

Winston-Salem Chronicle

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OUR OPINION

First, the good news

This editorial is the first in a periodic series of articles.

THE SLEEPY TOWN that used to stretch, yawn and roll over for exercise has awakened.

You don't hear as many jokes that Winston-Salem ought to be renamed "Reynolds," like everything else here, 'cause we're growing more than tobacco these days in the Twin City.

"Superblock" once seemed destined to be another glorious concept turned urban-renewal white elephant. Today it is fast becoming a reality.

The expansion of the Benton Convention Center has moved forward with due haste.

Likewise, across Fifth Street, the Winston Plaza Hotel seemed to sprout overnight, adding another impressive tower to our skyline and enhancing the Convention Center's drawing power.

Not to be outdone, and obviously recognizing its potential in tandem with the Convention Center and Winston Plaza, the neighboring Hyatt has begun a facelift program of its own.

Meanwhile, an industrial park is planned adjacent to Winston-Salem State University, an attractive, comfortable transit mall for bus patrons downtown.

A new East-West expressway will, in the coming years, offer relief from the twisting, congested stretch of I-40 that serves that purpose now.

And, although we wish it had come under different circumstances, city voters recently approved a long-overdue new arena to replace antiquated Memorial Coliseum, which probably is architecture's closest answer to what human beings call a nerd.

On a broad scale, these are exciting times for the Twin City.

Yet, on a smaller scale, in Winston-Salem's sizable black community, an awakening could be in the offing, too.

Consider the signs:

- The Urban League's spacious new offices on the corner of Fifth and Trade streets have been recently completed, and that increases the agency's ability to help others help themselves through job training and counseling.

- The *Chronicle* has staked its investment in a revitalized downtown by purchasing and renovating a building on Liberty Street to house its offices.

- The new Winston Lake YMCA holds its own among the best YMCA facilities in the nation.

- The East Winston Shopping Center, which should have been black-owned, continues to thrive.

- Developers plan new apartments near the shopping center, at 12th and File streets and off Carver School Road, helping to fill a serious void in decent, affordable housing in the black community.

- Pending an interpretation of its legal meaning by the state attorney general, recently passed enabling legislation could help breathe new life into black businesses that seek city contracts.

- The Chamber of Commerce's Minority Business Council has made significant headway in increasing the involvement of black businesses in the Chamber and bringing black businesses into the economic mainstream.

- The black political leadership has received an infusion of new energy, as younger heads have joined forces and shared perspectives with older ones.

Obviously, we're bullish both on the future of Winston-Salem as a whole and Black Winston-Salem in particular.

The ingredients for a political and economic renaissance certainly appear to be in place, waiting for somebody to stir the brew.

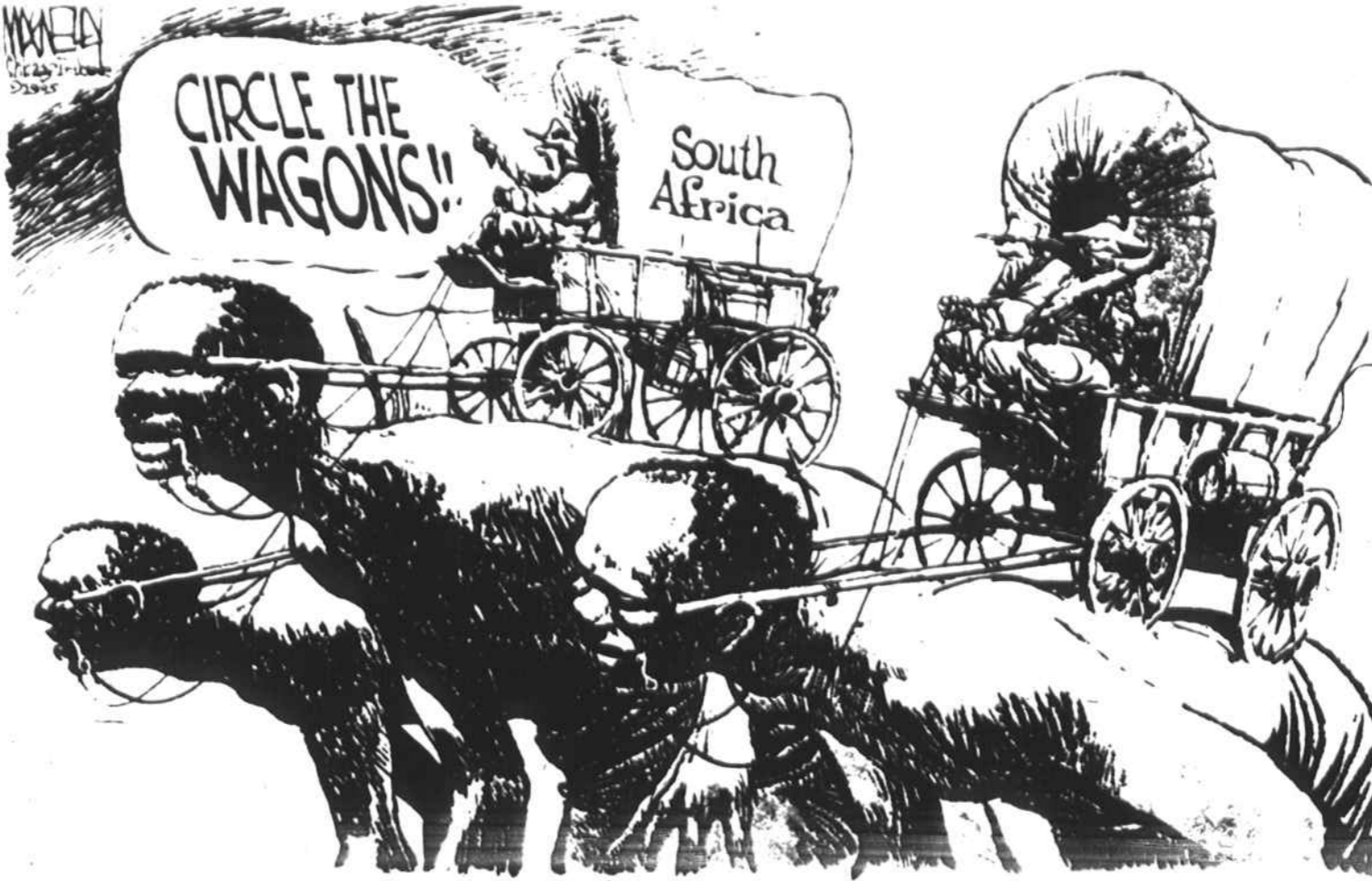
But in order to move from where we are to where we ought to be, we need to do our homework.

