

Winston-Salem Chronicle

The Twin City's Award-Winning Weekly

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Ernest H. Pitt • Ndubisi Egemonye

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Editorials

The Struggle Ain't Over

As the country celebrates Black History Month, African Americans should ask themselves: "What can I do today for the betterment of my race?" This is a question that blacks should ask not only during this celebratory month, but everyday.

Blacks need to continually pay homage to their founding fathers. But many today take for granted the earlier contributions that were made.

So many African American have been conditioned over the years to believe that, pardon the colloquialism, "Black ain't it," that we now accept that as gospel.

Blacks play the 'dozens on each other at pool halls, on the basketball courts and at other social arenas, many thinking they are the originators. But these games, which today have evolved into "your mamma" jokes, were subliminally put into black minds hundreds of years ago by the slavemaster as a way of making "coloreds" feel inferior. Attitudes did not change when Abe Lincoln in 1863 signed the Emancipation Proclamation, which supposedly made slaves freedmen. In fact, a year before he signed the document, he met with a delegation of blacks and asked them to leave the country. "... I think your race suffer very greatly, many of them by living among us, while ours suffer from your presence. There is an unwillingness on the part of our people, harsh as it may be, for you free colored people to remain with us. It is better for us both . . . to be separated." He then proposed a settlement land in Central American.

The attitude that blacks are second-class citizens persist today among many whites, too.

That's why blacks are followed around stores as if they were common thieves, are ignored at car dealership showrooms and why whites clutch their pocketbooks and cross the street when meeting a black man.

However, if there were black-owned businesses in East Winston, blacks could turn over the dollar in the black community more than one time. It's impossible to find in the black community a sit-down restaurant, a video rental store or many major retail or commercial outlets. But blacks must understand that they have the power - and it's within easy grasp -- to stem the tide: Support what black-owned businesses there are left in the community. And put pressure on city officials to build more retail stores in East Winston.

The struggle must continue if blacks are to gain an equitable share of the pie. If blacks don't support each other, no one will.

Discrimination Encounter In Court

To the Editor

I just read the "To the Editor" section of February 4th's issue of the Winston-Salem Chronicle. A letter from Crystal Brown stated that it's not what you know but who you know pertaining to her experience in court. I was dismayed to read Ms. Brown's account of the blatant discrimination she encountered in our local courts when demanding an increase in monetary support from her child's father.

Most shocking was not the apparent shady dealings of the African-American woman judge and the retained legal counsel. What was most shocking was the description Ms. Brown gave of the man with whom she brought a child into the world. She described him as an irresponsible illiterate with an apparent drinking problem. In other words, the man is a bum.

It is indeed a shame that women have to resort to the "legal" system in order to force fathers to take care of their responsibilities which they should be men enough to shoulder without the type of intervention. We, as women, must learn to better choose those with whom we begin relationships. We must learn to avoid men with little or no integrity and a lack of racial and fatherly pride. I hope Ms. Brown has learned from her experience. Not only the lesson that it's not what you know but who you know, but also the lesson of being more responsible herself within her right of choice before beginning relationships.

I.M. Taylor

Blacks, Whites & Reds

To the editor:

So Cincinnati Reds baseball teamowner, Marge Schott, has been sentenced for using "ethnically offensive" words. Red Herring's have passed from an art to a science laced up by the media and sewn together by baseball's Executive Council (11 member body made up of other team owners). Excuse me, but something is very wrong here. There are just too many free rides at Ms. Schott's expense! I don't know



WAITER... I SPECIFICALLY ASKED TO BE SEATED IN THE NON-CELLULAR PHONE SECTION....

CHRONICLE MAILBAG Our Readers Speak Out

Marge Schott, but what I heard from those that do, she is a wonderful person who has given much to her community. It is also hard to believe by those that know her that malice was behind the uttered words, "nigger", "Jap", and "money grubbing Jews". As a product of an Italian-Irish heritage, most of the jokes I hear growing up about Italians and the Irish came from my own family.

For several years I worked for a minority (black) organization in Baltimore wherein I was one of the very few non-minority employees. I can attest I heard the word "nigger" and more self-effacing racial jokes from my black co-workers than I ever heard from my white brothers. Why? It's simple, in the right setting, making fun of oneself and/or others, where malicious intent is not present, has been and always will be a trait of man's nature.

Fortunately, there are people like Hank Aaron, Frank Robinson, Jesse Jackson, Rep. Kewisi Mfume, who are attempting to draw atten-

tion the truly substantive inequalities in the baseball "good ole white boy" club network. The question is, "which is worse foul language or foul play?" Of course, the question must extend to other sports!

