

ON THE AVANT GARDE

BY TANG NIVRI

Black Folks, Just Like White Folks! Who is Responsible for Ice Cube?

It may very well be that the angst and frustration running rampant throughout the black community in this country is the gradual realization that the struggle to prove black equality is over; that black folks are indeed pretty much just like white folks. Sometimes we are good; sometimes we are bad.

That other than running faster and being able to jump a little higher, blacks are really no better than whites, that sadly, they are just as likely to lie, cheat, steal, kill, or have bad breath in the morning as would anybody else.

That just as Thomas Jefferson opined, and the Bible clearly says, "All men are indeed created equal" endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights which include the right to be just as confused about the truth as is anybody else.

Yes, that given the same advantage, the same resources, the same station in life, the same access to privilege, the same keys to the inner workings of the old boy network, the opportunity to sit at the table with the rich and famous, black and white people will pretty much reach the same conclusions; cultural differences allowed, blacks will still prefer gospel music on Sunday and collard greens and cornbread after church, rather than eat asparagus tips and Brussels sprouts.

Till now, the fight has been over whether blacks and whites were both created equally in the sight of God and that whites, historically, have done their best to keep blacks from knowing the truth of their equality as human beings, preventing them from assuming their rightful place on this earth. There is certainly plenty of evidence to indicate this truth.

But now that we are nearing the "fin de siècle," it is no longer possible to explain the development of such "pimp mentalities" as illustrated by rapper "Ice Cube." Using the old models of white devils under every rock, we find ourselves unable to explain that this "black thang" makes its money by vilifying our own black women, portraying them as nothing less than sexual slaves, promoting himself as having a big "Jimmy" running deep, glamorizing big guns, drugs, gambling, and scoring the equivalent of basketball's triple double, yet, unlike the movies he makes, Ice Cube goes home to live in Hollywood in a huge multi-room mansion.

Yes, this "black thang" has done it well, has it not? Is this not the true American dream? Is this not the way it was supposed to be? Is there any reason for him — "black thang" to be upset with white folks? Isn't he getting to do exactly what he wants to do with his life?

The fact that he and others like him have decided to be a pimp, notwithstanding, isn't this what the whole freedom struggle was all about? Freedom to do what one wants to do — to be all that you can be? The equation still stands.

Black people should work for Heineken Brewery just as white folks do. Black folks should be free to work for advertising agencies who help companies target the beer and wine to consumers they know best. Why not? Yet, this is the trap, the perfect model for confusion in our American minds.

We are having to come to grips with the truth that quite a number of us who have made it to the promised land, have started to enjoy the American dream — are behaving — making choices just like white folks do when they get there! Is someone who works for a brewery any less black? No. Are they not making what is sure to be called an honest living? Why then is there something wrong with the white folks who sell beer and liquor to black folks? Why are they racists for doing the same? Is it any better when blacks do the targeting? Do not these black parents have children to send to school, house payments to make, tithes to pay to their churches? Do they not give respect to those whom respect is deserved, vote on every election day and are otherwise good citizens? But when whites target the black community as part of its strategy to reach a lucrative market, we call them racist. Indeed what they are is capitalists. We are now seeing what we have become, now that some of us have made it in America, and we don't like it.

Rather than emulation, blacks should be helping the rest of America to change its values! We should be trying to help white America change its course of direction. We should be trying to help our country establish new models of success, to turn away from violence, to look for new models for how families can survive, instead of emulating the values of America which inevitably give rise to cretins the likes of "Ice Cube" and others who live off the misery of others. Is this not the very thing that blacks routinely criticize white folks most for — exploitation of the masses of black folks?

Really, we are quite the same. Sure they may not be as good as we are on the basketball court or on the football field, and we are yet to decide to master the standardized test, but let's just call it even. We can do anything they can, which means that white folks are good at drug abuse and so are we; they are good at spousal abuse and so are we; good at choosing violence as a means to solving problems and so do we. They prefer to kill each other and so do we.