We need to identify our strengths and weaknesses, pinpointing both our most pressing needs and our biggest assets.

The *Chronicle* plans to do its part with an upcoming series of articles, editorials and columns that will assess, from the perspectives of experts and laypeople, politicians and businessmen, academicians and planners, "The Future of Black Winston-Salem."

We've completed the easy phase this week in this editorial: given you the good news.

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The ironic tragedy of police violence

HAMILTON, N.Y. -- On the night of June 12, two incidents occurred in New York that represent the terror and tragedy of police and civilian racist violence. At approximately 9:30 p.m., a plainclothes police officer shot and killed a 17-year-old black man in Manhattan's Upper West Side. The white officer, Lee Van Houton, claimed that the victim and another companion assaulted him in an attempted robbery. After an investigation, Van Houton was cleared.

But many disturbing questions were left unanswered. The victim, Edmund E. Perry, had graduated with honors only two weeks before the incident from Phillips Exeter Academy. He was employed at a Wall Street brokerage house this summer; this autumn he was to begin college at Stanford University. Perry had no criminal record, had never used drugs and was "a very sensitive and endearing person," according to his teachers. "Why would a young black man on his way up attempt to rob anyone?" asked Attorney C. Vernon Mason shortly after Perry's death. "But if he did, why was deadly force used to stop a 17-year-old with no criminal record and no weapon?"

FROM THE GRASSROOTS

By DR. MANNING MARABLE

One hour later, four black youth between the ages of 14 and 18 entered a small Brooklyn grocery store. None were armed, but one teen-ager was drinking a bottle of soda which he had brought from home. The

civilian violence? The Reaganites and law-and-order addicts claim that the police simply require a freer hand to check urban violence against individuals and property. Certainly the black community, as a whole, is un-

"Why would a young black man on his way up attempt to rob anyone?" asked attorney C. Vernon Mason shortly after Perry's death. "But if he did, why was deadly force used to stop a 17-year-old with no criminal record and no weapon?"

storeowner, Ali Nagi, demanded to know which of the youths intended to pay for the drink. When none of the teen-agers agreed to do so, Nagi pulled a gun from behind the counter. Two teen-agers directly in front of Nagi were shot and killed instantly. The storeowner then leaped from behind the counter to chase the other teen-agers. One youth was killed, the fourth wounded. Neighbors informed police that the young black men were not "troublemakers." But now three are dead over a 65-cent soft drink.

What creates police and

sympathetic to rapists, vandals, burglars and other criminals who prey on the poor and working people.

But the distinction between fair law enforcement versus excessive force is frequently blurred, and often totally forgotten.

In New York City last year, about 6,700 complaints against excessive police force were filed, 10 percent more than in 1983. Five officers were forced to resign several weeks ago for beating and assaulting suspects with an electric stun gun.

But these problems aren't con- Please see page A13

Get out of bed with the Devil, Jerry

"Falwell's picking of Botha over Tutu is like selecting Hitler over the Jews ... 'Bull' Conner over Martin Luther King ... Pharaoh over Moses ..."

-- The Rev. Jesse Jackson

"It's not surprising for someone like Jerry Falwell -- who did nothing for poor people during the civil rights revolution (in the United States) -- to take the wrong position on South Africa now."

-- Dr. Benjamin Hooks

NORMAL, Ala. -- The Rev. Jerry Falwell -- erstwhile Baptist/fundamentalist preacher of the Gospel -- has proven once again that he clearly does not worship the same God as did Moses or Dr. King.

