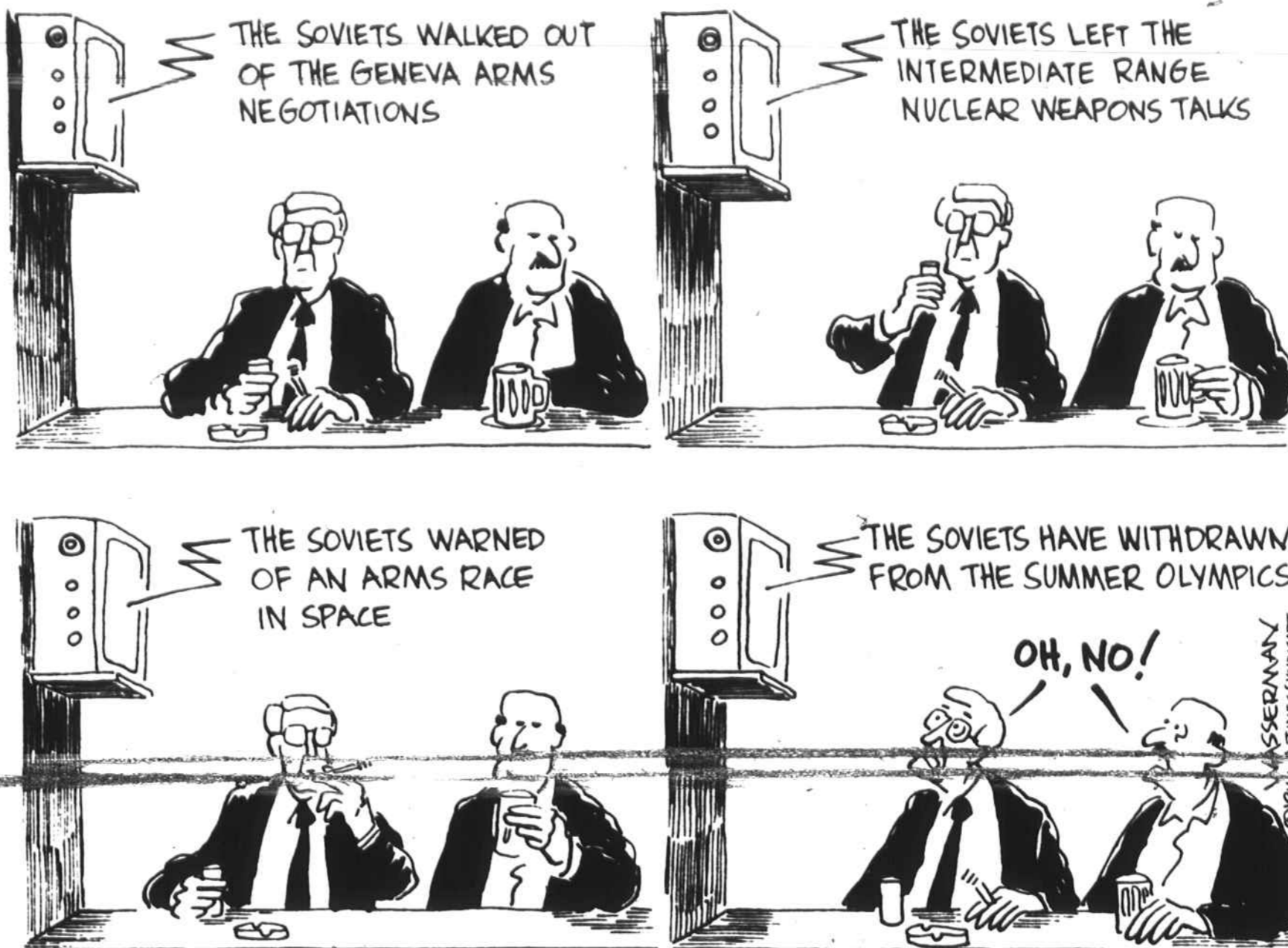
Though dashes (--) and ellipses (...) were used to mark where one thought began and another ended, some of our readers apparently misinterpreted the two items quoted above to be the same thought. They are not related.

The first item deals with the Black Leadership Roundtable and its struggle to weather apparent discord within its own ranks. We said then and we underscore now the fact that the Roundtable's status as the most influential black political organization in Forsyth County will be severely tested by that discord.

We hope it survives.

The second concerns some among us who, for a few dollar

Please see page A5



The genius of Brother Larry Little

By CLIFTON GRAVES  
Guest Columnist

Larry D. Little ... principled Panther ... progressive politician ... agitator alderman ... eloquent orator ... audacious organizer ... committed ... courageous ... sincere ... sensitive ... strategist ... statesman ... genius.