Finally, white folks are not stupid and we certainly aren't. Asians, Hispanics and others have long since grown tired of our tendency to whine about the state of Black America when many of them see that we, like others, that our values are questionable, that we're just as likely to kill ourselves as is anyone else, are just as likely to exploit others as were representatives from the nation who were selling fake cures for AIDS to poor, helpless black folks, as were the black car dealers in Chicago who would sell the car to the black woman at a price higher than did the white dealers, that we are just as likely to be our own worst enemy as they are. Such is true for humanity, the world over.

As somebody already said, "We have seen the enemy and he is us." What in the world are we going to do about it?

Carver Fight is Symptom of County-wide Tensions

By MARK R. MOSS
Chronicle Staff Writer

An interracial fight at Carver High School last week is a symptom of the racial tensions that permeate life in Forsyth County, several East Winston community leaders said.

"What we're seeing is just a culmination of some of the tensions in the community," said Earline W. Parmon, a Forsyth County commissioner. "It's just being passed from the adults to the students."

Three black students were arrested at the school around noon last Thursday after they allegedly beat up a white classmate near the school's cafeteria.

Horace Cutter, 17, and Greg Cutter, 18, both of 808 Efford St., and Rodney Hill, 16, of 4880 Circle Drive, were charged with assault following last week's incident. They were accused of beating Walter Gray Smith Jr., 18, of 4852 Monte Vista St.

Robert F. Clemmer, the school's principal, said Hill and the Cutters had been suspended for 10 days.

Clemmer said racial problems had been "festering for a while" at

the school and that a March 5 flag-waving incident likely triggered the fight. That was the day several white students skipped school, he said, and drove by the school waving Confederate flags while a Black History program was being held.

Walter Marshall, one of two black Winston-Salem Forsyth County school board members, said there is always the potential for the kind of trouble Carver experienced.

"You grow accustomed to hearing about these little things that can lead to what happened at the school," he said. He said there had been other incidents throughout the school year but none as serious as last week's.

He said racial problems won't be resolved until teachers come to terms with the "diversity" that makes up the school system.

He blamed the troubles at Carver, in particular, on the students who come from Belews Creek, a predominantly white and conservative township northeast of the city.

"They're the ones who initiate a lot of the problems," he said. Their parents have a "Klan and Nazi mentality" and students "bring that type

of attitude to school."

Geneva Brown, the other black school board member, said a lot of problems stem from a lack of communication between students and teachers. Brown said that when she was an elementary school principal, she frequently gathered with students to discuss racial issues. She agreed with Marshall that children are going to bring into the classroom the racial biases they learn at home.

There are parents from both sides of the coin who are going to teach racism," she said. "Some people are going to have those hatreds, it's sad to say. But damn if we can't keep students from doing things to each other."

Vivian Burke, an alderman from the Northeast Ward and whose district encompasses the school, was critical of Clemmer for not recognizing signs of racial tension.

"What has he done to let students know that their behavior towards each other is not proper?" she said.

"How many parent/teachers meetings has he had? What kind of long-range things is he doing to prevent further outbreaks?"

Burke said principals are so busy trying to move themselves up the ladder, they overlook their responsibilities to the students.

"We don't need a Mr. Personality out there, we need a strong principal," she said.

Clemmer, who was recently named Forsyth County's Wachovia principal of the year for the second time in three years, said that before the incident at Carver, the school system had developed a program to address these concerns in its long-range planning. And as a result of last week's fight, the school has called in an outside consultant — a group comprised of college students skilled in cultural sensitivity training.

Clemmer said he has also asked for help from the Winston-Salem Urban League.

Burke said senior citizens who live along Carver School Road and who are at home during the day do not need to feel intimidated by white students parading down the street waving Confederate flags.

"The people in that neighborhood don't bother anybody," she said.

Students Say They Saw It Coming

said, "It's not a normal day here."

The school also had three deputies from the Forsyth County Sheriff's Department on duty, instead of the usual one. As a student climbed one of the school's stairwells and turned to walk down a third-floor hallway, a deputy stopped him and asked to see his hall pass.