If Falwell did, surely he would not be aligning himself with the racist, oppressive demagogues of South Africa by advocating more U.S. investment in and support for the apartheid regime.

To be sure, this is not the first time that Falwell's "Moral Majority" (or, as my friend the Rev. Carlton A.G. Eversley terms it, the "Immoral Minority") has been on the wrong side of critical moral issues. These right-wing positions have included support for increased military spending, social services cutbacks, increased aid for the CIA-trained Contras in Nicaragua, advocacy for Ronald Reagan and, of course, a history of defending the racists in South Africa.

Admittedly, Falwell has a right to his opinions, as well as a right to express and expound upon his positions. Moreover, given his substantial following among African-Americans -- undoubtedly due to his "moral" positions on abortion, homosexuality, etc. -- one must give credence to

CLIFTON GRAVES JR.

Chronicle Columnist

Falwell's persuasive ability and charismatic personality.

However, when one subverts the moralistic teachings of Christianity to foster selfish, materialistic motives (as Falwell has done), such subversion must be challenged by all people of good will.

Now, there are certain of my Muslim friends who will make a

Gospel, anyone who is even vaguely familiar with the Bible must realize that the God of the slaveholder was not the God of the slave; the God of Hitler could not have been the God of the Jews; the God of the white South Africans is not the God of our black brethren in that nation; and, so, the God of Jerry Falwell cannot be the God of Martin Luther King, Harriet Tubman or Jesse Jackson.

With his uncalled for, but not unexpected aiding and abetting



cogent argument that Falwell's brand of Christianity has, in fact, been the prevailing form down through the ages. Indeed, both the sword and shield of Christianity were used and abused by the Europeans who invaded and enslaved our African ancestors. Additionally, ruthless oppressors such as Hitler, Mussolini, Batista (in Cuba), Marcos (the Philippines), Somoza (Nicaragua), the South African government, and even the founding fathers of this nation who perpetuated slavery and committed genocide on the Native American all purported to be "God-fearing Christians."

Yet, in spite of the false prophets and perverters of the

of the Caucasian South Africans and their Uncle Tom stoolies, Jerry Falwell has, in effect, made a pact with the Devil. Thus, it is incumbent upon all of us truly decent, God-fearing folk of all races -- Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist alike -- to condemn such a dangerous, immoral pact. Let us demand that the Jerry Falwells of this world either denounce South Africa, or renounce their misguided Christianity.

Get out of the bed with the Devil, Jerry.

Winston-Salem native Clifton E. Graves Jr. is an attorney and director of University Relations at Alabama A&M University.

TO BE EQUAL

It ain't broke so why fix it?

By JOHN JACOB
Syndicated Columnist

NEW YORK -- Affirmative action programs do what they are supposed to do -- namely, enhance opportunities for minorities and women.

Because those groups have traditionally been excluded from academic programs, skilled trades, and other employment opportunities, affirmative action also is very necessary.

Despite the massive assault on affirmative action conducted by a government that should be implementing it, there are signs that the principle has widespread acceptance, among them its proven effectiveness.

One way to tell if affirmative action actually does create greater employment opportunities for excluded groups is to look at the hiring experiences of government contractors, who must file detailed reports on the races and genders of their employees and who must implement affirmative action plans with goals and timetables.

The Labor Department's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs monitors those reports, and several studies have been made comparing the racial makeup of companies subject to federal oversight and those that are not.

The results of those studies consistently show that minority employment among federal contractors grew faster than in firms not covered by affirmative action.

Among large employers, affirmative action has become an integral part of corporate practice. It may have started out as something a company had to do to meet the requirements of federal agencies or of the civil rights laws. But because it worked, many companies are now relatively immune to the propaganda crusade against affirmative action.

Much of that crusade is directed against the purported evils of categorizing workers by race and sex. But business has always known that you can't meet goals without measurements.

Corporations set minority hiring goals the way they set marketing goals -- through statistical analysis and timetables. Anything else would be dishonest, for there would be no way to tell whether a program is successful.

So corporations keep close measurements on their hiring and promotion figures, and the best make their equal opportunity programs a priority. Most companies with affirmative action programs say they plan to stick to their present efforts.

Sometimes the courts have ordered implementation of affirmative action plans to remedy gross violations of constitutional rights. Recently, the Justice Department tried to overturn some of those court decrees as they relate to state and local governments, arguing that only the individuals who can prove they were victims of discrimination should be covered by the plans.

But the law clearly intended affirmative action as a remedy to solve systematic discrimination, not individual complaints. On the rare occasions when courts have ordered quotas, it was to remedy past quotas that excluded all but white males.

What doesn't make sense is opposition to affirmative action procedures that have taken root in our society and have benefitted both workers and employers. Guidelines set by the courts, including several Supreme Court rulings, ensure that white males are not victimized by procedures intending to broaden opportunities in our society.

When the government claims to support affirmative action Please see page A13