Webster's defines "genius" as "a great natural ability; a great mental capacity; a person with a very high intelligence quotient." While the term "genius" is used rather loosely in today's society, there is no better application of the definition, no better embodiment of the word, than Larry Little.

In my opinion, Brother Larry -- at the yet tender age of 33 -- has done more these past 15 years for effectuating change and progress in our community than anyone else, period.

Like him or loathe him, the brother must have your respect for no other reason than having the courage to stand up and fight for his convictions -- courage exemplified in his organizing support for Joanne Little and the Wilmington 10, and his standing up to corporate giants like R.J. Reynolds and demanding that they demonstrate more social responsibility toward the community in which they have become enriched.

His courage was shown in his cons-

tant confrontations with white-hooded, blue-suited, and black-robed white racists who have threatened to blow him off the map, run him out of town, or buy him off (as they have been able to do with so many of our so-called black leaders).

But beyond the "controversial," yet correct, positions Brother Larry has espoused over the years, beyond the confrontations with the status quo in both the white and black communities, Larry Little has demonstrated a political growth and maturity which has resulted in widespread respect at the local, state and national levels.

This is due in part to his uncanny ability to be both politician and statesman, prolific agitator and astute negotiator, idealist and pragmatist.

Thus, he can condemn the U.S. invasion of Grenada and, simultaneously, assist a local black business get through bureaucratic red tape. He can express outrage over the Klan-Nazi terrorism in Greensboro in

the morning and help his North Ward constituents solve a zoning problem that same afternoon. He can express righteous indignation over America's cozy political and economic relationship with racist South Africa, then turn around and get an unemployed youth a job with a local company.

Don't misunderstand. What I am highlighting here are strengths, not weaknesses; commitment, not inconsistencies; courage, not craziness.

But if one were to ask of Larry Little what he considers to be his crowning accomplishments to date, certainly he would have to list near the top the court-approved redistricting plan and his triumphant coordination of the Forsyth County Jesse Jackson presidential campaign.

In drafting the state legislative redistricting plan, which now practically guarantees two black state legislators from Forsyth County, Larry demonstrated a political savvy and intelligence possessed by few individuals of any hue. Indeed, the attorneys representing the African-American plaintiffs in the lawsuit considered Brother Little's draft plan the most thoughtful, fair and ingenious of those presented from across the state.

As for Larry's orchestration of Jesse Jackson's Forsyth County Please see page A12



Clifton Graves

Stats prove it: Poverty's on the rise

By JOHN JACOB  
Syndicated Columnist

Any way you look at the numbers, poverty is on the rise.

Just a few years ago, in 1979, there were 26 million poor Americans. By 1982, the poor had increased to 34.4 million. Current estimates of the poor place the number well over 35 million.

Why the jump? Simple. Two recessions in that three-year period between 1979 and 1982, one of them deep enough to qualify for depression status, if there were a fair economic labeling law in effect.

Still, there are those who argue the numbers of the poor are inflated. That's the view of leading officials in the administration who claim that the poverty figures include only people whose cash incomes fall below the poverty line.

They say that the value of federal non-cash benefits should be added to cash income in defining poverty. Put a dollar figure on a family's subsidized housing, its food stamps and its Medicaid benefits, and the numbers of the poor would be much smaller.

To me, that's just playing with numbers. It bears no relation to reality, and none to determining who is poor.

Most of those benefits -- medical assistance, for example -- flow directly to doctors and hospitals, not to

poor people. It is just ridiculous to say that a poor person is no longer poor because a stay in the hospital boosts his income by the amount the government pays the hospital and the doctors.

The same reasoning makes it foolish to add housing subsidies to the incomes of the poor. If the government pays a developer a subsidy to build low-income housing, does that make the tenants less poor?

It is interesting that the same people who are so anxious to find the specious ways to juggle numbers and

better-off, often at the expense of the needy.

But the critics of the conventional method of counting the poor -- by cash income alone -- are now powerful enough to get their way. They had the Census Bureau calculate the numbers of the poor using alternative methods that included the value of federal non-cash benefits. And guess what? Even by juggling the definitions of the poor, it turns out that poverty is rising and that some nine million people became poor over the 1979-1982 period.

"It is interesting that the same people who are so anxious to find specious ways to juggle numbers and definitions to increase the incomes of poor people and thus define them out of poverty, show no such inclination to add the value of federal benefits to the non-poor."

definitions to increase the incomes of poor people and thus define them out of poverty, show no such inclination to add the value of federal benefits to the non-poor.