How about corporate America? There are tens of thousands of companies in America. Are such minorities as women, blacks, Hispanics, Asians, etc. satisfied with their degree of success (or should I say lack of success) in climbing the corporate ladder? Let's get touch. How about the so-called liberal-leaning new media empire(s), i.e. banks, savings & loans, and the insurance industry. Does the reader believe the only problem with those has been the "red-lining" lending policies? I hope not. I have first hand experience, in Baltimore City, of witnessing the lengths banker's, attorney's, local and federal government officials will go to rape, and deny economic advancement for minorities in federally funded projects. And, I bet, in their back room plotting, slick-lip attorney's preparing all the right "documentation" for HUD, the word "nigger" was probably never used! (A story for another time, but it reads like a novel for its unbelievable personages, plots, & successes, except for its victims who can't forget.) Lets face it, racial slurs, with or without malice is a regrettable form of communication, but is not the real problem. Corporate America & I stress the media empire (only because of its influence on our lives), are in need of an attitude adjustment, and surrender its NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) behavior. Our attention must be drawn to slur behavior, and slur words will take care of themselves. My question to the reader's is, whether you are minority or non-minority, what are you doing about

the root cause of our racial misunderstandings and inequalities throughout our society?

And to Corporate America, media empires, sports leagues and our law makers I urge you to turn to the Bible and reflect on, at least, Matthew 7: vs. 1-5, and Matthews 23: vs. 4, 15, & 23-29.

R. Dan Ritchie

Foster & Ross

To the editor:

We would like to thank you very much for the way in which you published our engagement announcements.

We received numerous congratulation pertaining to your article compared to the one published in the Journal.

As a note of appreciation. Your article would truly make a black person proud of their accomplishments towards a future together. Again thank you.

Sincerely
Carolyn Foster

Frank Spencer Classic

To the editor:

Your continued support of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County High Schools is much appreciated. The Frank Spencer Classic in which you've graciously participated provides sorely needed revenues - most of which support those non revenue producing athletic programs which serve many students.

On behalf of all the high school principals and Sugar Creek Enterprises, Inc., please accept our sincere thanks.

Jerry Peoples
Principal



What New NAACP Leaders Need

There is hardly anywhere you can go and not hear the "secret" that any day now the NAACP will name Jesse Jackson as the successor to Ben Hooks as its executive director.

A story, alleged planted in USA Today by a public relations firm hired by a "Rev." whose name was mentioned as one of the final four, included Randall Robinson and Harvey Gantt, who immediately professed no interest in the job.

Jackson, the stealth candidate and rumored frontrunner, wasn't even mentioned, but that has not deterred his fans from a hard sell of the presidential aspirant.

Suddenly, in the media, Jackson was looking like a NAACP leader. Conspicuously in the last month, he started up his "activities again": calling for baseball boycott if Reds' owner Marge Schott was not suspended and associating himself with another high profile cause — the Haitian refugees.

The logic for putting Jackson in charge of the premier civil rights group is, according to his promoters, his charisma. They readily admit that he is severely lacking in

keep-track-of-the-money department and use his record in Chicago at Operation Breadbasket and his current tenure at the Rainbow Coalition as proof.

His friends also concede his non-interest in building an organization, other than those functions that promote his image. There is little interest in consensus building either.

Their main argument for giving him a 400,000 member organization with a multi-million dollar budget is, "Jesse needs a platform."

Aside from his not being a major player on President Clinton's team (spelled: no political clout) and the refusal of a Democratic president and Congress to seriously push for D.C. statehood that would give him a seat (or platform) in the U.S. Senate, Jackson's friends don't feel that the CNN TV show, syndicated column, business interests, speeches and ad hoc gadflying are sufficient for "Dr." Jackson.

However, I was never satisfied that the NAACP of Black America would benefit — and to his advocates, it didn't seem to matter.

Compare that attitude with

Kelly Alexander, Jr. and Joe Madison, two NAACP insiders who have worked in the trenches for years to find new, young faces to help rebuild an aging NAACP infrastructure with invigorated human capital.

To me their major asset is trust. They're known. They're dedicated and committed to the organization; not to the next press conference. Neither is a shrinking violet in the showboat department when a little charisma is needed, however. But neither sees charisma as his defining

civil rights or electoral, with the slogan: "Old Values and New Ideas." Not a bad idea for national NAACP focus.

Madison and I fell on different sides of the Clarence Thomas nomination. He staunchly upheld his board's opposition to Thomas. After the debate, we all went out to dinner and slapped hands. He builds bridges with people who differ.

Vernon Jarrett, Chicago Sun-Times columnist and Chairman of the NAACP's ACT-SO program, wrote that individual egos don't



TONY BROWN

Syndicated Columnist

character trait.

Joe Madison once campaigned for president of the Detroit NAACP with Rosa Parks as his running mate against one of the most entrenched political machines in the country,

make organizations confer the opportunity for individuals to serve in order to build communities. He used Martin Luther King and the Montgomery bus boycott as his example.

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