And students who normally would have been sitting in English class were instead sitting in an auditorium participating in a "Teen Forum" on how to improve race relations.

Three black students — Horace Cutter, 17, Greg Cutter, 18, and Rodney Hill, 16 — were arrested last Thursday and charged with assaulting Walter Gray Smith Jr., 18, who is white. Smith suffered a broken nose and two black eyes, officials said.

None of the four students could be reached for comment. Hill's grandmother, when contacted by telephone, said she did not wish to discuss the fight.

Some Carver students, however, said they saw signs that something was about to happen.

Raymond Banner, who has an English class with Smith, said tensions first flared on March 5 during a Black History assembly.

"Some white kids skipped school in protest," said Banner, who is black. "Students, parents and teachers saw them riding up the street waving the Confederate flags. The boy that they hit (Smith) was with them."

Banner said that made some black students angry. He said several of them talked about the incident in an English class.

"Some black people were talk-

ing about what happened in class, and he (Smith) said, yeah, he was a redneck and that he didn't care nothing about black people," Banner said. "And I heard some black people saying, 'They gonna get it.'"

But Banner said that wasn't all that was going on at the school that week. Some white students, he said, circulated a petition saying that if blacks could wear Malcolm X shirts, then they could carry the Confederate flag.

"I saw the petition and I shook my head because I thought it was stupid," Banner said.

Carver Principal Robert F. Clemmer told students at the "Teen Forum" that people must work together and learn to communicate effectively.

As the bell rang for students to change classes, Clemmer commanded them to go immediately to

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their next class.

But before the forum ended, one emotion-filled student interrupted Clemmer and asked a very poignant question, "I understand what you're saying, Mr. Clemmer," the student said. "But how can you work together when somebody's smiling in your face one minute and stabbing you in your back the next?"

Clemmer replied: "That's the importance of working together."

Amy Mecum, editor of the *Carver Courier*, said race relations at the school could improve if students understood each other.

"Things like this shouldn't be happening," she said. "We should be striving for unity. I'm a big person on respect. I've never been ashamed of Carver until now. It's embarrassing to hear people say, 'I don't want to go to Carver.'"

3 Blacks Arrested, 1 White Injured

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Cutter, 17, and Greg Cutter, 18, both of 808 Efford St., — were each charged with assault for allegedly beating up Smith. Smith suffered a broken nose and blackened eyes.

Clemmer said the "unprovoked" fight started around noon near the school's cafeteria.

Raymond Banner, a student who saw the fight, said it looked like mass chaos.

"At first, this white kid and some black kids were arguing," he said. And then a crowd of people ran over and just started hitting people."

Anthony Murphy, another student, also saw the fight. "One boy went up and hit the white guy and then it just went loose," he said. "I saw who was hitting him (Smith) and I went and told the assistant

principal. Now I'm hearing somebody's after me, too."

Murphy said he was threatened by another student because he told school authorities who was involved in the fight.

Deputies from the Forsyth County Sheriff's Department patrolled the school throughout the day Friday.

Clemmer said he has restricted

students' movement within the building and will continue to do so until "I feel that things have gotten back to normal."

The school has also scheduled a parents' forum to explain what the school is doing to resolve recent racial conflicts at the school and to get parents involved in solving the problems.