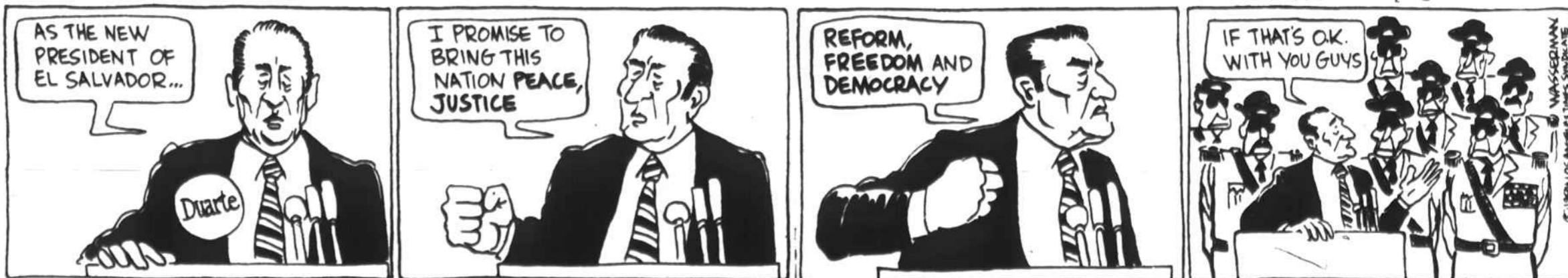
After all, if it is right to reason that all aid be included in income, why restrict the game to poor people. How about adding the value of interest deductions and depreciation deductions to incomes of the affluent?

Doing that would widen the statistical gap between the poor and the affluent, and would make visible the immense subsidies that flow to the

The numbers-crunching exercise does reduce the total poverty figure, but not significantly. And one reason is that the savage cuts in those federal benefit programs meant that fewer poor people received aid, and that the aid was not sufficient to lift the recipients above the poverty line.

In recent years, while unemployment and poverty were rising steeply, spending for both cash and non-cash benefit programs were declining in real terms. The eligibility requirements for those programs were

Please see page A10



Chronicle Letters

A word about Eddie Knox

To The Editor:

Eddie Knox, a candidate for governor of North Carolina, has been endorsed by his former opponent, Harvey Gantt, currently mayor of Charlotte. Gantt's endorsement is truly surprising, considering Knox's campaign tactics against him in the 1979 mayoral election in Charlotte.

During the 1979 campaign, Gantt, a black, in noting that Knox's campaign ads injected racial overtones in the mayoral race, was quoted in the Sept. 22, 1979 issue of *The Charlotte Observer* as saying to Knox, "Your ads are sick. They are bad." Knox replied, "That's a matter of opinion."

The July 29, 1983, issue of the *News and Observer* reported that Paul Luebke, an associate professor of sociology at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, testified in the federal redistricting litigation and referred to Knox's 1979 campaign against Gantt as an example of political campaigns in the state which have appealed to racial prejudice against black candidates through "racial telegraphing."

Specifically, through his ads, Knox attempted to project himself as a representative for all of the city of Charlotte, while indicating that Gantt would represent only a part of the city.

History shows that Gantt was narrowly defeated by an unfair campaign masterminded by Eddie Knox who, as a member of the North Carolina General Assembly in 1973, was one of the sponsors of Senate Joint Resolution 947. This resolution honored George C. Wallace, self-proclaimed racist, and it was ratified May 24, 1973.

A candidate who engages in despicable tactics such as those used by Eddie Knox in his 1979 mayoral race certainly is unworthy of serving as governor of this state.

Further research reveals that in 1973, Knox co-sponsored a resolution to ask Congress to convene a Constitutional Convention for the purpose of adopting an anti-busing amendment to the U.S. Constitution. This action was in the wake of desegregation order of the federal courts.

Black voters should not be deceived by Mayor Gantt's endorsement of Knox. Rather, they should view the endorsement for what it really is: a staged marriage of political expedience designed to enhance Knox's credibility among black voters.

I believe that black voters have enough political savvy to see through Knox's scheme. Such insight should lead blacks to vote decisively against Eddie Knox on election day.

As a black citizen of this state, I am currently an undecided voter with respect to the governor's race. I am sure, however, that Eddie Knox does not deserve and will not receive my vote.

E.H. Harris  
Greensboro

More on Knox

To The Editor:

Recently, I received in the mail an anonymous packet of information designed to call into question the integrity and commitment to equality of opportunity of Eddie Knox. This is a blatant attempt to undermine support for Eddie within the black community.

Eddie Knox has been in politics for a good part of his adult life. Like most of America, over the years, his views on civil rights issues have matured and become more liberal. Today, Eddie Knox is a subscribing life member of the Please see page A5