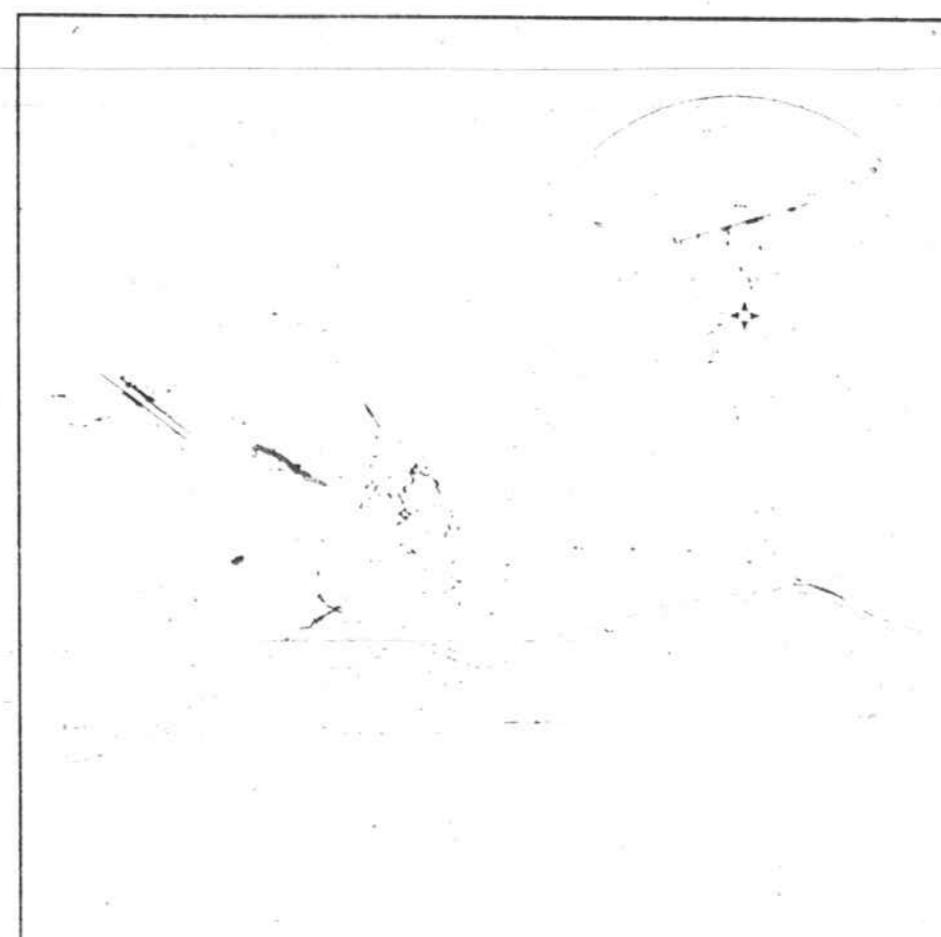
Traffic Map For NCAA Tournament

When thousands of fans and spectators converge on Winston-Salem for the NCAA 1st and 2nd

rounds, March 18 & 20, 1993, at the LJVM Coliseum, the City of Winston-Salem will be ready.

The City's Department of Transportation, Police Department, and Coliseum has produced routes

to Joel Coliseum that are safe, fast and easy for the NCAA 1st and 2nd Rounds at today and Saturday.



- From Points North - (Mt. Airy/ Virginia)** - US 52 South. Exit University Parkway. Left onto Reynolds Blvd.
- From Points East - Greensboro/Raleigh** - US 421/ Business 40 West. Exit US 52 North/Exit Akron Drive. Left over bridge. Left onto E Blvd. Left onto Shorefare Drive. Right on 30th/Deacon Blvd.
- From Points South - Southeast - (Lexington/HighPoint)** - US 52 North. Exit Akron Drive. Left over bridge. Left onto Reynolds Blvd. Left onto Shorefare Drive. Right on 30th/Deacon Blvd.
- From Points Southwest (Statesville, Charlotte, Hickory, N. Wilksboro)** Business 40 East. Exit Wake Forest/Silas Creek/ North Bound. Right onto University Parkway South Left onto Reynolds Blvd.

The Choice
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\$28K in Cocaine from page A1

"If I say what I want to say, the police department and all the city's officials will be down on me," Attucks said. "But I will say this: a young black entrepreneur catches it from both sides — from the white and from the black."

publicity about my place for a long time and the first time the *Chronicle* comes to me is when I'm doing bad.

Attucks was released from jail after posting a \$25,000 bond.

"I've been trying to get some

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